myweeklymarketing.

Janice Hostager: 0:00

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. Three seconds that's all the time it takes for a website visitor to make up their mind about your site. Most small businesses have a website, and if you don't, I really recommend that you get one. But a good and effective website should do more than display your product. It needs to sell your product. So it's got to make a great impression quickly because in those three seconds, you need to connect with your visitors in a way that will engage them and draw them in, and get them moving down what I call the trail to the sale. 81% of people decide whether or not to do business with you before you ever are in touch with them, so your website needs to be your best unpaid salesperson. Now, just talking personally, I don't think there's ever been a day where I thought my website is perfect just the way it is. Truly, it won't ever be perfect, because I like to tell my clients your website is a living thing. It needs to have new content added on a regular basis, which will make the search engines happy, and it will likely change over time as your business pivots. I think most small businesses kind of pivot at some point. That's why I wanted to talk to Paula Hickey. Paula is a website developer and she has a lot of great information. If you're just putting your site together or if you have one that needs a little improvement, Paula has answers. So here's my conversation with Paula. Well, welcome, Paula. I'm so glad to have you on the podcast today. How are you?

Paula Hickey: 1:58

I'm good. Thank you, Janice, I'm really excited to be here.

Janice Hostager: 2:01

Great, so tell us about your journey. Like, you are a web designer, but how did you get there? Is that something you've always wanted to do, or did you arrive at it from a different career? Or how did you get here?

Paula Hickey: 2:15

So I just started building websites as just a hobby, for fun, when I was a teenager, like 1999. So I had some friends who were making websites. I was like, oh, that sounds fun, so I just started building it, taught myself HTML and CSS, okay, and I just did that as a hobby and I had a job in retail. I was in retail for 20 years. I was an assistant manager with Walmart and so I just did websites on the side, for myself, for fun, because I'm a bit of a nerd and it was just a hobby. And I started blogging on WordPress in, I think, 2010. The blogging I went

just from just doing websites to blogging then and I actually started my entrepreneurial journey in 2017. I was still with Walmart, but I went as far as the companies I wanted to go. I enjoyed my time there, but I was like I'm ready to do something else and I found out about virtual assistants and I read a lot about what virtual assistants do and I was like, well, that's what I do for myself on my hobby blog. I can do that for other people and help them with their websites, help them with their blog. So I started as a virtual assistant, started offering those services, got a few clients, and I had a client ask me do you know anybody that can build a website for me? And I was like, yes, me, I can do it, I can build your website. And he was willing to take a chance on me because I had never built a website for a client. I always just built them for myself. But he took that chance on me and I built his website for him and I had so much fun doing that that I realized I need to start actually offering that as a service as well, along with my virtual assistants. And I think it was in 2020 when I really started focusing more on web design. I had been building them a lot with virtual assistants for a couple of years at that point, but in 2020, I was like I want to go full on web design because that was what I enjoyed the most and had the most fun with. Going back to that. Something that had been a hobby for years now was my career, and I was actually able to leave retail. I did both. I did retail and my virtual assistant business together for about three years. So I left Walmart in 2020 and I've been full-time in my business since then.

Janice Hostager: 4:51
Love it. I think that's the best kind of business right now that you really enjoy doing, and then people pay you to do something you love. I mean it could be better right?

Paula Hickey: 5:03
No, I couldn't believe it. You know I'm getting paid to do something that is just fun for me and probably a lot more profitable than retail too, right? Oh, yes, definitely.

Janice Hostager: 5:13
Yeah, yeah. So that's awesome. I find it really interesting when you know, it's interesting to me because people who build websites like I used to do with my, but I had a design agency, so I came at it from the design side. But, and so the coding? When I first did my first site it took me months and months to do it because I had to learn the CSS HTML part of it. And you know, my brain just doesn't work that way. You know, I tried to fool myself for so long but no, it just doesn't work that way. But I love that you came at it from the coding side, because I think that makes so much more sense, especially now when simple websites are easy to do. But you know, if, if you are working on a website that is a little more complex,

then you are totally equipped to do that right because you know that coding and you know.

Paula Hickey: 6:05
So you know that side of it and yeah, I'm not afraid to get in there and dig around in the code. So you know it's been a long time since I wrote code completely from scratch myself. But because you know you have builders now that you can use, that just makes the job so much easier. But if there's something that needs to be customized the builder can't do, you know I can. I don't know if I'd get in there and play around with some CSS or HTML to make that happen.

Janice Hostager: 6:29
Yeah, yeah, and that happens quite a bit. I mean that something will come up and you're like, oh, I don't like this, how do I fix it? And whatever builder you're using, if they can't do it, then it is nice to be able to just jump right in and go look under the hood, as I say.

Paula Hickey: 6:45
But I might get to look exactly how you want it to look.

Janice Hostager: 6:49
Yes, right, yeah. So what are some of the common things that you see when you're looking at websites because we're all online a lot? So what areas do you feel like a lot of small businesses could probably use a little more awareness or maybe some common mistakes that you see here and there?

Paula Hickey: 7:13
I think probably one of the common mistakes I see from a lot of people that come to me is they don't really understand the role that their website plays in their business. They're not sure what to do with their website. They just kind of think, oh, I need a website, everybody has a website, I need a website. But they don't understand how their website can really help them in their business. It can help them, you know, sell their products, book more clients, and whatever their goal is for their business. Their website can help them reach that goal. But they're not really clear on that. So I kind of help them figure out what their goals are, so that I can then create a strategy on our website to help them meet those goals. That's just kind of what they don't see, you know, but that's what they need me for or they need a designer for is to help them see how their website fits into the big picture of their business. It's not just there because everybody has a website or you need a pretty website for your business. It can actually help you reach your goals, whatever those might be, and that's different for everyone. Everyone has different business goals. I mean for

service providers and coaches, which is mostly what I work with. You know the goal generally is to book more clients. So you know you want to do certain things on your website that will lead a client on a journey to booking a sales call with you so that you can sell them on your services. And hopefully, you know you're also using your website to sell them on your services before they can even on the call. Those are some things that you can do to do that.

Janice Hostager: 8:48
Yeah, I think I've read somewhere that like and maybe this number is higher now, this was a few years ago, but like 70% of people will look at a website before they ever walk into a business or call a business. They'll make a quick judgment about your business based on the look-at-your-website. You know.

Paula Hickey: 9:05
Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 9:06
And I think that's something to really be aware of. And a website, you know, I love that. You said that it's designed to sell, because we're all in business to make money, right, right, I mean, I think a lot of times I used to say there are five layers to a website. There's, like, the text or the copy. There's the design. There's user experience and navigation. There's the metadata or the like, the words behind the pages that the search engine used, so it's an SEO, and then there's the marketing, which I think people often like to miss the marketing altogether, which is kind of what I mean is what I do. So I mean, like there's so much we can do on our website to talk about that marketing piece. So I love that you include that Right?

Paula Hickey: 9:53
Yeah, because I think a lot of times, especially now, as people rely so much on social media to do their marketing for them, but you're going to send them from social media where you're going to send them to your website, so the website needs to continue that selling once they get there. Continue that journey for them.

Janice Hostager: 10:11
Yeah, yeah, yeah, and a lot of people. I could go off and I'll be tangential about this, but you know, it's like the website that you own, that website Exactly. Facebook page or your Instagram feed or anything like that, and they could go away tomorrow. I mean, look at my space. You know it's still out there, but I mean it's like it was there.

Paula Hickey: 10:36

Somebody uses it though.

Janice Hostager: 10:37
Yeah, right, yeah, so you know if you've invested a lot of time and energy into something like that, or people. They get banned from social media platforms for one reason or another all the time, even sometimes an error. So, yeah, that website is crucial, yeah, so what are the steps that you take clients through when you're just sending a website for them?

Paula Hickey: 11:01
So like how deep do you want me to go? Well, we got some time, so you know well, I'll kind of talk about maybe some of the key things that I always try to make sure my clients are including on their websites, because I'm really big about your website should help you build trust with your audience. We know that. You know, we all know that like no trust. You know, to get someone to work with you to purchase from you, they need to know you, like you, and trust you and to really make that purchase, especially especially like if you're high ticket which that high ticket is relative, it could be different for everybody but you know they need to trust you that you can do what you say you're going to do to make that, to actually make that purchase. There are some key things you can have on your website that will help you build that trust and usually start with the about page because the about page is so important Other than your home page, and sometimes even outreach on pages being the most visited page on your website. So, for example, they just love their nosy. They want to see what you're about, they want to hear your story, but they are. But most importantly, they want to see how you can help them, and what you can do for them. So you want to be sure that you're including that on your about page. But some things to help you kind of build trust to showcase your values on your home page. A lot of times we'll leave that out, but just including your values on your home page will help you connect with the right people. People want to work with people that have similar values to them. So you know, it doesn't have to be like a huge thing. You can put and I usually say three to five values. Just include those on your home page and also try to infuse those values throughout your copy, throughout your website. But you can mention that specifically on your About page just to kind of connect with people. Get those skimmers who are going through it. They'll see the headings and stuff there and like, okay, you know this person, I resonate with them and that will give you that connection there. Some other thing to include on your About page is sharing your expertise there. You know, if you have degrees, if you have certifications, you don't have to have degrees and certifications to be an expert. I do want to say that you have years of experience because I don't have a degree, I have over 20 years of building websites as an experience. So if you have those things, make sure that you're mentioning them on your about page, maybe in a short bio or just like a

list of fun things about yourself. You mentioned, like you know that you have a degree or certification in these things so that people you know they'll just Rear farms in your mind that you know what you're, that you know what you're doing, that you really are truly legitimate because people have that fear of spending money and being taken advantage of. So you're just trying to eliminate that by mentioning a few things, and there are lots of different ways to show your expertise throughout your website. If you have those kinds of things, be sure that you're mentioning them.

Janice Hostager: 14:19
I love that you are talking about showing your values, and you know it is important to do before you even get to this point and I know you talked about that in your free downloads, which we'll talk about in a little bit but, you know, really understanding who that ideal customer is for you. And once you get a solid idea of who that is, then you can kind of reflect some of those values back at them. So if you know exactly who you want to work with, then you can feel more comfortable even with the small things. Like you said, skimmers I think we're kind of all website skimmers. I mean, you know, reading on a website is hard, you know, and most of us honestly don't. I mean, and you know, I think if you can just integrate little things about that target customer or ideal customer on that page, then it really does go a long way of personalizing that journey with them, you know. So it's like, hey, they understand me, they get me, you know.

Paula Hickey: 15:20
Yeah, I just like on my own website and I mentioned, you know, like I like wide margins and I'm not about the hustle, because I want to work with people that you know. They're not about the hustle, right, you know, if they're working 24, seven, that's fine if that's the kind of life that they want. I don't want that. So I want to attract people that are, you know, more easygoing, more chill, yeah, more chill. That's the kind of environment I want, you know. So I mentioned that you know to track, try to attract more people like that. I think most of my clients are really I don't really know about the hustle.

Janice Hostager: 15:55
Well, you know I've had a lot of clients who will text me at 11:30 at night, you know. So I love that you know, you put that out there and I think that's, that's far.

Paula Hickey: 16:04
So yeah, because I'm like I'm not working on the weekends, I'm not working fast, this time I mean I will. If there's an emergency, I'm going to be there and help my client. Sure, that's what you should do. But you know, for normal, every day, try to hold those boundaries.

Janice Hostager: 16:19
Good for you.

Paula Hickey: 16:22
So one other thing I do want to mention for the About page is a way to kind of show that you're an authority on things. I'm not sure who this is from, but I always love it if you don't decide that you're an authority. Other people do so to show that you're an authority. You want to show others that have recognized yourself as an authority and you're about page. You can also do it on your homepage. But on your About page maybe have one of those little features in bars like a different place has you been featured? It doesn't have to always be the huge names like Forbes or something like that, but you know other places that are recognized as an authority in your niche. Kind of list those there. If you've done some podcast interviews or you know different guest blogs on somebody's website or been featured in an article somewhere, maybe list a few of those and again it just reinforces that you are who you say you are and you can do what you say you can do and just kind of put that somewhere on your homepage which I think I tell on my guide like a good spot to put it. But you can also do that on your homepage. But that just you know is another way to kind of show your expertise.

Janice Hostager: 17:34
Great suggestion, absolutely, or big clients too, that you've worked with oh, yeah, yeah, I've depended on them.

Paula Hickey: 17:40
Yeah, I've depended on I guess what kind of business you have and stuff. Yeah, another thing that I always try to encourage my clients to get is testimonials, because you want to have that social proof on your website. And if someone's just starting out, they may not have testimonials and that's okay. I always tell everybody we all start with zero. We start with zero of everything. Testimonials featured in articles, all that stuff, and if you don't have it yet, don't worry about that, that's fine, but it's something for you to put on the list, that you need to get. You know, as you're building your business, as you're working with clients or selling products, start getting those reviews for your products so you can have that social proof on your website. And what I do, and what I encourage my clients to do, is scatter that throughout your website. You want to put it in strategic places. I mean, a lot of people say they have to have a testimonial page. Nobody's really going to read that. But if you carry out your website and there's nothing wrong with having that, but it's a quick way, I think, to share references kind of with people. If you want to have a testimonial page but you want to be more strategic. With it in place, you want to have a mic on your home page. You want to have some testimonials on your About page Definitely any service

pages or upon its pages, courses that you might be selling. You want to have those testimonials on there and you can have them in several spots and if you are just starting out you just have a few, it's okay to use them in more than one spot, that's okay. You know, don't feel bad about that, because people will miss stuff. They're not going to see everything, but I always try to make sure that if they have the testimonials, that we're using them and we're using them strategically where they need to be.

Janice Hostager: 19:22
Right, right, and you know just a place to get those that you may have some on your LinkedIn profile. You can just pull them up that. Or sometimes I'll get emails from clients that will say, hey, I really love what you did here and I'll just say is it okay if I just you know, pop this on my site? And they'll say sure, you know. So more people that you know. If you're just starting out, it's if you're just on something pro bono, for a nonprofit, or if you just, like you did, start doing it for friends, you know. So there's always, I think, opportunities to get testimonials or even case studies, if you hate that either type of business that you have yeah.

Paula Hickey: 20:00
Case studies are awesome If you can get them. That's really especially helpful for the people that are already kind of looking to buy and they're just trying to decide between you and someone else. The case study can help make that difference and push them to say, okay, I want to go with them because I've read through this. I like the process, but you know, it's really we're able to see the transformation someone got. It's okay. Studies can be really helpful for that. And that reminded me of something I did want to say about testimonials. Like you want to be sure that when you're getting testimonials from people you're asking good questions to try to get them to share what kind of transformation they received from working with you. Also, ask it too about any objections they may have had from working with you, to see what they had, because then you can use that and what helped them overcome those objections. Because you can use those testimonials to help eliminate that objection from a potential client's mind. Maybe someone thought that your services were too high. That was their initial objection, but then they said it was worth every penny. They're so glad they did it and they took the chance. You want to use that to try to help eliminate that objection in a potential client's mind. Just thinking those things when you're creating those questions to ask for when you're asking your clients for testimonials.

Janice Hostager: 21:24

Anything else that you feel like you are working with clients that you want to get from them?

Paula Hickey: 21:31
Yes, I always try to make sure of some things that I like to get from a client. This relates to the security and accessibility of their website. I'm not giving legal advice or anything, but I always make sure that my clients are aware that they will need a policy for their website and to encourage them to do their due diligence to determine what policies they're going to need for their website. But I give them some resources so that they can get those policies. Everybody needs a privacy policy and a cookie policy and those kinds of things, terms and conditions but I make sure that they have the resources that they need so that they can get those policies and we can have them for their website, because a lot of people may not even realize that when they come to me that they need those things. So I make sure to bring that up, to make sure that we have those when we launch because we don't want to launch without those things and also do my best just in the building and the client doesn't really have a whole lot to do with this part of it but I always try to make sure that everything is accessible as possible. I'm not an accessibility expert, I'm just continually trying to learn about it. And for those who don't know, accessibility just means that you're making your website so that anybody can view it, no matter if they have vision, hearing, or mobility impairments, that when they visit their website, your website, they still have a good experience and they can access all the content.

Janice Hostager: 23:05
That's awesome, so important, and Google rewards that, oh yeah.

Paula Hickey: 23:10
It's a huge deal.

Janice Hostager: 23:12
Yeah.

Paula Hickey: 23:13
It'll help you not just with your visitors, but it helps you with SEO, so it's a double bin, right yeah?

Janice Hostager: 23:20
Yeah, and I recently read this too, because I would always want to just put my keywords in, like an image and the alt text on the image, but they're looking for descriptions. So if a woman holding a baby, they want to know the woman holding the baby. And I try to work

in a keyword too, based on whatever page it is that I'm putting it on. But, yeah, I mean those little things that you know and work. And it's not as though most often and I'm correct me if I'm wrong, but when I was working with clients, oftentimes they would do their own blog posts, so, having an understanding of this carried over to the blog, so they may, I wouldn't upload their blogs for them. They would write them and upload them on their own, and but they really needed to have some kind of a level of understanding about simple SEO things and putting alt text and accessibility functions.

Paula Hickey: 24:20
Yes, that's one thing I always do at the end of a project is, I'll create tutorial videos for my client, and that's one of the things I always do is put well, for those clients who want to blog, I'll show them how to put the blog post in the website and everything, and part of that process is naming the image, of floating the image, and I explain all that to them in the video about why you're doing that, the way you're doing it, or to put your alt text and stuff like that, because I want them to understand how to do it and feel empowered that they can do it on their own if they need to. I mean, I do offer ongoing services with people, so if they don't want to even fool with that, you know I do that for them. I don't write blog posts, but I would upload them to the website and format them and everything like that. But, yeah, making sure that it's important to make sure they understand what to do when you're not around, right, so they can do it on their own. I don't want anybody to ever feel like I'm holding their business hostage like they have to rely on me. I want them to understand and be able to do it on their own. And there's accessibility, there's so much to it. But that's one of the things I always mention is making sure that you have the alt text and it's actually descriptive because I thought that was the same way, I thought the same thing. That's what I was taught, that's what was taught forever. It's like, oh, that's just where you put your key. I didn't know, you know, I learned better you know OK.

Janice Hostager: 25:50
Well, it's not like Google shows their hand ever, so you never really know. I mean, most of them will drop their hands and such. But yeah, sometimes it's a lot of guesswork on our part as to what Google is really looking for. But yeah, that is one.

Paula Hickey: 26:04
And another thing for accessibility. This is just kind of a mistake I see people might sometimes if their font size is a little, is too small on the website, so that's an easy fix for people to go in, and most of the time you see big just to because for the desktop you should be like an 18 pixels and mobile 16 is what was what Google recommends this best for accessibility and that's for your body font. Now, like your headings, of course, would be larger fonts. But you know, if your font is smaller than that, maybe going in and checking

that and you can up that size and also just check the contrast on it because sometimes I see the font is too light on the background and you can't really see it to read it, so maybe just darkening that. Sometimes all you have to do is increase the font weight a little bit too, and that will make it a little easier to read. So play around through the font and just make sure there's good contrast and it's the correct size.

Janice Hostager: 27:05
One thing that is important to and I'm sure that you would cover this is making sure it's mobile responsive, and so it was in the early days like you had a desktop site and then people were able to like you can tell how long I've been doing this Then people were able to pull up websites on their phones, so then it suddenly okay, we have to make another site that was mobile friendly, and this is probably before you even were doing this. But then now a website has to resize based on the pixel size of the screen. So they typically there's you know the terminology, I've totally forgotten this but like a point in which you are at a tablet size. Yeah, your point, thank you, that's the word and then a phone size and so on, and you know and I think you know you probably go into this as well but you know making sure that your font is large enough if you have to click on it with your phone, To make sure that you can click a link without hitting something else, or that there's no overlap or weird things happening or that used to be like popups would just like take down a mobile site sometimes because you get past them to see what was on the screen, and you know these are little things. So I think you know that always check your mobile version and your tablet version If you make any changes at all on your site and make sure that it all lays out correctly and that it looks good and is functional.

Paula Hickey: 28:38
Yes, Even if you just update a plugin on your website, you don't want to go check because I'm Right, that's a good point. Like I use Elementor the majority of the time to build websites, that's my builder choice. So if there is an update with elementary, it doesn't hurt to go and check the mobile, because it seems like something will happen with the padding or the margin Not every time, but it does happen.

Janice Hostager: 29:03
So Exactly what I used to Elementor. And yes, and now they give you warnings like maybe you should update your site before you install this, which I know you should always do. But yeah, I've just had really wonky things happen with the update. So, yes, I agree, Elementor makes it very easy to design a site, but you do have to pay attention when you do the updates. Make sure all the pages are still looking good. But I'm really glad you brought that up.

Paula Hickey: 29:34
Well, if this happened to me, I'd be like once on my website. I'm like what's going on here? Oh yeah, I did an update. I should check that.

Janice Hostager: 29:42
Yeah, sometimes like this, we forget to do our own website.

Paula Hickey: 29:43
Sometimes I'm really good about checking clients and then forgetting my own.

Janice Hostager: 29:49
Yeah, like doesn't load the CSS or something weird. But so, speaking of Elementor, I'm guessing you are on WordPress, right? You design sites on WordPress, which is open source, and so why do you like WordPress and what?

Paula Hickey: 30:05
Do you?

Janice Hostager: 30:05
Think about Wix and Squarespace and some of the others. I mean, we can be controversial here, I don't mind.

Paula Hickey: 30:12
No, I mean, I would never tell somebody like, oh, you have to be on WordPress, it's the only place to be. Though I feel that way. You know that's for me that's the only place to be.

Janice Hostager: 30:24
Right.

Paula Hickey: 30:25
I like it because it is open source, like you mentioned, and it's fully mine. You know, if you build on Squarespace or Wix and they aren't shut down tomorrow, there goes everything. There goes everything that you had. But, like with WordPress, if something weren't happening to my host and company, I could just go change my host and move everything real quick. No big deal, I still have it all. If you want to change platforms, it's kind of hard too. I mean, like you would have to rebuild everything from scratch if you wanted to move from Squarespace or Wix. So those are the downfalls. You know that, I see. And with WordPress, you can build any kind of website that you want. The plugin options, you know, are vast. So anything that you need. You can build a store on your website, you can build a course platform, you can build a membership site All right, on WordPress, you can

do it all there. So that's another reason. Like it's just, you know there's so many options for clients. There is a learning curve, you know. But if you have a client that doesn't mind tech, doesn't mind telling them those kinds of things, then you know WordPress is a perfect form, and with something like Elementor, they make it.

Janice Hostager: 31:49
I mean, it's just literally drag and drop, you know, almost not quite, but close.

Paula Hickey: 31:56
Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 31:57
Yeah, and I'm right there with you, I am a WordPress fan and that's what I've used since after I stopped designing them like hand coding, which was, well, not my finest hours, but when I started my blog, that was what I went with was WordPress, I heard it was the best, yeah, yeah.

Paula Hickey: 32:17
And there's.

Janice Hostager: 32:18
WordPress. com and there's WordPress. org Right, and so is it WordPress. com. That's all online. So if you just wanted to do a blog, you could just go onto WordPress. com and just do a blog, and it will live on WordPress.com, right?

Paula Hickey: 32:36
And you don't. But you don't have like I don't think you have as many options there to do things I could do with WordPress. org, Right, right, I've never had anything on WordPress. com, so I don't really know for sure, but yeah, I did a long time ago.

Janice Hostager: 32:50
I, I, I just anyway. But yes, I agree, I think we're it's limiting, yeah. So I think the reason I bring that up is because it's just kind of confusing that there's dot com and dot org, but the one we're talking about is that you can download and you would just go to your web host. If you're trying to build a site yourself, which I don't, I don't know that I'd recommend, but you might want to, a lot of people did.

Paula Hickey: 33:09
I learned. You know I did yeah.

Janice Hostager: 33:12

I mean, you just gotta jump right in sometimes and you just go to a web host and you know, reserve or buy a domain name, and then you can recommend. At that point, you can say I want to do some WordPress and they will help you set that up. It's really automatically set up for you.

Paula Hickey: 33:32

So yeah, especially with Blue House like is really easy. I used Oracle house. They were really easy. You know there's some house out there that might get super easy to use WordPress.

Janice Hostager: 33:44

Yeah, yeah, I think you know most of them make it so much easier now, as opposed to the early days where you really yeah.

Paula Hickey: 33:54

You had to figure out how to or just figure out how to upload it yourself. I think that is what I did. I just took the plunge and uploaded it that my host at that time didn't have WordPress. It's uneasy Just click this button and install it. I had to figure out how to install it myself, but. I like doing that kind of stuff, so Don't I see a lot of WordPress? Oh, excuse me.

Janice Hostager: 34:18

The other nice thing about WordPress is that you can go ahead and change the theme in there and it won't derail. You don't have to like redo your site If you get sick of the look of it or you just want to update it somehow. You can just change the theme and you know, and it will just. You can leave all your content there. You don't have to redo the entire site that way, which is really nice, I love that too.

Paula Hickey: 34:39

Yes, it makes it so easy to make changes.

Janice Hostager: 34:44

Yeah, yeah. So how do you approach balancing, like the aesthetics, and functionality of a website, especially for businesses?

Paula Hickey: 34:56

the aesthetics and the functionality. I mean the function really should be the first, most important thing, I think, because it affects the user experience. You wanna make sure that

everything is very clear for the user and everything's very easy for the user. Though you don't want things to, you don't want it to be too overwhelming. You know, like you don't want things to be cluttered or confusing. When someone lands on the website, it should be very clear. So always make sure that the aesthetics don't overcome the function or make it confusing to the visitor. You know I love pretty stuff too, but sometimes that pretty stuff isn't the best thing for your website. You know that font might be too hard to read or not the best size you know, or it might not have enough like different weight font weights that you need to work on your website Might be hard to read or just not look very good, or maybe the colors that you're using don't have very good contrast. So you might have to be willing to use some different shades. Keep me, because you can do that within your brand colors. You know, use some different shades so that you make sure that your text stands out and that your buttons stand out from everything as well, because you want those buttons to stand out, so you want to make sure that you have good contrast with your colors. So you need to have some flexibility with that and not get too married to them. I guess a little bit. I don't know. Man, you know like it has to be that particular shade when it may not look and work very well for the user experience, you know.

Janice Hostager: 36:38
So just trying to find that balance. One of the questions I used to get asked I still get asked this once in a while is like what colors should my buttons be Like? There's like a psychological connection and actually, I remember back I think it was college or grad school where I did a study where they looked at different colors and it was true that there were influence bond colors and there were impulse bond colors, and the impulse ones were what you would expect, like the reds and the brighter active colors versus the subtle shade. But really it's all about, I think, more recent studies, like on a website and with lead pages and stuff like that that you are doing. It's really about the contrast which you just said.

Paula Hickey: 37:27
Yes, this is funny because I just had a client who was like we need to use green for our buttons, right, and I was like, oh, I was like your green doesn't have enough contrast with the background. They will use this other color she had in her palette and it really stood out. I was like this is the color, but it was really pretty blue and it stood out from everything else. I was like that's kind of like old school thinking. But they've done studies like you just said that show is about the contrast.

Janice Hostager: 37:58
How can people get in touch with you? And you have a free download too. It's called Write your Client Getting Website, and I will tell you that this is super comprehensive. I just

downloaded it today and I printed it out and I kind of want to go through the website because, as I'm sure you know, it's easy to look at your own website and think it's fine, but if you go in it with fresh eyes or have somebody else do it, I think that's really the ideal thing, it's just like have somebody else who evaluate your website for you, because we're really too close to it. We just find it hard to be objective on our own site. But anyway, you have this free download and we'll put the link in our show notes for today, but tell us how we can get in touch with you, otherwise.

Paula Hickey: 38:44
So you can get in touch with me on my website, which is paulasextonhickey.com, and you can also get in touch with me on Instagram. That's probably the social media I'm most active on and that's paulahickeyva at paulahickeyva.

Janice Hostager: 39:00
I'll put the link in the show notes as well. So well, thank you, Paula. This has been a great talking website today. I just kind of geek out on websites too, so it's been a great conversation. Thanks for being here today.

Paula Hickey: 39:14
Thank you. It's fun to talk to somebody that gets it and geeks out too, because I just love it.

Janice Hostager: 39:19
I love it. Wow, that was a lot of information, wasn't it? Fortunately, as I talked about during the interview, Paula has a free download that will help you a ton. I seriously downloaded this thorough PDF and walked through it today and there is just a lot of great information in there that I will be using for myself as well. The sheet in this download will walk you through every part of getting your site up and running or maybe making some tweaks and improvements. You can get the link for that at myweeklymarketing.com forward slash 42. That's myweeklymarketing.com forward slash 42. As always, if you liked what you heard this week, let me know by subscribing and leaving a review on the platform you're listening on. Thanks again for joining me. See you next time. Bye for now.