

EPISODE 9: HOW TO REPURPOSE CONTENT TO REACH MORE PEOPLE with Ana Hoffman

Marketing for Creatives Show
at IntNetworkPlus.com

Announcer:

Turn your hobby and freelance work into a profitable business! Make your marketing easier by applying the strategies of experienced entrepreneurs and have more time to do the work you love. You are listening to the Marketing for Creatives show with your host Marina Barayeva.

Marina Barayeva:

Hi everyone, this is Marina Barayeva. And welcome to another episode of Marketing for Creatives show. In this episode, we gonna talk about how to repurpose content and reach more people.

Constantly creating a quality content takes a lot of time. But when you create the content for one platform such as blog or social media you can multiply it by repurposing it on other platforms. That way you get valuable new updates without actually creating new stuff. I'm very excited to be joined today by Ana Hoffman who is the master of content repurposing.

Ana is the founder of Traffic Generation Café.

She specializes on free traffic generation strategies, like SEO, social media, blogging and other internet marketing methods.

Working on increasing traffic to her Traffic Generation Café site, Ana brought it from non-existence to the top 18,000 global sites according to Alexia.com in 4 months.

And today Ana will share with us how to repurpose content that you already have to reach more people and increase traffic to your blog.

Marina Barayeva:

Hi Ana, welcome to the show. How are you?

Ana Hoffman:

I'm doing fine, thank you for asking.

Marina Barayeva:

Amazing. For those who don't know you yet, tell us a little bit about yourself. How did you get to blogging and this traffic stuff?

Ana Hoffman:

Let's see. A few years back I had a daughter and, like many moms, my dream was to stay at home with her. Plus it's a lot cheaper than sending someone to daycare, come on, let's face it.

I wanted to start a business that I could do from home while taking care of her and that prompted me to do a lot of research into different businesses that were generally available to do from home.

Didn't really churn too much but I did try a couple of different things, nothing very exciting or important but in every business I tried what I realized was that when you have an online business, you need to develop online presence that leads people to that business. Basically you needed to develop traffic channels so that your business becomes visible online.

I knew nothing about generating traffic, about marketing, very little about social media as well: I never used it for personal reasons back then. The whole new thing, I started learning how to get traffic mostly for free. I did not want to do any ads, especially when you're first starting, of course, that makes sense.

As I started learning more and more, first of all I loved it. I felt like it was completely my cup of tea and I enjoyed learning more. Because I enjoyed it so much I started writing about it.

Somebody told me that I needed to start a blog to increase my visibility, not that I knew anything about blogging but I figured, why not? So I started doing that.

I started publishing my findings and the different strategies that I've developed, and very quickly the blog grew quite big and I was completely blown away. I did not expect that kind of success, so I just stopped doing everything else and started blogging.

Marina Barayeva:

Fantastic. What do you think was the key point when you started to get a lot of traffic?

Ana Hoffman:

The reason why I started getting lots of traffic was because of a couple of different things. Number one, I stopped being afraid of being me. I think when you first start online you have an idea of what kind of personality is more acceptable to your customers.

Here's what I mean. Most people try to be too formal, too official, when they start business. They feel like that's what they need to sound like to the customers. But that doesn't work because they start sounding like everybody else and they lose their personality, which is really one of the most important assets that we have.

I started writing like I talk, using bad jokes if I had any, why not? I sounded like I do in normal life and I think that resonated with people.

Also I simplified things. That also was one of the key factors. The simpler you put things, the better they tend to be received. That's why everything that I write I edit pretty much to death. Any word that does not need to be there gets cut out.

That kind of simplification really resonated with my audience because everybody was saying, "Wow, I haven't gotten this before because I couldn't understand how it worked but they way you wrote about it did the trick."

Besides that, speaking just about traffic sources. I focused on one or two platforms, that's it. You know, when you first start especially, you hear that you need to be everywhere. This word everywhere is everywhere.

People don't realize that first of all you can't be everywhere. You cannot stretch yourself that way and be effective, especially when you're learning a platform. Of course things constantly change as well, so just when you thought you learned it, things change and you have to learn it again.

Keeping up with different things is very complicated so what I did is Twitter was my platform of choice back then. It was still fairly new when I started so everybody loved Twitter and I loved speaking in very short sentences: that was completely up my alley.

I focused on Twitter and I learned everything I could about it, and Twitter has proven to be such a huge traffic generator for me. That was also a very good strategy. Once I mastered Twitter, I moved on to Facebook. I kept adding one traffic source at a time.

But what happens when you focus on something and you really learn it and you build relationships? All of a sudden you start being everywhere because others take your content and your name to other platforms. Now your content is being shared on Facebook or Google+ or Instagram without you doing much of anything because it's your readers that are doing the legwork for you.

That's the benefit of being good at something and focusing on that versus being kind of sort of okay with a lot of different things. That's the strategy that worked the best for me; just keep it narrow, keep it focused and focus on what I'm good at.

Marina Barayeva:

That's interesting. You're good at simplifying stuff. Today we'll talk about how to repurpose content. You say that when you grew, people started to share your content, but for some people they're still at the beginning and they have to do many things by themselves.

Let's start from the simple thing. What is content repurposing?

Ana Hoffman:

In the simplest terms, let's put it this way.

Imagine your target audience. They have sort of similar interests, maybe same gender, maybe not, maybe same age, maybe not. But the main thing about them is about 25 percent of them like to read. The rest of them, they receive information better if they see it visually or they hear it.

That's why there are so many different types of media, there are videos and podcasts and there are a lot of visual platforms like Instagram and Pinterest. Then of course there is a mixture of everything like Twitter and Facebook. But there is something for everybody because people need that.

Let's face it, people have become more and more lazy and the presence of mobile phones also tends to push people towards short and visual versus a longer blog post. Nobody is going to read a 2000 word blog post on a mobile phone, right? It just doesn't make sense.

Because your audience is so diverse yet you tend to create content one way usually. If you're a blogger, you write. If you're a podcaster, you podcast.

But then that means that even though your audience is, let's say, a 360 degrees circle. Instead of reaching that circle, you all of a sudden half it by only writing or you only reach a quarter of the circle, a quarter of a pie.

Who wants a quarter of a pie? I want the whole thing. But all of a sudden you limit yourself if you only reach your audience in one specific way.

Content repurposing takes the content that you are creating already. It converts it, it reimagines it, in a different format.

For instance, I'm a blogger, I write blog posts. I can take my blog post, the existing one, I don't need to write anymore content I just take what I have, and I create a short video based on it, or I create a short presentation with the same message just a different kind of format and a different medium. Because I place that content on third party platforms because...

Let's face it, people are not hanging out on your site right now. It's unfortunate but it's true. They're hanging out somewhere else, on Instagram, Medium or Pinterest. Whatever it is that they're doing, they're not at your website. So, for you to drag them somehow, by posting links most likely, to drag them back to your site is really, you're running a very slim chance that people will actually come.

That's the main problem with traffic generation and content creation in general. Everybody says and everybody knows it, that content marketing is really the heart of marketing any business but few people understand why it's the heart. Because content is meant to get people into your business, to convert them into sales, but the problem with that, as I already mentioned, when it sits on your website, it's not reaching anybody because nobody reads it.

Your content should be able to go out there, get people and bring them back to your website, and that's exactly what content repurposing does.

When you publish a video on YouTube it reaches people who are searching for that content on YouTube because people these days, they haven't become lazier in as far as going to Google and searching for content, they just search it wherever they are because they are very content. They have a lot of information at their fingertips where they are. They don't have to go anywhere.

Your job as a content creator, as a business owner, is to be there when they're searching for the information that you provide.

Again, content repurposing is the only way to do this because content marketing as is, placing the content on your main site, on your blog, just does not work anymore.

Marina Barayeva:

You hit the point when you say that there are a lot of people now on social media and more and more people don't just have their blogs but some posts only on YouTube or they have the podcasts.

Where would you recommend focusing on to drive traffic to by repurposing content then?

Ana Hoffman:

This might sound like a lot of work but trust me it is not. When I repurpose content, I repurpose it in such a way that I can create...

I'll give you an example. I'm a blogger. Let's say I have a 2000 word blog post that I would like to repurpose. What I will do is, I'll take those 2000 words and I cut out all the fluff, all the sentences that do not need to be there and I create maybe a 200 to 300 word outline out of that post.

Once I have that outline, I will import it into a presentation creation software like PowerPoint or Keynote if you have an Apple computer.

Chances are that you already have everything you need to repurpose your content. Now we have an outline in a PowerPoint presentation. I will edit it to make it look nice, just apply different fonts or colors. It's very easy to do. And then images.

Images are very important because again you're creating content for very visual people. They want to see something; they want to be impressed by it. Not impressed like you made an impression on me but impressed meaning impressed into their memory because when they see it visually, it stays with them a lot better than just text. Images are very important.

Once you combine words with images, you basically have a presentation. Just a word on that. A lot of times people hear presentation and they think of a stuffy boring office presentation, graphs and charts and stats. That's not what a presentation is at all.

A presentation is simply a sequence of slides that tell a story and it can be anything.

Some of my students create presentations because they're painters and they create presentations of their paintings.

Some are Etsy shop owners and they create stories about their products and send people back to their Etsy shops.

The sky is the limit. I literally can create a presentation about a toilet plunger, make it funny and sell toilet plungers with a presentation. I swear to you. I even thought about that, "You know, I might as well do it." Maybe one of these days (laughter).

Marina Barayeva:

Have you seen anything like that?

Ana Hoffman:

No but I'm thinking of doing it because somebody challenged me. They said, "Does this work for any niche?"

I'm telling you right now, I have about 70 students that I'm teaching how to repurpose content the way I do and they come from so many different businesses. I have, as I mentioned, painters, comedians, authors, skincare folks, traditional bloggers, construction workers or people who sell concrete, really such a complete mix and it works for pretty much every single market.

Back to presentation creation before I forget what I was talking about. It doesn't have to be complicated, complex. We're talking about 10 to 20 slides, just make sure it has a beginning, it has the end, it has a storyline.

And the most important thing, and that's how you actually drive traffic, it has to have a call to action.

Like movie trailers, they're so good these days. They can take the crappiest movie and create a brilliant trailer and people are drooling all over it and then of course they go see it and it's what it's supposed to be: it's just nothing. But that's beside the point. They make it into eye candy. That's the purpose of your content that you send out there on YouTube or SlideShare, wherever it is that you're publishing it.

The point is to give people a taste of what they can find back on your blog or your website, I shouldn't say blog because not everybody has a blog. Then your website is a conversion machine. That's one purpose that it has, is to convert those people from leads, people who one way or another find your website, into customers.

That's what it's meant to do. Your website is not meant to, maybe 10 years ago it was a hub of the best content that you create, but now it's more of a decentralized kind of chaos of content that leads everywhere but all that content brings people back to your website from all kinds of directions. Again and again, content repurposing is the only thing that does that.

Marina Barayeva:

Okay.

Ana Hoffman:

I'm sorry, I get very passionate about it.

Marina Barayeva:

I can imagine. I can hear it in your voice.

You say that you work with a lot of different people like painters or comedians. They all have a different audience so probably their audience hangs out in different platforms.

Ana Hoffman:

Absolutely.

Marina Barayeva:

Which sites or social media do you repurpose content for? From our perspective, how to define if the platform is worth your time?

Ana Hoffman:

Got you. That's where I started going with but then I got carried away. Let me go back.

The reason why I create a presentation is because if you think about it, a presentation is as I said, just a sequence of slides, and what a slide is, is basically an image. You can save presentations as images and then instead of one presentation, you have 10 images.

If every image in that presentation is a complete thought with an image attached to it, you can actually share it as a standalone image.

All of a sudden you have a bunch of images that you don't have to limit yourself to one platform. You can share them, you can take those images to any platform where number one, you already have a presence because if something is already working for you, you might as well milk it for all its worth.

For instance, Facebook, I take Facebook because just about everybody is there. But trust me, it doesn't mean it's the best platform for you.

Number one focus on the one that's working for you and you know it's working because it's bringing you leads.

If you don't have a platform that's currently working what I would suggest to do is take your competitors website, any one of them, think of the best competitor that you have and see where they're getting their traffic from.

If they're big on YouTube or Medium or Instagram, wherever it is that they are getting most of their traffic from, that makes a lot of sense that that's where your target audience is.

The way you can determine it is fairly easy. You can do it by observation, you can see which platforms they tend to use the most. A little bit more scientifically and still a free way of doing it is by going to alexa.com and after you scroll down all the way to the bottom you'll be able to enter a website, any website and it'll give you a few stats about the website.

One of them is where the website is getting most of their traffic. That's how you can figure out if it's from Google, which means that they do a lot of SEO for their content or if it's social media and which exact platform is driving the most traffic. That would be a very good indication once again, that's where your target audience is.

If you don't know, if you're not sure, if you're new, do what I did. Make an educated guess based on your competition and also go for the platform that you feel most comfortable with because it does make a difference.

You want to kind of like it, where you are. Because if you hate video marketing, you don't like making videos, it scares you, you have no idea how to do it, then focusing on video marketing is probably not the right thing to do.

I would probably rather start with Facebook because you can post very short videos or even do Facebook Live and create videos that way because you can save them for later.

You have to have a feel for it and be where you're comfortable.

Personally right now that I've been in business for about six, seven years I post my images, presentations, everywhere on every single platform. I do not limit myself to any specific one because I already have those images, I might as well use them. I do post them everywhere.

And I also turn my presentations into videos, which is great for you if you're scared of video marketing. If you imagine a PowerPoint, I hope most of you have used it and if not, try it. It's really very simple. You slap a bunch of text on the background, add an image to it and voilà, basically you have something good to work with.

Once your presentation is complete, once you have a story of some sorts and sequence, you have the beginning, the cover slide and then you have the call to action, which is your closing slide, then you can basically screencast.

By screencast, if you're not familiar with the term, you record the screen of your computer as you flip through the slides and you can also add a voiceover reading through them or you can add an audio track to them, like that little background elevator music that plays through some videos, add something like that. You can find that for free online as well.

Within a few minutes, using what you already have, which is a presentation, you can create a video and now you can post that video not only on YouTube but also on Facebook, Twitter, a lot of the platforms that allow native video content.

I hope you see that I started with one thing. I started with a presentation and I turned that presentation, I didn't turn it, I just saved it as images. Now I'm using images everywhere I can, on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

I actually add those images back to my blog posts as well because that increases readership because people are more likely to read and share your blog posts if they're more visual versus just chunks of text. Then of course I create a video as well and I distribute it everywhere.

Content repurposing, once you have a good idea of what you can do with it and how, is just creating a process. It's really very simple. It's almost like second nature. Now I do not create any more new content without thinking about how I'm going to repurpose it.

As a matter of fact sometimes I create a presentation first and then I turn it into blog posts, sort of backwards but that's how my brain works these days. It thinks immediately into images and what I can create from any given piece of content. Does that make sense?

Marina Barayeva:

It does.

Ana Hoffman:

Without you asking the question, let me ask and answer a question because I think it's very important. I want to make sure that I get this in.

People get overwhelmed, obviously, we're business owners, we're busy, or if you've never done anything like this before. You've never created presentations. It just sounds like an amount of effort of to put in. Can you afford to do it and what the payoff is? I wanted to touch on that.

First of all, content repurposing does not involve any new content creation. Content creation is the most tedious, most time-consuming thing that you're currently doing for your business, most likely.

With content repurposing you use what you already have, all your existing blog posts, your existing videos, your existing podcasts.

I was just thinking about your Marina. You are recording this podcast and you and I are actually doing video, we can see each other's faces. If we record the video, you can put that video on YouTube or elsewhere so you will basically be repurposing your podcasts into other platforms without any additional effort. That's exactly what content repurposing does.

If you're a content marketer, stop creating new content. It's a waste of time because nobody's reading it as it is.

Take the content that you already have, the best of your content, and start turning it into presentations. Start posting those presentations.

Presentations are basically PDFs so any kind of site where you can upload a PDF like [SlideShare](#) or [Scribd](#).

By the way, SlideShare is by far my most favorite platform for repurposing because I have gotten so much traffic from SlideShare and the reason why it works so well is because nobody is using it despite the fact that we keep telling people, "Use it, use it, use it." But that's a benefit to you because a lot of your peers will not be on SlideShare so more traffic for you.

When you're very busy you cannot afford not to do content repurposing because you're killing your time without any return right now by creating new content that nobody's reading.

I'd rather see you create the process of creating a presentation, turning it into a video, turning it into images and then taking it all over instead of sitting and creating more and more content that doesn't get read. Does that make sense?

Marina Barayeva:

It does.

How to simplify it even more, it still takes time. How can we save time by repurposing content and maybe you have tools or services for us to recommend?

Ana Hoffman:

I have tried so many different things hoping that I can simplify things and the simplest thing I've come up with honestly is PowerPoint and Keynote. There's nothing simpler that you can do.

You can try things like Canva it's slipping from my mind. There are a lot of slide presentation creation software. What I find with them is that in the end they limit you to something like you can only have five slides or you can only post it on our platform or you can't export it as a PDF.

It's so frustrating and none of them in the end save any time, and for the most part you have to pay for them as well to achieve any kind of meaningful results, and they change constantly.

I took out all of that from my business because I only use Keynote or PowerPoint. I'm on an Apple computer so I can do either or. Honestly, it's the simplest way.

It comes down to creating a process. When you're cooking, when you're making pasta you have a process. You pick a pot that's right for it. You fill it with water. You turn on the stove. You put the water on the stove. All of these are little steps that you know exactly how to do because you've done it so many times.

Content repurposing is no different.

- Step one, find the post that works, that you want to repurpose
- Step two, shrink it down to bare bones, that's what I do, save it as a text document
- Step three, import that document into PowerPoint

When you do that, there's a feature in PowerPoint and it's amazing.

When you save your outline, your short version of the blog post as a text document, it has to be a text document. I don't know why, that's how it works. Then you go into PowerPoint and find their import feature and it allows you to open the file that you want to import from.

PowerPoint will automatically put every paragraph of your text document on a separate slide. All of a sudden within 30 seconds I can turn the text document into a SlideShare presentation, granted it's going to be a white background but that's okay because I can change that background in a second to whatever I want.

Once you discover those little tricks, and I wish I had all the time in the world right now and plus it is a podcast, it's hard to visualize or audiolize all those things that you can do but take my word for it.

Once you get that process down, I have my students creating videos like once a day they come up with a new video because they got it, they got how to do it and it's so simple for them to do that they're so prolific now. They're outdoing me by leaps and bounds.

The good news is that it's only a skill. Content repurposing is a skill and it's very attainable, you can learn how to do it. Then you can finally get what your content is supposed to do to begin with and that's traffic, leads and sales. That's what content repurposing does for your business, I won't get tired of saying it.

Marina Barayeva:

Ana, you gave us the whole strategy, one, two, three, easy.

Ana Hoffman:

I know. You go back home and you'll probably be like, "Okay, she said it's easy. Where do I start?" Go open PowerPoint and click on buttons.

Sometimes they say how do kids learn technology so well? When my daughter was growing up I realized how she learned everything so much; she clicks on everything, any button that she sees, any tab that she sees, she just clicks on it and sees what it does. Spend 20 minutes with PowerPoint.

Let me give you an example of how I started, maybe it'll inspire you. I knew nothing about PowerPoint, never used it in my life, knew nothing about creating presentations, SlideShare, just heard that people get very good results from it.

My husband was watching a football game. I had an idea of a presentation and during the football game, which was about three hours, I learned PowerPoint, I created a presentation. I posted it on SlideShare for the first time.

For 30 days, my 30 days, that's how I do it, I focus on one platform and try to learn everything I can about it. For 30 days I focused on SlideShare and I created nine presentations in 30 days. Again, never done anything like that in my life, just based on the content I already had.

In 30 days I got 243,000 views. I got about 1400, I had no list back then, new email sign ups, a ton of Facebook fans and general exposure. SlideShare became my second largest traffic source. It was amazing. Again, I did all of that when I knew nothing about anything. It just took a football game when I had nothing to do but a TV in front of me and a laptop on my lap, that's it.

Try that, give it a shot. Then you can come back and tell me, "Yes Ana, you're full of it. It doesn't work." Because it can't, it will work for you.

Marina Barayeva:

It does, we have to try it. Thank you, Ana, that was fantastic. Share with us how can we find you and know more about you.

Ana Hoffman:

Definitely **Traffic Generation Café**. I talk a lot about a lot of things there traffic wise but everything that I talk about is geared towards specific actionable things because I'm all about action. I don't talk about it if it doesn't bring results. Definitely try that.

I'm actually working on this process that I'm talking about right now, I'm working on putting it all on paper. I'm creating a course that will take you step by step through the entire process of content repurposing and that's what the 70 students that I have, they're sort of my beta students, they're learning how to do it and I'm learning about what they need and want and how to make it simpler.

When it's done it's going to be just like I said, one, two, three, four, five, so that you know exactly how to do it and you can just knock it out very quickly and content repurposing could become your next big traffic generator, and that's my purpose.

The way you can find the course is, it's not available right now but if you go to contentboomerang.training. Boomerang is because my idea for content is that you should be able to throw it out there and get people to come back to your website. That's sort of the image that I always have with everything that I create.

Why am I creating it? So that it can get back traffic and leads. So that's contentboomerang.training. You can sign-up, add your email address to that and when the course is ready I'll send you a quick email letting you know that.

Marina Barayeva:

Fantastic, I'll put a link to that in the show notes.

Ana Hoffman:

Sounds good.

Marina Barayeva:

There's a lot of stuff on how to repurpose content.

Ana Hoffman:

Yes, I know, right?

A lot of stuff that I read about they just tell you what to do and then people don't do it because they don't actually teach you how to do it. I'm thinking that's such a waste of white space, why are you telling people what to do without giving them the tools?

With this course, you'll definitely get the tools but even on my blog you'll get the tools, not just do this, this and that.

Marina Barayeva:

Thank you, Ana. It was a pleasure to have you here. Thank you for all of your insights.

Ana Hoffman:

I really appreciate you having me. You let me talk so much about something that I'm very passionate about and I appreciate that.

Marina Barayeva:

Thank you.

Marina Barayeva:

All right. So many great tips in this episode. If you want to go back to some parts of it just go to intnetworkplus.com for the show notes and the full transcript.

And let me know what you want us to talk about next. Just email me at marina@intnetworkplus.com. Remember, this show is dedicated to answering your questions so you could build a successful business and enjoy your life.

Announcer:

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