

Working Through the Inevitable Content Creation Slump

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You're listening to Business Badassery, the audio advice column for your online business. I'm Kirsty Fanton.

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And I'm Amy Posner. We're talking bite sized episodes that solve real world problems with a no holds barred tell it like it is kind of approach.

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The question we have this week is, I think probably a pretty relatable one for most business owners. And it is this. It's a struggle for me to create content at the moment, emails, socials, etc. But I know it's important to keep showing up. So either of you have any tips or systems that help win or if you're ever in a slump. I love the

00:43

or if

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I was in a slump never was superhuman.

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Yes, this is an interesting one. And I think there's, without a lot of context for why it's difficult. It's a little bit hard to answer, but maybe a good thing for us to do would be to bring up some of the things that we hear typically, because this is not uncommon, which is why we're both laughing like hyenas.

It's like, oh, yeah, everyone's everyone's in this slump at one point or another, sometimes for prolonged periods. It's definitely important. You're right. And so well, let's let me just flip it to you. Do you have anything to say there before I go into some long winded thing here, which I'm about to do?

01:23

No, I just love that. You mentioned that we're cackling like hyenas. Because I think that's pretty accurate. But yeah, because it's just it's so relatable. It happens to all of us. So yeah, I think totally agreeing with that, and just letting this person know, Hello, yes, you're in good company. You're human. You're normal, like, welcome to The Club. But please continue to pay dawg.

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I think there's, there's a lot of there's a lot of ideas, and I you know, or, you know, tips or systems. So one thing that I'll share just because I happen to be sitting here looking around at my bookshelf, it's that I find books are a great inspiration, if you have a shelf full of business books, even just like flipping through the chapter titles, or flipping through the index, you can read them if you want, but I'm giving, I'm giving you that I read most of them at one point. That's that's a really good place for inspiration. But I think one of the things that that helps, because, you know, it is a slump, it is this, you know, sort of series of ups and downs is a content calendar, a plan, and creating content in batches so that you're not every week up against the wall of like, you know, oh shit, what am I going to create this week? Because I think I think you do go in and out of the slumps. And so when you're in one of the more positive moments, you can fill in the content calendar. And we can we can talk more about that. But I think the the other thing is, it's a question of consistency. So if you can find a way to be consistent behind the scenes, then your you know, what you're putting out into the world is less sort of bound up with where you are at any given moment.

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Yes, yes, yes, I love all that, I'd like to add to just sort of, well, we're in the beginning phases of this conversation, I think it really helps to remember two things. So first of all, not every piece of content you put out should be or even can be groundbreaking. So I feel like it's like nice to acknowledge that and like take the pressure off in a way. I also think the second thing to acknowledge is that if you feel like you're really stuck, because you're not sure what to write about, or what to talk about with your audience. Remember that a really good source of content for you is just the work that you're already doing. So talk about what you're doing. You know, it doesn't have to be that you're plucking some big grand theory or idea from somewhere and trying to write like your magnum opus every time. It can be as simple as like, hey, like, here's what I'm up to in my business this week, because I'm sure that for so many people in your audience, there's going to be so much about what is every day or mundane or run of the mill for you that's going to be really interesting or insightful. And I think it's so easy to forget that what we do and what we know and how we think, can feel so like, you know, obvious for us, but can be such an interesting source of information for other people. So I just want to add those two things in there too. In case the block here is that pressure of feeling like I need to create something amazing every single time.

04:21

Can you unpack that for me a little bit? Because I can imagine someone sitting in the audience going like who wants to hear what I'm, you know what I'm doing in a day or what's interesting about it, but but I think it is very interesting, but how do you do that? And how do you think about that, from where listener might be sitting thinking? Like, what what is that?

04:38

Yeah, sure. So I mean, let me just have a look. So I have a folder in my inbox for all the emails that I send out and like for context, like the ones I've sent out over the last few weeks have been about an article I read about the Sydney property market and the impact the Sydney Opera House had on the value landscape. I've also sent an email out about how am I I love grilled cheese, about buying a pram attachment at Baby Bunting and also about a convenience store just down the road and also a show that my husband and I have been watching called alone. So like even this, like, say, these are the emails, this is the content I've been presenting to my audience, and the engagement has been great. So for these examples, I guess it's not even my every day what I'm doing in my work, it's like my everyday like, what ideas am I been exposed to? And how does my brain filter and interpret those given the way I think and the work that I do. So I think that's absolutely another way to approach it. And I also think, you know, if you are going to take this approach, it can really, really, really help to think about just having conversations with the people in your audience. Because I think that can take a lot of the formality and a lot of the pressure off, it's just like, Hey, I saw this thing that got me thinking about X, Y, and Zed, I think the same thing goes for talking about what you're actually doing, like in your business, and in your day to day work, you know, just being open. And talking about things like I keep having this conversation with my clients, blah, blah, blah, you know, making it relevant then for, you know, what you're talking about, and how that applies to the work you do. And therefore how that might be interesting or insightful for that person reading your email, or engaging with your social post. It could even be like anything behind the scenes, I always find that people are so hungry for sort of seeing how the sausage is made. Because I think, in a lot of cases, you only ever see like what business owners really deliberately want you to see. And it's very rarely the messy middle. So if you're in the process of creating a new offer, for example, I'm sure there'd be some amazing content in there about what that process looks like for you. What kind of questions you're grappling with, how you're making decisions, what you're testing out what you're scared of, like, any of these things that make you relatable, I think are going to be excellent content, because they're going to really help drive that relationship with the people in your audience. Does that help?

07:01

Yeah, it helps a lot. And to come back to those emails that you were talking about writing in recent weeks? Because I happen to have read them all. I don't know if you know, you're one of the you're one of the few people who have I read I read everything you said.

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I didn't know that. It's true.

07:16

But one of the things that we really skillfully is, you know, and you're funny, too, which is, you know, always interesting to read. But you know, you'll talk about some, you know, day to day thing or what's going on, but you tie it into some point that you never Well, to me anyway, it doesn't feel like you ever belabor the point. But it's just like, here's how I'm seeing it. And here's how it applies. And I was thinking, if somebody's not comfortable with that, or they're not good in that mode, another way that you might be able to do this and tell me if you think this is credible, coming back to books would be to talk about like extracting something that you've read, you know, like, here's what I read in, you know, X title book by x person. And you know, here's what it got me thinking about the marketplace, or here's how that you know, here's how that looks. And just something really simple about like, just an observation. I wonder if you think that's valid Christy because I Well, let me let me ask you that first.

08:06

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's valid, because I think, really, it's very rare to have a brand new idea, I think so much of the content, that we do engage with us people going about our lives and running our businesses is about other people's interpretations or applications of ideas. So absolutely, that's a valid a valid way. And if you can take something that you've seen in a book or online, whatever that might be, and, you know, explain your own, take off your application for that thing, that's absolutely great content that you can put put forward to your audience.

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Yeah, and I think it's a way of shaking things up. If you're, you know, if in fact, this person is is tired, you know, like, just, like, just getting, like, it's easy to get bored after a while, or at some points, right, with your own stuff, or what you have to say or, you know, it's interesting, too, because one of the other that what that made me think of, and one of the other places to look is, you know, what are you know, what are other people who are speaking to your audience, maybe in different disciplines than you, you know, what are they saying? Like, what's your audience eating up? How could you know, how can you tie tie into that and maybe that can give you some inspiration for for things to talk about, but even and I'm just being so mindful of the fact that people say so continuously but like, what do I have to say you know, it feels like it comes back to that so often and so that's why I'm saying like, you'll lean on a book you've read or make a parallel or use somebody else's thought leadership you know, by expressing your opinion about it and I think if you I don't know sometimes if you just shake it up and you do something different you like maybe it maybe that's what you would continue doing but I think it also inspires you or it gets you your voice back or gives you other gives you a jumping off place to find other I don't know sort of other ideas or sources. What have any other thoughts for tips or systems that help if for your win or if you're in a slump?

09:58

Yes, I two more things bring to my And I think repurposing content so helpful, particularly when you're in a slump. So that can just mean using the same content or pieces of the same content across different platforms. Or it could mean sort of diving back through the archives, seeing what you might have written, you know, 612 1824 months ago, and how that's landing for you now, and being able to share that again. Because I think I often feel like sometimes, I'm gonna toot my own horn here, sometimes I like write an email, and I'm like, this is such a good email. And then I get a bit sad that it only sort of has one last bit like you send about and you get great engagement that week, but then it

sort of often dwindles away. So I, you know, I'm just saying that I think that is such a place and such a purpose in being able to repurpose and reuse and reshare and reignite some stuff where you put your thoughts together in a really great way previously, it's okay to bring that back into the conversation. I think it is incredibly rare that people will remember everything that you've ever shared. So don't be afraid to do that. And the other thing that's bringing to mind, and this is a random suggestion, and I think it's certainly not something that would work for everyone. But it's something I've been playing with the last I think about three, three and a half months in my own business, I've started giving myself a 30 minute deadline for every email that I write. So every email that I send, like I give myself 30 minutes to write and edit that email, it has definitely meant that more typos make it into people's inboxes. And it's funny, because I think the the time I'm really cutting down there is like the editing and the going back through it, you know, a second or third time, so people sort of get like the rougher version. And I often don't say those typos until I see that email in my own inbox. And sometimes it makes me cringe as I'm like, Oh my God, that's such a bad typo. But I think generally, like the engagement with that content is just as good as it has been, when I've previously spent, you know, an hour and a half or two hours on every email, I think this works well for me, because I do tend to work well under pressure, I love a good deadline. And also, because I have like I do my days in a task based sort of way. So if I spend less time, getting through the things I need to get through, it means I have more time off and currently been heavily pregnant, it's very nice to have time off to like have a nap or just like sit and do nothing. So again, that isn't something that would work for everyone. But if you're hearing this, and it's sort of, you know, tickling your interest, I can definitely recommend giving it a go. Because I think sometimes, you know, you can spend so much time dreading creating a piece of content. Whereas if you just dive in and do it in a really defined time period, then it's done, you send it out off your plate. And then I think the more you do that, the more you just get in the habit and the more you get back into, like being on a roll with, with putting things out there into the world.

13:02

That's a really excellent argument for better done than perfect. And what proves it is that you're not seeing less engagement. And I think that's really, really interesting. It would be very interesting to see, you know, here's like the, you know, the email you spend 90 minutes on versus the 30 minutes, like it was so fascinating to know what it got you. I mean, I'm doing God in here close because everything is again. But I mean, even just in terms of opens or engagement, there's something about that, like, you know, like 90% is good enough, because that 10% that we spend, it's the it's that tweaking and tinkering. And the uncertainty. I mean, yeah, there's some like satisfaction in that, like, I'm gonna make this perfect or as good as I can. But there's also the, you know, I think it's some sometimes it's a questioning, like, is this really good, and then you tweak and you change, and then you're not sure if it's as good and then you're like, you sort of get get caught up. And I think that's a lot of waste of time. And I am off on another topic. But I just thought that was really important to point out. The other excellent point that I that you made is repurposing content. And I was thinking of when you were saying like, if you went back to something a year and a half ago, and people don't remember, and I just flashed on being at a conference years ago, I can't tell you where or when. But Andy Crestodina was was talking about content creation, and part of his presentation was he shared his spreadsheet, and he has this it's sort of mind blowing, but he had a spreadsheet of every piece of content he had created over a number of years, where he had posted it, what kind of engagement he got on it and he also had kind of a you know, a used body again, date to you know, based off I know, based on, you know, based on a whole number of factors. Anyway, it was very analytical. It was very organized and his, you know, his feeling was my my, well, his feeling was you should you should repurpose everything then. Gary Vaynerchuk and I'm sure I've told this story on this podcast, but I had a client who hired Gary Vaynerchuk to go to follow him around because I don't know if you remember, I can't recall how many years ago it is now that his book crush it came out. But he was

freaking everywhere. I mean, he was just everywhere. And she was very intrigued by him, and how did he do it? And how was there so much content? You know, what, what was this guy doing? So she paid him a hefty sum to follow him around for a day. And see, because he said, while I create all my talk live, he doesn't, you know, he doesn't create a batch content. And she followed Miranda and he creates little bits of content. But his whole secret was repurposing. He didn't spend all his time in the content creation. But he created a lot of small pieces of content. But his work was in the repurposing in that the content went up everywhere, which is why he got the feeling that he was everywhere, because he because he actually was, but he was very clever about how he how he tied all of his all of his content together, but really, how he maximized effort from every single little lick of anything that he created, which is so smart. Because like, I can't even begin to think of what's on my hard drive. It's, you know, there's probably 10 books on there worth of stuff that can be could be repurposed, and I'm not, I'm not exaggerating. I love that

16:06

those examples that you shared that spreadsheet is sounds genius from the first person you mentioned. And that sounds like such a super organized system. Like that's an official system. I'm impressed with that. And it's funny too, as like a meta, a meta note to make here. I do remember you sharing that story about Gary Vee on this podcast before, but I appreciate you hearing it again. Because I was like, oh, yeah, it's such a good point. So let that be a better example of the fact that there is value in in hearing the same thing multiple times. Sometimes it takes many, many rounds for something to sink in.

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You also perceive things differently, right? I mean, you can listen to what we're saying now, two years from now, and you will have been through so much and learn so much that you will have a totally different take it just do. So, you know, and what am I said? There's that stupid, old cliché. You know, repetition is the mother of skill. There's validity to it. There just is.

17:01

Yes, such a good point. I'm looking at this question. And I feel like I have nothing else to add. Is there any other Any final thoughts from you or me? Or is it time to wrap this one up?

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I believe we've reached that moment. Well, on that note, thank

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you so much for this question. And if our conversation here has raised any other question marks for you're listening, head on over to businessbadass.co/podcast And you'll find the question submission form a wedding for you there. We would love to dive into whatever is on your mind in a future episode.

17:29

Thanks for listening. Catch you next time. Hey, Amy

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here,

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having coached literally 1000s of freelancers. Over the last decade, I have found consistently that the people who don't suffer the ups and downs of feast and famine, and who consistently land great projects with ideal clients. What they all have in common is solid business skills. And it matters enough that I spent the last nine months creating a course called complete breakthrough freelancer. It's the resource for every single thing you need to know to build a solid sustainable business that suits you uniquely. And because you're a listener, you can save \$100 off the \$497 price tag using the code badass VAD AISs at the website, Amy posner.com forward slash complete dash breakthrough dash Freelancer thanks check it out.