

How to Sell Your Course on Social Media Without Giving It Away for Free

Melody

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Welcome everybody to the course consultants show my name's melody. And I'm so very excited today to have a very special guest. Andrea Jones has built an incredible online business, committed to empowering businesses to utilize the power of social media in a positive and impactful way without being overwhelmed or drained by it. Not only does she have an incredible amount of experience in social media marketing, that's actually seven years in the game. Andrea hosts the acclaimed podcast, the savvy social podcast, and leads a team providing done for you services inside of her marketing agency, that was named a top digital marketing agency in 2021 and serves over 200 students in her membership, the savvy social school. You can find her online@onlinejet.com or online jail on Instagram. Thank you so much for joining me on today's show. It's such a pleasure to have you back. I'm so excited.

Andrea Jones

00:01:03

Yay. Thank you so much for having me on the show. I'm excited for our conversation.

Melody

00:01:06

Yes. All right. So today I want to just dive into how to market your course without giving away everything for free. So let's take it from the top. You have a lot of different programs available, self-service documents and courses and templates and membership. You have a, a group program done for you services for your agency. There's a lot of content that you help your students and clients with. So how do you cover something in your marketing career, in your marketing plan on social media without actually really just giving away everything for free?

Andrea Jones

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Yes. And that is such a challenging thing to do, especially as course creators because we want people to ultimately buy our products and not just consume all of the free stuff. And I think anyone who is savvy enough could probably get at least 75% of my content for free. And I've been creating content for so long that a lot of it is available out there. The thing with my program is it lays it all out for you in order, and it helps you decide what's important for you. So I do give a lot away, a lot of free content, but ultimately the people who want to go through my program need that level of support that the program offers. So I talk a lot about the how on social media and in my podcast. And then I show the what in the program. So click this button, do this first, do this next kind of thing. Whereas social media is like, you need to have a content plan. I don't really talk too much about the step-by-step process of laying out a content plan, but you could probably put the pieces together if you watch all of my content, which we both know, you know, no one's going through your entire catalog of content. Mostly they kind of pick up things here and there. So that's really the foundation of how I approach creating content, both for my podcast and for social media.

Melody

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Wonderful. And I know that you have a heart for your students who really want to give them a way to feel empowered. So walk us through when somebody enters into your membership, what's something that they first do to actually experience all the joys of your curriculum, because obviously they're consuming content on your Instagram channel, maybe your YouTube channel, maybe a little bit on LinkedIn, and then they're thinking, Hey, I'm going to hop into this membership. What's the biggest difference, right?

Andrea Jones

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Yeah. So one of the things we actually changed this year after doing a consulting session with you was having a path for our members. So previously I kind of described our membership as a buffet where you could see everything, we kind of put what you want in your plate. And for a lot of my members that was overwhelming, they'd kind of maybe

taste a little bit here a little bit there and then go, this is too much for me and then they'd leave. And so one of the biggest things we created was this path, which is really our core framework. It's our foundational framework that is applicable to all of the courses, whether you're going through, you know, the Instagram course or the LinkedIn course, or we just released a Tik TOK course, this framework is applicable to any of those platforms. And it's just the foundations of building a social media strategy that you'll actually stick with. It's a strategy that you'll actually move forward with. So when you first come into our membership, that's what we tell our members to go through because it'll really help them make the decisions that they need to make so that they're not overwhelmed at the buffet. They know, oh, I need one protein and one meat. And so they go out and they do that.

Melody

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Yeah, no, and I am so appreciative that you mentioned, you know, you're a unique success plan and a little path for them to follow. Because as you mentioned, there is so much information inside of your membership and it's so incredibly valuable, but it can be hard and overwhelming for busy entrepreneurs to be able to dive in and see what exactly they need to take first in order to see that success goal. So let me just ask you this, when people are going through your curriculum, what are some common threads of questions of the ultimate goal that they want to accomplish? Because obviously you service a lot of different people in different containers. So you have your membership, you have your group program, and then you have your done for you services. So when people come to you, are they just looking to book more clients through social media, or they're really looking to really build up more followers so that they can do some sort of paid advertisement? Like, what is it the end goal for the, for your students and or customers when they come to you?

Andrea Jones

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Yeah. So most of our students are either service-based or coaches or consultants. So people who really do offer a service to their clients. And so ultimately they do want more customers and clients, and they're really willing to put in the work to kind of build a long lasting brand. So they don't want to be the flash in the pan. They don't necessarily have aspirations to be viral. They just want a business that works for them and a social media plan that fits inside of that. So whether they're in our membership program, which is the larger program, more for everyone or in our group program, which is really for social media managers, doing it for themselves and for their clients or the done for you services, which is our higher level clients who, you know, they're like, I've done Instagram. I don't want to log in anymore. You know, no matter where they're on that path, typically they want to grow their business using social media.

Melody

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Yeah. And I, I liked that. You mentioned for your clients, you really want them to be able to see the return of no matter where they're at there, they're not in it just for the short term. They're not looking to just go viral. Although of course, that would be great. They're looking for a longterm strategy. And I really love that approach that you take inside of your podcast. And also any of the interviews that you do because you've been on so many other podcasts and talking about social media and how to overcome your overwhelm with it, using step-by-step strategies and tools that you can easily implement. So you talk a little bit more about the, how in your social media marketing. And you also mentioned that when you get inside of your membership and your services, and also your other programs that you talk about the what, so let me ask you this.

Melody

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When it comes to helping your students inside of your membership, how does it work actually, logistically does your team help you build out the curriculum? Are you telling them, Hey, I need this to be updated. Here's some Canva templates these need to be created. And then just walk us through some history, you know, because every single membership, every program has iterations. Your first membership course, you're at first Jumblatt, it's going to be way different than your 50th template. So just walk us through, what was that evolution like for you from just being

an individual solo entrepreneur, into growing your team and handing over some tasks for building out these learning experiences for your students?

Andrea Jones

00:08:05

Yeah. So I started with my first course in 2016, I created a canvas course because at the time Campbell was newer and not a lot of social media managers were using it. And definitely business owners were struggling to create content that looked good without having to hire a designer or mess around with Photoshop to be able to create this content. So I started with the canvas course. This was before canvas even had a paid plan. It was before Canva had all the templates that they had. So it was really teaching business owners, how to create their own templates for social media. That was my first product. And then I started getting more questions about things, but before I could even create my next course, I found that I was still in iteration for Canva because it wasn't, they were improving their tool. So I kept relaunching the same course and I realized that I also had all of these individual trainings that didn't particularly go together as one course, but could be a product.

Andrea Jones

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And that's when I landed on membership. So at the time I was building out my team, this was 2017. So to build out my team, I was recording videos. Like here's how I write an Instagram caption. Here's how I, you know, create a post on LinkedIn. And so I had all of these tutorials for my team. That was the first iteration of my membership, which I launched in 2018. And so it was really just a collection of videos that I created for my team, the CAMBA course. And then I did create like a foundational social media strategy of course at the time as well. And then I've just been adding to it over time. I mean, the first iteration of the membership, my early bird members were \$19 per month. So it was really like bare bones. If you get it now you're locked in at that rate.

Andrea Jones

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Now it's \$57 and my team does help out a lot more now. So we saw a lot of growth with the pandemic when it hit, a lot of people were turning to low cost options for social media. Maybe they reduce their team size or their business shifted online and unexpected way. So we did see quite an uptick in membership the beginning of 2020. And that's when I started getting my team more involved. So my Facebook ads, strategist, who is a contractor on my agency side now teaches workshops and has created a whole Facebook ads course in our membership. My one of my account managers is also a programs coordinator. So she does help me with creating our programming specifically with staff, like noticing trends and things that work really well with our members, with our live sessions. I still record all of the most of the, the programming outside of the Facebook's training. And my sorry, my customer service person helps with a lot of the community management as well. So making sure members can log in, they can see everything uploading our live session recordings, that sort of thing.

Melody

01:11:11

Wow, that's so incredible. I love that you kind of just shared how you started to see a trend yourself that you were making these video tutorials. And it just made sense to actually show this to somebody else and wow, \$19 a month. That's incredible. You grew from 19 all the way to 57 and truthfully all the amazing curriculum that you have is worth more and everyone should go join your membership. So I wanted to just go back to originally what we talked about free versus paid content marketing in general, a lot of people feel like there are big names out there and they have to compete with these larger social media presences, especially on, let's say Instagram or YouTube. And so it becomes a little bit of a feeling of feeling that you do not have enough following in order to see success, especially in really saturated markets like social media marketing or online business. So how have you really overcome your own struggles with feeling that there are others in the market with your own marketing and also staying afloat with your team to encourage them? Because obviously as a leader, you have to be able to just keep the ball rolling. Thankfully you have a great team as well to help you along the way, but there is a sense of, I got to make sure that we're all on the same page and all of our customers see us growing at each stage without really burning out.

Andrea Jones

01:12:43

Yeah, it is tough. And honestly, because social media is so public, it does make it a lot harder than, you know, other elements of marketing because everyone is what it seems like doing so awesome. And they're sharing all of these things. And especially as a marketer, I do feel that pressure a lot more where, you know, I should be on tic-tac. I should be on LinkedIn. I doing live videos. I should be doing all of these things and I ended up shitting myself too much. And so when we think about that as business owners, you know, I think the biggest thing for me is just realizing that I'm on my own journey and that I don't have to rush. We live in the age where you can literally order something online and get it within minutes within an hour. And so I do think we apply some of that to our business growth in our marketing when growing a business takes a years, tens of years sometimes to actually grow it.

Andrea Jones

01:13:37

So I try to be patient with my business growth, realistic with my business growth and realistic with my marketing too. It is tough because even through the challenging times, you know, you still want to amplify and things that are working well in your business, but it can be harder to see those things. And so, you know, leaning into what our clients and customers are saying about us really helps in those moments. So having those testimonials, having reviews, you know, having the feedback from your, your customer customer base can be really helpful as you're growing and help you see that you are helping people, you are supporting people. Maybe it's not, you know, maybe you don't have a hundred thousand followers on Instagram. Maybe you just have a thousand, but those thousand people trust you believe in you. Aren't an excited to see you and your posts. So I think it's just leaning into that feeling a lot more.

Melody

01:14:32

Yeah. And I think that it's really important to really, as you said, find your own encouragement, you know, find out that you're not competing against other people. Yes, technically you are. But just seeing as a step-by-step process for your own growth of development for yourself and for your team, because as you said, it's so easy to just go, go, go, go, go and try to think short term. But if you start looking at the bigger picture, the longer run of a successful business, it's really building these relationships over time, being committed to supporting your customers at every stage and really helping them grow and see that success. And no matter if it's five customers or 500 customers, we want to be able to scale it over time that sustainable really gives the return that people want to see. And then also hopefully see that grow over time in the way that we want to.

Melody

01:15:26

So last question, as we kind of go through the whole process, I want to just ask you, like, are there any sort of tools that you look at when you are not just doing your own marketing, but also just looking at the return on investment. Some people like to do a lot of data analytics, they'll look at different sorts of dashboards, not just only on their social media scheduler, but across the board. Because obviously as a course creator, you're looking at your membership, you're looking at, you know, the payment plans for your group program and the retainers, you know, how do you keep track of all these metrics for marketing to onboarding and supporting your clients?

Andrea Jones

01:16:07

Yes, it is tap, especially on a social media side. I deal with this all the time. It's really tough to kind of label an ROI to a lot of the social media interactions and activities and even harder. So with the podcast. So for some of those things, I have to rely on the feedback. So when people join the program and if they're exiting the program, we give surveys and we also give surveys twice a year. And most of our members say they've listened to the podcast to become a member. So while I don't have an exact, like trackable way of saying they listened to this episode, then they joined a lot of them build up that know like, and trust factor by listening to the podcast with social media, I am looking for indicators of interest. So things like reach impressions and website clicks. So I like to look at Google analytics to see where people are coming in from and what they're signing up for. So which kind of lead magnets

and things like that. And then on the membership side, we look at member retention a lot. So while we're, we love getting new members, our biggest focus right now is retaining our current members. So it's, how can we be more supportive of them? How can we help them stay longer? Because it is, it is easier to keep your current members than it is to constantly be trying to get new members. So those are the things that we look at to, to see if we're successful.

Melody

01:17:38

Yeah. And, and I really love that too. And you're right. It is really hard to track all the different types of analytics. You know, recently I've been playing around with UTM parameters and seeing how I can track clicks based off of where my leads are coming from. And it's always interesting to see in my intake forms when people apply to work with me. One-on-one and so I'll always ask the question, how did you first hear about me? And sometimes they'll remember, sometimes they won't remember, but it's always good to see, you know, is there a trend coming on with, how did you first hear about me? And then as far as retention goes, I think that's a really great point that you just mentioned. And I want to highlight that you mentioned that it's so much easier to keep the customer you already have than trying to go find new ones and absolutely agree with you.

Melody

01:18:21

Customer retention is a huge topic, not just for internal, you know, your is actually in a membership program or any other product or subscription-based program, but also internally, you know, as a, someone who has a team, it can be really a lot of time commitment to train a new team member, try to get them onboard and on track with the key things that you want them to see as success in their role. And then trying to get somebody else new to come in. If that person doesn't actually want to move forward as a team member, or it's just some, for some reason, not a good fit. So great, great points. One thing I did want to mention to you with reviews, I found out about this tool that I really love called N dorsal. I don't know if you've heard of it before, but yeah.

Melody

01:19:08

Yeah. So in dorsal actually is a tool that allows you to create automatic, basically your request for reviews. And so you can basically have somebody review you by filling out the quick form. They can rate you on a star metric. You can actually feed and push that information directly as notifications on your web browser. You can also have it embedded on your website, and what's really cool about it. And I didn't realize this is that recently I saw that you can actually do publish and push posts and it will basically take external platform reviews like Facebook pages or Google reviews directly onto a social media platform like Facebook pages. And so it will make its own social media posts from the review that was taken. So very cool tool. I wanted to share that with you. So I'll send you the link. You can take a look at it. Yeah. Very, very fun. Okay. So free tools are really great, but I'm a big proponent of actually utilizing paid tools too. So tell us about your membership. What exactly does it cover? Lots of social media, I assume. Tell us about that and what you have up to in your business.

Andrea Jones

02:20:23

Yes. So actually the best place to start with a membership is a free course. It's onlinedrea.com/free, but it's like the, what I like to call the Costco sample, like size of what's in the course. So you get to kind of taste it a little bit and see what the course is. But we have so much support from courses on platforms like Instagram and LinkedIn and clubhouse and tic-tac and Facebook to tons of done for you. Content. We've got swipe files, templates, Canva templates, video templates, even so things to help you get started. And then we also have live support. So you can come to one of our strategy hours and get support from one of our coaches, myself or someone on the team, as well as life support in the Facebook group, we just completed a, one of our a hundred follower challenges. There's just a lot of fun. Our member saw a lot of growth and we give them a lot of feedback and support in those things as well. So you can find everything savvysocialschool.com.

Melody

02:21:20

Wonderful. I'm so excited to share that free course with everyone who's listening. And for those of you who are not subscribed to my YouTube channel, please feel free to subscribe. I share some amazing interviews with fabulous resources and amazing guests just like today. And if you are not already onsite my newsletter, I do have some free resources for you, including my customer success roadmap. So make sure that you grab that in the link below. I would love for you to check that out. It is a fabulous tool to help with your onboarding process, help you map out the milestones to help your customers see success. And I am super excited to share this episode. So I'll make sure to link all of the social areas for people to follow you on. So thank you again for having, for being on today's show. I'm really excited to share this with my audience.

Andrea Jones

02:22:09

Oh, thanks so much for having me. This is fun. Thank you.