

EP62: What Instructors NEED To Know About Social Media w/ Rachel Holmes

Rachel 00:00

You just have to get out of your own way. And you just have to post and really understand that people are not judging and are not looking at what you're wearing or what your hairs look like or if you've had Botox or not. Anybody's looking at you thinking, how can you help me, the information that you have, how can it make my life better in some way? The sooner you realize that the sooner you get over yourself, the sooner you can create great content that can change lives, and bring more people into your business.

Will: 00:28

Hello, and welcome to Group Fitness Real Talk the show where we talk about everything that's important to instructors in 2023 and beyond. And today, my guest is the wonderful Rachel Holmes, who is a fixture of the UK fitness circuit. Rachel, how are you?

Rachel 00:43

I'm so well well. And thank you for asking me to do this podcast. I'm an avid fan. I listen to every episode. So I was honored when I bumped into you. And you asked me to do it.

Will: 00:53

Ah, yeah. So, we bumped into each other at at a live event at Elevate in London last year, we decided that we'd set this up and I knew pretty much exactly what I wanted to talk about which we're gonna get to later, which is social media, something that I have grown to not like very much that I think you are smashing. But before we get to that, listeners, you're gonna get loads of hints and tips on how to manage your social media. Rachel, first up, I wanted you to give our listeners a little bit of a background to your history and fitness. where you started and where you are now.

Rachel 01:25

Oh, it's a long history. So I started in 87, a long, long time ago. My brother was pro BMXer and I raised BMX in the early 80s. And we started going to a gym to train in the winter. And it was an aerobics teacher there that I started going to loved it fell in love with it. I'm from an entrepreneurial family. We've worked in our family business since we were you know, really young. So my dad always encouraged us to follow our dreams and follow our passion and it was just seemed an exciting thing to do.

Will: 01:56

I've never heard of BMX as a as a starting point for Group Fitness career before you've just you've just started off with something really unique.

Rachel 02:05

Yeah, my brother. Yeah, he was a world champion. I was a European champion. And I won lots of titles. British champion in the UK. And yeah, it's having a bit of a resurgence actually, at the moment. It's very

retro. So yeah, we started going to the gym, started going to aerobics and then just thought, yeah, I can do that. And my parents said, right, yep, do it. So I left school with very, very few qualifications, started teaching in the local gym. In the UK, there wasn't even a fitness industry. Then there was a, there was, you know, just really, it was the beginning. It was way before FitPro. And there was a very small organization started actually Loughborough University, which is near where I live. And the convention there was going to be some kind of convention and I got to know the lady who was organizing it. She networked and asked me to teach an aqua class I presented an aqua class. So that was about 88.

Will: 02:58

BMX was your intro and then your first class was Aqua. Yeah, wow, this is interesting.

Rachel 03:02

My first presentation, this presentation. Full of surprises. is crazy. Yeah. So I was teaching locally. I live, I live just between Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. So I was teaching in both cities in Derby and Nottingham and locally very very few instructors around me teaching aerobics really high impact I was interested in music so I'd my my boyfriend at the time was doing a bit DJ in so he got to technics 1210s. And was mixing the music and yeah, it just became this this sort of amazing life really, when I think back and I look back it was really happy days really positive days. met some great people. Nike started at the time Reebok there wasn't any shoes at the time, but Reebok came up with a shoe.

Will: 03:43

Okay, quick question. What shoes did you wear when you first started teaching if there were no like specifics...

Rachel 03:48

Barefoot.

Will: 03:51

Well, that's had a resurgence as well.

Rachel 03:53

It was barefoot back in the day. And then I think it went, I think Reebok then came up with a freestyle which is like a little boot, which I wore, and then Nike they were based in the northwest and it was mainly a running brand at that time. Very athletic base, very male orientated brand, a lady that I knew actually networked with had got the job as woman who over over a woman's at Nike and she was looking for just maverick teachers I suppose around the country and she put together a little team those myself Jane Nichols, Sally Brooks, Jane wake some some real legends in the industry. And we just pretty much traveled globally really want to think about it all around the UK doing Nike total body conditioning, opening shopping centers, going to how they were launching their shoes, we were going to be returned. We were going to the idea convention. And yeah, pretty much through the whole of the early 90s I was aligned with Nike and I did some amazing things with that brand. Amazing. And that was that was pretty life changing really well at the time you don't you don't realize it just roll with it. I was still teaching classes locally. FitPro came over then Jane and Brent arrived on in the UK shores. And they started doing education which I wasn't involved in at the beginning. And then Jane Nichols, who I'd set up a business with at that time, we were doing podcast guest Yeah. So Jane got me a I think I did an audition actually. I did an audition for FitPro. They were looking for three people to do a tour called the choreography club.

Will: 05:29

Just for our listeners from not from the UK FitPro is an organization that creates education and ongoing education and support for fitness instructors in the UK and was kind of one of the one of the first companies to sort of come together and do that in a in a joined up way. Is that Is that a good description?

Rachel 05:47

I mean, that it was they were revolutionary, the the professionalism that they brought to the industry, their events, their teaching, because they came with amazing, amazing presenters. So then we were exposed to market. So when Lisa shivers, who, you know, I got the, you know, I got the honor really to be coached by and taught by on a one to one basis. So, yeah, it was hard, you know, and I look back, it was proper boot camp, you know, they were, they didn't just let us go on the road and do what we wanted. rehearsed. It was polished. And it was, for me as a business person. It was a whole new level of business and how they ran, how they ran their workshops. Their operation was extremely slick. So again, for the OGs that a listen to the podcast, I did a tour with Michael Steele. Again, amazing, amazing person.

Will: 06:35

Who is now working with Apple fitness plus?

Rachel 06:38

Yep. He's gone on to do amazing things globally. So yeah, myself and Michael and another lady called Halina toward the UK. I mean, they were the days, Will. We'd do 30 dates around the UK and we would get like 150 people at every single venue from from Land's End to John O'Groats. We, we traveled. And it was, you know, it was tough. They were hard days long days. But I mean, probably the success of my business in my career really is down to the foundations of the people that I met in those days, and people still follow me and are on my groups and come to my training from those days. So it was amazing. It was amazing. Jane and I then split off and decided to do our own events, which we did. I was still doing bits and pieces for FitPro. Lydia Campbell fitcamp Bognor Regis, generally working seven days a week for about...Doing every trend creating trends, doing trends going to all the events. Yeah, just be just really completely hook line and sinker lived and breathed the fitness industry presenting and teaching. So it yeah, it was it was good times. I recognize really early on from the from the FitPro days really that you know, we would go, we would sell a video VHS, we would sell music, we would sell sweatshirts. And I realized really that the sort of the secondary spend on these events was huge people would pay for the ticket. And I just really opened my eyes to the potential of that, you know, people were coming to the event, not just for the choreography, but the extra, you know, all of exactly what your business does right now. You know, the full package, the music, the choreography, the notes, the booklet, the t shirt, the whole thing. I was really inspired by that. Sort of slowly, we were, we were getting into the internet, it was MySpace days, I was fully loaded into my space I was on Friendster. The whole thing...

Will: 08:36

Younger listeners are not gonna know what those are, but I was on both.

Rachel 08:38

I mean, my dad was into CB when we were little, I don't even know if you know what that is. And I was always interested in communication. So it was like you would speak to people around the world. Yeah. And so when Friendster and MySpace was just jumped into I loved it, I could sit at home and speak to people and create these profiles. And yeah, I just knew that there was something in it. And knew this was gonna go somewhere where I didn't know but I was, I was, from the outset really interested.

Will: 09:13

When we talk about social media later because I want to hear about what you're doing now, we are really talking to an OG of the various social platforms right back with that pre Zuckerberg days.

Rachel 09:25

You know what it and I think back now it was putting those two things together realizing that people instructors needed the choreography, the music, the package. I was at that time filming VHS videos, you know, going to the post office every day sending them 20-30 VHS videos, and the Internet was kind of happening over here. My friend actually a friend from school of mine, she had started some kind of web, she was a web designer at that stage. And I mean, is this this this podcast PG? Are we go we're out to go take it in a little bit of a slightly...?

Will: 10:02

Oh, yeah, yeah, go where you want.

Rachel 10:04

So my friend was a web developer and she was at the time, hope your listeners are good for this. She was, she was developing websites for the adult entertainment industry.

Will: 10:15

We can definitely say that.

Rachel 10:18

That's in a very PC way. And at the time, what you would do, you would log on to a website when it was very early days. And if you wanted a certain type of adult education, you would put your 10 pound in, and you would get, you would get 10 minutes of you would watch 10 minutes of whatever. And when she was doing this, I was like, and then it just lightning, just I know, we could be doing the same thing with fitness. I could be filming 10 minutes of step, 10 minutes aerobic, 10 minutes of body conditioning. And this is how we could we could develop a business like this. And she made me a website. And that's how my Choreography To Go website was born 23 years ago. So yeah, it was sort of putting that all together. It was her inspiration, her knowledge. But I...

Will: 11:02

I'm trying to think of a new title of for this podcast, "From porn to..."

Rachel 11:09

But it was exactly the same format, you know, it was exactly the same. It was like pay per view, then.

Will: 11:16

The irony is, I think like without getting off into a tangent, I think that the porn industry has revolutionized a lot of the structure of the Internet, whether we like it or not. It's true.

Rachel 11:25

It's so true. I mean, look what's happening with, you know, only fans now? Yeah,

Will: 11:29

Well, exactly which which, to be fair, I've spoken to some of the people behind only fans. And their intention was not to do it in the first place, it was much more for like, you know, the type of our type of you know, fitness professionals or people that are really into knitting or had a very niche interest. It's just that it served the need for the people that were making money on the internet.

Rachel 11:49

It's huge, it's huge, they were that industry was definitely the forefront of live streaming. And so yeah, so that that's how that that my, that side of my business really grew. I think looking back, it was a little bit ahead of its time, many, many people didn't have internet, it was still CompuServe, it was dial up, it was, yeah, people just didn't have and lots of lots of my clientele where perhaps they were on their partner's email address or their husband's email address. And it you know, I, you know, I thought it was gonna grow a lot faster. And it was a slow burn. But it was a it was a really interesting journey. So that's kind of how my business has evolved from the presenting angle or teaching angle, and then the tech, the tech side of it. So yeah...

Will: 12:36

So, can you sort of just describe for the listeners what your business is now? So that's the background and what is it that you focus on primarily now?

Rachel 12:42

Yeah, I've got a few different verticals. So generally, we offer all of the the level two and level three fitness qualifications, everything. Apart from yoga, we do all of them, we always specialized in online, it pre pandemic, we were doing sort of 80% of our education was online. So I'd already got that infrastructure set up and established. But we were still doing Pilates courses around the country, face to face. So that's, that's a big part of the business, the qualifications are still, you know, extremely popular, the CPD courses are extremely popular. And we run those continuously throughout the year, we still do, we still do them as in person, but we offer everything on Zoom. So it's not just by the qualification and off you go. Some of the CPD as you know, we still deliver it. And you know, and that that section of the business is still growing. There's lots of new people coming into the industry, especially to teach Pilates, etc. That's good. I run a run some subscriptions myself. So I run, I teach classes online, and I run a membership that's run, live streamed into a website. And that's a recurring revenue model. And then a lot of my time is spent business coaching and creating courses for fitness professionals to help them almost do the same really, so they can live stream, create recurring revenue, build subscriptions, monetize their knowledge, really, because I still think we're only just tapping the surface of this. There's so much to go at, Will. You know, I wake up in the morning and think, right...Which direction shall I go in today? Because there's just so there's so much out there.

Will: 14:20

Yeah. So when I was thinking about what best we could talk about, when you guessed it on this podcast, there were so many things that I could think of, and it was actually Jane and her episode that suggested this one. And I immediately thought this is a great topic to talk about, not only because you have obviously been involved in fitness through the growth of social media, but as someone who I think

does a really, really fantastic job of harnessing it and being on it and creating content that is valuable for your users knowing what your users want and in creating that content. I'm going to state from the outset that as I'm getting older, I am becoming more and more I'm sort of anti social media. And I know that it's something that I need for my business. And I think this is this is something I hear echoed from a lot of our instructors and a lot of other people that are kind of a little bit older. Like, I know that I need to be on Tik Tok. And I know that I need to post more on Instagram. And I know that conventional methods of advertising are going down and like there's not as many conventions and so being online is very important, but I really don't like it. And you seem to have mastered being able to be authentic and present and regular with your postings. And so I really want to get under the surface of how you go about doing it. And whether you share any of these same problems that we have and how you motivate yourself. That was about 10 questions in one, we'll break them all down.

Rachel 15:43

Number one, I look back in the history of business. And you know, 25 years ago, I was sitting here, putting stamps on envelopes going to the post office. And I was going door to door with leaflets and I was buying mailouts with FitPro at five and a half grand a shot. So sitting here tonight talking to you in my slippers...I think in what you know, when you put it in context, it's free. It's free. It is all free. We've got with fitness, we've got so much to offer. But I think you use I had no idea that you felt like that. But obviously you found a mode that works really well for you. Your podcast is amazing. You know, and people love it and listen to it, you're great at it. You're great at interviewing, so you found what you're really good at, and you're capitalizing on that for sure. I think you've got to do that. If you like doing video, do video, if you like doing writing, write? If you like doing graphics and messing around with Canva do that. But whichever you do, be consistent. And realize as a FitPro, there's so many opportunities during your day, your working day that you can capture that don't take any more time out of your day, you can just film a little bit before you teach a class film a little bit after the class, you can get testimonials from people who are in front of you, you know, you have a ready supply of content that you can harness, you don't need to do anything different, you don't need to do anything staged in my opinion.

Will: 17:11

You make a really good point to in that like there are there are things that suck about every business. You know, the weather is going door to door doing cold calling or any sort of things like that. And maybe like I should, I should start the new year by reframing my relationship. I think it's more that I have I saw social media be something that you posted on sometimes to going into a more of a voyeuristic nature where you had to catalog your entire day. And as I've gotten older, I've just felt less and less inclined to share sort of the behind the scenes elements with the world. And that's that's sort of the crux of where I where I run into a problem. I love producing content. I love doing podcasts like this and interviewing really knowledgeable guests like you. I love creating the shift content. But it's kind of the connective stuff around that. And then being motivated and being consistent. That is, that is my real struggle. I have so much content on my phone and then I go to post it and I'm like...I can't be bothered today.

Rachel 18:07

Can't you just get a little team and get a VA to just post it all to Dropbox and then just top it and tail it and get somebody else to do it.

Will: 18:13

Yeah, I mean, I should do this. I, let's tell you what, we'll do a business coaching session after this. Okay, so I'm gonna jump into the questions that I slightly pre prepared on the basis of the questions that we get from our instructors about social media that I don't think I'm best placed to answer because of all the aforementioned reasons. So I'm gonna start as a fitness instructor in today's world in 2023, what do you Rachel Holmes recommend are the platforms that an instructor should be on?

Rachel 18:43

Okay, I'm going to I'm going to come back to a couple of questions for you for not you for the audience. Number one, number one, think about where your audience are, you got to know your target audience. Where are they? Who are they? How old are they? And of course, all fit pros come back to me say, well, everybody from 17 to 80. But there will be broadly, there'll be a demographic, think of the platforms, something like Facebook is a very established platform, it's very mature. So if you're, if you're teaching maybe 40 plus, they're probably going to be on Facebook. And it also depends on your mental capacity, your brain capacity, if you have got, you know, you've got a lot of commitments in your life, kids, parents, relationships, you've run into jobs, you're doing something else, then your time is very, very short. We, you know, I can't say well go, go and post on every platform, pick one and B do that consistently. The thing is now with all the platforms, their reach as you and I sit here today in 2023, their reach on the platforms is effing unbelievable. Three, three years ago, if you and I sit here, we would say Well, yeah, you got to post this time. You've got to build your brand. You could put a reel out today on Facebook, where the reach is phenomenal and it could reach a million people and that's not out of the ordinary. That could happen, because Facebook one they've got a lot of competition, they've got TikTok, YouTube, they've got all that competition they want people getting on their platform. So right now, if you've got an established page, if you're already marketing on Facebook, go all in, just go all in do lives, do reels, do whatever you can but make it consistent. And think, what could you do for the what can you do for the next three months? 30 days? Let's take 30 days. Which platform? Could you post on for 30 days? Which one could you do? Choose that one. So I think it's, it's just sort of, to boil that down, I think you've got to look at the time you've got available because most FitPros are teaching classes in their business. So if they're teaching five or six classes a week or more their PTing, and the time that they have for admin and content creation is is limited. So you've got to make sure that what you do post is consistent, you don't just drop off. And it's easy for you to create that content. So whether that's that means doing a video before you teach her after you teach or writing a blog, or whatever it is that you can do well, that you can do consistently, then do that. And that's the questions to ask yourself, before I start going, well do a do five TikToks, whatever, you've got to think what you've got available. And you know, you might not have the time right now. But maybe in six months, you know, you can be working towards increasing the amount of content that you put out there on the platform that you want to. But then on the other hand, if you're super ambitious, you can see the opportunity and you really want to build, you can create one piece of origin content less than a minute that you can populate all the different platform. But there's never been a time I don't think, where you can create a video for less than a minute that you can post on face all those different YouTube. So it's how to look at it. It's, you know, it's do you want to double down onto a platform that you know, and get in front of new people? Or do you want to create one piece of origin content that you can you can cross post across different platforms?

Will: 21:59

I'm gonna slightly divert from what my next question was going to be, which is sort of content planning, which you've touched on a little bit, and maybe ask question from a personal perspective that I know that a lot of our instructors have. So one of the reasons I struggle to post on social media is, I know this

is gonna sound weird to a lot of people that are listening to this, because obviously, I've been in the fitness industry for 20 years, but it's self confidence. Like I take a video of myself, and I'm like, Oh, you look like shit. Like, what you're saying is rubbish. You look terrible. And then I don't want to post it because I don't feel very confident. Do you ever struggle with that? Does that something that you need to push past? Or? Or do you just not think about it, putting these things out into the world? Because it is sitting there with like, face beautifully done the here sort of radiating down?

Rachel 22:44

Oh, well, nobody cares. Nobody cares. Nobody cares. If you're sitting here with your dinner down your shirt and a piece of egg in your head, they just don't care. The content is, nobody examines I know, nobody examines that content. No one is judging you on that level. They are just people are if you can look at when you create content from a mindset of if you can add some value, a tip, some motivation, something that makes people smile, a little bit of entertainment, something that they can carry with them through their day, it's not about this is and I think we've got a complete level playing field now. Because you know, even with celebrities all over Instagram, and Tiktok doing fitness and you can definitely compete with all of that, because people are just looking for you being authentically you. People love you people come to your classes for you. They buy your programs because of you. So I think it is hard to get over yourself, you got to get over yourself, Will. Get over yourself.

Will: 23:42

You make a good point. And like sometimes the content that is best is the ones where you're you're seeing the authentic side. I think maybe that's a problem for me, because I come from the time before social media when I would practice and practice and practice before I do anything on video. You also come from this time, so I'm sure you understand. And then I would like I would deliver exactly how I wanted to deliver. And so I kind of have that level of this is what I want to do when I'm on camera. And now social media is very much just like muddle your words, be authentic, and I struggle, I have to say, I struggle.

Rachel 24:13

You're a perfectionist, aren't you? I can tell you're a perfectionist.

Will: 24:16

In some areas. Definitely not others.

Rachel 24:18

I'm not a perfectionist. I think you can overanalyze these things and...

Will: 24:26

I'm definitely an overanalyzer.

Rachel 24:29

And I think I tend to create content in the morning when I've had a couple of coffees and I'm feeling quite articulate and verbal. I very rarely this is you are very honored to have me... Usually I've got my fluffy toes on and I'm relaxing. But I think you've got to do it when you're, I think, I prefer to do things doo doo doo doo doo quick, especially when I'm teaching because when I'm when I'm teaching, I'm fired up. Yeah, it's easy. I find it much harder than to stop teach, have a shower go back. Yeah. So I

think you've got to fit it around, you know, your day, when you feel that, you know, when you feel that you've got something to say, really.

Will: 25:10

Fair enough. Okay, that brings me on to my second point, which you've already covered a little bit. How do you go about planning out your content? So how far in advance do you plan? Do you know what you're going to talk about on the day? Do you let it come to you on the fly? Is that a combination of both? Tell me a little bit about how you would suggest an instructor goes about planning out what they're going to do for the next 30 days.

Rachel 25:29

This kind of always makes me smile, because we're in January. It's the same every single year. Yeah, January has the same theme, February has the same thing. March is spring, then we're going into Easter, then we're going into holidays, then, you know, it's the same themes all the way through the year.

Will: 25:48

Right, so again, don't overcomplicate it.

Rachel 25:52

I say to all the guys, you know, if you instead of just posting on social media, make a spreadsheet with all of the posts that you do this in January, that you have a spreadsheet that then next January, you get out and you've got a you've got a complete template of what to post in January.

Will: 26:07

Freshen the content with something that's a little bit more current. Same theme, different content.

26:12

Again, yeah, it just all comes down. And then you can of course, you can pepper it with topical things that are happening in the day, new trends that come but ultimately, if you are trying to sell a fitness service or workout of some description, people have got to see your teaching. So whether you have little clips of you teaching whether you speed up a little video of you teaching whether you film yourself going into a class setting up, you know all those types of things. People want to see who you are, what you sound like, they want to look into your eyes, don't they? And they want us it's almost like on social media they're just peeping around the door before they come into the class to see what it's all about.

Will: 26:50

Yeah, that's a very good way, that's a very good analogy actually for what social media is isn't it? Someone that's standing window not quite willing to put inside the class but potentially they will once they feel comfortable and know what they're getting themselves into.

Rachel 27:02

You know, Will, it's it is the same thing every year. It's you know, if you if you wrote down in a spreadsheet, document it everything that you posted last January and the January before and the January before and the last 25 Januarys, it would be relatively the same sort of thing, of course, you know, but you'd have a bit of a framework so you don't have to keep doing this. You do it once and then you just edit it. And again, the same for 30 days. You know, you I was looking at what am I selling?

What am I promoting? Who's the audience what the demographic? Where are they which social media platform? And then it's really a question of dividing up between written posts, graphics, Canva type videos, and lives or video. For me personally, it's always going to be video and live I find it easier and quicker to do. Written, written content is harder but it's getting a lot faster because we've got we've got a chat GPT, we've got AI, and that's gonna be...

Will: 27:56

Please write a post for a fitness instructor in their mid-40s who want to do...

Rachel 28:00

God, that's that this has made my life like this is the answer. So there you go. And there's gonna be more tools coming on online in the next probably few weeks as we, you and I do in this podcast.

Will: 28:11

So, just to hold on that for a second. What tools do you use to create your social media posts? You mentioned Canva and which is a great one for fitness instructors. I recommend that everybody gets across it if they're creating any type of social posts. Is there anything else that you use this like a must, a must-know for an instructor?

Rachel 28:28

I mean canvas just revolutionary, isn't it? It really is.

Will: 28:31

If you're listening to this and you're not on Canva then you need to get on Canva and learn it because it is so easy to use.

Rachel 28:37

It's incredible. So you know again, the great tutorials on YouTube that you can pick up and it does again, for social media posts. Things just need to be bright, breezy, sun headline, you know, not many syllables. Boom. It needs to catch the eye and then you've got a nice caption with whatever you're you're talking about or you're you're selling so definitely Canva, I think I use that every day. No, I pretty much use everything on the fly really now in everything just phone video nice microphone and just film at and try and film different background wherever I am. If it's if it's sunny, go in the garden. If I'm in a club, do it in the club. If I'm at home, do it in the studio. It's just the consistency it really doesn't matter what it you don't need anything else.

Will: 29:22

Okay, so you mentioned the word consistency. I'm going to ask the question, how do you motivate yourself to post when you don't feel like posting? You can see there's a theme with all my questions. Tell me how to do this. Are there times when you are super low motivation and don't want to post do you push through? Is this just something that you know it's for your business? Tell me what like, do you have a strategy for when you're not feeling it?

Rachel 29:45

Do I have a strategy? As a say, I always I always create the content and do most of my lives and videos in a morning because as I say that's when I'm articulate. I find it much more difficult in the evening to do it. I can do it but I find it quite hard. I've got much more energy then. Do I push through? I think If you

force it, it looks, people can tell it's forced. So but I always have a bank of content. So every week I get together with my assistant, and we just film for an hour. And we film tons of exercises, we do lots of pieces to camera. Some are good, some are not so good. You know, some I stumble. So I've always got a bank of content in my phone. And I've been doing that for years. So in my Dropbox, I've just stored every single video picture that I've ever done for probably 10 years or so. So there's always content to dip in and out of. I do get the best reaction from doing live videos, going, live chatting.

Will: 30:36

And do you think it's more on the fly and authentic? Or do you think the algorithm pushes it through to more people? Or is it a bit of a combination of both?

Rachel 30:43

I think it's a combination? Well, I think the the algorithm does push out live for sure. But I think it's that authenticity, people can see you, they can hear you, they can ask you questions. And I think it's a fast way for people to decide whether or not they like you your content, or they don't. And if they don't, that's fine, too.

Will: 31:03

I think that's that's a key thing. Right? And it's again, something that I struggle with. And I know that instructors do. You alluded to it before when you said Who is your class for and they're like, well, everybody, I want everybody to come to my class. One of the things you have to be comfortable on social media is accepting that some people are not going to jive with what you're putting out, and they're not going to like you. But that's also good. Because if everybody like you're either for someone or you're for no one, and you can't be for everyone, nobody can. And I think that's one of the things that social media helps to find your tribe. But also that necessitates weeding out the people that are not going to like you. And that's fine. Just like in real life, right? In real life, you don't go down the street expecting everybody to love you. So treat it the same way.

Rachel 31:47

You know, people come to your class and the class is not for them. And that's that's fine, too. That happens. That happens to everybody listening to this podcast, everyone's experienced that when people come through the door and you know immediately that it's not the right fit for you or them. And so social media definitely accelerates that. I do take on board what you're saying. And I do understand that it can be very daunting and very difficult. And life happens and stressful situations happen to everybody. And the last thing you think when you're dealing with personal circumstances is to go on social media go and wow, look at me, everything's great. Come and join my class. I do get that. But if you've got if you have a bit of a plan over the week, and you can schedule a hell of a lot, you can use tools, you know, going back to your tools, you can use tools like stream yard, where you can create video and it can actually appear that you are alive. You could you could, it can go out on social media as if you're live and nobody would know the algorithm won't know. And so many people I work with do that. You'll see a lot of the big marketers do this. They repost, repost, repost lots.

Will: 32:48

This is very important, right, is they look back at what what posts did really well. And they do one of two things, they either repost it exactly the same, or they redo it with exactly the same content.

Rachel 32:59

I do it all the time we do all the time here, you know, late in the evening, we'll schedule things going out in the evening at different time zones. And it'll be it'll be content that I've already that's already had good views and eyeballs on it. And we know it performs well. So I'll repost it. There's just literally millions and millions of people on social media, you can have people say this to me. Oh, you know, are you saturating everybody? And I'll go well, you can't possibly you just can't...

Will: 33:27

Exactly. And if people feel saturated, they'll unfollow and then 10 new people might follow me. So that's fine.

Rachel 33:34

It's true. It's true. Yeah. So yeah, hope that helps.

Will: 33:38

It does. Okay, so now I want to move on to one of the topics that I really wanted to talk to you about because it's one of the topics that fills me with the most dread. I say that I say that in a slightly jokey manner. TikTok. Now, like I say, to say it's a new platform will be will be silly, because obviously, it's been around for a long time, and it's very, very popular. But if you look at some of the stats that are coming out, and you're seeing the number of people who are on Tik Tok, and also, as we get older, the demographics that are coming to fitness classes, and as the generations move up, we simply have to make sure that we're either making a conscious choice to not be on it because we're focusing on the older platforms like Facebook or Instagram, or making a conscious choice to be honest, and that's a conscious choice that you have made. And I love your TikTok because it just feels that you are giving out something fresh that's completely authentic to you and you do not look daunted by the platform and the TikTok dances and all that sort of stuff. So tell me how long have you been on TikTok? How did you find getting on it and what tips can you give to instructors who are not yet using that platform?

Rachel 34:41

Oh, okay. I'm gonna say lots of different things here. So I had to musically out when it was musically, really through listening to Gary Vaynerchuk get watched musically. So I got the app and watched it then I joined when it switched to TikTok. I had a TikTok account and I did a couple of TikToks when it goes started that got like millions of...

Will: 35:01

Was musically the lip synching one?

Rachel 35:03

Right, because people are certain people are on YouTube, or they're using, yeah, Google YouTube, they're using search terms and the potential for your video to come out first. And that search remains current, as long as you're using the correct search terms, which is possibly another podcast topic that we need to focus on. Don't get too caught into that. But whereas you know, when you post something on social media, it either goes or it doesn't go and then you can repost it and try it again. But on YouTube, it's it's evergreen content. It was the first one. Yeah, that was that was like the predecessor. Yeah, yeah. Then I released some TikToks when it first came out, and they got millions and millions of views, so my very first TikToks just got millions of views. Well, I was a little bit scared of it there and really thought, I don't know if this is this is for me. So as the years have gone on, I've dabbled in and out of it. I've had seasons where I've gone all in and done TikToks every day, and I've really pushed it.

And then other days when I've just left it alone. To be absolutely honest with you. It's not an app that I choose to view and look at. And I know you can get some great unless I'm looking at the latest Britney conspiracy theory. Or where's Kanye gone? Yeah, I might have a look at it for that. But I don't tend to spend a lot of time on it, it doesn't captivate me as much as everybody else. Maybe again, that's an age thing. And I do agree with you, I think. But I just think it doesn't have to be TikTok. I think if you're being smart with your time, and you run a local business, if you're teaching classes, or you've got a studio, or you do pt, and you've got very little time to create short form content, I would go and create content for YouTube shorts. And I would, I would, I would label all those shorts for search. So Pilates classes in Derbyshire Part One, Pilates class, so you can be found. The thing with TikTok is once you've done the TikTok, it goes, same with Instagram, Facebook, really to a degree, it's just gone. But whereas on a YouTube short, you've got something that will stick around forever and a day, right? Youtube's not going anywhere. It's evergreen. So, again, it I think if you've got a local business, it would be it would be really imperative to to focus have a bit of a Google strategy.

Will: 37:15

Right because people are going to be searching on the location.

Rachel 37:20

And then you're gonna come up. So I think if you've got if you've got limited time, that would right now, as you and I are recording this podcast, I would say that that would be a better use of your time. Okay, I also, I've experimented a lot with TikTok and get lots of views and lots of comments. Very few of those people actually translate into clients and customers.

Will: 37:39

This is the question I was going to ask is, like, you've moved into a beautifully...So you've pretty much said this already YouTube. So just for anyone that's a little bit confused about what you mean by YouTube. Could you explain the type of content that you will put on YouTube and a little bit about what the tagging will be just for anyone who is a complete novice?

Rachel 37:57

Of course. So YouTube is owned by Google, which is why it's really important. So if somebody puts into Google Pilates classes in Derbyshire what Google does, it will search through all the Google products first. So it will look through if you've got Google reviews, if you are using Google Maps, if you have got Google My Business, and then it will go to YouTube. So if you've got YouTube videos that that are, as I say, Pilates classes in Derbyshire, part one, part two. So your digital footprint on Google is if it's large, large enough, then when people are organically searching, you're going to pop up, your videos are going to pop up, your website's going to pop up. So it's a it's a really clever way of harnessing what people are already looking for in search. And then within YouTube, you've got two forms of content. You've got long form content. So that's the type of YouTube that you go and search for and you look at.

Will: 38:50

Like a cooking tutorial, a full class.

Rachel 38:54

Exactly. And then you have got what YouTube have done to try and combat TikTok is they're called YouTube shorts, and it's vertical video up to a minute. It's very, very basic, the infrastructure, the whole,

how you create a YouTube show is very, very basic. You can't really go wrong with it. There's not it's not very sophisticated, but it's growing really, really quickly.

Will: 39:14

Okay, great.

Rachel 39:15

So if you tap if you on the short you only have a very few amount of characters, so you've got to make that title count. So it's got to be Pilates for menopausal women, Pilates for arthritis, Pilates for...

Will: 39:28

So you're talking about the title of the title of the video. And when people are titling it, they need to be thinking, who's my key customer, who's the person I'm trying to attract here? What would they put into a search engine? If they if what would I put into a search engine to find me, right? Or what would my customer avatar put in?

Rachel 39:49

Exactly that and you can test it. So you can go to Google and you could find Pilates classes in Ilkeston and then we'll put that in and the classes would pop up, you could see and you can actually see how many people are actually searching for that those terms. And you can, you could create 20 1-minute videos that are all based around and they have those words in them, chances are that you're gonna pop up. So it's a good way. Anybody that's got a local business and during physical classes, that is a great way of bringing new leads into your business for free.

Will: 40:21

So you must have some YouTube YouTube or YouTube shorts where you are specifically saying type of fitness class, location.

Rachel 40:29

Yeah, and all the Google and all the Google, Google Maps, Google reviews, make sure they're updated.

Will: 40:34

Having a business listing and all that sort of stuff. So making sure, so they can link together and then point them in your direction. Absolutely. Well, that is like I wanted to talk about social media, I guess. I guess that's YouTube is social media as well. But that is, it's interesting that we start on TikTok. And you're like, don't do that. Do this.

Rachel 40:51

Oh, well, let me let me come back.

Will: 40:55

No, I want you to listen is the most value. This seems like it is, keep going.

Rachel 40:59

But I think I think so. My point really with that was to say everybody's got limited time. TikTok, I know you can read everybody needs to be on TikTok, do TikTok, but you've got to do, you've got to do the

social media that's going to bring people into your business. If you've got extra time. On top of that, that would be my priority is to get your Google and your YouTube sorted. And if you've got more time on that, then maybe look at creating an account on TikTok and experimenting with content on TikTok, there are so many ways you can take TikTok, you can do the dances, the lip syncs, you can do information, you can do tip, you can do anything on TikTok. But it's a quantity game.

Will: 41:36

But if you're a local business and your key, your key desire is to get people into your fitness classes in front of you live and in person, then TikTok isn't maybe the best platform to do that, because it's pushing you out globally. And that's all fine and good. And you might get lots of followers, but that's not going to translate into bums in classes.

Rachel 41:54

Unless you've got the time. You know, I think you've got you've got to prioritize with social media, because it's so overwhelming, what is going to move the needle in the business? And I would suggest as we're recording this video that that the strategy we've just talked about with Google and YouTube is going to move the needle right now more than a TikTok. Now, if you've got extra time in the day, or you're got a VA or a personal or...

Will: 42:16

Yeah, I guess if you're a digital business that's not, you're creating online classes, rather than old-fashioned classes, then maybe it's a different consideration.

Rachel 42:24

Yeah, you can repurpose all that YouTube content and you can use you can almost use TikTok as a, I wouldn't say a dumping ground, but you can just utilize and use everything that you've created on TikTok, but to grow on tick tock, you've got to be very consistent, and it's quantity four or five times a day, or the walk the creator, the big creators, that have got the 1000s and 1000s of dollars. That's the type of content that they're putting out regularly. It's quantity. So it's, I think what we're both trying to say here is be strategic with your time, do the things that are going to move the needle and then with the additional time or repackaging repurposing then maybe look at TikTok. You know, we could sit here and have this conversation in a year, TikTok might be banned. You know what I mean? The US may have taken TikTok off the app store, who knows where it could go? Or it could be massive. But I think you can chase rainbows sometimes with this. And I think sometimes it's better to focus on solid, get your business foundation solid with social media first.

Will: 43:27

I'm going to try and boil this down. And I want you to interrogate me if I get any of it wrong, but what I'm hearing from this conversation is one, you really need to know exactly what your business is, and who your business is for before you go into creating any content or choosing a platform because that's ultimately what's going to define what's important. Two, is if you're a local business, then YouTube is the best place to go because you're optimizing Google to search. And if you want people to search for you, find you, and come to your class, then that's going to be the most like time effective way to use your time on social media. And number three is if you're going to do the other things, don't try and reinvent the wheel have a process that you just follow every month and and not be worried about perfection guide

Rachel 44:14

Yes, you've got it! That's exactly it and maybe I'll add, don't be afraid to try different things. Try different ideas. I think, question I get a lot from from FitPros is you know, how can I niche down I teach Pilates for older people, I teach Zumba, I teach SH1FT, I teach...Each one brings in different demographics. And I think you know, as a fitness business overall people are buying from you. You're the personal brand. So you know you can do some Pilates for older adults, you can do some SH1FT, you can do technique, you can do all the things because it still fits under your umbrella. And then people are going to be signposted to whichever class is going to be more appropriate to them or whichever segment of your business is going to be more appropriate for them. So don't be you know, I see lots of marketeers a niche down niche down and I do get it. But in fitness, you might have lots of different niches. And that's fine, you can create content around those different. In fact, it gives us more content to create. So, you know, you might do yoga content, Pilates content, dance content, you know, that's fine. There's, you know, there's no hard and fast rules here, you've got to experiment as well. And often you can post things at different times. And like we said, repost it and it can hit, you know, it's, it's a lot of trial and error. And it the algorithms are changing, and the platforms are changing. And they're all competing against each other for it. So it's an exciting time, I think to be in, it's an easier time, it may seem overwhelming, but there's more reach. There's more organic reach. Now, you don't have to spend a dime on advertising.

Will: 45:46

Yeah, we need to remind ourselves of that right? That all of this is free.

Rachel 45:49

Yeah, it's free. So yeah.

Will: 45:51

So I have two questions to finish. Okay, and I'm gonna ask you them in order. The first one is, if you could identify one learning you've had, from your time using social media to promote your business, what would that be? I know, it's hard.

Rachel 46:13

You've just I think the main thing is we you and I've talked about it is you just have to get out out of your own way. And you just have to post and really understand that people are not judging, and they're not looking at what you're wearing, or what your hair's look like, or if you've had Botox or not, they're really not.

Will: 46:30

You're speaking directly to me right now.

Rachel 46:31

No. They are really interested in how, anybody's is looking at you thinking, how can you help me? What can you do for me? The information that you have, how can it make my life better in some way? And I think the sooner you realize that the sooner you get over yourself, the sooner you can create great contact that can change lives, and bring more people into your business.

Will: 46:52

Yeah, for sure. And I think that getting out of your own way, and posting more allows you to post more, I know that the times when I've been more consistent with doing it, it's been easier in the times when I've kind of dropped off. And so after taking a couple of weeks off social media completely for Christmas, and New Year's, I'm at the at the hardest part, because I'm like, oh, how do I start again? Great. The last question I've got is a little bit different, not strictly related to social media, it is, after your time in the fitness industry and where you see what instructors are doing now, what is your prediction for where we're going to be at this time next year? Like if you could say there's going to be one change or one development in the fitness industry that instructors should get themselves across and understand what would it be?

Rachel 47:36

Oh, my gosh, I can't think of one what am I going to say? I think there's always going to be the fitness industry as we know it is always going to be here. How we deliver programs may change may be different. But I think you've got to be you've got to love how you teach your class, the platforms you use, whether you teach face to face, whether you teach online, you've got to love it. And the minute you don't love it anymore, that's the time to rethink, stop, and maybe change direction. I always say there's always going to be a market for fitness for the fitness industry as a group exercise instructor, people always want to get fit, they want to be happy, they want to be healthy, they want to live more productive lives, we have the keys, we have the keys for all that to teach fitness. And I think you've always got to remember that there will always be a market for that. And they'll always be people that want to want you for your expertise. You may have to learn some tech, you may have to, you know change sometimes how you deliver but there's always going to be customers for what we offer, which I think you'll never gonna be out of business ever, ever, ever. You just may have to change sometimes the way you deliver it.

Will: 48:49

Perfect. And on that note looking forward to the future. I want to say thank you Rachel Holmes, for appearing on the podcast. This has been a great conversation. I'm sure I will see you at some of the live in-person events this year. Thank you very much from our listeners.

Rachel 49:03

Oh, thank you. Oh, I hope so, Will. Thank you for having me.

Will: 49:07

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