



## EPISODE 237

# Five Ways to Create Binge-Worthy Content

## With Melissa Cassera

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**AMY PORTERFIELD:** Hey there, welcome back to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. I'm your host, Amy Porterfield. Thank you so much for tuning in.

I know you have a lot of options when it comes to marketing podcasts and the fact that you choose to listen in means the world to me so thanks, again, for being here.

You know I do listener spotlights now, right? I think it's extra fun because I get to see your reviews and I have a podcast group, in case you didn't know, it's called [The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast Community](#). You can find us on Facebook and a lot of you leave great comments in there as well.

I love to give shout outs. This one is for Gary K. who left me a kind review on iTunes. Gary said:

*"Amy always gives wonderful value. I have been listening for a few months and am glad I found this podcast. Her podcast is not only informative but entertaining. I have already seen positive results by taking action on her suggests and best practices."*

Gary, I'm very surprised to hear that I am entertaining because I'm not one to be super funny or entertaining. I feel like I'm all business so that was kind of refreshing. Maybe I'm a little bit more entertaining than I thought. Or, maybe I'm just getting a big head. Gary, thank you so much. I'm glad you found my podcast and I'm really happy to hear that you're taking action so keep up the good work.

I'd love to share your review here on the show. So head on over to iTunes or wherever you listen to my podcast. Leave a review and I might just give you a shout out on my next podcast.



Today we are finishing up. We are in the home stretch of our Creating Compelling Content miniseries.

We started out this miniseries with Episode #235 where I talked about understanding “Who” you are creating content for, your ideal customer avatar, and how to know what type of content will be compelling to them.

Then in Episode #236 we had Donald Miller share his seven-part framework to create powerful messaging to bring your ideal customer into a customer journey. Oh my goodness, remember I said this last week. Don’t tell Hobie but I have a serious work crush on Donald Miller. I love that guy. He’s so brilliant. That was a really fun episode.

Today we’ve got master storyteller herself, Melissa Cassera. She’s going to teach us about creating binge-worthy content. Like Donald, Melissa is a huge fan of using storytelling to create compelling content.

On Melissa’s website she tells her visitors that she’ll teach them how to create content and offers that send their fans into a complete and total frenzy. That’s pretty good, right? I know that she delivers on that promise and that’s why I brought her on the show today.

She’s going to cover some storytelling techniques. We’re going to get into details and tons of examples. Don’t worry about taking notes because Melissa created the binge-worthy content worksheet. You can get it at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/237>.

After you listen to the episode you can grab the binge-worthy content worksheet where we literally outline exactly what Melissa’s going to go over here. But you need to hear all of the examples and all of the little insights she adds for each of her techniques so that you know how to apply it.

Listen first and then grab the freebie. I won’t make you wait any longer. Let’s get to it.

**AMY:** Hey there Melissa, thanks so much for coming back to the show.

**MELISSA CASSERA:** Thank you, I’m so excited to be back.

**AMY:** Oh my gosh! I am excited that you’re here because the last time you were here we talked all about the About page. There are still instances where I’ll be out and about and I’ll be meeting people in my community and they’ll say, “Oh my gosh, I loved the episode all about how to put together an About page.”



You're definitely a hit with my community and I knew you'd be a hit coming back on.

I love how excited you got when you heard you were going to be a part of a miniseries that we're doing so tell my listeners why you were so excited and also tell them a little bit about yourself.

**MELISSA:** I love a good miniseries. I am obsessed. I am, for anyone who doesn't know me, both a publicity strategist and a professional screenwriter. Anytime anyone is combining TV and movies with marketing I am here for it so I was just jumping up and down to be a part of this. This is my favorite thing to talk about.

Just a really short, brief little bit about me. As I mentioned, I am a publicity strategist. I started my career in publicity and marketing about 16 years ago which feels crazy. I started in the pharmaceutical industry and ran away screaming.

I ended up starting my own business after that, which was 12 years ago at this point. It's still like, wow, I can't believe it. I was around when we were faxing press releases. So it's really insane to see how everything has shifted.

Interestingly, I funded my business early on by working as a commercial actress in New York City. Nothing sexy, but I used to be on the cover of Nursing magazine talking about uterine fibroids. It was nothing at all sexy.

I worked in the entertainment industry, as I said, funding my business but I also had several clients in the entertainment industry so I became obsessed with how movies and TV shows could create obsessed fan bases.

Eventually I swirled all of that experience and obsession to teach business owners how to create obsessed fan bases for their own work using the power of storytelling.

It wasn't until about four years ago that, in addition to helping business owners tell their stories, I started getting interested in telling my own stories, but more fictional. I moved my entire family to L.A. That me, my husband, and three dogs.

I started pursuing screenwriting. I have two films now that air on Lifetime network. If you are in the U.S. you have that or are familiar with it. If you are not in the U.S. then it does air in international markets. I just don't know the networks.

**AMY:** Say the names of them because we've got some fans here that are going to know.



**MELISSA:** My first film was Girl Followed and my second film is Her Stolen Past.

**AMY:** Both of them are so good. I've heard you talk about them. When I saw one I felt like I was the coolest girl ever because I knew who was behind it. To see your name on the screen has got to feel so good.

**MELISSA:** I have to say there's really nothing like it.

**AMY:** Right? I can't even imagine. That's so cool.

**MELISSA:** It's pretty cool when four million people watch your movie on premier night and your name is on screen. It is really cool, I have to say, and then people are tweeting about it.

**AMY:** Man, I would die over that kind of stuff. It's so cool.

**MELISSA:** It's so much fun. I also have a TV series in development and I have three additional films in development as well so things are busy, Amy, but that is just the little brief story about me.

**AMY:** Well you have such a cool background and you do really cool things that are different, definitely, than the world I live in. So it's always fun to talk to you. Today you're going to teach us five storytelling techniques to create (I love this title) binge-worthy content.

You're going to begin with using basic plots of movies and TVs so this is extra special. We've never done anything like this before on the podcast. I'm intrigued. Tell us all about it.

**MELISSA:** First, I just want to have a disclaimer that there are so many plots and types of stories you can do. But, because this podcast is not a six-hour miniseries I am only going to share three types because these three types are actually the best stories you can tell to get your audience to buy from you. I know that's most important for your audience because they are business owners.

The first type of story you can tell is a redemption story. People love hearing stories about beating the odds, getting redemption, and achieving success despite obstacles. Think about the movie Groundhog Day or any of the super hero movies.



Honestly, if redemption isn't the main theme of a movie or TV show it's always woven into a specific character arc or it's a secondary theme. Redemption is quite, quite popular. And, it's great as a business owner to tell a redemption story because it delivers a huge adrenaline shot of inspiration to your audience and potential buyers.

Amy, you had a great redemption story in your mega batching episode, which was [Episode #182](#). You started that episode with a comparison to Groundhog Day.

**AMY:** Yes.

**MELISSA:** People instantly connect to that movie because it's the story of a cursed man who is gaining redemption. Again, it's a perfect redemption story. Audiences love redemption arcs.

By setting it up that the listeners are going to see your story of redemption in that podcast episode was really exciting. It also made for that perfect episode trailer so that we knew what was coming.

When you set the tone in that episode we couldn't wait to keep listening. That's why that was a really popular episode for you. Another episode was the episode you did with Brooke Castillo (<http://www.amyporterfield.com/217>).

**AMY:** One of my favorites.

**MELISSA:** I know that was a fan favorite as well. Again, it's all coming back to the storytelling. This is why these episodes are so popular. Brooke had an amazing story and it was a mini story that she told.

It was about when she put her book out into the world and there were typos and grammatical errors in it. She felt a ton of shame because the evil grammar police came out after her. A side note for grammar police, I will tell everyone right now that there are Academy Award winning screenplays out there that have typos. So if you can win an Academy Award with typos I think we're all good.

**AMY:** I love that you put that out there.

**MELISSA:** Back to Brooke. She got a heartfelt letter about how she changed a woman's life. That was because the woman chose to focus on her message and not a misplaced comma.



Brooke was able to triumph by saying she produced B- work but it still changed lives. Again, Brooke had an amazing redemption story and that episode was wildly popular.

I want everyone listening now to know that as you are thinking of your own redemption stories in your business and the arc of your entrepreneurial journey it doesn't have to be something huge and dramatic.

Don't feel bad if you don't have a crazy story of living in a war torn country and had to survive before getting yourself out and then being able to create your dream job. If you have that story, great. Share it.

But if you don't, and many of us don't have that story, don't worry about it. There are smaller moments of redemption. Smaller adversities in your everyday life and in your business that you go through.

Even just getting lost on the way to a business meeting and deciding to embrace that feeling of being lost versus freaking out is an amazing story. It's a very small moment that happened in one day but it's a great thing people can connect to and you can tell them how you went from a totally freaked out panic attack in your car to how you overcame that and redeemed yourself in that moment, stuck in traffic, in the car, being lost, and then how you rocked that meeting or whatever happened in the end.

Maybe you didn't rock the meeting and that was the lesson you want to impart.

**AMY:** I love that you bring up that it doesn't have to be a most amazing triumphant situation to really resonate with your audience.

**MELISSA:** Totally. And, if you are worried about revealing obstacles, mistakes, or failures (I get that a lot from my audience) I just want you to think about any television show or movie. Your favorite characters are the ones who are not in total control all the time.

You only root for people when they make mistakes because they have something to redeem. So always think back to that. You're rooting for the people that are making mistakes. You're rooting for the people that need redemption.

**AMY:** So good.

**MELISSA:** The second type of story you can tell is the walk-away story. Think about Beyoncé left Destiny's Child to pursue a solo career and we all see how that went.



Elizabeth Gilbert, who wrote Eat, Pray, Love decided to leave everything behind and go on a worldwide quest for self discovery.

These are wildly popular stories. Beyoncé is a huge global phenomenon. Eat, Pray, Love is a huge global phenomenon both in book and movie form. These are the stories people want.

In life and in business there are so many moments where we need to courageously walk away from something. It could be that you've walked away from a career that wasn't meaningful anymore, you walked away from a relationship or business partnership or whatever that is.

I know everyone in this audience has at least a few moments in your life where you have walked away. I know you, Amy, you've talked about in several podcast episodes, and I think elsewhere even in webinars, etc., how you used to work for Tony Robbins.

You walked away. That's an inspiring story to tell and keep telling because there are a lot of Tony Robbins fans out there. People probably view that as being able to work with him or being in his orbit as the dream job. The fact that you walked away in pursuit of your own dreams is really powerful and inspiring.

I did the same thing. I told a six-part miniseries in my newsletter last year. I had to break it up because my business journey is expansive, right? I've been doing this for a really long time and I called it The Scandalous Truth.

I talked about how I walked away from a lucrative career in pharmaceuticals. It was lucrative but crazy. That career seemed really fancy on the surface and I had a paycheck and bonuses to match. But I was really depressed working in this very shady industry. I told the story about walking away. So think about your own walk away stories.

Finally, the third story you could tell is the "you are not alone" story. Really quick, before I dig into that let me just tell everybody how a screenwriter's job works. We aren't hired to write a script. We are contracted to produce a draft. It is a draft that everybody looks at and reads. Producers, networks, studio director, everybody. It could be 20-something people.

They are all giving you feedback and critique. What you need to do is figure out how to incorporate all of their critique and notes so that the project gets made while maintaining the integrity of the story you want to tell.



That's why it's really crazy to be a screenwriter. You are essentially trying to make everybody happy.

One of the most common notes I get, and every screenwriter gets, every professional writer gets is that something in that script is not believable. You have to find a way to make it believable.

Even though we're writing fiction we have to find something real that our audience will connect to. If anyone has watched *The Sopranos*, which most people have, there is a moment in the first season where the star of *The Sopranos* is a violent mobster named Tony Soprano.

He has an attachment to the ducks that are swimming in his pool at home. He was sweet and nurturing with them but when the ducks went away he experienced depression and actually had an anxiety attack when they left.

The reason they put that in there and told that story in *The Sopranos*, that was part of the plot because it was a way to get us to relate to Tony. We can't relate to him murdering people and cheating on his wife. But we can relate to the tenderness he felt in those moments with the ducks.

The point here is that you want to tell stories that relate to your audience. Often times, as business owners, our audiences can put us on a pedestal or believe that our life looks the way we share it on Instagram, a perfect, curated life.

They might be like, "Oh, she's just successful because she has this and that," or, "Amy's just successful because she's been doing it all these years."

It's important for us to share the moments that we felt exactly like our audience does and give them that reassurance. The reassurance can be so healing and people are so grateful when we are brave enough to stand up and say, "Hey, I felt that way too," or, "This happened to me."

You did this in your [Episode #213](#), which was Ten Things I'm Embarrassed To Tell You. That was the perfect example of this. So if you haven't listened to that episode of Amy's, it's amazing. She basically told ten mini "you are not alone" stories in one episode.

I really think each story could have probably been its own episode. They are just really powerful and allow your audience to deeply connect with you.





**AMY:** These are so good. Redemption, walk-away story, and you-are-not-alone stories. Did I get the three?

**MELISSA:** Got it.

**AMY:** Awesome. I love the examples you are giving. Of course I love them because you are referencing some of my podcast episodes. But even some of the other examples really bring this to life so thank you so much for doing your homework and making it so tangible for all of us. I absolutely love that.

As we keep going, we've got three ideas of the kind of stories we can create, and I think all of my listeners can think of one or two stories related to your examples, now that we know what kind of story we should be telling, what's next?

**MELISSA:** The next thing you need to figure out is how to begin your story. In screenwriting we refer to this as the "inciting incident." The inciting incident is how you're going to hook your audience and keep them reading, listening, or watching.

An example in referring back to your mega-batching episode, the inciting incident you used in that episode to hook us into the main action of that podcast was using the Groundhog Day comparison. Everyone can relate to that.

You then described how that felt when you were doing your podcast without batching and how you were doing one-off episodes and you felt really stressed. It was feeling like a total chore.

That's how you kicked that off. You hooked us into the main action of the episode because now we were with you. Again, you were relating and telling people they were not alone with all of these feelings. You were stressed and overwhelmed.

We are with you and connected to you and now we're being hooked. We see Amy's problem, we're with her, she's down in the dumps because she's not batching. Now we want to go on the journey with her.

The key here is to figure out how you're going to start your story, your episode, your blog, your video or whatever piece of content you're putting out. The key is to not start from the beginning of the story.



Here's what I mean by that. We all have a friend that calls us up on the phone and says, "Oh my gosh, the craziest thing happened to me." Then you say back to your friend, "Oh my God, tell me."

Then they continue to rattle on for 15 to 20 minutes about how they went to Target and Target was so crowded and they couldn't find parking and they forgot their eco-friendly bags in the car and 20 minutes later they finally get to the story, which is that they ran into an old friend you knew from high school.

By the time they get to the story your eyes have totally glazed over or you've totally checked out and are scrolling Instagram rather than actually listening to your friend. If you had just skipped to the good part and told the story about how you ran into the old friend then it would have been so much more exciting.

The point here is to skip the boring back story and the extraneous details and jump into the action. Let's imagine if your mega-batching episode had a different beginning.

Let's say instead of starting it the way you did you decided to start the episode by saying, "I woke up this morning and had to record a podcast episode but Scout really needed a walk and Hobie wanted to have coffee together and then Chloe needed me for a meeting and I secretly didn't really like the topic we were doing for the podcast and I really need a pedicure but I guess I really need to record this podcast."

Maybe all of those details were true. Maybe Scout needed a walk. Maybe Hobie wanted coffee. Maybe Chloe was bothering you for something. Shout out to Chloe!

Maybe that was true but those are extraneous details we do not need. We don't need to know that stuff. The point here is that when you're figuring out how to begin your article, your podcast, your video, or whatever the piece of content is it's okay to put extraneous things in your rough draft.

When you're doing an outline or a rough draft it's okay that extraneous details are there. But make sure to edit them out. Always remember to skip to the good part. That is the thing you want to take away from here.

When you're beginning your story please skip to the good part.



**AMY:** That's just so good. Some people just feel they need to tell you it all, especially with social media and all of the videos now. You just get everything and you lose people so quickly.

**MELISSA:** That's right.

**AMY:** This is a very good reminder for all of us. Skip to the good stuff. Now that we've got our reader hooked with the good stuff tell us the third storytelling technique.

**MELISSA:** Now you need to figure out what is going to be the conflict in your story. Without conflict content falls flat. Suddenly your audience will be paying attention to anything else because there's no conflict.

Let's again use your mega-batching episode as an example here. There were tons of conflicts baked into that episode. You had so many twists and turns there. You talked about the "why" of mega batching.

You were saying, "Here's why I wanted to incorporate mega batching," which really could have been, I think if anyone else had handled it, it could have been boring because it would have been, "Here's my why. Why reason #1," and just kind of blanketly stating your why.

Instead, you made it exciting because you added these twists and turns. You were like, "I was stifled creatively and I was missing out on big popular guests because I couldn't get my stuff together so that I could schedule them far in advance."

There were all of these twists and turns that we were following through as you were telling us your story.

What you could have done is just jump into the five ways you have a successful mega batch. But, again, that wouldn't have been exciting. If you just jumped in and said, "Hey everybody, this episode is about mega batching and here are my five tips for mega batching."

Fortunately you didn't do that. But how much content do we see out there that's like that? The ten ways to do this or the five ways to do that? I'm not against those type of tip-based articles or tip-based podcasts. They work.

They only work if you bake story and bake conflict into it. So the way that you did your mega-batch episode, you showed us the conflict before you shared the tips on how to



make it work so we cared about those tips because we knew what the conflict was first.

**AMY:** This makes sense, yes.

**MELISSA:** You also made it interesting, as a little side tip, because you also included some fun extra storytelling elements. You had Gina in there, which was that Gina helped you with putting together your mega batching and Gina was like every best friend in a romantic comedy.

Then you had this other funny element. You were talking about how you were figuring out how many episodes you could batch at a time. Your friend, John Lee Dumas, shout out to Johnny, he batches 100 episodes at a time.

**AMY:** That's crazy. I don't know what the heck.

**MELISSA:** All I could picture is this perfect podcaster, Johnny, who is not necessarily the villain but he is the guy in the movie that you can't stack up to. You're just frantically trying. All I could imagine is you trying to batch 100 episodes locked in this dark room unshowered.

It made this really fun visual component. It made conflict. Even though Johnny's not the bad guy in this story it's that you could see the comparison there in that you had a benchmark of Johnny doing 100 so let's see how many I can do.

You could almost envision what you must have went through trying and testing out to see how many you could get done. It created this fun internal struggle for you.

As the audience is trying to figure out how to bake content into your stories what I want you to think about is two things. One is when you are telling a story remember what the most important internal struggle was in that story.

When that happened to you or when you went through that what were you struggling with most? Remember, it doesn't have to be huge or world altering here. It can be something very small like you freaked out in the car because you were lost.

That's okay to tell something like that. It doesn't have to be world shifting. Then another fun way you can use conflict is by using the rule of three. This is something I use in screenwriting. I actually have to use it for every single thriller that I write for Lifetime.



In every Lifetime thriller it's formulaic in the sense that we have a main character who is always trying to figure out who the bad guy or bad girl is. Usually it's someone that they are in jeopardy because of. It's someone that's trying to kill them or somebody that's trying to take someone away from them (their child, their partner, whatever) or someone that's trying to usurp their throne in some way.

In order to make it interesting you can't have your main character just suddenly have one clue and then everything is resolved. Then the movie would be all over about 30 minutes in and it's done.

Instead, you have to use the rule of three. It is essentially that they have to make two unsuccessful attempts to do something and then the third one is actually successful. When you're telling your own stories think about that.

Think about the two things you did unsuccessfully before you got to the third successful thing. A quick example, let's use that car situation. I'm lost on the way to a meeting. The first thing I did was scream and lay on my horn. That is clearly very unsuccessful, right?

The second thing I did is called my husband and freaked out and made a big deal and put it all on him and stressed him out. Now not only am I stressed but he's equally stressed.

The third thing I did was I finally pulled over, I did a ten-minute meditation that I know always calms me down. I just sat with my thoughts, let myself feel that stress, and then I parted with the stress and let it dissipate and then it went away.

That's a bad example but an example of how you can have three things in a story where it was two unsuccessful attempts and finally the third one was good. Anyone can follow the rule of three with your own stories.

That way the story is exciting. If you're raising the stakes throughout because you tried something and it didn't work, you tried something and it didn't work, and now you try the third thing and it's successful. We're rooting for you throughout the whole story.

**AMY:** I love that. I think it adds a little intrigue and it keeps people interested the whole way through. We've been talking a lot about this on the show about the importance of being vulnerable and sharing the mistakes and being honest with your audience.



This is a perfect way to do that because you can talk about that conflict you've been facing. I love that you bring this up.

**MELISSA:** Yay.

**AMY:** Makes perfect sense. Okay, now that we've got them interested and there's some intrigue there and we're talking about the conflicts what's next?

**MELISSA:** Now we need to conclude the story. Everyone listening knows there is nothing worse than a disappointing finale. We see it all the time when our favorite shows end how people go on social media and rip it apart, "I hated that ending. It was so unsatisfying."

We want to avoid that grim fate with your own stories. There are two ways you can conclude your story. The first way is to have a resolved ending. This is essentially where everything is tied up neatly in a bow and there is a happily ever after.

This works out well for business content, particularly when you're trying to sell something like a course or workshop where you're educating people how to do something.

People do want to see that you've figured out whatever this is. For example, if you were doing a story that led into your webinar course. We would want to see some kind of happy ending there that you figured out whatever it was, maybe a tech glitch, you had to overcome in your first webinar.

If you ended the story and said you never figured it out but, "Here's hoping," nobody's going to be really excited to buy your webinar course because you said you never figured it out.

It's good to have some kind of happily ever after, particularly when you're using a piece of content to lead into something you're selling. We want to see that you have actually figured it out.

I also think it's important to resolve an ending in a redemption story because we want to see the redemption. If you are telling a redemption story it kind of is whomp, whomp at the end if you haven't actually felt redeemed unless you're doing something where you're telling it in three parts or six parts and there is a teaser for the next part. That's okay.



But if this is a closed-loop story, like an episode of Law and Order, then we need to see the redemption in the end. Law and Order always ends with finding out who did it. It would be really unsatisfying if you end the episode and we didn't know.

There can be shows like the arced stories like True Detective on HBO where it's okay that we don't have it figured out in one episode because we know we have five more to go.

When you're telling a redemption story I think it's really important to close the loop at the end and tie it up and also any content that's really leading you into some type of sale.

You can also go with an unresolved ending for other types of stories. We touched on this a bit earlier how it was not every story has to be wrapped in a perfect bow. It doesn't have to have a sweeping thing at the end that you ended up making seven figures. It doesn't have to be that.

Let's say you're telling a walk-away story. You walked away from something. You walked away from your career. You walked away from a relationship. Whatever it is. There is a huge amount of courage that's baked into that story but it's really only the beginning.

You don't have to tie that in any bow. You can say that you walked away from something but you can end it unresolved. You can end it with, "Who knows where the journey will take me."

You could end it with something that's like, "I tried this and I'm still feeling a little sticky about it but I know I'm on the right path and let's just see where it goes." It's kind of a to-be-continued. It's fine to leave it unresolved.

Also, you-are-not-alone stories work well with unresolved endings. I personally write a ton about my pursuit of screenwriting in my newsletter and on my blog. There is no end game here. Screenwriting is a career that's entirely out of your control because you have no control if your project's going to be made or not in the end unless you're the one that's fully funding it.

That includes tons of rejection and failure. Sometimes that's all I've got to share. Sometimes there isn't a happy, neat bow. Sometimes it's that I pitched this script to 100 different producers, networks, and studios and they all said, "no."



There's still a story there. There's still value in that story. I went through that rejection. I got through the rejection however I handled it. But it's still open ended. There's no happy resolve there. It's still floating out there.

I can still conclude my story with a lesson or how I dealt with all of that rejection. There is no definitive ending there yet it's still compelling. I know it's compelling because people always tell me how much they love when I talk about my screenwriting journey because they get to follow along with me. They are excited for my next "episode".

Before I wrap up the "how to conclude your story" piece of this podcast I just want to briefly mention that one question I get a lot from my audience about telling stories is that they are not sure whether a story is appropriate for their audience or not.

They are like, "Something happened to me and I want to talk about it but how do I know if it's going to be good for my business audience?"

**AMY:** Yes.

**MELISSA:** I personally say that if there's a lesson in that story somewhere that you think will help your ideal clients and customers tell it.

**AMY:** This is good because this comes up a lot. Should I tell a story where maybe it doesn't have the happiest ending?

**MELISSA:** Yes. Absolutely! As long as there is a lesson in there somewhere for your audience. It doesn't have to be tied up in a neat bow but you need to figure out how it relates to your audience.

You can pretty much relate anything, I think, to your audience with a little skill, pretty much anything. But here's an example. Let's say you went to brunch with your friends and had a really bad experience at that brunch, terrible experience.

If you were to come to me and say, "I just went to brunch, Melissa, and I had the worst experience and I want to talk about it to my audience. I want to tell them how I was really annoyed and unsatisfied."

I would still come back and ask you, "What's the lesson there for your audience?"





If you just want to vent about a bad brunch experience take it to Yelp. Take it to the review site or take it to the manager. The venting is not going to be helpful. But, if you came to me and said you had a really bad experience, you still vented your experience, but you said, "You know what, I learned that you never want to treat your customers that way and I want to make sure I'm going to personalize the experience or if somebody complains to me this is how I'm going to handle it moving forward."

If you took a lesson from that then I would say to absolutely tell your audience that. It is helpful. Your ideal clients would love that because they are always seeking ways that they can please their audience and always seeking ways they can get more intimate and deeper and make their audience happier with their service, their product, their business. There is value there.

Or, if it's an open-ended thing where you are really pissed off and, frankly, really don't know how to handle this because you are a business owner and know that one bad review can kind of tank your business.

If you are a small restaurant or something like that you feel bad. But I still think there's a lesson there that's worthy of sharing. You have an internal conflict and dialogue going on that's like, "I'm not quite sure how I want to handle this because I want to leave a Yelp review yet I know, and I'm aware as a business owner, that sometimes one bad review can really hurt someone so I had to think about that and I'm still unsure what I'm going to do but the conflict of where I'm marinating or where I'm thinking about proceeding with this, I can empathize with another business owner as a business owner but still want to share my experience."

I think that's a worthy story to share. There is conflict there. It's an open end but your audience can learn something from that because I guarantee a lot of them are feeling the same way. I guarantee a lot of people in your audience think twice about complaining about service because they're a business owner too.

They are like, "How would I feel if someone left me a one-star review?" Hopefully that is helpful for everybody. I know there is a bit of a fine line there but I always say to think about the lesson. What's going on? Is there some wisdom you can impart to your audience that would be helpful for them in this situation?

**AMY:** I think it's a great question, what is the lesson there? If there is something there then you should share it, for sure.

To wrap it up, what is our final binge-worthy storytelling technique? I know you've got one more. I need a drum roll maybe. But, what's next?

**MELISSA:** That is actually what the next tip is, what is next?

**AMY:** Oh I love it.

**MELISSA:** When you're finished with a piece of content the mistake that people make is to close the loop and it's done. They think about each piece of content singularly. It's like you wrote the blog, you recorded this podcast episode, you made this video, or whatever it is and that's off their plate. They check the box for their weekly content.

What you really want to be thinking about is the coming attractions. What should your audience be expecting next? One example I use, I'm a huge fan of TV. Duh! I feel like I have probably said that 17 thousand times.

I hate when I'm watching an episode of a show and then there's no trailer for the next episode. I get really upset. I'm frantically searching online for it because I want to know what's coming next week.

**AMY:** I listen to those. I need to know what's next, for sure.

**MELISSA:** Of course. That's exactly how people feel about your content.

**AMY:** Good point.

**MELISSA:** What is coming next week? Hello, Amy? What can I expect? Also, you can create that feeling if you do this. If people aren't feeling obsessed with your content yet this is a way to psychologically create it for them.

If you're giving coming attractions for your next piece then it has that same feeling. They are connecting it to what they see on TV when they hear, "Next week on The Bachelor." They are going to feel the same way about your content.

Like I mentioned before, with how we have certain content that has a definitive end and then some things that have no definitive end, you can still create that feeling. If it has an open-ended ending where you are saying, "I failed. I pitched my script 100 places. Here's how I dealt with it but the journey is still happening. The script hasn't been sold so stay tuned and watch me fail some more."



I would use that as the ending because it's the coming attraction for people to still come along that journey with me. I'm going to keep failing, y'all. And, you're all going to come with me. Watch this journey go.

Also, there is something baked in there where people are going to root for me because they are seeing me fail over and over and over again. They can't wait until I get my success. They can't wait until I get my "yes".

Another thing you could do is also tease your next piece of content. I know you actually did this, Amy, in your podcast episode on mega batching. I forget what you teased for the next episode off the top of my head but you did have it there. In the end you said, "I'm going to be talking about" this topic more.

It was just slipped in there. You didn't make a big deal out of it but it was enough that it teased people to know that you're going to be talking about this more. I know you left that mega-batching episode open ended because one thing you said is that you're still trying things. You're still testing this.

Again, there was a piece that we know that we're going to be checking back in with you at some point on batching again. We're going to know how this is going for you.

Another thing you can do beyond those two things of teasing what's coming next week or just teasing that this journey is still continuing and that they should follow along is that they can serialize their content.

Any of us can do this. When I use the term "serialize", a very screenwriting term, it's basically a television term that's referring to a television series that follows one story arc over the full run of the series or over a season.

Examples are True Detective, Sharp Objects, Breaking Bad. These are things where there is one story that rolls out over the course of a series. Unlike episodic television, which is a closed loop like Law and Order.

We said earlier when you are done with a Law and Order episode it's done. The loop is closed. You can actually drop into Law and Order at any time. You don't have to go back and watch all 20 seasons of Law and Order to know what's going on.

This is a cool little tip that anybody here can use. If you have a particularly sweeping story that you want to tell, something that's really long and in depth, I would recommend breaking it up.



I would do it like a miniseries. This is a miniseries that you're listening to right now with Amy. I did a miniseries. I brought it up earlier in this episode where I told my entire business story. That's a long story that spans over many, many years so I broke it up into six parts.

I added little teasers at the end so that it felt like it would be "next week on the Scandalous Truth." It had the same feeling. The point here is that when you're done writing a piece of content, recording it for a podcast, video, or whatever you're doing don't make that it. Don't stop there.

The point is that you want people to keep engaging so please tease something. Give them a coming attractions for coming. It can be the next piece you're doing. It can be to just keep following this journey as I continue to mess up or keep following the journey until I reach my success eventually.

It doesn't have to be a closed loop all of the time. It could be like you did in your batching episode where I am still doing this so stay tuned for a future episode where I will check back in and tell you how my batching is going.

Or, you can serialize your content where you have one big story you want to tell. Break it up over three, four, five, six, seven parts and then release it in increments rather than all in one piece.

**AMY:** I love that. One of the things I've been doing a little bit more is because I've been batching. I know what is coming next for my podcast so I will do it at the end of this one when I wrap things up where I could say, "Next week let me tell you what we're going to dive in to."

I'm not always that organized so I haven't been doing it in the past but with my batching there's no excuse. I should know what's coming next so I think it's really cool to even do it with your podcasting or with your video shows or whatever you might be doing.

**MELISSA:** Absolutely. Yes, if you know what's coming next, especially if you're batching, that's the great way to do it. That's all you have to do. That makes your job easy.

**AMY:** Way easier.



**MELISSA:** You can be like, “Coming next.” But for those of us that haven’t quite mastered batching, and I get it, there are other options for you so don’t feel like you have to wait to figure batching out.

**AMY:** Yes, I’m so glad you said that. You can always tease no matter how you want to get it organized. I’m glad you brought that up as well.

Melissa, I absolutely love this approach to communicating to our audiences. I love that you brought in your love of TV and movies because we have a lot of movie and TV buffs out there so they can completely relate to all of these examples you’re giving.

I really want my listeners to take action. You guys, I want you to try this. I want you to build a story and go through the different steps of this storytelling technique. But I also know you might be on a subway right now, in the car, taking your kids to school, maybe at the gym and you will never remember all of what Melissa just shared with us.

The good news is Melissa created a worksheet to help you work through these five storytelling techniques and you can grab it at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/237>. It’s called The Binge-Worthy Content Worksheet.

First of all, thank you Melissa for creating this worksheet so that you could save people from panicking and thinking they are never going to remember this. Thanks a bunch.

**MELISSA:** You’re welcome. I’m excited for everybody to use it.

**AMY:** Me too. It’s so useful. Also, before I let you go, tell my listeners how they can find out more about you.

**MELISSA:** Sure. The best way to do that is to just come over to my website. It’s just my name, [MelissaCassera.com](http://MelissaCassera.com). I have a newsletter there called OMG, Original Melissa Goodness, which is my own personal TV show except it’s in the written form because I’m a writer.

It’s free to sign up, of course, as all newsletters are. That’s where I really share tons of storytelling tips and techniques to create your own binge-worthy content. If you like the content in this podcast and you want more that’s where to go get it.

**AMY:** Perfect. Thanks again, Melissa. I can’t wait to have you on again.



**MELISSA:** Thank you so much, Amy.

**AMY:** There you have it. And, because I like to practice what I learn, let me tell you what's coming up. Next week we have two episodes. One is a bonus episode. I'm going to help you answer the question, "Should I have an LLC or an S-Corp for my business structure?"

This is for my U.S. audience. It's different in Canada and overseas. But if you're in the U.S., no matter if you've already set up your business or not, this episode is a must listen to.

I brought on my resident attorney, Bobby Klinck, to talk about what is best for your business in terms of protecting yourself, protecting your business, and protecting your taxes so you don't pay too much.

It's a great episode. I've been in business almost ten years and I learned so much from how Bobby broke down the two different entities. That's a bonus episode next week. And then I have Seth Godin on the show.

I'm such a huge fan of Seth. I'm actually very, very nervous about that interview. It's coming up soon. Seth has a new book coming out so we're going to talk about marketing with generosity and empathy. I absolutely love this topic.

We're going to get into details and specifics and examples so make sure to show up and listen in as I get to interview the legendary Seth Godin. Both episodes are next week. I cannot wait to see you here same time, same place.

One more thing. Make sure you subscribe to the podcast. Whether you listen to it in iTunes and you subscribe there or wherever you listen to it because when I have bonus episodes I don't always email out about them.

I haven't yet decided if I'm going to email out about the LLC/S-Corp episode so if I don't email you, you will get a notification if you subscribe in iTunes or wherever you listen. I'm doing a lot of bonus episodes. Make sure you subscribe.

Okay guys, I cannot wait to see you here next week. Bye for now.