



Define Your Audience Unit

HOW PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS EARN \$10,000 A GIG

Here's the short answer: You'll earn \$10,000 when you convince someone you're worth \$10,000.

“So what do you speak about?”

That’s the way I started almost every conversation I had with speakers at the recent National Speakers Association Convention in Washington DC (#NSA15, #influence15).

After listening to each speaker give me their elevator pitch, I got down to business.

“I like what you’re saying,” I began. “It makes sense to me. I would really love to pay you \$10,000 to come and speak at my conference. But I need to know what the return on investment is going to be so I can justify the cost to my CFO.”

See what I did there? I immediately started asking the tough question. What is the ROI?

I spoke to some really fascinating people about many different topics. But almost without fail when I mentioned the \$10,000 number their eyes glazed over.

The point I wanted to make right out of the gate was that it doesn’t matter how much you believe in the value of your content, you need to be able to prove that value to the people who hire you.

Here’s the thing, this discussion is exactly the same if the number is \$1000 or \$40,000. People want to know the money they invest in a speaker will show some sort of return.

Shockingly, the ROI conversation is one that very few people could answer.

There was a lot of soft talk about employee morale, increased sales and happy workplaces - but that doesn't really differentiate one speaker from another in a crowded market.

It doesn't matter how much you believe in the value of your content, you need to prove it to the people who hire you. [CLICK TO TWEET](#)

What speakers need to have is a strong statement; something that backs up the business case for bringing them in (and paying that \$10,000 fee).

Give yourself a minute before going down through the next couple of paragraphs. Think about what the specific ROI will be for a company or conference to hire you to speak at an event.

I don't want to pick on anyone in particular. So I'm just going to make up a general persona to run through one discussion I had.

Me: So what do you speak about?

Speaker: I'm "The Communicator."

Me: Okay. What do you speak about?

Speaker: I teach sales teams how to communicate effectively with clients.

Me: Hmm? So who hires you? And why would they pay you \$10,000 to speak?

Speaker: I make salespeople more effective in communications. That makes them better sales people.

I knew what he was trying to say. But I didn't really think he was making a good case. So I suggested the following:

Every team has that one sales person. He or she is able to have great conversations with anyone in a room. What I do is turn every member of your sales team into "that guy." Now think about how much more revenue your company would generate if every person on your sales team was producing at that level.

Sounds a lot better than "I'm the communicator."

What speakers really need is to not only find their value proposition. They need to be able to articulate it in a way that fires up the client's imagination.
Figure out how to do that and you'll never be short of work.