

# myweeklymarketing.

**Janice Hostager: 0:04**

I'm Janice Hostager. After three decades in the marketing business and many years of being an entrepreneur, I've learned a thing or two about marketing. Join me as we talk about marketing, small business, and life in between. Welcome to my weekly marketing. Are you a planner by nature? I have to admit I am, and although it drives my family nuts, I really can't change that about myself. But I think it's okay. It's really a good thing in business for sure. Of course, we can't plan for everything and we will always have to learn to pivot, but I found that planning, along with setting goals, is really crucial for long-term success in business. After all, we need to know where we're headed in order to get there. I love what Tony Robbins said. He said setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible to the visible. I love to know what things look like on a practical level. How do you plan a year in advance? Well, by the end of this episode, you should be able to start your own planning process so that you can better project your revenue for the new year. I, like a lot of you I'm sure, started out by getting a new calendar or planning book. Honestly, I've tried a lot of them and I use them for a while, but then chaos kind of sets in and it kind of falls to pieces, honestly. But I was at a networking event the other day and I shared with another coach and I was feeling a little lost and overwhelmed as we headed into the new year. Some things that I wanted to accomplish in 2023 didn't get done, although many things did and she asked me a question. She said do you have a personal mission statement? I had to confess that I do not. I know roughly where I want to go and what I want to do in the next year, but I feel this disconnect between where I am now and where I want to be. I guess I get so focused on the tasks ahead of me that I sometimes lose sight of the bigger goals. But doesn't that happen to all of us? Sometimes, when we start focusing on the day-to-day details, we kind of move on autopilot and we find ourselves kind of circling a cul-de-sac. And I don't know about you, but have you ever been driving to a place you go often and ended up driving to another place instead? It's scary for sure, but I think it happens in our businesses too. We look up and we're not sure how we got to where we are. So my step number one for 2024 is to create a personal mission statement. I Really like spending time thinking and praying and then writing it all out about where I want to be at the end of the year and what I want to accomplish in this next year. The other thing that can happen is that we get so busy with tasks that we don't give ourselves permission to take breaks for thinking and mental clarity. That's something that I'm really guilty of. If I have a day off, I'll often plan an event or spend the day with my husband or friends, or my kids. I do give myself prayer time each morning, but that tends to be rushed, and sometimes we need longer periods of rest and time alone just to get mental clarity. So that's what I plan to do first, to give myself a couple of days off to breathe and then think and pray about the direction my business is headed, and then I'm going to write out my goals and my personal

mission statement. In my last episode, Tammy McKinney reminded me that we need to be faithful to the actual amount of time that we can commit to our business. If you have school-aged children, for example, you may prefer to lighten up your load during the summer, or you may only want to work 20 hours a week. We also need to be true to ourselves, offering only the products or services that light us up. Of course, there needs to be a market for those products too, but I think we need to take some time to really do some soul-searching before we dive headfirst into the new year. Listen to episode 35 for more great nuggets of wisdom from Tammy. So step number two on my list of how to plan for 2024 is to schedule a brainstorming session with yourself. Create a revenue-generating product or services that you want to offer in the new year. I recommend doing a big launcher promotion no more than once a quarter. Not only does that give you time to create, execute, and launch your product or promotion, but it also gives you time to take a mental break between them, and your audience will appreciate the fact that you're not bombarding them with sales messages all the time too. So what I'm planning on doing is launching my core offer twice next year, in spring and fall, and launching a smaller offer during the other two quarters. But with any kind of launcher campaign, there are a lot of details around it. Since I'm launching a new course in 2024, I've already got some of those planned. Of course, you'll have to look at your overall revenue requirements for the year to determine what your financial goals look like and how you'll reach them. Once I determine how much money I need to live on and make a profit in my business, then I can break it down into quarters. To determine those numbers I need to look at my business expenses, my profit margin, and salaries for myself and my team. I like looking at quarters rather than months because things happen and some promotions don't go as well as planned. So focusing on quarterly revenue allows me to be more flexible and gives me some wiggle room. Then I can add a small event if I'm falling short and make up for things by adding a coaching session here or a new client in another quarter. So after I figured out what my revenue goals are, then I created my product ladder. A product ladder is a way to take your brainstorming list of products or service ideas and rank them by value and in-competential. On the bottom rung of your ladder is your free content. I like to do that weekly because then I have a reason to email my list each week with valuable content that can help them and it also helps me develop a reputation as an expert in my field. It also kind of keeps me top of mind with my customers. On the next rung up I include a lead magnet. These are tools, checklists, and detailed how-to lists that help my customer in a deeper way, that are gated, which means that they would need to input their email address and names to get them. I love to make these lead magnets something that a customer will refer to again and again. I could talk a lot about lead magnets and I will in an upcoming episode, but for now, know that these will help you build your email list and they'll help you gauge interest in topics, which is also really important when you're determining what products you're going to offer. The next rung up

is a low-priced product. It could be an e-book, a mini online workshop, a mini course, maybe a paid webinar, or something similar that would be in like the \$10 to \$50 range. After that, it's time to look at bigger offerings. It could be a small course, a workshop, or a promotion that you have a couple of times a year. These are priced a little higher than your last rung, from, we'll say, maybe \$50 to \$200. These are maybe courses that include quick wins and are quick and easy to complete. These could also be something that would lead to your main offer later. I plan to have a branding course on the calendar this year and that would supplement my main marketing course, but it wouldn't replace it. On the top of the letter would be your signature course that you offer, or maybe private coaching, or basically your signature product. This is where you put most of your time and energy in promotion and in execution. You could even offer another rung on the letter, another layer above that, such as a mastermind or something very top-tier, but once you're starting off, it's better not to do that and regret having too much on your plate at once. In fact, if you don't have an offer letter set up, don't add more than one or two paid offerings along with your free and gated content. Trust me when I tell you it's better to start off small than to take on too much and be overwhelmed. I recommend doing this with any product or promotion you have. One note if you don't have a digital course or even a digital product, even if you have a physical product, it's smart to schedule promotions on the calendar too. Think about your biggest promotion dates. It might be Mother's Day or Black Friday or next Christmas. No matter what those dates are, get them down on the big calendar. That leads me to step number four. The next step is to head over to Amazon and order one of those big giant dry-erase yearly calendars for the wall. I found a great deal of one and I'll put a link to it on my show notes. Here's what I put on my calendar: Holidays. I don't want to launch a course during a time when people are busy with other things, or even dates like the middle of the summer when people are on vacation, or between Christmas and New Year's, so I need to pay attention to those times and block them off from my launches. I also add breaks after a busy season. Even if we don't have a trip on the calendar, I give myself a breather after a really busy time. It's easy for me to ignore my mental health, but the truth is, if I don't do this, I'll reach a crisis point and burn out. I don't want to burn out, and neither do you. We're not machines, and even our machines, like our cars, need maintenance. So this has become a non-negotiable thing for 2024. The next thing to add to the calendar are trips that I have planned. Todd and I don't take a ton of trips and since he's a college professor, he needs to work around his university schedule, but if we do have one planned. I'll write it down on the calendar. I also make notes of speaking engagements, conferences, and other scheduled events. There are a couple of conferences I want to attend next year, so I'm adding them to the calendar too, and if I might speak somewhere, I'll add that, even if it's not a sure thing at this point. Once all of those are filled in, then it's time to add my launch or promotion dates. For my launches and promotions. I work backward from the cart close date to the cart open date and then beyond that to when I

start developing promotional content For one launch. I'll work backward, making sure I have time to run promotions, get the ads designed, get content written, get additional help hired, and so on. I work eight weeks out, but that might be different for you, especially if there's a new product or service that you're offering. I like to add enough time for generating pre-launch content, to get an active email list in place for writing copywriting social media, designing graphics, emails, video recording, batching, launch content, and so on. So there's a lot of things that you need to think about before the actual date of the promotion or launch. If you're launching a software product or maybe a membership or maybe a physical product, that can all look really different. If it's a physical product, make sure that you include time to circle back with the purchasers to see how they're enjoying their product and get some feedback and, if they love it, have them leave a review or refer a friend. That's actually true for all launches, even if it's a membership or an online course, but the timing is a little different than with a physical product. After your launch date, I want you to write a date on the calendar time so that you can look back and assess what worked well, and what didn't work, and take a look at all the analytics. My coach always says the magic is in the debrief and what that means is that we really learn why something worked or didn't work by looking at the data. The numbers tell a story. Make sure this is on your calendar or, believe me, you'll get busy with the next thing and it won't happen. So for step five, after I have all the launches, webinars, and the dates of the big things the big stones, if you will those items on the calendar, then I move everything to a Google spreadsheet and start planning all the extra stuff that goes along with them. For that, I start blocking off my time on my Google calendar, but when I get to that point, I already have the main 10,000-foot view in place, so it's much easier to look at my calendar at that point and know that the hard part, I think, is done. Is it really a matter of filling in the smaller stones and the sand? If you want to carry that analogy, at that point I can share it with my key players on my team too, to make sure that they don't schedule a big vacation, for example, during a launch week. So that's really all there is to it. We obviously can't plan for everything, because things do come up, but if you can get this much done as you head into the new year, I know that you'll be so much better off than if you just jump in without a plan in place. So there you have it. There's no right or wrong way to do all this planning. This is just how I've had success with it in the past. We obviously can't plan too tightly, because things do come up, but if you can do this much as you head into the new year, I know you'll be much better off than if you just jumped in without a plan in place. I've also created a freebie for you this week: a product ladder template that you can use to plan your own product ladder in 2024. You can find a link to that in my show notes at [myweeklymarketing.com](https://myweeklymarketing.com) Forward slash 36. That's all for this week. I hope this has been helpful. If so, please leave a review in your favorite podcast app, and thanks so much for listening. See you next time. Bye for now.

