

111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

Laura Davis: [00:00:00] On the show today, we're sharing how to instil confidence in potential clients without making any guarantees about the results that you can provide.

Laura Moore: Welcome to “JFDI with The Two Lauras”. If you're looking for advice and inspiration for freelance social media marketers, you are in the right place. We're “The Two Lauras” and we're on a mission to help you to build a more profitable and enjoyable business.

One of the things you'll often come across as a freelance social media marketer is potential clients expecting really specific and often unrealistic results.

So on the show today, we're diving into how you can handle these conversations to give people the confidence to hire you without making any guarantees or turning them away entirely. Now, after the show, you might have questions and we'd love to continue the conversation. So drop into our Facebook community, “The Social Media Managers Hub”, where we'll be happy to answer any questions on this topic.

Access to the community is free for our email subscribers, so just tap the link in the show notes [00:01:00] or search for “The Social Media Managers Hub” on Facebook. Pop your details in the box, join our email list, and we will let you in.

Okay, let's dive in and let's start with why it's a really bad idea to make guarantees, even if you really want to win that client.

Laura Davis: In essence, because we are not magicians. Okay. We can't control any, anything really.

Laura Moore: No, literally.

Laura Davis: Yeah. So as a social media marketer, you have absolutely no control over the algorithms and the platforms.

You know, you've just got to look at the recent changes on Instagram that they've announced and you just think you can't, we can't control that. We've just got to adapt and move with the times. So if you were to say to a client today, well I will guarantee you blah blah, and then the algorithms all change or they [00:02:00] release new features and it all, everything goes tits up.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

Laura Moore: Yeah.

Laura Davis: Then that's it, you've made a guarantee that you cannot meet. And also our mate Mosseri says this a lot in many respects, that we can't control the people on their phones -

Laura Moore: Yeah.

Laura Davis: - at the other end of the, of the app. We can't control that they open that platform that day and see your content. We can't control whether they got distracted because Coronation Street just started on the telly, or their kids, or they finished having their wee, or whatever it is where they're on their phones.

We can't control any of that. And because we can't control it, we therefore can't be confident to give guarantees as to the results that are achievable.

Laura Moore: Yeah. And it's funny, isn't it? Because in years gone by, like I've worked in marketing ever since I left school, and in years gone by, no one would have expected any guarantees from [00:03:00] marketing.

So it's strange that people do now because of social media. A whole different conversation.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Like there was a post in the "Hub" the other day in our free Facebook group where someone had said they were taking on a client and the client had stipulated we want to get, I can't remember what the details are, X amount of views for every single reel and I was just like flabbergasted by it, I was like, why?

Like, surely you're, surely they want more sales or more leads or more followers even is better than views. Views mean absolutely jack shit.

Laura Moore: It's not a TV show.

Laura Davis: Yeah, yeah. And the question was like, how can I respond to that? And it was like, well, you can't, like, we can't control, we can't control any of that, and we also can't control what happens, so even if the algorithm's working in our favour, and the person is



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

on the other end of [00:04:00] the app has found our content, likes our content, clicks the link or what have you, goes over to the client's website.

We can't then - that's it. Our control is gone again. We can't control what happens on that website. If it's a shit website, then that's not a reflection on us that people aren't therefore going on and buying or, if the product is out of stock or the person can't just navigate because the website just isn't particularly user friendly and that customer journey is a bit rubbish, you know, we can't control any of that.

Laura Moore: Yeah, like even like little things like the website happens to go down that day or the person like you're sending leads and the person who is managing those leads phones the client but they don't answer the phone that day and then they never phone them back. Like you can't control any of those things.

They're all completely out of your control. So making any guarantees about any of those things is just bonkers.

Laura Davis: Yeah, it's all just, and people who do that, it's just bullshit, isn't it?

Laura Moore: Yeah, and I think it's really important to say that this applies to organic [00:05:00] content and ads, before we go further, like we're talking about both things.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. We can't, and I've had, I've not gone forward with clients when I've been at that kind of discovery call point where they've said, well, will you be able to guarantee me an increase in 10 percent sales? And I'm like, oh my God, like I could not get off that call quick enough.

Laura Moore: Mm. Mm.

Laura Davis: And so sometimes it isn't worth fighting.

It is not. If people are coming to you saying they want guarantees, then to me, and we're all different, but to me, that is, that is a red flag. Like, I'm like, nah, I can't, I can't. Because even if you say to them, like we're just saying well I can't control this and actually a lot of this is out of my control - the chances are that they'll come back in six weeks time and go well I thought I thought we could get more followers or whatever bullshit target they wanted.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

So yeah just be careful not to be - and don't feel therefore you've got to suddenly create goals and [00:06:00] targets and say, okay, well, how about we say that we'll try and get another 5,000 followers this week? You know, you're just making your lives hard.

Laura Moore: Yeah. And I think, I think it is worth saying that yes, there are those, those businesses out there who like, you know, say they want these guarantees because they've thought them through and that's what they think they should do.

But I think there's other businesses out there who just don't know. They're just clueless and they think that's what they should be asking. And because they're just not educated enough to really understand that and that's the sort of question that they might ask to one of their other suppliers where it is relevant, you know what I mean?

So I think you do have to just be a little bit, you know, just, just think a little bit about what, and I think that's why the question why is so important when they're asking, can you guarantee XYZ and you're asking why it's important, then you can kind of get under their skin and understand, you know, are they saying this for a reason or is it just something they plucked out of thin air. I think those [00:07:00] conversations are really important.

But so when we were doing research for this episode, I came across all of these reports and podcasts and books and stuff that were by this guy called Jonah 'Burger', might be Berger, don't know how to pronounce it. And he is the author of books like 'Contagion' and 'Magic Words'.

And some of the things that he said, I thought were so relevant to this podcast, we wanted to bring them on today. And there are like three things that he says that you can do to make some really small tweaks to the language that you're using to persuade people and give people confidence without using those guarantees.

Laura Davis: Nice.

Laura Moore: Because yes, there will be times when you do want to just say, no, I don't want those people. Those guarantees are a red flag. But there will be definitely times when actually, they are potentially a good client and it's just, that's just something they've brought to you.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

So, the first thing that he says is that being ambiguous removes confidence. So you don't want to make promises to people, because you don't want to make these guarantees, but by [00:08:00] not doing so, you might start to make people nervous, right? Which makes sense. You know, if they've come to you asking for a guarantee and you can't give them one, immediately that's going to maybe be a red flag for them.

Laura Davis: Yeah. They'll think, oh, you can't do the job properly.

Laura Moore: Yeah, exactly. So you need to think of a way that you can do that in another way. So instead of making promises about the results that you can provide, you can make other promises. So promises about the process. So instead of saying, yes, I can guarantee that I'll get you 5,000 followers, you can say, I can promise that what I will do is I will put out X amount of content each week.

It will be based on these things. I'll create this amazing strategy. We'll do this customer research. So you're promising something else. You're promising a different deliverable. And, you know, you're reclaiming that confidence back for them without making unrealistic promises.

Laura Davis: Yeah, I used to always, whenever people ever asked for guarantees, I would always say the only guarantee is that I will do my best.

I will do my best [00:09:00] and I will, it sounds like, I promise that I'll do my best to do my duty to God, to serve the queen and help other people keep the Brownie Guide Law. Um, I, yeah, so I just, I'll just promise I'll do my best and I will keep them informed of how things are going and then I would be like, how often do you want me to, speak to you, like what, you know, and that's how the conversation would, would go.

Laura Moore: Yeah, totally.

And you can, you can kind of remove that expectation of that guarantee by talking about the things that we've already spoken about and saying, you know, that you can't control those external factors, but then you can put it back on them and you can, like, a bit like Laura's just said, but you can say, look, to give us the best possible chance of making that happen, we need these three things.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

We need a solid strategy. We need a really in depth audience and competitor analysis. Maybe we need a really strong proactive engagement strategy. You might even say, you know, we need really highly shareable content. We need ads, you know, all of those things that then make them think, oh, okay. So that's why these people have got those results [00:10:00] because they've done all of these other things.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Right.

Laura Moore: And they're not just coming at it blind. So you're kind of putting the onus back on them. The other thing that he said, which I thought was really interesting, was that he said that people listen to and they trust expert authority. So if somebody is coming to you, then they probably already see you as an expert.

But how can you persuade them that you're right, especially if you don't feel like you are the expert, because maybe you've got a bit of imposter syndrome or something. Or maybe you think that they are not listening to what you're saying in terms of the guarantee. How else can you approach that? And how else can you get them to listen to like an expert authority?

So to do that, you can quote people like, well, the head of Instagram says X, Y, Z. Or this industry leader is doing blah, blah, blah. Or your competitors are doing X, Y, Z. And this seems to be working for them. Those sorts of comparisons and things that have come from other people who they probably trust and see as an authority [00:11:00] can make you look really good and make them trust and have confidence in you.

Laura Davis: I think this is where as well, when you're, you can own your niche, I think this can really help because you, you're speaking with confidence and therefore showing your authority within that sector or that platform or however you've chosen to niche, and I do think that gives people more confidence because they feel like this person knows my industry, my problems, whatever it may be.

So definitely own it. And I love the, the competitors bit, like whenever I mentioned what my client's competitors are doing, they sit up and listen, and they realise that I understand the, the climate that they're in, what's being achieved elsewhere. They're quite respectful of that. And I've been able to interpret what's happening on competitors and be able to give them some intel.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

They love it.

Laura Moore: Yeah. And that's right. How brilliant to go into like some sort of like a pitch or discovery call and have that information and be saying, look, [00:12:00] I've looked at your competitors, this is what they're doing. This is X, Y, Z, and you know, immediately they're going to take you as an expert because you've done that work.

And most people wouldn't do that work. And by the way, that work is not hard to do. We use a tool called "Social Insider". We'll put the link for that in the show notes. And you can just pull in your competitors and find out information about them. And what the, you know, their content strategy and how many times they're posting.

And you know, the type of content that works really well for them. So it's definitely worth a look. Especially if you're going into like a big meeting with a big client that you really, really want. And you want to make sure that, that they do see you as that trusted expert authority.

The final thing that he said, and I think this is the one that people find hardest. He said that filler words breed uncertainty, which is obviously what you don't want.

Laura Davis: Oh God.

Laura Moore: So, and Laura, like is the expert at filler words. So when you're speaking to a client and they're asking you a question, it's really, really hard not to say um, when you're thinking right? Because that um, kind of gives you the space to think.

It fills [00:13:00] in that awkward silence and we're all guilty of it. We will all, someone will ask us a question and we'll go um, and immediately that makes you look like you're thinking about the answer. And if you look like you're thinking about the answer, that makes them think you don't know the answer, and it breeds that uncertainty a little bit, right?

Laura Davis: That's so interesting. I know, sorry, I know you've not finished, but yesterday we were on a call, and we haven't discussed this actually, but every time you, we asked a question, instead of their response being, um, their response was, every single question was, good question.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

Laura Moore: Yeah.

Laura Davis: So it still gives them that split second for them to formulate their answer in their head, but they haven't gone, um, they've gone, good question.

Laura Moore: Yeah. Yeah. And that was the advice that this guy said. He said, you know, instead of using those filler words, like your ums, replace it with something better. And that example is definitely something better, but even if you can't think of that, silence is better than an um, because your silence, it just. It kind of gives that [00:14:00] space, and the way to, I know it's very awkward to try and change habits, but the way to kind of pull that into your being and into how you have a conversation is to just speak slower.

Respond slower to all the questions. Not just the ones you have to think about, but all of the questions. If somebody asks you a question that you already know the answer to, don't immediately give it, just be slow. Because then on the times when you don't know the answer, and you are thinking that slowness is less obvious.

Laura Davis: Oh, I love that.

Laura Moore: And I speak really fast.

Laura Davis: Yeah, you do.

Laura Moore: So I find that difficult.

Laura Davis: And you, you love to get your answer. Like you, you can see sometimes you're like.

Laura Moore: Oh, I just have to spit it out. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Hold me back. Definitely. Yeah. But what he said about this is he said that responding more slowly shows that you're being much more thoughtful.

And that is a positive signal because that instils confidence because you're being thoughtful about your answer without questioning yourself by putting in an um. So if you speak really slowly and more [00:15:00] deliberately and pause instead of saying um then the person who's listening to you immediately feels more confident in what you're saying.

I thought all of those things were like so interesting.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

Laura Davis: Yeah they're good.

Laura Moore: How you change what you're saying.

Laura Davis: They're so good.

Laura Moore: But I think there's something to be said that you can actually probably prevent a lot of these conversations in the first place. So you don't need to worry about how many ums you're saying.

Laura Davis: Yeah I think. Um, um. I'm going to be conscious of my um's now. We can totally remove a lot of that by tackling this whole conversation in the content that you're sharing on your own marketing, whether that be on your website, on your social media. You know, and you can call out the bullshit. You can call out that this dude, we're not obviously calling out someone specific, but if someone's promising you a 10 percent increase in sales off the back of your Instagram, organic, like you call it out and you can then create [00:16:00] exactly what we've been saying today.

You can kind of say that this, this is absolute bullshit and this, this is why I won't guarantee, but this is what I do guarantee. And you can tackle like what we've talked about before in terms of the way you work and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So you can try to avoid these conversations by using your content.

Laura Moore: Yeah, social proof, like social proof can work wonders for getting rid of these conversations. Like results from clients you've already worked with, but the story around, you know, how you got those results and what those results meant for a client, not just in terms of they got an extra 10,000 followers, like what did that actually mean?

And that the actual impact that had on the business, case studies, you know, testimonials, all of that stuff has such a big impact.

Laura Davis: Yeah. You have to choose wisely though. You've got to make sure your case studies and social proof is relevant. And because like I've got a case study on my website where I made a client, what was it? [00:17:00] £1.6 million within four weeks.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

If a client came to me tomorrow with a 50p postcard business, that's not transferable. So it's about making sure that you're, although you may have incredible social proof, incredible results from clients, you've got to make it, don't set yourself up for a fail by -

Laura Moore: Yeah, keep it realistic.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Just make sure it's, it's on par with what you might be able to achieve for that business. And again, if you're within a certain niche and only work with a certain type of business or on a certain platform, for example, then it might be easier to do that anyway. It might be more comparable, but for me, I've got varied, uh, varied results and case studies.

Laura Moore: Yeah, definitely. And I think like, as well as your marketing, you can nip these conversations in the bud before you kind of get on those conversations, like your pre qualifying system, that should be doing a lot of this heavy lifting. That should be identifying who these people are that might have [00:18:00] these expectations so you can have those responses ready.

You know, if you just had a simple question, what does success look like for you when we're working together and someone says, yeah, I have 5, 000 new followers every week, you immediately know that's going to come up in the conversation and you can have those conversations or you can just not invite them to a call.

You can, you know, you pull those things out at that beginning stage and like, don't be afraid to say no to somebody. If someone's expectations are like completely wild, they're not, you know, in alignment with the platform, with their budget, with their business. Tell them, say no, you don't have to speak to everyone on a call, just because they filled in your form doesn't mean they're entitled to your time, you don't have to work with everyone.

Laura Davis: Well that's the whole point of having a form, the whole point of having a pre qualifying system and your filter is that you filter out the people that do not align with you and that's not just you don't like the business or the business isn't, it's [00:19:00] some of their expectations. You know, and yes, you are judging by what someone's written in a form, but, and it may be, you know, maybe if you're desperate for a new client, maybe you're more likely to go on a discovery call than if you're actually really busy and you, you can cope without working with pains in the arse.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

So obviously your situations probably will wildly vary in terms of how likely you are to get on a call, but you can definitely just say no.

Laura Moore: But, but this is why it's so important on your website not to have a button that says book a call. Have a button that says apply to work with me, have them fill in that form, and don't then redirect them to your Calendly after they've filled in the form.

Say thank you, I'll be in touch soon, and then you invite them if you want to. It should be very difficult for somebody to actually book a call with you. Like, it should be easy for somebody to fill in your form, it should be easy for somebody to send you an email. It shouldn't be easy for somebody to get on a Zoom with you.

Laura Davis: Yeah, God.

Laura Moore: I think that's a whole different rant that I'm about to go on there. [00:20:00] And then in terms of like the people who you do actually get on that call with, before that call, like, we were just talking about case studies and stuff that might be in your marketing, you can send those things that are relevant before the call so they've had another chance to see it.

They may not have seen it on your Instagram or your LinkedIn, for example, but if you, you could, you know, you could send it with the confirmation of the call.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Nice.

Laura Moore: And then when they're actually on that call, like just own it, like really own that call and start strong and feel confident and ask why to a lot of their questions.

Like, why do you want to do that? What impact will that have on your business? So you're really getting the nitty gritty of, you know, what it actually is that they want. And they're really understanding and having to think about what it is that they want and why they want it. Because those conversations then, when they come up in reporting and monthly meetings and stuff, it's already, they've already kind of, you've come out, overcome those things.

Laura Davis: Yeah, it's really important to have honest conversations, I think, at that early [00:21:00] stage in your relationship, because if you, if you go into these kind of discovery



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

calls being a bit, kind of, a bit of a people pleaser, a bit of a wanting to make all the right sounds and say all the right things because you just want the client, but actually without tackling some of the underlying issues that they're expecting, you know, 5,000 followers a week or whatever you said before.

Like you're setting yourself up for a fall, whereas you just need to say, you know, okay, I appreciate that you want 5,000 extra followers a week. Can we just chat a little bit more about that? Can you tell me why you want that? Is that your ultimate goal?

Or are you actually wanting sales, you plonker? Like, and, and, and, like what Laura covered before about that Jonah geezer, like, speak with confidence. It's okay to ask these questions. I think, if I was on a discovery call and someone was really happy to kind of question me and push [00:22:00] back and to, to find more information.

I would really rate that I'd be like, okay, this person is the real deal. This person isn't just going, okay, yeah, I can do that for you. Like, yeah, it just gives me more confidence that they're actually drilling down into that nitty gritty. And I would really rate that.

Laura Moore: And like we were talking before about that expert authority, if you were asked a question, you've said that you want 5,000 followers a week and the person, the social media manager then asks you why and you're saying because I want to sell more of my 50p postcards and that social media manager then says to you, okay, well actually having 5,000 more followers probably won't do that because not all your followers are going to see your content, not all the followers are going to click links.

What we should instead focus on is creating like a launch campaign and using really highly clickable content and showing off why people should buy your postcards and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. That makes you look like the authority. That builds confidence.

Laura Davis: Yeah.

Laura Moore: You then [00:23:00] just saying, yeah, okay, we can get you 5,000 followers.

It might build a little bit confidence in the fact that you might be able to do that. You won't be able to deliver on it, but they then only have that confidence in that small piece of what you can deliver, or they think you can deliver, not in the rest of like how you're going to actually have an impact on their business.



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. You managing expectations right off the bat will make your situation and lives so much easier going forward. And I think that's not to say that in six months time your client might go, oh, we haven't got as many followers as I thought and you might have to keep having that same conversation and keep reiterating like I have to do that constantly and that's just, and that's just how it is.

But if you start as you mean to go on.

Laura Moore: I don't think any of these conversations, none of these conversations are ever going to be like a one and done thing. You're always going to have to keep repeating yourself, keep repeating yourself because they're not just listening to you. Your clients are being told things by other people in their team, by other content they're seeing, by other business [00:24:00] owners who've had different things.

So you're not the only expert in their mind that's telling them stuff. So you're always going to have to answer these things as time goes by. And it can be really frustrating. If you just remind yourself that you're not the only person in their ear, I think that helps to relieve that frustration a little.

Laura Davis: And so whether, and on that point, whether it's a discovery call stage or six months, 12 months, 18 months down the line, how you speak and the confidence you respond with when they ask you these questions, the better that will be for you. If you waver and um, and uh, and, and show you don't know what you're doing, then that puts doubt in their mind.

So then, and as Laura says, because they're chatting to other people, someone goes, oh, you know what? My social media manager, she's doing really, why don't you have my social media manager instead? You know, she's got capacity and that's it, you're out and they've replaced you with probably someone who does make guarantees and doesn't meet it and is all [00:25:00] talking out their arse.

And, you know, you have to speak with confidence.

Laura Moore: Yeah, definitely.

So, quick recap then about these tips that will help you. Slow your responses down, so you can get rid of some of those filler words. That will definitely help to instil a bit of



111 - Instil Confidence in Potential Clients Without Guaranteeing They'll Go Viral

confidence. Make promises about the process that you're going to give somebody, not the outcome that they can expect.

And set expectations about what you need to get the results that they want. And when you do those things, immediately they will start to feel more confident. And also don't forget to use your marketing to kind of reduce those, those conversations happening and ask why a lot and push back on a client a lot in those calls.

So that's it. I hope this podcast has kind of given you some ideas of how you can be more confident. Let us know, drop into the Facebook group. We'll make sure that the link that is in the show notes or come over on Instagram and send us a DM and we will be back same time, same place next week with more tips and ideas and inspiration.

We'll see you then.

Laura Davis: Bye.

Laura Moore: Au [00:26:00] revoir. Why are we singing our goodbyes today? Very strange.

