

Building a Following Through Blog Posts

Transcript and 10 Point Checklist John Rampton

Want to gain as much knowledge as possible out of Marketing Speak? Read on below for a full transcript of this episode, as well as a **10 point checklist** that gives the next, real steps you can take to take your marketing to the next level.

MARKETING SPEAK 

HOSTED BY **STEPHAN SPENCER**



“At most conferences, you’re lucky to get in front of 200-300 people. But with an article, I can get in front of millions of people.”

JOHN RAMPTON

10 STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TODAY

Want to step up your marketing game? Here are 10 steps that can move you closer to your goals – today.

- Create a list of 3-5 websites that allow guest contributors, and that your target audience would read. Start reaching out to them with your blog ideas and previous work.
- Getting verified on Twitter translates into more traffic, and you stand out more as a trustworthy person. The more you grow your following, the better chance you have to be selected.
- Reach out to John at his website johnrampton.com. You can contact him if you have any questions about blogging, social media, or his company Due.com.
- Get to know your audience. Pay attention to the traffic to see when your audience is online to ensure that you are bringing traffic to your website.
- Don't be afraid to spend time on free content, like blog posts. It can turn into a loyal client base-and income.
- Turn Twitter followers into an email list by pinning a tweet that says "sign up for my mailing list" on your account.
- Pinterest users are most active at night-pin from 6 pm to 1 am for the most repins.
- Use a program like Buffer to schedule your social posts, so you don't skip days or forget when you're busy.
- If content creation is taking up a lot of your time, hire a ghostwriter and an editor to help you. Always go through each post to add your ideas and voice.
- Don't try to focus on every social media channel. Some of them won't work as well for you as others, and that's okay-focus on the ones that do work for you.

Transcript

S: Hello, and welcome to Marketing Speak! I'm your host, Stephan Spencer, and I have the distinct pleasure of inviting on the show today John Rampton. He's an awesome guy and among many of his

“Besides his speaking and writing career, he's also a giver. He likes to help people out and give back to the online community”

accomplishments, he's the founder of Due.com, which is a payment platform. Invoicing and so forth. He writes a lot for the biggest names out there in terms of online journals - Entrepreneur.com, Forbes, Inc, Mashable, The Economist. He's a speaker-a seasoned speaker. He speaks at Pubcon and at all sorts of events. Hundreds of events, he's spoken at, averaging about twice a month, which I think is about as frequently as I speak, so that's pretty impressive. Besides

his speaking and writing career, he's also a giver. He likes to help people out and give back to the online community and he is a really good guy. So thanks John for joining me here today!

J: Thanks for having me! And thanks for the nice introduction.

S: Yeah! So let's start by talking about authority marketing and what it can do for your brand. So you've done some great authority marketing for yourself. Some of the names you write for are pretty impressive and you help other clients do the same thing, build up their authority platform. Maybe we could start off by explaining the process, how you do this for yourself and do this for others.

J: Yeah! So basically what it boils down to is that I want to be as influential as possible and get myself out in front of as many people as possible in specific industries or niches. So for myself, I blog a lot. Obviously I speak at a bunch of conferences. But on top of speaking, over speaking I would say-I spoke one time in

au·thor·i·ty

front of an audience of 15,000 people, so that's the biggest audience I've ever spoken in front of. I spoke with Kevin O'Leary on stage in Mexico and we did this big thing. But that was a huge, huge audience. The reason I blog and write all these articles is because I can get in front of millions of people. Not just tens of thousands, five thousand-at most conferences you're lucky to get in front of 2-3 hundred people. But with an article, I can get in front of thousands of people. I have some articles that have 20+ million viewers who have read them. So I got into the industry with that in mind, and got into the blogging and authority marketing with that in mind. I can influence more people if I put out amazing content and amazing things they want to read.

S: Wow, that's incredible that you have an article that literally millions of people have read.

J: Yeah, and it's not just one. I probably have over a hundred articles that have had a million people read them.

S: Wow. What would be your most popular article?

J: You know one of my most popular ones is on Entrepreneur. There's two of them that are up there. 50 signs You're an Entrepreneur and Top Movies Entrepreneurs Should Watch, and then another one Why I Won't Invest in Your Company.

S: Alright, those sound good, they sound interesting. I'll have to check them out. We'll add these to the shownotes, we'll add links so people can read those. There are so many places you could write for. As a listener you might wonder, should I place my articles on [Medium.com](https://medium.com), or just on my blog, or my domain name.com? Should I blog on LinkedIn Pulse? Should I try to get a column somewhere like the Huffington Post? I write for the Huffington Post, but I haven't been doing much writing for them lately. There are a lot of choices.

J: There are a lot of choices. I go where my audience is. If my audience is on Medium, I go to Medium. If my audience is on Mama Joe's Barbecue Blog, go to Mama Joe's Barbecue Blog. I made that up, I have no clue-actually there probably is a site called that. You've got to go where your audience is, and I like to become the best at whatever I am, and you've got to work your way up. How I personally did it is I've always wanted to write for TechCrunch and Mashable. Those are for me, success. That defines success for me. Once I'm there, success means something else. But for the past five years, success means being on TechCrunch. And writing for TechCrunch, and writing for Mashable. What I did was I started by own blog. I figured I could put anything up on my own blog, so I started my own blog. This is something I would recommend to readers. When you are blogging, I put stuff up on my own blog, and then I syndicate it, or copy and paste it onto Medium and onto LinkedIn. So it's the same post. First I put it on my own blog, and then 2-3 days later I put it up on Medium and on LinkedIn. That way I'm capturing my audience on my website, and then Medium's audience and LinkedIn's audience. Blog on your own blog, get a bit of a reputation behind you and a following behind you. That for me took nine months. I blogged three times a day, now you don't have to blog three times a day, but I blogged three times a day on my own website for nine months. I didn't make a penny doing it. I was just helping people. And I thought "Huh, I've made a audience, I had about 50-60,000 readers a month coming to my site. That might be a ton for some industries and nothing for others-only you can gauge that. My thought is I'm helping 60,000 people a month. But then I went and said "You know what, I can do this on other people's blogs". At the time I was in the SEO industry, so I went to

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Search Engine Journal, that typically will give a lot of people chances. I said "Hey, I wrote this amazing thing, will you post it?" They accepted it, they posted it, and I started writing actively for them. And then I went onto pursue the next thing. Their bigger competitor was Search Engine Watch, at the time. They're a little bit bigger, had a little bit more readership, and said "Hey, I want to write for you." and they said "Okay!". And then after that I'm like "Oh! I can do this for a lot of different people." After that I went to Huffington Post, after Search Engine Watch, and thought "You know, Huffington Post has a little bit more readership". And I said "Hey, I write for these guys", and showed them that on Search Engine Watch, I had written daily for them for about 3-4 months, which is a lot of work. But started getting a bit of a following behind me. But I wanted to write for somewhere bigger. So Huffington Post, would you accept me? They said okay. So then I blogged weekly for them for about 2-3 months, and then I went to another one, and another one, and another one. I worked my way up.

S: Wow, so what was the biggest fish that you caught during that process?

J: The biggest is obviously TechCrunch, and then Mashable. I went to them, and said "Hey, I write for lots of other places, I want to start writing for you, I have a very very large following now. People like what I put out, I have a couple posts with a lot of views. Would you be interested? And they said "No to page views? Yeah, let's try it out!". They try you out and you do your best to send everyone you can including your mom 300 times to their website, get a lot of traffic, and they say "Oh my word! Your stuff's great, and it does great on our site." So, then they will put you as more of a regular contributor.

S: And what's the end game here? Because a lot of people will say "Well, that's fine to do a bunch of free work for Tech Crunch or Mashable, but I'd rather them write about me and my business and my story of struggle and all the cool technologies and initiatives that I'm putting out there.

J: Yeah, so I usually write things that help other people in my niche. I don't write for Oprah, because that's not in my niche. I obviously own Due.com, we're an invoicing and payments platform. So I typically write about technical things, about freelancing, or business owners or small business owners or things in that type of a niche so I can relate back in some way shape or form articles on my own site, on my blog, or on my own personal site and I try to link to myself and say "Here's an amazing article that I wrote" or "here's actual ways to invoice people can get paid". People are 90% more likely to get paid by doing these three things, and people are like "Oh, I wanna read that." And I bring those types of things into my articles, so I can essentially get an ROI on the work that I'm doing. So even though I'm not getting paid, I am driving links and people back to my own website, which is increasing the traffic there, which I would say to listeners that once you gain a person's trust, they will buy anything you put in front of them. As long as you don't violate that trust or put a crappy product in front of them, they will trust you. So me putting out these tons of articles, these tens of articles a week with really great information. Say a thousand people read it. Out of a thousand, only probably a hundred will really read it. And only 10 will become superfans. And those people will be like "Oh my word! What does John do? I want to find out more about him." They'll come to my site or my company's site and they'll go, "Oh, this is an amazing product, and they'll start using it, and that will make me money.

S: So how do you measure the ROI? Because there are a lot of steps to this

process, a lot of attrition and loss-

“I do measure referral traffic and how much specific places are driving to my site and I will put more energy into those sites.”

J: I don't necessarily measure the ROI in the regards that I am nitpicky. I do measure referral traffic and how much specific places are driving to my site and I will put more energy into those sites. So if, for example, Entrepreneur Magazine drives 1000 people back to my website and Moz drives back 2 people to my website, I know I should be spending much more time on Entrepreneur and submitting a lot more posts to them because obviously the engagements are more likely to come back to my site.

S: That was something I was curious about too. Have you tried writing for Moz? It sounds like

maybe you have.

J: Moz, specifically, I have not. Although I have written for many other people similar to Moz.

S: Got it. What would you say the time spent if you had to add up, like the blogging you are doing for your own site and everything you are doing for other sites. What does that add up to in a week?

J: Now I use a lot of ghostwriters, so I do have ghostwriters that help me put my words into text, and I have editors. I have a team that helps me with my content. In addition to that, every post that goes up, I put my own experiences into and I read and edit every single post. So I would say I've put in 2 hours a day minimum. 2 to 3 hours every single day into content. And I've legitimately done that, 2+ hours a day, for the past 5 years.

S: That's commitment.

J: Yeah, it is a lot of time.

S: So if you were to not use ghostwriters-have you always used ghostwriters?

J: No, in the beginning I didn't. It isn't scalable for me to do what I'm doing. Obviously. I legitimately put out 4 to 5 blog posts a day under my own personal name, right. So that is not scalable by myself. Back when I was only doing 1 post a day, I'm a very very fast writer. I can typically push out an entire blog post of about 1000 words in about 30 minutes. And then I pass it onto an editor. To which-you guys, editors are worth so much. It is worth finding somebody. I have two outsourced people that are great. One is a fact checking editor and one is a grammar editor. So the fact checking editor, if I even link to stats, they'll go make sure all of that is correct and up to date and make sure it is great. The grammar editor, these are two different mentalities of people. They are putting in time. And I pay them well. So don't be chincy on that.

S: How much does that cost?

J: \$25 to \$30 an hour.

S: Okay. And with the volume that you are putting out every day, I'm going to imagine that will amount to a number of hours a week for those two folks.

J: Correct. Yep. And it ends up costing me, between them, about \$3000 a month.

S: Right, and then the ghostwriting, would you say that is another \$3000 right there?

J: For me now, it is about \$8-10,000 now.

S: Whoa. That is serious money. That is impressive.

J: Yeah, this is something that works very very well for me and drives a lot. It is not even just about customers and my name out there a lot. It is gaining massive followings on places. Like on Twitter I have almost a million Twitter followers. I put a post out and my average Tweet will drive, you know, 150 to 2000 clicks. So just things like that. I can leverage that a lot, and it helps grow more and more and more of my presence online. But it definitely does cost a lot. It is a commitment that I have made and it pays for itself driving hundreds of customers every single day to our product and we've been able to back up those costs, luckily. Who knows if that will be able to last forever. It works very very well for us. And it helps a lot of people.

S: So a million followers on Twitter. That's legit. I'm curious as to what your other numbers are for social platforms. YouTube, Facebook, and all that.

J: YouTube I haven't done a lot. I have a couple of thousand subscribers. I know on Vine I have probably tens of thousands. On Instagram I have tens of thousands. On Facebook I think I have like 50 or 60 thousand just on my fan page, but on my personal I probably have around 20,000. On Vine I have almost a million views. These are things I don't really focus on a whole lot and take for granted. It is something I'm not that great at. That's another thing I'd say to listeners is know what you're really good at. Focus on that, and then learn from others. There are a lot of people who are very very good on Vine. And drive millions and millions of views. For example, my business partner, I think he has around 50 million Vine versus, I have about a million. But that is what he is good at. I have never attributed to an actual backout of money, so I can't justify a cost for it. Whereas some people are very very good at that.

S: So you vest where you see the return and it is kind of in your wheelhouse, it is in your gift. Although, people could argue that you are pretty darn good at Vine if you have a million views.

J: Correct, and that's the thing. I think that somebody who is really really good at Vine could come in and be like "dude, John, you're awesome. You're doing this, you're killing it". For example, Periscope I do not get at all. I have done 5 broadcasts and have gotten 527,000 hearts during those 5 broadcasts. So 100,000 people hearting my thing. Some people would look at that and be like "Oh my word, that's the most amazing thing". Even someone from Periscope said "Oh wow, an amazing thing", and I was like "Okay, but it didn't make me any money". I have no clue how to leverage this at all. If I have any listeners listening to this, I have all these amazing social assets. I need to learn how to leverage them better. I can learn from you guys. Happy to share my secrets and help you guys out, but again I am great at content, that is what I'm really good at.

S: I remember Robert Allen telling me this that helped frame my marketing and producing content. Either you're a speaker who writes or a writer who speaks. I'm a speaker who writes. It is so much easier and fun for me to speak on stage, in front of a camera, or in front of podcast mic versus on the computer typing in front of the keyboard, that's really painful for me, especially if it is a blank screen and I have to start an article. So I would speak an article to an assistant, just kind of riff on whatever and he or she would turn it into a draft blog post and it was a lot easier for me to turn it into whatever than a blank page. I even had an assistant when I was living in New Zealand who knew shorthand so dictated in shorthand and then would log in to my WordPress admin and load the draft onto the Wordpress admin. That was great.

“I don't sit down and come up with a topic and write an article. I usually sit down with a group of people, and we come up with 200 topics.”

J: Wow, cool.

S: Yeah, but everybody is different. You sound like a writer who speaks. I mean you do get on stages and do speaking, but the writing is just, you are in the zone when you are front of a keyboard, it is just flowing.

J: Yeah, I would say that. There are things that again, for the audience, things that I do that help that over time. I don't sit down and come up with a topic and write an article. I usually sit down with a group of people, and we come up with 200 topics. I sit down with 5 to 10 people and we literally come up with like 50 topics for everybody. Because once you have a topic, I find it is 10 times easier to write a post than it is to come up with a topic and write a post. So if you have friends and stuff like that, I get together, about once a month, sometimes it is two people, sometimes it is 10 people. We just sit and come up with topics for the other person. It is great. Then you have other people helping you come up with titles and I also use software to help me. I use SearchMetrics, they are friends of mine and they help me find different amazing topics.

S: Right. So what sort of ideation tools do you use? Are you going into, I don't know, UberSuggest, and starting to type in keywords? What does this process look like?

J: For me personally, I'll tell you what my process looks like. When I use Searchmetrics, I go in and I type really amazing websites and I find which posts are driving the most traffic and then I go and write a better post with a lot more detail and a lot more analysis and a lot more thoughts and love into the post. Typically if it does well in one place, it'll do well in another. Or, I'll go to Mashable or TechCrunch or a place I look up to, and it is 10 Cute Animals That Changing This, so I'll go 10 Amazing Tools that are Changing Marketing. So I'll basically take the title and change it for whatever I am doing. Because I know if it did well for example, if you use BuzzSumo, I think that is the company. BuzzSumo, BuzzStream? I'll go into BuzzSumo and say "Oh my word! Here's 5 Titles that are doing great!" Let me change up the title to be from People Magazine

“I find which posts are driving the most traffic and then I go and write a better post with a lot more detail and a lot more analysis and a lot more thoughts and love into the post.”

and Justin Bieber to the marketing world and finance world and theoretically it is the same type of title so it should do very very well in the users' minds. Another thing, I mean, this is big for users. Pay attention to your titles. I probably spend 50% of all my time on my titles. All of the post.

S: That is a great piece of advice. I believe it was David Oglesby who would spend 80% of the time writing the headline of the advertisement, then 20% on the remainder. And it was a big ad. Lots and lots of other stuff on the ad. So that really translates. What do you think of BuzzFeed?

J: Yeah! BuzzFeed is great! They do amazingly with titles. They test their titles like no other. I rip off their titles I would say all the time. Now rip off meaning I go there and I apply what they are doing to a different industry.

“this is big for users. Pay attention to your titles. I probably spend 50% of all my time on my titles.”

S: Yep, so for our listeners if, let's say, they are typing in your industry or topic and you add to that site: buzzfeed.com, you'll find a list of BuzzFeed articles that have that keyword or relate to that keyword maybe in the title or in the body copy. You can even restrict it further by having intitle: and then the keyword, no space after the keyword, and then site: buzzfeed-we'll put this in the

shownotes too so you can see all types of BuzzFeed articles that have that keyword in the headline and the title of the blogpost. Really helpful. The thing you're suggesting is going into the SearchMetrics tool and looking at what are the most popular posts driving the most traffic and then emulating. That's a whole different way to get to creating outstanding pieces of content. And do you use SEMrush?

J: Yep! I use Moz, I use SearchMetrics, I use SEMRush. I use SERPs. I use Ahrefs. I use them all.

S: Yep. Got it. Awesome. There are a lot of viral sites like Distractify, ViralNova, BuzzFeed, and so forth. Upworthy. What are your absolute favorites in terms of emulating? R&Ding? Ripoff and duplicate?

J: You know, I'm a big fan of Mashable, TechCrunch, Entrepreneur, though I do go to BuzzFeed, Upworthy. Upworthy has some cool things that they do on titles. I spend a lot of time with one of their content people. They spend like \$250 on every title and they put out 4 titles and pay for it and see which one goes better in the polls and that's the one that goes live.

S: Oh, so they are spending that in Facebook Advertising?

J: Yeah, and their advertising as well, to make sure it does well and that. I go emulate some of theirs. If they are talking about a specific thing, I'll go relate it to something completely different. But keep the same gist of the title in it. It helps a lot.

S: Are you doing a lot of testing with your stuff?

J: I do not. I wish I had time for that, and I wish I had the know-how to do that, but I typically go and find titles that are doing very very well in other places and relate it to whatever I'm doing.

S: Got it. And are you doing much advertising? Facebook, StumbleUpon, Twitter, what have you?

J: You know I do some Facebook Ads and some Twitter Ads on my content. If I really want an article to do very very well, I push it out and pay for ads.

S: And what's a reasonable amount to spend for advertising for a blog post?

J: I put like \$50 to it. If it is really important to me, \$150. But only if it is really important to me. Mainly because I have to back this out. We're business owners. I have to back this out to an ROI, and if I'm spending \$300 on a post, putting it together, having it edited, and then another \$150 of promotion like that, it costs a lot. Though I will say, a lot of people just put up a blog post and expect nobody to come. I have a



lot of people coming to my articles because of work that I've done in the past. I can tweet it out and have 2000 people that will see it and a lot of people spend hours and hours on a post and only 3 people will see it. If that is the case, what you should do is stop putting out so many articles and focus on one and spend some on promotion and really promote that article heavily.

S: That's good advice. What are some of the other ways to build a big fan base that isn't amazing content? What are you doing that are ninja techniques that are not well known that you are willing to share?

J: I would say my content. That's my ninja technique. I'm pushing my content out to bigger sources and I'm working my way up to bigger and bigger and bigger places. If you want to get into ninja techniques, I got into these bigger places and I didn't really get into how I got into them. I mean, I kind of stalk the right people and I'll find out who it is and I'll find a conference they are attending or speaking at and I'll go meet them once or twice. I find that every major publication I get into, I have met the editor at least two times.

S: Got it. And so you are basically stalking these people, identifying first of all these are the right journals or online magazines that are targeting your exact audience that you want to reach so you are not spending time on the wrong audience. Then you find out who the right people are, the decision makers of online magazines who are going to make the decision of whether they can use you or not and you figure out where you can meet them such as at the next conference that they are speaking or they are going to have a booth or whatever.

J: And in that time I am getting to know them as well. I am paying attention to them, I am following them, I am interacting with them, so when they do meet me, they know who I am.

S: So are you using a PR firm to help you with any kind of relationship building with journalists?

J: I'm not. I'm lean and mean, I'm scrappy. So I am doing it all myself. That would fast-track a lot of those.

S: Right, so there are some really big name people out there like David Pogue and Walt Mossberg and so forth and it just might seem impossible for listeners to build a relationship with them. And I think one thing to get from this is nothing is impossible, you just have to have that pig-headed determination, that drive to make it happen. Then you just figure out ways to meet them in person and have something that is of such immense value that they can't help but say yes. So do you do PR for others? Because you have such an amazing rolodex of great contacts.

J: You know, I have helped some people out. Some companies have approached me and I'll help them out and stuff like that. I typically will refer them onto some of my trusted partners that I have worked with in the past. So usually I don't do PR. If you're a startup and you need some help, typically I'll be like "Yeah! Here's the right people". Or if you pitch me, I might write about your stuff. Usually I don't do PR for companies. We're more focused on our own properties.

S: Makes sense. It's more of an exchanging hours for dollars thing if you're doing PR for others.

J: Correct. And now we're exchanging dollars for pennies doing our own thing.

S: I would hope not. Sounds like you are doing pretty well. So let's talk a bit about Twitter. There's been a lot of buzz about is Twitter really dead or on its way out. We keep doing stuff and people are scratching their heads saying "Really? You're going to eliminate the 140 character limit?" Now it is that they are going to make the image or URL free and not count toward the 140 characters. It is like "Oh, this is the end for



Twitter!" What's your take on it? Are you still bullish on Twitter and invested in building up your presence on Twitter? Or are you kind of putting your sights elsewhere like Facebook?

J: You know I am invested in Twitter. I really like Twitter. It has been really really good for me. I have a very very large following on there. And they are a very engaged following. And it is only getting bigger. I would say it is not going down for me, it is only going up for me. Now who knows how long that is going to stay. Twitter has made a lot of stupid decisions here in the past six months that have caused a lot of people to go away. But the fact that every news place out there still pushes Twitter like "Hey, interact with us on Twitter, do this. Until a company comes up that will do it better, I think we'll still be there".

S: Yeah, and they recently switched in the app store from social networking to news as their category. So now they are #1 in news. That had me scratching my head. What do you think the point was of that?

J: I mean I get my news typically on Twitter. I think they are realizing that people are not using Twitter to interact with each other. They are using it to share news with each other and share posts with each other and share information with each other instead of "Oh! Hey how are you doing today?" It is more like "Hey! Did you check out this post about how kittens need more love?" I find that is how people are interacting a lot more on Twitter.

S: And what do you think about these strategies as a way of building your follower base to follow a bunch of people.

J: It works.

S: So is that a good idea?

J: Yes.

S: Okay. So do you use a tool for that? Do you hire somebody for that?

J: I hire somebody to do that for me. And it does work. It very well works.

S: And what does that sort of thing cost?

J: I have somebody that I pay \$1500 a month to. I pay a lot for it. But I get a lot of use out of it. So the person that I use is different than a majority of people. I have a verified account. Verified accounts can follow up to 35,000 people a day and unfollow up to 50,000 people a day, whereas a normal account is something like 800, 800. So it is like 35 or 40 times more every single day.

S: Right. And did you use this person to get a verified account?

J: No, I got verified naturally by Twitter.

S: Alright. Because you can get verified on Twitter, you can get verified on Facebook, and you get that little check next to your name. Is that worth it to put in the effort?

J: To try and get? Yes. I am verified on Twitter, Facebook, instagram, Vine, most of the social networks I am verified. It significantly increases traffic. There is also really cool things. Like the Twitter app, there's a verified section. I can see just people who mention me who are verified and a couple of other things just verified users can get.

S: So how is it that a little verified account, the little check mark, translates into a ton more traffic for you?

J: It stands out. People realize that the legitimate person. Not saying that they specifically are, but that is how Twitter recognizes them. When they are searching, they get a little bit more top priority. Your tweets get more mentions and a lot more things because you stand out more. Also, Twitter's algorithms are matched a little bit higher for verified people.

S: Right, so if you hashtag something in a tweet, you are going to get more visibility than just some random person?

J: Correct.

S: Got it.

“You can pin a tweet that says "sign up for my mailing list" on your Twitter. When a person does that it automatically takes their email that they sign up with for Twitter and you can plug that into MailChimp and it successfully puts all of them on your email list.”

that it automatically takes their email that they sign up with for Twitter and you can plug that into MailChimp and it successfully puts all of them on your email list.

S: So if you have a million followers, you'll end up with-

J: Not a million. So I pinned it up one day and I retweeted it and pushed out a couple of times. I believe it one day I got 12,000-13,000 signups.

S: That's pretty good.

J: Yeah! That's great. And most of them have stuck around.

S: So pinning stuff to be at the top of your Twitter feed sounds like it is a great strategy to get visibility and get opt-ins.

J: Yes. Very. It decreases visibility to other things, but it increases that.

S: Got it. Then what about Pinterest?

J: Pinterest works for specific audiences. My audience it does not work for.

J: Also, a lot of verified people, if I follow them, they will follow me back.

S: Yeah! That makes sense. Once you're a celebrity, celebrities hang out with other celebrities.

J: Yep, correct.

S: And how do you then turn that massive list of Twitter followers into an email list? Because as Frank Kern says "The money is in the list".

J: Yep. The way to do that specifically is that you can add a Twitter-I'll have to remember how to do it, I did it a while ago. You can pin a tweet that says "sign up for my mailing list" on your Twitter. When a person does

S: It skews very heavily towards women. I know that. It is very popular for scrapbooking, for planning weddings, for flower arrangements and fashion apparel, all that.

“Just on Pinterest I have around 30,000 followers, just on Pinterest alone. And man, people love it. I used to own Organize.com, we competed with The Container Store, and every click from Pinterest was worth a \$1.15 to us. Every click. ”

J: It works. Just on Pinterest I have around 30,000 followers, just on Pinterest alone. And man, people love it. I used to own Organize.com, we competed with The Container Store, and every click from Pinterest was worth a \$1.15 to us. Every click.

S: Wow.

J: And we would do thousands of clicks a day.

S: Were you doing that primarily through organic means or were you doing that through paid advertising?

J: No, that was organic. We had a full-time pinner. All she did was pin all day long. Cool pictures, this, cool that, hot this, hot that. Man, it was worth

gold. Versus when I would post something tech, nobody cares. Literally. Nobody cared.

S: Right. So you could have the best infographic in the world, but because it was related to tech, it was going to go nowhere.

J: Correct, I mean it might go somewhere. But most likely it is going to go nowhere.



S: I remember we were on a panel talking about Pinterest and that was fun. Pubcon. Those were some good techniques you were sharing onstage. Do you have any recollection of that?

J: Yeah! Just really connect with what your audience wants. There are things called ProPinner. There are tools out there where you can automate pins, take your top pins and repin every 3 to 8 days and do them

automated. If you notice a pin gets 1000 repins, which is a ton, but it is totally doable. Go 6 to 8 days later and repin. Pinners are mostly active at night, so you can pin from 6 to 1 am. 6 pm to 1 am. The better it will be for you. That is when the audience is online. Til 1 am, maybe 2 am. And that is Eastern.

S: Right, and timing is really important not just for Pinterest, but all the social platforms. If you are trying to reach the front page of Reddit, for example, and you are doing it at the wrong time, you are missing the window. So what would be your timing recommendations for some of the other platforms?

J: Most of them? I'll tell you when things do well and when you're getting impressions or not. So, Twitter. I can tell you that-here, I'm looking at my Twitter right now. Over the past 24 hours, it looks like 10 am to 12 pm is my top time. I got 1.6 million impressions between 10 and 12 pm. Versus from 2 to 4, I got 22,000. And at 1 am, I had 400,000 impressions. At 10 am, I get a lot more impressions, and statistically, if you look back at top tweets, they are all around 10 am. Which is weird. It is an odd time. But that is when my audience is online. You just really have to know when your audience is online. It is the same with posting content too. I know that if I publish in a magazine and I publish at 5 o'clock at night, they are not going to do well. Versus if I publish at 11 am? They are going to do amazing.

S: Makes sense.

J: You have just got to know your audience, pay attention to the traffic, pay attention to impressions, and see when your audience is online.

S: And you can repost stuff to add something to your Twitter feed multiple times and seem to get away with that just fine. Guy Kawasaki is regularly reposting the same thing to his Twitter, at least 3 times.

J: Yep! And there's Get Edgar. Or Meet Edgar. I believe it is \$100/mo. But basically what it does is determine "Oh, this was popular? Let me republish on whatever medium a day later or two days later or three weeks later or three months later."

S: And are you using that tool?

J: Yep!

S: Cool. Do you have any other tools you want to mention that are pretty cool? Like for example if you want to see how many of your Twitter followers are automated bots and not even real people, you can use Twitteraudit.com. What are some that you use?

J: Let's see. I really like Buffer for scheduling posts. I don't use a ton of other things. I use Buffer a lot. That is probably the biggest one that I use.

S: Okay. Are you doing much with Reddit?

J: I'm not doing anything, I don't understand Reddit at all.

S: Okay.

J: Wish I did. There are great people, for example Brent Csutoras. He's tried to teach me three or four times and I just do not get it. I am completely an idiot when it comes to that stuff.

S: But you know how to hire the right people.

J: Yeah, exactly. I hire him. And he's done stuff on there and it is fantabulous. You know, I stick to what I am very good at and I scale it. Once I nail it, I scale it. And things I am not good at, I hire out.

S: Right, like I have a Reddit person who works for me as a contractor. She is in the Century Club, which means over 100,000 link karma points. She has multiple accounts that are over that. She is a big deal in Reddit land. And she hits the front page regularly, like all the time, which is huge, driving traffic to individual images she links to and stuff. I have her create an account from scratch for me so I own that asset and she built that up to 16,000-20,000 link karma points within a few months. I'm not an expert at Reddit but I know how to hire someone who is and build an asset for me. You have that same skill. Might be something to consider? Other social platforms you consider sleeping giants to the traditional marketer?

J: Blab is a really good one. Blab is a great platform. Blab.im. Blab is a platform I've used to—they basically are like a Skype, but they record it. If you ever want to do a podcast or something, you can record it on there and export it. I love Blab. It is a great tool.

S: They bought a company called PodClear that had a really cool premise. You go onto the website and the person you are interviewing on the podcast, they are being recorded on their end without having to have call recorder for skype installed or anything like that. The same thing is happening on your end. You're getting the local version or copy of the recording on both sides. I guess that is built in now to Blab. That's a great idea.

J: Yeah! Definitely.

S: So are you using Blab a lot? Or just kind of experimenting with it?

J: I go on as much as I can. I'm running a company, so you know you try to find time for everything but it is pretty much impossible. I use it whenever I can.

S: Cool, so listeners, check out Blab. What about StumbleUpon?

J: Haven't done StumbleUpon. My main ones are Twitter, Facebook, I do a little bit of Vine, a little bit of Periscope, a little bit of SnapChat. And then Blab. Those are the ones I use.

S: And does Snapchat actually deliver buyers?

J: No, it does not. I have not figured out Snapchat. But I have so many people, apparently people have said I do Snapchat very very well, I market it well. Some days I have 1000 plus add me. So, I have a fairly large audience there. But I don't get it. I am playing around with it, but not trying to get it.

S: So at least at this point it is not monetizing.

J: Nope, not at all. But you have to play around with things. See how it goes, experiment. Right now I'm in the experimenting phase and the seeing how it works phase.

S: I know Gary Vaynerchuk is hugely bullish about Snapchat.

J: Yep.

S: I still don't get it.

J: I don't either. But I'm trying to.

S: Cool, well this has been mind expanding. You've got quite a machine for content creation, of course, in your head. That machine is amazing. And you figure out how to expand that beyond your skull to have people help you with different aspects of it so it is automated and scalable and you have people helping out put out dozens and dozens of content pieces a week. That is impressive. It is really impressive. So I think you've inspired a lot of listeners on how to get a following, how to get high quality content out there, how to turn that following into something that monetizes to out there to work for free for an editor for some online magazine. Thank you again. If anyone wanted to work with you-I know you are super selective with who you take on, in many cases you won't take on any PR clients or anything like that. Do you have any interest in taking on any potential clients? If so, how would they reach you?

J: I would say go to my website, johnrampton.com, you can also go to my company website which is due.com. Come to my contact page, hit me up, and say "Hey! I had a question about this." I'm happy to get you on the phone and help you in any way possible. I truly really enjoy helping people. So contact me there. Also, I'm johnrampton on Twitter.

S: Awesome. We talked about this briefly early on in the episode. You mention the term superfans. That's a great way to refer to the people who are following you, subscribing to you, who are waiting for your next content piece because you set a really high bar and you keep it there. Kevin Kelly wrote this piece called 1000 True fans. You have that in spades.

J: Oh thanks!

S: And you've earned it. So thank you again, John, it's been great! And for you listeners, now it is time to take action, so go to the website, marketingspeak.com, go to the shownotes, which will include links to these great tools and resources into what we talked about. We put a lot of time into creating a fabulous pdf transcript with a checklist of action items to take, so go ahead and check that out on marketingspeak.com. This is Stephan Spencer, and I will catch you on the next episode!

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Stephan Spencer is an internationally recognized SEO expert and bestselling author. He is the co-author of [The Art of SEO](#) (3rd edition - August 2015), author of [Google Power Search](#) and co-author of [Social eCommerce](#), all published by O'Reilly. Stephan founded Netconcepts, an SEO and interactive agency in the 1990's, and sold it to Covario in 2010. He invented a pay-for-performance SEO technology called GravityStream that was also acquired and is now part of Rio SEO. Stephan's recent SEO clients have included such retail giants as Zappos, Sony Store, Quiksilver, Best Buy Canada, Bed Bath & Beyond, and Chanel. Stephan has spoken at countless hundreds of Internet marketing events, including all the major search & e-commerce conferences (SES, SMX, PubCon, Internet Retailer, Shop.org, eTail, etc.). He's been a contributor to the Huffington Post, Multichannel Merchant, Practical Ecommerce, Search Engine Land, DM News and MarketingProfs, to name a few.

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