

Episode 151: How to find your perfect audience through Virtual Summits.

Publish Date: June 1, 2020

Speaker: Christina Wessendorf

Dr. Mark T. Wade: Hey summit hosts, Dr. Mark T. Wade here, founder of Virtual Summits Software and your host on the Virtual Summit Podcast. I am super excited for today's episode. We are going to be getting into some extremely valuable information. Information that you are going to absolutely want to hear because it might just save your summit. Now all of that's going to be possible because we got a legendary Christina Wessendorf with us today. Christina, how are you?

Christina Wessendorf: I'm fine, thank you Mark.

Dr. Mark: Well, I am super glad you're here with us. I cannot wait to jump into some of this information about all the different summits you've been putting on, uh, and kinda, uh, on, on unpack all of those. But before we get into those summit goodies, I would love for you to just take a quick moment and let the audience know just a little bit more about yourself.

Christina: Awesome. So guys, I am working for, I'm a coach and I'm working for travelers who are traveling overseas and actually I'm putting together, you know, packages all around how can you follow your calling, traveling abroad and still, you know, I'm having a plan and still putting something into place and finally really making your, your calling your travel calling doable. And especially I think during Corona, this is a very valuable point because it's all about, you know, how do I use this time? I'm not allowed to travel to still keep going with my mission. And yes, so I'm from Germany. I um, I was working before in Egypt, so I have this, Arabic - German international background and I cannot wait to share what I experienced.

Dr. Mark: Oh, well it is, it is going to be fun. Unpackaging these, uh, the summits now, first off, super big shout out coming over to us from Berlin. That is amazing. I, I'm, I'm, I'm glad we have this capacity and ability to connect with each other worldwide. And I also think this is a really great highlight to the fact that, you know, it doesn't really matter where we're at that we can still do summits. So Christina, I'd love for you to kind of talk to us a little bit more about, about your, it's give us an overview of the different ones you've done and then maybe kinda give us a little bit more insight into your most recent one.

Christina: Awesome. So, um, I think it's firstly what I'm talking about as very valuable for all the business owners who still don't have a team and who still gets started. So I actually started my business, my coaching business with summit I started last year and I'm to right now credit free summit and um, they all have different topics. So from summer to summer, I use them also to figure out who is my ideal client and who I want to work with. And so the first one, we're called from power to peace. We're all for this, um, COS and cooperative, uh, executives who, you know, need to be very strong and powerful in their job and, but they come home and they will love to be this, you know, this loving partner or father or mother. And how do they switch? So well, it was my first summit and it was kind of, you know, really, I took a lot of learning lessons from it. And then I, um, I decided to go right into the next summit who were kind of a flop and, um, I can

talk about later. But then I created, um, just, you know, just one month ago, my last summit ended and it were called, uh, the abandoned solo travelers. And like, you can hear it getting much more closer to the people I really want to serve. So I think summits are an amazing way to, to kick off your business and to get started. And yeah, that's it. So far as an overview.

Dr. Mark: I love that and I love that you said you've used some, it's to kind of get closer to who your target audience is. Um, let's, let's kinda unpackage the first one. I want to talk about that first one. When you started off with that and you, I guess we're still trying to figure out who you wanted to serve, what was, what was some of the ways that you were able to use that to improve for the, for, for your later summits, what were maybe one or two lessons you learned from the first summit that you're like, okay, I can, I can fix this or do this differently moving forward.

Christina: I love that you're talking about it, the course on the back end and we're such a mess. And on the front end, you know, it looked nice and I could still fix it. So I think that are huge learning points here. Um, listen. So, um, I, you know, I am having a business coach were told me how to um, how to construct and how to do the summit and I was interviewing the speakers and um, at one point I lost all the interviews because I did not, um, I did not save them on my computer but in the cloud or the other way around, somehow I really lost them and I get so totally freaked out because my promise, right. My personal promise for this first summit was really to serve the people, like to give them what they are at subscribed to. And it was so important for me that I tried to figure out how can I still deliver value, right?

Christina: How can I still make it possible not to postpone the summit? Because I think for everybody who gets started with summit, you are so likely to postpone when you don't hit the numbers, you know, of speakers are technically is very, um, it's a chaos. But I think, you know, to really stand out as a leader and to really, um, take the responsibility, it's great to deliver even if it's not, you know, the high, high value that you promise to. And um, so what I ended up doing is that I, um, I became very vulnerable with the speaker. I said, sorry, I lost your interview. Are you ready to redo it in very short term? And I just got back to my, to my coaching and I also asked them to encourage me that it's possible within the next five days to still find, you know, seven, eight or nine speakers.

Christina: So this was, this was a time where it's, it's about really like that you are so committed to do your summit and you know why you are doing it. And to really follow through. Like I think this was one of my biggest learning lesson. So we delivered the summit at the end. We're not the 23 speaker, but who were maybe 15 speaker or 11 speakers. But I felt like I really gave my best and from our first summit, I think, you know, this is like, you know the Corona managements. So once you're through it, like you feel like a superhero, it really raises your confidence and you can get better next time.

Dr. Mark: Christina, Oh my goodness, I feel your pain over here. I couldn't imagine what would happen if all of a sudden now I've had scares like this before. I have, I've had scares like this before in multiple facets sometimes on my podcast, sometimes on summit, sometimes on different projects I'm working on. But Oh, that is always one of the worst

feelings to have. And what impresses me the most right here out of this is most summit hosts would have quit right there. They would have just said, you know what? There's no am going to those speakers back to those speakers. I'm just going to not do it. And they just would have not move forward with this. So I love that you said, you know what? I have a responsibility to my audience, I have a responsibility of the speakers. And you, you weren't just vulnerable with the speakers.

Dr. Mark: That shows a lot of characteristic of integrity to actually go to those speakers and say that. And yeah, of course, you know, one or two, you know, some speakers are going to be annoyed, but honestly, most speakers, most influencers know the amount of integrity and courage. I would say that it would take to reach out and say that to them and they're going to respect you that much more. So I've, I just want to take a moment to point that out because that is, that is very impressive. Now I love what you talked about on how what you've learned from that and how you can move forward. Now I'm, I'm really curious now to hear how the second one was the bombed summit. If you had this kind of incident with the first one. So let's, let's unpack the second summit now. What happened on that one to make it quote unquote a bombed summit?

Christina: So, like I told you, the second one was a flop in terms of speaker. And here's what, I also would love to share this big learning lesson for me. So guys, um, for you to get started in the online world and you're asking influencers from a niche, from, you know, you still don't really know. So what you can learn now from my mistake is that there is a specific, um, how can I say, there's a specific seasons in the year it's easier to make summits and the specific seasons. It's really hard to find speakers who take or have time to jump on your summit. So what I want to say that this is my second summit should land in I think November. November, 2019. And um, what I figured out is that most of the speakers, even if they would love to jump on my summit, they just don't have the time because they just, uh, their team booked out the calendars in the last, you know, two, three months of the year. They are just not available even if they will love. So this, that's what's the main reason why it was a flop because the interview, like the speakers I had the promoted, um, the interviews went really well, like the people who subscribed, you know, um, they, they got value and I got feedback. Um, but this was my biggest learning lesson.

Dr. Mark: And is such an important one to understand, especially because we see, I see on a regular basis summit hosts that are very ambitious, very eager to get their summit out there. And so they're trying to do it very, very quickly. One of the things to understand as you've just mentioned here is it's not just about how quickly you can put everything together, but it's also about making sure that you're giving your speakers enough time to even be on their promotional calendar. So I love that you point this out, Christina, because that's something a lot of summit hosts don't actually consider or think about. Micro influencers up to anchors and influencers. A lot of times their promotional calendars are at least three to four months booked out. Some of them are booked out in a year. So I, this is a great learning point right here. Now let's, let's pivot here to the third summit. And what I want to talk about is some of the success points with this. You've given us some really great examples of areas of lessons learned, but let's talk about some stuff with any of your summers, but specifically your most recent summit and why it was one of your most successful ones.

Christina: Awesome. Absolutely. So the last one is my most successful one and one of the things would work really, really well is the connection to the speaker means that every time, right you are getting the speaker like in the way I do it. Um, I get the speaker on a first call to see two things. If we match. Matching means the first point is actually, you know, if their audience and their message is matching with what I want to deliver, right? So for example, um, in my last summit it was about, uh, people who are traveling are already traveled abroad and who are sitting right now there. And I'm a bit confused about, you know, how, how do I get not, I'm not distracted by this new life and still follow my vision through. So I had speakers, you know, who are digital nomads and I had speakers who were around purpose and speakers around, um, around know quitting your corporate job and doing something totally different.

Christina: So take a leap of faith. And so when I connected with the speakers, I need to know right what they are telling me because of course I did a research of course you as a summit host or you're interested to um, to create a summit. You did a research before, but still it's about, you know, is it matching right now? And that second part, what I also learned is, um, and what went really well is to know if it sounds a bit reared that I will love to have your opinion later. Mark. Um, if the character is matching with me. So here's the thing. I think you can have two types of really great interviews, like one type of person. It's really the contrast of you. Like they are opposite opinion, opposite ways to do it. But it's so interesting, right, to see, see both ways in the interview point of views.

Christina: The second one is somebody who is really likely like you and it feels like a great connection. So I had for example, so once again, right? This worked really well because I could train myself to say the truth when the speaker was not matching, they had, you know, 20 thousands on the email list. They had a great magic, great message still somehow I, I really, you know, there was no flow. Like I could not imagine to make a great interview with this person. So, um, you need to speak your truth. You are the host of the summit. You are giving huge value and you are giving shoot exposure to this, um, to these influencers and speakers. So you can say your truth. I'm saying, you know what, this sounds amazing, but I don't have the impression that it's right now the summit, you know, is the good match or it's the right time or stuff like this.

Christina: So, and from the person that what I selected in the end I had, um, I have maybe five were like, you know, really soulmates or I have this ability to find awesome people. So we leading great people and I actually, after the summer is over, I still, I get clients of one speaker and we are, you know, um, pushing each other on different levels higher with another speaker I already get on the phone because she was proposing, you know, to, to work in hand network or also to do a workshop together. And she's a great woman with a lot of influence, a lot of beautiful things for what she's doing. And another influencer. He is like, you know, I feel like a small legends that we, we're, you know, we're checking in together. So we'll see what happens. Um, and I hope this is a short overview around that connecting of the speaker is so important to deliver a great summit, but also because you, um, you, why are you doing a summit, right guys? You're doing a summit because, first, maybe you want to figure out your, I declined, that second you would love to be on mission and you would love to, you know, to spread your talents and gifts in the world. So you want to connect with thought leaders, um, on, on the same, you know, on the same level, eye to eye, and you will love to get into

this, um, into this world of, uh, online business. So there's just worked out amazingly. What do you think, Mark?

Dr. Mark: Yeah, no, and I love that. And I love how you pointed out the partnerships that came from the speakers. This is such a, it's one of those what I call an end tangible return on investments. It, most people are focused on leads or revenue that comes from their summits, but there's actually so many intangible return on investments in partnerships that come from the speakers that you've created. Relationships are one of the most powerful return on investments because those are, those are people who will support you in either a partner webinar or a, you know, affiliate launch or you know, PR promote you to their list, et cetera. In the end, it is so valuable and so beneficial. So I love that you pointed this out. Um, let's.

Christina: Sorry, let me just add this one point is I'm so spatially, I see it right now in the, in the time of Corona. Um, like these are people you connected with on your last summit or on my last summit. These are people I reach out now to them and I'm proposing them, you know, to make a short mastermind together or these are people like you can instantly to support your list and to serve your list. You can instantly have access to in a, you know, in a friendship way and can ask them. So like you can really use them to serve deeper.

Dr. Mark: So true. And such a great point there. Let's, let's dig into a little bit of, with this summit, there were a couple, um, or maybe a lesson, some lessons learned from this as well. And I'd like to dig into that a little bit. We were talking about in our pre-interview chat, um, some of the topics or issues with email copy and I'd love for you to kind of unpack that what happened, what was the complication and kind of how would you do it differently?

Christina: Awesome. So guys, I hope that you're hearing this because this is so beautiful and this is where especially when you are a type, you know, business owner type like me, like I get very excited. I'm very also inspiring. You know, I love speaking. Um, but when it comes to the copy, I did not put the focus on it and I did not put the energy in it. So I get better and better in this. But I would, I would love to tell you is, um, first of all, you know, writing your copies is not a point where you give up your energy, right? So you are, you found the speakers, you are in the progress of doing the interviews. There comes the promotional package. You also have to create, I have to, you know, at least to tell your designer how it will look like and to put it together.

Christina: And that writing the actual emails. And I've talking about, you know, summit, what are my summits were um, well life, you know, for, for 21 days. For example, when I have 21 speakers. So it means that every day there will go out and email to the attendees who joined the summits with, you know, with a subject line about what kind of interview they will find today. So, uh, you need to write a lot of copies. So the summit even did not started yet after you know that you interviewed the people and the summit even did not start yet, but still your energy might go down and I can tell you copy is the first thing or maybe the second what your attendees will see from your summit. So it really is important that you are taking care of this and taking also your energy for it.

- Christina: So one of the golden thing, what I figured out and also what my coach was telling me. But once again, if you have a coach follow the coaching, right? Um, a lot of times we think that if we don't have time or we know it better, but just to really love the invitation to follow the coaching. So one, what really worked well is that, um, when I had the speaker, um, no, so when he, when I did the interview directly after hanging up the phone or you know, closing Zoom, I got, I opened a Word sheet and I just wrote an email, um, to my best friend about this interview. What it gives you is that you are saving the energy, how you feel about this interview and you are, uh, you can use this Word sheet directly to create later on a beautiful copy.
- Christina: So this is the first thing I want to give you. Um, the second thing is that I, um, in my first summit it was, I did not choose a good subject line. So what I did actually is, um, I wrote something like, you know, Maria Ozlena, she is a, she is going to teach you this and this and this. And in the copy itself I was, you know, writing, I was pointing out so many things what are good in the interview and what I think is, you know, this is that when you are this excited business owner like me, right? So, um, when you are like this, please take care that you really watch the interview again after you're not excited maybe and that you are finding one golden point. What, why this interview is different from all the other interviews. What it makes is that it makes your copy easier to write and it also serves you to really find, to really find, you know, like to find, to, to promote this interview as an interesting interview.
- Christina: It also gives you opportunity to use the subject line to point out this golden point. And um, here's what I also love to copy paste. I also love to, um, before much more to jump on other summit to learn from other hosts, right? So I were attending and something what I just copied from the last summit I were on is that you are writing in the subject line, you know, for example, um, figure out your purpose, whatever. Right? And then that you are writing at, not in the subject line but you know this the second part of the email which shows in gray, um, what's your are so see without opening your email, would you see direct in your inbox that you are putting the name of the speaker because your audience want to consume value and want to get answers on to that questions and who this person is you're speaking to. You know, this is important, you will write it in the copy, but in order that people are interested to open the email, this is not like, this is not an eye catcher as you know, at least if you don't have, right. Some, some persons who are incredibly, you know, um, well known, but normally it's better to do the copy like this. What do you think, Mark? What is, what are your thought about?
- Dr. Mark: No, I think first off, I think email copy in general is one of the most, uh, the least favorite aspects of a summit for most summit hosts. It's one of the most procrastinated aspects of a summit. So much so that, you know, we actually every year run an entire summit just on this called Summit Scripts over at summitscripts.com because the email copy is so important. But most of us, like you were saying, Christina, we're not, you know, we're not copywriters. Like we're excited, we're visionaries, we're entrepreneurs, you know, we like to be on the interview with the, with the speakers, but then when we sit down and write the copy, you know, all heck breaks loose. So I love that you pointed this out in and you walk through this and I think it's very important for some hosts to recognize that and think about that. And as you said, going back through some of those interviews as well, even afterwards are important as well.

- Dr. Mark: As I'd even add a, one of the strategies I like to do is while I'm doing my interviews, I'm taking notes specifically for promotional and copywriting purposes. And at the end of the interview I actually have built into my schedule, um, time for my, what I call the post interview process, which is where I will map some of these things out. So it's already done for this very reason, like you were just saying is because I know it's now fresher, more fresh than ever right now. Whereas in a month or two months from now, if I go back to start writing some of this, I may not remember it exactly how it was. So amazing. Amazing insights there, Christina. Now, as we start to wrap this episode up, I'd love to talk about a little bit of the maybe challenges and or strategies or even resources available to be able when hosting a summit, like the challenges of trying to handle it all on yourself, trying to build out, you know, all of the platforms, all by yourself, all these types of aspects, um, that you've experienced. Why don't you give us some insights into that experience?
- Christina: I think that's a good point. I think, you know, especially when you get started and like I told you don't have a team. Look, I think it's, it's our, I experienced it. It's so valuable to take a virtual assistant, a VA. And just, if you've never heard about this, um, you can go to the websites. Um, let me Upwork. I use Upwork like U-P-W-O-R-K, Upwork. And um, you can, you know, you can put a job offer there inside and you can put some key points, some ballots about what you are, who you need your virtual assistant to be and what programs he needs to, um, to be, you know, to, to be familiar with. And so having, having a virtual assistant gives you a lot of, uh, a lot of support. So it gives us a part to, um, when you write the initial emails, the generator emails, you know, emails at the beginning, maybe to hundreds of speakers before you get, you know, 20, 25 speakers confirmed.
- Christina: So the follow up from initially emails because you want to send, you know, some reminders and check on them if they read your email, just super busy. The follow up, this is a perfect task for your VA. Right? Um, that's one point. Also to coordinate the speaker like to collect the information, right? So if you do like with yourself and a virtual assistant, the virtual assistant is so incredibly valuable really that you are, that you can concentrate on, um, on, right. Maybe he also books this, uh, initial course and the interviews in your calendar, but you can really, um, you can go to the copywriting, right? If you don't have a copywriter. Um, and you can go to, um, you can put your focus on doing the actual interview, um, preparing for the interview and you still have your life, right? So, um, I don't believe when you're starting that you are doing it full time and I, I think you have a part time or full time job by side.
- Christina: Um, so our, at least you have your main business, right? And yours trying to add the, or you are adding the, the summits. Um, if like if you, uh, you don't want to get started with virtual assistant, um, I really would love to introduce you to Mark's Summit Software. Um, I just created an account and I went through the video how it looks like. And basically what it does is it takes all your work, all, all the work that your virtual assistant is doing for you to set up the landing page to um, you know, collect the information of the speakers, what takes a lot of time, you know, because they are also, sometimes they have some, some questions about it and so on, like, um, all of this. And also if you, you know, creating this affiliate links and if you want to make a paid version of your summit afterwards, like everything is included in the summit software and it's

not expensive, right? So this are two options that you have in order to handle the summit in a way that you don't feel overwhelmed. And even if you think like, Hey, you know, this is my first summit, I do it all on myself, believe me, there is just coming too much. You know, small work that you can handle it all on yourself. And I'm also a virtual assistant is starting from \$10 per hour. So are you are absolutely, um, it's absolutely possible for you also to hire one.

Dr. Mark: Well this is really information and I appreciate the shout out to Virtual Summits Software over there, Christina, that makes me smile over here. Love hearing people give a give that some, some great uh, feedback and I appreciate that. So, um, and I agree with you 100%. You know, either you probably both, you know, you should be using a platform like Virtual Summits Software and for sure have some help. Um, it's gonna make that so much easier like you just said as well, Christina. So you can actually still be, have some bit of a life while you're building out your, your, your summit there. So now this has been an absolute blast, but before we kinda wrap this up, I would love to just kinda hear, um, well first off, let's go with this because I know everybody's going well Mark, where's Christina hanging out with? How can we get in touch with her? You know, so let everybody know where you're at and the best way to get in touch with you.

Christina: Awesome. So I would say, um, spatially, if you're in the position to see how you use your time right now in Corona, in order to, you know, to deepen your vision audit, really to, to not forget about your dreams. I would love for you to make yourself the gift and go to abandoned. Wait, it's a slash in the middle. The, I think the line right? Abandoned, no. How is it called Mark? I have to acknowledge, right. It's not my mother language English. So how do you say this in English?

Dr. Mark: I got to get out there because one, I lived in Italy for six, six years where I moved there without speaking the language and then became fluent. And even when I was fluent in it is still such a challenge to giving interviews, presentations in a second language. So it hats off to you their own running summits in different languages. But here's what we'll do. Um, Christina, we'll link to it in the show notes so there'll be able to grab it in the show notes if you just want to name it what it is and we'll link to it over there.

Christina: Awesome. So it's the website, abundant-soul-traveler.com and if you just put your information there and sending your short, then you will get an, you know, a welcome email. Um, and then you are, you're invited to sending me a short note about what you are at right now with your business and what is your biggest challenge. And I will give to you, you with free interviews from my last summit totally for free so that you have kind of the support right, right now. And in another way I would love for you just to check myself out, I'm on Facebook. It's um, again www.facebook.com/lebeninfuelle. This is German. Just also put the link in the description. Um, that this is a great way actually to, um, to check on some videos when I'm doing, um, to check, you know, um, if I can support you some further or just to get in touch and say hi.

Dr. Mark: Absolutely love that. Thank you. And yes, we will link all of that information in the show notes over at podcast.virtualsummits.com/151. So make sure you head over there and grab those goodies from Christina. I'd love for you to round us out here with like some, a

parting piece of wisdom for these summit hosts that are maybe just getting started or just thinking about getting started with a virtual summit.

Christina: Awesome. So guys, first of all, I'm, I'm super excited for you and I'm very proud of you that you think of this option because we have a lot of funnels we can use in order to, to start or grow a business. And I believe that when you get started, summit is the absolute best way to figure out your ideal clients, to figure like, to get to know Fort leaders in your market and in your niche and to build confidence that you need because you want to start as a leader or you want to improve as a leader. Um, and so there's that are. So it's, it's a lot of different things, what you need to think about in order to create something good you're also proud about to, to share and promote with the speakers. So I also invite you from a heart to, um, to figure out if there is like a business coach out there who shows you the framework like, right.

Christina: So Mark is just very close to you, you know him so well. So if you would love to run a Oh of I can [inaudible] just to check out his framework, um, to go to other coaches who are close to you and you know well and you trust because it's so important for you and your business. And especially right now, Corona, it's your chance to make an impact and really to serve and to solve some big problems that people have. So do not, you know, just try to put it all together. But, um, I wish you all love success and this is, I think, the best way to have some help.

Dr. Mark: So good. Thank you so much Christina, for sharing these gems with us today.

Christina: Woo hoo. What a pleasure.

Dr. Mark: And thank you all you summit hosts for hanging out with Christina and I am Dr. Mark T. Wade, your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast. Don't forget to head over to the show notes to check out all these amazing goodies that Christina just shared with us over at podcast.virtualsummits.com/151. And remember your message matters. So go out there and make an impact in the world. 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, 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.