

Episode 134: Social Media Strategy To Increase Engagement Of Your Sessions.

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Speaker: Andrea Jones

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 and we are in for a treat today on this episode we're going to be jumping into something which I believe is going to be pretty magical for all of you. Whether you're a summit host, a summit speaker, or both. We're going to be covering some information that you must know and it's going to be about how to market your session or your whole summit a little bit better as well as creating engagement, even pre thought of engagement into your session. And it's all going to be possible because we have the legendary Andrea Jones with us today. How are you doing today, Andrea?

Andrea Jones: Hey, I'm good. Happy to be here.

Dr. Mark: Well, we're going to have some fun. I am super stoked that you're with us today because I cannot wait to hear about these strategies and tactics because it, it's one thing that all of us in the summit world, whether summit speakers or summit hosts, we need to do a better job of marketing ourselves and increasing engagement into our sessions. Now, before we jumped down those rabbit holes, I would love for you to just take a quick second and let the audience know just a little bit more about yourself.

Andrea: Yeah. Awesome. So my name is Andrea Jones, as you mentioned, I love geeking out about all things social media. Uh, so we run an agency, we have 17 clients. So I'm doing the work for businesses, building out, um, their strategies on social media, but then we also teach it on the Savvy Social Podcast and in the Savvy Social School. So I've worked with a range of businesses, whether you're just new starting out and trying to figure out social media or you have a team and you want to outsource it. I, I've seen it all. So that's where I kind of geek out. It's been my time. Um, I also have two dogs, so if you hear them wrestling around a little bit, that's just the work at home life. And I love that I have the freedom to kind of build a business like this, which is awesome.

Dr. Mark: Oh, it's so awesome. And yeah, we got like, we got a lots of dog lovers listening in, so no worries with that. Now, social media marketing, that's your forte. And you've told me on our pre-interview chat, we were just talking about, um, you've spoken on quite a few summits and you enjoy speaking on summits. So let's talk about why do you like to speak on virtual summits?

Andrea: Yeah. So I'm introverted, um, and being like in the room with people, I love it, but it's very draining. Um, you know, going to events and things, I can probably do like five a year and that's it. With summits I could do an unlimited amount and it's just a lot of fun to hang out virtually. And it kinda ties back into why I love social media, which is that you can choose to show up and be present and then if you wanna like spend the rest of the day reading a book and not talking to anybody, you have that option as well as, so for an introverted person like myself, I find that it makes it a lot easier for me to show up, be present, be active, be really into it. And then still having this space of not being around a lot of people and like getting my energy drained.

Andrea: Um, so that's one part of it. The other part of it is that summits have an amazing opportunity to just bring the right people together. I don't know if you've experienced this yourself, probably being that this is what you do and that there is like this, there's this power and all showing up and like being excited to learn something together in the same room with the same people virtually that just is captured by a summit. And then when you have like those time deadlines, like we're all gonna do this together at this specific time, that's so magical too because now we're all at the same goal and in the same timeline. And so I think there's just a power in that learning space to where we actually can get a lot more done because if we just had access to a course, you've probably done this before. You bought a course and you're like, I'll do this at some point. And it whole years go by and you haven't even looked at it. And so with the summit and like almost prompts you to show up on time because you want to participate with the speakers and the other attendees and you want to kind of be virtually in the room with them. Um, so there's so much power in it.

Dr. Mark: I completely agree. And being a social media marketing expert over there, you see this as a way, as you just mentioned, to actually kind of promote the business. This is a great way, summits are a great way to promote opportunities. Now when you're speaking on summit, you do things a little bit different. So let's actually talk through the thought process of why you think there should be a little bit different. Like let's talk through the difference between an engaged speaking session and a non-engaged speaking session and why that matters.

Andrea: Yeah. So when preparing content, and this just comes from my background, I wanted to be a teacher growing up. I've always wanted to be a teacher. Um, I actually did a session teaching. Um, when I was in high school, I taught middle school. It was awful. They, they ate me alive. Like I didn't survive. So I thought that I didn't like teaching after that moment. But what I realized was I still liked the power of teaching. I just rather teach people who want to want to be there, which happens to be adults in business. Um, so there is a power though in helping people discover something and have them use it immediately. So the fitness industry does this really well. You don't just sit down and watch, uh, you know, dance video, you're actually doing it with them. Um, and so when I prepare my summit content, I want to encourage the audience to do the work with me.

Andrea: I don't want them to write it down and it's stuck in some notebook, in a drawer somewhere forever. I want them to actually take action. And so one of the things that I do in the summit is I ask questions and I actually pause and say, think about this, write this down, put it in the chat. If there's a chat box, even if there's not a chat box, I'll invite them to, um, tell me about it on social media, maybe tweet it to me or send me a direct message on Instagram because I want them to actually think about it, not take notes, but actually take action on some of the concepts that I'm teaching in a summit section session. And I find that people actually remember the sessions more because they're actually working on their business and not just taking notes to work on it later. And I find that people are actually making a difference in their business too. So I'm giving them something that can actually change their business and they're working on it in that moment. And so there's just a lot of power in being able to help someone through that. Um, so I think as a summit, a speaker or even as a summit host, if you can encourage

your speakers to create a more interactive experience, I think that that's just going to create such a lasting impression with the attendees of the summit.

Dr. Mark: Uh, so, so, so true here. And I want to keep digging into this because this is a, is a really important topic and something because I see summits as needing to evolve, most of them are a passive experience. We need to create them more into an active opportunity and we like to call them more like edutainment style versus just like sit back and get taught at you. Something you can engage with. So I'm, I'm right there with you. Now let's, let's look at this, cause I know some of the summit hosts are thinking, well Mark these videos or these presentations, they're all prerecorded. How do I do engagement in a prerecorded session? So let's talk through maybe an example of, of a session you've done and how you incorporated engagement, like a specific tactic, a specific engagement call to action, whatever that you did in a session. And then what that ended up doing for you?

Andrea: Yeah, so I've got two examples that are really good. It kind of depends on how the summit is set up. So some summits have a chat option, so we'll cover that first. And then if they don't have a chat option, there's still things you can do to encourage participation. So if there is a chat box in the summit and attendees are participating while watching your prerecorded session, you can ask them questions to directly put in the chat. So even though it's a recorded video, just simply saying, Hey, this is what we're going to work on. I want you to take a minute, write it down and put it in the chat because I want to see it. I'm going to be in the chat or even if you're not in the chat, I want us to all work on this together. Um, so an example would be if we're talking about Instagram and we're writing our Instagram bio, then I want you to actually, okay, if I'm going to give you the formula, I want you to apply it and write what you think your Instagram bio should be in the chat.

Andrea: Okay. So that's a really good, easy way to just create action with the concepts that I'm teaching. If there's not a chat, you can still kind of activate people. And as a social media strategist, I'm going to recommend social media. Some people do email that works as well. Um, but I want people to connect with me in my, like where I like to hang out. So if I'm going to say something like, okay, I'm teaching Instagram stories and I want you to actually go post your first Instagram story and I want to watch it and there's only about 24 hours that I can see that story. So I want you to, as soon as you post it, send me a direct message cause I want to go watch it and cheer you on. And if you want advice, I'd be happy to give you some advice on how to make that Instagram story better, more impactful, um, help you convert better from that story. All of those things. So if I'm teaching a concept and want them to go take action and then I'll tell them why that action is valuable and how I can help support them after they've done that. So it's not as if they're just going to post an Instagram story. I'm there to cheer them on after and to help and encourage them with the concept that I've just taught.

Dr. Mark: I love that. And it with, with them taking the action. What kind of, what difference do you see, like maybe you've done a, a session in the past where you didn't incorporate one of these, you know, engagement strategies. What was the difference between that and your experience of the summit?

Andrea: I think the attendees from the session when they actually like participate and they actually take action towards growing their business, my session is actually very memorable to them because they're not passively sitting back and taking notes. They're, they're taking action. So they actually remember me and my session more so much so that there's a summit. This is, this will be my third year speaking at the summit simply because the attendees keeps saying, is Andrea going to teach again? I'm ready to learn something else about social media because I engage with them in the process. So it's not just me shouting into the void. It's like I'm there with them. Um, I also think when you're thinking about keeping in touch with attendees after the summit, a lot of us as speakers were in the summits to increase our reach and increase our audience members. And so if you can give them something to do that's social and social media, you're not promoting something, you're not selling them something, you're just connecting with some with them. You're, you're actually giving yourself an opportunity to connect with them deeper, to take another step with you. Yes, they showed up to your summit, they loved it, they enjoyed it, they got a lot from it. But how can they continue learning from you? And a great next step for that is social media. And people kind of feel like they know you and they're connected with you on social.

Dr. Mark: That's so true. And some people you feel like you're like actually friends with me. You may be friends with them on Facebook, but may, I know there's people that I've never met in person that I actually feel very, very close to because I'm constantly seeing what they're doing in their life, their day, their things like that. So what is now when you're doing the engagement or maybe you're doing, you're asking the attendees to, you know, take a second, write out the Instagram bio or take this action. Do you ever incentivize the action and if so, like how or what would be good ideas?

Andrea: Yeah, so a good incentive is just to give feedback on that action. Um, and it kinda depends on how the summit is set up. But I also like to give them a worksheet. Like if they're gonna work with this on me together, I can give them a free worksheet to go along with the session. Um, so that helps. Um, but oftentimes the incentive is the, the opportunity to get a strategist, to look at your content, to get someone who's a professional, to give you feedback in the moment. And that also encourages people to show up live, which is a kind of a bit of a challenge with summits, right? Um, you know, to get people to attend live. So if they know that I'm going to be live, I'm giving them feedback, this is interactive, they're actually going to have takeaways that they can use right now in their business.

Andrea: There's so much opportunity for them just from this summit session to make a difference. And so I think that's a really good incentive for the attendees. And again, like I said, it really makes it memorable. Um, when I'm pitching to speak on other summits, I don't have like a very big audience. I don't have a very big list, but my people are so tuned in that when I'm pitching to speak on other summits, I have tweets, DMS, quotes on social media reviews that I can take screenshots. I haven't go, my people will show up, they will participate. And sometimes that's so much more valuable than having a massive audience of just like lookie loos and people who are curious. Like I have people who are really tuned in. And so it's so, so valuable for me as a speaker to be able to give in that way to the attendees because they are just more likely to stick with me. For the other things that I do.

Dr. Mark: Sure. And then engagement, the hosts are all gonna love that as well. It brings more excitement and engagement. And imagine for all the summit hosts listening right now, if you could get multiple speakers to do things like this, how much more powerful your summit will be overall. So Andrea with with the um, the prerecorded session and you're going to include this strategy. So you just, you just kind of build it into your presentation. Let's assume you're recording the video right now. Like, what are you doing? Are you just leaving a break or are you letting them know that you'll be at it later? Like kind of walk us through that again cause from a prerecorded standpoint, how do you do it? Keeping it authentic but also getting them to take that action.

Andrea: Yeah, so I like to use slides. I know some people like to just like be the talking head. I get too distracted for that. I need slides to guide me through this process. And since this, this is the way that I teach in my membership program, it's very easy for me to teach like this in summits. So when it comes time for the students to take action, I usually have that written on the screen. Okay, this is what you, I want you to work on right now. Um, so if we're talking about, for instance, what I call the three Ws, what do you sell? Who is it for and why does it matter? I want you to write down your three W's right now. I'll repeat it again. And then what I'll also do is give them two or three examples. So that while they're writing it down, I'm still talking and teaching.

Andrea: So it's not awkward silence, but it's the same concept with examples from other people. So I try to do an example that's like someone famous that everybody knows. I try to do an example that's from one of my students or clients so that they can kind of see what that looks like. And then I'll do my own example as well in my business. Um, so to be able to give three examples, like this is what we're talking about. Write this down right now. Here are three examples. Put yours in the chat and I'll be in the chat there to talk with you about it. Or, you know, send me a DM on Instagram. I'd love to know, um, that gives us, gives them some time to write it down and then I'll move on. Um, I don't try to spend too much time cause you're right with the prerecorded, it can feel a little bit awkward, but I do want them to write it down.

Andrea: And, um, but you know, even before I start the session, I just make sure to emphasize right at the top. This is interactive. I will be in the chat or I will be looking for your answers and this is an opportunity to get feedback. So this is your time to shine. And, um, I love having the opportunity to kind of connect with people and as a summit host, if you can educate your speakers on how to do this and even give them like that template for how to like encourage action, I think your attendees are gonna be very happy with that.

Dr. Mark: I agree with that. So as this, and I would love to get your opinion on this. As a social media marketing, you know, strategist and expert and a lot of summit speakers are hoping to get an opt in. Like they're hoping to get somebody onto their list from their presentation. Have you found that it's easier, better, et cetera to take them to social media or to go for the opt in or do you have a way of trying to do both?

Andrea: Yeah. So I'm a huge fan of the opt in as well. Um, because not everyone uses all of the social media as the same way that I use them. And even if they do, they may not log in every day. So I do like having the email. Um, I use social media as an addition to the opt

in, um, and as a place to continue the conversation. So typically I frame that freebie or opt in as like if you want to learn another concept, here's like a quick thing that you can do next. Um, but if you want to have a conversation with me, social media is the best place to go for that. So they have two different purposes and the most tuned in attendees will do both. And that's what I want them to do as both. I want them to opt in and follow me on social.

Andrea: Um, and then in that first email that I send them after they opt in, I always customize my options for each summit. Um, so they're not getting something like generic and I'll thank them for attending my session. And then I'll also add an opportunity for them to connect with me on social media as well, so that way they can also see that in the email as well. Um, but yeah, I, I use both simultaneously. Um, because um, for me personally, I want the people who are going to do both. Um, like I said, I'm really tuned into those. I'm not just trying to go mass numbers. I want everybody, I need the right people, the action takers, the people who are really bought into me. And that's how I kind of see who those people are.

Dr. Mark: And do you, do you have a preference or have you noticed one better over the other as far as placement? Do you start off the presentation with a, you know, a social call for action for social media or an opt in or, you know, a lot of times we see at the end of the presentations where people will give kind of an opt in opportunity, but you know, if we watch video stats, like no, most people don't stay to the end of the video unfortunately. And a lot of things. So I'm just curious on your perspective or what you've seen work best.

Andrea: Yeah, so I usually do it at the end. Again, I'm looking for the action takers, so the people who have watched to the end. Um, but it kinda depends because in the past I also have had just like the opt in be a worksheet for that, for that session. And so if it is a worksheet, I do have that call to action at the beginning cause that just makes sense for them to like go get it now. Um, but typically in my sessions to some of the things I'll say is like, okay, now's the time close down your tabs. We're going to just like 30 minutes or an hour or whatever it is. We're going to focus on this for just right now. And so I don't really want them to take action until after the session because want them to focus on the concepts that I'm teaching. Um, so yeah, I can see how having it at the beginning could be beneficial, but I think it could also be distracting for the attendees. So my personal preference is to have them at the end.

Dr. Mark: Awesome. Love that. So let's kind of switch gears just a little bit. We've been talking about from a speaker's perspective on what to include in the session and how to get the audience to engage. But you've also, in our pre-interview chat, we're talking about you've got some pretty ninja strategies on how to use the fact you're speaking on a summit and marketing that do also benefit you as well, which then benefits the summit, benefits the host. So let's dive into some of those tactics and strategies that you use.

Andrea: Yeah, I mean as speakers it's such an honor to be invited to speak in a summit. And I think sometimes we take advantage of that or we don't really understand like how much of an opportunity is in front of us. So not only do we have the opportunity to get up in front of other people, that's a given, right? If all of the speakers are inviting

people, we'll get new audience members. I'm not too worried about that part. But what I want to do for my current audience is give them something so cool that they're like, man, I can't wait to see Andrea's next summit because as a speaker I want to be invited to more summit. So for me, I really like to hype up my audience. Like this summit is amazing. You guys have to sign up for it. I'm going to be watching this summit.

Andrea: Here are the sessions I'm personally interested in because if that excitement is contagious, you want people to get excited about your summit and you want your people to show up so that they get value from the summit. And honestly, it's actually not that much work for you because you're giving them access typically for free to an awesome event that they wouldn't have had otherwise. Um, so I like to do that through live video. I love Instagram stories, things like that where I'll talk about the summit, I'll share what I'm excited about and then invite them to join the summit as well. Um, your typical things like posting regularly on summits is great. Uh, but what I'll also do is support the other speakers as well. So the other speakers who are posting about the summit, I'll go into their Instagram post or I'll retweet their, um, tweet about the summit or I'll comment on their Facebook post because I want them to see that I'm excited about them as well. And it's another way to kind of get in front of their audience too. If they see me and all of these speakers are going to be at the summit, they look like they're all having a great time. Like it's, we're all lifting each other up. And so anything you can do to kind of showcase your excitement is a plus for getting people to sign up.

Dr. Mark: And just that, like the speakers seeing you talk positively about them is going to put you on their radar as well, which is another huge positive. So, so essentially do you have, when, when you're doing this marketing strategies, let's say, let's, let's kind of break this down, so almost into a formulaic type of manner so that our summit hosts are, are some speakers listening can, can try to emulate it. So let's say you've recorded your presentation, the summit is going to be going live. How far out you start and is it daily? Do you set like a schedule, like during your day at this point, you know, I'm promoting this summit or like how, how would we implement this as a strategy?

Andrea: Yes. So it kind of depends on the other things that you have going on as well. So think about your own personal balance. Uh, but typically for me, I'm about two weeks out from the summit. I'm starting a pretty heavy promotion of it. Um, so I'll do at least two live videos. So one right when I'm announcing the summit and one is like the last chance to sign up. And then in between those live videos, I'll have static posts that talk about the summit typically three or four more times. Um, because I have, you know, podcast episodes and other things that I promote. That's a good kind of balance for me. Um, for the static posts, I'm really focused in on the benefits of attending the summit. Um, I, some summits have like upgrades and things like that and typically as a summit host, you have that fairly set up.

Andrea: So I'm not really talking about like, you know, get the all access pass or things like that, but I'm saying, here's my session, here's what you're going to learn from it. Or here's other sessions, here's other speakers. Here are the dates. Like I'm really providing a lot of information. And the beauty about social media is that everyone has a busy life. And if you approach it as like, I'm giving them this reminder because they need it, then I

think that's a helpful strategy. I think oftentimes we go, man, I'm bothering them talking about this summit again, but that's not it at all. And I'll often run polls sometimes like an Instagram story, poll, that's like, Hey, I've been talking about this summit. Click yes, if you've heard me talk about it before, click no if you have it. And I'm always surprised by the number of people who say no that they haven't heard me talk about this thing that I've been talking about for two weeks because maybe they just, they've been off Instagram for two weeks and they just now logged in. Right? You never know. So, um, definitely keep talking about it from the place of like I'm giving to the audience this gift of the summit. And maybe they saw it once or twice and they went, Oh yeah, I'll sign up for that later. And we never do. We always forget. So remind them.

Dr. Mark: Definitely need that reminder. And nobody should feel bad about letting them know about that because again, they need that reminder. So, and this last, uh, last little bit we have left here, Andrea, let's kind of switch gears and, and dig in even more into your strategy. Your expertise was social media marketing and, and maybe look at how some summit hosts could be improving exposure, improving a, you know, awareness of their, of their summit. Uh, maybe some things you've seen on the summits that you've been on that could be improved and how we could implement those.

Andrea: Yes. So there's a few summits I've been on recently than I've absolutely loved how they've been read. Um, one of them while we were, um, we did like an interview style recorded a session. Um, but while we were recording, she just said, Hey, I'm gonna make a video for you. I want you to say your name and what your session is about and say, I'm excited to speak at insert summit name. I didn't, I was already there, I didn't have to do any extra work. And then she sent me the video and it was beautiful. And so of course I'm going to post it. Um, so as an, as a speaker, I go, she made this so easy for me and people were excited to see this video. It was 10 seconds long, but it works so beautifully. Um, so if you're recording inter interviews or even some summit hosts do like an intro before your prerecorded session, um, sometimes just getting a little clip that you can send to your speaker is a great way to get them to promote the summit.

Andrea: Um, in that same vein, one of my favorite summits and when I speak spoken on this will be my third year. She always gives us way more information than we can ever need and it's so helpful. She gives us graphics probably I want to say five to six different variations of how we can promote ourselves in the summit as well as like maybe 10 to 15 generic styled images that we can use all different sizes. So like squares for Instagram, um, long ones for Pinterest or Instagram stories. Like there's such a variety that it's easy for me to go in and pick ones that fit my branding. Cause I find sometimes like the promos for the seminar, like this won't look good on my Instagram feed or whatever the case may be. So she has such a variety that I can usually pick one. And then she gives us this swipe copy for promoting our session personally.

Andrea: So I see a lot of summit hosts give swipe copy for the summit generically that say like insert your session here. But she actually writes swipe copy for my sessions specifically, which I find to be very helpful. We're all busy. Like literally everyone is always talking about how busy they are. I can't name a person who's like, man, I'm not busy enough. Right? So if there's something you can do as a host to help your speakers, something like that can be very helpful and it probably doesn't take a lot of time to do. Like if you set it

up so that it's formatted, you're really just swapping out a few things for the speakers. But it goes a long way to encourage the speaker to promote. Because as a host it's really what you need is your speakers to promote. Um, and then the last thing that this host is that I absolutely love is that she actually tests out the summit promos about a week before we do.

Andrea: And then she gives us the results. So she does a lot of Facebook ads and she'll say, Hey, I ran Facebook ads to the summit. Just so you know, our upsell is converting at about 8%. So as a speaker I go, Oh, I want to promote this because I want the upsell to convert to 8% for me as well. So just having that data and being able to encourage and empower the speakers to share it out, I think all of that is such a great way to kind of really get things going for encouraging participation from your speakers.

Dr. Mark: And that's the goal. You got to get the speakers engaged, encouraged if they're going to promote it. And if you want your summer to be successful, you got to have your speakers promote. So this is absolutely incredible. Andrea, we're going to wrap this up here. Um, but first I know all of our summit hosts are going, Mark, Whoa, Whoa. I need more of Andrea, my live where she hanging out at? Where can I follow her? So let everybody know where you're hanging out at and the best way to get in touch with you.

Andrea: Yes. So my new favorite place to hang out is actually on my podcast. You can listen to it by searching for Savvy Social Podcast on any of the podcasting apps. Um, that's uh, like there's a lot of concepts and strategies that I teach on there that can be very helpful for hosts. Otherwise, I'm everywhere on social media @onlinedrea. Instagram's where I hang out the most right now. I love when you get an Instagram story and if you send me a DM, I will send you a voice message back.

Dr. Mark: Wow. Go send her a DM and let's hear those voice messages. That is awesome. So this has been phenomenal. Andrea, before we go, I'm going to let you kind of leave our summit house with one parting piece of wisdom.

Andrea: Yeah. So I think the hardest part about summits is building that sense of community. So if you can build a sense of like we're all in this together, this is our group of people, then the success of your summit is going to be that more dynamic. The actual tech behind it doesn't matter. I've seen summits run in Facebook groups. I've seen them run in WordPress websites. I've seen them run on things like Network. The actual tech of it doesn't really matter. As long as you can get your people together in one spot and get them talking together in one spot, you're going to have such an amazing sense of camaraderie that's going to make it a lot easier to do your upsell, promote future segments, whatever the case may be, but think about how you can build the community around your summit and I think you're going to be in for an amazing experience.

Dr. Mark: They truly are. Andrea, thank you so much for your time with us.

Andrea: Thanks for having me. This has been fun.

Dr. Mark: Absolutely, and thank you all you summit hosts for hanging out with Andrea and I. I'm Dr. Mark T. Wade, your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast, and just remember your message matters. So go out there and make an impact in the world. Don't forget to check out all the amazing goodies that Andrea just shared with us over in the show notes at podcast.virtualsummits.com/134 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 of them, they 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. 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.