

095 - Should You Embrace the “Faceless Marketing” Instagram Trend?

Laura Davis: [00:00:00] In this episode, we're talking about the faceless marketing trend that is taking Instagram by storm, and talking about whether you should embrace it as a social media manager.

Laura Moore: You're listening to JFDI with The Two Lauras. This is the weekly podcast for social media managers where the two of us chat about all things related to business as a freelancer. Every week we share tips, advice, and inspiration about business, marketing, and social media to help you to build a business that fits around your lifestyle and your family.

In today's episode, we're diving into the faceless marketing trend that is taking Instagram by storm and discussing whether you as a social media manager should be embracing it or avoiding it entirely. And if you have no idea what this faceless marketing thing is all about, don't worry. That's exactly where we're going to start.

If you're wondering how to get clients for your social media services, you're going to love our new pocket training. We're calling it The Client Attraction Kit because when you follow all the steps we're going to teach you, that's exactly what will happen.

And you'll be able to say hello to new [00:01:00] clients, even without a small audience. Before creating a portfolio and without a single testimonial. To dive straight in today, all you need to do is go to thetwolauras.com/clients or click the link that's in our show notes.

Laura Davis: The first I heard about it and I was probably late to the, late to the table, is that a phrase?

Laura Moore: It is now.

Laura Davis: When I, um, first kind of went down a bit of a rabbit hole was when you shared that Instagram reel the other week, the one that said -

Laura Moore: Oh, yeah, so there was an Instagram reel the other week and it had basically blown up, it had gone viral.

Somebody had sent it to me in my DMs and it said on the reel, did you know if you copy and paste your caption from your notes, Instagram will stop showing your content type of



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thing. So don't do that. You have to type it natively into Instagram. And it was absolute, complete load of crap, but everyone believed it.

And everyone was in the comments going, Oh my God, I do this all the time. That [00:02:00] explains why my reach is low. And Laura and I going, no, it's just because your content's crap. It's got nothing to do with you copying and pasting.

Laura Davis: Yeah, and I looked at it originally, and I looked at it at face value in terms of what she was saying was a crock of shit.

And then later you put a story up because you'd commented on it saying, this is a crock of shit. And you'd shared it into your own story saying, I don't like giving this limelight. This is a crock of shit. Everybody just stop listening to this bullshit type of thing. And then you then shared a screenshot because she had replied to the fact that you'd shared it, obviously hadn't read it and just got, I'm saying she, it may have been he, shared it saying, she, she responded saying, thanks for sharing or something like that, and I was just like, oh my God, like, so I then went back and started to kind of dive into it.

Now, I had, just to jump around slightly, heard about this Master Reseller Rights, which we will probably come a bit more on to, but I hadn't quite [00:03:00] connected the two at that point, but it was the point that was the point that I started to then realise how many people were doing this baseless marketing. But I didn't really go any further than that.

I just thought, Oh, God, what a crock of shit. They don't know anything. This is just another bloody scam that will go around. And that was it. So it's only been recently that we've decided to get our, uh, investigate -

Laura Moore: Get our soapboxes out.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. Become spies. But what is your, kind of, impressions and, uh, how long have you known?

Laura Moore: So let's explain what it is first. So if you open up Instagram, go to the Reels tab, probably it will only take you a few scrolls before you see some sort of B roll that looks very much stock imagey. It's not something that someone's shot in their own kitchen. It's very stock image/B roll with some sort of quotes or text on it.



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Often it's like, well, like we said earlier, some absolute crap about what you need to do on Instagram or, oh, you know, this is what I [00:04:00] did to make £50,000 in one month. And they're talking about how they've grown their business without showing their face and all of this stuff. So basically, so on the face of it, faceless marketing.

It's marketing without ever showing your face, which I think is a load of crap anyway, but we'll come on to that. And there's this whole trend, I suppose you could call it, and most of these accounts have the word faceless. in their actual handle. I say most of them, not all of them. And all of their content is like, it's like a copy and paste job, honestly.

I mean, I've said in so many conversations with Laura recently, I've told her that I am bored to death of Instagram reels. And this is why, because all the content is exactly the same. And even more so now that there's more and more and more of these awful faceless marketing accounts. And, and when we looked into them a little bit more, we were like, we really need to uncover, like, how are these people getting so much engagement on such awful content and growing their accounts so quickly?

Because there must be something in it, [00:05:00] right? It must, there must be something about it that's good. And so we really, like, put our investigator hats on, it didn't take much work, I have to say.

Laura Davis: Don't say that, we could have owned it.

Laura Moore: We're not like the FBI. And, and what we've basically discovered, and this probably won't come as news to everybody listening, but what we've discovered is that faceless marketing is just a giant engagement pod.

If you don't know what an engagement pod is, it's basically where everybody kind of joins forces and they're like, right, I've posted, go and post on everyone, on my post and like a thousand people come and leave a little comment on your post, but it's not real.

Laura Davis: It was prolific, wasn't it? Like 10 years ago, engagement pods were huge.

Laura Moore: Yeah, and this is just bringing back engagement pods. Because it's the same people commenting on all of these posts, making it look like it's got a lot of engagement. Obviously, then that fires up the algorithm to say, Oh, this post is doing really well, show it to more people. And that's what's happening.



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It's just [00:06:00] all fake, fake, fakery. So, yeah, that's what it is.

Laura Davis: So, because of that, because of the whole, we kind of straight away could see that it was engagement pods, I decided to go and try and find the engagement pods. Because back in the day, which makes this heavily old, but engagement pods used to be on Facebook.

People would create a Facebook group. So you would go and post it. And they were often like, monetised as well, but you'd post it. It was big in bloggers, influencers, and probably still is to be honest. But you would put, this is my most recent post, whether it be Facebook, Instagram, I think there were a lot for Pinterest and when Pinterest worked slightly differently.

And the groups would be massive, like thousands and thousands of people in them. So I was like, right, I'm going to go and see if there's a Facebook marketing pod. And to be fair, there were, there were quite a few groups. Nothing massive, like with like hundreds of thousands of people in that I was expecting.

I ended up joining one. So if you do join any and you see that I'm in there, that was [00:07:00] why - I might have to leave actually. And one of them, there was a poll, and it was all about, obviously all their content is about social media marketing, growth on social media, and selling on social media.

Laura Moore: Making money from social, yeah.

Laura Davis: And this person who was running the group did a poll of all the people in this group saying, What is your digital marketing knowledge? And I think the options were, I don't know anything about digital marketing, I know a little bit, I'm an expert. I think it might have been a fourth option. But 63 percent of the people who were faceless marketers had no experience of digital marketing.

But yet were choosing to be a faceless marketer to try to make this money because they were sucked into the kind of scam behind it.

Laura Moore: I just want to hover on that point a minute because we've said in numerous podcasts in the past, like you shouldn't judge somebody's credibility by the number of followers that they have.



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But there is, there's so many of these faceless marketing accounts on [00:08:00] Instagram now and a lot of them have got a lot of followers. And then when they put out this content that is lies, is clickbait, there's no real value, there's no truth behind a lot of it. And actually those followers are not even real followers because they're a pod.

And you're sitting there thinking to yourself, well, what do they know that I don't know? All they know is how to get a pod behind them. They don't know anything about digital marketing. They don't know really how to grow. Well, they don't know how to grow an audience. They know how to get an audience of people who are not buyers and would come on to talking about how they've monetized this in a minute because they don't actually know the business side, which is what makes you a successful freelancer.

And I think it's really important that you, you remember that when you see these posts going through Instagram and they've got all of this engagement and they're saying something that you think that you didn't know, or you thought the opposite, and then you start questioning yourself, just remind yourself the reason that they're putting that content out there.

It's to get the engagement. It's [00:09:00] not for any other reason. It's because they want to pull in the people who are clueless so that they can then sell them the thing they're going to sell, which we'll talk about in a second. It's not because they're trying to attract clients who want social media managers.

And I can tell you that for a fact, because during our research, as I will call it now, make it sound a bit more formal, I set up a fake account on Instagram. And I went and messaged a lot of these people and said, I'm looking for a social media manager for my husband's business. Can you tell me how much you charge?

Can you tell me if you have space for a new client? And not one of them replied. Not one of them was looking for clients. Not one of them is actually a social media manager. Not one of them is doing this to make money from doing this for other people because they don't know how to. All they know how to do is to grow an audience of the people who are just like them, who they won't be able to sell to, or how to grow an audience of people who want to do what they're doing and sell them this scammy thing that we'll talk [00:10:00] about.



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So just don't judge yourself or your expertise or your ability to get clients by what they're doing because it's all very much a front. It's all very much, like, from the outside, I mean, it is quite scammy, I think.

Laura Davis: Yeah. And so, and I think there's the association of this, like it didn't take much Googling yesterday to find myself down some rabbit holes about this, about the kind of scam behind it.

It's very much of a level like, um, MLM, like multi-level marketing and pyramid marketing, all of that. It's not the same, but it has that same reputation already. So. I feel like if you think, Oh, this is great. I'm going to do a faceless account because I don't like putting my face on socials. And I, we hear that all the time.

So I get why people will find it attractive, but you're very quickly going to become associated with a industry that is already kind of being deemed as to be a scam. And it, it is, it, and it's not [00:11:00] reflective of you as a good quality social media marketer. So do just, you know, do your due diligence before jumping into suddenly having a faceless account, because by association that won't necessarily do you any favours.

Laura Moore: For sure. So should we talk about how these people are actually making money, because you see a lot of these accounts, and actually I saw one on Instagram this morning that were actually running ads, and I did click through to their account, and on their bio it says that she, I'm guessing it's a she, I mean it looks quite feminine in the account, but you know, faceless, so who knows.

It says, helping you sell digital products, blah, blah, blah, blah, personally made \$50,000 in one month. Okay, great. Give me some of that. You open up their account, they've got 14 followers, they've only ever posted five times. So it's like, really? Have you really made that much money? And if you have, you haven't done it by using organic social media marketing, which is supposedly what they're selling you.

Because A, she's running ads, so we know that [00:12:00] that's where the money's coming from, if there is any money. And B, there's no audience there to actually sell to organically. So whatever they are supposedly learning, they're not implementing it anyway. Which brings us on to how they're making money and that is, they're making money because they're selling somebody else's digital product.



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And you've probably heard people talking about this over the past few months anyway, because it, this isn't a new thing, you know, it's called Master Resell Rights. And that as a term, it's like a term that's been around for a long time, you know, someone creates something and then they sell you the right so you can go and sell it somewhere else, you know, it's like, it's how most of the shops out there sell things because they've got the rights to sell them, right, but there's a business who literally have called their business Master Resell Rights, and so that's then given that kind of terminology, this bad name.

What it is, is a digital course that supposedly, neither Laura and I have taken this course so we don't know anything about it, but it's supposedly teaching you how to do digital marketing. Which we can now gather from Laura's, um, poll that she saw in the [00:13:00] Facebook group. No one's actually taking the course.

All they're doing is buying the course and then reselling it. And that's where the money's coming from. It's because they're just reselling the course that they just bought. They're not learning from the course, implementing what they've learned in order to sell something else. So it's just buy this thing and then go and resell it and then resell it to someone else and resell it to someone else.

And you know, if you can make money that way, then great, but it's just a bit scammy, isn't it?

Laura Davis: Yeah. It's not, I hate this word. It's not authentic. It's not you. They won't last. It will be a fad. And then what will you be left with? You'll be left with an account that is full of your pod friends and, and I just feel like it preys on the vulnerable a little bit.

It preys on the people who have kind of got that and, and it's, this is an industry that, you know, I'm not going to go off on a tangent, but it's like there's business coaches out there preying on the vulnerable. There's all of that. And so that's not new, but I feel this is just a new, [00:14:00] possibly more, a different price point than the coaching.

People where they're saying, look, you can make all this money from at home on the sofa with your baby or, you know, you can get to have holidays in Dubai if, if you buy this shite and it makes people who have probably feeling a bit, maybe stuck in a rut. Maybe they're having financial problems, makes them feel like this is a quick, a quick win.



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And don't get me wrong, there will be people who will be probably making \$50,000. But it's not, it's, it's not the norm. No. And when you, when you, it didn't take us long to find the multiple accounts that literally have got no followers. You know, if I think if you were early on an early adopter of this, maybe you're kind of laughing now, you know, your way to the bank, cause you're selling all this shit for people and people, you know, it's just so annoying.

It's just, I just [00:15:00] don't feel like it's very ethical, but yet you can't really kind of justify that feeling? You know what I mean?

Laura Moore: Well, yes and no. The account that we saw this morning, in their bio it said they made 50 grand in a month. In their story highlights, they actually shared a screenshot of their ad account.

And they'd spent \$31,000 on ads. So, if you've got \$31,000 to spend then it's quite likely you're probably going to be able to make 50 grand back, you know, if you're selling something, you're doing a good job of selling it. If you haven't got 31 grand in the first place, that's not quite so likely.

Laura Davis: Well, and that's what's worrying, isn't it?

It's like people are going to go, Oh, but you know, I'm going to, I'm going to put my life savings into this because. It's like dropshipping, it's like all that NFT stuff, it's like people see, they become blinkered by it and think, Oh, it's okay, dad, let me have your pension pot, because I know I can get it back because this woman on Instagram with 14 followers has told me that I can.

And it's [00:16:00] just, you know, it's just frightening. It's really, really frightening. And I, and I find it really sad. And I feel like. People are going to end up making mistakes and it have quite considerable impact, which might be, might be sounding a bit dramatic, but I don't want that to be anybody I know, which is why, why we're doing this podcast.

Laura Moore: Yeah, I think let's just kind of flip it to the sort of positive sides of what you could do instead. So you see these kind of accounts coming around, they're selling you the dream, they're selling you that you don't need to show your face on Instagram to, you know, get great engagement. We now know that that's a lie.



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But there are things that you can do without showing your face and like Laura and I are big believers that you should show your face on socials, doesn't have to be all the time, but every now and then, you know, because being faceless, someone's going to hire you. They probably want to know what you look like before you get on a zoom call. It's just a bit weird otherwise, I think.

Laura Davis: That you're a human, that you're not a bot.

Laura Moore: Yeah, exactly. So there are things you can do and if you want to make money from selling a digital course, [00:17:00] wouldn't it be better to sell your own digital course that you know, as you know, is based on theories and, and, you know, strategies that you've used and you know actually work and you know, doing all of that yourself, I think is a far, far better way to kind of get started and start making money because you will have more credibility that way.

So in terms of how you can do your own marketing, I think we should start there and like how you can market without, kind of, being faceless - I think the first thing that's really important to say is to just not be in a pod. Like avoid those at all costs in case the memo didn't get out. We're not doing engagement pods these days. Come on, it's 2024.

Laura Davis: Yeah, if you've listened to our podcast before, you know that we don't even like it when you comment on your own content. Let alone when there's like 50 of you commenting on your own stuff. It's all very, and I used to do marketing for a blogger, and it's very rife in that, kind of, influencer blogger world. It kind of still is now and you can see it a bloody mile off. [00:18:00] It just looks shit, shit and shoddy.

Laura Moore: Especially on these faceless accounts where everybody's commenting is saying, has got faceless in their account name going, Oh yes, I did this too. Oh, I did the same course as you. It's like, come on.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. No, no need for pods.

Laura Moore: So anyway, so, so no pods. Instead. Just do what we always say, do proper marketing, learn about humans and how humans use social media, worry less about the algorithm and trying to con people by, you know, triggering the algorithm to do what you



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want it to do, and create brilliant content that people want to read that is truthful and helps people out.

Laura Davis: You can embrace the faceless, like we've obviously, you know, we, we wouldn't advise that, but if, if you want to do the faceless thing, then do it, if you want to, but possibly don't use faceless in your name because you'll automatically be associated with them. But maybe consider showing your face because people buy from humans.

[00:19:00]

Laura Moore: And actually, I've just, as we're recording this, I've just opened our Instagram and it has actually taken me four scrolls of my thumb before I've seen our faces on Instagram. So like, we don't show our faces all the time, but we're not faceless by any stretch of the imagination. People know what we look like.

Our faces in our, um, what's the word I'm looking for?

Laura Davis: Profile picture.

Laura Moore: Profile picture. God, I'm such a good marketer that I even know all the terms.

But you know, you don't have to be in, your face doesn't have to be in every single picture that you put on Instagram. And actually, you know, we would probably advise against you doing that anyway, because especially if you want to grow your audience and you need shareable content and people are less likely to share, if your photo's on those posts, but that's a whole different episode.

So there are, there's a time and a place for showing your face. So you can kind of lean into not showing your face all the time while still creating amazing content and leaning into that faceless kind of marketing pod and the [00:20:00] way that all of these people are doing it, it's not going to help you get clients, but also it's not going to help you get results for clients because you can't do that for them.

You know, how many clients are going to come to you and go, Oh yes, I just, I just want some pretty stock video on my account. And I want you to talk about how to get engagement on Instagram. You know, that's not going to happen. So you need to know



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how to be a really, really good marketer in order to get clients and keep them and make decent money.

So that's the first part of it, learn how to become a good marketer. And by the way, if you are unsure how to do that, then dive into our course. Our course is not scammy. We don't have any engagement pods. You get, it's The Social Media Managers Toolkit and it includes everything that you need in there to become a really, really good marketer and actually get clients and keep clients and get really good results for them without any engagement pods, without any scammy stuff.

And no, we're not going to let you resell it, but you can be an affiliate if you want to be. So that's that side of things. But the second piece is how do you then [00:21:00] monetise what you've done on your accounts as well as, like, working for clients as a social media manager. And we've got various podcasts.

We'll link them in the show notes that will help you to do that in terms of creating yourself a digital course, like a four week program or something like that. You can create a paid lead magnet. You know, there's lots of different ways that you can monetise your account without having to sell somebody else's things.

And whilst we are all like, we, we totally believe in affiliate marketing. We definitely think that that's a really good way to add more income to your business. It has to be something that aligns with you. It has to be something that your audience is interested in, that positions you well, doesn't make you look like a dodgy person. And, you know, so really think heavily about what it is you're promoting before you actually do promote it.

Laura Davis: So, to summarise, don't do it. No, to summarise, these are just our opinions, said [00:22:00] with love, but I think it's worth, it's worth just stopping and thinking and don't get sucked into it. You know, it all sounds too good to be true, and the reality is, it probably is. And you as social media marketers, you understand actually how people use social media, like the proper way.

And how you can transfer that to clients across all different sectors, all different platforms. Own that. Like, you are better than the faceless marketing scam, as we know, because 63 percent of the buggers don't know about digital marketing. So just be confident and don't get sucked into the vanity metrics and the bullshit out there.



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So that's our thoughts, but we'd love to know what you think. I'm sure this is a hot topic. In fact, I've seen. On various little dark holes on the internet, some very opinionated people coming and so I'm here for it. Like come to our DM, tell us what you think. [00:23:00] Yeah. Comment on our Instagram.

Laura Moore: And if you see any, like, faceless marketers sharing advice or, you know, information that you are not sure whether or not is true and you want a second opinion, send it to us and we will give you our opinion.

Yeah. Because I can guarantee probably 99% of it is absolutely crap.

Laura Davis: A hundred percent.

Laura Moore: Oh, not 99%.

Laura Davis: Oh no, a hundred percent. I agree with you.

Okay. Well that's it for this week. I hope you've enjoyed this episode. Let us know what you think and we will be back, same time next week.

Laura Moore: Arrivederci.

Laura Davis: Au revoir.

