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Anatomy of an Authority Press Release

Jack: Okay, folks. Here we are. Another episode of Authority Alchemy, the show for building your authority, positioning yourself as that expert in your industry, and then how to leverage that positioning as well.

This is Jack Mize and I'm here with ...

Brian: Brian Horn.

Jack: That's right. So today, we're going to get into the meat of press releases because one of the things that really drives me nuts is when I see people talking about "press releases are dead" How many times have you seen that over the last year?

Brian: Oh, people love saying it. When something stops working for one person, their immediate thought is it's dead. It doesn't work anymore. There's no use for it.

Jack: Yeah, exactly. And why would press releases be dead? That's such a broad statement, you know?

Brian: Yeah.

Jack: Usually, you get it from the SEO jockeys (sorry SEO folks). SEO's very important but really the thing about press releases are dead, as far as SEO goes and the way that they were used, because at one time, they were pretty powerful for search engine optimization, right?

Brian: Yeah. Even saying it's dead just for SEO, it's just dead, like you said, the way it was used. I'm doing some cool stuff with them right now with SEO. But, yeah, people used to use them to buy unlimited releases from PRWeb, and hammer those out every single day just to build a bunch of backlinks and that was their SEO strategy.

And Google caught on to that and shut that down, so now they're saying press releases just can't work for anything anymore, ever.

Jack: Right. You said something interesting. Backlinks. That was what everybody used press releases for. Forget about what the press releases say. Forget about anything interesting in there.

Brian: Right.

Jack: Let's just get enough to get approved, make it look like news, but what we really want is those backlinks.

Brian: Right. Which at the time, it worked. That was a cool thing to do then. That was the only thing people saw them for was for that.

Jack: Yeah, just to link it back to your site. And, like you said, it did work. I know everybody was doing it and I think I saw a lot of people cry, probably for the first time in years, the day that Google said, no. And that's one thing. You know, Google can wipe out a whole business model in an afternoon, if they want to. And there are a lot of people that relied very heavily on press releases.

Brian: Oh, absolutely. I'm part of an SEO Mafia Mastermind. We have a Skype group that's very active. I remember that day on there, some big SEO people everybody knows, were just furious that day. They just had their entire backlink system just taken away over night at the whim of Google.

Jack: All right. So I will concede that press releases are dead for that reason for what a lot of people thought online press releases were used for.

Brian: Right.

Jack: But let's talk about what press releases, and really, the way that we're using them is more the original, what press releases have been used for, for many, many years. And that is talking about news, announcing things that companies have done and it's not about SEO at all. Well, a little bit. We'll talk about that in either this episode or beyond.

But the main thing is not the SEO. It's about the positioning and the way that press releases are done.

Now, I've got to say. You put together a really, really cool press release announcing our show. We had our first episode. So this is our second episode and so, when we announced that Authority Alchemy was live and the show was out there, the press release that you put together was, to me, a perfect goulash of a lot of different tweaks and hacks that you can use in press releases.

And if someone read it really carefully, they can probably see that there are some very purposeful things that you did by design.

So, why don't you talk about that. Let's call this the Anatomy of an Authority Press Release. And so, talk about what the anatomy of an authority press release is. We'll put an image of the press release that I'm talking about at AuthorityAlchemy.com on this post so folks can walk through there and see what you did, why you did it and the benefit of that.

Brian: Sure. We'll go through several of the pieces in there.

The first thing I like doing with press releases is with the title, to not make it look like it's just something being announced. It's not just, you know, Brian Horn, Jack Mize announce a new podcast. That's just, immediately; somebody's eyes will just glaze over that.

So you want to make it look as much like a headline you'd see in regular news. There are some restrictions when you're doing press releases. You have to meet certain requirements. It can't just be an opinion piece or an essay. It does have to announce something but, like in this one, instead of just we're announcing a new podcast, I made it, the title is "New Show Tackles Taboo Topic of 'Manufactured Celebrity' for Entrepreneurs."

And so, the announcement with that one is a new show being announced. But I did throw in "tackles taboo topic," a little alliteration in there that journalists like to do. So I try to throw that in there. And then just make it where it's really almost kind of vague, where it says, "new show tackling topic of manufactured celebrity for entrepreneurs." It almost sounds like it could be a shark tank type show or some other, showing a real network where it's talking about something really kind of cool and that you're not

quite sure what it is. Because very few people actually know what manufactured celebrity is, but it sounds so cool. It sounds like something you'd want to learn, like wow!

Jack: Oh, definitely. It has the elements. It's magnetic, for one. Two, it instantly creates curiosity, you know? So to be able to do that in one sentence, versus the "Brian and Jack announce a new show," I think right there, there's a lot of muscle behind this, compared to what it could be and what a lot of people would do as a press release.

So, titles are very important. In fact, I'm sure we're going to do, we'll probably do a show just on the headlines, because they can be done and very, very purposeful and the different techniques and styles that you would use. So this one, completely see this one. Like I said, magnetic and builds curiosity immediately.

Brian: Yeah. When you get down into it, at the beginning, I hit on the economic crisis also, which that goes back into the newsjacking-type stuff. We're going to do a whole thing on that probably. But basically, you find some trending topic or some common topic in the mass media that people are used to seeing news stories about and you bring that into it also.

And that, again, that makes it look more like it's a real article about something. So the whole goal with these authority press releases, or one of the big goals, is to make it look like a real article that you're being brought in on.

This looks like it, this one is actually more about the show itself, but there are ways you can, sometimes, I'll make it just more. I did several that seemed to be just about Obamacare. And then I'd bring in a dentist to give his opinion on it, how Obamacare's affecting the dental industry. We can get into more on that.

Jack: I'll break in real quick, because you used the term "real article." I want to be clear. This is a real article.

Brian: It is a real article.

Jack: And so, we've got to be careful about that, but letting folks understand that this is a real article, approved. You know, the Wall Street Journal published this as a bona fide piece of journalism. So a real article, it is about something real. It's about something truthful. It's about something that's happening. Versus just some made up something. So I want to make sure that we.

Brian: Yeah, it's more of a, like an editorial type article.

Jack: I guess it's in the way that we, it's the alchemy. This is the pure alchemy happening here, is the way that this is presented. So, it's definitely a real article, really on the Wall Street Journal.

Brian: Yeah.

Jack: It's just done with the alchemy method that made it much easier for us to do this, than what most people think it really takes to get talked about.

Brian: Right. Then, after that, I go into, getting more into just the meat and bones, what it's about. The facts about the release, which is something that needs to be done, that we do have a new podcast coming out. Our new show starting. And I get into an authority building quote that is one of Jack's, a couple of paragraphs later.

But this one just establishes my authority on it. Where we go and actually tell what the show is going to be about, why we're doing it and make it very entertaining, that I'm really coming from a very authoritative place.

But the next thing I'm doing there is something that I've really not seen anybody else do, which is huge. The next one is, I'll read the sentence on here. It's "Mark Cuban, the owner of the Dallas Mavericks and AXS TV echoes Horn's statements on the importance of entrepreneurs being different." And it goes into Cuban elaborated, and then it goes into a full quote from Mark Cuban. It says, "Wherever I see people doing something the way it's always been done, the way it's supposed to be done, following the same old trends, well, that's just a big red flag to me to go look somewhere else."

So what I do on these releases, I'll go and find a quote from a celebrity entrepreneur or a politician or another famous person that's relatively well-known. I wouldn't go to the Oprah levels or anything, go crazy with it. And you get them, I find a quote from them that kind of supports what your position is.

In this case, ours was that we want to show people, our listeners, how to do some different type of positioning of them that's never been done before, ever taught before. And so I found a quote from Mark Cuban, a famous celebrity entrepreneur, that's supporting that.

So basically, what this does, this just goes and basically almost looks like you're getting an endorsement from somebody like Mark Cuban.

Jack: Right. And we're going to be really clear on this. You have to be careful about this because you don't want to make it say, Mark Cuban said this about Brian, right?

Brian: Right. Oh, absolutely.

Jack: But what you're doing is, folks, we're not trying to paint this picture of something that isn't real, any more than journalism has been doing since journalism began.

All we're doing is we're peeling back the curtains on how big journalism operates and you've seen Spin, what was the show, Spin City. They can peel back on exactly how politics has been spun.

So this right here is to me huge, so that you've kind of uncovered and really shown in one sentence, this very strong powerful tactic that's been used by high level journalists and marketers for many, many years, and it's such a simple principle.

It's fantastic. But you just have to be careful about the way that you position it, but it is such a strong. It's the same way when people get their picture taken with a celebrity.

Brian: Yeah.

Jack: What you're doing is you're positioning yourself for the people looking at that to infer that you're hobnobbing with a celebrity, even though you may be thrown back on the other side of the red velvet rope instantly after that.

Brian: That's true.

Jack: But that's exactly what you're doing, but you're doing it through words and this really is a true wordsmith. It's art, to me, and to be able to do this. Really take notes, if you're looking at this. Go to the website. Read it. Because this, right here, is one of the most powerful techniques that I think Brian has revealed on this show yet.

Brian: Yeah, it's very cool indeed. People that go through and read this. You know how much we pay attention to what we read. We skim read. We just go through it and a person, a prospect of yours possibly, if you're listening to this show and we do one of these for you, and they see it, they're not going to just dig into that and read it and say, "Ah, this is what they're doing." They're going to go, "Wow!" You know? Mark Cuban's ...

They see this on the Wall Street Journal. So they're not going to think that Brian Horn's writing this. They're going to think that a top level journalist from the Wall Street Journal wrote this article and they interviewed Brian for it, they interviewed Jack and then they got a thought from Mark Cuban about it. And nowhere in here am I saying any of that happened. That's just the way that people's minds work.

And you're just putting it out there to make a really good interesting article. And that's just where people's minds are going to go. If anybody asks me about that, I tell them, no, it's one of my favorite quotes from Mark Cuban. It fit well with the story so I used it, which is true.

Jack: Yeah. I was about to say this is Psychology 101, but it's actually Psychology 400, because this really is, cause you are not telling people anything. You're allowing them to paint the picture themselves.

Brian: Right.

Jack: And fill in the blanks, which is really fantastic.

Brian: Right. And one of the, the word I use in there for, I use this one almost every time for these quotes, is the word echoing, because it's saying this guy just said the exact same thing. It's not an original. It's not a specific statement from him. Listen, this dude said the same thing at one point in his life some time.

Jack: Yeah. He happens to think the same way.

Brian: Yeah. And that's it.

Okay, after that, we go back in to another authority establishing quote from Jack. And it just moves along and says something different than I said, but it moves the thought along.

And then we get back into some more quotes from me. What we do then, this is the next little piece of the puzzle. Down towards the bottom, we have some testimonials from a person I worked with and a person Jack worked with, and then we do a couple more.

And what this does, like in this one for me. I'll read this one. I'll read a quote of this sentence instead of the whole thing. This is from John Sanpietro, a guy I did some work for. A part of it says, "Months later, I'm still reaping the rewards of all of that coverage. Brian's authority marketing is easy to implement and the effects last for years."

Now, what we can do now, this has been published on the Wall Street Journal. That sentence was on the Wall Street Journal. So we could now, in a piece of promotional material, we could say, "Authority marketing is easy to implement and the effects last for years." Then we have, J. Sanpietro, WallStreetJournal.com.

And that's where the quote has been found. Again, we're just, and I like to put the date on there also. Once we get several of these under your belt, so then we'll have today's date and then you put a bunch of those on your website. And you attribute it to the person, to the date, but everybody will just read WallStreetJournal.com.

Jack: That's the power of having the quotes, the fact that you pulled a quote out from me. You put a quote from you. You put a quote from anyone in this release.

And now, everyone that's been quoted in there can ethically say, *As quoted on the Wall Street Journal*, which is really powerful.

And you guys, you've seen everything from movie posters to reading TV Guide, that when you see quotes from different outlets, they're whole purpose of that is to establish credibility.

Brian: Absolutely.

Jack: To really hone in on the credibility. And that's what you're doing. By using these little tweaks, you're able to use that same kind of powerful branding and marketing that big media uses. And you're doing it in the exact same fashion that they do.

Brian: Yeah. And that's, the movie poster is exactly where I got this from and started using it because people see movie posters or the ads pop up and say, Brian Horn, or B. Horn, Rolling Stone and gives it a 4 star review or some little dinky TV station in Wisconsin (I love Wisconsin, but, first one that popped in my head) and it sounds cool. And people go, wow! It pumped the movie. So we do the same thing here.

Jack: That is awesome.

Brian: And then the last thing, it's still another testimonial. But we actually did one, the first ones were one about Jack, one about me and then we did some for the show, which we got some early reviews in from people we sent the early access to and got them to give us opinions on it, and plugged those in also.

So we each got an individual one for the processes that we're teaching, that people have had success with. And then one just about the actual show itself and the content of the show.

So we just stacked all those things in this one release. And then they can be used forever. Like those testimonials, we'll use those forever. Those are our first comments about the show. We'll use those and show they were published on the Wall Street Journal and KABC and LA and a whole bunch of great places these things pop up with our distribution system.

Jack: Oh, yeah. And, yeah, that's the one thing. That's a great point, is this can be used for, anyone that's quoted in these, for the rest of their careers, they can ethically say they were quoted on the Wall Street Journal. That they were quoted on any of the places that get distribution.

I know some of these things, we're able to get hundreds of spots all over on media outlets for this. And that's why it is extremely powerful with this.

So, you've kind of dissected what we've done for this initial press release for the release of this show. And this is something that literally takes how long? I know how long it takes, but a lot of people are shocked when they say let's get quoted on the Wall Street Journal. Let's position this and I always say, and I'll say it again, so many people have that thought in their head that, "Oh, down the road. That would be great down the road."

Brian: Yeah.

Jack: And we're talking from conception to you putting, start typing on your keyboard, what are we talking about?

Brian: Man, it can go fast. I've had one that got put out today, that the person contacted me on Monday, yesterday. So within 24 hours, a guy that I've done some stuff for, sent me a text message, said, "Man, I've got a guy who's hot but he wants it right now. Can we do it?" My journalist that writes these up for us had an opening. The guy interviewed him. He wrote it up that day, sent it to me. I sent it off last night about 6 or 7 o'clock. I got it hooked up on our network and it published at 3:05 a.m. today.

So it can go really, really fast. I usually like to say about 48 to 72 hours is about the closest I like to do. 72 hours is a good time because that gives you a day or so to book a time with the writer, get a couple of days to write

it up and then we can publish it out. But when things need to be fast, man, we can make them fast.

Jack: Yeah, and really, this is a double-edged sword, because we've seen where people try to put some of these out that really, when you read it, was slanted in the wrong light. It didn't look good and the same way that we built this credibility in a matter of 24 hours, you can actually make yourself look kind of bad in 24 hours if you write it in the wrong way or the story's slanted.

And so, we talked about some of the nuances in here and how this is very purposeful in the way you wrote this, but there are a lot of little things that people don't realize, that this isn't just put in whatever you want and the Wall Street Journal is going to publish it.

Brian: Right.

Jack: They're very particular about things being the way they're written and newsworthy. It's easy to get rejected. I've had a lot of people that say I tried doing this myself and I got nothing, or I got rejected or whatever. And that really is where it comes with building the authority and writing these from an authority point of view. And to add that credibility really is an art, as much as it is a science.

But I think you've definitely gone through and shown some of the hidden pieces and put a spotlight on some of the things that people don't realize when they're reading a lot of press releases. That people don't realize what's happening, the picture that they're painting themselves because they're reading between the lines and coming up with their own opinions of what that piece is.

So if you're out there and you're doing this and you have an opportunity, think about these principles. Think about the principles of putting an authority, someone like Mark Cuban, if they have an opinion similar to you, or if they have a story out there that's similar to what you're talking about, to be able to weave them into your story adds a tremendous amount of credibility to this.

The fact that you put in quotes in there, real quotes, and like I said, we're not trying to fool anyone. We're not trying to do anything that is unethical, but real quotes in there can be very powerful and allow you to say that you've been quoted on these news outlets.

Brian: And the other thing, just real quick, the other benefit of using quotes and why I use a lot of quotes is because inside a press release, you can't use the words "you" or "we" or words like that. And as you know from doing sales copy, "you" is one of the most powerful words you can use. And so, but in quotes, you can use them because then you're just quoting somebody. And so I always put quotes and put the really good sales copy into quotes and then you can put just about anything you want.

Jack: Right. And opinions. I always tell people, if there's going to be an opinion, it better be in a quote if you want to get it through there.

Brian: Yeah.

Jack: And that's one of the things, I've seen a lot of people that are brilliant marketers. They're brilliant at writing sales copy and absolutely horrible at press releases, just because they cannot get that mind shift, that this is not a marketing piece. And what you've done is you actually have to weave this really intricate piece here to: one, make it very strong marketing-wise, but also, two, make it appear that there's no marketing involved at all.

And that, right there, is again, where the alchemy comes in. Cause you're really turning something ordinary, making it into something special without crossing over that line of being hypey or marketing. Because there is nothing in here where you're using those words like exciting, fantastic, brilliant, you know, all the stuff that people would normally see in a marketing piece.

And that's one of the biggest mistakes that I see.

Brian: And I did a bunch of these, when I was really testing this distribution network that I use to get all these published everywhere.

Because you guys that are using PRWeb, you're not going to get on Wall Street Journal. Period.

Really, anything else out there but what we're doing. But when I was first testing out the network, I offered to do these for everybody in the mastermind group I'm in, and just to do it for them at cost. But I said, you guys write it up yourself, because I don't want to spend a lot of time writing them.

And these are people that can afford to spend tens of thousands of dollars in a mastermind. Most are 7-figure earners. And out of the twelve I did, eleven I had to re-write completely, because they did not know how to write press releases.

7-figure marketers, smart, smart. Most of you guys would recognize at least half and just about all of them in this group and none of them could write a press release the right way like this.

Maybe I didn't do a good job explaining it, but even just a standard press release. It was just like Jack said. All full of superlatives and exclamation points and somebody even put, one of the people even had put all types of fonts in there. Like bolded stuff and highlighted, italicizing and, like a bad sales letter.

Jack: So, yeah, there is a method to all of this. But take the principles, folks and really, what I would encourage you to do, and I'm sure Brian would, too, is start reading press releases. Look at press releases and see how they're written and catch some of these tricks that are very stealth.

And even big press releases, when you're looking on CNN.com or you're looking on Entertainment Tonight or any of these, read the stories and look and see how the use of quotes and the use of butting up celebrity and credibility are used to really turn the story into something completely different and more powerful.

And speaking of CNN.

Brian: Uh-oh.

Jack: I think it's time for the Authority Hacks.

Brian: Authority Hacks?

Jack: Authority Hacks. (Musical interlude – Authority Hacks)

All right. That is the song and so, go ahead, Brian, give them the authority hack. Although, I don't know how you, what you just did is a huge authority hack. But I want you to do authority hack, because we talked about CNN today, so give a CNN authority hack.

Brian: Cool, yeah. We'll get down. A lot of you already, if you follow me or follow Jack, we both shared this before. But without question, every time, every event I've gone and spoken at where I've shared this, everybody comes to me and says this is the best trick I've heard, not just here, but at any event, period.

And it's really simple, but just people don't know it exists. There is a place on CNN's website, a subdomain called iReport.CNN.com. Like iPods, the lower case i, then Report-dot-CNN-dot-com. And it is a site for citizen journalism. Anybody, just regular people can go and become news contributors for CNN about anything they want to, any time they want to.

So basically, what this allows you to do, you can go through and upload a news story of your own on CNN, about what you have going on with your business, maybe a client's business, and it'll be published on CNN.com.

And then you're able to say, "As seen on CNN." And it's really cool. They have, I know they have the iPhone app for it. They have the Android version also. You can just do everything right from your phone. You can just take a video of somebody or take a picture, upload it, type in a few paragraphs of content and you're done.

It is powerful, powerful stuff. That is one of my favorite little hack things to do. If you just want to quickly and easily make yourself into an authority and have the CNN logo on your site, you can do that in all of about five minutes with this.

Jack: Yeah. And it shows up instantly. I was amazed the first time I did that. I published it and I was thinking, well, maybe I'll get some notification or something. But no, boom! There I was, right there on CNN. So that is extremely powerful and I've seen people do some really, really powerful things with that, for sure.

So, there it is. The CNN, today's Authority Hack. That's something that you can do immediately. Go give it a shot and let us know the feedback. Let us know what you did. Send us a link to your CNN. Put it in the comments section. We'd love to see how folks are using this.

Well, Brian, I think that we've really put a lot into this episode today, as far as the anatomy of an authority press release, and how people can be that authority alchemist and really dig deeper into how these things are put together. And for sure, with the CNN authority hack.

I would definitely like to encourage you, if you like the show, go to iTunes. Subscribe to iTunes. Leave us a review. We would be very appreciative of that. Leave a comment at AuthorityAlchemy.com.

And if you are interested in becoming that authority, positioning yourself and have credible news, national media talk about you in the next 24 to 48 hours, then go to AuthorityAlchemy.com and hit the "Claim My Authority" button. And you can learn how you can get this type of credibility, really within the next 24 to 48 hours.

Brian, anything you want to leave the folks with today, until the next episode?

Brian: I think we got it covered, man. This was good stuff. I hope everybody is able to implement what we shared today. And if I said one thing, I would go on and do the CNN thing right away. That's an easy, someone can get an easy win like that under your belt, leads on to other things, so things start rolling for you faster.

It's a fast way to do it. Then share it on Facebook and blast off to your list.

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Jack: Fantastic. All right, guys. Again, go to AuthorityAlchemy.com, leave us a comment. Share the podcast out with folks, if you like it, and leave us a review there on iTunes. And we will see you on the next episode of Authority Alchemy.

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