



# How Books Increase Our Authority and Leadership with Azul Terronez

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Pat Flynn: One thing I love to do in my business is to pull back the curtain and to share with you a lot of the behind the scenes, and the processes that I work through to accomplish some of the goals. Sometimes, it's a win; sometimes, it is a fail; but every time, it's going to be a lesson for you. That's why I continue to do what I do, and why I continue to experiment, and try new things. Now, I've been writing books for a number of years now. Thank you to everybody who has supported my previous book, *Will It Fly?*, and helped it, as a self-published book, become a Wall Street Journal bestseller. In case you haven't heard yet, my next book is finally coming out. It's called *Superfans*, and it comes out in August of this year, by the time this episode publishes, about a month later.

I wanted to bring in my book writing coach, Azul Terronez, who was very, very vital in the process of writing my previous book, *Will It Fly?*, to talk a lot about the book writing process, yes, but more so, how we, as thought leaders—that's you the listener—can implement a book strategy in terms of not just writing a book because you have a message to share. That's a big part of it, obviously, but how does the book actually play a role in the growth of our business, in our authority, and how it can help us get on stages, and get more book proposals, and those kinds of things.

I wanted to bring Azul on because he was incredibly important in my book writing journey, and with my new book coming out I wanted to just bring people on to share with you, behind the scenes, how I approach book writing now, and Azul's take. Because he, and his partner Steve, are now helping thought leaders and world changers create books of their own too. We're going to dive right in after the intro. Here we go.

Announcer: *Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host, he's co-inventor of the SwitchPod, Pat Flynn.*

Pat: What's up everybody? Pat Flynn here and welcome to Session 379 of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. My name is Pat Flynn, here to

help you make more money, save more time, and help more people, too. Today, we're talking books. Whether you've already written a book or are in the process of writing a book, or even just starting to think about writing a book, this is going to be helpful. We're bringing on my book writing coach, Azul Terronez, who has just an incredible journey. He was a former teacher and even has a TED Talk that has been seen over a million times, which is not related to book writing directly, but there's just so many things to unpack here. I'm really excited.

Also, like I said earlier, really excited about my upcoming book, *Superfans*, which, in my eyes, is going to be a huge benefit to those of you who are just starting out, especially in your business. But even if you have a business that's been running for a while, we're always looking for new strategies, new ways to help grow our business. In my eyes, I'm putting the foot down: the best way to grow your business is to not focus on new traffic, and paying for ads, and any of that stuff; it is focusing on the people that are in your brand already, even if it's just one person, and helping that person become a fan. Because when they become a superfan, they start to grow your business for you without you even trying. That's what's happened with Smart Passive Income over the years. I have the best fans in the world, and my goal is to have you find the best fans in the world for you to help you grow your business in an organic, and really, truly, a fun way. That's what *Superfans* is about.

If you want to get that book, and pre-order it, and support me now, all you have to do is go to [YourSuperfans.com](http://YourSuperfans.com), and you can pre-order the book. You can submit your receipt there and we'll hook you up with some bonuses like the audiobook. That's right, I'm actually giving away the audiobook to anybody who pre-orders the book right now before August 13th. So go to [YourSuperfans.com](http://YourSuperfans.com), follow the instructions there, and you'll get set up. Thank you to everybody who has already supported that book. I'm looking forward to seeing how it goes in August

But for now, we're going to talk book writing, and book publishing, and how these books can support us with our goals as business owners to help us not just spread the message, but actually grow our brand. And help us land more stages, have us write more books, and get more opportunities, and help more people. That's what it's all about. Let's dive right in. Here's Azul Terronez from Born to Write and AuthorsWhoLead.com. Here we go.

Azul, welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast. Thank you so much for joining me today. It's just such an honor that you're here today.

Azul Terronez: Pat, thank you so much. I'm thrilled to be here.

Pat: It's been a long time coming. A lot of people have heard your name before, and for those who haven't, I'd love for you to explain a little bit about who you are, what you do, what your work is, what your superpower is. I want to dive a little bit into how you got to here because it's been an interesting journey. And more than that, I want to make sure we cover how you were so important and vital to my business, and some of the work that you've done with my books because you help people write books. It's just so great what you've been able to do for me and so many other people to help spread their message, become more of a leader and an authority in their space. We're going to get into that, and make sure you stick around because we're going to get into a lot of important conversations about why a book for your leadership, how it can help you in your business, how it fits into your business plan, and all those great things. But man, you should have been on way long ago. I'm just so thrilled that you're here. How would you define what you do now?

Azul: When people ask me what I do, I say, "I'm a book whisperer." They often say, "What is that?" I say, "Well, I help people find the message for their book and make sure it's born in the way it's supposed to be so they can build their brand, amplify their business, and make more sales towards their life."

Pat: I love that. The book whisperer. That's cool.

Azul: Yeah.

Pat: That's so cool. But you didn't always write books. What were you doing before you were writing books and helping other people write books?

Azul: You know, when we first intersected, I was a school teacher. I spent twenty-four years as a principal, a teacher, and a university instructor for educators. I was looking for a way to make a transition, and that's basically how I crossed your path, and started reading your blog, really, back in 2008 when I started figuring out what is this thing called passive income. I didn't really know what I was doing, to be honest, and that's how I started to follow you, and learn from you, and people like you because I found so much struggle finding someone that I could trust their integrity. That's the thing that resonated with me with you. Being a teacher, I was capable of learning, I just wanted to learn from the right people. I remember specifically that you were having a One-Day Business Breakthrough, which is something you did with Chris Tucker, in-person live events, and I was following you on social, and you posted, "I'm having one more of these in-person events. I'm not posting it anywhere but here, and there's a link, click to buy." And I did it. I bought it. I didn't have the money, and I bought the thing, and then I read more carefully that you need to show your business, what's your website, what's your model, be ready to sit in the hot seat, and I was terrified because I didn't have any of that.

I knew I had a book idea in me, and I thought, "You know what? I'm going to finish this book. I have about thirty days until this One-Day Business Breakthrough, and I'm going to write it, and post every day to hold myself accountable, and finish this book in thirty days." And I showed up the day of the event with the book done. That's the only thing I had to show up with. I think that's the thing that sparked everything because people started asking, "Well, how did you do that?"

Pat: I remember that because you were one of the students who we were like, “Wait, what are you doing here?” Not that we didn't want you there, but me and Chris were running this workshop called the One-Day Business Breakthrough Workshop, fifteen to twenty students paid their way to come in here, get in the hot seat, and help them scale their existing business. It wasn't there for people to find their niche, or figure out how to get started; it was literally, “Okay, you got your start. Let's scale this thing. Let's break down your existing business and build it back up even better.” It was your hot seat, and you told us that like, well, you didn't have a business, and even when you signed up, you didn't have anything, but within a month, you wrote this book. We were all blown away like, “Not everybody can do that. How did you do that?”

We started asking you a lot of questions, but then we started to ask you things like, “What do you want? How do you want to progress from here?” You wrote this book. It's called The Art of Apprenticeship: How to Hack Your Way Into Any Industry, Get a Mentor, and Make a Killing Doing What You Love. It's a beautifully written book. I've done a review on it on my YouTube channel before. It's available on Kindle, and paperback, and I'll link to it in the show notes, of course, but tell me what was going through your head during those moments. You wrote this book, you knew you had it in you, but how did this book end up helping you, and how did it help you determine where you wanted to go next?

Azul: Well, I was blown away by the caliber of people sitting in that group. If you think of all the people there and where they are today, it was 2014, I think that was, and they were already pretty much six-figure business owners or on their way, and then so many of them have catapulted. But for me, not knowing what to do, I didn't realize . . . And you had asked what kind of thing could I do. I thought I'd be writing curriculum for teachers. I had no idea that this would be a struggle: writing a book, getting confidence to do it, and knowing what to say. I just didn't know anything about online business, but I knew a lot about helping writers, about structuring writing, about how



to find the message, and tuning in because I spent a lot of time listening. Mainly because I'm dyslexic person, so school was always hard. I flunked out of freshman English at UCLA. I had to take it again. I always struggled to read, even at third grade, so writing was hard.

I had something to my advantage, which was that I was really good at listening for the things that were in between. I think that's what people started asking me: "Could you help me write my book?" I didn't know that would be useful. It never crossed my mind. That's the thing that kind of sparked the idea. Rather than focus on *The Art of Apprenticeship*, which was what I was attempting to do, I want to follow the people that are doing these things, and serve them, and that's what apprenticeship is about, about service. So many people try to take from someone like, "Could you mentor me? Could you show me?" but I thought, "Wow, if we could just serve the people that we care about, then we could really learn," and that's what I was there to do. I think that's the spark of it for me is finding that there was a need for people that maybe I could fill.

Pat: And you definitely had proven that with that book, and then you started to get more people asking you for help with their book, including me.

Azul: Right!

Pat: This was around the time of the origin story of *Will It Fly?*, my book that came out in early 2016, and I reached out to Azul, and we decided to work together to help me through this book. It was after a trial and failure of trying to get it done myself. I just didn't know how to approach it. Yes, I had already written a book before that called *Let Go*. But that was more of a memoir, it was more based on just personal story, it wasn't a business teaching-type book, an information book like I wanted to create. Actually, it was really not even well-defined at this point. That was the first thing that you helped me with.

Take us back to Barnes & Noble and the exercise you ran me through that was really eye-opening for me to help me determine what the book that I was supposed to write was. Because it was definitely not called *Will It Fly?* and it definitely didn't land on the idea behind *Will It Fly?*, which was to help people validate their business idea yet. When I first started working with you, it was really a brainstorming session. I'd love for you to tell us how that went down, and how, even those of us listening at home, can do that exercise right after this.

Azul:

Right, yeah. Really, it was about emptying your head because you had so many ideas. I remember, we met at Barnes & Noble to have some inspiration, and then we talked about your ideas. I said, "Well, why don't you just empty your head on a piece of paper? Like a visual map of what you think this book could be, what it might be." When we stopped, and you said, "I think this is it." And there was every topic that was possibly Pat Flynn could teach, which is podcasting, affiliate marketing, online marketing, business, growing an audience, all of these things, and your vision was you wanted to be an encyclopedia for everything online. We said, "Okay, maybe the Book for Dummies, in some regards, that Pat Flynn's authority would be shared all this."

But as we walked around, I remember asking you, "Pat, do people read encyclopedias anymore?" I remember you going, "Uh, I don't think so?" I'm like, "Huh." I think that's the thing is that you've got to see the book before it's written. You kind of see, "What is this?" Because if you rush too quickly into it, you invest a lot of time and energy and thinking into a book that maybe won't serve you, and then ultimately, may not serve the audience as you want. That was a big aha in that process of unpacking it before you actually start writing it and dive into an outline, I think was important. And then watching you apply your own style to it, and deciding to use Post-Its, and deciding to color code them, deciding to move things around, I think that was important, too, if people realize you can see things visually if you can move them around in ways like using index cards or Post-Its. I think Jon Vroman from the Front Row Factor, he used a



big whiteboard. People use different ways, but at the visual way to map out the book was the first place we started.

Pat:

Yeah. After that encyclopedia idea, and you had asked me and challenged me, and that's what makes you such a great coach. I've gotten a lot of inspiration on how to coach people from you and the way that you coached me through the book process because you never, ever once said, "Do this," or, "I think this is the path that you should go down." You asked me questions the entire time. I don't think ever once you told me what to do, but you would ask me questions so I could figure out what I needed to do. One of those first questions that you asked was, "How do you want this book to serve you and your audience?" That was such an important question to ask, and that's something that every soon to be author, anybody writing a book should be able to answer before they even dive into the topic.

To answer that question back then, I remember, how do I want this book to serve my audience? I want it to be an answer to some of their biggest problems and their questions. So then it became very clear to me. Well, let me figure out what their biggest problems are right now, and that's actually what spurred on a survey that was put in 2014 where I asked questions like, "What's your number one challenge related to starting a business?" We used some pretty sophisticated software; one called SurveyMonkey, that allowed us to have different, "If this answer, then serve this question next," and those kinds of things, but the most important question was that one for people who were just starting out, which is a majority of my audience: what are you worried about? What are you struggling with? What's the big challenge for you?

The answer that I got, in so many different ways, but it all boiled down to the same thing was, "I just don't know what idea to go forward with. How do I know it's the right idea? How do I make sure I don't waste my time and money?" That phrasing right there actually became the tagline for the book: "How to Test Your Next Business Idea so You Don't Waste Your Time and Money." The title came way,

way, way later, and we'll talk about that in a little bit, but that's how I knew, "Okay, that's the problem I need to solve."

I envisioned, thanks to you when you asked, "How do you expect people to react when reading this? How do you want them to behave after they read it?" It was like I want them to have the confidence that the idea they chose is the one that they can be confident that that's going to work for them. And then, it was reverse engineering: okay, when it comes to the content of the book, how do I get them there? I know where they're at, I know where I want them to go, but how do I transform them? That was one of the first moments I was introduced to that word, transformation, and that was from you. We hear that all the time now, and it's such a beautiful way to think about anything you produce, how you transform people with it, but I still was struggling with the writing process.

After we determined, okay, this was the topic that I was going to tackle, this is how it's going to be used in my business, I wasn't quite so future-thinking of, "Okay, this is how it's going to turn into an online course," but I was thinking about it in the way that you had coached me, which was, "This is how I will be using it to serve my audience." But the writing process was, I mean, do you remember how much I struggled with writing? We met at the coworking space in San Diego several times, and I was just struggling for, "Okay, I know where I want them to go, but how do I get them there?" Can you remember some of the ways that you coached me through that process of determining how and what to include in this book so that it actually accomplished the goal?

Azul:

Well, I think one of the things you already mentioned, which was what is it that I want them to walk away with? That's the hardest thing about a book is making it so simple that it doesn't get more complicated. Even though you might be doing some teaching inside that has lots of parts, the message should be "will it fly?" Will this be the thing that helps them achieve what they're hoping for? I remember when we did the readthrough, we'd ask ourselves the question, "Does this help that person?" I remember distinctly, one

day we looked at each other and go, “This isn't it because this doesn't meet that goal. It doesn't get them there, it starts to go too deep.” The manuscript that no one will ever see, perhaps, that you wrote in the beginning wasn't on par to what you had hoped for. Also, the big why that you wanted, you wanted to start being able to create courses of your own because up until then, you hadn't done that. It was also a big motivation, but also terrifying because you're like, “This has to be good or it has to be right so that I can grow something on my own.”

So all those pressures that we put on ourselves when we're creating something, really like art—and I really believe writing is art—so knowing clearly where you want to go and what's your big why was even on your mind as you were writing the book. Some of the adjustments were made as to let go of things. Sometimes we create great content that doesn't serve the purpose of the book, and that was a big aha, I think, just owning that.

Pat:

That was. I remember writing a few chapters that never ended up in *Will It Fly?* because we had to, as who is it? Stephen King? He says, “You've got to kill your darlings,” and even though it's well-written, it may not serve its real purpose in the book. But then you had some great ideas like maybe that can be a bonus chapter, or maybe that can be a podcast episode, you could talk about those same things. And I've done that, but I've never mentioned, “Oh, this was actually going to be a chapter in *Will It Fly?*, but it wasn't.” I was still able to reuse that content in different ways.

But I remember when I was going through the book writing process, and there were moments where I wanted to give up, Azul, and I was questioning why am I writing this? I knew what I wanted it to do, but I was like, “Aren't there other ways that I can serve my audience with this information? Aren't there different mechanisms for me to deliver this content that would likely be easier for me to create? Why a book?” I'd love for you to speak to those who are in the audience thinking about creating something so that they can build their authority, so that they can speak more on stages, so that they can do

all these things they want to do, and are not quite sure that a book is the way to go. Why books? You, obviously, are all-in on books right now, but I'd just love to know why, Azul? Why all-in on books, specifically?

Azul: Well, I think the number one reason is that books have hundreds of years of history around what they are. You don't have to explain to a four-year-old or a hundred-and-four-year-old what a book is. They instantly understand. Because they were written, typically, and curated by people with knowledge, people have an inherent belief that books are valuable, and that people that write them are important. Does it mean that there are plenty of bad books? Yeah, it does, but that doesn't take away from the idea of so many people try to write books but so few people actually publish them. Even though it may seem like everyone seems like they might be writing a book, I think the New York Times in 2008 put out an article that said eighty-one percent of Americans say they have a book inside of them, but only three percent actually ever finish a manuscript, which is a very small percentage, right?

Pat: Yeah, very.

Azul: And you know because you finished a book and realized, "Uh oh, this isn't it," and most people would probably give up, but you just pushed through. But of those three percent, only thirty percent of those people who actually finished a manuscript actually ever get published, so you really are in an elite group of people if you write a book. It would be way different I went to that One-Day Business Breakthrough and said, "Hey, I just wrote twenty blog posts in thirty days." I don't think that would have had the same impact.

Pat: No.

Azul: Because the perception around books have a much higher value. It's one way to grow authority, and you don't have to package the messaging around what a book is; you can focus completely on your message. Because people, even if they don't read your book, if

they're able to talk about it, it gives you authority. Think of all the books you purchased that you had good intent to read, and you planned to, but you still haven't, but you might even still talk about it because it's in the popular conversation. But those books still have value, even if they don't read all of the content because of the very nature of it being a book.

Pat: I have this question, and I think a lot of other people do: if we're writing a book, how do we know if it's successful? I think that we all know that most books don't end up on the New York Times Bestseller List, and for some people, that's a failure, which is unfortunate because your book can do amazing things even without being on the lists. I was very fortunate, and again, I can't thank you enough, with *Will It Fly?*, that *Will It Fly?*, after its first week, made the Wall Street Journal Bestseller as a self-published book. First of all, I didn't even know that was possible. That was one of the happiest moments of my life to see that, and of course, still today, the book is being read. I'm still getting tweets and now it's in nine different countries around the world in different languages. It's just continued to go on, and I think that speaks to how much we worked in the beginning. But I think different people have different goals, especially leaders who are striving to serve their audience in different kinds of ways, who have different goals. What are some benefits of writing a book beyond the authority? Yes, we get this authority with a book, but what are some specific things that we can look forward to, and how else might we be able to use a book in our business to help spread our message even more beyond the text?

Azul: Well, definitely number one, Amazon being one of the top search engines in the world, it makes you more searchable. You show up more often when people are searching for their problem, which is usually what they're doing when they're looking for a book is solving their problem. That's definitely one. There's multiple ways in which you can deliver a book. You can create an audiobook, which more and more people, as the years have progressed, are using audiobooks as a means to consume content. That's another stream of income. And like you said, they can be translated into multiple



languages. Even though the market might be saturated in one niche that you're a part of, in other countries, that might be a complete void.

There's so many opportunities. And then as you know, there's course content that can be created, there's opportunity to speak, and I want people to remember, I was a school teacher. I was not sure, even, that I had a business idea. And it wasn't until people like you started saying, "I'd really love help," that I thought, "Wow, I'm just like all these people in Pat's group. I'm one of them who never made more than five hundred dollars online and don't know if this is the right idea." And the validation I got was that I was on the right track. So, it brings people to you in a way that establishes you as an authority that has done great things. I got invited to speak at a TEDx. I didn't even have to apply. That was a huge win because the introduction could be made: "I want to introduce you to Azul. He's an author." They didn't say how many books did he sell or what's the number of clicks on his website. They really wanted to know that he was trustworthy. That has led to multiple keynote speeches that I'm getting paid for. So I think it has a lot of places it can go once it's written, including more books, more opportunities for other things.

Pat: Now, is that something you think about as you are writing a book? Would you recommend that in terms of like, "My goal with this book is to be on a TEDx stage," and you kind of develop this whole plan? Or is it something that you just write the best thing that you can, and you put it out there, and you cross your fingers, and hope for the best? How much planning can we actually do for our future with a book in mind?

Azul: I think if you think of your book as your brand, I tell people, "Think of this book as your transformation moment." If you think of it as transactional, meaning, "I know stuff, I'm going to tell you stuff," then it ends up being very superficial and people don't remember it. But if you're curating a real transformation that you're having as an author, like you were at the time—you were transitioning from just an affiliate marketer to someone who was creating content that people would



consume—that's a huge shift for you, and you're thinking differently, so your journey starts to shift. Not only that, but if you're thinking about a book, all a book really is, is a five or seven-hour conversation, whatever the length it would take them to read your book. I say, look, if you're going to have a conversation with somebody, whether it be five minutes in an airport lounge or an hour at a dinner, what's the conversation you want to own, that you feel like you want to hang onto, that you could have in multiple ways in multiple places? That's why creating a speech, the initial idea is very similar because you're curating the idea that you're going to own.

So to validate that, that's the book that I'm launching as well was built on the idea of what if it were just a talk? What if I validated a book through a talk first to see if it has legs? To see if it has virality, or has meaning? That can be possibly a way you do things, just like you can create a blog post that maybe gets good traction. It could be the potential focus of a book. I think it's good to test those ideas before you commit because once you commit, you have to be on it, and a lot of books sell because they're marketed well, not just because they're good or well-written.

Pat: Yeah, for sure. And speaking of taking a speech as a validation and turning it into a book, that's exactly what I did with my next and upcoming book, which is coming out next month. It's called Superfans, and this is based on a talk that was done in 2015. Actually, it was 2014. It was very popular. I've been asked to do it over, and over, and over again all around the world. I've performed it in Australia, I've performed it all around the world, and then it was actually after speaking about Superfans in San Diego on Social Media Day, a good friend of mine, Jay Baer from Convince and Convert, came up to me. He was like, "Pat, dude, that was so good. You should turn that into a book."

I never had thought of that. I was like, "Oh, well, I delivered this content in a speech already. It's out there and that's the way people should consume it," but obviously, a book can be so much more wide-reaching, and more impactful, and authority-building, and reach

people who can't come to your conference. I'm just really excited that you mentioned that because that's the exact same path that I've taken with this book. I know a lot of people who are using even online events to test certain things, like webinars and other things where you're in front of an audience and you can gauge reactions right away. Sometimes people create free ebooks like Michael Hyatt did with his free ebook, which was called Living Forward, and that turned into a bestselling book down the road. I love that you're speaking on the idea of validation so you're not just creating to create, but you're creating because the audience has already spoken up and said that they've wanted to learn more about something.

Azul:

Right. That validation for the book, “What Makes a Good Teacher Great,” was even though it was eighteen minutes of my life on a stage, it validated how many people all over the world that cared about this topic. It was able to give proof so that I could commit to it. It's something I care about, it's something I believe in, so I knew that messaging worked. If you're not careful, if you just talk about information, it could easily run dry on you.

But you, *Superfans*—the qualities that you've held up, even since that talk in 2014, exemplify who you are. It continues to be who you are. It's a message that will continually resonate with your followers and for you, so that's an important way to look at books. Will I keep wanting to have this conversation or will I only care about it for a little bit?

Pat:

Right. Now, speaking of thinking about the future and how a book can play a role in your business, as a leader, as somebody who's trying to monetize and all those kinds of things, I remember with *Will It Fly?*, it was a very last minute decision to add the companion course in *Will It Fly?*. For those of you who haven't read *Will It Fly?*, in the first few pages and throughout the entire book, you'll see call to actions to go to a specific page to get a bonus free companion course, which actually was inspired by a show that I love called *The Walking Dead*.

I don't know if you even know this origin story, Azul, but I was watching *The Walking Dead* with my wife. We're pretty big superfans. You'll see it end up in the book, actually. We go to *The Walking Dead* "Walker Stalker Con," as it's called, and we don't do cosplay just because the fake blood would not travel very well, but other than that. Anyway, we're big fans of *The Walking Dead*. Before *The Walking Dead* plays on AMC, they go, "Hey, go to [WalkingDeadStorySync.com](http://WalkingDeadStorySync.com) and you can get your side-by-side experience while you watch this to get some behind the scenes and other stuff." It's such a cool experience. I wanted to create that for *Will It Fly?*, so I set up a Teachable course in a day and a half. It was right before the manuscript was due and we were going to go to print with it, essentially. I set it up and got the URL for it, and just in a day and a half, I built the course in a way where it was structured lesson by lesson, was working in conjunction with the chapters in the book.

So you can go into the companion course, and you see the images that were in the book, but they're high res; all the links that were mentioned in each chapter are in each chapter in the course; and then some videos on things that are a little bit more difficult to explain via text. I can't tell you how many comments I get about that, but more than that, I recently checked the data, it's thirty-five percent of people who read the book get into that course, and it's free, but guess what I have now? I have their email address and I can reach back out to them.

It was actually though the emails that I was sending to them on further help with *Will It Fly?* that inspired me to create my first online course. My first online course was going to be about something else, but this was getting asked about so much because of that direct connection with my readers. Because unless you collect their email, there's really no way to know who's reading your book. They asked me for more information and that's where Smart From Scratch came from. That turned into a lot of confidence that allowed me to build Power-Up Podcasting, and then 123 Affiliate Marketing. It really was the start of all that. How soon . . . ? Can we plan for lead capture like that into our book? Is that something we should think about as we

are creating content in the book? Because that was truly a last minute thing, and I think it could have been done even better if I thought about it ahead of time.

Azul:

Yeah, absolutely. The great thing about Amazon and books that are delivered, you could put links in there. In fact, in Kindle, they don't prevent you, they encourage you to put links to capture emails. That's awesome. They want it to be a great experience for their readers. So yeah, for sure, capitalize on that. Draw them off of a platform that doesn't let you collect their emails and get them. Especially if it's content that really engages them, that's important. I know even our mutual friend, Dana Malstaff, when we were working together on her book—because she actually is one of the people I met at one of the One-Day Business Breakthroughs and she wanted to write her book. The thing that I noticed about her is she was a content strategist, and I think her brand was called Expand Your Reach, and she had a podcast, and this whole brand. But she got really passionate during that same visual process where we talked about what is this book that we worked on in that Barnes & Noble.

The thing that I noticed, she had this little image or this little thing about a bucket of love. I said, “What is this, Dana? Why this bucket of love when we're talking about content strategy?” She had mentioned that she really felt like mothers felt guilty for loving their business as much as their children, or family, or spouse, and they didn't feel comfortable, but she really wanted them to be boss moms about it. I said, “What is a boss mom?” She went on and on. What happened was she pivoted, and she worked her way into a whole new brand because of the questioning, and because of the deeper understanding. Boss Mom, the book that became her brand of her podcast, the brand of her blog, and she used it to draw people into her programs as well, just like you did, and has been able to grow a huge audience, and become a strong influencer around women who want to start a business with children at home.

Pat:

Yeah, that's amazing. I've noticed a lot of people who have used their books to create transitions as an announcement and a way to step

into a new thing. *Superfans* is doing that for me a little bit, and I'm not going to reveal exactly how but you'll hear about it later. But it makes me think of Gretchen Ruben, it makes me think of Sally Hogshead, who each have books that then tie into a quiz that you could take that is their lead magnet. So Sally Hogshead, for example, has a book called Fascinate, where there's specific types of ways that we each, as a person, can be fascinating to others, and it's important to know that. It's like a StrengthsFinder test, but more like, "Well, what makes you interesting? You have to know that so that you can triple down on that and understand how you can best share your superpowers with others." And it's really cool. I remember her speaking at Social Media Marketing World, I think it was the very first Social Media Marketing World five or six years ago. She spoke and she was a great storyteller, but it made me want to get her book. But it also made me interested in this test, and I applied for it, and it's free, but then she started sending me emails and getting me into her ecosystem. It was a really cool, natural, smart, organic way to bring me into her brand, and share these things with me. It was just so fascinating.

And then there's other books like Storybrand, which comes to mind, which has a very specific framework that then . . . now people can hire a Storybranded person, sort of certified Storybrand person, to come and "Storybrand" their own website and business, and that's been really successful. There's StrengthsFinder that has people who specialize in offering StrengthsFinder tests to others. These are books that are obviously the start of something much bigger. Beyond just wanting to write a book, can you give us some insight on how one might be able to think about a book to be used on that level, and how do we even begin to start thinking about that?

Azul:

I always tell people it comes down to messaging. What is it that you're saying that's unique? Not original because a lot of people think, "Well, I have to think of something original." If you get too original, people won't know what you're talking about. It's hard to capture them. So, you've got to think: what's unique? What's my lens?



What's my view? Is there something that irks me in the world, something that I see in a fresh way that's been there all along?

And then when you can captivate them on something simple like that, and you want to own that conversation, then you're able to continually drive them to you as the answer. Simon Sinek comes to mind and Start With Why, being his book, the same thing that drives traffic back to his lead magnet and his site. It's not that he was the first one to ask this question, start with why, he just owned it. That's one thing you could do is like, "What do I want to own? What do I want to build my brand on? What do I want to build my capacity around so that I could be known for this in a long-lasting way?"

If you can do that in a way that's natural, that fits your personality, your uniqueness, your quality, even if you pivot in your business, will this still resonate with you? Do you still care about this topic enough? And then you're able to think of multiple ways to build engagement: a quiz, a course. I know people who give a free download of x-number of chapters of their audiobook if they want to get a lead magnet, something that simple. Go to here, you get the first five chapters, or go here and get a free interview behind the scenes with the author about the process. Those kinds of things are really valuable because they've grown to trust you in the process of reading your book and they want more.

Pat: That's true. That's amazing. You are now somebody who a lot of my colleagues and friends and other thought leaders go to for help with writing books. What do you think the biggest challenges are for busy thought leaders when it comes to writing books? What are some of the big objections or big hardships that they're having that you can share with us?

Azul: Number one, I don't know if I have time. I don't know if I have time to do this. That's one of the biggest objections. I often tell people that our perception of writing books is a little bit off. We think of books as being this really big task, when really, writing a book is a small task. When I asked Chris Guillebeau this in 2013, he's like, "Well, it's just



about writing a thousand words a day.” Just a word count a day. Five hundred words a day. It's not about how hard you work or that you have to sit over a typewriter for days and lock yourself in a cabin. That's what it really comes down to and that's what I used to apply to writing my book is break it down into small, bite-sized pieces. I remember, even for you, as far as the objection of time, I asked you, “How long does it take you to write a blog post?” Because you thought, “You know what? I'll speak the book. I'm a podcaster. I'll speak the book,” but that didn't really work for you. It just didn't come out the way you wanted it, but thinking about it in small, bite-sized pieces and saying, “I can write a blog post in about an hour,” and then breaking down that process into smaller steps.

So teaching people, number one, that most people think they're writing. They say, “I'm writing a book,” or, “I'm doing some writing.” What they really usually mean is, “I'm researching. I'm thinking. I'm looking at other people's books. I'm reviewing things on Amazon.” They're not really writing. I tell people, “Only say you're writing when words leave your brain from your fingers onto some page, either written by hand or on a computer, that's when you're writing. Only count that as writing and don't count thinking as writing,” so that you realize it doesn't take as long as you think. That's the number one objection. People usually say, “I don't have time.” I tell people, “If you have twenty minutes a day, you can write a book in six months without a problem.” It's just about understanding the basic principle.

Pat:

A lot of people listening to this might recall my November challenge from 2018, NaNoWriMo, which is a big worldwide thing where people challenge themselves. It's just this big worldwide movement that's been around for years. NaNoWriMo stands for National Novel Writers Month. I had used that as my challenge and accountability for trying to write a thousand words per day. I didn't always get a thousand words per day, but I did write every day, and on Instagram and on Twitter, I'd share a little spreadsheet that I added to every single day. *Will It Fly?* took me, overall, about eighteen to twenty-four months to finish, in terms of just the writing part of it, including scrapping the original manuscript and starting over again and that sort of stuff. The

*Superfans* book took me forty-five days to get to my first draft and it was because I definitely took it into day-by-day chunks. I, yes, had a little bit of an advantage knowing that I've spoken about this topic before, so it was something that I knew a lot about. And it's a little bit different presenting something and then writing a book about it, but it definitely did help me. But most of all, it was just chipping away at it, Azul, and it truly helped me.

Of course, I learned from the first go around to find the tool that worked best for me. Everybody, all my friends, were using Scrivener for their books, and I tried to use it as well, remember, with *Will It Fly?*, and it just was so overwhelming. You were like, “Pat, how do you write blog posts?” I was like, “Well, I write them in Google Docs.” And you were like, “Just write your book in Google Docs and write it as if you're writing a blog post. Just one chapter per Google Doc.” That is when things started to finally happen. So, I did that with *Superfans* right from the get-go, and it was really helpful. So again, thank you for everything that you've done and taught me. Hopefully, people are getting inspiration and learning how they might be able to write their books in not-so-long-as-they-might-think time since writing is so . . . Time is one thing. What's another big objection that thought leaders have when it comes to writing their books?

Azul:

They'll think, “How do I know it is the right idea? I have lots of ideas, I have lots of options, how do I find the right idea?” There's multiple ways to do it. If you want to make your living as a writer, and you want to write multiple books, you've really got to think about the overall stamina you need to have to keep writing books in a certain genre. Our friend, Steve Scott, he writes in a particular niche and he stays there because it's successful for him. He makes a significant amount of money every month on staying in niche. But if you want to write a book that helps you grow a brand, or launch a personal business in a certain way, and grow authority, people often get nervous. How do I pick the right idea?

I tell people, “Look, you have to think of this as that same thing: a conversation. What will you feel confident about talking with anybody

if you sat down with them? What do you feel like you want to own in this conversation?" If you can think of it that simply, and think of, "Well, what makes me unique in this conversation?" Because you're not the only one who has this niche or idea, but what will make you unique? Where can you stand out?

Oftentimes, people don't notice their greatness because they live in their body; they live in their soul; they don't see how great they are. They don't even notice how great their biggest failures, and their lowest lows, and their highest highs have to do with who they are. But a lot of people, if they focus on some of those things and brought them into their message, they could really have a huge impact. My wonder, when I was writing the book to go to the One-Day Business Breakthrough, is who am I? What do I have to say? The truth was I had a lens of being a teacher, I had a lens of being in a place of observing lots of people and studying things in a way that maybe other people wouldn't have. So I was able to use my thinking to my advantage and my perspective. I think that's one thing. Realize that the way you message a book, finding that idea is important, but there's no wrong choice; there's just the choice you make. You've got to commit. You can't be worried for too long.

Pat:

So we've talked about some of the objections. Can you share some success stories from some of the authors that you've helped in terms of what their book has done for them? Obviously, with *Will It Fly?*, it's turned into an internationally read book, and that's been really amazing. It's definitely led to more speaking opportunities. As a self-published book, it's led to publishers and agents reaching out to me, which is just unbelievable. We're still trying to figure out our future roadmap in terms of traditional versus self-publishing. We have some podcast episodes coming up that are going to be talking about that specifically.

*Superfans*, during the launch at least, is going to be self-published still. Again, you'll see that in August. But speak to some of the cool things that have happened since some of these leaders have

published their books beyond just, “Oh yeah, they made more money with a book.”

Azul:

Yeah. I think about Jon Vroman because he's just on top of my mind because he just sent me an email. He's a speaker, he usually speaks in colleges, but he wanted to not travel so much on the road, and he runs a foundation called Front Row Factor and basically gives people with a life-threatening illness an opportunity—a lot like Make-A-Wish, but adults can do it too—to get an experience in the front row of their choice. He wanted to write a book called The Front Row Factor. He wanted to use it to start to build a business around not traveling, but teaching, and educating, and leading. So just codifying his message, and his journey, and the purpose of that book, and the stories that people have experienced this. That book has led to not only incredible sales, and communities, and getting more gigs outside of the college arena—I think he said somebody recently just read his book, loved it, and signed him up for a thirty-five thousand dollar keynote. That's huge from his book because they liked his book. It really allowed him to leap into a place of like, he wants to spend more time with his family, commit to being a dad, and focus on starting more of that kind of business. That's one example.

I think others are that people have started to show up. There's one particular author who—he came to me from somebody else, he basically wanted to write a memoir, which those are difficult. They're difficult to sell, they're difficult to change, so it's got to be a personal journey. He said, essentially, in the email, “Here's 178 pages.” And he goes, “Essentially, this was my suicide note, but I didn't go through with it.” I was blown away that this man would send this to me, but he was messing up all of his life, he got into the Army, he got himself a little bit straight, but he was still struggling. He was trying to pass calculus for the third time when he'd only finished eighth grade math. His goal was, as he was writing the book and he was working with me to get it published, was to get to an Ivy League school. He goes, “That would be ultimate man. Some dropout, some guy that's a mess can get out of this army and get somewhere.” That book alone, during the process, he got accepted to Cornell.

- Pat: Wow.
- Azul: So just watching him commit to the ending of the book, which is, “What do I say? I’m not dead?” I’m like, “I don’t know. What do you want?” He’s like, “I want to go to Cornell.” That’s what he did. It’s called Mental Violation: Going from Rock Bottom to Ivy League. That book served him because he got what he was looking for. He got what he really wanted. And so if you look beyond even monetization, you could see it really taking you to a new place in life, and definitely, that’s one of the things that a book can do for you because it gives you clarity, it gives you a sense of focus in your business and your life.
- Pat: That’s amazing. Some amazing things have happened in your life since we last chatted or talked about you on the podcast, at least. I know that referencing the TEDx talk that you did, how many views does it have now, Azul?
- Azul: Maybe 1.4 million views.
- Pat: 1.4 million. We’ll link to that in the show notes, but tell us what that TEDx talk was, and as you said, it’s opened up a lot more opportunities for you. I’d love for you to talk a little bit about this upcoming book that you have, which is outside the realm of helping people write books, which you still do. Actually, you’re going even deeper into that. You and your partner, Steve, are creating workshops, and retreats for book writing. I’d love for you to share those things in a minute, but this TEDx talk, what was it about, and how does it tie into the book that you’re writing? When’s the book coming out?
- Azul: Yeah. The book idea I had for a while, it’s called What Makes a Good Teacher Great, but I had prepared a proposal. Actually, right around the time when you were finishing your book, I was writing this book proposal because I met Dan Roam, who is the New York Times bestselling author of The Back of the Napkin. He has a couple New



York Times bestselling books. And casually asked me, “Hey, what are you doing?” And I said, “I’m a teacher but I’m writing a book.” I just had an idea. I really wasn’t necessarily writing. It was writing in my head kind of thing.

He said, “Well, what is it?” I said, “Well, it’s called *What Makes a Good Teacher Great*.” I said, “For twenty-four years, I’ve asked this question in inner-city LA, in urban schools in Texas, in elite schools abroad, and I’ve collected twenty-six thousand responses to this question in the last twenty-four years.” He says, “That’s amazing. That’s a bestselling book. You should talk to my agent,” who is also the agent of Austin Kleon, who wrote *Steal Like an Artist*.

My heart stopped because I was looking for validation, but I wasn’t ready for that much validation. I think I froze. I think it was a blessing and a curse because I freaked out because I didn’t really think much of the idea, to be honest. So, I was telling people about this idea. I got a proposal and I sent it off to somebody who was helping me with the proposal, and he came back and said, “This is not very good. It’s not very interesting.” And my heart was broken. But he goes, “But these things, when you talk about these kids and what they say,” he goes, “that’s super interesting.” Because I was going on about education, what’s wrong, how it can change. He says, “That’s all good and well. But when you say what kids say to you and what you think of it, that’s valuable.”

That’s where the idea of this talk came from. I go, “Let me test this out.” I told this TEDx organizer of the TEDx of Santo Domingo in Dominican Republic that I had this idea, and Charlie Hoehn, who introduced me to him, and Charlie Hoehn is probably best known for being Tim Ferriss’s first employee. Basically, we had the introduction. He said, “Hey, Azul has a cool idea. Talk to him about his book. He’s already written a book but he’d be great.” So I pitched this idea just as I told you. He says, “Great, why don’t you come do the talk?”

So I did the talk, and prepared it, and the night before, Charlie was helping me with it, and he says, “I think you should change it.



Rearrange it.” I rewrote it the night before. I barely really knew it very well. I don't prepare a lot, but I really don't usually prepare the night before.

Pat: Yeah, jeez!

Azul: I was nervous because one, it's another country. It's a big deal. But the message was there, what I wanted to say showed up about what kids really say, and the things that blew my mind about what kids think. The biggest message was we're not listening to kids. If we just listen, we could change the face of education, one classroom at a time. That was really where the book came from. That was where the message on TEDx came from was that focus, that simple idea of what makes a good teacher great.

Pat: That's amazing. When can we expect the book? Because I know we were talking about it years ago, as it was being developed, and you were looking for an illustrator and all this stuff, how far along is it? When am I going to see it?

Azul: August 22nd.

Pat: Wow! That's pretty close to when my book comes out. It'll be soon after.

Azul: Yeah. I'm excited and terrified at the same time, just like everyone who shares a book in the world. There's no way getting around that, I think.

Pat: Oh dude, I'm super stoked for you. And really stoked for everybody who's listening to this who has been inspired to start thinking about a book for their business, for their authority, for their life. Who has been reignited after, perhaps, trying to go down that route before. I'm just excited to see everything that everybody comes up with. I still think books are an amazing tool, and an amazing way to share a message and to put your foot on the ground. I think that's another thing with these books that I'm really excited about is that it's like part of building a business and building authority is to have a stance on something, to make decisions, and put your foot on the ground, and say certain

things versus just trying to play in the middle and please everybody. Not to say that you are trying to write a book to stir up anything, but when you have specific goals, when you have specific ways that you teach, and specific beliefs, when it's written in a book, it's there for people to consume and they can choose whether or not they want to follow you or not.

As I talk about in my book, *Will It Fly?*, when you have that message, then people start to believe it and they start to see you as a leader; they're going to become superfans and help you build your brand for you. You won't have to work so hard to get new people into your brand when you serve that audience who follows you for you. It's just really exciting to see and I'm excited to hear about the ripple effect of this episode, and your book, and my book, and everybody else's book as well. That's why we're here and I just want to thank you again, Azul, for coming on. I'm sorry Steve couldn't be here as well, but if people want to learn more from you and Steve and how you can help them with their book writing and where to even start, what would you recommend they get into right now?

Azul: Yeah. If they come to AuthorsWhoLead.com, they can learn more about us, about the book writing process, and figure out what message they should share with the world. I really want people to know that anyone can do it, really. Everyone should. I maybe go against a lot of other teachers of writing. I think everyone should write a book because they can, and they should. The teacher in me wouldn't let anybody not put something out that's worthy, but it also would not keep somebody from writing a book because they have something to say. I think it's a way to connect. So, I really would love to hear more about the things that people want to share with the world.

Pat: Amazing. Thank you. You have a podcast as well that we could all check out, right?

Azul: Yeah. It's called Born to Write. It's where we share behind the scenes with authors and their messages from New York Times bestselling authors to self-published and first-time authors. They can hear what it's like to go through the journey of getting a book on the page.

Pat: Awesome. So AuthorsWhoLead.com, and Born to Write on your podcast app right now. Azul, thank you so much for coming on. I appreciate you so, so much. You're an amazing teacher, coach, and inspiration. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Azul: Same here. Thanks Pat.

Pat: All right. I hope you enjoyed that episode with Azul Terronez. You can find he and Steve's podcast at Born To Write. Just look that up wherever podcasts are available to you. Also, AuthorsWhoLead.com. If you want all the links and the show notes and the resources mentioned in this episode, all you have to do is go to [SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session379](http://SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session379). One more time, that's [SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session379](http://SmartPassiveIncome.com/Session379).

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