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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPISODE  
**167**

**Rob Kosberg**

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/167>



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Best of success,



John Bowen  
Co-founder, AES Nation

**John Bowen:** As entrepreneurs we want to make a difference. One of the best ways we can do it is have our clients, our customers perceive us as the expert. I've got a remarkable entrepreneur with me today that's going to share with you how literally overnight you can be the expert. He is a 2-time international best-selling author himself. He's a founder of a company that can help you do this, Best-Selling Publishing. He has, and this is the part where I love him, he successfully helped market. He's taken 200 authors to bestseller status. He's worked with 300 different industries. You've ever wondered how you can be an expert; you need to stay tuned because we're going to lay it out step-by-step. You don't want to miss this.

Rob, I am so excited that you have the time to join me today. I know we have a little trouble getting together. When I met you at Mastermind Talks and had the chance to spend some time there, I was blown away with all the stuff that you do. First of all, thank you for joining us.

**Rob Kosberg:** Thanks John. Great to be with you, man. Had a lot of fun at Mastermind Talks. We enjoyed some good conversation and good friends there. That was a lot of fun.

**John:** It was and a lot of brainstorming. One of the things I love about AES Nation, Rob, is that you and I get to ... This is a conversation I would have had if I didn't have a podcast, but I get to share it with 10,000 friends. What you do is just so powerful. I'm coming out with a book and this is what I want your help in doing this. I've done 17 books, but this one I want to have a little bit better positioning and you are the guy here. In any event, you've been doing all this help, making all these other people really accelerate their success like crazy. Give me a little bit of back story. How did you get into what you're doing?

**Rob:** Yeah. Do you want the glossy version or do you want the real ugly, ugly truth?

**John:** Nobody gets through life unscarred, so a couple of the scars along the way maybe.

**Rob:** I was in the real estate business. I'm 51 years old now. I got my real estate license at 18. I worked my way through college selling real estate. Did really, really well, so a lot of real estate history. In the early 2000s I owned 3 companies in the real estate industry. I owned a mortgage company, a real estate company. I was a licensed title agent. Long story short, those businesses were crushing it. I was doing \$100 million a year in closings, millions of dollars in personal income. I owned millions of dollars of real estate, and then I didn't.

**John:** Rob, let me just stop you for a second. There are a lot of fellow entrepreneurs, a little different story different times and so on, but they probably went through it personally and if they didn't they had some friends that did. We call these life lessons. It made grad school look really cheap.

**Rob:** That's the truth, man. In one sense, I've been in real estate a long time, so I was looking for an out, an exit. That was not the exit I had in mind, but I was looking for an exit. I didn't want to stay in any longer. I could've pivoted, I could've kept my companies and changed the type of real estate we were doing. We were doing luxury real estate in South Florida, and that market completely seized up. It went away as far as lending goes for a period of years. In fact, it really is, even to this day hasn't fully returned.

Long story short, I was a Mastermind with Dan Kennedy and a few others. You know these folks. I was kind of licking my wounds, wondering what I should do. This is late 2007, early 2008. I got some advice that I should write a book to kind of position myself as an expert in a brand-new industry. I'd never written a book. I didn't know much about it at the time, but I decided to do it. I made a ton of mistakes, but the book really became successful. It became a bestseller. It got me on radio. In fact, I ended up doing ... I had my own radio show. I took this brand-new business in a terrible economy in 2008 and 2009 from zero to over million dollars a year in personal income in 13 months. All of that was as a product of my book. Out of nowhere it exploded.

I started having people come to me saying, "How'd you do it? We've never heard of you before, and now you," ... I was all over the radio in south Florida. I kind of owned the radio airwaves in this particular niche, and it was all due to my books. I sold my company and just dove headfirst 2011 into best-seller publishing.

**John:** I am so glad that you did, Rob, because this is an area that is so important. I've done 17 books mostly in the industry. 2 books particularly ... The very first book I sold 100,000 copies personal finance one and it changed my life. The second one was an industry book talking about creating value in your business. One guy read it and wrote me a check for \$25 million, bought the business. I like books. I don't know what it is.

**Rob:** Wow.

**John:** I had 2 partners too, so I had to share it a little. Just amazing things. This is something I've talked to my wife about it. The difference in level of success before I did books and after I did books are quite honestly night and day. This authority, you and I have talked about this, is authority comes from celebrity ... I'm going to create a new word "celebritism." My wife gets really frustrated on this. I always think it's like waving your fist at the sun. That's not going to make the sun be less hot. This is the way it is. As entrepreneurs we've got to recognize this. How do you see this working? You were the one that told me this, this authority celebrity relationship.

**Rob:** Yeah. Whether it's the Kim Kardashians of the world, or even what you see going on with Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton ... It was once said to me, "If you can get half the

people in America to hate you, you could probably become president of the United States.” It’s nuts but that kind of celebrity creates this power. There’s this attraction and whether we like it or not ...

I do do a lot of work with financial advisors. I’ve done tons of financial advisory books. I’ll always ask in a public space, “Who’s the first person that comes to your mind?” I don’t ask financial advisors this. I ask general public this. They either say 1 of 2 people; Susie Orman or Dave Ramsey. All the financial advisors, and you know this better than me because you’re in the field, they just roll their eyes, and they’re just, “Ah.” It makes them sick because of the celebrity that those 2 have created. The reverse can be true. You could be terrible in some ways and give the most simplistic advice, but if you’re well-known, baby you’re the authority.

**John:** Ron, I can tell you I was at my Mastermind group of financial advisors ... and we’ll talk about all industries but ... Financial advisors, last week in San Francisco, I had 230 of the top financial advisors from around the world. I was talking about this, Rob, and the very first picture I showed because on the number 1 that comes up on search is Susie Orman, whether you like her or not she’s one of the best-selling authors out there. I can tell you when I asked almost every financial advisor thought she’s not giving good advice. Whether she is or isn’t, that celebrity part creates the authority. This is this is important not only in the financial services industry ... You’ve been in over 300 niches. This is a universal truth.

**Rob:** Yeah. You’re 100% right. Now, we’ve done almost 300 books; we haven’t done 300 niches.

**John:** Okay.

**Rob:** About 25 different niches. You’re right, the same is true. We work with coaches, consultants, entrepreneurs of all kinds, doctors, dentists, chiropractors, attorneys; you name it, but also my clients. I’ve done books for US ambassadors and professional athletes that are no longer in the limelight because they want to get back in the limelight, and the book helps them to reinvigorate their celebrity. That gives them speaking opportunities, etc., which then puts them right back on the stage.

**John:** Let me go over one of the things I hear over and over again from my entrepreneurial friends is. Rob, they go, “My life’s been pretty boring and mundane. I don’t know if I could really write a book. Yeah, I’d love to have a book. I get this celebrity part, and I want to be an authority, but I’m not sure I have a book. How do I get it out of me,” type thing.

**Rob:** Yeah. That’s a common problem. The first thing is, everybody has a book. They really do. They have great stories. They have great examples. Even if their own personal story isn’t

as exciting as failing terribly in business and then succeeding again, they still have client case studies and client examples of people that they helped in tremendous ways.

We have a whole process. We actually call it “hybrid ghost-writing.” I went through the traditional ghost-writing path when I did my first book. Remember I mentioned I made all these mistakes. I won’t go into details. I know there’s a lot to talk about. I hear this. I talk to authors. We get, I don’t know, a thousand plus applications a year for people to work with our company, so I talk to authors all the time. Those that have written books with traditional ghost-writing have always talked about the same problem, and that is it doesn’t capture their voice. It feels more like a generic thing than a real personalized and powerful personal story.

Anyway, there’s a process that someone can go through to have a writer capture their voice, capture their stories and actually create something that is really fulfilling to them, but more importantly creates that powerful authority in their marketplace. Everybody’s got it, John.

**John:** Rob, it’s so funny, the first book that I did, I stared at a blank computer for a while and nothing happened. Then I hired the wrong people. I finally hired somebody that was right. He taught me that, John, you’re the author and I’m the writer, and it’s don’t get caught up. A lot of us, as entrepreneurs, think it’s unethical somebody’s writing.

**Rob:** Absolutely. Even the big like Patterson and others, they’re doing the same thing. They’re using writers and they’re the authors, so you’re right on.

**John:** This is such an important separation. Having somebody that’s got the experience to do this it makes a huge difference. I know for those of you have been struggling to get that book out this can be a fun process. The material that you create is great. I want to go another step, Rob. I’ve had some friends who have got their book done. I have one in particular who went on Oprah.

**Rob:** Life-changing.

**John:** Yeah, life-changing, except he didn’t have any process of lead capture or anything like this. We went skiing together after and I was like, “You missed a little bit of opportunity here. There’s no kind of do-overs.” How do you, for the first time author or really for somebody who’s done it but hasn’t done it correctly, how do you use a book? My guess is, I know in any of the books I did, I really didn’t make any money, but I made millions of dollars ... I talked about a sale but ... I made millions and millions of dollars off of what the books cost, the leads, the introductions and so on. How do you see these successful authors that you’re working with really do this lead generation?

**Rob:** Yeah. Wow, great question. You hit on the truth. We call it “author 1.0” is where authors think that the royalties from the book sale is where they’re going to make big money. Certainly if you’re a big name person like a Hillary Clinton you can get a multi 7-figure book deal. The reality is for us we’re never going to get that A, and B there’s millions of dollars in opportunity on the backend for all of our books.

One thing that we do with our authors as they’re creating their book in this process, because it does take a number of months; it’s not a year’s long process, but it does take a number of months to do it right, we want them to be thinking about what their lead generation funnel looks like that is the backend. We talk consistently with all our authors that your monetization strategy’s going to come from 3 primary things; speaking engagements, it’s going to come from PR and publicity ongoing, and it’s also going to come from lead generation. Of course, all those things really funnel into each other anyway.

If it’s going to come from lead generation, we need to have funnels set up. They can be very, very simple things. They don’t have to be complicated. It could be as simple as a funnel that looks like sending people from a radio show to a telephone number that they call in and get more information or get a copy of your free book. That was my first funnel online. I simply told people, “I’ll give you a free copy, physical copy of my book, if you call my office and requested it.” We would get hundreds of calls a week, and we would convert 1 in 18 to a \$5000 program. How many could I just give away was the-

**John:** Let me just stop for a second, Rob. My wife is my reality check. She’d be going, “John, you’re giving away all these free books.” 1 out of 18, what did it cost for those 18 books to get \$5000. Even a few of our mutual friends who are a big presence writing books, nonfiction, the motivational guys, the business development and so on, where a couple of them or getting million dollar advances, none of them pocket that money. They use it all for the marketing process to do really just accelerate what you’re talking about it. It’s really pretty amazing what I can generate if it’s done well.

**Rob:** Yeah. It’s massive. I have example after example after example. We have a client of ours actually in the financial niche, but he’s not in advisory. He actually owns a company that does cyber security for midsize RIA firms.

**John:** I know Richard.

**Rob:** Oh, do you?

**John:** I met him. I read his book and I didn’t know until I saw on the website today that you did that.

**Rob:** It's so funny. Rich used his book to get a speaking engagement at a trade show that he was unable to get previously. He then gave away his book. He signed \$700,000 worth of business from the book giveaway at that one trade show. 700,000, like wow! We're like, I have to help authors to understand, give the book away. It's okay. It cost it you 3 bucks to print. The lead is more valuable to you than the book is.

**John:** Why don't we touch on, Rob, I don't know the answer of this or we didn't talk about it too much when we were having our Mastermind with all the assorted things going on, but publishing versus self-publishing just for a second. How do you feel about that? I don't know what Rich did or what you're recommending to authors.

**Rob:** Yeah. Best-Seller Publishing, is a self-publishing tool to do it. We primarily focus on Amazon, because Amazon is the gorilla. Amazon also, with Create Space, allows you to print on demand. You don't have to have 1000 books sitting in your garage because the publisher demanded you to buy a thousand copies at 8 bucks a copy. You can print on demand, and also you can get complete distribution in the bookstores and everything else. It's not rocket science to do anymore.

**John:** You and I are in agreement. I've done 17 books. First 3 were published by traditional publishers, and I've stopped. I've had many conversations with publishers, but they just haven't gone ahead and been worthwhile to go forward. My business when I first started doing books I was a financial advisor. I had the good fortune to be in Silicon Valley, kind of right place right time, and publishing a few of these books, I became an expert. Very quickly the size of the type of client ... I went from the really affluent, affluent, all the way up to the ultra-affluent over time. Had I known this the very first thing I would have done was create that authority.

In the 25 or so industries that you've worked in, how is this at positioning to kind of move up market? Everybody wants to do larger deals.

**Rob:** Great question John. I could probably note many, many examples but innately probably you know, just like those that are listening know, that those that are authors are credible experts, they're authorities. In any large transaction or in any big opportunity you're going to have competition. Clearly, you're going to have competition. Imagine that you're competing against someone that's a best-selling author, has been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox, has large speaking engagements and you don't have any of that credibility. Even if you were really more of an expert than them you're just not appearing as you are, so you have to have those boxes checked if you want really big opportunities.

**John:** It's funny, Rob, I had mentioned I sold the company, it was to a young fellow in Winnipeg, Canada ... One of best deal guys I ever met, Marty Weinberg. Marty ended up

really leading the charge and building a billion-dollar business. I was the CEO on the US financial side. We went out and bought a number of sports' agencies, and business management firms, CPA firms that focused on the entertainment. We had 600 of the really the superstars both in sports and in entertainment.

As we were going doing the acquisition Marty, always super dressed, had his rolling bag he brought. It's like, "Marty, why are you bringing your luggage to the meeting?" He opened it up and he was taking my books out and giving it to our target acquisitions, because he recognized the value of creating that celebrity. I would've never thought to use them. Marty used everybody that he worked with, their books, not his books. He walked away with many hundreds of millions of dollars after that. I think it was a good tool.

**Rob:** Smart guy.

**John:** Yeah, very smart guy. Let's go to something you and I are real big users of and this is the ... The Internet is such a great facilitator of technology in getting your message out. How can authors use this effectively?

**Rob:** We're in a time right now, especially with Facebook, where you can target your ideal client down to their interest, not just their demographics, but their interest so specifically that you can get your ideal client very inexpensively and very easily. If you don't have the pieces in place to use Facebook, as an example, or Instagram, even Snapchat is growing, and especially Google Pay-Per-Click, etc. then you're missing out on this massive segment of opportunity of the population for lead generation.

**John:** Yeah. To me it's just, as an author, you can do some pretty amazing things. What happens is there was a time ... You think at a bookstore; somebody bought your book, that was the transaction. There wasn't much follow-up. Maybe you could have action in the book and that's it. Today, we can ... Facebook is a great example. The demographics and cycle graphics, whatever niche you're in you can target in, you can load up your client base and get liked mine, and just really do some amazing things and the book kind of ties it all together.

**Rob:** Yeah. The book is the authority piece. It can back be the lead gen piece as well because people want that book. Even if they never open it it's powerful.

**John:** That's it. One of the things I'm seeing, Rob, in marketing so often you talk about what they call "lead magnets." A book is one of the most effective ones. In today's world there's no privacy anymore. We can put little pixels or cookies where we can track what you're doing with them. I've had thousands of books downloaded where people didn't open them or videos they didn't play, but that started the conversation. That's really all we're looking for in a marketing is starting a conversation.

**Rob:** Look behind you. You can't throw a book away. I already have Jay Abraham's, Getting Everything ... I was sent this by a friend. I can't throw this away. I don't own it, so it sits here on my desk, and you've got hundreds behind you. Imagine that reminder of you being the expert to your ideal clients also.

**John:** It's phenomenal. Let's go to the next segment, which is really about resources. I'm going to pull up your website. Help me, Rob ... As a matter of fact, Richard's picture came up on the website just as I pulled it up ... What's on the website and the resources that are available as our fellow entrepreneurs are considering this and thinking about it?

**Rob:** Yeah. Probably a great place to start is we had a number of case studies right on the homepage. There's a button that will say something to the effect of, "Would you like our author case study?" If they click that they can watch a short video presentation that talks about the 3 keys to getting your book done, making it a bestseller and then using it to profit from it. That's completely free. They can watch that and learn about the process that sells. Plus, we get our clients on TV, radio, etc. I have 2 full-time publicists that do that. They can see tons of examples of clients on TV. I have some video blog stuff there, that'll be helpful too.

**John:** I recognize an awful lot of people that you've sent through. One of the reasons, some I knew beforehand, but probably many of them I know because they went through the process with you. This is one of the real key things.

Let me summarize all this and the key takeaways. This is something to me that I think is so important for all of us. If you're going to be a business owner, an entrepreneur, you want to differentiate yourself and ideally you want to be distinctive. Everybody want to differentiate yourself, but whatever industry you're in, whatever niche, you want to move from differentiation to being distinct. The only thing that is distinct among all of us is our own personal story, our experiences, our perspective on what it is that we're doing in our industry. People love those stories.

Taking from Rob what he shared with us; number 1, if you want to be an authority in your industry remember how celebrities do it. This is coming out, making very public. A book a just one of the most powerful ways to do it.

Second, I got to tell you, everybody has a book. If you're successful in your business you have a book. You probably have a whole series. Behind me I've got 17 of them are mine and then one of my partners has written 50. You can go ahead and you can really ... You don't have to do that kind of quantity, but you have that first one, and working with the right people just makes it so much easier. Remember, you're the author. Write or work with a team that's going to help you pull together.

Third, is really the success that comes out of lead generation. Before you release the book you should have that whole launch sequence and what you're going to do. This is why you don't want to work just with a writer. You want to work with a team that is going to build that out ahead of time so that you can achieve. On the case studies, and Rob your reports on the website, there's so many ... Their internet kind of blew up a bit with all the lead generations, and we want everyone to have that. I've done that and it's amazing how big that can be.

Then from there, I want you think, in the financial market we study the relationship of the affluence. These are successful families with at least \$1 million or more of financial assets. What we find is 91% want to work with an expert. One of the best ways of demonstrating expertise is publishing. In the financial markets it's really one of the big separations, but I got to say it's the big separation in every industry.

Lastly, this podcast is all about accelerating entrepreneurial success. The name, I'm pointing to the logo here, aesnation.com, Accelerating Entrepreneurial Success, there is nothing more ... With using the Internet, today's tools, with a book you can really accelerate it.

Rob, I want to thank you. This is so invaluable. I want encourage everyone to go to your website, look at the case studies, really consider if it fits into their business. If so have that conversation, because you know what, your future clients the people that you don't know now, who are going to read your book, they're counting on you to make a huge difference. Wish you the best of success.

## A Second Opinion on Your Finances

*A Complimentary Service from Financial Advisor Select for the Members of AES Nation*

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

Like many members of AESNation, I'm a serial entrepreneur. In addition to co-founding AESNation, I'm the founder and CEO of Financial Advisor Select, a firm dedicated to helping successful people make informed financial decisions by introducing them to top financial advisors.

If you're like many successful entrepreneurs, you and your family already have a relationship with a financial advisor. You may even work with several financial advisors. If you are completely satisfied with these relationships and confident that your finances are on track toward helping you achieve all that is most important to you, we congratulate you.

However, you may not be entirely satisfied. You may be wondering if there's a financial advisor who is better-suited to address your family's very specific financial challenges. If so, you are not alone. In today's uncertain economic climate, many successful entrepreneurs are wondering if they have the right financial advisor.

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John Bowen  
Founder and CEO  
Financial Advisor Select