

Episode 84: Hey You! LIST GRABBER!! Stop Exploiting Your Speakers
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There's no way to sugar coat this. If you are doing these list grabber slimy tactics you are a part of the problem. However, we are going to help ensure you never make these mistakes again as we talk about how to STOP exploiting your speakers and still rock out an epic virtual summit. Buckle in because this one is gonna get bumpy!

Ok, I'm gonna need you to sit down and put on your tough girl & boy pants for today's episode. I'm going to talk about an aspect of virtual summits that is becoming an epidemically horrific theme.

Something so dirty, so blah that it's literally putting a bad taste in the mouths of summit speakers worldwide.

Now I know it's not you if you are listening to this, you are one of the good ones. So I'm gonna ask that you do us ALL a favor and share this episode in any summit group, or with any summit hosts you know. Because we have to get this message out there to save summits for all the rest of us.

Ok, Take a deep breath and blow out slowly. Here we go.

I'm gonna need to ask you to stop exploiting your speakers.

Yeah you heard that correctly.

At least 50% of the summits that are being run are completely and utterly disrespecting the speaker recruitment process.

They are in a rabid frenzy to sign up speakers for one reason and one reason only. They want to pillage their list.

It's like a savage beast that has been trapped in a cage for years, malnourished, mistreated, and consistently teased with the allure of a delicious meal, then to finally be let out of the cage into the wild.

The poor unsuspecting herd of cattle simply grazing, enjoying the world have no clue that this creature is set on a direct path of carnivorous rage.

Ok, I may have been watching animal planet earlier today, but still the metaphor is the same.

A newer entrepreneur, who from this point forward we will refer to as “List Grabber” is desperate for revenue to get their idea conceptualized and to pay the light bill is on a spree to fill their lists. And they can only see that one thing. Build my list by any means possible.

I have talked with hundreds of Summit Speakers and I am literally disgusted by how many of them have told me their stories of being disrespected, undervalued and downright used for their list.

These people have spent years, thousands of hours, and a lot of their hard earned money to build their tribe, their community, their lists and in no way should you ever think or act like you are entitled to that list.

Now you might be thinking “But Mark you have said you need to have your speakers promote in order to build the summit attendees”, and yes that is correct.

The concept of a Collaborative Marketing Strategy is the best method. However what we are discussing today is the way list grabber summit hosts are doing it. Or I should say the horrible ways they are doing it.

Even my business partner in my health company who has spoken on hundreds of summits, has shared with me how she can quickly spot a “list grabber” right away when they reach out.

Here’s the problem, and we will go through some of the absolute WRONG ways to get a speaker on your summit, but all of those summit hosts who are doing these things are ruining it for the rest of us.

Successful entrepreneurs in many industries are starting to say, nope, no thanks but I’m not speaking on summits any more. Almost as if on a moral strike to say enough is enough. We will not be used for our lists any more.

Now I have talked in episode 21 on correct Speaker Recruitment Strategies, but I didn’t really go in depth on the current plague of horrific speaker recruitment trends, which I should have, and which we will discuss today.

Because if we don’t start upping our summit games, and stopping those who are doing it incorrectly we are going to be fighting an uphill battle very soon.

So what is the main premise that is happening?

Overall there are some summit coaches out there teaching strategies about how to build your list using a summit. It’s all about grow a big list, see how I built a big list, use a summit to build a big list, etc etc.

So they teach these tasteless strategies all focused on doing a list grab from someone in the guise of a virtual summit.

You can spot these list grabbers a mile away. How? Easy, they are the ONLY ones who start off the conversation or relationship by asking “How Big Is Your List”.

Seriously? Come on.

Or they will say please fill out this survey, and on the survey it asks how big is your list? Ah sneaky, but we still see you list grabber.

Additionally the worst of the worst straight up tell you, that you can ONLY speak on this summit if you have a list size of 5,000 subscribers.

Ok, now you can just go.... FFFFF - Ok, breathe Mark, just breathe.

Sorry, I got a little worked up there, but this in my opinion is the absolute worst thing you could ever do.

Yes we set goals, and we use the summit success strategy to map out our summit list potential, but never ever do I say don't let someone speak if they don't have a list size of XXXX subscribers.

What do I say? I say if your goal is to generate 5,000 attendees then you need a list potential of 50,000. So you can add more speakers with smaller lists if you prefer. But never decide if a person is going to speak on your summit 100% solely based on the size of their list. That is just tasteless and no class.

Those summits never do very well anyways, why, because the speakers are disgusted and no one wants to support something that makes them feel undervalued and used.

Also remember, I've said this over and over, it's not about the size of your list. Yes it sounds good to say I did a 26,000 lead summit a few months ago, which is a true statement, but honestly I'd prefer to do a quick & easy summit, that adds a ton of value to the world, creates epic relationships with my speakers and builds an engaged audience.

I've had summits that have generated less than 3,000 leads go on to make well over six figures. Matter of Fact my first ever \$136,000 launch came from a list of 900 people that were generated from a one-day summit.

So rule number one quit focusing on how to generate a big list, and focus on how to create an exceptional experience & engaged audience. This will generate far more fruits of labor than any 10,000 unengaged generic list will.

So it's not about the size of the list.

Next big flaw is they are also creating a boring generic summit. They are trying to throw it together as quickly as possible, with generic (unrelated) templates that don't show their voices and are no different than every other item floating around on the internet.

No one wants to listen to 30 boring interviews. No one wants to listen a copy of 30 boring interviews. And this is exactly what they are creating.

If you are going to pump out a summit in a month or two you can't do it with quality or creativity. So they use a generic template to ask the same 10 questions to their speakers. They have zero training on how to create an impactful interview so the interviews are literally unwatchable, and then they wonder why no speaker would promote it.

First off, you need to evolve your summit. We have some free resources covering how to create a "Summit Story". That will help you build a story line for your summit to build a binge worthy summit. Think Netflix series except summit.

Next you ABSOLUTELY must get some type of interview training. What is a summit? It's a series of interviews. So how in the world would someone think that they could just wing the interviews? NO. Please stop that.

If you haven't already grab our free training called "Interview Like A PRO". It will help you create a professional introduction, craft an engaging interview and overall create an impactful summit.

Don't skip this step. Period. Both of these are in the resource section at virtualsummits.com .

Let's move on to the next way summit hosts are exploiting speakers and ruining summits for the rest of us.

They don't take the time and they don't build the relationship.

Since they are trying to throw their summit together so quickly because they only care about getting the list they haven't taken the time needed to prepare the summit speaker research and recruitment process.

Also they take zero time to build a relationship with the speaker. This is how you really see who is trying to just steal your list. If the person reaching out doesn't want to take the time or effort to build a relationship then most speakers have ZERO interest in being on your summit.

Or even worst, they will speak on your summit but they aren't going to share or promote it. This happens all the time, but I don't blame the speaker. You let that speaker down. You dropped the ball.

Because you didn't build a relationship with them. If you know you are going to do a summit then you need to start building relationships, getting warm intros, and building some rapport with these people.

They are not here to serve you. You need to build a relationship and engage them on the mission of the summit. The Summit Story. You need to make it different, fun and professional so that they are eager to share it with their audiences.

This is on you. Not the speaker.

The next classless list grabber flaw is making it all about them the list grabber.

They say you should want to speak on my summit. I'm going to give you publicity and people will see you. Yeah just like the way people see a TV commercial, or listen to the safety instructions at the beginning of a flight on an airplane.

No one is listening to that. And no speaker is thinking, oh great, I'm going to get publicity. Stop using that as a benefit.

You need to add some actual tangible benefits for your speakers. More than just the opportunity for them get affiliate commissions, or to offer a free gift on their session.

You need to add more value, you need to go over and above and give them something.

I did talk about this in depth on one of our Live Weekly Summit Workshops. You can find the replay of that training in the resource area over at VirtualSummits.com

On my summits I add some of my paid trainings, or even help for the speaker to monetize their session on my summit. I'll give some of them access to the Virtual Summits Software for free as a gift, and I always try to give my speakers more speaking opportunities.

All of this is for them. It adds value to them and makes their participation not just about me. They can see I want to help them and truly make it a COLLABORATIVE Marketing strategy.

Not a list grabber all about myself type of promotion.

So truly think about ways you can give to your speakers. Can you give them something that you have, or help them get introduced to someone they want to meet.

It doesn't have to be crazy. Just put time, effort and energy into making sure that your summit isn't just about you.

The next list grabber classless tactic is failure to ensure the speaker has a great experience.

Imagine you were on a date with someone. They reach out and act like you are the best thing in the world.

Like if a Victoria's Secret angel lingerie model walked by in the newest seasons swimwear that they wouldn't even blink or break eye contact with you because your beauty is second to none.

They talk this incredible game of how special and important you are and how they can finally stop looking, as you are the one, their forever coffee date.

Feels pretty good. Then a few weeks into the relationship they act like you are chop liver.

That would hurt right? We would never do that (hopefully) to someone in real life, why would we ever do that to our speakers.

This is what your speaker feels when you drop the ball after they agree to speak.

Or in some cases it's after they complete the interview. Or in a few cases it's after they actually promote for you, which will talk about in a moment.

If you don't ensure your speaker has a great experience you are going to actually do more damage to that relationship than if you would have never reached out to the speaker to begin with.

The speaker is looking at this opportunity much like a date. Is this person a good person, can I trust this person, are they going to murder me in my sleep?

All great questions. Well in your business relationship they are asking those same things about how you will treat them, their business, and their list.

If you don't give a good experience you are showing them that you are just a sleazy list grabber and not someone they want to be associated with later.

So think about your speakers. Ask them how they are doing. Find out how you can help them, or give them a better experience.

Don't get the Yes, and then move on. Don't stop after they do the interview.

As important as that engaged audience is you are trying to create, the relationships you build with your speakers are just as important if not more.

The partnerships and collaborations that can be created from this could be a game changer for your business. Don't forget to provide an exceptional experience.

Now the last list grabber icky ness will talk about today is not following up with your speaker.

This is like when you go to a fancy restaurant, you have an incredible meal, you pay an outrageously priced ticket, leave a special tip for your waiter or waitress and as soon as they have it they never check back on you. They don't even gaze in your general direction.

They are off smoozing the next table and have left you high and dry. Why? Well they got the tip already, what do they need to be nice to you for?

This is what you are saying to your speaker when you don't have a follow up process.

You smooze them, give them a good experience, get them to promote and then poof you are gone, like a gypsy in the night.

I'd say out of everything this is one of the most damaging things you can do with your speaker.

OF course all the others are horrible too, the difference is if you get to this point with your speaker they are ready to have a relationship with you.

So you have built up some trust, and connection. Then if you drop it here, you actually hurt their feelings.

Any of the others, you just offend the speaker and they write you off forever to never speak of you again.

But with this, you may actually create a potential enemy. No one likes to feel used, mistreated, or forgotten about.

Don't do this to your speakers. Don't get them on board and have them support you and promote you and talk great about you, taking time out of their schedule and giving you precious spots on their promotional calendar to then just drop them like yesterday's sushi.

You need to have a follow up process letting the speakers know you still care about them (figuratively of course) and that you are here to support them as well.

Ask them what they are working on, and how you can help them out.

Let them know that you are still grateful and appreciative of their help and support. And that you are here for them if they need you.

You do this and you have an ally for life. This is so powerful and important. Don't take it lightly.

I know I have made a lot of jokes and said some funny (or maybe disturbing) things in this episode, but I'm trying to make it a little bit more digestible.

We are talking about a very serious topic. One that really does have serious consequences.

Not just for the summit host who is out there being a list grabber, but also for the reputation of virtual summits all together.

We are a tribe of world changers and impact makers. We all have a message to get out to the world. There is nothing more powerful than a Collaborative Marketing Strategy to do this.

A Virtual Summit is this way. However if we don't start upping our games we are going to see summits taking a different turn.

Now Virtual summits are never going to die or go away. But they may become far more difficult to host.

However if we start evolving summits, if we start treating our speakers with respect and get away from these list grabber tactics, and start putting time, thought & energy into our summits, we are going to see some epic virtual summit success.

I know you listening to this episode you are the world changers. You are not the list grabbers. You are dedicated to upping your summit game not just for yourselves but also for your speakers and the communities you are building.

So keep putting in the time, the energy and the effort. We all notice it. Your tribe thanks you, and I promise you are the hosts that your speakers remember and look forward to working with again in the future.

We are here to support you. We want you to be successful. So reach out to us and let us know what we can do to help you evolve your summit.

Be sure to come join us at Summit Fest Live, which is a live conference in New Orleans for Summit Hosts, Speakers & Experts. You can check out that information at SummitFestlive.com

Also check out the resource area for all our awesome free resources on getting your summit or one-day summit started.

Plus you can let us know if you are interested in our Viral Summits program. This is a 100% done for you summit concierge service. It is by application only, and we are looking for summit hosts looking to create a summit that matters.

Other than that, I just want to say thank you for being you, and for investing in yourself by listening to these episodes.

I know you have a message that matters and I can't wait to see the impact you make in the world.

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Building a relationship
Not giving to the speaker
Not ensuring the speaker has a great experience
Not following up with your speaker