



Marketing Moxie Podcast

Episode 32: Fired Up About Challenges with Racheal Cook

Show notes at: <http://www.maggiepatterson.com/episode32>

- MAGGIE: Welcome to Marketing Moxie. Today on Marketing Moxie, we have the Yogipreneur, Racheal Cook, helping us break down how to run a successful challenge. Let's get started.
- INTRO: Welcome to Marketing Moxie with Maggie Patterson where we get down and dirty on all things marketing for entrepreneurs. Maggie takes a practical, no holds barred approach to helping you take action on what matters to your business, all with her signature moxie and sass. Now it's time to roll up your sleeves and dive in.
- MAGGIE: Hey there, guys! We are here today. We are going to talk about challenges as an Unconventional Tactic. When I invited Racheal on the show, I knew she was about to run her Fired Up + Focused Challenge, which is very popular, and I'm very excited to be a part of it. But I actually learned a lot more in this than I bargained for, and I hope you really get a lot out of it too. There are some great takeaways from this episode, so be sure to get your pen and paper ready. And if not, you can always hop on over to the show notes at www.MaggiePatterson.com/Episode32.

Hey, everyone! I have Racheal Cook from the Yogipreneur here today, and we are going to talk about her Fired Up + Focused Challenge. I wanted Racheal to come on and talk about it because, A, I think the challenge is awesome. I'm very excited to be a part of it this September 2014, as well as I think it's a really great example of how to use a challenge to build community, build activity, really build some momentum as you're going into a launch. Racheal, welcome to the show.

RACHEAL: Thanks! I'm so excited!

MAGGIE: Let's talk about Fired Up + Focused. You have me on the name alone, but tell us a little bit about the challenge and how it came to be.

RACHEAL: The challenge came to be because, like most things I think a lot of entrepreneurs experience, it was kind of something I did by accident with a lot of my clients and didn't really see the value in it. I was hosting an in-person event with several of my private clients, and that's when I got the feedback for the first time that the biggest thing they got out of working with me wasn't just the marketing strategy or the business model or taking them online, but it was these really little, to me, so simple focus practices that I gave them that helped them get more done and stay incredibly laser focused so that they could see results. Once I heard that, and they were telling everybody else there about how these little tiny things changed their lives and their businesses, I was like okay; obviously this isn't just common sense to everybody. Maybe I should do something with this and turn it into some sort of online program.

At the time, I already had a few online programs, and I wasn't sure exactly where it would fit in, but the more I kind of listened to my clients, I realized that the biggest challenge for most people coming in to work with me as a business strategist and as a marketing strategist wasn't that they didn't want to learn about business, or they didn't want to learn about marketing. They were already so overwhelmed and so swamped that they couldn't even make the space, the brain space to take on something as big as working with somebody in a high level way. That's how the Fired Up + Focused Challenge kind of came to be. It was my answer to helping them kind of clear their own path and get out of their own way so that they could be more intentional about creating their business.

MAGGIE: I like what you said about people just being so overwhelmed they can't think about doing the things they really need to do in their business because I know, for some of my clients, they'll come to me and they just want a marketing plan, but they're like: I don't even know where to start, and where would this fit, and why would I do this. If you can kind of, like you say, clear that path for them, it makes things so much easier.

RACHEAL: Yeah! We are so good naturally, I think, at just jam-packing our days with every little thing we think that we need to do. I think the Internet has compounded this problem dramatically, especially for entrepreneurs. You can't get on Facebook without seeing all of these things that everybody is doing. But the truth is, you don't need all that stuff. You don't need probably any of what your competition or peers are doing. You can probably get away with just a few things. That's what I'm trying to get people to do is to stop just piling on and instead start taking off of the to-do list so that you can focus on the things that really, really matter.

MAGGIE: You ran the challenge back in January.

RACHEAL: Mm-hmm.

MAGGIE: What were some of the biggest lessons you learned from the challenge?

RACHEAL: Running it as a challenge was interesting. Like I said, I considered running it just as a straight program and making it like a paid offering. Then I realized it would be the perfect entry point to my signature program, which is called Conscious Business Design. At that point I was literally about two weeks from launching for Conscious Business Design, and the strategy I had before was the traditional kind of PLF Internet marketing launch, which I've done before, which is the three-part video series, and you kind of guide them through this sideways sales page. And I'm doing all of these with bunny quotes in the air. We've all seen them.

MAGGIE: Yep.

RACHEAL: They're really popular. They're very effective, but we've kind of seen it. I was literally getting back the videos from my videographer and kind of just not feeling very inspired by it. I was like, well, if it's not inspiring me, this isn't going to get people where I want them to go.

For me, I am definitely the type of person, and I've created enough programs at this point that when I get an idea, and I just get stuck on it, I just pull the trigger and go. I literally created the Fired Up + Focused Challenge a week before I launched it, and I was actually in process of creating it as it was going live, so there would be several nights where I would be up recording videos while my husband is in the kids' bedroom trying to keep them quiet, knowing that I had to get that video out the next morning at 8:00 in the morning. It was a pretty wild three weeks of me creating this thing, launching it, putting it out there.

Some of the biggest lessons I learned was, one, this style is very conducive to the way I teach, and I think this is a disconnect I think a lot of people have, especially for online business. I know you have a lot of coaches listening to you, Maggie.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

RACHEAL: But I think a lot of us tend to listen to a lot of the "Internet marketers" more than tuning in to our own way of communicating best. I've always been more of a teacher than an entertainer or somebody who is going to really be comfortable sitting in front of a camera. So I literally created the challenge the same kind of way that I teach. It's recorded slides with a voiceover. I kept them all really, really, really short and practical, so I wanted everything to be bite-sized. I felt that was really, really important.

But that, just pulling the trigger on it, jumping on it, and making sure that it was really aligned with the way that I actually teach inside my programs turned out to be huge. Just to give everybody a frame of reference - for typical, online launch, they say that you could expect about 1% of your list

to become paid clients. With this challenge, I saw about 4.5% of people who took the challenge become paid clients. That was huge for me, and it resulted literally in my biggest month ever.

MAGGIE: And what I like about that, Racheal is, number one, screw the 1%. We all can do better than 1%. But you did the work to get it from that 1% kind of average to the 4%, 4.5%, so people can actually see you did something that's in line with your teaching style. People knew actually what to expect if they were going to invest money with you. And I think that that creates a lot more trust than us trying to jam ourselves into this classic PLF formula where we're like, oh, this is how we're going to do it - three videos. If that doesn't work for you, it's not going to work for your clients, and it's not going to sell the program at all.

RACHEAL: Yeah, exactly, and that's where I was sitting there kind of watching a lot of people starting to try to do that even more. Maybe it's just something about me. I feel like when I start to see a lot of people do something, I want to do it differently. I just want to do something outside of the status quo. That's why I decided to kind of go with the challenge format.

The hardest part for me, though, was figuring out how to break down these really complicated concepts into smaller, bite-sized pieces. I had seen really popular challenges that were in the more kind of either fitness or lifestyle space.

MAGGIE: Mm-hmm.

RACHEAL: And I was just amazed at how well they did, but I also saw challenges in the more business space, and they, a lot of them honestly feel flat, and they didn't really get people where the person, the creator wanted them to go, I don't think. I was really trying to figure out with each thing that I was creating, how can I make this as engaging as possible? How can I really give them something that they can actually try on and get some sort of result out of? This is really important, I think, for any, really, a launch marketing thing is you want to give them those results in advance and give them something they can actually put into action.

If it's too complicated or too high level, they're never going to get a chance to really see or feel like it could work for them, and that's what the core of it was. I wanted people to feel in the first challenge or two that, oh, my gosh, this is making a difference; I can do this. I knew if I could get them to that head space of, oh, I can do this; this is helpful; I can really make this happen and see some results from it, I knew if I could get them there then they would get through the challenge, first of all, and then be a great candidate for my program.

MAGGIE: I think that's a good example, though, of anything we're doing in our business is people are most excited when they first join your list, when they first start your challenge. How can you sustain that through? It's like starting a new weight loss routine or exercise routine.

RACHEAL: Yeah.

MAGGIE: You're pretty excited for three or four days, and then something happens, and you go, oh, gosh. If you could give them those micro results where they can see that positive change, it reinforces the behavior. It's kind of like potty training, right?

RACHEAL: It is. I heard about it. Actually, some of the strategy I pulled from was from videogame theory. If you've ever seen somebody get addicted to a videogame, and I know you have kids, Maggie, so you probably have.

MAGGIE: Um, hello. Hello, Minecraft. This is my life.

RACHEAL: There's some sort of connection there where if you watch how those videogames are developed, they're developed so you start winning in like the first ten minutes of it. That's something we want our marketing to do, especially launched related marketing. You want them to feel like: I'm winning! I'm doing it! That was really important, and so even if you take my challenge, you'll notice the first week of it, this is not uber-complicated business strategy or marketing strategy. It's really these small, simple, little habits and, kind of again, clearing the path, but people can do them, and they can do them in a short timeframe really wherever they are.

They don't need any special equipment. They don't need any special software. They pretty much just need a Post-it note and five minutes to think, and they can implement some of these habits, and it just has a huge impact.

MAGGIE: I think what you just said about the whole habit, you know, not needing special stuff. It's like when you go to make dinner, and you pull out the recipe, and it needs four exotic spices you don't have, and you just go, oh, forget it; I'm ordering a pizza.

RACHEAL: Exactly.

MAGGIE: It's the same thing in our business. I think that if it's too complicated, we just shut down. We walk away and say, I'm done; forget it!

RACHEAL: Exactly! I think a lot of, especially online entrepreneurs, tend to get addicted to all the tools and technology, and we forget that there are simpler, easier ways to get the same end result, especially when you're first starting. It's not worth it to procrastinate and spend all your time comparing 20 different tools when seriously a paper calendar will get you where you want to go. Don't get in your way.

MAGGIE: Yep. I love that. You and I are so aligned on that whole approach to doing business.

RACHEAL: Yes, totally.

MAGGIE: If I was going to consider doing a challenge, or our listeners were going to consider doing a challenge, what do we need to consider before we kind of jump into this?

RACHEAL: Cool! This is a great question, and I definitely thought through a lot of these pieces a lot as I was implementing them. The first thing I would say is pick one thing you really want to focus on as kind of the on ramp to whatever the challenge is. If it's too many things you're trying to include in the challenge, or if it's too vague, people aren't going to resonate and latch onto it. So pick one focus point, one topic that you're trying to connect with people.

Then I would definitely, definitely do this step because it's one that I think made all the difference for me. Send out an email to your list saying, "Hey, guys. I'm thinking about creating a free program to help you with," insert topic. I literally said I'm thinking about coming up with a program to help you maximize your productivity so you can get more done in less time. What are you struggling with right now? Hit reply. Let me know.

It wasn't a survey monkey thing. It was just like a hit reply and let me know. I literally got over 100 answers the first day and sat there and sorted them, starting grouping like with like and seeing the themes. That's how I figured out what I wanted the challenge to be because I could quickly see from them what they were struggling with, what they were confused about, and most of it was a lot of small habit pieces, so I answered the most popular ones first to kind of hook them in and give them those little wins that they needed to feel confident about the whole thing.

Then, as we got through the rest of the challenge, I started weaving in more of my higher-level content, which kind of previewed my main offering. That would be a huge thing. Let your community co-create the challenge with you.

MAGGIE: Because then they're going to feel like, wow, she's really listening to me.

RACHEAL: Exactly.

MAGGIE: They're so much bonded to you, and they are going to be the ones that are going to be your cheerleaders and the super fans out there sharing it.

RACHEAL: Exactly! I mean it's amazing. I literally have people -- I mean, if you join and go in the Facebook group, you can scroll through, and you'll see people who have said, "Oh, my gosh! I got today's challenge, and it's like you were reading my mind. How did you know?" And it's like, because you told me! Thank you.

MAGGIE: You sent me an email.

RACHEAL: You made it so easy for me. The thing is, we all tend to think that our programs are ours alone, and it's not true. The more personal, the more

universal, the more you struggle with something, chances are there are other people struggling with it. It's really, really so much easier as an entrepreneur to create anything from a free offer to a paid offer if you just ask them what they want. It makes it a million times easier.

MAGGIE: Yeah, and I think this is something that we all need to be reminded of because we start to, you know, you've been doing it a certain amount of time; you start to make assumptions.

RACHEAL: Exactly.

MAGGIE: You start to --

RACHEAL: And we also overcomplicate and forget what it's like to be several steps behind where our clients are.

MAGGIE: Yep.

RACHEAL: I think that's why the email, the open-ended email is so important. I did that the week, probably about two weeks before I really launched the first one, and then, like I said, I kind of was rapidly creating this thing as I was going.

A couple other things I did that I think are really important is, one, make sure you have an opt-in page for it instead of just announcing a challenge and only sharing it on social media because, ultimately, if you want to have them turn into clients, you'll have a lot better chance of that if the challenge is being delivered to them via email than if you're trying to get them to check in on social media every day. That was pretty important, I think, and especially if you're going to add a Facebook group.

I've seen a lot of Facebook groups, and I think they can be so much fun, and people definitely love them because we're all hanging out on Facebook all day. I totally get it. But I also see a lot of people who have Facebook groups who don't have kind of an opt-in to protect that Facebook group. And so what tends to happen is you get a lot of people who are just out there adding themselves to every Facebook group on the planet. They're not really participating in any of them. It kind of dilutes the quality of the community, and you really want to make sure that you're kind of protecting this community that you're putting together and really making it a safe space. That's something that I think is really important, kind of keeping out anybody who is not related to the challenge so that everybody feels like we're all in this together.

MAGGIE: Yeah, that common purpose for the community so everyone is secure, happy, and feels okay sharing the stuff. Talking about the fact that you're struggling with time management, or productivity, or whatever it is is not a comfortable thing for most of us.

RACHEAL: Yeah, exactly, so they need to know that it's just others taking the challenge as well. I would kind of wrap everything up by saying if you're

going to run some sort of challenge or really any online community-based thing, engagement starts with you. Engagement starts with the leader. That means you need to dedicate time to be in there responding, answering questions. It's often these little things that we tend to rationalize away and say, well, I don't have time for that. That's what makes the difference between a great experience for people in a challenge like this and, honestly, makes them want to work with you long-term than a free challenge where it's basically the equivalent of the ebook that they never really open.

I engaged everything from once we add them to the group, I personally try to welcome every single person just by saying, "Hey, we're so glad you're in here. Looking forward to starting." And people respond. They're like, "Oh, my gosh, thanks. I'm happy to be here."

Then when people ask questions, giving thoughtful responses, not just like quick one-liners, but actually doing some coaching inside the group and giving some responses or sharing some resources. All of those things, I found, have made a tremendous difference. I think, especially in the online space, it's really easy to lose that connection with people and rationalize away that you don't have time for it. But the truth is, the more that you connect with them, the more they really, really, really respect you as an entrepreneur and are more inclined to work with you.

MAGGIE: Yeah, because people buy from people.

RACHEAL: Exactly.

MAGGIE: People buy from people they like. I know that's how my business was built. They're like, "I was really impressed that you took the time to answer that question in a Facebook group."

RACHEAL: Yeah.

MAGGIE: Literally, person-by-person, those human engagements are what actually matter more than my list size or anything else. I think that that's a really good lesson for everyone to always be thinking about is, like, how can I be more human and less about my scheduled updates.

RACHEAL: Exactly. It's kind of like if you're using any sort of launch strategy to preview an offer that you have, you want to give a very similar experience. I can't tell them that I'm launching this training program and online mastermind and then not give them the equivalent experience in the free preview. Then they're going to be like, well, she didn't really engage in that. She didn't really talk or answer any questions. How will I know when I've invested thousands of dollars that she's going to be really doing that here? I think you've got to be very congruent with how you show up for people, and that trust piece is really, really important.

MAGGIE: Yeah. Racheal, if we want to learn more about you and the challenge, where can we do that?

RACHEAL: Head over to FiredUpandFocused.com, and the challenge kicks off September 1st. But, you know, it basically starts when you join, so if you are finding us after September 1st, you can still hop on. We'll be there for you. You'll get everything. You won't miss a day. I promise. And, yeah, I can't wait to see you guys there.

MAGGIE: And I hope you guys will join me because I'm going to be there too, so you can learn all my dirty, time management secrets and things I'm doing wrong. Racheal, thank you so much for being on the show.

RACHEAL: Thanks for having me.

MAGGIE: Ay, caramba! Was that not action packed? I think every guest I've had lately has been super action packed. There is no boredom here on the Marketing Moxie Show. Let's talk about what Racheal brought to the table and some of the key takeaways. I personally was furiously scribbling down during this.

Number one, when Racheal was thinking about what to do, she went to her audience. She went to her community, and she said, "Hey, what can I help you with?" Look for the feedback.

That's a lesson I think that we talked about in the episode we just had with Farideh, and you can't ask for the feedback enough. Now you don't want to be sending a survey monkey thing out every single week, but what Racheal discovered from that was a lot of common sense things, simple little things that she wouldn't have realized without asking her community. Find a way to connect with your community and get their feedback before you get too far into creating something.

Takeaway number two, I love how Racheal talked about the PLF formula, that's the product launch formula, and how that wasn't working for her, how she actually got into this. She abandoned the video scripts and said, "You know what? Screw the rulebook. I'm out of here." And you need to really look at if you're doing something, and it's not feeling right, feeling free to change direction, feeling free not to follow the PLF rule and to do what's actually going to work her way.

In that, Racheal really focused on doing what it is she teaches. If you coach, you want to make sure that you're providing it in the right way. You want to have it resonate with your actual style for whatever it is this challenge or program is a lead into.

Number three--I love this. I'm a huge fan of this, and I think we don't do it enough. We get this tunnel vision--borrow from other industries. Racheal said she looked at health challenges and all kinds of different things to see how it was being done. We don't have to confine ourselves to marketing, to online marketing, to online business.

Look at other things. If you love fishing, look at what they're doing in the fishing industry. I may not be groundbreaking from the point of view of the online part, but maybe you can take a takeaway from there. Look at how other things are done. I know, for myself, a lot of my marketing best practices are things I've stolen from the crafting industry or personally learned myself there. So don't be afraid to look at what's happening in other industries and bring it back to what you're doing.

If you want to join the Fired Up + Focused Challenge, you can find the link over at the show notes at www.MaggiePatterson.com/Episode32. You can also share your love by clicking on over there. And if you want any more information on Racheal, everything about her will be linked up there.

I hope you found today really productive, and I would love to hear from you what of the three takeaways you are going to put into action in your business. You can tweet me @magspatterson on Twitter, and I would love to talk to you over there, so I will talk to you all soon.

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