



How to Triple Your Sales Using Stories with Will Wang – The Get Clients Series



If you're not using stories in your marketing, there are very good reasons why you should. Growth Labz' Will Wang goes over them in this SuperFastBusiness episode.



James Schramko and Will Wang

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. I'm here with my friend Will Wang, and this is Episode 726. We're gonna be talking about how to triple your sales using stories. And Will, you've got a new website now called ContentDrivenBusiness.com. We've had you on before, you're usually from GrowthLabz.com. You've got both now. I think you've got agency, and you've now got community, where you're actually helping people with content marketing. So, welcome to the show again.

Will: Thanks for having me back, James. It's always good fun every time I'm on here.

James: Well, we've often talked about getting leads. I mean, that's been our thing, get more leads. You're convinced that you can actually make more sales using story. So give me the overview. What are we going to be talking about today?

Will: Yeah, sure. So today, I'm going to be going for a bit of a framework that we have on storytelling, and the framework we've used recently for one of our clients, and it's tripled the sales on the funnel on their products. So I thought it'd be pretty cool to share exactly how we did it, break down the steps that go into it, and help everyone listening now how to tell a story in a really believable and nice way to increase their sales as well.

One of business's most underused tools

James: And how do you feel businesses are approaching story at the moment? I mean, there's some out there, we know their story. And then there's other ones we don't. Would you say when you're starting to work with a client that it's common that they've really tapped into it? Or is it a hidden asset that you can utilize?

Will: That's a good question. It's one of the most underutilized things in business. I mean, I've always talked about emails every time I've jumped on the podcast, and talked about how emails are underutilized. But one of the other things is telling a good story or telling a brand history by email.



So for me, when I look at companies, because you're kind of in there every single day, kind of in the forest, you know, walking through the trees, you don't really get to see the big picture. And you kind of have this expectation that everybody else knows about your company, knows about what you're doing, when they really don't. And stories are such a great way of relaying good information, building rapport and just starting that relationship off on the right foot.

James: Right. Well, I'm really interested in, you said, telling a good story. And I'd love to know what a good story is. And I think one way to highlight that might be to talk about, perhaps, some of the mistakes people make when they start using story. I know for a fact, [we have talked about stories](#) on this particular podcast. I mean, we've got 726 episodes, and a good chunk of them relate to storytelling, email storytelling... It's not the first time we've heard that; it's not the second or the third or probably even the 10th. But I'd like to know what you think some of the biggest mistakes are that people are making when they do try and incorporate story into their selling.

Beware of telling the one-sided story

Will: Yeah. So the way I look at it is, well, one of the first mistakes I'll mention is telling stories from one side, or from one person. So a lot of the clients we work with, when they start trying to use stories, it really is a lot about them, or their company, and with the view of just telling the story, and really explaining how they came to be, what drove the company, and things like that. So the number one mistake is telling a story from one point of view. So what I mean by that is, it's always good to have other points of views, other customer stories. General stories, even, you know, just analogies and different sources that we can use to talk about what we're trying to talk about.

The number one goal is to always be looking at what kind of stories you're telling, from whose perspective – I think working backwards from that and trying to have a bit of a mix when you actually go out there and present your business.

James: Right. When we were talking to [Valerie Khoo](#), she even has a book on the different types of stories that you can tell about your business. So really, that's the major point – there are different stories to tell. I guess it's also common where someone tells that story about the founder and they're kind of making them or the company the hero. And one of the other episodes we had was about [making the customer the hero and you being the guide](#) instead.

Will: Yeah, exactly right. That's a great way of telling a story, because it really helps your potential customers or future customers to relate to other people in their situation, rather than just a company.

Lend some color to your storytelling

And I think that brings along a really good point as well, which is the second common mistake that I always see. And it's, you know, when you tell a story, a lot of the time it's a historical story, like how the company got started. What people tend to do, what companies tend to do, is be very factual-based. So they go, we started in 1998; we did this; it took us two years to achieve this. Whereas if you can bring some emotion to it, it's a really good way of telling the story but not in a very gray or bland way. It really brings a human element back to it and gets people relating to what you're going through, what your business is actually going through.

James: Well, stories are emotional. But let's talk about the different emotions you can tap into. Because I imagine there's good emotions and bad emotions. Is there a particular type of emotion you prefer?

Will: It really just comes back to the people that we're working with, or the companies that we're working with. For example, in some industries, you have to educate a little bit more about what the problem is, because the product isn't always solving a bleeding-neck issue. So in those type of situations, you want to, not exactly be a fearmonger, you want to have some kind of urgency or have people feel like, Oh, I didn't really know about this. But now that you've told me through your story, it's something that I'm going to be aware of. Whereas in other industry, so for example, weight loss or, you know, health industry, you want to paint a more a more upbeat picture, where it's like, even though you might not be in the best place at the moment, what if your life could be better and you could look like this? So it depends on the industry, depends on the customers you're trying to get through to. And obviously, it depends on your brand story as well.

James: Right. And as part of your framework, I imagine you have certain information you need to gather when you're helping a client develop their story. Would you be able to share some of that with us?

Background, challenges, emotion

Will: Yeah, sure. So I can share this after the podcast as well, with a template we've got. But a lot of the questions we look at are really delving into the emotions. So for example, we look at, yes, first of all, how did you come to be where you are, you know, tell us a little bit about your background. But we'll also look at, what are the common challenges you've had to overcome as a business owner to get to where you were? And dive into those.

So for example, you know, top of mind, because I'm reading this great book at the moment called *Shoe Dog* by the founder of Nike, you kind of see his story, how he goes through, and he's had all these issues with cash flow. And he explains how that made him feel, the pressure he was going under. So those are some of the challenges that we kind of try to dig into, and look at, when you were going through these challenges as a founder or a CEO, what were you feeling? Or what kind of emotions were you feeling then?

James: I did a training on that book for [SuperFastBusiness](#) members several years ago, it was one of my favorite books at the time. It's a fascinating story. But I'm just wondering, okay, how do you translate that story to selling sneakers? Because I imagine, like you, I didn't fully know the whole story. I knew the part about the waffle iron. I knew that the original Nike sole came from a waffle iron. I didn't know about his struggles with cash flow or how the name of the shoe related to his trip to Greece, etc. So how do you get that story into the marketing message? And why is it relevant to the customer, if at all?

Will: Yeah, I think it's one of those ways where he goes in and really... It's funny because growing up the way I did, Nike for me was always the bigger brand. I always viewed them as bigger than Adidas and Puma and all this kind of stuff. So I grew up in an age when Nike was a dominant brand. But for me to read that book and go back to it, now I've got the image in my mind. I'm understanding how they got to where they were, really getting to the underdog story. So after reading, I'm like, Well, I want to support the underdogs, right? I want to support the guys and girls who are there at the coalface and really struggling to grow their businesses. Because hey, as a business owner, sometimes I go through the same thing.

So having a different look at it, having the personal relatability of the experience that he went through, it kind of brought me on his side as a consumer. And now I've got a loyalty to a brand where before I just saw them as a dominant force. Now it's like, Hey, I knew what he had to go through to get this brand to market and to grow it. Now I'm more kind of loyal to his brand, let's just say.

James: Would you buy a pair of tigers?

Will: Probably not, actually.

James: If you don't know what I'm talking about, and you're listening to this, you have to read the book. But yes, it's a really great business lesson book.

And by the way, anything you say Will, we'll format into a nice PDF and we'll have a utility-style download available where this episode is, 726 at [SuperFastBusiness.com](#), and we'll make sure we put a link off to your site, [Content Driven Business](#), and credit you with this great intellectual property.

So what else do we need to find out when we're working out our story? Like, if we're going through the checklist?

Targeting the customer's disbelief

Will: Yep. So another thing that we look at, and this is more told from the angle of the consumer or the customer, is what disbelief have they got about the product? Because as companies, as marketers, we always go out there and make a claim about what our product can do. But there's a lot of people in the market who might not believe that claim. So another thing to look at is, have you spoken to your customers? What were they hesitant about? What were they hesitant to believe about your brand? Are they doubting that you can make them run faster? Are they doubting that you can make them a million dollars? Like, what is it that they're not 100 percent sure about in their mind? And we can use other customer stories and other customers who had the same doubts to kind of talk about that angle.

So the other side of it is, what is the disbelief that customers are going through? Which will be the second question.

James: Right. So that really addresses proof and trust. And it's like when we do case study episodes on SuperFastBusiness. That's an actual customer, the scenario they went through; they're even telling the story themselves. So it's like super believable, researchable back-up-able, look-up-able. It just lowers the bar. It's like people go from thinking, Is this something I can trust? to deciding, Hey, you know, this person's having the same challenge that I'm having, and they were able to solve it using that solution. Maybe that solution will work for me.

Uncovering the objections

Will: Yeah, exactly right. And we take that even one step further. We look at, what are the objections of someone who is going to buy? Because the objections will stem from the disbelief. So you look at what disbelief they've got, and then you can really easily work out, well, before they gave us the money, what objection did they have? And that is actually one of the most powerful stories you can tell in your business, because it's kind of like you're pre-selling the idea of what you do. And customers love it because they see from someone else's perspective, and it just makes a lot of sense.

James: I've seen one of those style of questions for testimonial-type framework, which is something along the lines of, prior to purchasing our product, did you have any hesitation or concerns or doubts? That really addresses the prospect at that point, pre-order button, and it's nice to flush that one out if you can.

Certainly some industries, they get the same objections over and over again. I used to be involved with Mercedes-Benz, we used to get a lot of the same objections. They needed to speak to their accountant, they needed to check with their partner, whether that was a business partner or a board of directors or their wife or their husband. And that would basically often be a smokescreen, but sometimes legitimate and part of the process.

You've got a way of finding out what those common objections are?

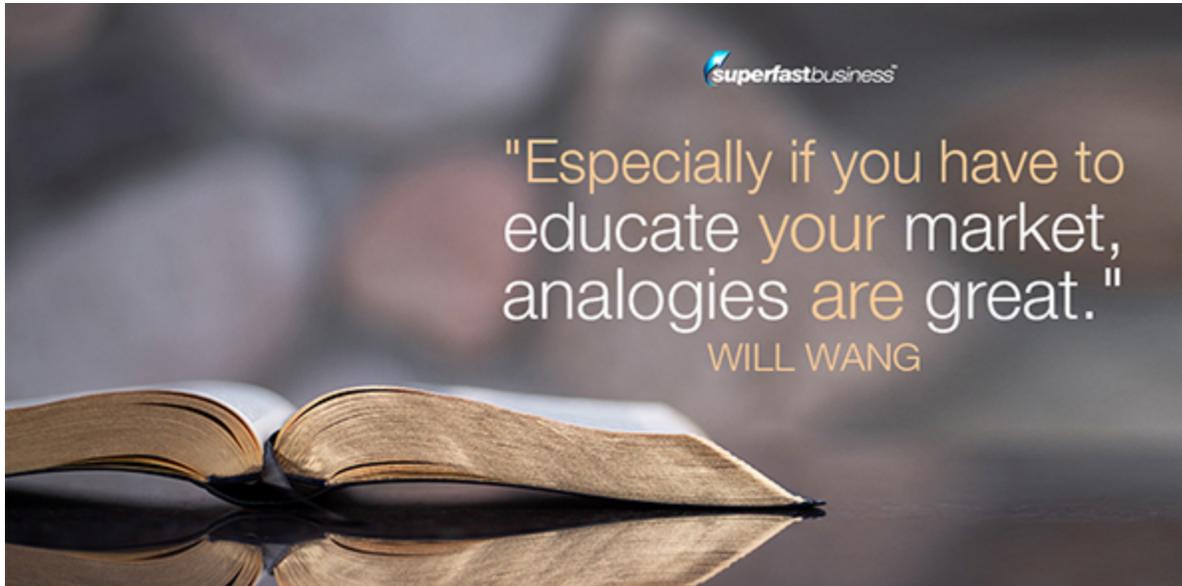
Will: Yeah, so there's nothing better than going back to your customers and just asking them. Now, I'm a big believer in surveys. One of the things that we do, when we first bring a client on, is we actually asked to talk to some of their best customers. We go through these questions with the customers, without them being in the room, so we can get the truthful answers. So that's always really helpful. But if you don't have that on hand, you can always send out surveys to your email list, and just ask really good questions, because you might be surprised with the types of answers that you get back.

James: Right. So we take all this Intel, and we then formulate our story or our campaign. And you're suggesting we put this into email form?

Will: Yep. So emails, we've done videos around this as well. But before we get into that side of things, I'll just go through the next few questions really quickly, because I think it all kind of drives the same or a very similar narrative, and helps build the story up.

So we tackle disbelief, you know, what's my hidden disbelief? We also, when we speak to other customers, we say, what was the trigger that made them shatter that disbelief? Or, how did we break down that disbelief and get our customers on board? which is a little bit different, because that goes into, you know, what the risks were, what the rewards were, and looks at painting that picture of, you know, I knew this was expensive, but here's what happened after we did it. And here's why I decided to make that decision. So again, spoken from the customer's perspective.

James: Nice.



The evidence and future pacing

Will: We then look at and talk to the salespeople and say, Look, what evidence are you using now to speak to the people on the phone, if you are? Or, what evidence Have you got on your site that you think really makes this work? So that obviously helps us paint a picture of, you can use that to paint analogies and talk about other objects. Especially if you have to educate your market, analogies are great. And looking at evidence of sales really helps to build that.

We then look at the future pacing, or how would your customers feel after they've used your product successfully? and really dive into the emotion side of it. So you know, if they feel anxiety now, how do they feel when they go to use your course, or buy your course, use your product? Is it freedom? Is it confident? We really dive in emotionally, and you know, both physical, emotional, spiritually how people feel after they buy the product. And then we look at, what else has this worked for? So we kind of match the ideal customer profile of the people that we're trying to target. And we build a story based on them, and match it to what we're getting back from the story as well.

Turning the data into emails

James: Nice. So we turn that into emails? Have you got a special way you do that? Do you tip them all into a scratch pad and start sifting and sorting, or do you just let it stream from your consciousness?

Will: That's a good question. We do have a process, so it's not all fly-by-night stuff.

So typically for our clients, when we work with them, we've got a seven-to-nine-part mail sequence for new people coming through the business. Because this is somebody who has never heard of you, that might have just downloaded an ebook, or just opted into some kind of free training or free sample. There's not a good relationship there, so we can't expect to dump this into one single story and get them across the line, especially if you're selling a service or a high-price product.



So what we typically do is, we have an email sequence. And we start with just introducing who we are and saying thank you for taking some kind of action to get onto our list, giving them what they asked for, whether it's a free ebook or video, whatever it is, give it to them in the first email, and seed the idea that there's a few more emails coming for the next seven to 14 days, and it's going to be worth their while to read these emails. The biggest challenge we've got as marketers isn't actually with our competitors. It's actually with people doing nothing and not taking action on what we send through to them. So in the very first email, we seed the idea that hey, this is just the first of many, we're going to be telling you a lot more stories and giving you a lot more value. So make sure you read the rest of the emails.

How to set recipients' expectations

James: Do you actually tell them that you're telling them stories, or do you say it in other words?

Will: It depends on how sophisticated the market is. So sometimes we can seed it with a short story and say, Look, there's a few more examples and ideas and stories coming through to you. Otherwise, if we don't want to approach it that way – and again, it comes back to the brand, guide and brand identity of the company – some companies don't mind saying that because they've got a very open and friendly relationship with their customers. Ones who are a little bit more corporate, they don't necessarily use the word "stories". They use the idea that, hey, we're going to send you some more examples.

James: Yeah. Some of the people in our market, they might as well say, we're going to send you a pitch email three times a day for the rest of eternity. I've heard them repeat some of the expressions I heard from my old industry, which is, send them emails until they buy or die. I think that's a shocking approach. But I'm wondering, do you think when they got the thing they opted in for, do you frame that opt-in as, that is the only thing, or do you frame it as beyond that being the only thing in the opt-in offer?

Will: Yeah, so I typically like to frame it as one part of a whole system, right. And the way I do it is I sell the value of the opt-in. So the opt-in can't be rubbish, it can't be junk. It has to be useful and valuable in its own right. And we go back and sell the value of them actually using the opt-in. Because the biggest thing is, people might request the download; they'll download it and then never open and never use it. So we've got to go through and get them to use it, get them to see the value in it. And then we can educate them and say, Look, this is just one part of it. Obviously, I can't give you my entire system or process or whatever you're trying to sell, a single email. So keep your eyes open for the next part of our system.

James: That's a good insight. So at this point, it's pretty value-driven for the person who's opting in.

Spacing and segmentation

So, then you're sending these emails. Why seven to 14 emails or seven to 14 days? Is it one a day? Is it one every few days?

Will: Yeah, typically in fast moving industries, it's one a day for the first seven to 14 days, and then it kind of scales back to either twice or once a week. So the reason why we do that is because, if you think about it psychologically, these people coming through, they've just requested what we have, and they're hot to go, right? They're very attentive to what we have to say, they've just given us their details. What I want to do is really build that relationship very quickly, and get it to a point where they're looking forward to hearing from us. So that's why we send them one a day. And we always make sure the emails are actually packed with value. Now in some of the emails later on in the sequence, we do start selling some of the things that we do, but more in a way to give them an option to get more help from us if they want, rather than trying to cram something down their throats. And so we use a lot of stories to do this. You know, the ones that we talked about before where we answer objections, or talk about their customers and what other customers have achieved. They're really, really good emails to get sales coming through without putting a hard pitch on them.

James: So do you ever use techniques like a super signature or a behavioral-based trigger where they click on a certain link and that starts them on a different sequence in the way that [Andre Chaperon](#) teaches? I imagine some of these emails have an element of soap opera about them, as per Autoresponder Madness.

Will: Yeah, we do, actually. So again, it all comes back to how many products we've got at our disposal that we can sell, and what the business wants us to do in terms of the sales process. So some of the clients we're working with, they do have a smaller-priced product, which they don't mind selling without talking to people. But ultimately, they want a phone call with the people they're dealing with, so they can get them into a high-ticket offer. So depending on what path they choose, what they click on, what information they want, we do segment from that point as well. And it's becoming really easy to automate the whole process whereby if you give some other value to the people in the list, and ask them Hey, is this what you want to see? they click on a link, it confirms Yes, that is, or this topic is what they want to see, and they can branch off into another automation speaking just on that topic.

James: Right. It makes a lot of sense and it's highly relevant. And I was speaking to a very smart student today, actually, there's about \$8 million a year, and he said the main reason business owners aren't making as much profit as they could, he said virtually nobody does their emails properly – they don't have enough back end, they're not making enough offers, and they don't send emails for long enough, which was very insightful.

So this is a repeat theme. That's the second time today I've heard you really should be focusing on your emails, you really should be strategically planning your product line rollout, and it makes perfect sense that you should add more products to your first initial contact. And if you combine that with some behavioral-based segmentation, you're going to start hitting jackpots all over the place.

When do the sales happen?

So you start making most of your sales at what point?

Will: Yeah, so it's typically at around email three or four. We start seeding the idea that, hey, we do have something else to offer. It's still very light on at that point. It might just be a P. S. down at the bottom of the email, saying, Hey, by the way, if you want to find out more about this... One of the lines I like to use for our own email campaigns, saying something like, if you're impatient in business like me, and you just want to get to where you want to go without having to wait for more emails, take this kind of action. And you just allow them to self-select and say, Yep, that sounds like me. I don't want to wait for more emails. I just want to speak to you right now and do something together. So we kind of start seeding the idea in emails three and four, but it's not really until emails probably six or seven that we really start selling and, you know, playing the scarcity card if there is an element of natural scarcity, but not going and creating false scarcity, like 100 seats only if it's an online thing or anything like that.

James: I saw a website today and it said Limited offer, only 100 books printed. And I my first thought was, what kind of author only prints 100 books? Like, either someone who's very under-confident in their method, or someone with a tiny, tiny budget who's not that yet successful. So it made me disbelieve the claim. It felt like false scarcity.

A really interesting sort of theme is developing here, because I imagine you've got this prospect from a source, perhaps from a Facebook ad or maybe to the existing email campaign. But reminds me of [a conversation I had with Scott Desgrosseilliers from Wicked Reports](#) saying the average breakeven point on \$1.5 billion worth of paid traffic was at 60 days. So a theme that I'm getting here is, you don't have to make your sale on the first moment that you meet the prospect. It can come later. And I imagine a lot of the backend sales, especially if you're talking about application-style sales, where there's most definitely going to be a higher price point, could be, you know, significantly more profitable. But you have to wait. Right? You got to be patient.

Will: Yeah. And to illustrate the point, it kind of ties back to what you were saying before about this concept that you always talk about, and I love, which is [Own the Racecourse](#). Because a lot of people spend so much time and effort on the front end of it, they don't think about, what kind of offers can we make? And even though we do so many emails for our clients, and so many split tests on emails, the single biggest driver or single biggest leverage point I see in their businesses is making new offers or testing different offers.

There's a client that we're working with at the moment who runs a brilliant business, multiple eight figures. And one of the things that they did in, you know, in a very similar boat where they pay for traffic, had to wait for between 45 to 60 days to recoup the cost of it. And their goal was to keep their customers around for long enough to obviously start making money from six days in. But by testing a new offer to their email list, they figured out that they can actually take that same offer to pay traffic, and they reduced the time to payback to 14 days. So that was just looking at the offer itself. Obviously the story and things impacted into it, but they owned the racecourse, and they tested multiple offers, and then that really grew that business.

James: These are the big outcomes. Do your research. Milk that resource of that email list that you have, always with a mind that you're helping the customer be better off. Have the most relevant possible products, make the offers, continue to nurture the relationship, test different ways of shortening the path and putting the offer in a different light. And then you can reinvest that profit back into growing a campaign. You can scale a business much faster if you do that. And what a terrific process. And provide a fast path for people who are ready to buy now, a green light where they can just bypass the thing, just like at the theme park where they can pay extra to skip the queue.



Will: Exactly, And some people, they're just not ready yet. And that's completely fine. That's why we keep sending them emails and sending them stories, and getting them to believe that what we have can really help them. And like, other people, some of them are just willing to go now, but if you try and push in the wrong way, or try and have the wrong triggers for the wrong people, it can actually turn them off. So, you know, my advice is, just tell really good stories and spread the stories out over time, and don't force people to take action that they're not ready for. So if someone's not ready to jump on the phone with you, yes, you can try a little bit to see if they want to, but you don't have to cram it down their throats and make a play like, if they don't jump on the phone with you in the next five days, they're never going to talk to you again. It's just about telling believable stories, both in with your marketing, and also in the way you make the offers.

The question James ought to be asking

James: Cool. Well, I've just got two things left, Will, and one of them might shock you. But the first one is, what should I be asking you? I mean, I've got an expert here on email funnels. What question should I ask if I was really intelligent and clever that you'd say, oh, wow, that's a great question? Because I didn't get that yet. And that's really my metric of a podcast that I want to publish.

Will: Cool. So I think for me, I always look at it strategically and say, What is the biggest impact we can have on the business? And in this case, it's like, how can we use emails to have the biggest impact on business?

So a few of the questions may be like, how often do we send emails? That's a pretty basic one; I recommend at least once a week.

Another one is, how do we know that a copy is working? Or how do we know that our emails are having the effect we want? And there's a whole bunch of numbers we can track. Ultimately, what I like to track for is return on investment on, you know, if you send an email out to a certain number of people, what's your sales number at the end of it? And then looking at other numbers which kind of helped to paint the picture, like open rates, click throughs. So that's the other side of how do we know that email works?

How do we write those emails? Well, for us, it comes down to a lot of split testing. So split testing different headlines, split testing different body text, different offers on it as well. That always really helps to kind of, you know, to kind of drive the conversation the right way.

And finally, maybe another question is, hmm, what other question?

What are the types of emails you must have?

James: Well, I can tell you, too. I know the answers to this, but what are the essential types of emails that we have? Because there's only a few. Ultimately, they all boil down a few different types of emails. Can you name a couple off the top of your head?

Will: Yeah, that's a good question. So number one is a transaction email. And what they are is, if they bought something, or if the customer's bought something from you, an email that goes out automatically saying, Hey, thank you for your purchase. Here's an invoice, or Here's a receipt. And just on that, not a lot of people or companies are using that well, because the transaction emails are one of the most opened types of emails across the board. So you can have another offer in these transaction emails. So that's one type.

A second type is an automated email campaign or sequence that goes out when a person does an action, like joins an email list. Within that, you can tell stories.

There's daily or there's campaign emails, or emails that you send out every single week talking about a specific topic. And within those, they're story emails, they're sales emails where you make a pitch for something.

There's emails to answer questions. There's a whole bunch of different factors, but transactional and also campaign emails are the kind of two that we look at.

James: Cool. So the big question that a business operator has to ask is, what's missing? Because that's going to be the biggest way to profit, is to add in the ones that are missing before you start tuning the ones you've got.

Find out what Will does with his list

So the second thing, Will, and this is something I have not discussed with you, you're not prepared for this, but I'm going to put you on the spot and I'm going to say this – if I went along to ContentDrivenBusiness.com, would there be somewhere where I can opt in to see what Will does with his own email list?

Will: Yeah, so we built the site on purpose to have that option for people. So what ContentDrivenBusiness.com is, you can opt in to see the automated email sequence.

James: That's exactly what everyone listening to this will do. They'll go and opt in, and go, Okay, this guy's talking about emails, what does he actually send? Because I get questions in my own forum. They're like, Oh, I got this email from you, James. Can you just tell me more about the background to this, like, how it performs, what sort of open rates? Like, they're all just spying on it. We got a bunch of spies on this podcast, because they're marketing savvy.

I can tell you, that's exactly what they're going to do. So you better make sure, by the time this podcast comes out, you've got your best work in there, and put it to the test, because that's exactly what will happen.

Will: Yeah, awesome. I think it's a pretty good sequence in there already. But now that you've put the pressure on, I'm going to go back and look at it again. I think it's ready to go. So when they sign up, they can actually see the full seven-day sequence that I've written.

So one of the things I've done is, on purpose, made it a little bit educational. So I've got some different tonalities in there. I put jokes in there as well, because that showcases my personality in terms of email. So people can kind of see how far they can push in terms of personalization, and, you know, tone and voice and all that kind of stuff. So that's definitely one place they can go. And if they're on the email list, chances are they're probably going to get email templates from me anyway. So we share some of our best-performing templates from ContentDrivenBusiness.com. So they'll see it in action, and then they'll see we have some training from me talking about how I put it together.

James: Will, thank you again. Part of the [Get Leads series](#), Episode 726. Been talking to Will Wang, who I love talking to. You're always a lot of fun and very knowledgeable, well-read, and you're getting results for your clients. That's what I like the most. I'm speaking to you most weeks. We have a great working relationship these days, so I get to see behind the scenes and what you're really doing, and I'm just so excited about what's happening. Thank you very much for sharing.

Will: Thanks for having me on again, James. It's always amazing coming on here. It's great fun.



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