

Ep #10: The Awkwardness of Tooting Your Own Horn



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With Your Host

Rachel Cannon

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Welcome to *Loudmouth Introvert*, a podcast for helping creative introverted entrepreneurs thrive, despite living in a world that's designed for extroverts to succeed. If you're ready to make more money and build the creative business you've been dreaming of, you're in the right place. I'm your host Rachel Cannon.

Welcome back, y'all! We're 10 episodes in, and already, you've become my family. You've either emailed me, messaged me, or left a review on Apple Podcasts, and you've just completely affirmed my decision to create this podcast. And it's not surprising to me at all that we've connected so quickly because that's what introverts want more than anything!! We want deep, meaningful connections over surface, shallow interaction! I'm introducing a new segment today right here at the top of the show to highlight your sweet messages, and I'm starting with user DLuongo's (I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly!) review on Apple Podcasts:

"New BFF

Rachel doesn't know it yet, but she's my new BFF. Normally I would say I wish I could meet her. But just after one episode, I can simply say I can't wait to meet her! I have no clue how that will happen, obviously, us introverts must think about it first. Love, love everything about Rachel and this podcast!"

D? Can I call you D? D. I hope we get to meet someday too. I love that she immediately starts in by saying I'm her BFF because honestly that's exactly how I've become BFFs with anyone I've ever met. They usually just tell me and I'm cool with that. D, thank you for your review.

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In other news, it's Thanksgiving Day, which probably means if you're listening to this, you've escaped a heinous political discussion at the dinner table and stolen away to a quiet corner for a moment's peace. If so, I'm really excited to share a little piece of this holiday with you because I think this episode is really going to resonate with you. So, since we're already thinking about family dynamics, I have a question: Does anybody employ tough love anymore? I'm a product of a home where tough love was regularly practiced; and by tough love, I don't mean abuse of any kind, I mean discipline that was probably a lot harder on my parents than it was on me and my sister because it involved them having to stick to their guns. I'm not a parent, so I can't speak to whether or not this is still how kids are raised in 2019, but since this is my podcast, and you're kind of like my kids, and it is Thanksgiving, I'm going to show all of you some tough love today. I mean, what are the holidays if someone doesn't end up feeling frustrated and re-evaluating all of their life choices, right?

When you hear the word "niche" do you have a visceral reaction to it? If you're in the interior design industry, does it seem like it would limit opportunities if you decided to only work in a design aesthetic that you personally like? Or even design only in one color? Or, if you're a photographer, do you bristle at the idea of only photographing in portrait style? Maybe you're a landscape architect who'd love to create Zen gardens, but you feel like putting that out there would actually limit your opportunities. Well, today's episode will hopefully change some of that for you. A highly focused niche strategy is an intelligent way to set yourself apart from all the other people who appear to do the same thing as you, and as I've mentioned before, it means you stand a greater chance at getting all the work in that niche, rather than some of the work in no niche. And in today's market it's easier than ever to reach your target audience through the use of social media.

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Now, I already hear some of you saying to me, “Rach, I’m not a writer. I know what I want to say, but when I try to write it down, it comes out all weird. I never know what to post on social media. I’m not good at it.” Here’s where the tough love comes in: Stop saying this to yourself. Stop limiting your growth and playing it safe by giving yourself a pass on social media. Social media is a necessary platform today to grow your audience and regularly engage with them, even for those of us in the over 40 crowd. We like to think we can continue to reel in clients the old fashioned way, and I get it - it can feel so intimidating to creative introverts... the selfies, the cheesy quotes, humble-bragging. To be perfectly honest, I regularly unfollow accounts where I don’t feel the message resonates with me, or if I sense an inauthentic vibe. But truth be told, if you’re not using social media as a part of your marketing strategy, you’re leaving money on the table, and as your tough-love/accountability partner, I want you to stop holding yourself back from making money!

So before we dig in, I want to make a bold statement. This episode is going to shatter a lot of the beliefs you’ve held about social media that have allowed you to safely avoid using it to your advantage. If you’re not ready to hear this, don’t go anywhere, because you are exactly who I’ve created this for! If you think you’ve already mastered social media, also don’t go anywhere, because there’s always room for improvement. I’m a big believer in steps and strategies, and I like for things to be simple. I promise you, this is not going to overwhelm you or make you feel like you have to add yet another thing to your plate. Alright, ready? Good.

Let’s begin by just establishing that saying you don’t know how to use social media is an excuse, because when I graduated from design school, there was no social media. There was no Facebook or Instagram. There wasn’t even an iPhone. (It would be another three years before that would be invented, and I am really dating myself by revealing that.) But did we all learn how to use an iPhone? You bet we did. Do we all have Facebook and

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Instagram accounts? Heck yeah! Do we all regularly adopt new technologies as they roll out? Of course we do.

So why would you not also learn how to unlock the potential of social media as a way to speak directly to your unique audience?

Here are the common excuses I hear:

“I’m not a good writer.”

“I don’t know what to say.”

“It’s overwhelming, and I get so busy at work I forget I need to post something.”

“I’m not an influencer.”

“I hate talking about myself.”

I think all of those points can be boiled down to these: (a) I don’t know who I’m talking to, (b) I don’t have a goal in mind, and (c) I haven’t created a strategy.

Well, in that case, I can see why it’s difficult – but not impossible – to create content. Let’s start with the first point: “I don’t know who I’m talking to.” I covered this in Episode 6 about the Top 5 Mistakes Creative Introverts

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Make When Starting a Business, so if you haven't listened to that episode, you should go back and listen to it. Mistake number 1 is "Trying to appeal to everyone."

You do not need to appeal to everyone.

In fact, you shouldn't.

Trying to appeal to everyone causes confusion, not just to our followers or potential clients, but for us, too! You need to know who you're talking to before you can really speak their language, which is what allows us to stand out. If you need a refresher on this, I highly recommend you go back to Episode 6 and re-listen, and then go to rachelcannonlimited.com/6 and download the free guide I created that will help you work through this exact problem.

The next problem is not having a goal in mind. I'm sure the big goal is to attract new business, but have you considered using your social media to market specific services? Or to build engagement with your audience? Remember – for introverts, energy out is energy lost. We can't spend energy on anything without feeling like we got a return on it.

You could set some goals for the number of new clients you want to sign in 30 days.

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You could set goals that relate to how you interact with your followers.

In any event, moving through social media with no direction, just sort of aimlessly wandering around until followers decide to comment or like what you post, is wasted effort and you'll burn out...and when we creative introverts burn out, we are ready to throw our hands up and forget it altogether! To call back to Episode 4, "It's Not About the Money (Until It Is)," I talked about how, as creative introverts, relying on our passion to make a living, instead of relying on clear, measurable goals, is incredibly risky because we get drained so easily. (Another great episode to cross reference with this one.)

And finally, many of us don't create a strategy for how we want to use social media in our businesses. We know we need to show up, but we have no plan for when, or how, or what time our best bet for engagement is going to be, so we show up sporadically (if at all). We post in a moment of panic, realizing we haven't posted anything in a few days, and we scramble to find anything on our phones that we can throw up before the day is done. We don't curate our content, and I think that's what most of you are struggling with. The idea of creating content is overwhelming, so we leave it as the last thing we want to deal with. Even when we have beautiful images we can share of our work! We don't know how this fits into our overall business, so we treat it like it's just a casual side thing.

I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to take control over your social media.

Starting now.

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How can you do that? I'm glad you asked!

First, spend some time thinking about the clients you'd work with again and again, or the ones you'd clone so you could work with people just like them.

Second, put together a list of topics that you could talk about without getting sick of hearing yourself. Stuff that fires you up, that you can be excited about.

Third, download a scheduling app, for the love. There are TONS, and they really do make your life so much easier.

Let's dig a little deeper into the reasons why these are the first steps you need to take to start tooting your own horn – because believe me, nobody else is going to do it for you, and I know that's what you're hoping will happen.

1. You want to Grow & Engage Your Following

A highly focused niche strategy is an intelligent way to set yourself apart from all the other people who appear to do the same thing as you.

2. Be the Authority on your personal area of expertise.

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A fast-track to becoming an authority in your industry is video. This is because, just like we value the intimacy of a close group of friends, your audience wants to know YOU. This is absolutely true for EVERY business. Since the dawn of time, people have made decisions based on personal relationships. And, even though it feels like a one-way lens when you're talking to a camera (or your iphone with your own face staring back at you) your audience will feel that same connection we crave in our own inner circle.

3. Use a Planning and Scheduling platform

Since social media can drain introverts of their energy, using a planning and scheduling platform to do most of your work will liberate you from this work taking over your days.

Here are some popular options, many offer free plans. Find one that fits your needs and stick with it until it no longer meets your needs.

Later

Buffer

Hootsuite

MeetEdgar

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Planoly

Loomly

Coschedule

By simplifying how you use social media to promote your business, you'll feel more confident in tooting your own horn!

Hey, y'all, if you love the show and you find it useful, I would really appreciate it if you would leave me a rating and a review on Apple Podcasts, or iTunes if you're an Android or Windows user. Your feedback helps other creative introverted entrepreneurs find the show and it helps me create an awesome show that provides tons of value.

So, visit rachelcannonlimited.com/podcastlaunch for directions on how to subscribe, rate, and review.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Loudmouth Introvert*. Want more? Come visit us at loudmouth-introvert.com. We'll see you back here next week.