

Episode 89: The Brutal truth on how you should treat your speakers

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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. We are in for a doozy today. I think we've got a spark plug come and we've got an incredible episode lined up for you because we're going to be digging into something that most of you summit hosts need to know and unfortunately not all of you are doing so hold on tight because we're going to be digging down. I've got legendary Yvi Heimann with me here today. Thanks for showing up to rock this episode. Yvi.

Yvonne Heimann: Thanks so much for having me. Let's go on a roller coaster. I think we're going to have fun today.

Dr. Mark: Oh, we are most definitely gonna have a blast and our summit hosts are in for treat because we've, we've lined up a pretty amazing episode that we're going to dive into and we're going to come out this. Yvi is a summit speaker and we're going to be talking about some things you, summit hosts, absolutely need to know when you are trying to recruit speakers for your summit. Now, before we jump into all of those tactics and golden strategies, Yvi, I'd love for you to give our summit hosts just a little bit of background about yourself.

Yvi: So the weird accent you're going to hear today as a German accent. I grew up there 24 years and came to the States in 2007 and then had first dove into web design, social media, that kind of thing, and then realize that I'm coaching people and ended up in that clarification process realizing that I'm all about systems and workflows. I don't know if that is the German in me because we just like to make sense of things. I don't know. But I always say I see systems and workflows where you see chaos. I just thrive in that. And I think that's why we going to take it today.

Dr. Mark: Yvi, I feel like you may be the yin to my yang because I have so many ideas, but one of my weakest points is being able to organize it and take what I always call chaos into a structured, organized system. So I'm actually really excited to hear, uh, some of these systems and strategies. So why don't we, um, jump into it. First off, why don't you give us a little bit of experience, um, or a little bit of background on maybe some of the summits you've spoken on and, and, and why you even started speaking on the summits. And then we'll kinda take it from there.

Yvi: Why did I start speaking on summits? I'm like, it's a marketing piece. It's an ego piece. Who doesn't like to be the fancy one on stage? Don't get me wrong. Um, but also there is a personal aspect to that. In 2014, I lost my husband to cancer and realized, especially realized at that point that we need residual income, that we need to build something up where our business can run without us. I had to put my business on hold for two years and I was lucky enough to bring it back from the ashes and that's where my passion comes from. I'm automating a business and being able to make an income without us having to be 24/7 in business. So that's where that personal drive comes from. And with

that, to get the message out there, I need to be up front. So ego or not, yes I do like to be on stage.

Yvi: I love the energy. It's like it just fuels me. But without being out there, without telling my story, without showing people that tomorrow is not a given and we need to prep for this now and not wait till you are in my situation. And I always joke, you know what? If life doesn't hit you over the head, at least you can go take a vacation. So with that, that's how I ended up in the speaker role and getting out there and being public. Um, I've done a lot of podcasts. I've done a lot of summits. Most recently I've been on the Agorapulse Social Success Summit. The MeetEdgar Solopreneur Summit is I need to say like it should be running right now. Um, with my recent move. I am a little bit behind on schedule. I don't even know what's life right now. Um, but yeah, those are two big ones that are going on right now. There's a couple stage appearances in the works for next year and I'm excited to see what else is coming.

Dr. Mark: That is a really funny, we actually just had, Tom Tate on the podcast, uh, as you know, talking about that Solo Biz. Um, and matter of fact, I believe that was episode 85. So anybody who's curious about that can check out that episode there.

Yvi: He's amazing.

Dr. Mark: Yvi. So I'm just curious like it sounds like, you know, that you're saying it's a benefit to be a speaker on a summit because there's a lot of speakers, there's a lot of people out there kind of nagging or ragging on summits and that everybody's being asked as a speaker, I like hearing this kind of positivity about it. Now with, go ahead. As I like to hear your thoughts on this for any maybe like people that are out there like, man, I'm too good to speak on a summit or what's your kind of thoughts on this?

Yvi: There is a multi-approach to the whole summit thing. I'm not doing every summit. I get approached a lot and I'm like, yeah, no, not my thing. So as a speaker and also as a host, how you can get speakers to say, okay, I'm going to be coming on is really drilled down on who is your target market, who are you speaking to? I can take my topics and I can adjust them for the solopreneur for the mompreneur at home, but also for agency clients. So there's that big difference between me, that girl who was looking more in the solopreneur area. Agorapulse is looking more at the agency sector. In the end, to me as a speaker, it's the same talk, but I need to approach it differently because we have a different target market. Now Agorapulse also gave us the attendee access information.

Yvi: So I was able to reach out to them and then it came down to me. I needed to have my stuff in order to be able to capture those people. So not just is it the appearance and the, the publicity that I get through a summit, I also needed to get them into a sales funnel or an engagement funnel and be like, okay, here's additional assets for you. Here's things you can do. Here's things where you can meet me. And having just gone through that with Agorapulse my course, my freebies and all of those literally just exploded. I was supposed to send, I need to say a like about 50 video messages to everybody that signs up gets a short little video message from me and because of the move I literally just have to do 50 short video messages for everybody that signed up on Monday and that was Agorapulse Summit.

Yvi: That was a free summit, half an hour. Pre-recorded. What I have my stuff in order, which meant I could funnel them down, but I also pay attention to when I get invitations, if I just get the, Hey, I want you on the summit, I'm like delete, you're not even going to get an answer from me. I need to know when is it? Is it a live? Is it recorded? So do I need to carve out a certain time that I need to be live there? Do I need to put on a cute face? Is it audio? Is it video? How is everything happening and what, as bad as it sounds, what can I get out of it? Are we talking to the same target market? Are we, am I reaching the people I want to reach or are you talking to somebody completely different. If I don't get at least that little bit of minimum information out of you and I need to spend five emails to take all that information out of you.

Yvi: I'm sorry, I don't have the time to do that. I prefer laying out on the pool and getting my tan on rather than having to educate you what I need from you. So wrapping that up in a short answer. In your first email, when you're reaching out to potential speakers, give them as much information as possible. When is the summit happening? When is the marketing piece happening? What are you expecting from them? But what are they getting from you too? Who are you talking to and what is the overlaying story of your summit? What are you giving you attendees?

Dr. Mark: I love that. And that and that, that opens up, um, another area. What I want to kind of dive into. This is when we're approaching speakers, obviously much better to have a warm intro, but let's say we're reaching out cold. This is the first time we're meeting and we're doing it via email. So I like how you said give this, give all this information. Is there a specific or better way of doing this? Because I've found that or sometimes we find that it can be overwhelming if the email is super, super long, the speakers don't even read it and they just like it moves right away. Right pass. So what is the best way you feel, at least maybe from your perspective of us presenting all of this information to you when we initially reach out?

Yvi: There is multiple ways. One thing you should never do is an attachment, don't put attachments into the first email. Start out with an intro and take, please people take five minutes. There is so much else on social media. When you reach out to me, you will refer to the Agorapulse Summit. So meaning you took five minutes to figure out who am I and what am I doing. You can use templates, templates are a godsend. Customize them, talk to me in my first name. Reference something. Reference a social media posts or whatever. If you have additional time, start talking to me on social media. We are all out there. It's like every time I'm on a YouTube video, I'm on a summit. And like people, I am here. Message me. Make use of that and then when it comes to all of the information there is multiple ways you can do it, have it in a Google document and just the link to it. Hey, if you want to know more, if you want to know what this is exactly about, go in this Google document. If you don't want to do links because that can cause issues in first emails. Usually it doesn't but you never know.

Yvi: Mention you can give them more information. Or use visual stuff, meaning in the emails, start out with an intro. Tell them what you are doing and what you are about and really just keep it at one or two short paragraphs. Signature below and then at the end of everything, when it looks like the email is actually over, say, Hey, by the way, if

you want to know what it's all about, and then just put all of the event information at the end of the email. That way it looks like a short email. It's visually separated from here's all the end for you might want, to, Hey, great to meet you. I would love to have you as a speaker. There's multiple ways to do that. Just try to, just like we do on blog posts, use some visual or use an external Google document.

Dr. Mark: I love that and, and, and that's a really great way of looking at this and I'd like to actually even take it even a little bit deeper when, when we're kind of categorizing or even like determining the information and what order to put it, what is the most important thing? Like what really sticks out to the speaker? I mean, let's say we're going to put all of the information, but like if we're going to lead with something, what would it be like? What's that going to really kind of hook that speaker into being interested?

Yvi: If you want to do a short intro of what the summit is about and hook a speaker. Really just do the bullet points of the summit name, the summit date, expected attendees past exposure and past wins always help. Agorapulse has a big name. They don't need any social proof. I know I'm going to go there. Not a problem. No question. MeetEdgar. The same thing. If somebody comes like you and reaches out and wants me on a podcast, it's the, okay, please save me time having to research you. I will do it either way, but what are some download numbers you have? What is a standard view? What are some Google Analytics? Even if you are new to summits and it's the first summit you are putting on, you have social proof. Do you have a YouTube channel? How many views do you have a week? Do you have a website? What's the regular visitor numbers? Those social proof numbers show me if I want to spend time on you. If you don't have the numbers because you are completely starting and those numbers are tiny. Play the heartstrings, have a cost behind it. Have something that speaks to, not my ego because I want to get out there, but to my heart a cost that I can get behind that gets me excited.

Dr. Mark: Oh wow. This is so good. I hope everybody's taking notes on this because Yvi is really literally just laying this out for us. I want to dig into that last pit, that last bit that you just said there about don't just play into my ego, play into my heart strings. Can you unpack that a little bit? Like what's, what's the difference and why is the heartstrings, what was that? What would that look like and what is that? Why is that better than playing to the ego?

Yvi: So ego is all about numbers. It's the how much exposure can I get? What can I get out of you? What kind of clients can I get? Because too many summits are those email grow my list kind of BS. I think we can use BS. Um, so it's, it's a turn off when you tell me I need to have 1500 subscribers on my email list or 15,000. I'm out. My email list is cleaned up, but I have an engagement rate that you're going to be jealous off. So I'm not going to bring the numbers, but I bring an engagement weight. That's the ego side. Now, the heartstrings side, if you come to me and you say you want to build a summit for caregivers that do not have the time to take care of their business and you want to educate them how they can keep running their business while taking care of their cancer fighting spouse, I don't care what exposure you have, I don't care what social proof you have.

Yvi: That is a cause that I have lived through that I can feel for that I'm going to be there no matter what. And that, you just need to spin it. It's, it's, it's just gonna sound bad. It's like those heartstrings is still a marketing piece. It's why I do what I do, why I'm passionate about it. But on the other hand, it, it speaks to heartstrings. It speaks to your feeling. It connects me with you because you know I went through something I have learned out of it and it, it puts a story to my passion. It's not just the, I want to sell you something. Now if you can do the same thing the other way around from your summit, for your speakers and for your audience, no numbers matter. Numbers are going to be the second thing that is gonna be a conversation.

Dr. Mark: I love that and I, and I love how you've just walked us right through that specific strategy. Now kind of taking a slight pivot over to something that I know you're passionate about and we were chatting about in our pre-interview chat, um, is kind of the way after we've met. If after we've made that contact, we've got the agreement with the speaker. Um, now the process after that, kind of walk us through what's been your experience and your thought process on that?

Yvi: One of the biggest things when you start, yes, I'm coming to you summit. I'm doing this. Uh, one of the biggest messes and I am really bad about it because I like things in order and nicely organized is the communication piece and the assets that need to go forward and back. It can be so overwhelming, especially when you are speaking more when you were in that, uh, exposure piece and one podcast and another podcast and another summit and everything. If you can reach out to a speaker and be like, okay, I need a 20 minute video intro, outro, we'll do the rest. Not a problem. I need this information, that information, that information and just have one template you can send to your speakers. And really not five hours later come with, Oh we forgot about this and Oh, we need this. The more specific you can get on what you need from your speaker, the better.

Yvi: Okay? We need a headshot. The headshot needs to be at least 400x400 pixel. We need a bio. Please do a short bio of, I don't know, 30 words and then do a longer bio of 250 words. Um, we need your title, we need the description for your talk. Are you going to have slides? Are you going to be on camera? Um, do you want to do a freebie? All of those questions, and again, the most specific you can be, the better. Tell them how many words. Tell them the title words. Tell them the sizes of the images, what kind of files can you take for the video and send that to them. Now if you can put that actually into a form, and I know we had that conversation in the green room. PDF is great, but not everybody is technical.

Yvi: That savvy. When you send a PDF it can cause issues and somebody saves it locally. Even when they already had entry. Suddenly that PDF is empty. They get mad because they just spent 15 minutes entering everything in that PDF. So rather than sending a PDF or a long email that says I need all of those things, take it to Airtable. You can start in Google docs with a spreadsheet and a form there, but it has its limitations. I prefer using Airtable. Build a form there. Give them the information. Again, how big this the image, how many words do you need for bio description? Throw all of that in a form. You can even add a little button that they can upload their picture with that form and put it all together in one so that it's easy on my end to be like, okay, um, yup, got the email.

Yvi: I know I need that. Put it on my calendar, get everything ready. I schedule a half an hour to fill out the form to get you all of the information, make sure I have everything okay and I'm fine. We don't have to go forward and back. Use schedulers. Use schedulers. Use schedulers with reminders. If it's a live summit, if you need to talk with them and it's an interview style kind of summit, use a scheduler and don't forget to set reminders. Some schedulers have the reminders where these some don't and really make it easy. Um, I'm pulling information from web design out of that. Our attention span is so short. We say in web design it's all about three. You have three clicks or three seconds to get people to the information they need. If you can turn that around and can make it that simple for your speakers, they gonna love you to pieces because that is the worst when you have to go forward and back, five emails, 10 emails. Oh yeah, we forgot that. Oh, we didn't get that. And things happen. So if you send an email with the list, yeah, I might be going through and I have spent the time to get it all to you and suddenly I forgot 0.3. That's where that form helps because it's all there. I can plug in right in it, complains at me when it's a required information field. It complains at me because I forgot something and it saves you so much time as well as me and just makes it easy.

Dr. Mark: This is really important here, what you're saying and, and, and how to make this easy. So systems, workflow, uh, make it, make it as easy as possible for the speaker. So I would love to actually hear from your perspective, um, what would be a wow experience because you, you've, you've got a lot of experience here. You know, you're giving us all this great, um, information on what we can do to make sure it's a good experience. I would love for you to kind of paint the picture like in, in go outside, like let's, let's, let's think like a, an 11 out of a 10 star kind of experience. Walk us through that from the initial kind of outreach or the person reaching out to you up into the interview. I'd love to just kind of get your feedback on that.

Yvi: Okay. Dream summit. One of the little things before we go through the, through the full workflow, um, something personal. So let's talk VIP Summits. Not a summit that's happening every month. It's maybe a quota summit or half a year or it's an annual summit. So we uh, we are looking really at the VIP experience with that. Get your speaker's address because you know, paperwork and all of those, you know, we always need everybody's mailing address and do a little something, um, social media day over Jessica with Now Marketing with her speakers, which she does. They get a little bobble heads when they speak. I know it's, it's, it's a public speaking stage, but they get their personalized bobble heads. You don't have to go that crazy. Send a little thank you note afterwards. I have gotten that from summit, really just a cute little handwritten fold up.

Yvi: Thank you note. Show them that you value them because speakers talk with each other. If you screw over one speaker and it's a trouble and they feel like they need to do your work, others will hear it. So keep it personal. Send a little thank you notes, go the extra mile, it will pay back for you. You will get back on it. I promise you. Now on the workflow and on the experience, as I said first email, don't do the template email, go personal. We all love our ego. We usually share when we speak. When the summit is going on and plug something in there. Mention a Facebook post, a Twitter post that you've seen them somewhere. Would you love about them? Something? It doesn't have to be much. It literally just takes a minute or two to personalize those regular templates. Keep it easy.

Yvi: We spawned and have the conversation with them. Then move into a way that they can submit things easily to you. It doesn't have to look fancy. You don't have to pay for Airtable. Just have all the information there, but also give them all the information for your summit to fast be able to make a decision just because you might not be talking to the right target market. Again, I know other speakers they might be going after your target market and if I get a good first impression I'm going to reach out to you and be like, Hey, not my target market or it doesn't fit in my schedule right now but I have somebody else that can fill that spot. So a great first impression already saves you time. Again, even if I not might be speaking and I know round the whole thing up.

Yvi: One thing we haven't even talked about yet is how to get your speakers to market your summit. Make it easy, don't reach out to speakers just a month before you do the summit. Give us time. We have schedules going on, we have multiple summits going on. I don't want to be promoting as summit when another summit is going on too, so I like to stagger them so I really can pay attention to summits. Give me the dates, give me enough time to be able to wrap up the summits I have going on and move into yours. And then please give me the assets. You are already building marketing material for your summit. You are already out there marketing it. Tell your VA to spend another hour, customize a couple of those images with my face on them and my title, send them to me or just put them in a big Google Drive folder and send everybody that link.

Yvi: Give me a couple posts, ideas for Twitter and Facebook. I'll copy and paste them. Even if I am moving or traveling or whatever, I always can copy and paste them and use them and if I have more time, how build up on that. I'll tell my VA here is two posts that we got, now write five more and put it into our rotation and get it out there. But with all of that you, you just also need the headway in time. You do not want to be like, Hey I got a summit going live tomorrow or you want to jump on live, give us time, give us time and attention and we'll be happy.

Dr. Mark: I love this. Yes. Make your, what a, you know, kind of out there idea. Why don't you treat your speakers with respect and gratitude. I go, that's a phenomenal idea. I think we should actually incorporate that. Yvi, this has been, this is great and I love how you called this like the VIP experience. I really believe, I believe one of the best, um, ROIs, the return on investments of a summit are actually non tangible return on investments. One is the authority and influence you create, but to have the relationships you can build with the speakers and if you create an experience like you've just mapped out for us Yvi, then that's one of those relationships that will surely flourish and become so much more. So I'm really grateful for your insights and wisdom here. We're going to start to wrap this up. Um, as we, as we wrap up this episode here, I would love to actually have you kind of take away or give us a takeaway on like what is like one key thing that our summit hosts should really be focused on when even as you've just said with this VIP experience, what's one key thing if they're going to walk away from this, uh, this episode, what's the one thing that they need to be thinking and keeping in their minds?

Yvi: Just one thing. Um, let's do two things. Personal and simple. It needs to be personal and simple. If just like DMV, if you feel like a number, it's gonna annoy you. So keep it personal. We're all just humans. We all like to engage. We all like to interact. And

simple. It's, it's gonna sound bad, but you are the one putting on the summit. You want me there? I'm not the one that reached out to you. I'm not the one bagging to be on your stage or in your summit. You're in the situation where speakers reach out to you. It doesn't matter. You have the social proof they want to be on your show, don't even worry about it. But that happens seldomly. So if you are reaching out to people, keep it simple because if I am going to have to spend hours, your name is gonna drop the next time people ask if they should be on that summit or not. You wouldn't believe how many conversations we had even just over the last few months because speaker circus is starting again for 2020 we are talking behind the scenes.

Yvi: We know exactly what other king's in and it doesn't matter if it's a public stage, if it's an in person event or if it's a summit, it's if it's a podcast, we're talking behind the scenes and we are talking like women after a bottle of wine. It's bad. It's honest and it's to the point. So if you are making it simple, if you will, being that things go wrong, own up to it. Hey we had technical issues. Something that doesn't work like the link just broke, I don't know, saw it. We fixed that. It'll go a long way. You might be spending right now half an hour or an hour more on me to make it easy to build all of those, all of the workflows, all of the systems, all of the forms who are building for your first summit. You can use again for the next summit. Spend the time, have the conversation and we're gonna do the work for you because if something pops up and I love the summit and I just filled up my course with your summit attendees, I'm going to ask for the next one. If I can be on it again. And I'm going to send you other over. I'm going to send you over other speakers too because we know we are not just a number, we are not just there to bring you new email subscribers and suddenly you don't even have to reach out to speakers because we speakers are gonna bring new speakers.

Dr. Mark: That was a phenomenal advice right there, Yvi, so I know our audience are, some of the hosts are going, I need to get Yvi on to my summit right now. What's the best place or way they can get in touch with you and like where are you hanging out on social?

Yvi: I'm pretty much listening everywhere on social, behind the scenes that's happening on Instagram, regular, all the things that happening on Facebook specifically as a speaker, I'm making it easy for you too. There is my website called askyvi.com. That's A-S-K-Y-V-I.com and just find the menu item speaking. You get a little idea of who I am and there's a little form on the bottom. There's even all the social media links, anything you could use right at the beginning.

Dr. Mark: Absolutely love that. Thank you so much Yvi. I appreciate you taking the time out of your schedule to drop this amazing summit gems on us. Thank you so much for doing that.

Yvi: Thank you so much for having me.

Dr. Mark: And thank you all you summit hosts for hanging out with Yvi and I over here on the Virtual Summit Podcast on Dr. Mark T. Wade, founder of virtual summit software. Remember your message matters, so go out there and make an impact. Don't forget to check out the show notes so you can get access to all these amazing resources that

you've been sharing with us over podcast.virtualsummits.com/089 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.