

Episode 5.21: Position Yourself for Book Success with Your Messaging with Danait Berghe

Welcome to the Write.Publish.Market. podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided that's even better. I'm your host Jodi Brandon book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20 year veteran of the book publishing industry on the Write.Publish.Market. podcas. In addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of Writing, Publishing, and marketing a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed of yet.

Our guest today is Danait Berghe. Danait is a messaging strategist and the founder of The Asmara Agency. She is passionate about helping entrepreneurs who want to leave an imprint on the universe do just that. By helping them build brands that matter from the inside out. She helps entrepreneurs craft compelling messaging strategies that position them as the go to in their industry. Danait's unique approach comes from her decade long background in analytical research, marketing and sales and has helped her clients get seen heard and booked out. when she's not nerding out over data or spending time with a thesaurus, Danait is hanging with her pup Lulu and her husband Simion or snuggled up with a good book pizza and wine. That sounds like a perfect night to me. So welcome Danait. I'm so happy to have you here today. Thank you for being here.

Danait

Thank you so much for having me Jodi, I'm so so excited to be here.

Jodi

This is a topic that we probably should have covered on this podcast like eons ago. But here we are. So messaging and positioning, I think are two things that get confused, conflated. People just aren't quite sure. But I think they kind of get tossed around a lot. So could you, the messaging expert, sort of give us some basic definitions here on those two things?

Danait

Yeah, of course. And you're definitely right, we use those terms a lot. But it kind of feels like pie in the sky, because they're used so often. So for me, I like to think of messaging as what is it that you are trying to say? What is the big idea that you are trying to put out there into the world? And we can talk about this some more? And of what like what constitutes the messaging keys. But that's what messaging is like, what is the message? What is the idea that's being shared? And then on the flip side positioning is, how is that going to be executed? How are you going to frame that message in the world, and that can look a few different ways. It can look like content marketing, it can look like your brand

identity. So a lot of people start with like, the brand visuals, and they're like, Oh, this is how I want my brand to look without really nailing down the messaging, because the messaging really informs how you're going to execute it, what things need to look like how they need to be framed in the world for people to connect those two things like, Oh, this is the person who talks about this thing. That's what positioning helps you do. So messaging is what are we trying to say? And the positioning is? How are we saying it? How are we putting it out into the world?

Jodi

Fantastic. That's so clear. Well, we talk a lot on this podcast about like, breaking things down to those sort of fundamentals like, what is the why what is the how, what is the what? So using what and how here makes will make perfect sense to this audience. So that's very, very helpful. I remember listening to a podcast that you were on with our friend, Lee, Shea McDonough, her coach with clarity podcasts. And I think you guys were using the analogy of like, a piece of artwork and the frame around it. Yeah. Yeah. Which I thought was really helpful. Like a helpful visual also where, you know, the message in the messaging is that artwork, and then the positioning is sort of the frame around it that yeah, you know, can sort of help it help it or hurt it. Yeah, cuz it makes a big difference.

Danait

Yeah, yeah. Because the frame makes a big difference in the art world, at least, like I love museums. And so they are very intentional about especially artists who are very intentional about the frame that they put around their artwork, because it can either add to it or subtract from it. And it really makes a big difference. And you might be like, what a frame really, but like, if you think about your own home, and you're trying to put a frame around a picture, the frame that you use really enhances the photo, and either makes it fit in with the space or makes it really stand out. And so that's yeah, that's such thank you for reminding me of that.

Jodi

I remember well, I remember the conversation when I was, you know, sort of jotting down my notes for what I wanted us to talk about today. And it was fresh in my mind because we just renovated our master bathroom in my house and when we were doing the mirrors for above our new vanity, and I was thinking, how hard is it going to be to pick this you know? The frame around the mirrors and then like the contractor came with all of these options, and I was like, yep. Okay, harder than I thought. But yeah, it all, that makes perfect, perfect sense to me.

So it could we touch on too before we dig into sort of like the nitty gritty here of like, so I feel especially for this audience, which is, you know, business owners writing a book or have written a book like to use in their business ecosystem in some way. How should the book messaging line up with the business messaging? Like, should? I mean, are they the same? Are they different? Is one of them a subset of the other?

Danait

Yeah, that's a great question. So when I think about messaging, sometimes we think of messaging as like this really big chunk that we're like, I don't really know what this is in my business, like, is it the content? Is it like my brand values? Like what is my messaging, and I like to break it up into two

categories. So to me messaging is your brand message. And then there's your offer message. And so your brand message is really the overall mission that you have for your company. And it's kind of like the mission, the vision, the values. What are your commitments? What are the things that you are committed to doing within this business? It's really the big idea of like, I like to tell my clients, I like them to think about it this way, if everyone in the world who needed what you do, like, it's not gonna be everyone in the world, but everyone in the world who needed what you do, worked with you, what problem would you be eradicating from the world? And that's like a really big picture, really, like broad, and that's your brand message.

And then we want to take that brand message, and then we turn it into an offer message. And that is, what is the offer that you're going to put out that's going to help people get to this, like big vision that you have for the world? What is the offer that kind of helps them get there, and then your offer message is very specifically tailored to the promise of the offer that you are putting out. What's the outcome of working with you in this capacity, whether it's a one on one container, whether it's a program, whatever that looks like. What does that look like? And so that's kind of your offer promise, the process that you're going to take people through. What are the results they can expect from working with you, that is really offer messaging. And that's where we focus a lot of our time, and our content is talking about that. So your book could kind of work in either category, depending on what you want it to do for your business and your brand. Do you want it to be focused on this, like really big mission of what you're trying to put out in the world and your big ideas, your overarching ideas? And so it's tied more to your brand message? Or do you want it to help you get more people into a specific offer that gets people very specific results. And so then your book can be tied to a specific offer, and your offer message instead. So either way, it could go either way. But a lot of times, we're always sharing our brand message as well as part of our offer, because it's the way that people connect with us. It's like the big, the big vision, the values, what are what's important to us, why are we here kind of thing. So does that kind of help answer that question?

Jodi

Yeah, I've never thought about it like that. I've never thought about it being sort of, you know, one or the other, versus just kind of talking about it, like more generally, that I mean, that makes perfect sense.

Danait

Yeah, it helps give people a bit of options in terms of how they want to talk about things. And it kind of helps chunk it down. Because my clients always struggle with like, oh, there's so much to talk about. And I'm like, Well, what do you want to focus on? Which one? Which piece? Are you really trying to each one, like, if you're sharing your brand message, or your offer message, each one kind of has a different purpose and goal and gets you moving in a certain direction. And so it just depends on what you're hoping to get out of sharing this message.

Jodi

But thinking about your book that way will really help people. I always tell my clients, like the more clear you are on what this book is and what it's going to do both for you and your audience. Yes, the easier it's going to be to get it into the right people's hands. And thinking about it the way you're talking about.

We'll just, I mean, that's the momentum they need to kind of think about it, then know how to position it. That's, yeah, that's, that's really, really interesting.

Danait

Yeah, I love that.

Jodi

So most business owners should have attended. I mean, the people that I work with, I would say, have most of their messaging kind of dialed in their, you know, that big picture, but how do they how do they clarify it? If there is any confusion or you know, as a business and brand evolve, like how do we keep making sure that we're clear on that messaging?

Danait

Yeah. So for me, the test is always is, well, first and foremost, I always like to tell people that messaging is always evolving, things are always changing, things are always shifting. And your big idea may never change, which is the point. But like the small little ways that you communicate, that message might change based on what's going on in the world, what your audience is resonating with. So always keep that in mind, I find that people get super frustrated, because we feel in business, especially that and as entrepreneurs that we should have things figured out and like, Okay, we have a system and a process around this and this forever, and we never have to touch it. Again, we're messaging is it really like that? It's something that continues to evolve. It's something that we continue to tweak, and especially because it revolves so much around language, which I'm sure your readers aren't really, your listeners are really familiar with, because they're readers and writers. And so it's language. And so we're always like adapting and evolving that. Keep that in mind.

And then one of the ways that I like to test whether messaging is resonating, is how many conversations are you having with people in your audience? Are the things that you're putting out there, leading to more conversations, and I'm not even talking about like sales conversations, just conversations in general, where they are responding and letting you know that, oh, yes, this is resonating with me, this is interesting, here's an idea that I have and like engaging conversation with you. If that's not happening, it might just mean that there are some things we need to tweak in our messaging and the way that we're communicating it. And so my recommendation is to always keep your ear to the ground, really ask your audience like is this landing for you? is this making sense? talking to the people who you're working with one on one, really listening to how they're reflecting? What their current experience is, as they're trying to solve this problem that you help them with? And really listening to see if what you're sharing and reflecting back to them through your content is landing for them? And a big way to test that is? Are we having conversations? Is this opening up more doors to conversations and community with the people that I want to serve? If the answer is no, then we might need to go back and tweak and play around with some of the language and play around with some of the words. And so that's what I would say. And also when you don't feel excited anymore, or you feel kind of like, like it doesn't feel like things are flowing. When you're trying to talk about things, you're not feeling like that excitement, it just kind of is it sometimes it will feel hard. I'm not saying that if it's not always like this amazing, fully experienced, then it's not. A lot of the time, like 95% of the time you go to sit and write something, it's feels like, Oh, my goodness, I have to talk about this. Like I just don't feel

excited. I don't know what to say, then that's probably a sign that like, your messaging is not in alignment with how you're how you're wanting to put it out there. So take a step back and figure out, okay, what is it I'm trying to say? What does my audience need here? What is their current experience? How can I reflect that back to them in a more clear way, that gets them excited to talk about this that gets them excited to work on this problem?

Jodi

I love that you're talking about like that. Like that, where they where they meet, like what you want to say and what your audience needs to hear. Because I think that's so important. And that's something that we talk about that a lot with, with books, because yeah, I mean, it's great that you want to write this book for what it's going to do for you. But it's the goals of you as the author and the goals of your audience for what they want to get out of the book. That's where that's the sweet spot for where you're going to have the success. So it sounds like it kind of mirrors that a little bit.

Danait

Yeah, yeah. Oh, yeah. You definitely have to be excited.

Jodi

Speaking of audience, like, what are your thoughts about, I am not a fan of like, yeah, like the audience avatar, like, this is what my person looks like. And this is what they write, you know, this is the kind of magazine they read. Like, I feel like that's not deep enough for like, the kind of things we're talking about. Am I like off base there? Or like, what do you think about when you think about needing to know your audience?

Danait

Okay. So that is, you are 100% Spot on like that. I absolutely hate doing those. And people are always when they work with me, because they're like, we're not doing that. I'm like, No, that's not how we do that here.

Jodi

I feel so validated.

Danait

Because it really doesn't help. And that's why people get so frustrated and confused when they're like, but I have people in my audience who don't look like you know, we sue who I put up as my like, you know, Avatar, and she doesn't look, she doesn't look like her. She doesn't have the same car. She doesn't read. And it's like, that's not really, that doesn't really matter to the messaging piece. What really matters matters. And this is all like, what we're talking about is really how do we communicate? How do people take in information and how do they process that information and make sense of it? And so, when we're talking about messaging, what we really want ultimately is for our audience to see us hear us and understand us. And for them to feel the same way. When we talk to them like that we see them, we hear them, we understand what they're going through. And so much of that has nothing to do with the type of car they drive, just because they drive, you know, 100. Does that mean that I know what kind of vesting issues are going through? No, absolutely not. So that doesn't matter. I really like to focus

on a few key areas. So the things I want people to really dig into with their ideal clients, and really understanding them are number one, what are their values and they should be, they should be very similar to your values. Because that's how you're going to connect when you share your values. Those people should be able to be like, Oh, yes, those are exactly what I value in my business as well. Yes, I connect in that way, and I can understand where you're coming from. So that's one piece. The other really important pieces. And the really critical pieces are where are their knowledge and skill gaps in regards to what it is that you do? Where are the things that they are like, Oh, I don't actually know how to do this, I don't actually have this particular skill. For me, it's communication. When I work with my clients, a lot of times, it's the messaging piece that putting all of those puzzle pieces together, they don't have that skill, and my job is to, or they don't have mastery of that skill just yet. And so my job is to help them master the skill of communication. And that master that part of messaging. The other really important thing to think about are, what is their current perspective on the problem that they have. And that is the biggest piece of messaging that I think so many of us miss is what is their perspective, because problem solving essentially for what we do is, we are helping them gain a new perspective on an issue that they've been looking at for a really long time and don't know how to figure out we're kind of shifting that perspective for them, helping them see it in a new light, helping them see that there are options and ways to solve this that they might not have considered before. And so your job in your communication and your messaging and your content is to understand and reflect back to them that you understand their current perspective. And that can be thoughts that they have about what it is that you do beliefs that they've been holding on to about what it is that you do. And I don't mean, like going into the therapist route. But just like, I need to have a really big audience to be able to sell my book. That right is not true. Like, you can have a small audience and sell your book, right? Yeah. Right. And so like things like that, that you need to address and help them see a new perspective. Because that's when they're able to move into that place of being able to make a buying decision where they're excited to work with you because they're like, Oh, I didn't know that I had been holding off on working with Jody because I thought I needed to grow my following. But now that she's mentioned, I don't need that, right. I think I'm on board here like, loving, okay, I think I'm ready to work with her. So things like that. Those are the things that matter in terms of helping your audience move through the customer journey towards that transformation that you're trying to help them get. And those are the things that are important. Those are the things that matter. The other stuff, the house, that they live in the car, whatever, those are all fluff and not really going to help them in solving their problem, if that makes sense.

Jodi

100% and my two big takeaways there are one I feel completely validated. So thanks, but also the way you're framing that is about perspective. I mean, it feels so much more natural and more just like having a conversation with someone versus you know, like trying to be like, salesy, smarmy like all of that, which of course, is that conversation? is what we're looking for, not the buy my book, buy my book, buy my book.

Danait

So yeah, it's just like, you would talk with a friend of like, they're like, Hey, I'm having this problem. I wouldn't be there like, oh, well, if you know, talk to me right now, in the next five minutes, I can really help you with this. Like, that's not what we do. Like, oh, like, oh, okay, what's going on? What have you

tried? You know, those are the things we're asking. Right? And so that's how you have to approach right your content and your messaging as well as like, What has my audience already tried? What are the things that they haven't tried? What things have they tried and like been frustrated with you know, what are things that they've been listening to from other people in the industry that are not serving them all of these things are how we solve problems and if we can just think about it like that it becomes like you said a conversation and it takes away the ick of like selling so much and I I love that approach so much better.

Jodi

Yeah, I mean, I do as well as both a seller and a buyer. Once we are clear on what we want our message to be like the positioning that is sort of like the the nuts and bolts of getting it out to the world. Right. So what like what does that look like? Does that mean like I have to be on Instagram every day? What's it like? What does that look like?

Danait

Yeah, great. Question and no, you do not have to be on Instagram every day. Really what it what positioning is about is I like to ask my audience and my clients, what is the best way that you like to show up? What does that look like for you? And then also does your audience engage on those on those platforms. So for some people, they really love podcasting, they really love writing blog posts, they really love showing up on social media, whatever it is that you feel really excited to continuously put out there. That's how you want to show up. And it doesn't matter what anyone says about like, Oh, this is the latest thing or this, you know, blogging is dying. No, it's not like people will always utilize all of these tools, it's just a matter of whether you are invested in making it work for you. And so, to me, that's what that looks like. And so I always tell people pick one main platform that you are going to continuously on a weekly basis, show up and create some form of content that is going to help your audience by addressing whatever issues they're having whatever perspectives they're having on the problem that you're trying to help them solve. And so that could be, that's the main thing there. And then if you have the capacity, if you have the bandwidth, you can add on what I like to call like your secondary platform, that's kind of more fun. So for some people, that's like stories, they like showing up on stories. And so you can do that, or, you know, some people love creating reels or some people like doing videos and lives. And that's like their secondary way to show up. And it's, once you have the first part perfected, then you can add any second pieces. But to me, it's really about what is if email, like you love writing to your email list, and that's the way that you're going to communicate with your audience, then that's fabulous. Just make sure that you're invested in that platform that you are willing to consistently show up there for your audience, and that you're excited about showing up in that place that you're excited to create in that way. And that's really all that matters for that positioning piece. And then creating systems, of course around that and making it easier for you to show up in that way. And of course, you know, we always want to be tracking and making sure that these things are working for us.

It's not necessarily about when it comes to marketing. And so that's like the positioning is our marketing, how we're putting our messaging out there. I am a firm believer that all forms of marketing work, that most of them will work for anyone, it's just a matter of is it right for you? Is it right for your audience? And are you willing to make it work? And if you have, if those are, if you're like, Yes, I am,

then that's the platform for you. go for it, like go all in and see what results you can get from being consistent and available on that platform to your audience, if that makes sense.

Jodi

It does make sense. So content then is like one piece of positioning like you had mentioned sales pages before. So what are some other pieces of positioning?

Danait

Yes. So the content is one piece, which is one of the big ones that I talk a lot about. But branding is another one. So your visual brand is another way that you position yourself got it, because of you know, the way that you select like the colors that you're using the textures, all of those things, paint a picture in someone's mind. And so that adds more to the frame of how you're showing up in your brand. That's another way, your website. So how your website is the copy on your website is another way to position your brand. So you know your sales pitches and how those are structured and how your website is structured. A lot of those are, that's another piece of positioning. So I like to think about it in terms of like, you know, the visual elements of branding, and then the how, like the marketing element, those are the two big positioning pieces. And then also like how you present yourself for speaking engagements. All of those, like those public relations pieces are also that's another positioning of like, where you choose to show up, like some people are very particular about the podcast, or the magazines or the, you know, interviews that they take on. And that's all a part of positioning because it helps to give people a sense of like, Oh, these are the things that people engage in. This person only does podcast interviews, this person likes to do TV interviews, whatever that looks like. It really helps to frame your brand. So anything that's public facing where other people can have like a perception of how you're showing up. That is a positioning piece. So like I said, public relations, your content marketing, your brand, visuals, your website, these are all pieces of your positioning and how you're showing up to the world and how they can like perceive who you are and what you're all about.

Jodi

Okay, that that description was perfect. That was so clear, and it ties back What you said you had said that like we're at the beginning of our conversation you said about this becoming, you know, the person who's known for talking about x. So if you're doing all of these positioning things, the way you're telling us we should be doing. That's the result then is that we become the person that talks about X, which is exactly what we want. I mean, for all business owners, but especially as we then throw a book into the mix, because, yeah, that gives us that credibility. Oh, my gosh, this.

Danait

And that book is also a big positioning piece, because it's like the public facing of all the internal messaging you've been doing. Like, like you said, messaging is really like what we want people to think about. And we're like, this is how I want people to, that's like, we're like, oh, this is what I want people to know about me this hour. And then positioning is like the active execution of that if both of those are in alignment, you will become the person, right? So is known for this. If I'm going on podcast talking about messaging one day, another day, I'm talking about like lifestyle blogging, that doesn't make any sense. People are gonna be like, What is going on? Right? And they're confused. I'm confused. And I'm like, I want people to know be about messaging. But it's like, but I'm not doing the things that alignment with

that. And so that would make sense that people wouldn't know. So yes, you're so right. It is like a tangible way that we show up, right helps us become that person.

Jodi

Oh my gosh, this was so good. I feel like I mean, I feel like I just asked like three questions, but you gave us like a masterclass here in the last, like, 25 minutes, so I hope everyone was always taking notes. I definitely can't wait to go back and listen and take some more notes. Oh, my gosh, Danait, this was amazing. Thank you so so, so much. This was super helpful. Thank you. So I don't let anyone leave the podcast without giving your reading recommendation. And I know you're a big reader. And so I know you have at least one recommendation for me.

Danait

Okay. Yes, I do. Okay. I have been at rereading deep work for work by Calvin Newton. I have loved that book. And so I'm rereading that one. It's a really good one. And then I've, I am a big fan of fantasy fiction. I just am obsessed. And so I have been okay. The most recent ones that I've read are Sorcery of Thorns by Margaret Rogerson. And it happens in a library. So it's really, really cool. The books kind of have a life of their own, and they communicate and stuff. It's really cool. So okay, I have loved that one. And then another series, these violent delights by Chloe gone, which is a Romeo and Juliet retelling in in Shanghai in the 1920s. And it's so cool.

Jodi

So oh, that sounds cool. I bet the setting is amazing in that one.

Danait

Yeah, the setting was really cool.

Jodi

I'm not a fantasy reader, but you're making me want to try it with the one in the library.

Danait

It was so good. And the writing style was really was really cool. And I like the writing style. So I read everything though. I love reading, so I'm definitely willing to try anything.

Jodi

I'm reading right now. Something from my book club. And we're reading a thriller this month. And I'm I don't usually read thrillers because I'm a big fat baby. Same. So my husband was going out the other night. And I was like, Oh, I'm going to read before you leave. Because I don't want to read this book when I'm home alone in the dark, and he's like, how old are you? Let me read. Books are very, very limited.

Danait

I had to stop reading mystery thrillers because that very recently, I was like, this is getting real for me. Yeah, it became like, it's not an enjoyable experience for me at that, at that point, even though it's like well written and it's a great story and all of that, right. So like, no, just somebody told me what happens

in opera. So exactly. There's so good to a lot of those thriller writers are very, very talented because they literally feel sorry, that I'm just like on high alert, and I can't sleep all night because of like, is there someone coming into my home to kidnap me and replay this in real life? Like, I don't want to be so? No, no, thank you. No, thank you. But I'm gonna I'm gonna check out that that one?

Jodi

Yeah. I'll do it based on the library. That sounds really good. I reread personal development books. Also, like you're reading deep work rereading deep work. I do that too. I think that that's a good practice for business owners for anybody really. But business owners.

Danait

Yeah. Because sometimes you get things, new things every time you reread them. And there's so much to absolutely, yeah. personal development books are just much right.

Jodi

Yeah, I always yes, I pick something else up every time I reread something like that. So Well, thank you Danait. This was such a fun conversation. I learned a ton and I know that the listeners did too. So thank you so much for sharing your expertise with us.

Danait

Thanks so much for having me, Jodi.

Jodi

Thanks for listening to today's episode of the right publish market podcast. I know just how busy your schedule is as a business owner, so I'm grateful you've taken some time out of yours to journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you are looking for even more book writing, marketing and publishing information and support, check out my mentorship membership. The author entrepreneurs lab where each month we take a deep dive into one element of the book world with education, a q&a session with me your book publishing expert resources, co writing times and so much more. You can learn more at the link in the show notes. I hope to see you inside the lab