

Why A Podcast? Transcript

Since this is my first episode, I'd like to share a few things with you about why I'm doing this and what I hope to accomplish with this podcast.

First, I'm going to talk about who I am. Second why I'm doing this podcast at all. And third, a few things I've learned about running a business. And fourth, and just want to give you a little preview about what's to come.

So as I said in the intro, my name is Janice Hostager and I have been doing all sorts of marketing for my three-decade career. I started my career out loving both writing and design. I was told over and over again, I had to choose one. So I did the writing part for a while, went into PR, and then it went into management then art direction. And from there I've done just about everything marketing, email, social media website design, SEO, and a whole lot more.

Because I love to do so many things, though. I've struggled with focus. So much of what I've learned and what I teach about marketing strategy was put into a framework that I created as a business owner so that I can stay focused on what I need to be working on when I need to work on it, and how to stay on track with marketing. I call the framework the Trail to the Sale™ and I'll talk a lot more about the framework in upcoming episodes.

So I want to share all I've learned with you a small business owner who struggles with keeping up with marketing, learning, marketing, and figuring out how to get more customers and more sales. I get it because I also run a small business.

After my first child was born, I tried going back to work at a very demanding job. But if you're a mom, you know that feeling of leaving your baby to a caretaker, no matter how great they are. Feels like it's ripping your heart out. But my husband was just finishing his Ph.D. at the time. So being a stay-at-home mom was not an option for me. But as I sat rocking my baby night after night, I dreamed about the kind of business I could start where I could still be there for my baby while she was growing up.

I was in fact raised in a small business family. From the time I was very small. All I remember was my dad was nearly always at work. Most of the week I didn't see him at all since he'd left before I got up and got home after I went to bed. And when he wasn't home, he was exhausted.

He had purchased a company that rebuilt automotive parts and my mom worked there also three days a week. So during summer break and holiday school breaks, I was brought along to the shop as we called it. My two older sisters also worked there. In the winter months, it got very busy because cars broke down more often in a cold Minnesota winter. Those days were long. There were times I fell asleep in my dad's office chair during holiday breaks waiting for him to get done for the day.

But there were also been times when he was less busy, but our family budget was very tight. For me, as a child. Those were better days. Even though money was tight. I was at least able to see my dad and although his life was hard for me, it was even harder for him. Although he was able to support his family and a number of employees. He got terrible migraine headaches. And in his early 60s, he had a heart attack. Although he survived, at that point, he cut back on his hours and eventually sold his business.

So I literally grew up in this environment of small business, watching him when times are good, and when times are bad. So I had no disillusion about what the business was all about. And yet I still wanted it. But I wanted it to be different. I wanted it to work. I feel like that stayed with me.

Once I finished college and attended grad school, I went to work for a large high-end retailer in their advertising department, which by the way was so glamorous and fun. And then I moved to working at an ad agency as art director. But I always felt like I was amassing knowledge for when I would start my own business.

After I got married and my husband took a job in a college town in Wisconsin far away from any large corporate or agency marketing position. I had my chance and I opened a small graphic design agency, which was the perfect combination of working and being a mom. That was important because by then I had two kids. From there it grew into a marketing and design firm. And now several years later, I just focus on marketing strategy.

So I started with a side gig, putting the word out that I was taking on freelance clients. I'll never forget that sense of freedom when I sat in my car on a way to visit a client and I knew I was running my own business it really wasn't much money at first. But it was the realization of a dream that I think I had had most of my life. And I did it in a way where I was able to be there for my family and for my business. I knew I did not want to live the life my dad did.

Next you may be wondering why I'm doing this podcast. First of all, I'm not doing this for me. I'm doing this because I feel like we all have a calling in our life to help other people. As I look around today, I see so many people in that same rat race as my dad was in. My dad was a word-of-mouth guy in terms of marketing. As far as I know, he never did any formal marketing of his business, never ran ads, and so on.

My talent happened to fall into the world of marketing and I love sharing what I know to help you in your business. I enjoy working with small business owners because I understand where you're coming from. I don't offer a pot of gold get-rich promise but I do offer what I know how to develop a solid business marketing strategy that actually works.

My why is also a little bigger. I strongly believe that we're put on this earth to help others part of every dollar anyone spends in my business goes to three amazing organizations. After visiting Africa and Haiti and meeting women who have watched their children die from not having enough food to eat. I have been committed to doing what I can to help teach and provide

donations to care for children and provide micro-loans for women. So that they don't have the means to create their own businesses. From there, they can support their family and their community. I'll put the link to those organizations in the show notes.

And third, here are a few lessons I've learned about small business in general:

Number one, it is really largely a head game. All it takes to stop me cold is to say I can't do this, or I'm not qualified, or I'm not smart enough. not young enough. They're all lies. It takes intentional effort to get past those thoughts and override them. And for me it's a daily exercise I'll talk more about that.

Number two, you will be scared and that's good. This podcast I'm doing right now? I'm totally uncomfortable. And uncomfortable is a polite way to say terrified. I'm fearful of putting myself into the podcast world feeling completely naked about my life, my business, my thoughts, my experiences. But that's actually a good thing. I have learned that growth takes place in the fear zone. So here I am.

Number three, creativity is king. You've probably heard that content is king. But I think with AI that's about to change. There are so many people in business copying everyone else. I see small businesses do this all the time and honestly, I've done it myself. Something inside of us goes back to middle school where we just want to be like everyone else to feel legit. But that is not a good marketing strategy. In fact, nothing can turn your business into a commodity faster. And a business that's a commodity isn't a race to the bottom where the commodity the lowest price wins.

So it's really important to be unique and set yourself apart in the marketing world. It's called pattern disruption. It's something you want to do to get someone's attention. If nobody notices you, then nobody's gonna know you're there. If nobody knows you're there, nobody's gonna buy your product. So be creative about choosing your market, your pricing, your packaging, be a pattern disrupter.

Number four, you need a cheerleader. My cheerleader has been my husband who makes me feel like I can do anything. I happen to be blessed enough to be married to a business professor. Even though he's busy with his own career. He has spent many an evening giving me pep talks as I sob or vent about something in my business not going the way I want. If you don't have a spouse or if your family's not on board with what you're doing. Find a friend or a business coach who is it is a game changer.

Number five, you deserve a participation trophy. Why? Because you decided to get into the entrepreneurship game. There are a lot of business gurus and marketing bros who try and sell you underline that running a business and making a million is easy. Assuming you buy the product that is I'm here to tell you it's hard work. So kudos to you for putting in the effort and listening to what we're sharing here today. Consider this your audio trophy.

So what's going to be coming up? Here's what we're going to talk about in future episodes.

- Websites, including what to include in the dreaded SEO. Do you have the right things on your homepage? Are people finding your website? We'll talk more about that.
- Target customers. A lot of business owners struggle with this one and I know I did. I'll talk more about how to determine who that audience is and who it's not.
- Promotions. How to run a promotion. We'll talk about that.
- Social media, the great time sucker. You might love social or shut it either way. There's a way to use it to your advantage without draining your day.
- Pricing. How do you price your product? There's more that goes into pricing your product and paying you what you're worth or about the same price that others are charging. We'll talk more about that too.
- Technology. Ever-changing, technology is part of our life. Learn how to embrace it, I promise.
- Small business life. You and I both know that our businesses don't stop at the end of the day.
- Branding is much, much more to a brand and a logo. I can't wait to dive into that either.
- Advertising productivity, lots of things coming up together with some special guests. We'll learn more about all these topics. So stay tuned. It's going to be a great ride!

And for joining me today, I'd like to offer you something special in the show notes. My 2023 ultimate marketing planner. This is a project that I've literally been working on for years and I use it every day in my own business. I typically sell it for \$24.95 but I'm offering it to you *for free* because you chose to give me a try and I am so grateful. I'll keep this updated too. So if you're listening to this podcast later on, it'll still be there.

You can find the show notes for today's episode at my <https://weeklymarketing.com/1>. If you liked what you heard today, subscribe on your favorite podcast app. You have a lot of podcasts you could choose from. Thanks for spending time with me today. See you next time.

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