

EPISODE 109

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:09.3] AT: Welcome to The Portfolio Life Podcast with Jeff Goins. Jeff believes that every creative should live a portfolio life, a life full of pursuing work that matters, making the difference with your art and discovering your true voice and Jeff is committed to helping you find, develop, and live out your unique world with you so that you too can live a portfolio life.

Today, Jeff and I want to talk to you about Facebook Live. Facebook is by far the largest and most influential social network and perhaps cultural force in the world. In the early part of 2016, they've gone all in on live video. The question for you as a writer is should you care? Or is it a distraction that keeps you from doing the real work of writing?

[EPISODE]

[00:00:54.1] AT: So thanks for joining us today. All right, so I want to talk about are these things distractions for writers or are they opportunities for writers and I want to talk about Facebook Live and Snapchat.

[00:01:07.1] JG: Okay, I'm not on Snapchat.

[00:01:08.1] AT: That's okay.

[00:01:10.1] JG: Okay.

[00:01:10.2] AT: But we can talk about it. I'll do a quick explanation, but I think it falls in the same but we can stick to Facebook Live if you want.

[00:01:17.0] JG: No, I mean that's fine. It's just so you know. So you're not like, "How's it going using Snapchat?" "Oh I love it, I love the Snappies."

[00:01:25.6] AT: I love the chatty of the snaps.

[00:01:26.6] **JG:** I think I'm actually am on there but I have done it once.

[00:01:29.0] **AT:** You are on there.

[00:01:30.7] **JG:** Yeah.

[00:01:31.0] **AT:** Okay great. All right, here we go. Jeff, you have thousands of writers that come to you for advice and one of the things that they're constantly asking you about is sort of the shift in writing and blogging should I be on Medium or not? How many times should I post a week? You get lots of questions about writing behavior, correct?

[00:01:54.2] **JG:** Yeah, correct.

[00:01:55.3] **AT:** So what do we do with new technology that comes out and I would love to talk today about Facebook Live and we'll get into a few other platforms but should writers be viewing these things as distractions? Because the last time I checked, Facebook Live is not writing. It's live video on Facebook. But how do you view these things as a person who is not afraid to teach platform building and monetization of your craft but also, you're always saying, "You need to put butt in chair and write."

So what do you do with Facebook Live and also, what do you want to tell those who are up and coming authors? Should they bother with it at all?

[00:02:38.3] **JG:** I really like Facebook Live. I've gone all in on that for the live video tool.

[00:02:47.5] **AT:** Versus a Periscope or other options, right?

[00:02:52.1] **JG:** Periscope and man, we loved Blab and I think you pointed this out to me because you're always ahead of me of the curve.

[00:02:58.1] **AT:** I'm ahead of both dude.

[00:03:00.6] **JG:** Ahead of my curve?

[00:03:02.0] **AT:** I'm always ahead of the Jeff curve. Way ahead of the Jeff curve.

[00:03:06.2] **JG:** You're ahead of me when it comes to technology stuff, which I appreciate about you. You always let me know what's coming down the pike and I think that you said this that Blab is going to compete with Zoom or something more as like a team conference call tool as opposed to video broadcasting tool.

What a great tool, I get why they're making that move so yeah, there's really Periscope, which was a really great fad for a few months and just doesn't have the reach that Facebook Live has right now. I did one today and I reached 350,000 people, I mean it's crazy. So I'm going all in on that for a lot of reasons. I'm getting great traffic from Facebook.

It's easy, I just open my phone and do it and most days, I'm doing it — if I do it, I'm doing it for five minutes and Facebook has said that they give precedence and priority to the power of this content. So yeah, I think that what we talk about on the show is important that what you do as a writer, as a creative, as an entrepreneur is not just one thing.

Although we advocate mastery, as I say in *The Art of Work*, it's not about being a jack of all trades but it is about becoming a master of some and so when you pick a craft like writing for example and you say, "I'm going to go all in on this." That's great, but what that really means in my opinion is that you're going to go all in on a suite of strengths that will help compliment this core skill that you have.

And so I think it's really important to pick a core skill like writing but then to pick two or three complimentary skills that are going to strengthen that skill. In the case of writing for me, I think two really important skills are marketing and business. Marketing is helping me grow the reach of my words, which is important because my work is going to impact more people.

Business is finding ways to monetize some of my content so that if I am making money, I hopefully will have more time to create more content and so those are three skills that I try to

develop really on a weekly basis. I try to invest in growing my craft as a writer, which includes reading and practicing writing every day, growing my brand.

So finding ways to reach new people, i.e. like a Facebook Live, and then finding ways to increase the bottom line and grow the business so that money makes it everything continue to work and so those are the three areas that I am thinking about and in the case that this is a marketing thing, in the case of Facebook Live for example, it's an easy way for me to get to the end which is to reach more people.

I think an important criteria for me with this sort of thing, because there's always something else to do to promote your work. An important criterion for me is, is the entry level, is the barrier to entry for this new technology or this new strategy or tactic, like how easy is it? And in the case of Facebook it's super easy. So that's how I try to make my decisions.

[00:06:15.3] AT: Well in comparison to that would be building a website used to be really difficult.

[00:06:20.5] JG: Right.

[00:06:21.0] AT: Right and now Jeff has a post about this. I think it's "How to set up your blog in eight minutes or less", or something like that and I remember setting them up the old way. Literally taking steps someone had taught me and I literally had no idea what I was doing. I was doing the steps but I didn't know what those steps did.

If I did it right and I hit this last button out of 37 steps, it worked and if I didn't do it right, something didn't work and I'd call my friend. That used to be the same for live video and now it's not the case anymore. It is built into the app. They are making it more prominent. I would not be surprised if they even made it more prominent.

That there's always an app just for Facebook Live just like there is for Periscope and so when you are considering doing Facebook Live and I'm going to confirm what you said Jeff, being in the social media marketing world a few months ago, Facebook is we know that they are giving

prominent to Facebook Live video tremendously in the status bar, and the notifications to your followers, your friends.

So what would be your encouragement to someone who says, “Well, I just thought I was just going to be able to sit there and write, occasionally send an e-mail. But I’m not comfortable even for five minutes turning on my phone, sitting on front of it and talking for even five minutes about a topic.” How can they overcome that if Facebook Live is such a great tool for those who want to connect with their audience?

[00:07:52.0] JG: Well so here’s the thing, I think that sometimes when we hear somebody, a guru or whatever say, “You’ve got to do this,” and I’m hearing this about Snapchat right now and I’m going, “Uh, but I don’t want to.” Or like, “I don’t want to learn that new thing and I know the opportunity cost is to learn that new technology and I’m just saying no. I’m just dragging my feet,” and I get that.

I think the challenge here is when somebody says, “Well you can’t just write. You have to get out there and get your work out there,” which is true. I think that the tendency for those of us who are hearing guru say, “You’ve got to go market yourself,” or whatever, we’re hearing somebody tell us something that is going to help us grow but it’s like any growth, it’s going to require some discomfort.

It feels binary to us and it’s never binary. What I mean by that is it feels like it’s all or nothing. Either self-promote, and in our minds typically it’s become a sleaze ball, or don’t do it at all and stay true to your craft and then someday, somebody is going to discover your art and that’s not true either and so it’s usually not a binary option.

As an example, I was doing a Facebook Live thing this morning and I was talking about mentorship and I said, “One of the best ways for you to get a mentor is not to go ask somebody to be your mentor. It’s to see the people in your life right now as teachers and just become a better student of the teaching that they have. You can learn from anyone.”

The first step in that process would be write 10 people an e-mail that says, “Hey, thanks for helping me with such and such, or teaching me such and such. It really helped me do _____,”

and let them know what they're teaching or influence helped you do and then ask them a question. This is a great way to influencers, right?

If you do this 10 times, probably somebody will respond and it will surprise you and so I said, "Just go do this," and there's this one person who kept pushing back and they said, "But I don't know 10 people. I can't think of 10 people like that," you know? Or, "I don't know 10 people that had helped me."

[00:09:57.9] AT: Did you say to them, "All right, then just don't, never mind"?

[00:10:01.9] JG: Well it went back and forth several times so this person said, "I don't know 10 people that have helped me like that." I said, "I think you're misunderstanding me. I'm talking about strangers. Have you read a book or a blog post or listened to a podcast or heard a random quote from somebody and said, "Huh, that's kind of helpful"? Can you think of 10 people that have done that?"

The point is, reach out to 10 strangers and one of them will respond if you do it following this formula more often than not. It's not like a hard and fast rule but it's a principle. It tends to be true overtime and this person said, "Well I can't even think of 10 strangers. I can think of more people that I actually know," and I was like, "Look, do whatever you want. I'm just making a suggestion. This is just a way to apply this thing that I think works. You don't have to do it. But good grief, it doesn't have to be 10 people. If you can't do 10 try one, okay? Do something."

And so I think when we hear things like, "You've got to get on Facebook Live or Periscope or this or that or start a blog or do this," there's certain things that I think are better to do than others. Things that I think are almost bare minimum to get into the game. As a writer, I really think you need a blog, and as you mentioned Andy, if you go to my blog, there's an eight minute video. So it's not hard and literary you press a button and it installs all of the software that you used to have to upload via an FTP site overnight 10-12 years ago.

So I think the lesson is when you're hearing somebody say, "You've got to do this, you've got to do this," listen and be willing to grow because growth always happens not in your comfort zone. I think that's a Michael Hyatt-ism. Your greatest growth is going to happen outside of your

comfort zone so you're going to have to be a little bit uncomfortable but the point is to try something new. To put yourself out there a little bit. You don't have to do all of it and you don't have to do it all at once but you do need to try something and please, don't tell me that you're too old or too young or too inexperienced or too behind the curve.

[00:12:05.9] AT: Or what kind of camera should I use? Use your phone.

[00:12:08.0] JG: Yeah, do something. We have a student in every single course I have ever taught, a woman named Vonnie who is I think in her early 80's now and she's just started blogging. You are never too old to learn something if you're willing to apply yourself and you're willing to find the right teachers and it doesn't mean you have to execute everything flawlessly. But you need to keep learning new stuff and again, the idea is I'm never going to be as good as the technology stuff as you are Andy, quite frankly because I don't want to be because you really enjoy that and I don't.

But I still know like when you or my friend Kyle or somebody who's really at the bleeding edge of the stuff says, "Dude you've got to check this out." I'm going, "Well I'm over here writing books," and they're like, "Yeah but you need to check this out," and I'm like, "Okay, I'll check it out. I'll try it once and see how it goes."

[00:13:09.6] AT: For Facebook Live, you do some things that I want to encourage people to consider. Before I talk about that, I want to give a warning, which is, I think we need to be careful of who we get advice from and that is because Facebook Live exists as a channel or a way, a format to speak to your existing connections.

Facebook Live is not going to suddenly say, "Hey, I know there's four billion on Facebook so we're just going to tell everyone you're live." It's still only going to broadcast to the people that you are connected with. So if you have 17 Facebook friends, you're not going to get 10,000 viewers of your Facebook Live video unless one of them shares it on their wall and they have 10,000 friends.

The reason I say that is because I know people that say, "Facebook Live has been really good for me. Of my 200,000 existing fans, I often get 50,000 live," and I go, "Oh, okay. You have a

massive audience.” But there are some excuses to avoid using Facebook Live and I still think it can be helpful but for instance, I have a Facebook page for my public, Facebook.com/andytraubpublic and I have 150 people there.

If I do a Facebook Live, I might get five people, not 500, not 5,000, not 50,000. So just make sure that you know who you’re listening to and their context but some things that you’ve done well Jeff that I think people can take as best practices, you tell people, “I’m going to go live at this time today.” You can send an e-mail out and you can say, “I’m going to go live at this time today, here’s what I’m going to talk about.”

I’ve also seen and I think you’ve done this, I’ve seen others do it but you say, “Hey, I’m going to go live at this time about this topic. If you have a question you want me to get answered, go ahead and submit it right here,” and then you could go through those questions on that post later because sometimes the Facebook Live commenting system can be a little troubling, a little confusing. So a lot of people know this is coming. You can trust the serendipity of, “Oh Bob just happened to be on his lunch break and have his Facebook open and I came live at that time.” Or you can be a little bit more strategic and also just give people a heads up.

I think you have done that well and the other thing I think you’ve done well Jeff is you’ve been consistent. You said, “You can find me here,” and I don’t know why I feel a sadness for things like Periscope or whatever else but Periscope again is tied to Twitter and Twitter is in trouble right now in a lot of ways and it’s a silo. You have to have that Periscope app on your phone and a lot of people don’t want another app. But a vast, vast majority of people already have that Facebook app and a lot of those notifications turned on. So just some real practical things to think about.

Jeff as we close here, what would be your last bit of advice for someone that says, “Okay, I’m willing to do Facebook Live.” Based on the journey you’ve had so far in using it, and Jeff I’ve seen a lot of your Facebook Live, you’ve probably logged 24 hours or more or maybe 40 or 50, I don’t know, it’s just the ones that I recall of doing this live whether it’s a thousand people or 10 people live, what are some real practical tips you can give people if they’re going to turn it on today and just try Facebook Live?

[00:16:28.6] JG: Well, so I think these are applicable lessons even to another technology and these are the things that I try to use when adopting a new technology. So the first thing I do is I just try it out in a very low risk kind of way. I did this with Periscope, Blab, Facebook Live and I'll probably at some point do it with Snapchat and so I try it out and if I like it, then I'll keep doing it for a while just to see if there's any traction.

The first thing I do is I just try it out. With Facebook Live, I did what you did Andy, I used our Tribe Writers Group. We have a Facebook group for our paid students of the Tribe Writer's course and that's got over a thousand people in it. Not a huge group, not a small group but I was like, "If I post a piece of text in that group, I might get a dozen comments on a good day," and so I was like, "I'll do it."

So I did a live video and we got 100 people to watch it and I thought, "That's really interesting. I just saw a really great engagement within a group," and it was fun and it was so easy to do. The comments came in and I was like, "This is way more fun than Periscope," because I did Periscope and Facebook Live on the same day and I did Periscope, I was just having to block all of these trolls, all these comments. Whereas with Facebook, they are mostly people that I know.

[00:17:46.2] AT: Yeah, they're great.

[00:17:47.8] JG: They know me. Yeah, which I liked. It was very encouraging. So the first thing that you do is I think that you just try it out and see if you like it. If you like it, then I think the next step you take is really important. So the next step I took, particularly with Facebook Live, is I went all in on it and I think I learned this or at least this came to ahead when I saw my friend Derek Halpern do this with Periscope, I don't know, six or eight months ago.

He did the same thing. He's like, "Oh this is stupid," or whatever. "I'm going to pull out my phone at a restaurant and see if this even makes sense," and he did it and he was amazed at the engagement that he got at the very outset of Periscope and so what did he do next? He went all in. I saw sponsored Facebook posts. I saw an e-mail to his list of hundreds of thousands of people saying, "Go find me here," and I think this is a crucial next step.

So whether you've got five friends on Facebook or 50 people on your e-mail newsletter or whatever, whatever influence you have once you find something that's fun that has some promise and you've heard people say things like, "Facebook is going all in on Facebook Live and it's got some real power behind it." Or, "Everybody is flocking to Periscope or everybody is doing Snapchat, this is going to be a big thing," when you hear rumblings of that I think it's wise.

If it's fun and if you see some fruit in the engagement and that's what Facebook Live is for me. It's fun, it's easy and I can connect with people so I like it, I went all in on it as you said and so I e-mailed my list and I said, "I'm about to do it at this point." I try to be consistent, I use the technology itself to grow it so I get on and I say, "Hey everybody leave a comment," because the more comments there are, I think, the greater engagement that's there.

Which tells Facebook that this is a good piece of content that they don't want to throttle and they wanted to reach more and more people. I ask people to like and share it as soon as they log on. I like and share it and promote it in groups and stuff and I just try to give it a nice little boost and then I try to do something that adds value, share something that people would want to share and then I think the last thing that I do is use that technology in its own native format.

What makes Facebook Live unique to something else? What makes it different from Blab or Periscope or whatever? I really liked Blab. I love Blab, I tried to go all in on it and it just never kind of took off for me in terms of reach although I will continue to use it for stuff that I do with my audience. But Blab I think has the coolest technology because one of the things that you can do is you can share the last 30 seconds of a Blab on Twitter as a video, which I think is the coolest thing in the world.

So in the middle of a Blab presentation, I would say, "Hey, did you know that you could do this? Go ahead and do this." So to summarize, I think you've got to try it and see if it's fun. If it's fun, go all in on it for an experiment. Michael Hyatt did this with I think it was Periscope or he did like...

[00:20:51.5] AT: He did 30 days every day.

[00:20:54.4] JG: Crazy, yeah.

[00:20:55.1] AT: Every day.

[00:20:57.1] JG: But I think there's a time limit to that so you can go all in on something for a while. It doesn't have to be forever and then you want to evaluate the response and how much energy and effort are you putting in versus how much you're getting out of it? And if it's worth it then I think at that point, you need to figure out what makes the most sense.

I have a friend who is a marketer who does this with every new marketing campaign or technique that he pursues. He follows this process. It's experiment, chase, program. Experiment is just try it. Chase is I'm going to go all in on this for a certain period of time, set a certain budget maybe if it's like an advertising campaign or something.

And then program is once it works, so say I'm getting more out of it than I'm putting into it. So if I put five minutes into Facebook Live video and I reach 2,500 people, I feel really good about that because that was cheap. That was a cheap way to reach a lot of people, five minutes of my time, 2,500 people watched a video, awesome, I can do that once a week.

Once you do that, you need to set up a program and say, "Okay, I'm going to do this every Monday afternoon," and it becomes a part of your schedule because there's a return on your investment of time. At that point, you really need to study the medium and say what makes this unique from other forms of media? I do the same thing with Medium, Medium.com, which we've talked about before.

Once I started to see some traction, I went all in on it. I tried to push my tribe in the direction of this new platform because I saw it taking off and now, when I write content for Medium or repurpose content for my blog for Medium, I try to obey the rules for Medium, which is to my understanding, write a really great almost kind of click bait-y headline.

Like write something that's really in your face that dares people to click it, have a ton of quotes, be super practical. I mean there are certain things that work on Medium that would work on the New York Times website and you've got to play by the platform's rules and the same thing is

true with Facebook. Somebody told me that to Facebook a share is more valuable than a like. That makes sense, right? You share it and now it's on your wall and your friends can see it.

[00:23:17.8] AT: Well, that's the difference between me saying, "Hey Jeff good job," and, "Hey everybody, look at my friend Jeff he's doing a great job."

[00:23:23.7] JG: Right, so to the algorithm of getting to reach more people on Facebook, a share is more valuable than a like and so I tell people on the video, "Go share this. If you like this, if you've enjoyed this, go share this."

[00:23:37.9] AT: Yes, love it. Very practical. We'll talk Snapchat another time.

[00:23:41.7] JG: Good times. Cool.

[00:23:43.1] AT: Thank you Jeff.

[00:23:43.9] JG: Thank you.

[END OF EPISODE]

[00:23:44.2] AT: So what do you think? Are you going to try Facebook Live? Leave a comment on today's episode and share it with your friends by going to Goinswriter.com/109. We'd love to hear some feedback.

I'm Andy Traub and behalf of Jeff Goins, thanks for spending some time with us. Now go build your portfolio.

[END]