

Episode 8 - How to Create Content That Stands Out

Lauren 0:01

Welcome to the Launch Your Blog Biz podcast. I'm your host, Lauren McManus. I used to be a full time tax accountant and CPA with a whole lot of limiting beliefs and "I can't"s whenever I thought about starting my own business, fast forward a few months, and I quit my job after starting and growing my first blog to six figures in just a year. This is my space to share and yours to listen and grow about how to build and scale your own blogging business and design a life on your terms. Let's get started.

Lauren 0:35

Hey, y'all, welcome back to the podcast. I hope that you are all doing awesome today. I am currently recording this from Santa Teresa beach in Costa Rica. And it's a small beach town on the west coast of Costa Rica. It's near the Guanacasta region, but it's actually part of the Punta Arenas, province and it's on the peninsula on the west side. The very cute little beach town, there's a pretty decent sized expat community and there is amazing surfing, so definitely check it out if you're ever in Costa Rica.

Lauren 1:11

I'm absolutely loving it here with the jungle sounds and the hot weather and it's on the edge of rainy season. So it rains a lot, and absolutely love listening to the rain while I'm side working. So I'm out here for the next few weeks. And yeah, I have a really great episode for you today. I think I say that at the beginning of every episode.

Lauren 1:34

But y'all seriously, today's is gonna be great, because I've been talking over the last few episodes about a lot more of the setup phases and the background, how I got started, how to kind of set yourself up for success. But in today's episode, and in the next few episodes, we're actually going to start getting into real strategy. Today we're going to talk all about creating content. And in the next few episodes, we're gonna begin to talk about traffic and email marketing and monetization. And yeah, super, super excited about it.

Lauren 2:09

In today's episode, we're gonna talk all about creating content that really stands out. So this is really content that makes people stop in their tracks and remember you and come back. I think that when many people are creating content, they either create content based on what they think people are interested in, or they do some quick research to see what else is popular, and then they try to mimic that content. But what ends up happening is that you create content that just comes off like everybody else's. And nowadays, when you're searching for content on Google, or wherever it is, there's just so much generic content out there. And this kind of content just isn't going to cut it anymore. It may be that you are answering people's questions and writing what people expect. But if your content is just like everybody else's, people are just going to keep passing on to the next article or the next piece of content.

Lauren 3:10

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And today, I want to talk about what makes up really great content. I think that this kind of content is the stuff that your audience really wants to hear when they can't wait for you to create your next piece of content. And it's also the content that naturally it gets comments, shares and reviews without you having to really pull teeth for it.

Lauren 3:34

Imagine creating really amazing content where you don't have to continue to follow up time after time trying to get reviews, get responses, get feedbacks get shares, it just happens naturally. That's what we're going to talk about today.

Lauren 3:49

First and foremost, I think that great content should tick a few boxes. Great content should be relevant, meaning that it should be what people are actually looking for. And it should answer whatever question they have. And it should answer that well. Great content should be specific. It shouldn't be so generic that you haven't answered their question. It should be specific enough that you give them enough details to really provide an in depth answer to their question. And that they aren't searching for more information after they've left your article or your piece of content. Great content should be engaging. It should be entertaining, educational, moving, a little bit of everything, maybe a little bit of other things. But it should be engaging so that people are interacting with your content, and they're really paying attention to it as they're absorbing it. And also great content should be relatable. It should be about building relationships and making connections with people.

Lauren 4:49

So really, I think that those are a few things that you should aim for in your content, but I know what I've just said is also pretty generic. So in this episode today, we are going to dive into a few different ways to accomplish all these things, this relevancy, specificity, engaging content and relatable content.

Lauren 5:11

Now, I think that the first thing that you need to do is to actually just know your audience, before you start creating any kind of content, you need to really know your audience and who they are and how to reach them. I've talked in other episodes with our first blog failure about how we started out creating content that we believed was great for other people based on what we might want. And we ended up actually attracting an entirely different audience. So we had a complete mismatch between the content that we were creating and the audience that we were attracting. This ended up leading to not so much traction on this blog, and ultimately a failed product.

Lauren 5:53

Y'all, it's really not enough to just know that you are, let's say writing to women. You should ideally know that you're writing to a 45 year old mother of two children on a budget. If you can get as specific as possible here without obviously being way too specific that your audience is so narrow, that there's no one left. But if you end up speaking to somebody who is 45 years old,

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with two children and is on a budget, they're going to be in a very different place than some young professional 25 year old who doesn't have kids, and maybe who now has a big salary behind their back. And they're looking for completely different things.

Lauren 6:34

And it's okay, if your audience actually reaches both of those people, you can definitely speak a little bit more generally to both of these people. But ideally, you do have a pretty specific idea of who you're speaking to. And once you know this, you need to think about where those people are. So if I am speaking to a 45 year old woman with two kids on a budget, I don't know that YouTube is going to be the best place to reach her. It's likely going to be Pinterest, just knowing the demographics there. It's probably not going to be tik tok, it's also probably not going to be Instagram. But it could also definitely be Google SEO.

Lauren 7:12

So think about who that person is that you're trying to reach and think about where they hang out. Where are they seeking their information? So that's going to be your very first starting point in thinking about what kind of content that you're going to create is, you want to think about who you're going to reach, and where you can reach them. And if you're still a little bit unsure about what platform is going to be right for you and your audience, don't worry, the next episode that I'm going to record is going to be all about getting visitors to your blog. And it's going to be all about choosing this platform. So you'll definitely be able to hone down on this a little bit more with the information from that episode.

Lauren 7:55

Alright, next y'all, once you have picked out your platform or two and how you're going to reach your audience, it's time to start thinking about that kind of content. And the next few tips, I'm going to give you a really adjust writing or communication tips. So how you're going to speak to your audience and what you're going to include in your content.

Lauren 8:15

And the very first thing I want to say is that you should just be yourself. I know it's super generic, and nobody ever wants to hear that, like blah, give me something better than that. But it's true, y'all. And if you don't like you, then other people aren't gonna like you either. But rather than just thinking about yourself and how you normally communicate, think about how you would write or communicate to one of your best friends, to one of the people in your life that you just don't really have to think about how you communicate with them.

Lauren 8:46

You can joke you can be yourself, you can act naturally, you don't have to think about what you've said, whether it's going to offend somebody. Speak or write or communicate whatever your platform is, however you're creating content. Think about really just speaking to that person. It should be a very natural, easy to understand and friendly type of communication.

Lauren 9:10

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I can tell you that when I started recording these podcasts episodes, the first two or three, I think I recorded them three or four times. I tried completely drafting the whole entire script. Everything from that to just totally winging it. And it's been a little bit difficult for me to kind of get my style down. But at the end of the day, I've wanted to record a few episodes. And I thought, you know what, that's just me. And I'm going to get better at that over time.

Lauren 9:40

So really just try to say what you need to say, communicate to that friendly person that you know, and think about trying to educate them on something that is important to them in their life, something that they need, and you want to make sure that they have all the tools and resources that they need. All of the background, all of the info that has helped you achieve that goal, give them all of that, because they're your really good friend, and they deserve the best from you. So think about that when you are writing your content.

Lauren 10:12

Next, now that you've sort of thought about your style, I want you to think about telling stories in absolutely every thing that you do. Sharing your experiences is one of the best ways that you can make your content stand out. Because y'all, no one can ever replicate your story. People can lie about it, but they can't communicate your feelings and your experiences the way that you can, because you've experienced them.

Lauren 10:43

So when you talk about your thoughts, your fears, all of the different feelings that you've had along your journey, that is what makes your stuff really stand out. This is how you build relationships and how you make your content really relatable to other people. A few other tips at this stage, you want to always be humble. And remember here to try to focus more on point A rather than point B.

Lauren 11:13

So what this means is that the point A is where your reader is that right now, they are at the beginning stages of trying to achieve something they haven't achieved it yet. So they're feeling all those fears and anxieties, frustrations, stresses, all those negative emotions, that stem from being in a place where we desire change. That is where they're at now. And remember that you are at a point B, you are at a place where you've already fixed these problems, you're now feeling like you're on cloud nine, you feel great, you feel positive energy, you're on all those higher energy field emotions, because you've fixed that problem.

Lauren 11:53

So that means that when you communicate to this person, you're communicating from this really positive space, and they're receiving it from this more negative space. So if you instead focus more on how you felt when you were at point A, and you speak to them from those thoughts, experiences that you had back, then you're going to come across as a lot more relatable to that person, where they're at.

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Lauren 12:19

And ya'll, this is so true, and really helpful and important at every stage. So whether you are writing or creating free content on your blog, podcast, YouTube, whatever, to writing emails to your audience, to actually communicating them within your products, whether that's a course or coaching--if you're able to communicate with them on that level, throughout all of these different places, and this process in your business, this is what is going to make you so incredibly relatable and make people want to learn from you every step of the way.

Lauren 12:56

Y'all, this is why I continue to talk about my struggles with starting this podcast and just being real with y'all. Because at the end of the day, I hope that this inspires some of you to start your own podcast. So you can see that for me even after being in this business for five years, I still have fears and anxiety around starting something like this. And I did it anyway. And I hope that you can see that Well, there's no point in me waiting five years to be super ready to do this. Because if she wasn't ready by then, you know, maybe now is as good a time as any. This is why I continue to speak from this mindset. Because A, I still feel these feelings to now but also is because I know it's what some of you are feeling. So when you're telling your stories and you're sharing your experiences, always try to have that in the back of your head, it's going to make you so much more relatable.

Lauren 13:50

And y'all, on this note, the next tip is a bit related to this. And Alex actually read this in some books somewhere, I think it was on storytelling. And this tip was to remember that your audience is at a level 1 and you're at a level 10.

Lauren 14:07

So we often again speak from that point B view rather than the point A and we kind of talk over our audience and they don't always understand. I know that I'm guilty of this in some ways, because Alex used to remind me of it all the time. But I used to sometimes jump right into talking about generating leads, driving traffic, conversions, optimization. And Alex would have to pull me back and be like, Lauren, think in terms of people who are just starting a blog. They don't know what any of this stuff is yet. You need to talk in terms of making money and getting visitors to your blog, rather than driving traffic, monetization, optimizing your conversions. This was just a bit above their head and it just ends up coming off like marketing speak.

Lauren 14:55

It's something that I still try to remind myself of to this day, always making sure that I'm speaking to them from level one. And I remember when Alex was reading this book, one of the tips in there was that whenever you think that you're coming down to a level 1 from level 10, you're often still landing somewhere around 6 or 7. So just make sure to always check yourself and your communication and make sure that you aren't skipping over the important introductions, the setting up the background, the backstory. Those are the things that really begin to pull the reader in and give them the full picture, before you start just giving them information strategy,

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you know the answers to their questions. Make sure that you take the time to set up what you want to say and what you want to accomplish in your content.

Lauren 15:47

All right, y'all, the next tip I have is to make your content entertaining or engaging. There's this thing called dwell time. And I'm sure it's referred to as other things in other platforms. But Google refers to it as dwell time. And it just means the time that someone is dwelling on your page. So in YouTube it would be the time that someone is watching your video, or in a podcast, it's the time that people are listening to your podcast. And the longer that people engage with your content, the better your chances of ranking in those algorithms are.

Lauren 16:24

So it's really important to keep people engaged with your content. And y'all, this doesn't mean that you have to be super entertaining. I definitely don't think that I'm really great at that. It's another reason why I wanted Alex to do the podcast, and why he's been really great at YouTube is because he just has that personality. People laugh at him a lot more than they laugh at me. And, you know, y'all, that's okay. Sure, I'd like to be a little bit funnier. And I still try to make my jokes every now and then. But at the end of the day, my style is more to just be incredibly honest, admit many of my mistakes, and just be super real. And that in itself is what makes my content, I believe, more engaging. Because I am able to connect with y'all with our audience pretty well, and it makes people want to keep listening and keep listening. So that realism and honesty is my way of being engaging.

Lauren 17:17

So think about what yours might be. And this may definitely be different for everyone based on what kind of content that you're creating. If you are in a very technical space, it might be a little bit more difficult to be super engaging. But think about all the other technical information out there that's just so incredibly to the point. What else can you add to your content, whether it's your own flair, your own personality, or some kind of extra information? What else can you add to make your content more engaging, and make people really want to spend more time on your content. And telling those stories, as I said before, setting your content up, and really including the backstory, the experiences, that is one way to really draw people in with stories and keep them engaged.

Lauren 18:07

And y'all, that brings me to my next point. Because one of the best ways that you can be engaging and that you can stand out, is to just give your opinion. And you probably don't have too much of a problem with this because most people want to give their opinions about absolutely everything these days. But don't create some kind of general bs content that already exists in 100 other websites.

Lauren 18:32

I just added this extra point in here actually this morning, because I was looking over content yesterday, I was trying to find a podcast analytics company, I was really just trying to figure out

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what was the best company to really compile the analytics from my podcast to see who was listening, how long they were listening, and just get general feedback in order to improve. And I searched Google for podcast analytics companies. And man, there was so much shit content that came up that I just left feeling completely frustrated and didn't sign up for anything. The first few articles that came up in Google had nine or ten different podcast companies. And under each point, each different company, all these articles were the same. And it was really just two incredibly short paragraphs about the general overall stuff that these companies included. There wasn't a single personal opinion about any of the software companies.

Lauren 19:31

And I was like, you know, I just really want someone's honest opinion who has actually used the software so that they can tell me whether it worked for them or not, and why it might have worked. But there's just so many people creating content and companies now creating content as quickly as possible and just getting the bare bones generic stuff up. And man, it just left me so frustrated. So if I had found an article that actually gave some real personal opinions, I would have signed up, read more articles done whatever it took.

Lauren 20:03

And that is what will end up making people really come back to your content is when you can give some personal opinions on stuff. Whether it's software, whether it's diet programs, whatever you're teaching about, whatever your experiences are with different products, different experiences, please just be honest about it. Tell people when you didn't like something and tell them why you didn't like it. Don't be afraid to pick apart those experiences and just give people a healthy dose of honesty. It's what they want. And it's what's going to make them end up buying your products and really listening to you. Because it's what is going to make you stand out.

Lauren 20:42

I feel like I'm getting pretty like heated up and passionate about this. Just because yeah, it's a real frustration of mine. So please give your opinion, even if it's a little bit polarizing. This is what is going to make people more loyal to you. And y'all I think that's most of my biggest tips for creating content, I want to give you a few others that are a little bit smaller, but they still do matter. So just some other tips for success.

Lauren 21:11

The first tip that I think is the most important of all these other little tips I'm about to give you is to create your content with a purpose. There can be multiple different types of purposes for your content, but make sure that every piece of content that you produce has a solid purpose. It could be as simple as just for keyword research. So you've researched some keywords, and you found some ones that would be great to try to rank for on YouTube, on Google, whatever. So that's a great purpose, you're going to create content that will rank and that will get eyeballs.

Lauren 21:49

Another purpose that you could create content for is just to build relationships. And this is a really important type of content that you can create. And I think that people often overlook,

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because it doesn't necessarily always translate directly into sales. So one example of this type of content is one that we created on the phases of blogging success. But we created this content specifically to resonate with our readers, and to help our readers really feel some more motivation and inspiration for moving on in their own journey.

Lauren 22:27

This article is really about the different phases of blogging success. And it starts out talking about the poop phase, which is what we call the early stages of just being down in the dumps, in the trenches, when you're working really, really hard and you're not seeing anything for it. And you feel a lot of negative energy and just aren't sure if you can make it.

Lauren 22:50

It starts at that stage and then moves on to what we call the teenager stage, which is really just the stage in which you're feeling like there's tons of ups and downs, you're having a little bit of success, but then it gets swept right out from under your feet again. And from then just moves on to more and more higher levels of success.

Lauren 23:09

But this is a piece of content that our audience loves so much. And so many of our students actually talk about in our community groups, they say, Oh, I'm in the poop stage, they actually refer to this article because they love it so much. And y'all this article has zero chance of ranking in Google, there's just no point because it's not going after any keywords. It was created specifically to build a better relationship with our readers, and to help them and to inspire them.

Lauren 23:39

So that's a fantastic purpose. And it doesn't have to directly translate into sales. Although a piece of content like this, one, building better relationships can actually lead to more sales. And on that note, another purpose of content is to directly make sales.

Lauren 23:56

You can create content that is specifically designed to educate someone on how to solve a problem. And that problem may be directly related to the problems that you're solving with your paid product. And another different type of content could just be popular and trendy topics. Because that sort of thing can be a little bit easier to rank for. Or it might just be that it's really popular with your audience right now, because it's a hot topic.

Lauren 24:23

So think about all the different ways that you can really have a purpose with your content. And make sure that each piece of content has that purpose in mind before you start creating it. So you know exactly not only what you're going to say, but how you're going to say it, and what you want to accomplish with that article. Because you're going to speak very differently if the goal is to make a sale, versus if the goal is to build a relationship, or simply to educate, to satisfy keywords, etc, etc.

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Lauren 24:56

The next tip is to simply write great headlines. This is something that Alex and I used to test out quite a bit, we actually used to split test emails and split test headlines on our email opt ins. And we used to pay attention to that data and analytics for weeks and months afterwards, to get better at writing headlines.

Lauren 25:17

You never want to be to click-bait-y, and focus only on generating the clicks. We've definitely been down that rabbit hole as well. And that's not going to lead you anywhere good. But you do want to monitor what people are clicking on, and what's getting a little bit better clicks than others. Because, y'all, if people don't ever give you the click, they're never going to end up seeing your content.

Lauren 25:40

So whether that is a great headline that pops up in the YouTube feed and inspires that curiosity for someone to click and see what your content is about, or whether that's a great headline in Google that causes someone to click on your second, third or fourth spot versus the number one spot. Or it could be that your email's just coming through to someone who's on their way to work and isn't really paying attention. And if it's not a great headline, they're just not going to open up the email, they're not going to care about it, they're going to save it till later. And then maybe never look at it.

Lauren 26:12

Or again, another example is the pins that you're creating on Pinterest. If they're not good enough, people aren't going to even give you the click and you've lost them before you've even gotten the chance to get to know them. Or for them to get to know you, rather. So don't obsess over this. But do consider it and do make sure that you're paying attention to what people are clicking on, consider split testing different emails to get a better idea of what people are looking on and what people want to click on. But do pay attention to it.

Lauren 26:43

The next small tip is just to not obsess over content length. We get many people asking, how long should my videos be? How long should my articles be? And I think it's always a good idea to look around at the other content that is doing really well, that's at the top of search to see how long their content is. But this should always be a pretty natural thing.

Lauren 27:06

I can tell you that I don't much draft these podcast episodes, now. I'm really just talking. And they're always ending up between 25 and 35 minutes, because I'm just saying what I need to say. And I'm planning out the content a bit in the beginning to make sure that there is enough content to be able to talk about, about this particular topic. But then I just talk, I just talk and share what I need to say and it just ends up kind of naturally working out.

Lauren 27:34

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So this should be a pretty natural process. You should do a little bit of planning to make sure that you cover everything that you want to cover. But don't worry about adding fluff to make things longer. Don't worry about writing too much. Because if you're telling a really great story that you think people are going to love to hear, it's okay, if your content is 4000 words long, or you have a 45 minute long YouTube video. If it's great, people will stay there and they will be engaged and they will finish that content. And that's going to help you rank higher in these algorithms.

Lauren 28:06

So don't worry about it too much. You can definitely use tools like Yoast SEO, or rank math within WordPress to see what the recommended word count is and make sure that you're not under that amount. But don't don't worry about this too much.

Lauren 28:22

Alright, y'all, I think that wraps up most of the best tips and strategies that I have for creating better content. I feel like I for sure blew through that and probably talked way too fast, we'll find out in the editing process. But it's just something I'm really passionate about. And I really enjoy this process of continuing to create content and to get better at creating content. For me, it's a constant learning process and personal growth, as well as business growth, just trying to get better at really creating content, producing it, and whatnot.

Lauren 29:00

And y'all, there are millions of content creators out there. So when you're going through this process, don't worry about reinventing the wheel. When I talk about creating content that stands out, it doesn't mean that yours has to be so differentiated or so different from other people's. Just look at competitors' content, see what you think might be missing. You could scroll through other people's contents on popular articles or videos, and read through some of the comments there. See what people commented on, what they found really engaging, and see what people still had questions about.

Lauren 29:36

You'll often see in comments at the bottom of articles or videos that people give feedback. They talk about what resonated with them, and they still ask questions because whatever kind of content that person did right, if someone takes the time to leave a comment, it means that they probably cared about it or they hated it. And you know, of course, there's a lot of trolls out there that will let you know if they didn't like something. But do a little bit of research before you create the content, see what other kind of content is already ranking. Because there's a reason it's ranking, right? Whether it's keywords, whether it is the type of content, and see if there's anything that you feel that you can improve on that content. Whether it's the way that it was delivered, whether it's the information that's given in there, see what you can do better, and what you think might be missing.

Lauren 30:25

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And y'all, above all, when you are creating content, be your authentic self. Be vulnerable, be honest, be relatable, be specific enough. Share your story and give your opinion. Create great content, and try to create it often, whether that's paid content, or whether that's free content. Your audience deserves to have every bit of your time and attention. And if you want your business to grow, it's the only way forward.

Lauren 30:57

If you just dump content out there, try to get it to quickly rank and move on, you can at times make some quick money. But that's not how you build a sustainable business. Creating relationships, building those relationships and connections with your audience--that is how you build a sustainable business that's going to last you for months and years to come. Because your audience is going to evolve with you, they're going to stay connected, they're going to stay listening, they're going to stay on your email list, and they're just going to care more.

Lauren 31:30

So always make sure that you are showing up 110% for all your free content. This also extends into any kind of paid content like coaching or courses, make sure that you're doing that. Y'all, always do your best to really reach people, resonate with them, and make a lasting impression. Because this is what makes people keep coming back.

Lauren 31:56

And y'all I hope that you liked this really what I think is the first episode that we're really getting into strategy here. If you did like this episode, if you're enjoying this podcast, and if you feel like my content that I'm producing is speaking to you or helping you. If you could please just take two minutes out of your day to just leave me a quick review and let me know, I would really, really appreciate it.

Lauren 32:20

I want to know what kind of content that you want me to create. I want to know what you want to hear about in this podcast and what resonates more with you and really helps you on your journey because this is this is for you. So, alright y'all. I hope you enjoyed it. And I'll see you next time. Bye for now.

Lauren 32:40

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