

Episode 200: Peek into how our Viral Summits Concierge Team Creates Summits.

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Speakers: Dr. Mark T. Wade, Shannon, Karl Eisenman, Jackie

Dr. Mark T. Wade ([00:05](#)):

Hey, summit hosts, Dr. Mark T. Wade here, founder of Virtual Summits Software and your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast. And I am beyond delighted for this episode. We are doing a specialty episode. First off episode, 200 everybody. That's amazing. 200 episodes on the Virtual Summit Podcast. We appreciate each and every one of you for tuning in with us here on the, on the podcast.

Dr. Mark ([01:07](#)):

And for that reason, I've decided to do something super special, something I'm really excited to do, which is to introduce you to the heart and soul of the Viral Summits Concierge Agency. Today's special episode, we're going to be talking to three of the main people that make the magic happen over in our agency, Viral Summits, which creates summits that matter. Now, before we jump into all of the amazingness, which we're going to talk about what works, we're going to talk about what doesn't work. We're going to talk about common hosts mistakes, and we're going to give you, you know, some of the mistakes we've made along the way as well. But before we jump into all of that amazing goodness, I'm going to let Jackie, Karl and Shannon briefly introduce themselves. We're going to start with Shannon then Jackie, and then Karl, go on ahead.

Shannon ([01:59](#)):

I'm Shannon. I've worked with Dr. Mark for almost two years now, and I get to be the person that gets to onboard USA Post into the platform, which is incredibly fun and cool. And then I also help you and your attendees with any support questions, kind of handle all of the customer support and make sure everybody's going smoothly.

Dr. Mark ([02:25](#)):

Amazing. Thanks, Shannon, Jackie, go on ahead and introduce yourself.

Jackie ([02:29](#)):

And Jackie, I joined the team earlier this year. I am a speaker concierge, so I helped get your speakers, get their information, get them the information that they're going to need to help promote your summit. I try and give them the kick in the butt if they aren't promoting the way they're supposed to. And I'm also transitioning into a business process analyst. So taking all of the mistakes that we've made, taking all of the issues that we see, the host and the speakers make, and trying to find ways to streamline them and keep them from happening again. Make the best of it.

Dr. Mark ([03:00](#)):

We're totally going to be diving into some of those year. Thank you, Jackie. And Karl.

Karl ([03:08](#)):

Hello everyone. Hi I'm Karl Eisenman. I am the summit strategist here at Viral Summits Agency and, um, I'll be helping you all summit hosts go through all the process. I'll be the main point of contact between

our team and your team, and we'll make sure that we get everything on time and up and ready to go for the summit launch.

Dr. Mark ([03:30](#)):

Thank you so much, Karl. All right. So you can hear right now we've got the heart and soul of the Viral Summits Concierge here with us. So I want to jump in, we're gonna start off with, with just some kind of easy questions, some easy to, uh, you know, starter points with processes, and then we're going to get into some common mistakes and some common challenges, um, from the host side, from the speaker side and also from the attendees side, which is not often thought about, so we're going to dive into that momentarily, but let's start off with this. Karl let's, uh, let, let let's talk about the process. When we get started with the summit hosts, like what, what should they be expecting? Like what should they be planning to do when they first get started? Like what, what is, what's something great that they should be bringing to the table or have in their mind maybe when it comes to the topic of their summit and, and kind of jumping into it?

Karl ([04:20](#)):

I would say the first, um, one of the first steps that we will go through is we call this summit formation. So it's when we thought we would really start to think about, um, the main problem that the summit avatar, the attendees are having and focus everything around that problem, that solution, that way we can find the niche that we are looking for and, um, really get locked down the name, um, the dates of the summits really have a hard think of the topics of each day, how we're going to go through them. And, um, what else, what else am I missing, Dr. Mark?

Dr. Mark ([04:55](#)):

Well, that's definitely where we would be starting off. So let's talk about some different topics, uh, that some, that some of the summits, and actually like just a comment on this from an experience standpoint. I mean, I like to say this a lot. Uh, when we talk about summits, you know, there's about 14% of the world is entrepreneurs. Out of that 14%, only about 1% will ever host a summit. Well, these three right here have done 13 summits in the last four months. So put that a little bit into perspective. Karl, so with that being said, 13 different summits, let's talk about some of the different topics that have popped up with summits and from your, your opinion, like what kind of makes a good topic and maybe what's a little bit off point. Okay.

Karl ([05:58](#)):

So I'm all about the niches. So I really think that we need to focus on one problem and one solution and kind of work the summit around that. What we've been seeing in our experiences that for example, in the health industry, those do very well because doctors and, um, even patients are looking for different types of solutions these days, as everyone knows. So this, these virtual summits for those types of patients really do well. Um, we've also seen some entrepreneur summits do very well as well. So I'm a little bit different ones can, um, you know, go different ways. But the, the main ones are the ones that really have a clear focus on what they want to achieve.

Dr. Mark ([06:41](#)):

Well, and let's, well, we'll come back to some common mistakes in a minute. That was great right there. Uh, going over to the speaker side of this. So we've, we've started the process. We've got our hosts that have come in, they've started, uh, they've come up with their idea. They're moving through the process

of crafting their summit agenda and their itinerary. And now it's time to start reaching out to speakers. Jackie, what are some best practices being the, you know, the expert over there with a speaker management and, and, and really, uh, getting them to take action, which, uh, is, is no small feat. What is some best practices when they're initially reaching out to potential speakers to be on their summit?

Jackie ([07:23](#)):

The main thing that you're going to be looking for as a speaker, it's somebody who's knowledgeable, someone who has an audience base and someone who's willing to promote. Um, so really reaching out, making a personal connection, following up with it, continuing to talk, you know, you might reach out to them and then four months later is going to be the summit. You don't want to lose contact with them during those four months, you really want to build that connection. You want to ensure that, you know, they're just as passionate about this topic as you are, and you want to find ways to encourage them to promote or make it more beneficial to promote. There are summit commissions, but you want to find other ways as well, um, with whether it be helping cross promote their company or business or products and finding them as sponsors, just finding ways to think if somebody were to approach you to speak on a summit, what would make it beneficial for you and implementing those, uh, with your speakers? Another thing is I have four kids. I'm a single mom of four kids, so it's constant chaos. And that's, it prepared me for dealing with constant speakers because it's constant chaos. So you really need to be willing to juggle, willing to work with them, finding what works for individuals and not just doing a blanket. This is what I'll give you. And hoping that they'll promote, you really need to confirm that they're going to do this for you and see what you can offer them in return.

Dr. Mark ([08:49](#)):

Well, I love that. And let's dive into that. The constant chaos, like give us some of, you know, some of the frustrations or challenges that comes with, uh, managing speakers. Okay. Cause a lot of our summit hosts who are listening, you know, they're going to be running their own summit. So they're essentially Karl, Jackie and Shannon all in one, one spot. So they're going to be managing speakers as well. What's some common challenges, um, that you face when managing speakers, getting them to engage,

Jackie ([09:22](#)):

Right? The biggest one is getting them to engage, getting them to promote again. And a lot of them might 30 there, the assumption that they will promote, or they might even agree to promote. And when it comes down to it, you know, it's not done. Um, and unfortunately that's just a common factor in every summit, no matter how hard you work at it, there's going to be some that just aren't going to promote. And another big thing is you might have speakers willing to promote, but if they don't have the audience-based to promote to, it's still not going to get you to the point that you're wanting to with your summit. So, which means you need to factor in, if these speakers aren't promoting, in ten speakers only have a smaller list. You need to get so many more speakers in addition. So initially we say 35 promoting speakers, but if they have small list or you approve a few of them not promoting, you might need 45, you might need 65 in order to actually get the results that you're wanting.

Jackie ([10:21](#)):

I think some speakers are very particular about how they're presented. So it's going to be a big issue with, you know, what you present to them as your summit topic needs to be the summit topic. You know, we've seen speakers pull out of summits because what the host initially told them, isn't the direction they ended up going and it didn't align with their audience. It didn't align with their

perspective. So it wasn't going to be beneficial. And it wasn't something that they were going to stand behind. And so just really being honest with them about it and getting them on board early as possible so that we can get the information, we can get materials, we can make edits or corrections as needed. And those are really just the big things.

Dr. Mark ([11:05](#)):

So true. Right. They're so true. It's kinda like, uh, herding cats sometimes we joke about, um, amazing. Thanks Jackie. Shannon. Um, I want to talk about the attendees. Is this an area that a lot of summit hosts don't actually think about? They spend a lot of time on the summit topic. There's someone idea on speaker recruitment and then interviews and offer creation, all these amazing goodies and then summit live comes it's time to actually do the summit and they haven't really thought much about the attendees. So I'd love to kind of dive into a couple areas, you know, that that either can make an attendee really happy or that can cause attendees frustration, uh, and disappointment. So what are some of the common things you've seen from attendees that either make them really happy with the summit and some of the things that maybe make them more frustrated?

Shannon ([11:55](#)):

So one of the, I guess the main thing that I would say that makes them happy is, um, they get every email they get to basically go through and watch the videos start to finish without a hitch that makes them very happy. Um, also answering their questions in a very minimal amount of time. So we try to answer questions in less than three to four hours. If somebody sends me. The frustrating part for a lot of them is, um, the browser that they're using. So if they're using, let's say Safari, that may not be the best one for them to use. And so we like to make sure that everybody is, is watching a summit on Chrome. It's, it's the best way to do it. You usually don't have many glitches in that at all. And then, um, I'd say that the, um, I guess the other thing would be understanding the process. So we do get a lot of people that, that send emails in that don't know how to go and watch the presentations. So even if it says watch now, or they have to scroll down, that's just a common mistake. So, um, we do get a lot of people that just don't understand. They're new to summits. They've never participated in one before. And so you just have to make sure that they understand here's what you do and you'll get, you know, at that point, you'll be able to just get through it.

Dr. Mark ([13:36](#)):

I think that's a great point there. Most people aren't thinking about the differences in browsers, Safari and Internet Explorer are just commonly poor, uh, poorly supported browsers in general, whereas Chrome and or Firefox are typically more, more functionable. Excellent points there. Now, when it comes to the attendees and you've seen a lot of positive feedback from attendees from the different summits they've attended. Have you seen anything as far as like what they really enjoy from a content perspective or are they, do they really enjoy having live streams that happened during their summit? Or is there a specialty item that we've seen on summits that people have really responded to in the past? Like what are some things other than the just normal prerecorded sessions that attendees, uh, value and look forward to?

Shannon ([14:26](#)):

So that is a very good question. And actually you're, you're right about one of them the live. So the live sessions make the attendee feel special. They get to actually interact and it's not just, um, what some people would consider a, um, automated prerecorded, just not even, you know, a back and forth, um,

personalized. So the personalization from the lives is what people love. And then recently also, um, one of our biggest hits is when hosts do an e-book, the people love the e-books. Um, and that's, uh, that's a very special thing. The other thing that they like is, um, the personalization that they get. So when we send emails or, um, reminders, and it comes from the host, they feel like the host is talking to them directly.

Dr. Mark ([15:29](#)):

That kind of level of customization and personalization goes a long way. Amazing. Thank you. Well, Karl, let's, uh, let's dive into a little bit of the overarching processes in times. Like you, you spend a lot of time making sure all of the summits are kind of coming together on time and, and all of the different processes are happening now from an estimation. Like let's just, you know, let's just kind of estimate here. How much time do you think it takes for a summit to adequately prepare and, and host a summit?

Karl ([16:03](#)):

Um, okay. So I would say, you know, a good amount of time to prepare for a summit would be around four to three months prior to the summit launch date. Um, and throughout all of those, all of that time, all of those processes will go through different phases. Um, we usually do it's around four phases. So we do the summit formation, which we've already talked about the speaker phase, which Jackie, when Jackie jumps in, kind of helps out with recruitment and all of that for the speakers, getting all the information from then. Um, and then we go to the build-out obviously, and then the summit live, which would kind of start the summit. And then we have a couple of ending processes as well. Um, so throughout all those process, I would give it a good, you know, 10, 15, 20 hour weeks, depending on which phase, um, throughout those three month processes.

Dr. Mark ([16:56](#)):

Well, let's, let's dive into that because that's a really good point there. So what are the areas that kind of suck up the most time? Where do we see hosts kind of get behind schedule because they weren't prepared for the amount of time, like where's those sticking spots.

Karl ([17:11](#)):

I would say the most for the host the most time consuming phase of the whole process would be the speaker recruitment and interviews. Um, so I think that people underestimate how much time and energy it really takes to conduct over 35 interviews. So they really need to prepare for that mentally, even physically, it can be hard on, on anyone for trying to, you know, conduct all of those. I know Dr. Mark is an expert on that. He's done 100 plus interviews in, I don't know, I think one month, which is insane. So he is definitely the, the one to model.

Dr. Mark ([17:45](#)):

Crazy one. I'm the crazy one. And that's why there's a bag of Hall's and throat lozenges and stuff all around well from, I love how you, you talked about the interview and the amount of time that goes into it, and there's so much, um, we've actually got full episodes on that. You can, you know, everyone can listen into. We talked about interview fatigue and what actually goes into it because as Karl was saying, there's a physical component that goes into this as well. Also during the summit live, like when the summit actually starts and goes, there's a lot of energy that, that goes into, and it's really important to prepare your mind body and, you know, maybe your soul to also just want to put a post point out. I

think we should coin that phrase, the host with the most, I think that's what you were saying there, the hostess with the mostess.

Dr. Mark ([18:30](#)):

So, um, now let's also dive in a little bit to, from our, well, we'll come back to our side and just a moment. Um, so Jackie, I want to get into a little bit of the analytic aspects. Like, so when we talk about speakers and promotions and, um, from, from our standpoint, from the Viral Summits concierge standpoint, what are we looking at? Like, what are we looking at to see if speakers are on track, if they're engaged, how can we kind of measure that, engage that in advance so that we can step in and try and fix it before it's too late?

Jackie ([19:06](#)):

Well, initially it's just matter of, you know, communication with me. I send out multiple emails a week to the speakers and they're reminding them of dates. I'm reaching back out. If I haven't gotten their speaker information yet, if they haven't signed up for affiliates yet, um, when we do send out their promotional materials, um, ideally we would like all the speakers to already have their affiliate account set up. It takes two to three minutes. Doesn't require any personal information. Doesn't require payment information. It's a really quick, simple process, but sometimes it's pulling teeth to get people to actually do it. Um, but so when they do that, then we go in and every day we're looking at, you know, how many clicks have they gotten? How many opt-ins have they gotten? How many sales have they gotten? I, and you know, we reach out if they're doing great, we say, you're doing great.

Jackie ([19:56](#)):

This is awesome. You know, we really appreciate it. We appreciate everything you're doing. We really hope that you'll keep doing it. Um, because those top promoters are really picking up the Slack for the ones that don't, and the ones that aren't promoting. We're also reaching out, being, you know, is everything okay? Do you need anything? Is there an issue with something that, you know, you need addressed in order to promote? Cause we haven't, we've noticed there's no traffic. Um, sometimes it's just, they haven't proved it. Sometimes they, and then we also ask what their promotion schedule is and that way we can make note of it, we can check, they say, they're going to, Oh, I'm sending out an email tomorrow and tomorrow comes and goes. And the next day there's still no traffic. Like, okay, well you said you were going to promote tomorrow.

Jackie ([20:37](#)):

You know, did something happen? What's going on? And sometimes it's, they forgot to include their affiliate link. You know, we've had that happen where people are promoting, but they just forgot to put their link in there. And sometimes they put the wrong link by accident. Sometimes they have it scheduled. Sometimes they don't. And the ones that don't, you know, we do recommend to the host that there is some sort of consequence for not fulfilling their promotion agreement. Um, they, everyone signs an agreement saying they will promote, they know the promotion dates ahead of time. So there's no excuse like, Oh, well I don't have time to schedule it. Even if they don't get their email swipe right away, they already knew the dates. They could have already scheduled it because they will get their swipe and materials in time for the promotional period.

Dr. Mark ([21:24](#)):

Well, you bring up a really excellent point here. Let's dive into this a little bit. So what would an example of a consequence or something be what can summit hosts do? Because I know a lot of them say like, you know, I asked the speaker to promote and they didn't promote, so what, what can we do to actually help encourage and hold those speakers accountable?

Jackie ([21:45](#)):

One of the main things that I've suggested to our hosts, um, if, if a speaker had agreed to promote and doesn't one of the things you can do is you can either pull them from the summit, which most of us don't want to do because they still want that message out. But you can also, we can remove their lead generation link from their speaker page. And because if they aren't going to help promote and benefit the summit, then theory, they shouldn't benefit from the summit. So they can still get their message out. People still get their name, but they don't necessarily get the benefit of building their list off of it.

Dr. Mark ([22:21](#)):

Uh, and I, I'll back that. I've, I've found that to be an effective, uh, at least encouragement for most speakers. And again, sometimes you can just mention it. You don't actually have to follow through with it, if it makes you feel uncomfortable, but usually just holding your speaker accountable is enough to get them to actually fall through for the ones who, you know, will actually do that. Now Shannon, I want to kind of come at the, the attendees, um, from the aspect of what gets them really excited. And let's maybe hone in a little bit on Summit Talks, uh, for this specific question, but like what have you, what have you seen, um, maybe some out of the box examples that we did that are not just necessarily a live stream or not just, um, you know, a, a prerecorded video that we did in Summit Talks that really got attendees involved, engaged, and, and showing up. What are some, some of those examples?

Shannon ([23:22](#)):

That is the biggest one that I can give to anybody is contests. That is the biggest thing that will get your audience and your speakers completely engaged, especially on social media. So for Summit Talks, we did use Facebook for quite a few of the contest. We gave away money. We gave away prizes, but there was, it, it increased the interaction and it increased our lead list as well. So anything that the attending just wants to feel like they are, they're interacting with the host and they're having fun with the host. So I'd say, like I said, the, the main one would be the, the contest thing, for sure.

Dr. Mark ([24:11](#)):

I agree. It really gets the attendees involved, gives them excited. It gives them an incentive, something to look forward to, uh, to, and that keeps them coming back as well.

Shannon ([24:21](#)):

They also have the other big thing that I noticed with you and Summit Talks was the opening ceremony and a closing ceremony. And it gives the perception of almost like the Olympics. So you're, you're actually getting to join and see everything and participate as it should be. And if you incorporate the competitions and the contest, you will have massive interaction for sure.

Dr. Mark ([24:54](#)):

So that also, it also engaged by bringing the speakers into those activities as well. It really engaged the speakers as well. So great points there.

Dr. Mark (25:26):

Now for everybody listening in, Viral Summits Concierge started, it had to start somewhere. And when we first got started, our processes were kind of all over the place. Our systems were all over the place and we had things happening in real time. So a lot of these things we were having to figure out as we go. Now, some of you might be thinking well, Mark, you, you run summits all the time. What do you mean about figuring out processes? Totally true. But when you have 20 different people working on a summit at one time, the processes need to be very specific and detailed. And in this situation, there was three to four summits a month happening all in the same time. So luckily this amazing crew here has helped us refine these systems. It's one of the things we focus on every month is looking back at our processes. How can we improve those? How can we innovate and continue to grow? But let's take a step back into that messy chaos that we started in for a second here. Karl, what was some of the most challenging aspects from being in an agency and hosting summits for a variety of different summits? Uh, what was some of the most challenging things for you as the summit strategist?

Karl 4 (26:37):

Okay. So, um, I will say this again, that it's very important to due dates. Um, we will obviously divide tasks between our team and then the host team. Um, they're responsible for different things. We're responsible for other things. And the only way that we can get the work done on time is if the host actually gets the work on, on time. So, um, you know, obviously there's some communication issues as we're all in different areas of the world. Um, there's also, uh, different timing. You know, some people have some hosts have a full-time job. So they're also juggling, you know, between their full-time job as well as running a summit. So it's difficult to, um, you know, coordinate, I would say more than anything. So the coordination of all of the items that we will need to build out this a successful summit.

Dr. Mark (27:28):

Yeah. That is definitely a challenge right there. Getting those due dates done in time, holding fast to that. Um, let's, let's go ahead and dive in a little bit into the technical side of things to build out what are some of the challenges when it comes to now, and for everybody listening in here, you know, for most of our Viral Summits clients, we build these from scratch. They want a completely customized summit. So it is rebuilt from the ground up for every single summit. So looking at it from a technical build-out standpoint, um, Karl, what would you say is some of the biggest challenges we face in building out a summit?

Karl (28:05):

Okay. So I would, I would suggest, I would say the, maybe understanding their vision so we can get the copy correct. So we will build out the copy as long as we have the whole summit, as long as we have their vision, um, concrete on our side. So, um, it's important to know during the summit formation, we will ask for the branding guides, um, what, what their whole vision is, what they want to kind of let out to the world for them to see, because obviously this is, this is high stress situations for the S for the summit host as this is, their life works all in one week, basically. So it's important that we get every, all the most information that we can from them. So we have the best idea of what to put out.

Dr. Mark (28:53):

Yeah, I think we, uh, we've experienced times, we can't read minds yet. We're still working on that point. And when, when we do it'll make everything easier, but, uh, not understanding exactly what the host wants, definitely adds challenges into it. And I would say, you know, from a smaller standpoint, but

as critical, um, you know, when we're building out a summit from scratch, there's literally thousands of little pieces that have to be done, created, uh, and checked, you know, and sometimes, uh, you know, those can cause overlap or, or errors as well. So Jackie kind of going with that same, the same theme. What, what has been some of the biggest challenges from your position? Um, other than getting speakers to promote, for example, what has been some of the biggest challenges, uh, that you've experienced as the speaker concierge and, you know, managing anywhere from, you know, four or five summits at a time, each of those having 30 to 60 speakers. So, I mean, we're talking about juggling, well, hundreds of speakers at any one given moment, what are some, maybe some of the technical components for you that have been a challenge in your position?

Jackie ([30:04](#)):

The biggest thing is getting the speaker information and getting it properly. So I'm not just bits and pieces here and there, making sure when you give me your lead gen link or your free gift link, or if it's a summit registration or a purchased gift link, um, that they're correct the first time and making sure that the details are the way that speakers are going to want them on the page and getting all that information in time so that it can be reviewed. And the biggest thing is going in. And once we've built all the pages, you know, one little changed, one speaker name affects multiple pages, you know, in the next 20 pages or one little change to this detail that those wants to make an effect 20 to 40 pages, and that's time to do it. We have incredible builders and we have incredible designers, great video editors.

Jackie ([30:56](#)):

Like we have an amazing copywriter. We have a really talented team, but they're very talented, but they also have full plates. So we need to get the information correctly the first time around or the first edit around. Um, it puts us behind if we're constantly going in and trying to make little tweaks here and there. So really just getting, getting the information the way you want it. We're not going to go through and we're not gonna edit every little item. Like we're trusting that when you send us your bio, like, that's your bio. If you said you had four kids and you only have three, like we're not going to know that about you. Um, the other thing is really making sure that if your speakers don't get us your information, then we rely on the host and the host team to at least get us the photo and the bio. Um, that way it makes your summit look more complete, but, you know, I don't know these speakers, so I can't just go Google them. I don't know if I'm going to be pulling the right information. So that's as much as I'd like to help. And sometimes if I have at least their business website or something, I can grab that, but just really having that information available and making sure that it's given to us in a timely fashion,

Dr. Mark ([32:07](#)):

You know, two things about that one, if you have, you know, you say I have four kids and you only have three, well now you just got another kid that's what's happening right there. No, but in all, in all transparency, what you're saying, what you've just said, there is one little mistake can cause hours of work that has to happen. So it's so important that the speakers and the summit hosts are aligned and in tune as well. And for all of you listening here, when you're doing your summit, I mean, think about this. If you get the information from your speakers, well, first off, we're going to dive back into this right now. Jackie, how are you collecting that information from your speakers first off? Are you sending emails back and forth to try and collect headshot, bio title, topic, et cetera. I mean the amount of work that would go into that and then to change like a misspelling, like, Oh, I want my name to be Mark T. Wade, instead of just Mark Wade that can affect everything in your summit. As in the speaker pages, the day event pages, the promotional pages, et cetera, all of the graphics that have been designed, it affects all of that. So make sure for you listening into this, that you have double check that information before you start all

that process, but let's, let's talk about how we collect the information, Jackie. Um, what, what is, you know, what would be like your best recommendation for our summit hosts listening in here when they're trying to collect all this speaker data?

Jackie ([33:27](#)):

The best recommendation I can give is we create a, like when you were working with Karl, you're going to create a speaker invite page for your reaching out. Um, on that page is going to be linked a Google form that we've personalized to you to your summit. It'll have the speaker agreement and the promotion agreement. How about the important dates and it has all of the information that both we need for the summit and additional information that you might want to need for, you know, what does their topic best aligned with, or, you know, do they have a suggestion for another speaker? Are they interested in being a sponsor? Do they know someone or a product that could be a sponsor? So things that could be very helpful to you and it's linked to the speaker invite. I also follow up. So when you give me your list of speakers and their emails, I follow up and send them the speaker page by follow up again, if they haven't completed it. But every bit of information that we need is on that form. So really getting them to fill it out is the biggest thing. Um, you sending it to them right away is super helpful. Um, as soon as they agree to be a speaker and the sooner we get that information, the more beneficial it is to you and the more beneficial it is to us and our builders.

Dr. Mark ([34:42](#)):

That is such a great point. And, and the, the, the form you know, collecting that data via form is one of the best recommendations that I can give for anybody. Now, if you're using the Virtual Summits Software, one of the cool things with that is it essentially has a speaker management feature built into it. Um, but it's still kind of good to make sure that you have a way to collect that data. Now, Shannon, from the attendees standpoint here, like if somebody you've just juggled multiple different summits at the same time, and there's a lot of different aspects that go into it, what would you say is the most time consuming part of, of the customer service response for a summit?

Shannon ([35:25](#)):

I'd say it would be, I guess the fact that attendees realize, well, they don't really care cause they shouldn't have, if we're doing four summits, which we have done in the past, that it may take a little bit of time to get back to them. Um, the, the other thing is it's important to remember as a host, that attendees don't care at all, and they can go back and forth with questions and not like your answer, back and forth and back and forth and back and forth. And that ends up being really problematic. The other thing too is if you're juggling that many summits, you have to actually remember what each one of those hosts is actually doing, what they're giving away, um, what their expectations are. And, and then the other thing that does take a little bit of time is that if attendees reach out to the host directly, the host wants to answer it and they should be sending them to the support channel. If you have one, that's great. Obviously we do with a, quite a big team, but it's important that the host understands exactly what we do in support. We're here to help them.

Dr. Mark ([36:49](#)):

It's super important. I'd also say, yeah, that, you know, there's always going to be those problematic attendees. And what I try and tell summit hosts is like, look, first off, don't put everything about your summit on the one or two negative comments that you get, because you're always going to have somebody that's going to give you a negative comment as an attendee. What, in one of the biggest

mistakes I've seen a summit host make is change things based on that feedback. Those are not your ideal customers. Those are not your ideal attendees. Don't change your strategy based on the people who are not your ideal customers and attendees, and just understand some people are going to have negative responses and that's okay. Serve them the best you can, and then move forward with helping the others as well. Um, now response time, you may, you mentioned that in, in as far as attendees, um, and our summit hosts, you know, we've got a lot of summit hosts that are going to be, that are listening into this right now. They're just doing one summit, but they're kind of like the solo summit, right? They're doing all of it. They're doing the graphics, they're doing video editing, they're doing speaker outreach and they're actually doing the customer service. What's the kind of response time that you've seen most attendees are expecting. And where does it start to, if it goes beyond that two, four, six, eight, 24 hours, whatever, that's, when the attendees really start to get a little disgruntled?

Shannon ([38:07](#)):

I would say, um, probably about 70, 75% expect the answer within the hour. It's an, and what you just mentioned, especially if the host is doing everything, that's an unrealistic goal. And so, um, we do have, you know, if a, if a attendee is expecting your answer within minutes, you already know that that attendee is going to be sucking your time. So don't, you need to, you definitely need to move on because you want to put your time into the people that are actually engaged, are actually wanting to hear your information, actually have a legitimate question. So it's, it's also a matter of, once you start doing the summits, you do kind of figure out, um, how to maneuver basically, and figure out who to spend the time with, who to not. And what you also said that is super important is that you don't take two people that say, I didn't like this, and you didn't give me the information I needed to then turn around and change everything, your message, everything about the summit for those people. And so, um, I, like I said, I'd say the seventy-five percent and there's, um, you know, once you start hitting like that two to four hour mark, your attendees start to get a little bit agitated.

Dr. Mark ([39:41](#)):

So I'd say based on that information, you know, checking the emails two to three times a day would be a highly recommended at the minimum. And what about, um, I know a lot of times we use templates, like we know the common responses or questions that are gonna come, what are some of the most, you know, maybe top three to five, most common questions, um, or topics that come up. So are the summit host listening in right now, maybe able to prepare for those?

Shannon ([40:10](#)):

Um, it's, it's going to sound a bit odd, but the most basic questions that you would think are just obvious, how do I log in? Um, how do I watch the presentation? So the more that the host shows it's basically, um, I actually say, when I train other support staff is dumb it down for a two year old. You gotta make it so incredibly basic that those questions that should not even be asked, won't be, um, the other, the other is, um, how do I watch? How do I watch the presentations? How do I know who's on the schedule? Uh, how do I, how do I get in touch with that speaker directly? How long will I have access to the free gift link? How long will I have access to the software? So I can see the summit if it's lifetime access. So those are really the top main questions. Yeah.

Dr. Mark ([41:16](#)):

That is, those are like those right there. Write those down. Now, Shannon just gave it to you. Um, I'd also say, you know, as you get those emails in those questions in save your responses, either do a

document, an Excel document, a word document, or just save it in, in whatever platform you're because you are most likely going to be answering those exact same questions over and over and over. So that will save you some time. Now, as we start to wrap up this episode, which has been an blast hanging out with my crew over here, um, I kind of want to get your, some more high level thoughts from each of you. I'd love for you to let's, let's start off with the, um, what do you each, and we'll go in these, uh, one at a time. But the thing that makes the biggest difference, uh, from, from a summit, like what's, what's the one thing you would say can kind of move the needle the most, um, or make the biggest difference for the summit. So we'll go ahead and start off with Shannon.

Shannon ([42:14](#)):

Um, I would say that the biggest thing that I would suggest is to plan your time accordingly. Do not rush something. Be smart about it. Make sure that you actually understand every single solitary process. Like we've talked about the, um, having the hosts, not understand how support works or how speakers work. The more you pay attention to things, the better it will be. The more, you know, that it takes three to four months, the better you will be. Don't go into it and think which a lot of people do. I'm going to get this done in two weeks, cause I'm working 24 hours a day. That won't happen.

Dr. Mark ([42:59](#)):

Excellent. Karl, what would you say make some of the biggest difference for a summit?

Karl ([43:06](#)):

Um, I would definitely put a lot of focus into the offers. Um, some summit hosts or not only the offer, just the overall understanding of a summit like Shannon was speaking about. A summit shouldn't be your way to get rich. It should be more of your entrance to that doorway to be able to offer, you know, service or product or whatever it is that you want to offer. But that's why I do think it goes hand in hand, but I do really think it's important to have a solid offer, really think about what works, what doesn't work within a summit and what works for the post summit offer as well, and make sure that that's already ready to go. Um, we do have a lot of hosts trying to build out a summit while they're building out their post summit offer as well. And I think that creates some sort of friction, some extra work. So it is important to have a solid offer for your summit.

Dr. Mark ([44:00](#)):

Excellent feedback there, Jackie.

Jackie ([44:04](#)):

All right. Well, I think it goes three main things. Um, the offer is super important. Like you have to be, if people are going to pay for it, they want to get something of value. Um, so even if it seems valuable to you, you really need to put a lot of thought into it. A lot of effort into it. Karl is amazing. He's our host whisperer that he's great at helping you figure out ways to bump up an offer at another extra tier at another like little thing. And those little amounts are really going to add up. Second is your promotion is incredibly important. Your speakers need to promote, you need to promote. If you're not promoting you can't expect them to. So they need to see it. You doing lives with them going on podcasts, finding other social media groups or platforms that, you know, you can promote your summit anywhere you can and try and do it for like, don't spend a bunch of money on your advertising fees, find like-minded people and like-minded groups, you know, it's not going to cost you to advertise in those areas.

Jackie ([45:03](#)):

So find places that you can post about it, find people you can post about it, talk about it. Um, and lastly is just finding ways to really engage your audience. So whether that's, uh, doing live events, whether that's adding features where, you know, they can connect with the hosts, uh, they can ask questions and get them answered and they can tag with the speakers, like any way to make them feel like they're interacting instead of just sitting and watching something. Feel they can sit and watch Netflix. They can sit and watch TV. They can sit and watch sports, but they're sitting and watching your summit. And so they need to feel like they're getting something more out of it, especially if they're going to put money into it.

Dr. Mark ([45:44](#)):

Such good wisdom right there. And I'd love to, to kind of end us on a positive, inspirational note. So I'm going to have each of you, uh, you know, your thoughts on what's. Why, why should our summit hosts that are listening here, despite hearing all the challenges in the work and the effort that goes into it? Like why should they host a summit? Like what's the benefit? What's, what's the reason they should do it. So we're going to start with Karl and then we'll go Shannon and Jackie. So Karl.

Karl ([46:35](#)):

Okay. Well a couple of things jumped out to me, but I'll talk about two very important ones. Um, you know, a lot of hosts come back after they do a summit with us and they talk to us about how incredible the process, how incredible the experience was. But as well as the feedback from the attendees, the speakers, they they'll see a big high jump in people actually reaching out to them to come on, either on their Facebook groups to speak about things on their summits, um, their podcasts. So it, it also gives a lot of outreach. Um, another thing is it does create a really good connection with the speakers. Um, for example, I've had a host come, come back to us and say, you know, one of the speakers actually offered, offered me a job or, or offered me a kind of like joint venture, um, thing to do with them. So it it's really cool. It works both ways with the attendees as well the speakers.

Dr. Mark ([47:34](#)):

Amazing. Okay. Shannon, some positive words of inspiration.

Shannon ([47:39](#)):

Um, I would say to remember that, um, with the summit you are building your authority, you are the one that now people will come to for advice, for help to ask you to be on their summit. So you're just creating yourself as one of the best in that niche that you're, that you're doing. And I think that's probably one of the greatest things. The other thing is what Karl was talking about, the engagement with the attendees. You are, you will make relationships for a lifetime, many times with some of these attendees. And, um, that's also what I've seen a lot of people happening and that's pretty cool too.

Dr. Mark ([48:28](#)):

That's super cool. All right, Jackie.

Jackie ([48:32](#)):

I won't parrot what they've said, but I agree with it completely. Um, the other thing that I would say is the basically, your summit, once it's over, now you have a product. Now you have something more. You

have something that you can brand, something you can offer, something you can sell, something you can create off of. So your summit is to get your name out there. Your summit is to get awareness out there for what else you have to offer, for what other things you already have for your business already, for the business you're wanting to start. It's gonna open up all these doors and it's now you have one more thing to offer. One more trick in your pocket that you can use to monopolize on and to really boost yourself and build your list, build yourself and your brand.

Dr. Mark ([49:25](#)):

Wow, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Jackie, Shannon and Karl, this has been absolutely phenomenal. Episode 200, specialty episode behind the scenes with the heart and soul of the Viral Summits Concierge. Our agency right here is creating summits that matter. They are making an impact in the world, helping hosts, reach more people. Uh, I know every day that we get excited to go through those challenges and those difficult moments, because we are playing a small part in that role of making a big difference in the world. And I know all of you summit hosts listening right now. That is what matters. You have a message that matters and an impact to making this world. So I hope you'll go out there and let that message shine and take some information from us here to go out and put that towards your next or first virtual summit. Shannon, Jackie, Karl, thank you so much for spending this time with me hanging out and sharing your knowledge and information with our summit hosts.

Jackie ([50:26](#)):

Thanks Mark.

Shannon ([50:27](#)):

Thank you.

Karl ([50:28](#)):

Yeah, thank you. Thank you everyone.

Dr. Mark ([50:30](#)):

And thank you summit hosts for hanging out with Karl, Shannon, Jackie and I. I'm Dr. Mark T. Wade, your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast and remember your message matters and there's no more powerful way to get that message out to the world than with a virtual summit. Be sure to check out our show notes over episode 200 and I'll see you on the next episode.

Dr. Mark ([50:50](#)):

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.