

Copyright © 2019 by Mike Capuzzi

An Important Note About This Transcribed Interview

The following transcription was created by transcribing a telephone interview audio recording. Although we have done our best to ensure an accurate transcription, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors.

It was created as a courtesy to my Main Street Author Podcast listeners and as a supplement to the actual audio recording—for use by those people who prefer to read the interview and for individuals with hearing challenges.

It is not perfect. Please do not let these imperfections get in the way of the value of the content contained within.

Thank you in advance.

Mike Capuzzi

Mike Capuzzi

Welcome everybody to another insightful episode of The Main Street Author Podcast, the place to inspire local business owners to author, publish and leverage their own short helpful books, or shooks™, as I call them. Today I'm excited and pleased to be able to have a conversation with a long-time friend, Dr. Ginger Bratzel. Ginger, welcome.

Ginger Bratzel

Thanks, Mike, and I think about how long we've been friends. It's been a while.

Mike Capuzzi

These first couple episodes, if anyone listens to them back-to-back, they're going to think I have all these long-term friendships, which, in fact I do, and it's very cool. I think, again, we probably go back 10 years, at least.

Ginger Bratzel

Even longer than that. I age my friendships and business relationship on where I was with my children. So, I figure out which kid was what age and I go back, so we are over 12 years, I can tell you that based on child number two.

Mike Capuzzi

Well, you know my daughter who's now a freshman in college, she must have been a youngster when we first met too, but listen, that's a testimony to, just the importance of relationships. And as I launched Main Street Author Podcast, I really thought about folks that I've known for years that, over the years, have done consistently good work and are consistently doing smart marketing and promotion, etcetera, and you know you rose to the top. I know you're an author which is what we're going to talk about today, but I also thought about you because you have this unique angle, which I think will be relevant to some of our listeners, where you were a practicing dentist. You're no longer a practicing dentist, but you're now coach to dentists, and I think that's a very unique pathway that obviously you're going to touch on, but why don't we get started here and tell me about your business, tell me where you were with your dental practice and where you are today?

Ginger Bratzel

Of course, I was at what we call in-the-trenches, wet-gloved; that's what we call ourselves, so and seeing patients every day. And I was having struggles in my practice like a lot of people in their business at some stage, and we were just kind of in a rut, and the way they tell you to fix it in dentistry is going about it the wrong way – you need more equipment, you need another class, you need more credentials after your name and all I did is separate me further, from what I needed to do, and I had to go back and look at it at a different perspective—what the patients want and how can I serve them better? And its connection,

and that's where marketing came in for me and that's when I became a student of marketing, and they became really passionate about practice development and building businesses and strategies to do that. And so all those years of accumulating all that junk, as I call it, software and dental equipment and big overhead on a new building and all the initials after my name, we didn't get traction until we really start focusing on connecting with people and direct response about what they want to hear, what they're saying in their head, and how we enter that conversation and bring them in and then solve that problem that they needed. So, we just start doing that, it turned around pretty quickly in a few months where we've been struggling for years.

I didn't realize that that was unique until one day I got a call from my accountant, and my assistant came in and said, "I need to talk to your accountant on the phone, he's got to talk to you right now." And you know when your account calls you think, "Oh my gosh, this is the end of the world." You take that call. So, I took off my gloves and went back to my office and he said, "Ginger we've got a real problem. There's too much money in your QuickBooks, and I think someone's been making a mistake. I went back and it wasn't just one entry that's wrong, it's cumulative. So, we got to sit down and figure out who's been adding extra money into it." And I said, "That's not a mistake. We're really doing better." And I'm explaining to him what's going on and he said, "Is it something unique to you?" And I was like, "Well, no." He said, "Is it something special you do in your area that nobody else can reproduce?" And I said "No." He said, "Could you teach this to somebody else?" And I said, "Yeah," and he said, "Okay, I've got three doctors who are also clients who are not doing very well. I've got to call them next, and could you help them out and teach them what you're doing?" And that's how I made that transition.

Mike Capuzzi

Wow, wow, so are you no longer practicing today? And what are you doing today?

Ginger Bratzel

I no longer practice today. So, I was fortunate enough where I could sell my practice. I was doing this on the side, it was my side hustle. I was always helping practices because I really enjoyed it, and it became my main hustle. So, I was able to step back from dentistry and focus entirely on it. So now I work strategically with practices on getting and keeping more patients, without the drama, without the stress, and putting them in systems that are focused on patients and the psychology of getting patients, and serving them better so they can worry about the dentistry, and I helped them put that other stuff in place where they're not having to become a business major too.

Mike Capuzzi

Very good, very good. Now, the focus of Main Street Author Podcast is really talking about how traditional local business owners can leverage the power of being an author. I don't know the answer to this question, I probably should, but if back when you had your

practice and you were doing all the direct response marketing, did you have any book for your dental practice?

Ginger Bratzel

No, I didn't. I mean we did lengthy, free reports, you know, then video was starting to get more popular. So, you're sending out videos and your website, interactive quizzes and things like that, but a book serves well, and that's why we talk about our clients now, too. It's a lot of work to write a book, and any shortcut you can take so, you know, that's something we work with them now to shortcut that process so they can have it because it makes you an authority and I mean, seriously, if you write a book, you're legit at that stage.

Mike Capuzzi

Good, good. Well I do want to talk about that here in a second, but let's talk about your book, because again, what was interesting was when you made that transition from practicing dentist to a consultant / coach for other dentists, you did author your own book. Tell me a little bit more about that book.

Ginger Bratzel

Well, I did it the hard way, I'll say that, it's like a real book, like you sat down and really wrote it, and I really wrote it. I put it off for a long time because it was such a scary thing. And everyone said, "You got to have a book, you got to have a book," and I was trying to find every reason not to have a book, and I think I was out of practice totally, well at least five years, and I was like, "I don't have time to commit to that process." I had all this information, we put so much content out there, I love sharing it, I do a lot of direct to camera video and teaching and we do webinars and things like that, so I had all this information, and so when we sat down and just kind of put it together and organized this, like this is a lot. In fact, we have so much, like this is about 20 books.

So, let's just take what our readers are asking most about. So, we went to our YouTube channel, what topics were we getting more views on? What kind of emails were we getting back from certain topics? And we pick their top topics and then we put that together in creating the book. I had to hire an editor, writing is not my strong suit, communicating is my strong suit, but not the physical writing process. So, hiring an editor, the layout of all that, it was a daunting process, and I'm trying to think, it was a small team, about five of us, I put my stuff on and I can hand it off to somebody else. Someone's going to proofread it, someone's going to edit it, I'm going to do graphics, somebody's going to do setup, to get that all together. So, it took a little bit of work.

Mike Capuzzi

Yeah, and that is probably the number one thing I hear from potential authors, is it's a scary proposition. I mean, the good news is, there are simple pathways, of course, I offer one and I know now you offer one for your clients. But your book that you wrote for establishing

you as a thought leader for other dentists, and the book title is, "Everything You Didn't Learn in Dental School: Secrets to Creating a Prosperous Dental Practice." Let's talk a little bit more, even though you were fearful and concerned and anxious about getting started, what really finally motivated you? What was the number one reason to get this thing done for you?

Ginger Bratzel

Well, just like I went to dental school to get a "Dr." in front of my name, you write a book to put author as the list of titles because you do have a higher level of authority at that point. Then also you're able to spread that information. There's a lot of free information on the web, but not that many people write books. And so, it really sets you up as a stage. I didn't want to write a book just for the sake of writing a book, it was always the intention of using it as a lead generation tool. I had a friend in the dental community, I sent her an early copy of it, and she said, "No, Ginger, you could make money off of this," and I said, "That has never been my intention to sell books, it is to attract clients and to start that process in there and get into their heads."

Mike Capuzzi

Right, and I preach the same thing. I know you've read "Main Street Author" and I, right in there, say one of the differentiators of being a Main Street author, and even though you and I did not work on your book together, I would still consider you a Main Street author because you serve Main Street business owners, but it's not about selling books, it's not about all that stuff that people who are trying to make money from a book, it really is a business card, a legion device, etcetera. So, can you talk a little bit more about the book itself, you completed it, is there any specific strategies you used when you finally got it done? Is there anything you did right, anything you did wrong that you want other people to know about and learn from your experience?

Ginger Bratzel

I made too much into it. I wanted a substantial book and I don't think it had to be that substantial. I know I could take that book and divide it into about three or four books on itself. So, don't get preoccupied with this. This view that it has to be a certain number of pages or things like that. So that's one of the things that kept me from starting it sooner, and also made it such a daunting process in going forward. So, any other things we do, especially with our clients, we make a mini book, more of a shook format for them, because I like the physicality of a book, anyone could write a PDF and download it, but a physical book sticks around and floats and stays for a long time. And so that was really, really important to me.

As far as strategy going into it, I knew I was going to do the lead gen. So, the thicker your book, the more it costs to publish, and to produce and so legion ideas, dentists still read a lot of physical mail, they still read a lot of magazines. So, we did lead generation and published articles to get the book and they were just paying shipping and handling.

Essentially, they covered my cost and then we could lead capture and then start putting them into a funnel. We did Facebook ads for the book as a lead generation. We didn't promote it a lot on our site. It was more for new traffic. So, we do a lot of keywords and squeeze pages. So, we would use that in different capacities. If I was going to have a new client that I was going to have a call with, we will send a book ahead of time so they can have it. Now I know it's thick, they're probably never going to read it or touch it, but they had a book in their hands now. It was a shook format, like I said if I go back and do it again, I might have several shook formats on different topics depending on what the motivating factor, what they contacted me about, and send it out specifically for that topic and be more targeted. So, I see those applications for our guys, for our docs, you know when they get a new patient and it's someone calling for something that's going to be substantial, they're sending out paperwork ahead of time, why can't they put a book in there and send it out too?

Mike Capuzzi

Right, right. Now relative to all the different marketing things you've done for your own business – and you can combine it, Ginger, whether it's your business or now the businesses you're helping – where do these physical books rank as far as an important asset, whether it's your consulting business or your dentist practices, where do they rank?

Ginger Bratzel

Well, you know as high-tech as dentistry is, there's still an old-school component to it. Like I said, physical publications, people still read those, and books are on that old-school mentality as far as legitimate factor, so they give you that extra weight in it where you go to a conference and most people don't even have a business card anymore to hand out to you: "Oh, no, you just look me up, go to my Instagram." And so, it's a binding to that more traditional background. So, it has that kind of weight with them.

Mike Capuzzi

Right, right. Now are you still using your book in your own business, your own consulting business, is it still a centerpiece?

Ginger Bratzel

I don't use it as much, as I have no marketing go into it. It's just a backup, I call it a validation step so when somebody wants information, we send that out. We're not driving leads to the book, per se, right now. We do a lot of webinars. And so I go back and I think how much webinar content – we have like four, five, six, a dozen different shook topics that would be more specific to keep them more on a certain strategic path so they ask me about Y or X and I send them a book about everything in the alphabet that's sometimes overwhelming so they have something, that tool, I see that being very, very beneficial.

Mike Capuzzi

Right, and listen, in all fairness, I mean you published your book in I think it was 2014 if I recall?

Ginger Bratzel

Right.

Mike Capuzzi

It's been a few years. So yes, I mean listen the reality is, it still has legs, I'm sure you're still using it in various ways, but we're now, what, almost six years after you first published this and for you – and this is a teachable moment for everybody – I mean for you to take that, and it's a pretty substantial book, and freshen it up and then slice and dice it into probably at minimum after looking at it, Ginger, I could see probably a minimum three shooks, short helpful books, I think would breathe new life into that content. It would give you something new to bring and talk about in your marketing. And that's a strategy, all because someone has written a book, it shouldn't be forgotten, and we see it time and time again where people write a book and then they do a second edition or a new update etcetera.

So, in your own case that could definitely be something you do because I went through it and there's a lot of good content there, and now extracting it and creating these bite-sized books, these books that take about an hour to read versus days to read, I think is a smart strategy. So, you've commented you're doing short helpful books for your clients. Can you tell me more thoughts about that? I know you're a fan of them because you're doing them for your clients. But this concept of less is more. I don't like the notion, "Oh, no one's going to read my book," because I think if we have something helpful in some way to help somebody, we want them to read it. So, making it easier for them to read is important any comments on that, Ginger?

Ginger Bratzel

Yeah, I believe the shorter book, even back to my objection why it took me so long to do a book and then why it's taken me so long to want to do another book, if you put so much into it you won't do it. So that's why the shorter book is easier for everybody. It's not this big investment, it's not scary, they will get it out there. It gets received. It has a better chance of getting read or glanced through, if it's more that content. And what I like about your shook format, so I'm going to tell your listeners a story. I always get Kindle books now because my eyes are not what they used to be and I like how I can zoom it in as big as I need it to and do it, but I finished your book. I don't know, maybe an hour to read, and then I was like, "Well no, I need the physical book." I want to hold that; it has value to me. And so, I ordered it again. And so I got the physical book and so what I did with the physical book, for yours I went back and I highlighted in pink, specifically, how many times you were selling it when you started selling and it was the first page, and you made no apologies about it. And that's what other people think, you have to read the whole book and put it at

the end. This shook format is very open and honest to say, you have an issue, I offer a solution to this, and I hear this is what you can do, and you keep reminding them all the way through it. And so that's what I think another thing about scaring people was like, how am I going to convert that into traction? Well, shook format, you tell them straight up: I'm here to offer a service and if it resonates with you, contact me.

Mike Capuzzi

Well, it's a couple of thoughts on that to kind of just think freely here for a moment. So first of all, I'm like you, I totally get the eye thing, and I totally get the "I buy a Kindle version then by a paperback," it drives my wife nuts because she's like, "You've got so many books," but I guess we're of the age where we'd like that. So, I'm with you completely on that. Now, here's an interesting comment based on what you just said. I was just talking yesterday, as a matter of fact – I will be a guest just like you are a guest on my podcast – I'm going to be a guest on a gentleman's podcast, I guess in two weeks, and what he does, because we don't know each other, he does a pre-interview, and I researched him and I knew that we were going to have a connection. He knows nothing about me, but anyway, what was supposed to be a 15-minute call turned into a 50-minute call, and we just had a really good connection.

But what he said, because he's not from where you and I've come from, Ginger, the direct response Dan Kennedy world, that kind of thing, and he said to me, "Mike, I'm intrigued by how you use shooks to sell, but most people don't do that and most people are very squeamish about that, maybe that's something we could talk about on the podcast because I think the way you do it is very unique." So to your point, Ginger, I think this is a key point, and I showed him, I point it out because he got a digital copy of my book to go through, I'm actually mailing him a copy today, but I pointed out right in the very beginning of the book, I do this with my shooks, I do it with our clients' shooks, there is a short chapter called "Who is this book for?" and right in there, right in the very front, we say, "Listen, this is for this person with this problem, or somebody who has a problem or somebody wants to get something, learn something, and by the way, if you like what I had to say, yes, I'm going to be making an offer to you."

This is all about whether or not we should be connecting, and we do it right up front, and there's no need to be squeamish because if someone's going to read it, they've already made that mental agreement, that "Okay, I get what Capuzzi's doing here. I'm past that, let's move on." So, for those people listening – and Ginger, I don't know what other additional comments you may have on this – but these are sales devices, a shook is a sales device. It should be good, helpful content. It must be good, helpful content, preferably on a focus topic, but it is a sales tool, it is designed to get a person, a reader, from step one to step two in your sales process. And I don't know if that's what you're doing with your client shooks, your short books, but it really is a key strategy.

Ginger Bratzel

Yeah, and if you think about a mainstream author, and if they're writing nonfiction, they're putting the book out because they're trying to get speaking engagements. They're going to put a lot of press behind it, they want to get to number one. That's a lot of work to get your message out there. This is a lot faster and more direct and very targeted.

Mike Capuzzi

Yeah, and I think you probably would agree with this, I mean most of us – we're busy, you have kids, I have kids, you have a business, we want the promise of a book but we may not have the time. I just got a book recently, another one, I get books sent to me as gifts and it's a topic I probably would like to learn more about, but it's so damn thick, I'm thinking, "Jeez, when the heck am I going to read this?" Versus a short, helpful book and just the size difference and there really is an appeal, I think for most people. And you made mention of printing and mailing, yeah, they get expensive also when you have a traditional book, and a shook definitely helps with that. So enough, I'm talking too much here. I don't typically like to do that. So again, I think your feedback is important here because you went through that hurdle of not getting started and finally getting started. Are there any words of wisdom if someone's listening to this and says, "Yeah, I'm in that same place today"?

Ginger Bratzel

Well, this is not to promote you, Mike, but it's that overwhelming of having to make it bigger than it has to be. It doesn't have to be an overwhelming task, and you and I know people out there that'll send, pay \$25,000 to create your book because you don't want to do it and so you have to wait till you have enough money, and what's going to happen, how do you get \$25,000 back out of a book quickly, and it should not be an overwhelming barrier to do that. Everyone's got a book in them, they've got several books in them. They need to be able to get it out as quickly as possible. So, my guys are so busy working in the business, and they have a hard time working on the business, and there's no time for them to write a book. So, having that shortcut to be able to get that information out to a patient is really phenomenal for them. But also, to legitimize and create that authority concept because you can go to some streets, there's a dentist on every corner. But how many of them written a book? Very few.

Mike Capuzzi

Yeah, and have your dentists that you're working with, what type of feedback do you typically get when they finally get their printed books and are using them? Any antidotes or any stories that you can share? Again, I'm hitting you sort of from left field here, but I've got to believe they are excited and it's just a feel-good thing for them.

Ginger Bratzel

Well, it's a pride thing because to be a published author is substantial, I do not leave negative reviews on books anymore because I have total respect for anyone who wrote a bad book, I will not criticize them for going through that process, so God bless them. So it gives them that pride, "I've accomplished that," they have a degree, they have an office, they have a practice, now they're a published author, when patients come in and they refer, "Oh, I gave your book to my friend and they were surprised my dentist had a book," and it's all, "Here, take another one, give them to your other friend." It's a great calling card, again, the problem with a fat book – I've been at meetings, you've been at meetings, so I carry my books, I'm like, "Well, where's my clothes going to go? I got to hand out books, but I got all this extra weight." And I've been stopped by TSA to go through my luggage because they couldn't see a block of stuff because that was my books in my carry-on to hand out. I'm like, "This is nuts."

Mike Capuzzi

That's funny, these are realities, and listen, I love books, right? I don't knock those, there's always a time and place for a traditional bigger, longer book. I also don't knock the people, I mean \$25,000, Ginger, the price points for certain publishers to work with is much higher than that these days. So that's even a bit low these days for a lot of people. It's just the realities of what's going on out there. But I totally get this notion of having the big books and now having a shorter book, how much easier it is. So, I appreciate that. So, before we wrap up here, is there anything that you'd like to share, like one big thing or just something from your experience or from this interview that you'd like listeners to take away?

Ginger Bratzel

Well, I think you have to have a plan. So, don't write a book and hope it sells and that's going to happen, you have to go with clear intention. Now again, we're from the direct response. I don't get out of bed without a strategy every day, even at how to run my day and how I'm going to get my kids out the door. There's always a strategy to everything of what results I want to happen. And so, that's part of it first, is coming through, you're not going to get rich selling books. Some people do, some don't; this is a way to get your communication out, and also with a smaller book format, we're talking about the weight, carrying it and everything like that, it makes it easier for your patients or your clients to share with other people. So, you have to think of that convenience factor for them, so make it happen. So, writing a book about what they want to hear, not what you want to say, what they want to hear, the questions you're getting all the time, the things that hang people up, that if you could just tell people and get them over that hurdle, how you can make that happen. And again, with a particular strategy, how you're going to turn it into a business building tool.

Mike Capuzzi

I love it, I love it. Yeah, and that's a lot of wisdom there, folks. So, Ginger if there's any dentist or professional practice owners listening, or anybody, for that matter, how can they learn more about you and what you do?

Ginger Bratzel

Well, the easiest way is to go over my website, and you can reach me at gingerbratzel.com, and we have, like I said, we get regular content out. I like to do direct-to-camera. We do strategies and big-picture thinking, all the time, specific to the dental industry. So, you're a dentist, a spouse of a dentist, we have a lot of clients, that's how they come through us because they're working on the business. We would love to talk with you some more.

Mike Capuzzi

Great, great. Well Ginger, I do appreciate your time, I know you're busy. Let's make sure it's not when we have grandkids the next time, we talk like this, since you measure in terms of kids and ages. So, it's always good to touch base with you and see what you're doing and the growth that you have, and now the wisdom you're sharing. So, I really do appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Ginger Bratzel

It was my pleasure.