

## Episode 70: Why You Shouldn't Run A Virtual Summit!

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Dr. Mark T. Wade: Hey summit hosts, Dr. Mark T. Wade here, founder of Virtual Summit Software, and I am super excited for today's episode on the Virtual Summit Podcast because we are going to go down the rabbit hole into the dark side of summits. Why you should not host a virtual summit. I cannot wait to dive into this topic. There's so many internal things that have been brewing up that I can't wait to have exposed and we're going to do that with my legendary rock star guest, Sandra Van Der Lee. She's the CEO of Sandra Van Der Lee. She's the host of the Unconventional Marketing Summit. She's hosted one of the first online summits in her home country and she's a speaker on the Infopreneurs Summit. Sandra, so glad to have you here with us.

Sandra Van Der Lee: Thanks. I'm so glad to be here.

Dr. Mark: Now we're going to have some fun on today's episode. We're going to be talking about something we have never talked about on this show before, but before we do that, why don't you tell our summit hosts just a little bit about yourself?

Sandra: Absolutely. So I mainly work as a Squarespace web designer. I'm also one of the first ones to do that in my home country. And nowadays as an online business manager, which means I come in on a retainer basis and I take over managing software, websites marketing campaigns, all sorts of stuff for my clients which is kind of like hosting a summit, right? I come in and I handle all sorts of projects, which is fantastic. And then for summits, I realized that coming from the Netherlands and being in this little tiny country, there's very little for us entrepreneurs here. And I'm always jealous of the amazing content. So many of, especially in the US you know, so many great content and events get put out. So I decided to host my own summit in Dutch, all around growing online and online marketing and how that works.

Sandra: And then last year I was complaining with my business best friend and we were like, why is marketing so horrible? Like why do people feel like they need to put up those weird Facebook ads with the Ferraris and all the, you know, to scarcity tactics and all the annoying little tiny things. How can we do this differently? And who do we know that actually does things differently? And that's how the whole unconventional marketing summit came together at. That worked out pretty well for us. But that's not really what we're here to talk about, are we?

Dr. Mark: No, no, no, no, no. I do. I, before we go down this rabbit hole, because you have had some success, you've had quite a bit of success with your summits and we're going to talk about the dark side of the summits and, and why you shouldn't host a virtual summit. But before we do that, let's go ahead and talk a little bit more about kind of the results of your summit. So I love, let's focus first off on the one you did in Dutch. I think this is so, so amazing, so unique. So kind of walk us through that process, what it was, quickly, what it was, and then what were some of the results you did see from that?

Sandra: So it was a pretty standard free day set up. We did kind of a foundational day talking about copywriting for social media. We did legal basics, we talked about did GDPR, which was a very big thing for us, especially in that period. And then we went sort of more advanced into how can you actually grow online because that's an area where a lot of companies here are just lagging. So I just started approaching Dutch people. And the funny thing is I've always had more with the international communities and with the international entrepreneurs. So it kind of gave me an in with the whole Dutch people and it's ranging from I was at a networking event last week and someone came up to me was like, wait, I know you from somewhere, right? I don't really, I've never seen you before, but apparently they've been an attendee to my summit.

Sandra: So they've seen 15 videos with my face and someone else's face on it. So it's given me this reputation and this sort of recognition when I go to a local things, but it's also given me the reputation of being someone that's on the edge of the cool thing, right. Of the unconventional of the things that not everyone is working on. And also a lot of people realize how much work it actually is and we'll definitely get into that on the dark side part, but it's also given people, like people are impressed and especially the moment I tell them I hosted that whole summit alone. Like, I didn't have a VA, I didn't have a team. It was just me doing all the things. And I think that's it's in terms of street creds, that was a very big thing for me.

Dr. Mark: And I think this is it. This is something we were chatting about in our pre-interview chat. It's, it's one of those unmeasurable aspects of the summit and we're going to get into some of the measurable stuff. But it is one of those benefits that sometimes we take for granted is influence. I mean, how do you measure influence really honestly, and, and in your situation it's even, it's probably easier to measure because you're literally walking into a networking event and they're going, Hey, I know you. Whereas internationally you're, you may not be meeting the person in Chicago or Detroit or you know, LA that goes, I know you. So I, I really liked it and I, I wanted to highlight the fact that the creativity, cause I know we have an international audience here. Every time we get on a live training, we've got people in Romania, South Africa, et cetera.

Dr. Mark: So for those of you listening who are in a foreign area, foreign country or you know, it's your home country. So if you're in a non-English speaking country, don't be afraid to take that on like Sandra's done here. So I love this. Now let's kind of put aside the benefits and I mean some, some benefits will probably pop up as we're talking this, but the point of this episode, we want to talk about why you shouldn't host a virtual summit. Because honestly not everybody should, you need to know what you're getting into. So let's, let's kind of jump into some of the challenges, maybe the unforeseen challenges. Let's start with that. What were some of the unforeseen challenges that you ran into when you went to host your first summit?

Sandra: So I think, and this is, I'm going to start with the hardest one. And it's like I still like I get freelancers or I hire VAs so I get people for like six projects into my business, but generally I work alone because I don't want to have coworkers. I don't want to manage people. And then you host a summit and suddenly you're dealing with 15 speakers and hundreds or thousands of people that have enrolled for the summit and no one ever reads or listens to you. So if you, your patience will be tested. Let me put it like that.

Which is like speakers, if you're hearing this, I love you all so much, but honestly just read my fucking email. So I think that's something that a lot of people don't realize is that. And the longer to summit is, right. If you're running something for five days, and I've seen some extent go on for like two weeks, you're dealing with so many moving pieces and all of these people, they have agendas and schedules and priorities that are way different than yours, right?

Sandra: Because the summit and the success of the summit is your big thing. And for them it's just an afterthought in their calendar where you're like, Oh right, I need to schedule an interview and send over my headshot. And something that really, well it didn't surprise me, but that I think is something we forget is that when you're dealing with other people it might be difficult to get what you want from them, even though they're enthusiastic and committed to begin with. So that was, I think that's a big negative. Like that really adds to the workload.

Dr. Mark: Yeah, absolutely. And I can agree with you. Nobody ever reads the emails that you, and I'm, I'm over here writing down things. One of the reasons I love this podcast is it, I'm a student of the game, so I continue to learn every time. Yeah. And I just wrote, I need to make a checklist of all the things that always go wrong, which like your speakers are not going to listen or read your stuff. So just plan for that and what are you going to do to overcome that? So I love this. This is great. So let's, let's keep diving into that. So now we've, we've talked about a couple of the things that you know that unforeseen challenges, but what were some of the things, looking back on it, a couple of the bigger things as you looked back on your summits where, I mean obviously we, we know that you, you believe summits are beneficial, but like if we removed some of the results, let's say if we removed the results or even decreased the results, what would have been the things where you would have just been like, it wasn't worth it because of this or this or this?

Sandra: It wasn't worth it for me if I look at the hours I spend on that, I would probably be much better off pitching or using those hours to pitch myself for podcasts to get guest posts accepted. Like looking at the time investment and I'm actually afraid, like I haven't done the total tally in my, even though I keep track of my hours because this is not, this was part of, this was a fashion project. Like looking at the ROI, even if you take into account all the influence, I might've been better off spending that time elsewhere. So that is looking back, I'm like, I'm not sure if it's the best way to spend your time if you're looking to get no,

Dr. Mark: And you're basing that off of obviously the amount of overall hours that you had to pour into the project versus the return on investment.

Sandra: It's like, it's an awesome project and I love doing it, but looking at the ROI, I'm not sure, like if this was a corporate thing, I could not actually go to my boss and say, well, this was great. Right? I would have to go in and admit that, well, I might've actually been better off spending that time on something else. I'm still glad I did it. Don't get me wrong.

Dr. Mark: And I love that we're painting this picture because I know there's some people out there that, you know, they're kind of trying to decide should we do it or shouldn't we do it. And obviously with me, the founder of Virtual Summit Software, people are going to assume that I just want everybody to do a virtual summit. But honestly as we were talking about in our pre-interview chat, I get a lot of emails where I'm just like, well what were you thinking? Why did you do that? So let's, let's talk about a couple other things. A couple of other big things for you that kind of popped up that maybe you didn't know about going into it, that you were like, that just was kinda overwhelming or had you known ahead of time, maybe you wouldn't have done it.

Sandra: Yeah. Yeah. So I think a big thing is for me that I am impulsive. Like I literally, I wasn't standing in a shower because that's usually when the best ideas come up. I was laying in bed and suddenly it's like, wait a summit in Dutch, that's the best thing ever. And I didn't do, like I did the gut check and I was so excited about it. I just jumped right in. Whereas if I'd looked at my overall strategy, I probably would have moved to English straight away because I was going more and more international already. Like at the moment I think 75% of my clients is actually English speaking even though some of them are based in the Netherlands. So looking back, hosting that first one in Dutch was a bit of a waste of time because I didn't want to email them afterwards because I was like well I don't want to work in Dutch anymore. It was just like looking back, that's really pretty silly but you need to check in with like what's the longer term goal and I don't really like to think ahead too much, but if I sort of realize this, I would've had two in English under my belt and had like that boost within the international community. So it needs to fit into the overall strategy like longer term. Right. This is not a quick fix thing. That was something. Yeah.

Dr. Mark: And the funny thing is that's a very common mistake everybody makes their first summit. They go, Oh, this sounds like a good idea. You're like, Oh, in Dutch, this sounds like a great idea. Well they're like, Ooh, crypto is hot or this is hot, let's do it like this. And they end up building an audience that they don't want to serve. So that's a really great point there. Now let's talk about, let's talk about kind of from a systems and, and, and what amount of work, cause you, you, we briefly talked about, let's go in depth. Let's actually talk about like what was taking all your time and what were you doing where you were just like, why, why am I doing this?

Sandra: Hm. So I think for me to think that really bugged me was that although I had this checklist for everything that needed to happen for everyone was like emailing speakers again. Right? And some of them, like a lot of them actually, you build a relationship, which is one, to me, one of the biggest benefits of the summit is building relationship with speakers. But the amount of time you literally, I would spend going into Google drive, like copying my email, like personalizing. I was like, Oh my God, it doesn't end. So that was one thing. And for me the second thing, and I've noticed that this is a flaw I have for more things. By the time I've created something, I am bored with it and I don't want to spend the time promoting it. So what I would do differently next time, it's like create older promotional posts before creating the actual content, like have a promotional schedule because I was sick of thinking about that summit by the time, you know, time to promote and tell people about it. It's like I don't want to think about this

anymore. I've spent two and a half months thinking about it now. So start with the promotion.

Dr. Mark: I actually love that. That is a, that is a great idea and I totally feel you that we're in the middle of a launch right now. By the time I got to actually doing the social media ads aspect, it was like I've already written 30 pages of email copy and the sales then this. So this is a great idea. Start with your promotions first. Now I'm here in here in a couple minutes we'll switch over to maybe how we can resolve some of these problems. But let's, let's keep going down this timeline because I think you're really painting a good picture that people need to know about going into this. So from a systems aspect, like you said, you kind of jumped into it. You talked about, you know, like, Oh, the thing you had to do frequently was going in and copying this, but also like you, you didn't use the Virtual Summit Software, you built this from scratch. So like let's talk about that time. Like what, what went into that?

Sandra: That was actually not too bad and it helped that I came, like I have a, a web design background, so that really helped and I set it up in Squarespace. So that was pretty fast. If you're going down that road, what I would highly recommend is that you use one page per day and not one page per speaker because that is something that took me very long time. But overall I literally, I created a landing page to sign up, a thank you page and then pages per day. It got a little bit ridiculous by the time the schedule came around because I would have my alarm go at like five minutes tonight. Like Oh, turn on this video page and like 24 hours later, like turn off this video page. So that was a bit weird. Like while the summit was running, I was sitting in my office waiting for my phone to tell me to shut a page off or turn a page on. So in terms of software, like I've kept it pretty low tech. So I set up a separate Squarespace website and then I used MailChimp cause it's free and it was a test thing. Nowadays I'm on active campaign, which is way better, but back then it was all like, it was really basic. So to thing there. I think that even if you don't have budget or if you, if you have a little bit of skill with a certain software, like see if you can make that work

Dr. Mark: And then how much time, like you being kind of an expert in that area still, how much time do you think you invested to build all of that out?

Sandra: That was actually the fastest part. I think that took me like under a day in total. That was not so bad and that includes testing the whole thing, right? It doesn't include setting up all the emails, but it includes testing the whole thing to see if it works. Yeah.

Dr. Mark: I remember the first one I built, I didn't use, I didn't follow that. I did a page per speaker, so I had 60 something pages. It took me almost a hundred hours. Also, I had no idea what I was doing in that area. Luckily now with the Virtual Summit Software, you can have it set up in hours and not even a day or days and you don't have to worry about turning on or turning off anything, handles all of that. But I do remember that I, I had to go and turn it off speaker by speaker the first time. That was a nightmare. So I'm loving this. You're actually helping me reminisce on some of those things that I was like, Oh, but again, the results for us were so great we had to keep doing them. So again, you did most of this on your own, which is what a lot of our summit hosts are doing. It's a huge undertaking to do, especially if you're doing like a multi-day 30 40 50 60 speaker. We

have the One-Day Summit, which makes it much more kind of consumable. So let's kind of shift this now in second half of this interview and kind of go into like, how would we fix this? We talked about some of the things, but now you've, you've learned the lessons, you're going to be hosting more summits in the future. What are you doing now for some of these to improve it or to fix the problems?

Sandra: So I'm kind of, for the next one, I'm kind of thinking two different thoughts. And one of them is like a one day thing and I'm sure you've probably interviewed or talked to Bailey Richard at some point because when it comes to teaching summits she's a big deal out there. And she just recently did one that she hosted herself, which I think if your audience is big enough you can definitely put together a program without any speakers like completely cutting out the whole process of finding people, pitching people, finding new people, pitching more people getting all of that scheduled and instead you create this more cohesive experience. So I'm kind of considering do I want to either do it all myself or get like a few select people that I've built a relationship with over the years. So they are guaranteed yes. They're guaranteed to actually send me their head shot and schedule of interviewing actually show up to really make it still this immersive, awesome, free experience for people, but to also make it a lot easier to manage. So I'm thinking on, on the one hand, like short and short churn. The day per the page per day helps a lot. Like, if there's only one page and there's just a list with five to ten videos, that's a lot faster than doing individual ones.

Dr. Mark: Let's get into some maybe systems. Like what, what would you prepare in advance going into this, knowing kind of what, you know. How would you take that at all?

Sandra: What I kind of, so I'm a big fan of ClickUp. It's my favorite project management tool. Like ever I started a YouTube channel so I could do videos about how great it is because no one uses it and they should. So what I have now is like I have a template per speaker that has a checklist and I can just replicated per topic. So I would start with, well old Adidas, right? And what's the name, when's it happening, what software do I need? Do I have enough, do I need to sort of get support in there? And then I would start on the schedule and match that up to who I want to speak to. So I would literally, the way we did it the second time was we had the day and the topic and then a task per speaker.

Sandra: So it would be like, well day one we want to talk about introductory things. So we were hoping to get this person and there's a checklist that's literally, that we send them a pitch. Did they reply to the pitch? Did they schedule in their interview and then added deadlines. So every week I would go in and check for like where's everyone in this process? Which it still takes time but it's a lot faster because you have an overview of where everyone is at all times. Like I knew who the problem were because their checklists at 3 out of 20 instead of 15 out of 20 where everyone else was sitting. So I found that very helpful to just know where every interview is.

Dr. Mark: Yeah, that's such a, and that, that was with ClickUp being able to see that. Yeah. We will link to all of the things that Sandra is talking about in the show notes over [podcasts.virtualsummits.com/070](https://podcasts.virtualsummits.com/070). So this is cool. A number 70 here. We're getting up there. Awesome. So I'm loving, I'm loving where we're going with this. So let's circle back to some of the solutions to the fact that the speakers don't listen. So we have the

checklist which allows you to see which of those speakers aren't listening. What would you do maybe to kind of resolve that issue going into it now.

Sandra: So for some of them it's really about following up again. I'm not gonna say who it was, but I've certainly friend, well known people to boot them if they didn't get back to me by a certain deadline. So the thing there is, it's kind of like, I know generally the recommendation is to start with the person best for the topic. I've kind of gone the other way around and start it with who do I already know, which is not maybe it doesn't guarantee the newest sort of freshest audience that doesn't know you yet, but that relationship often is key in speeding things along. So if you have two speaker options and one of them is a friend or someone you know, you actively follow on Instagram and every once in a while you talk to them about their stories start with them because there's that personal relationship helps speed things.

Sandra: So most of the time I'm also a big fan of short emails, so sometimes you have a lot of information and I tried to do like a little summary saying like, Hey, all of the information is below here are three highlights or here are the things I really need from you, and just put all the other things at the bottom. So at least they read those three bullets of things you really need. Right. It's one schedule, schedule your interview. Two send me your head shots. Three, send me a link to your freebie, here's all the details you're probably not going to read. I guess it's really being strategic around like, well we're all busy. No one's looking forward to getting another 500 word email. Right. So how can you make it easier?

Dr. Mark: Yeah, I like that. I'm, I'm laughing over here because my audience that's on my email list knows that I am a long form copywriter. Not because I to be, I just got a lot to say. So I'm like, I'm laughing cause I'm like, yeah, Mark everyday I'm like, shorten your email, shorten your email. The second, the second thing I'll say just for, just to clarify what Sandra was talking about at the beginning are you referring to having the, the speakers that, you know, at the beginning of the summit or the first of the day?

Sandra: Oh, I meant that if you, if you're going to start pitching people, start with the people, you know, because that's going to give that momentum. So it's more, it's more on a practical level. If you start with people that you have a relationship with, like I would try to put them first or try to get them on a first day and promote them because you know you're friends. So it's kind of like you want to give a little bit of an extra edge there, but they're also more likely to say yes and you're top of mind. You're a familiar name in their inbox usually so they're more likely to like make sure to process those smokes.

Dr. Mark: Yeah, no, I'm glad I clarified that. So that does make a lot of sense. And also the last clarification I'll say on this topic too is this, one of the reasons we built the virtual some seller for us is it has an entire speaker management feature in, it follows up with the speakers, recruited, they put their headshots and all that directly into it because I used to have two full time VA's because we run two to four multi-day summits every year and just fulltime VA's follow up, follow up, follow up. So great information. So let's, let's now again go from the, we talked about the hours spent, didn't really match ROI from a monetary perspective. Can you go a little bit deeper and why that like, like why that was like, cause you told me in our pre-interview chat a specific piece of information, which I

think would be great to share and then let's start with that. And then I want to rotate and do a, what were some of the benefits that we can't measure?

Sandra: So I think although in both summits, I did do a little bit of a look back on what were the numbers, what went well, do you want to do this again, yes or no, and if so, how should it look next time? And on my first summit, even though I try to keep costs down a lot by using software I already had and MailChimp still had a good free plan back then I, at the end of the day, if I looked at the revenue I made, all access pass sales versus the costs that were directly related to the summit. I made a whopping total of 6 cents in Euros.

Sandra: So that is for the number. The second summit, we actually, if you don't count the hours a week, we actually made a profit. But it was also small even though, I mean at the end of the day the numbers play out, right. The, the sort of conversion rate wasn't surprising or weird. But if you're doing this for the money, I would start with something else.

Dr. Mark: Yeah. So we always talk about how the summit is the relationship building, audience generating strategy, not the monetization strategy. So I love that you're saying this now. What, why, why would somebody do a summit then? What were the, maybe the benefits that are not monetarily related? Either that or both, you know, both quantifiable and non-quantifiable,

Sandra: So quantifiable. It's new people on an email list that you're allowed to pitch to. Obviously under GDPR, that's a little bit iffy for some of us. So I don't send people that have subscribed to that in general newsletters or anything, but whenever I have something coming up that's related to the summit, I can reach out to them again.

Sandra: So I did actually see a really big pour over from, I emailed all of the people from the Dutch summit that I hadn't emailed tens because I didn't want to work in Dutch anymore. I emailed them saying like, hey, six months ago we did this, we're now doing it in English. It's a similar topic. We've got some very big names in the industry. Do you want to sign up? So I think in terms of audience building and list growth, it's there. I always find that some leaders, new people connecting to me on LinkedIn that have seen this summit. Following me on Instagram that have seen the summit. There's people replying to your emails about it. So those are all interactions that otherwise wouldn't have happened. So that is in some way quantifiable. I mean I got the new client at wants me to host her summit. That's definitely related to the fact that she was a speaker on my summit.

Sandra: Like that's how she even knows about summits. So that's quantifiable. But I think for me to biggest benefit is it's not even the audience building. It's the relationship with the speaker. For me it's been much more about, it's such a boost to you know, from someone you casually kind of sometimes run into on the internet to someone you've actively worked on, like work with on something. You've interviewed them, you've emailed them a couple of times, sometimes more than a couple of times. They know who you are and you've helped them too, right? Because a big part of it is some, it is of win, win, win like the speaker wins because if they get in front of a new audience, the audience wins because they get free information. That is awesome. And we kind of win because we're the ones that make it all possible. So that is, to me, the biggest thing.



Dr. Mark: And I like that. I, I regularly talk about how when you host a summit, also kind of like when you have a podcast, you have a platform and when you have a platform, it's valuable for a variety of different reasons. Now I want to circle back to something you mentioned because we actually never talked about this. And it's a, it's a pretty important thing and you brought it up, GDPR. So when you have your summit obviously with GDPR for our summit hosts that are in the US it's not quite effecting us yet, right. But it's essentially this additional kind of loophole you have to go through. And why don't you actually, I'll let you explain it cause you're more, you're more, you're closer to it. So why don't you just briefly explain what GDPR is, what precaution you took on your summit and then specifically, cause you just briefly mentioned it, what, how you took that precaution post summit to get them over to where you could promote to them.

Sandra: So please do not use anything I say as a legal basis for anything because I feel like we're all still figuring it out. Like we're still not 100% sure. What it kind of comes down to when it comes to email marketing and stats. Just because I give you my email address, it doesn't mean you can target me for everything everywhere, all the time. And actually this is also relevant because if I'm subscribing from Europe, you're not allowed to suddenly send me stuff I didn't request either, which I see go wrong for like, I'm not gonna shame people, but whenever I get too many emails and I'm looking and I'm like, I signed up for your webinar, but you're now suddenly emailing me four times a week about your latest podcast episode. Actually not allowed, cause I'm based in Europe. And for a while we had the whole freak out where everyone's like, we're blocking traffic from Europe.

Sandra: You're not allowed on our website anymore. Don't come in my shop. To a part where it's like, well, nothing's happening. So people are just ignoring it and sending us everything. The thing is kind of the biggest thing, the way I understand it. And that's only related to email marketing, not data processing of everything else. When it comes to emails, it's more that if I sign up, I need to actively give consent for what you're going to send me. And you're not allow to make it like one line for everything. So a lot of times you'll see, Oh, you'll sign up, check this box to get our five day email course and our newsletters. Right. The newsletters need to be a separate checkbox. And I have to admit like I am the most, I am the, the world's worst marketer. Like I am booked out. I'm not worried about it, but I am the worst marketer because I am not a consistent person.

Sandra: This is the same thing with promoting summits. Like by the time I get there, I'm like, I don't want to send a newsletter this week. So that's like, don't be like me. Okay. Like, listen dude, don't do as I do. But what I did the first time was it was a sign up form you would get I had a little note saying you get two emails a day about the summit and some stuff leading up to it. Any opportunity to buy the all access pass sort of, and I'm, that's probably not, it doesn't even have to be data extensive. But it's more like telling people what to expect, right? So it's, if I would do it now, I would say, Hey, you get emails related to the summit and an exclusive offer after something like that. In terms of newsletters, and this is where I think everyone goes wrong.

Sandra: And again, not legal advice, but the way I understand it, if someone didn't actively say, yes, please send me your new, your weekly newsletter, you're not supposed to send them. Which I have to, none of my clients handle it like that. I personally do and I see

that people opt into my opt in and not to my newsletter. So I'm rethinking having an opt in at all and just making the newsletter the main attraction. Right. The thing is if you have cool writing and whether that's on Instagram or LinkedIn or your newsletter, if you create great stuff, people will find you and follow you and sign up for it. So that is kind of related to GDPR, but it's more like you're not supposed to send people things. They didn't sign up for it. That's what it boils down to really.

Dr. Mark: Yeah, I liked that overview and honestly it was good for me to hear it again because I know I'm not following all of those rules either myself. But I, I kinda think the takeaway from this from a summit standpoint is they sign up for your summit, you give them with summit stuff that they signed up for and then after the summit, give them the opportunity to decide what they want to opt in for. So like I do a weekly kind of what I call summit digest, where I have essentially everything that's going on from last week and this week. And people can opt into the things they want and they have to opt in to whatever those things are that are listed there. So if you do that after your summit, you're essentially, I think taking care of that. And again, I think Sandra made a really great point. None of this is legal advice. Please contact if your person who gives you legal advice. So yup.

Sandra: Super quick follow up on that. Like this really relates back to the strategy there. So I think going into a summit, it's not just a summit, right? The summit, it's the first part. So ideally before you start you'd have the, okay, the summit is the relationship building. We're offering them the all access pass, but we're offering them something else. Like what? Or it's a service or a course or group program straight after that. And you can warn people about that and give them the option to like opt into your regular whatever it is, whether it's podcast updates or newsletters. But you really have to think of that path before you started with the summit because once you're in the summit, you're so focused because it's such a big deal that suddenly the summit's over and you haven't thought about the whole following art yet. At least that's what happened to me twice now where you're putting together a sales page on the last day of your summit because you need to sell them something.

Dr. Mark: I love that. So have a plan, think ahead and then make sure you're following GDPR. I love this. So Sandra, this has been absolutely incredible. We're going to wrap this up here. But before we do that, I want you to let everybody, everybody's now going, okay, I love Sandra. Her accent's really cool and she's super smart. So how I get in touch with our follow her and hear more of that accent. So standard, why don't you let everybody listening know where you hang out at, where they can follow you and how they can get in touch with you.

Sandra: So if you're into personal brands, definitely follow my Instagram. That's where you get the most honest, open personality based stuff. I have a YouTube channel that I update again irregularly cause I'm irregular about lots of stuff but if you're into software and systems and everything around that, like I do a combination of videos where we talk about you know, systems mindset, all of that but also actual tech tutorials. You can actually opt in. I have a batching email course on my website. I'm not sure how long it's going to be there cause I'm considering redoing my entire email marketing. You can sign up for my regular newsletter there as well. Which has actually been pretty consistent

every first day and I try to keep them like super short. So I promoted it for a long time as a five sentence newsletter, which is a really interesting challenge.

Sandra: If you try to make a point at a joke and wish people a great day in five sentences. But I like to keep it short and snappy. I actually, if you go to my website, half of link where you can just schedule a coffee. This is not a sales call. That is not a creepy stitchy things. I just love talking to new people and hearing what people are doing and what's cool and new and their world and business. So if you're like, I want to drink a cocktail or a coffee with Sandra, like head over there, book a call, you'll actually do me a favor. So do not hesitate to do that.

Dr. Mark: I love that the Sandra just did, just GDPR does. She made sure she's given you each option that you can opt in for innovative and we'll put all of, we'll have all of those over there if the show notes so you can get in touch with her. And, and follow up with her like that. And then Sandra just kinda kick us off here with some kind of a, with a final piece of wisdom or advice you have for aspiring summit hosts.

Sandra: You could have warned me about this one then I would have saved some of the good stuff for now. At the end of the day, I think I would say if this is something you want to do because you have this feeling of creating something epic that doesn't exist yet, definitely do it, but create a bit of a battle plan before you start. And the battle plan could literally be, it's going to take a lot more time than I expect. How do I make this work in my personal and in my professional life? What am I going to sell them afterwards? And what's the smallest way I can do it for the same result? So how small can it be for great result? It doesn't have to be two week, 60, 100 speaker event to still have a really good impact on your business. So have a plan and make sure you actually have an offer at the end of the summit.

Dr. Mark: Oh my gosh, I love that. I love battle plan and keep it short and sweet. This has been so great. Thank you again, Sandra for being here with us. Awesome. Thanks so much for having me and thank you all you summit hosts for spending this time with Sandra and I am Dr. Mark T. Wade, founder of Virtual Summit Software, and just remember your message matters, so go out and make an impact in the world. Be sure to get all of the awesome things Sandra just talked about in this episode at the show notes, [podcast.virtualsummits.com/070](https://podcast.virtualsummits.com/070) and we'll see you on the next episode.

Dr. Mark: Now I want to end this episode by saying to all the summit hosts listening right now, I believe in you and you can do this. Summits are by far one of the most powerful ways to quickly grow your list, launch your platform, make more money, and most importantly, make an impact in the world, even if you're just getting started. So don't get caught up in analysis paralysis because the world needs to hear your message, and there are people who are waiting for you to help them just get started because imperfect action is always better than no action. Thank you and see you on the next episode.