Webinars: How to Market and Sell Using Webinars

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Looking for a proven way to sell courses and consulting?

Interested in boosting webinar attendance and conversions?

To learn about selling products and services via webinars, I interview Amy Porterfield.

More About This Show

The Social Media Marketing podcast is an on-demand talk radio show from Social Media Examiner. It’s designed to help busy marketers, business owners, and creators discover what works with social media marketing.

In this episode, I interview Amy Porterfield. Amy is an online marketing expert and host of the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. Her course is called Webinars That Convert.

Amy explains how live versus recorded webinars impacts conversions and connection with your audience.

You’ll discover how to craft an effective email sequence for webinar promotion and follow-up.

Webinars: How to Market and Sell Using Webinars featuring insights from Amy Porterfield on the Social Media Marketing podcast.

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Here are some of the things you'll discover in this show:

Webinars

Amy's Story

Amy had her first experience with webinars when she worked for Tony Robbins. The webinar was a first for Tony too, and the response was great. About 800 people paid $100 to attend. The night before, Amy and Tony practiced for the webinar on the GoToWebinar platform. When they were done, Amy hit a button to end the practice session but accidentally deleted the webinar instead.

In an instant, Tony and all 800 customers received an email saying, "This webinar has been canceled." A panicked Amy and team stayed up all night working with GoToWebinar to piece Tony's webinar back together. In that moment, Amy hated webinars and never wanted to do one again.

However, by morning the problem was resolved. Everyone received a follow-up email saying the webinar was still happening. Although Amy was a nervous wreck, the webinar was a huge success. She then realized webinars allow you to connect in a very personal way. The connection aspect of the webinar was awesome and Amy was hooked.

About a year later, in 2010, when Amy started her own business, webinars became the number-one way she promoted her online courses.

> *Hey friends! I'm hosting a webinar all about Pinterest – if*

you're interested, join us! www.amyporterfield.com/pinterest

Posted by Amy Porterfield on Friday, March 22, 2013

Although she's still had snafus, the wins outweigh the losses. Indeed, Amy has done webinars for all of her live launches except one, for which she did a three-part video series. However, she still added webinars afterward.

Amy likes webinars because she loves to give before asking for anything in return. Webinars are a great way to teach and sell. Over the years, Amy has improved her ability to align the free content with the pitch, but giving is still her motivation for offering webinars. Before she starts a live webinar, she puts herself in this giving mindset by saying to herself, "No matter if they buy or not, they walk away today feeling excited, inspired, and driven to take action."

Because Amy does a lot of business promotion, she appreciates the way webinars allow her to slow down. They allow her to make an impact before asking for anything in return. She's built a multimillion-dollar business primarily based on webinar promotions.

Listen to the show to hear Amy's thoughts on improving something that works versus trying new things.

What to Sell on a Webinar

While some experts say you could sell anything on a webinar, Amy disagrees. Webinars are ideal when you're selling knowledge and the product allows someone to continue learning in a medium that's similar to the webinar itself.

For example, pre-recorded online courses sell well. In the webinar, you can break down what's included in a $1,000 course, explain how your audience can get the course right away, and share the link. Then attendees simply sign up and receive the course immediately. The process is seamless.

Similarly, live online workshops also sell well on webinars. For instance, you might sell a 2-hour live workshop or a summit with live, 1-hour workshops over the next 6 weeks. Webinars are also good for coaches and consultants who put together packages. It’s all about the offer.

Amy says live events and physical products don’t sell as well via a webinar. Other strategies work better for these items. So before you choose a webinar to sell your product or service, think about how the thing you’re selling is or isn’t like a webinar experience.

Listen to the show to hear about my experience trying to sell Social Media Marketing World with webinars.

Attendance

Amy typically hears that on average, about 20% of the people who register for a webinar show up live. However, she thinks that number is much too low. Her goal is to see 40% show up live. If you can get to that number, you’re doing really well. To increase your percentage of attendees, Amy recommends focusing on your promotion timeframe and your pre-webinar email sequence.

For promotion, most people run Facebook ads, Instagram ads, or

Insta-story ads, which is a great strategy. The question is how far in advance to start those ads.

Most people start signups about 2 weeks before the webinar. Amy says people who sign up 2 weeks in advance lose the enthusiasm they felt when signing up. However, people who sign up only a few days beforehand still have that excitement. Thus, when someone signs up closer to the event date, they're more likely to show up for the webinar.

Posted by Amy Porterfield on Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Start promoting 10 days in advance at the most, although 7 days is the sweet spot. Amy and her team start testing ads about 10 days before the webinar. Then they ramp up their social media promotion (bump up the ad spend) between 3 and 5 days before the webinar.

Also, your pre-webinar email sequence can build people's enthusiasm after they sign up. Amy and her team send four to five emails to people who sign up, and not everybody will get all of the emails. If the first email goes out 5 days before the actual webinar, someone who signs up 3 days before won't get the first two emails.

In these emails, you do three things. First, encourage people to show up live. Second, inspire them with a cool story, a case study, or a little tip. Third, stay top of mind. You need to keep reminding them they've signed up for something cool that they don't want to miss.

To encourage people to show up live, Amy talks about the unique energy of a live event. She mentions how the people who show up live are engaged, take more notes, ask questions, and walk away ready to take action. She also asks them to mark their calendar and create an alert on their phone for the event.

To preview the webinar content and pique people’s interest, Amy also shares a simple workbook. The workbook is typically a three-page, fill-in-the-blank PDF for attendees to print and fill in with information that’s most valuable to them during the webinar.

The contents of the workbook reflect the structure of her webinar. To illustrate, if her webinar is “Five Tips to X, Y, Z,” the workbook will contain those main points. Amy makes sure the workbook contains the best stuff she’s going to teach. She finds that the workbook helps drive attendance for the webinar.

In the pre-webinar email sequence, asking two or three questions you plan to discuss in the webinar improves engagement, too. Amy uses simple questions that won’t take

people long to answer. Then when she asks the same questions during the webinar, people are more likely to engage and answer.

I ask if Amy recommends using the automated email reminders that come with webinar platforms. Amy says she uses her own system for the email sequence instead. She wants all of the communications to come from her company's email address, and her system allows her to track actions people take on those emails, too.

Amy uses Infusionsoft for her email system, and people receive emails from info@amyporterfield.com. Beyond the email address and tracking, your own system also tends to be more reliable than a webinar platform's automated messages.

Listen to hear Amy discuss how she times ads targeting cold audiences versus her email list.

Webinar Content

Amy emphasizes that your free webinar content explains the What, whereas your paid content explains the How. For example, in your webinar, explain what the opportunity looks like. Paint a picture using images and really powerful words and stories. Give just enough that people see the What, understand it, and get excited about the opportunity or results they can achieve.

With your free content, you also need to acknowledge people's emotions, especially around the obstacles that come up for them. Typically, on a webinar, Amy will just say those obstacles. She might say, "Right now, you're probably thinking, 'But Amy, I don't have anything to sell, so how would this work for me? Or, Amy, I'm just starting out in my business…'"

When you bring the obstacles to the forefront of the conversation, the audience feels like you understand them. Then they're thinking, "Now what's my next step? What do I need to do next?"

With the free content, you want to avoid teaching too much information. When you do that, attendees feel overwhelmed and want to process your information and try it out. You never want that to happen. Instead, provide enough information about the What so that your product is the next logical step.

Specifically, you want attendees to walk away feeling like they've learned something and are ready to take the next step, which is your online course. This way, your free and paid content are aligned so that attendees are more likely to make a purchase.

When you begin selling in your webinar, focus on how your paid program, online product, consulting, or coaching helps attendees achieve the opportunity, transformation, or result you've just explained.

I ask Amy to share about balancing the What and the How. Amy

shares an example from her master class on how to do webinars. Her free content will include tips and strategies for specific aspects of conducting the actual webinar. She'll say, "When you want to talk about yourself, here's the wrong way to do it, and here's the right way to do it." Then she'll demonstrate strategies.

After Amy shares five or six good tips with tangible advice, she begins to sell her system for putting together every aspect of a successful webinar, not just the webinar content itself. She might say, "Okay, if you're ready for the next step, you need a plan. What you might not know is a webinar is a system. This system includes pre-webinar emails, the actual webinar, and the post-webinar emails."

From there, Amy talks about how her program provides a roadmap and helps attendees achieve the system they need. For instance, she might say, "If you look at a webinar as a system, that's how you get results. Your next step is to create your system. Now that you've got a few tips and tricks under your belt, let's put it into a system. That's what my program does."

Listen to the show to hear Amy share another example of free content that clarifies the What.

Webinar Follow-Up

Amy's post-webinar follow-up is a specific email sequence. She often tells her students they can double their revenue during this time. If you made $1,000 on your webinar, you can make another $1,000 or more in the post-webinar sequence.

In your first email, send a limited-time replay of the webinar. Although not every webinar expert recommends doing this, Amy finds the replay makes a difference. Not everyone's going to show up live. Why leave that money on the table?

Send that first email with the replay the day after the webinar. Emphasize what people will learn in the webinar if they missed it. Also, mention how you talked about a special offer and they can watch the webinar to learn more. It's also important to mention that your cart will close in, say, 5 days after the webinar, so people have about 4 days to watch before cart-close day.

If you're just starting out, keep it simple and send the replay to everybody. Thank those who were there live and share the link so they can review the webinar one more time. Ask those who missed it to be sure to watch.

When you get more advanced, you can segment. In the email you send to those who watched the webinar live, include the replay link but focus on the program you pitched. For those who weren't on the webinar, the email isn't all about the pitch.

The second email is all about the offer and the fact that the timer is ticking. It's time to buy. This email is usually the

longest in the post-webinar sequence because you walk through your offer in detail. Talk about each module, what's in it for customers, and the transformation you're promising. Although a lot of people say, "No one's going to read an email that long," the ones who *do* read it are genuinely interested in buying.

The third email needs to show social proof that your product delivers on its promise. Share a case study with a quick story about one of your students, or about you and the success you've seen. You could also share testimonials.

The fourth email is an FAQ (frequently asked questions) that addresses people's objections to buying. Amy loves to present these objections as the top five frequently asked questions (and her responses). These questions are about the program, the process, the roadmap, and so forth.

Depending on how aggressive you want to get, you can also send an inspirational email. This email tackles the mindset blocks that keep your audience from taking that leap and buying.

On the final day, when the cart closes, send an email about time running out. Amy puts an active timer in the email using a tool called MotionMail. The timer is very powerful. Also, Amy sends more than one email on cart-close day.

I ask if webinars work only if you're "closing the cart." Amy says you don't need to close the cart, but you do need urgency or scarcity so that people take action. And the scarcity has to be real.

For example, Amy offers evergreen webinars that aren't live and run every day. However, you can't just go to the sales page. You have to go through a webinar. Also, when people sign up for one of these webinars, they enter a funnel with a timeline for receiving bonuses. Amy makes it clear that to receive the bonuses, you need to purchase by a certain date.

The timeline is specific to whenever the attendee enters the funnel, and Amy uses a tool like Deadline Funnel to manage that timing. If someone clicks the link to purchase the day after the deadline, they can buy her program, but they don't receive the bonuses.

Listen to the show to find out which emails in the follow-up sequence are the most popular.

Live vs. Non-Live Webinars

Last year (2017) was Amy's year of automation. Her goal was to do automated, evergreen webinars instead of live launches. She did a podcast about this effort because it had pros and cons.

From a financial standpoint, the automated, evergreen webinars were profitable but not as profitable as the live webinars. On the other hand, the automated, evergreen webinars can run every day, 7 days a week, so they're still worth offering.

[embedded content]

Amy thinks the live webinars are more profitable for a few reasons. People perceive value in a live webinar. Also, you're there to answer questions in the moment. She believes that if you do live webinars versus evergreen, you'll likely see a higher conversion rate.

While Amy was focusing on automated, evergreen webinars, she missed the way she could connect with her audience during a live webinar. So she suggests exploring a mix of evergreen and live webinars, and that's exactly what she's doing this year.

As Amy returned to live webinars, she added live video to her webinar format so people see her face. That change added another dimension of connecting with people. Sometimes, half of the screen shows Amy and the other half shows her slides. During the lesson-heavy portion of the webinar, Amy shows only the slides. For the sales portion, attendees just see Amy without any slides.

I ask how Amy focuses on her content as she's changed her webinar format. Amy keeps her slides visible off-camera so she can reference them if she needs to. Also, Amy doesn't look at the comments during a live webinar unless she asks a question.

When you begin hosting webinars, Amy doesn't recommend turning on the video camera right away. Do some webinars without the camera first. However, the live video is worth trying because the conversion rates were higher on the webinars with live video of Amy. When you're selling, the ability to see your face adds a level of trust. It's more personal.

Next, we discuss tech for evergreen and live webinars. For evergreen webinars, Amy's favorites are EasyWebinar and EverWebinar, although you can find many other options.

When Amy added video to her live webinar, she used Zoom instead of her usual GoToWebinar.

Listen to the show to hear Amy and I discuss how important it is to see your slides when you're speaking.

Discovery of the Week

With SocialRank, you can analyze Twitter and Instagram followers based on all sorts of criteria, such as influence,

engagement, and more.

SocialRank is a web-based tool, so you start by connecting your accounts to the service. Next, the service analyzes all of your followers. (You can also toggle the tool so it analyzes accounts that you follow instead.) If you have lots of followers (like half a million), the process might take a while.

With the free version of SocialRank, you have access to filtering and sorting options. Filter by location, posting frequency, verified status, and more. Learn who among your followers is most influential or most engaged (retweets, mentions, replies, likes, and Instagram comments or tags). You can even narrow the criteria to followers who are a combination of most valuable and engaged. To learn more about a specific follower, simply view their full profile via the SocialRank interface.

With SocialRank paid services, you can do even more. Create reports and export them as either CSV or PDF files. For instance, you can export a CSV file of your most influential followers and use that file to help you connect with them. You can also save searches, upload handles, and follow accounts.

Although Twitter analytics offers functionality similar to SocialRank, because SocialRank covers both Twitter and Instagram, SocialRank offers a wider view of your followers.

Listen to the show to learn more and let us know how SocialRank works for you.

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Key takeaways mentioned in this episode:

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