

Ep #25: Raising Your Visibility Without Raising Your Voice



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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 to the podcast, guys! Before we get started with today's episode, I wanted to take a minute and say hello to everyone who is new to this community. When I started the podcast in October, I had a gut feeling that if I started talking about introverted, creative entrepreneurs have our own set of needs and requirements in business, y'all would come out of the woodwork. And you have! I'm really grateful to all of you for your support, and one of the ways I'm here to support you is in my private Facebook group for podcast listeners only! To request to be added to the group, go to my Instagram account (@rclinteriors) and tap on the "Podcast" highlight on my bio, and follow the link there to find the group and ask to join. It's a place where I hope to interact with you on a much deeper level, with some Q&A sessions, some surprise Facebook Live sessions, and more. Plus, you're surrounded by other introverted, creative entrepreneurs, and it's an entirely safe space for people just like you and me! Had a bad week? Tell us about it so we can help you. Had a major victory? Tell us so we can celebrate with you! The best way for us to support each other is to show up – so look for the link on the "Podcast" highlight on my Instagram account and start finding YOUR people today!!

Now, has anyone ever told you something like, "You have to follow this person on Instagram. She makes the most incredible cheese boards!" Or "Read this blog - it's all about how to find clothes and style them for tall women." And you follow or read and you love it because it's like it was created to speak just to you. And you might even wonder, how did they even think to start a business doing this? How is this even a thing? A whole Instagram of nothing but pics of cheese boards, but I can't look away? Why do things like this catch like wildfire? What's the deal? Why am I so drawn in? The deal, my friends, is visibility. These people have mastered it. And

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that begs the question: Why is it that some people just seem to have no issue putting themselves out there and shamelessly self-promoting? I really don't love to do it. My worst fear is for someone to say "so tell me about yourself." I instantly go blank, I feel weird saying anything about myself, much less speaking about the things I'm most proud of....but I don't want to miss an opportunity to build my business. I feel like I have a really unique message and I'm eager to share it, but when I'm put on the spot...I fall silent. So much so, that instead of promoting myself, I'd rather have someone else do it for me. Perfect example: from I'm going to let one of my listeners do it in today's Loudmouth Letter!

Loudmouth Letter: "Krystal M Design says Thank you Rachel for sharing your brilliance! Every time I put into action one of your nuggets of wisdom, I'm in awe of how right you are. This podcast is an actual godsend for the creatives trying to run our businesses without losing our spark. Love your honesty, love your heart, love your voice. Keep it ALL up and lead on!" Krystal! Thank you so much. That really means a lot to me, especially on a day like today, when I have 50 million things I'm supposed to be checking off my list, and writing this episode is one of them. When I get into a rut with creating content, I do tend to start questioning whether or not the podcast is helping anyone...and then I get your reviews or dms and y'all really don't know what that does to give me a boost!! So thank you, Krystal, and everyone who has reviewed the show or sent me a personal message...they're what keep me focused on continuing to spread the message that you don't have to transform yourself into an extrovert to be successful in your creative business!

So I'll let you in on a little spoiler: Krystal is one of my oldest and dearest friends, so she might be a tiny bit biased. However, she and I share office space, and we both run interior design businesses, so we really "get" each other. We've had many deep conversations about business, marketing, planning, all of that, and the one thing I know she resists is the idea of self-promotion and visibility. And I mean, who can blame her? It's uncomfortable to talk about your achievements and talents - especially for

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introverts. And she's not the only one! So many of you have reached out with similar feelings about how uncomfortable it is to have to be visible in order for your business to grow and be successful. And I totally get it, because I know how you feel. I also don't want to come across as self-absorbed or completely unaware of what I sound like...because I think we've all been around that person, and it's a huge turn-off. One time I met another designer for the first time at an event, and she spent 20 minutes giving me her work history and resume, dropping lots of big names and big budget projects, and never once stopped to ask me about my business. It was like she was trying to let me know that she was the alpha, but all it did was make her look incredibly insecure, not to mention it demonstrated how insular her world was. I walked away from the conversation not really knowing anything about her, other than that she had worked at some other design firms that I knew I was supposed to be impressed by (but honestly had never heard of), and still not knowing what exactly was unique about the business she'd started. It just seemed like a lot of other interior design businesses to me - creating pretty rooms, serving rich clients. I think that's why we introverts shy away from self-promotion. We deeply dislike an exchange like that, where no attempt a connection is made, and the other person just comes across looking like a total me-monster.

But here's the thing: you already know that you have to be willing to promote not only your business, but yourself, if you want to grow and be successful. And we all have our own version of what growth and success look like, but we all know we can't get there if we're so under-the-radar that people don't know about you. And the thing that holds us up is our unwillingness to raise our visibility because we don't want to get a reputation of someone who is completely oblivious to others and our environment. We want visibility, but we don't want to model our behavior on the conventional notion that says we must constantly be out in front, pretending to be celebrities, or always shining the spotlight on ourselves! Our unwillingness to be front and center limits our ability to really position ourselves as something incredible in our market...and we end up blending

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in with all of the other people who appear to do what we do. Pretty rooms for rich clients.

Introverts tend to assume that raising our visibility means raising our voice. Ideally, we'd love for our creative work to speak for itself, so we don't have to say anything at all. We end up comparing ourselves to others who seem to be everywhere all the time, constantly promoting themselves and their businesses, and we feel like we just can't compete that way. So instead of finding a way we can be visible, we assume we're just going to have to be happy with whatever work comes our way. We get in between a rock and a hard place: stay where it's more comfortable, behind the scenes, so we don't have to risk becoming an insufferable me-monster; or do what doesn't come naturally to us and learn to be a self-promoting machine, regardless of who it turns off?? We have to attract clients to stay in business and achieve our unique versions of growth and success...so how do we get out from this being so stuck.

Well, breathe a sigh of relief, because the secret is this: We don't have to raise our voices, we simply have to USE them. Visibility is what happens when we use our voice through self-promotion. We get to determine the message we want to share, and we get to do it in the most authentic way possible, without falling back on all of that gross, uncomfortable behavior that is such a huge turn off. And we do that by identifying the thing we do that's different from all the other people in our industries who are doing the same thing. We actually CAN master the art of self-promotion, without becoming a giant pill, when we determine the thing WE offer that nobody else can. We can become known for doing [fill in the blank] - and that's the ticket to letting your creative work speak for itself!

So, self promotion. What is it, if it's not bragging, name dropping, dominating the conversation, listing your accomplishments or one-upping others, or (worse) begging for attention? What self-promotion really amounts to is: complete security in our strengths AND our weaknesses so that promoting ourselves instills confidence in anyone who hears our

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message, because it's entirely unique to US and the way WE function in our creative industries. It's allowing ourselves to fully embrace what we do best above and beyond the creative service we offer, and letting that be the lighthouse that shines the light for anyone looking for what we offer. And introverts, we are lighthouses before we are anything else. Lighthouses do not go out into the water to bring ships in. They are the fixed spot on land, beckoning ships to navigate towards them by putting out a very strong, bright signal. In short, they accomplish their goal by doing one thing: being visible.

Now that we understand that self-promotion is not about bragging, we can start to work through some of the key points we need to understand if we want to master it. And remember - you raise your visibility without raising your voice when you master self-promotion.

Rather than starting at the beginning today, I'm going to start at the end. Normally, I'd say step one is X, but today, let's focus on the end goal. Visibility is about being known for something. Not for a bunch of things, but for one thing. What do you want to be known for? What fires you up? What would you do again and again if it would put you on the fast track to you achieving your goals? In my case, I want to be known for helping introverts thrive at home and in business. I want to be the girl who designs for and coaches introverted professionals with demanding schedules. A consulting client dubbed me "queen of the introverts" and I was like, "yes girl put that on a t-shirt today!" Because being visible for working with introverted professionals doesn't take anything away from my ability to design beautiful rooms, nor does it diminish my ability to help someone in their business. It simply means that if you're an introvert whose home or business is wearing them out, I have a solution that addresses THAT issue, in addition to things like "I hate my paint color" or "my workload is killing me." It makes me recognizable to potential clients in a way that simply saying "I'm an interior designer" or "I'm a business coach" doesn't. It frees me from having to fall back on my credentials (where my degree is from, that I'm licensed, how long I've had my business) as a way to appeal to clients. AND, it has

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helped start an entirely new conversation that moves me to top-of-mind for potential clients because nobody else is talking about it! So in order to promote what you believe in, take some time to think about what you want to be known for, outside of just your creative talent. Your visibility is going to skyrocket, and you're not going to have to do a whole lot of talking about yourself.

Now you might be wondering "you just told me I have to be willing to do some self-promotion in order to raise my visibility, and now you're saying I can do that without talking about myself, and that sounds completely contradictory." Stick with me. So if the end goal is visibility, and we're thinking about what we want to be known for, consider this - what's your expertise? In my case, I found my expertise when I uncovered what I spent most of my time trying to work against. So, in design: that was open floor plans. In business: it was the idea only extroverts can be successful. What made me an expert in challenging those ideas? Obviously because I'm an introvert, and because I refuse to accept that I have to simply tolerate a noisy open floor plan or that I have to transform myself into an extrovert to be successful. I just flat don't believe either of those. I believe I'm an expert in guiding others to see things my way because I know there are other people out there just like me, wishing someone would speak up for them. And in realizing how powerful that message is, I enabled myself to do some self-promotion without raising my voice simply because this message is completely authentic to my own experiences. I can solve what's at the root of your design dilemma and your business problem because I've had to overcome them both in my own life! That means I can confidently demonstrate to potential clients that their pain is temporary and their aspirations are not out of reach.

And since we're on the subject of pain points and aspiration, let's talk about them for a minute. I think it's crucial to identify both for your potential client and your audience because people make buying decisions based on both. By identifying both, you demonstrate to them that you understand where they're coming from, and you position yourself as the expert...that's all part

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raising your visibility so that the answer you hold becomes the only possibility for them when it's time for them to buy. But a quick note about how to use your knowledge about their pain and aspirations. Yes, you need them to know that you understand both, but what you don't want to do is spend so much time talking about the pain that you begin to attract an audience or clients who only want to wallow in the pain. Ultimately, you want to spend more time talking about how you can make their aspirations a reality, because you'll send the message that says "I have the way out of your pain!" And that will attract people who are ready to take action and let you guide them. Remember, we're showing them that their pain is temporary, so we don't want to end up just commiserating with them. The visibility you want that will help your business grow is the kind that focuses on the transformation and the pay-off.

So that leads me to what this actually all starts with. Relief for all of us who have endured that me-monster conversation and thought, "if that's self-promotion, count me out because I refuse to list my accomplishments and accolades and name drop because it is the grossest thing I've ever witnessed." Y'all, true self-promotion is not about YOU. Again, that sounds counterintuitive, I know. How can you promote yourself without talking about yourself? My introverted friends, this is the moment you've been waiting for: You'll raise your visibility without raising your voice when you learn exactly who you're talking to. Because you're actually talking to and about them. Knowing exactly who you serve, by what means, and to what end, so that you can talk about THEM, not yourself means you've mastered self-promotion. Remember, it's not bragging, name-dropping, or one-upping. Those things are a turnoff for most people and they feel desperate. In my design business, who do I serve? Introverted professionals with demanding schedules. By what means? Promoting self-care through spaces that encourage quiet time, recharging, and restoration. To what end? Clients that feel energized and restored by their homes so that they can perform at their optimum level in their businesses. I raise my visibility by speaking to them, about their pain points and aspirations, rather than

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talking about how many years of experience I have as an interior designer (because nobody cares about that).

So, to now put all of this into steps that you can work with, now that I've listed them backwards for you, let's start at the beginning:

1. Identify Your Target Audience
2. Identify Their Pain Points
3. Identify Their Aspirations
4. Bridge the Gap for them (show them you understand what they want, and position yourself as the expert)
5. Demonstrate Your Expertise (show them you have the answer to solve their problem so their aspirations are not out of reach)
6. Become Known for Being the Girl or Guy Who...

As creative introverts, we all have our own idea of success for our businesses. Mastering self-promotion by using these steps will not only move you towards your goals, it will help you raise your visibility without having to raise your voice, and I don't know a single introvert who can't feel relieved about that!

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.

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