

## Episode 85: How Understanding The Audience Helped MeetEdgar On Their Virtual Summit

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Speaker: Tom Tate

Dr. Mark T. Wade: Hey summit hosts, Dr. Mark T. Wade, founder of the Virtual Summits Software and your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast. We have an incredible episode lined up for you. Today we're going to be digging into a way at unpacking essentially a summit, a that was a little outside of the norm in a great way, in a way that I think is going to kind of inspire you and both challenge you to up your summit game a little bit. So we got legendary Tom Tate with us today. He's the director of marketing over at MeetEdgar. And I am so excited to have you here with us. Tom.

Tom Tate: Thank you. Yeah, I'm super excited, Mark. Uh, looking forward to unpacking, uh, the Solo Biz Summit and talking a little bit about some of the interesting things that, well, I think they're interesting, but some of the things that we did a this time around.

Dr. Mark: Well, Tom, if we're talking summits here. It's both interesting to me, you and the entire audience listening into this episode. So before we jump into that though, because I know we've got some amazing goodies, we're going to unpackage here. Um, I would love for you to give our summit hosts just a little bit of background on you and what you do.

Tom: Yeah, for sure. Uh, so my name is Tom Tate. I, I consider myself a full stack marketer. You know, like I like to get my hands dirty with all different marketing channels and strategies and tactics. Um, I am the director of marketing at MeetEdgar. Uh, we are a social media automation platform. Uh, we help you automate your social media posting. I keep that super organized. Uh, I've been with MeetEdgar for about six months. Um, so this is my first kind of big event with MeetEdgar, the, the summit that we've pulled off. Uh, but prior to that I was on the marketing team at AWeber, uh, an email service provider, email automation tool and I was with AWeber for a little over five years. Um, and in the course of my time with MeetEdgar, I was with AWeber.

Tom: I was involved in a couple of live events that we did and also our first virtual summit for podcasters, which was called Beyond the Podcast. So I have a little bit of experience, uh, behind the scenes with summits and with Beyond the Podcast, I was the host of that summit. So I was able to interview Amy Porterfield, John Lee Dumas, and kind of be a, I don't know why they allowed me to be the face of that summit, but for the most part I was the face of that summit, which is a lot of fun. Um, and they just wrapped up their second one, which was also pretty, pretty great.

Dr. Mark: Yeah, we absolutely love that. Beyond the Podcast summit, it was that One-Day Summit format, which everybody listening in here knows I'm a big proponent of. So that's super cool to, to meet the face of that, the host of that you know, and dig into your mind. But what we're gonna focus on today is more on that Solo Biz Summit, um, because you've done some things with that, that we're a little outside of the norm, but before we go full on into every detail of that, why don't you let us know kind of like what was the purpose, like when you decided we're going to do a summit over at MeetEdgar, what was the reason behind it? And mean this is a, this is a SaaS company, right? This is like,

not like just a solopreneur saying, Oh, I'm going to go run a summit. How did you kind of float that idea and what was the initial response? And then yeah, take us, take us through that initial actions.

Tom: Yeah, definitely. So in, I think it was March of 2019, this was before I joined the team. They did do a one day summit, very similar One-Day Summit Formula. It was called Content Creator Day. Um, and they recruited a couple of other SaaS companies to be involved in it. So a Convertkit, Demio, Podia. There was four speakers, uh, and it was live streams through the course of the day. And the audience obviously was content creators, um, you know, bloggers, podcasters, um, YouTubers, creative types and, you know, the idea was that was, that performed really well for MeetEdgar in terms of getting in front of some new audiences, uh, you know, getting leads, you know, adding email addresses to our MailChimp account. And I think the idea was like, can we, can we do that again? Can we pull off something like that again before the end of the year? Um, you know, obviously we're a marketing team where our company, like we are focused on real goals, you know, adding leads, getting new customers. Like that's what we do. You know. So like the idea was can we rinse and repeat Content Creator Day before the end of the year, um, and either get the same or better results.

Tom: And at first we were going to do a virtual summit, very similar formula and the topic was going to be seasonal content. You know, like how to prep for black Friday, cyber Monday, um, how to get in front of promotional sales, um, with a little bit more of a still focused on content creators but content creators who have products to sell, you know, like how do you sell your online courses, how do you sell, um, you know, coaching services, physical products. And uh, it was very, it was very niche, very targeted. Uh, and the more we thought about it, it just didn't feel right. Like it didn't feel like the right topic at the right time for the people we really wanted to talk to.

Tom: So we took a step back. Uh, we have a very scrappy two-person marketing team. So me and my colleague Mara, we took a step back and we started having conversations just around, you know, instead of the what, you know, that we wanted to talk about, you know, seasonal content, black Friday promotions, you know, how to do that kind of stuff. Right? Why don't we focus on like the who, like, who are, who's the avatar, who's the persona, who's the real person that we want to have a positive impact on? Um, and that's where we decided that, you know, solo business owners, solopreneurs, freelancers, uh, you know, the, the time strapped, resource strapped, you know, person who's wearing all the hats, you know, it needs to do all the things. This is the person that I wanted to talk to.

Tom: Um, it's not only a really great person that MeetEdgar can serve like with our software. So it complimented the products. And that was really important to me. But like those types of people in my experience, they didn't start a business because they wanted to become full time marketers. You know, like they started a business because they were passionate about something and they were passionate about serving their audience and they, they didn't get into it because they were passionate about online marketing or digital marketing. That's a byproduct of like needing to grow the business and scale once you kick things off. Um, so what, what we intended to do with Solo Biz Summit at that point it was too, I get a bunch of really fantastic experts to help you kind of navigate

some of the marketing pieces, demystify them. Help them, uh, you know, focus and prioritize on like what's going to help you grow your business, uh, because you shouldn't be expected to be the expert on all the things, you know, you're already wearing so many hats. Um, so that's kind of how we came up with it and how we pivot it, you know, from one idea to another. Um, and then once we had that idea, we, we started putting the pieces in place.

Dr. Mark: You are such a wordsmith over there, Tom. I love this. Even in our pre-interview chat you were talking about snackable ideas and content. I love this. So, um, well let's keep diving into that. So this, this one is even more exciting as I, as I hear how you've unpackaged this, how, or how it came to fruition essentially in, in the initial summit. Now your idea behind it, when you started to do, okay, well now we're going to do this Solo Biz Summit. You were like, we don't want to just do it as you were saying as before, we're going to kind of make it a little bit different. Unpackage or let's dive into why, how, how you decided to kind of set the parameters or restrictions on this summit, like what those were and why you kind of thought, uh, that, that you should do it and what was the outcome from it?

Tom: Yeah, definitely. So I again, we started to get hyper focused on like, who is this for? And we started to think about the solo business owner again, time strapped, resource strapped. Like what would that person want to consume in terms of summit content and how would want to consume it? And then likewise, you know, what can we do to help them get the most value out of it and take action and actually like do something with this content that we're putting out there. And that's when we started to kind of build out these parameters for how we wanted to run this particular summit.

Tom: And we started to notice that there were some stark differences between how, you know, many summits kind of followed the same formula. So we didn't go into this saying like, Oh, summit formulas are terrible and they're not conducive, you know, to learning and education and all the, the goals that you might go into a summit for it. Like we didn't, we weren't necessarily like trashing summit formulas. Uh, we really just wanted to say like this particular formula that is so popular, it doesn't feel like it resonates with who we want to speak to. So when we started to think about our audience, what we ultimately started to do was put these parameters in place. We didn't want 50 to 60 minute sessions. Um, so we wanted these sessions to be, again, short, snackable and actionable. One of my pet peeves is you sit through a 45 to 50 minutes webinar or summit session, and it takes about 30 minutes just to get to anything of great substance, you know, and then even once you start to snack on that substance, you end up with like nothing that's like super actionable.

Tom: You know, like you learned a little bit, but like you sat there for 50 minutes and you didn't get a ton out of it. So my, my directive to all of the speakers that we recruited, it was okay, keep the sessions between 12 and 20 minutes and get right to the meat of it. Like, get right to the heart of like what it is you're trying to teach, why it's helpful and relevant for a solo business owner, and then leave them with one actionable thing that they can then take. So if this resonated with you, here's the action I want you to take, um, to, to really just like inch forward to leveling up your business. So it's not, it's not the main course. Like we never expected any of our sessions to be the main course. Like

we always expected it to be kind of the appetizer, but then like, here's how you get to the main course, you know, like, here's how you continued on a path of, you know, if it's a session about podcasting, you know, here's how you take the next step.

Tom: Um, so that was really important to us was like the length and like getting to the heart of the content right away. Um, so that was like the first big differentiator I would say is like, let's keep them really short. Um, most sessions that I've sat in, they, they exceed that 30 minute mark. You know, we wanted it to be a little bit shorter. Uh, the other thing was we didn't want it to be live. We want, we wanted them to be prerecorded. Um, I call that like Netflix style. You know, like if you want to binge on them, you can binge on them. You know, if you want to watch, you know, one a day for the next 20 days, you can do that. We ended up at 20 sessions by the way. So if you want to do one a day for 20 days, go for it.

Tom: Um, if you want to watch all, all of them in a specific topic area, you can do that all in one sitting. Um, so Netflix style, prerecorded, that, that was a, that was half like us thinking about our audience. And then the other half is us thinking about our two person marketing team, which is like, do we really want to attempt to pull off 20 sessions live or do we, do I want to, you know, behind the scenes package all these up, posts them on Vimeo and just feel comfortable sleeping at night knowing that like everything's going to go fine tomorrow. You know, so like that was half and half. Uh, but I was happy with how having them be prerecorded, like how that ended up. Um, so prerecorded, bingeable and you know, the other thing that we did that was a little bit different was in all of our pre marketing for this summit and kind of like as we were onboarding people who signed up, who've registered, I was reiterating again and again, do not watch every session.

Tom: Do not watch every single video. There's 20 videos that you can watch. And if you were to sit down and watch all 20 videos, either in one sitting or over the course of a week or two, you're going to have information overload and you're likely not going to take any specific action because you're going to end up with 20 different CTAs, 20 different calls to action in 20 different things that you could test for your business. So we had sessions around podcasting, email marketing, sessions around growing your own, your audience and your reach, maybe being a guest on other people's podcasts, SEO, blogging. So we've covered a lot of different ground, a lot of different topics and they all fulfill different needs within your business. Um, so my main directive and a lot of the pre-marketing and then also the onboarding was get a sense of like what topic you think is going to resonate the most with you and what you think your business can benefit most from.

Tom: So if you've had that, like that tickle to start a podcast for the past six months, just watch the podcast sessions and then go start your podcast. You know, don't watch the podcast sessions and then the blogging and then the SEO and all these other things and then end up with a to-do list and information overload and end up doing nothing. You know. So I really wanted to instill like a bias for action by way of just focus on the things that are important to you and your business right now. Um, and we got some really good feedback that like that, that resonate with people as well. You know, like they were happy to know that it was an expert. It wasn't an expectation that you would

cover everything, you know, and you would act on everything. Um, so that was, uh, another kind of differentiator that we put our mark on with this particular summit.

Dr. Mark: I love that. I love how, you know, you've maintained the structure format of a summit, but you've got creative with it and thought about what thought about your audience and that that is one of the most important things there. And, and I love that you were saying, you know, well it was, you know, the prerecord is primarily for the audience but also for a little of our sanity as well. I hear you. Um, well one of the things if we dive a little bit deeper into this is the structure or the format of the releasing of the episodes or excuse me, of the sessions. Um, we had talked, uh, in our pre chat, you know, I was asking you, well, was this in the format of a one day summit or a multi-day summit? And you, you all kind of did a little bit different. So why don't you walk us through that?

Tom: Yeah, it was a bit of a hybrid. Um, so the majority of the experts, uh, that were a part of the summit, the majority of them sent me a video file and I edited that file lightly. I added some bumpers to it, um, intro outro bumpers, just to make them a little bit consistent, made sure the audio quality was good. And I uploaded those. A few of them we did through Zoom calls, very similar to what we're doing right now. So I gave the speakers an option, if they wanted to record on their own time for their own convenience, record and just send me the a link to a Dropbox file or something. They want it to record with me, we did that through Zoom. Um, but what I ultimately ended up doing was packaging up each video. Um, yeah, I didn't do a ton of work with that, you know, just a couple of bumpers and I uploaded those to Vimeo and we hosted it on a WordPress site.

Tom: So we had a WordPress site where each session had its own page. Um, so the session pages, it was very simple, title of the session, uh, embed of the Vimeo video, a short bio and a call to action link related to whatever the content was in the video. Like if there were links in the video or calls to action in the video, then I put those links on the page. Um, and on the day of the summit, uh, I just sent an email out the morning of, saying like, everything is unlocked, you know, today's the day. So very much like the One-Day Summit Formula, which is like, everything's unlocked today. Uh, here's your username and password. That's another WordPress trick that I did. So like I didn't create users for every single registrant. I sent everyone the same, um, username and password, which was just a blocked WordPress page.

Tom: Right? So, uh, okay. Another little trick, you know, I didn't create a membership site or you know, like I just created a public WordPress site with a private page. Um, and behind that kind of private page, username and password, I had all the videos broken out, a links to all the videos broken out by their category. You know, like podcasting, content creation, paid ads. You know, there's just a bunch of different categories and just a short little description. Um, so day one, everything's unlocked. Go crazy if you want to. Uh, but then what I did was day two through day four, um, I sent just a simple broadcast email each morning highlighting different sessions, right? So I want it to highlight the speakers and the content because again, like I was trying to avoid information overwhelm because day one is like, here's 20 videos, have at it? Day two was more like, here's six of the 20 videos who they're best suited for, what problems they'll solve for your business and direct links to check them out. You know. So I did that

over the course. I drip that out over the course of a couple of days again to keep engagement going over a few days, uh, but also to, to just break down the sessions so there wasn't that overload again.

Dr. Mark: To keep digging here because this is, this is great, I had already written this down to kind of ask you about is, you know, if you're letting everybody have all of it right away and then how do you keep them engaged and what are they supposed to get? How were you communicating with them? So you were sending emails to all of them all at the same time about like the chunks. Oh. Or like categories of the sessions in like if you're interested in podcasts, here's the things you can get out, here's the videos to check out, and then the next day it would be the next category. Right. Can you talk us through that strategy just a little bit more in depth?

Tom: Yeah, definitely. You know, one of the things that I was, I was worried about was, you know, with, with a summit, you get all the registrants beforehand. You're never going to get 100% open rate on that day of email. You know, so like, let, let's just use simple math. Like if you get a hundred registrants, and you get a 40% open rate, 50% open rate, there's 50 to 60 people who showed intent to appreciate and enjoy your summit, who never opened the email to learn how to access it. You know? So I, I always knew that like the way we were setting this up to be on demand and just like everything unlocks on one day, we're going to lose a big chunk of people. You're just never going to open that. Hey, your, your sessions are on are unlocked video. Um, so I always knew that we were going to have to chunk out, you know, emails to the list. Um, to remind them that everything's unlocked, you know, and to, to bring them in and really get them to start engaging. So that's where, you know, like instead of sending the same email four times, like, Oh, don't miss the summit, you know, like the summit's open, you know, and just kind of like reminding people that like, Hey, your videos are unlocked three or four times, they're starting to create the segments to say like, Oh, don't miss this.

Tom: You know, we noticed you haven't opened your email yet. Check this out. Uh, what I did was I just kept it clean, sent to the whole list. Um, and each email was again, just like, it just broken out into two sections, you know, so like I, I sent a quick intro just to engage people, you know, here's one section, one category of the summit sessions like podcasting and then just broke down like the different ones. And then, uh, I just did that for a couple of days. You know, I kept things really simple. Uh, but again, the whole point was, you know, to try to capture as many people you know, along that kind of path. And then I reminded people to that like, you know, check out the previous emails, look out for the next email. You know, I try to keep it like, like a sequence, you know, um, I'll be back tomorrow morning with, you know, six more highlighted sessions, you know, so I try to keep people kind of engaged in that way too.

Dr. Mark: So it was one email a day for four or five days, or did you send multiple each day?

Tom: So we, uh, we unveiled the summit on a Thursday, um, and I sent Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Monday. Yeah. I took off on Sunday.

Dr. Mark: As you should. As you should.

Tom: Yeah. Yeah. Right.

Dr. Mark: So perfect. That answered exactly what I was trying to get out of that. So let's circle back. Um, you were talking about the present, like the, the format of the actual sessions and you've touched on that and I want to come back and kind of highlight on it, cause you did that a little bit different than what we typically see on summits as well. And you mentioned that there was a presentation. Can we talk through, like what, what was the challenge behind that? Getting the speakers to actually submit you a video that they've done on their own? Like how did you talk through, how'd you explain that to them and then again re-walk us through what that actually means by you had them do a presentation and not an interview.

Tom: Yeah. So one of the things that I was super transparent about with the speakers as well was like, we're not going to sell anything. We're not selling a premium pass to the summit. We're not putting like lifetime access to the videos behind a paywall or any type of like, like after 48 hours, oh, if you want to keep watching the summit videos, sign up for MeetEdgar, like we didn't do any of that. Um, we really wanted to say upfront to the audience, you know, sign up for this summit and you'll get lifetime access. You know. So in approaching the speakers, you know, I really had to uh, be transparent and tell them that like, you know, we're not really doing an affiliate program for this cause we're not selling anything. Um, so like the, the point of this really is just to get in front of the audience and build goodwill with the audience. And I was also transparent to say like, and yeah, like we're, or acquiring leads too, you know, like we're acquiring email addresses.

Tom: Um, I had uh, another thing, I'm big on transparency, but like another thing I did was when a registrant was signing up, I had a check box. I'm saying like, you agree that by signing up for the summit, MeetEdgar is going to send you emails about the summit and you know, potentially future promotional emails. You know, just to completely cover, like we're going to add you to our list. Um, full transparency, but then I had a second checkbox that was like, um, do you want us share? Do you want to give us consent? I actually said consent. Do you want to give us consent, uh, to share your contact information with are awesome speakers. And then I had yes, you may share or no do not share and if you left it blank, I just assumed it was a no. Um, and the purpose of that was I wanted to go forward to our speakers and say there's no money to be made here because we're not doing an affiliate program.

Tom: But you know, if you do this 12 to 20 minutes educational session, you can promote. I'm totally cool with you tactfully promoting whatever you have. Right? So like if you're gonna do 20 minutes on SEO and you have a \$200 SEO coaching call product or service, promote that, I'm okay with that. You know, like our goal is to provide value to the audience and if your product and service provides relevant, tangible value. Okay. Then like tactfully promote that at the end of your session or if you just want to promote a free eCourse, like a free email course or a free thing that you have promote that too. If you just want to like channel shift people from this list to your list, go for it, you know, promote your thing. Uh, so I told everyone up front, like you'll, you'll get any leads that, that specifically gave me us consent to share, right?

- Tom: Like I can't guarantee how many that will be, but like happy to share those if they're happy to let you have them. Uh, and then I also said like, you can promote your stuff. Um, so that was kind of the conversation that I had with speakers, you know, just in full transparency to really help them understand like our vision for the summit, but then also like the, you know, what's in it for me, you know, obviously it's an investment of their time. Um, we're using their influence and, and there audience, you know, as well, you know, to kind of build up the summit too. So, um, that was the initial conversation. And then in terms of actually getting the assets, um, I just, you know, put together a really quick Google doc, uh, just to say like, Hey, here's the technical stuff, you know, like, widescreen 16:9, you know, don't do it on your phone.
- Tom: Um, you know, your branding can be your own branding. I made that clear. You know, like if you have slides, use slides. If you just want to talk in front of the camera, that's fine too. Like whatever you feel most comfortable with. Um, go for it. I also encouraged people to repurpose their best content, you know, so don't reinvent the wheel. If you've done a session on how to find new audiences with Instagram ads three months ago, then like, and that can be tailored down to a 12 to 20 minute session. Go for it. You know, like the only, my only ask was that you did something, um, original. I didn't want people to submit something they've already record it, you know, like a webinar that they've already done. Um, I did ask them to address solo business owners and tailor it to solo business owners and everyone did. Everyone did a really fantastic job, you know, doing that. Um, so once all the videos came in, um, I was able to package those together. And then for the Zoom ones, we, they were a little bit looser, you know, but we, everyone had a, uh, tangible lesson, you know, that they wanted to teach, you know, a tangible educational piece. Um, you know, like a formula or three step process, you know, like everything was kind of like packaged. Uh, and then they were just a little bit more looser conversational in terms of like unpacking that.
- Dr. Mark: And that's great right there. And, and, and I kind of, I'm curious about with the pitching, you don't obviously have to disclose any names, but like I'm curious, did everybody kinda, did everybody do the pitching exactly how you would wanted or were there any that you had to ask them to redo it or even any or like that's so close, but yeah, I'm just curious if anybody took advantage of that or how that was.
- Tom: Yeah, everything. Everything was actually great. Like I didn't have anybody send anything back, you know, that was super, like that had to be redone or anything like that. Like everybody really did a good job nailing it. And one of the other things that I did too was, um, I had specifically said when I, when I pitched the summit to the speakers, to the experts, um, and then as I was curating them, um, another kind of perk for them specifically was, and this played out well, you know, I basically said, you know, like I want you to be the LinkedIn expert as an example for this summit.
- Tom: You know, like I won our solo business owners to learn something new and valuable about LinkedIn and I want you to be the one to teach it. Yeah. And if you say yes, you're going to be the only LinkedIn expert, I'm not going to go out and get three competing LinkedIn experts to say either the same thing or conflicting things with three separate CTAs, you know, so that you're competing now with like other LinkedIn experts. Um, so I've really tried to, um, make sure that everybody was representing their thing and then



that was it. And I think that that really helps in terms of, uh, the speakers, the experts taking ownership of their area of expertise, knowing that they were going to be the only one talking about that topic or that specific thing. Um, so that was really helpful. Uh, and everyone's content was really good.

Tom: I mean, the only thing that I will say, uh, that's was a con for kind of like how I set this up and I would caution, you know, any summit organizers to think through this. Um, I had made assumptions that all of the speakers were going to promote this thing full blast, you know, you know, and like obviously they promoted it to varying degrees. Um, one of the things that I did do to try to incentivize was even though we didn't have an affiliate program, a formal affiliate program, um, I did give everyone over referral link and I just said, we're going to give Amazon gift cards to the top three referrals just to the speakers, just to the experts. Um, and I, I was up front, I was like, you know, I, I know most of you don't get out of bed for anything other than cash payout affiliate programs and like, this is not that.

Tom: And I, I'm not pretending that this is that. Um, but I just as a way of saying it was almost my way of saying thank you, you know, thanks for, you know, uh, aligning with the mission of this thing, right? Realizing that it's mostly just a goodwill generator and not like this big cash cow revenue generator in itself. Um, and, you know, helping me getting fro and get in front of this audience, uh, and deliver our message and your message too. Um, so this is my way of saying thank you. And we've had, you know we had a handful of people, uh, who just didn't even care to use the referral link and they still shared it. But then we had people who were into it and they shared it with the referral link. But, um, you know, I think I, I had, I didn't sign any, you know, agreements with anybody or I didn't like have anybody agree to like, I want you to send three emails, promotions to your full list.

Tom: You know, like there was none of those conversations. It was more or less like, you know, we really want you to be into this and promote it to your audience. Um, and everyone kind of gave the verbal, you know, like, yeah, we're into it, we're gonna promote it to our audience. But when it came down to it, um, we didn't get a hundred percent participation from all the speakers with full promotion, which I think hurt attendance a little bit, then our projections were right. But, um, but it was, I mean, I'm still happy with it and some of our speakers really came through, but I, that's one caution that I would definitely make is like, don't go into it thinking that like your superstar speakers are going to bring in all of the registrants, you know, unless you really formalize that agreement that says, you know, here's your swipe copy. And we did provide swipe copy and we did provide shareable, I'm speaking at Solo Biz Summit images. Uh, but even with all that stuff, you know, unless you have a formal agreement that says you're going to send it to your list of X thousands of people one time, two times, three times, um, try not to project over project, you know, what you think speakers are going to bring in specifically.

Dr. Mark: I think that's very solid knowledge right there. And unfortunately it happens more frequently than we would like. Um, so with the marketing aspect, you're obviously, you were, you were having the speakers help promote it. Did you run any other type of

marketing promotions maybe to your own list, social media, paid ads? Like were there any other marketing tactics that you used?

Tom: Yeah, we did a, so we did a couple things. Um, you know, obviously we engaged our, our own list. You know, we have a lot of prospects, you know, with thousands of prospects on our list that have yet to even try MeetEdgar, you know, so our goal was first and foremost to serve them with great content. Secondly, it's, you know, bring them closer to some of the products and services that we have. So yeah. Ah, we, we did engage our active less or active subscribers. Um, we did run social media ads. Um, so we mostly used Facebook ads for this. So we did a couple of different sequences. Um, we did a short video that just introduced the summit.

Tom: Um, and then we've ran that kind of at scale to a bunch of colder audiences and then we ran a retargeting ad to get people to sign up, um, that people who played that video, you know, so there was like a, it was just a real simple two step Facebook ad sequence that we ran. Um, and that was our primary driver. Uh, and then we just had some experimental Facebook ads that we were running too. Just a different, a cold in some warmer audiences as well. So we did invest a bit in Facebook. Um, it did well. I mean it didn't do bad at all. Um, I think we were getting our best campaigns. We're getting 3 to \$5 per registration. It was amazing. You know, like, like I, I, I remember getting those like in Facebook ad glory days, you know, we haven't seen that kind of performance sense, you know, so we were really happy with that.

Tom: Um, our budget wasn't super high, so it's not like we saw that and we like scaled it, you know, like to like mega dollars, but, um, but we were definitely happy with that. Um, the other thing that we did too was, um, okay, so this is the only thing that I did that was like borderline, like, you know, do this action to unlock this other thing, you know, or like sign up to get lifetime access. You know, like anyone who signed up got lifetime access, but we had a, a giveaway on the thank you page. Um, right after you registered. Uh, we basically said share Solo Biz Summit and we use Gleam, uh, gleam.io, which is giveaway software to, to run this. Share Solo Biz Summit with your audience. Uh, and if you do that, you will unlock the MP3s and the transcripts of every session.

Tom: Um, so we kind of gave like a quick incentive and we also gave away, um, Solo Business Book Bundle, which is like 10 handpicked books from our team. Um, digital or physical, whatever you want, of course catered towards solo business owners. Um, so we kind of dropped that giveaway on the thank you page and it did, it did okay. You know, like, like it definitely helped us on social. Like I think that we've got a lot of Twitter activity through that, you know, people tweeting, hashtagging, um, re-tweeting, uh, a tweet that we had pinned on our MeetEdgar Twitter account. Um, but I can't say with like certainty that, that like 10x registrations, you know, but it was definitely nice to have people participate and to see all that activity on social. Uh, but that was like the one kind of like viral marketing thing. I wouldn't even call it viral, but like our one attempt to like really promote people sharing it and getting excited about it, um, after they signed up.

Tom: Um, so we did do that. Um, and then like I said, you know, we had swipe copy for all the speakers that we, we kind of shared. Um, we did go and create some scrappy, um,

images, you know, that they can share on social, Instagram story sizes. You know, Instagram stories are really popular. So I would say if you're going to go that route of like creating visuals for your speakers. Um, we did do custom ones for Instagram stories and we did have a lot of speakers share that on Instagram, which is great. Um, but yeah, you know, nothing, we didn't do anything super unconventional, the marketing side of things. Um, we also only had, I want to say it was like 10 to 12 days where we were actively marketing it. Um, in retrospect, I would've given myself a longer runway, um, you know, maybe closer to a month of like unveiling it, slow burn, and then kind of like giving Facebook ads some time to optimize and kind of understanding like what our approach is. Uh, but we kind of threw this together faster than we wanted to. Uh, which left us with a very smaller window to actually market and push the thing

Dr. Mark: That is a really true right there. I'm glad that you said that. So now Tom, as time as we start to wrap this up, first off, this has been phenomenal, amazing information, tons of notes over here. Um, I'd love for you to kind of give us what are you, what, like as we round this out, what's your key, what was the key to success? If you had to pick one thing from this summit, what was the key to success?

Tom: I think it's like for this one it was really understanding your audience. Um, and also not just catering the content to serve your audience, your audience and meet them where they are. But you know, everything that we put on the website and all the marketing content, um, all the emails that we send prior to and then day of, and then the follow up emails afterwards, like we were very much, um, speaking directly to the individual that was going to be participating. And I think that that was really important for me. And I felt like in the feedback that we received a lot of feedback of people saying like, this is different, you know, like something about this is different and I appreciate that, you know, like you're being upfront and transparent and you're speaking to me like a human being. I signed off all my emails, my own personal email address and like, do you have questions, email me directly.

Tom: You know, like, here's the link, here's my email address. You know, like if you have feedback questions, if you like this summit or like I, I basically said at some point like, I like it if you're not happy with this summit, tell me, you know, and like, here's my email address. If you are happy with this summit, tell everybody, you know, just like go, you know, spread the word and uh, I think the down to earthiness and just kind of approaching it from like, yes, we're MeetEdgar, a SaaS company. But like we're a two person marketing team that runs our marketing, like a solo business owner would. I mean, we're a remote team too, so like, this is my home office, you know, I don't go to a fancy Google-esque office every day, you know, so like I feel a connection to solo business owners and I really wanted to make sure that that can actually come through.

Tom: Uh, and we treated it as, um, a, a value add and not just like a lead generation tool for MeetEdgar. It wasn't that it wasn't ever designed to be that. And I wanted to make sure that all of our content that, that touched the registrant and the prospect, like all that content had to feel different, you know? And I felt like we did a good job of accomplishing that for sure.

Dr. Mark: Amazing there. Tom, thank you so much for taking the time out of your schedule to share this with us and give us all these gems and wisdom moms. Thank you.

Tom: Yeah, no problem. Thanks for having me. I'm so glad we were able to connect it. And um, you know, if anybody out there thinking about doing a summit, I'll, I'll drop my contact info. Feel free to reach out to me and if you have follow up questions, I'm happy to answer them.

Dr. Mark: Absolutely. And we'll make sure we link over to everything including Tom of MeetEdgar in the show notes over at [podcast.virtualsummits.com/085](https://podcast.virtualsummits.com/085). So, Tom, why don't you wrap us out with one parting piece of wisdom.

Tom: Yeah. Virtual summits are awesome. You know, I've participated in a few, uh, at this point and I just think like, if you're gonna go and, and design one, create one, execute, um, you're not just getting on a stage to speak to your target audience, to speak to your people. You're creating the stage. And that's a really exciting, I think that's a really exciting thing. You know, you're not just getting on the stage, you're creating it, you're designing it. Um, you're in control of, you know, who do you want to speak to and how you want to speak to them and what you want to say. Um, and it's one of the really nice things about kind of living in this digital age that we're at now.

Tom: And the other thing that I will say, and I know we have to wrap up is, you know, different than like a tweet or an Instagram story or something that's just gonna like disappear, right? Like in 24 hours and the shelf life is like super a short, virtual summits can have a lasting impact. Um, and one of the things that we're going to do with this one is actually make it more of an evergreen piece where like, you know, we might re-launch an encore of it, you know, and like, I think that that's really valuable is that, you know, people can kind of revisit this later on in life later on in their business journey. Um, and you have the opportunity with virtual summits to create something that has a little bit more of a lasting impact in like, you know, and an email course, or a tweet or a Instagram story, you know, so I definitely appreciate that aspect of it.

Dr. Mark: Thank you so much Tom. Thanks again, one more time for being here with us and thank you all you summit hosts for spending this time with Tom and I. I am Dr. Mark T. Wade, founder of Virtual Summits Software. And just remember your message matters. So go out there and make an impact in the world. Don't forget to check out the show notes so you can get access to all these amazing things that Tom's just been sharing with us over at [podcast.virtualsummits.com/085](https://podcast.virtualsummits.com/085) 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.