

## 57. Escape Marketing Overwhelm: The Best Strategies & Tools

**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.

**Janice Hostager:** 0:29

Hey, hey and welcome to another episode of my Weekly Marketing. I recently completed a survey of my subscribers. Thank you to those of you who participated and one of the things that showed up on this survey and actually it's the same thing that showed up on every survey I've done in the last nine years since I've been a marketing consultant. In fact, nearly 100% of people I surveyed listed marketing overwhelm as one of their biggest problems, and I get it. I'm in the same boat in terms of hitting that icky overwhelming feeling when you're almost paralyzed from looking at your to-do list and you don't know where to start or how you'll get everything done. But since I hate feeling that way, getting organized and focused is something that I have made a personal mission to figure out for my own business. So today I'd like to focus on the way I get past overwhelm and hopefully you can apply a few of these tricks and tips to your own business. By the way, this isn't the first podcast that I've done on this topic. In episode six, I talk about how I manage my marketing with my Trail to the Sale framework, and we talk a lot about overwhelm and how that helps that. And in episode 25, I talk about general tips to manage overwhelm and set priorities. So I recommend going back and listening to both of those if you're looking for a deeper dive.

**Janice Hostager:** 1:54

But for this week I want to focus primarily on marketing, since that's the thing I see derailing so many businesses I work with and so many of my students, and since I really hate the feeling overwhelmed myself, I want to make sure that you get past it too. But first I think we need to understand why it occurs. I think the reason so many of us get overwhelmed with marketing is that we try and take on more than we need to. We see a lot of people having success on Instagram or TikTok or YouTube, and then we think maybe we should be doing that. Then we realize we should also be tracking our analytics, focusing on SEO, updating our website, producing content. I'm going to stop

now because you know the drill. Then there's our client work. If you're a service-based business, and there's financial tracking and billing invoicing.

**Janice Hostager: 2:44**

As many small business owners, we usually're a service-based business and there's financial tracking and billing invoicing. As many small business owners, we usually wear a lot of hats, but it can be managed. Here's the truth. We don't need to do all the things all the time. We just don't.

**Janice Hostager: 3:00**

A good marketing strategy will help you focus on only what's important for you and your ideal customer will help you focus on only what's important for you and your ideal customer. Sure, you may want to do all those things, but if you get overwhelmed and shut down, then you've accomplished nothing. It's like the straw that breaks the camel's back, and we don't want that to happen. Okay, tip number one focus on only what moves the needle. To do that, you have to get to know your ideal customer. This may not seem like something you should start with, but it will help you determine what you should be spending your time doing and what you could say goodbye to or at least put off for a while. If you don't have a good idea about who your ideal customer is, I have a free download that will help you with that. It goes beyond what most people's ideal customer profiles do, so check it out. Just go to [janicehostager.com/customer](http://janicehostager.com/customer). Or I'll put the link in the show notes for this episode at [myweeklymarketing.com/57](http://myweeklymarketing.com/57)

**Janice Hostager: 3:58**

Once you figure out who your best customer is the one that buys the most, spends the most and is the greatest to work with. Then next, figure out what you can do to connect with them. If you know who you're talking to, you can focus on what social media they use and what content to produce. You can also determine what exactly their pain points are, so that when it comes time to promote a service or even a freebie, a lead magnet, then you can produce only content specific for the needs of that customer. And once you have that figured out, then you can narrow down how much you need to do. You don't need to be on all the social media platforms or create dozens of lead magnets. Just pick one or, at the most, two platforms that you can manage and figure out where your customer is, to determine which one you should choose and create the best problem solving lead magnet and focus on promoting that. There's no point in creating content or promoting a product where nobody is paying attention right, and if we try to promote too much, it eats away of our time and money and we end up not doing a good job at any of it because we're spread too thin. Next, determine their preferred method of communication, so how they like to learn, whether they like to read blogs or watch video or listen to podcasts, who their influencers are, and so on. A podcast might be a good idea, but it takes a lot of time to produce each week. Same with video. So if you're short

on time and you're going to do that, make darn sure that your ideal customer wants to consume content in that way. Otherwise it's more wasted time.

**Janice Hostager: 5:38**

Okay, so moving on to tip number two, use my framework. My favorite framework is one I developed several years ago and I use it for all my promotions and for my clients. I call it the trail to the sale, and the reason I developed it in the first place is because of overwhelm. I needed to figure out what to do for my own marketing and when to do it. I see a lot of clients and students doing what I call shot in the dark marketing. They try social media, ads, punch cards for repeat customers, public relations, seo, they play with their website, and they can kind of get lost in the process, rather than throwing everything out there to see what sticks. This framework breaks it down step by step for each stage of the customer's journey, so you only focus on what you should do to move the needle, and that allows you to set realistic goals. The trail goes from awareness stage and what you need to do at that point to get your ideal customer aware of you, to the consider stage and what your customer thinks about and needs from you at this phase. Then to the compare stage, evaluation stage, supersize, serve and send stages. At each of these steps, rather than thinking of 100 things you could do, focus on what makes the most sense just for that ideal customer, for that one promotion or that one launch. I can't tell you what a huge difference this framework has made in my own life and in the life of my clients. You can find a version of the Trail to the Sale at [janicehostager.com/trail](http://janicehostager.com/trail) or visit the show notes for today and I'll include a link. Okay, tip number three batch it.

**Janice Hostager: 7:21**

I love the word batch because it always makes me think of cookies at Christmas time, but, like holiday cookie day, batching content can be a huge time saver. I know people who batch all of their content, although I think it would be great if I could batch, like what I'm doing today, my solo podcast episodes. For me that's been too difficult, since each episode is more in-depth and I need a mental break between writing my episodes, but many people do batch the production of content, for sure. I do sometimes batch guest episodes, though, if I can get all the schedules to align. The thing that works best for me to batch are emails.

**Janice Hostager: 7:59**

When I'm working on a campaign or a launch, I have an email planner spreadsheet where I include the email number, which phase of the launch it is, the send date, subject lines, the content, the call to action and so on. I have it all listed on the spreadsheet. Then when I sit down, I can power through the first draft of all the emails at the same time, with the spreadsheet as a guide. It makes it so much easier. It helps to be in the same mental framework when writing each of the emails and it saves time to do them all

together versus stopping and going back to it and writing each one at different times. I also use that same spreadsheet after the fact to record the metrics for each of the emails so I can see how each email did for the entire campaign or launch. Then I use it as a template for other launches or promotions. It's a huge time saver, and a close cousin to batching is repurposing content. If you've spent time writing a blog post, every tip, every paragraph, every subhead in there can be broken out and turned into a social media post. Then the call to action can be to visit your blog post or whatever platform you created it on. Okay, moving along.

**Janice Hostager: 9:10**

Tip number four create templates. Templates are a godsend, and I have many that I use. I have a template for a webinar, email, social media events, metric tracking and just about anything else that I do repeatedly over and over again. Now, with ChatGPT, it's even easier to create a template. Now, with ChatGPT, it's even easier to create a template. I'll just ask ChatGPT to give a template for a project and he or she or it will come up with one. It's pretty cool actually. Of course, you need to modify it to fit your customer and your situation, but it's a huge time saver and a great starting point. Of course, templates morph over time, but that's a good thing, because they become more user-friendly for you over time. Okay, which brings me to tip number five create a list of the important things and add them to your calendar.

**Janice Hostager: 10:06**

Pretend like these tasks are important. We all have to-do lists and, as satisfying as I find crossing a task off from my list, it's a lot less efficient for things that are important but not urgent, the big rock, so to speak. For me it's sometimes the things I know I have to do but I don't want to, like tracking my finances or my numbers or the things that I just don't get to, like social media brainstorming or reading a business book. You know what I mean. If I get too busy on the day it's scheduled, then I move it, but I never delete it.

**Janice Hostager: 10:42**

To put this together, I initially did a brain dump and put all the things that I needed to do that weren't getting done on a spreadsheet. I added a column next to that list to track how often I should do each of them, and then I added a third column of the best days or the best seasons or the best dates to do it. So on my list I have things like social media brainstorming, which I do every two weeks, same with social media recording. I do KPI tracking monthly. I do my email newsletter every week on Mondays. I do podcast show notes every week on Mondays. I look at my product and launch planning quarterly and I do my yearly planning in October once a year and I block out multiple days for that. So a process like this allows me to make sure that nothing falls through the cracks and I do

the things that I need to do. By the way, I also add go to the gym and eat lunch on my calendar, or those get squeezed out of my day too.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:46

I know it's sad that we need reminders for self-care. A fringe benefit of doing this is if you have friends who know you work from home assuming you do work from home and tend to call or expect that you'd be available since you're not at work. You know which friends I'm talking about. It provides a convenient way to set boundaries, since you have events on your calendar already. Sometimes we just need an excuse to say not right now, maybe later. Okay, moving on.

**Janice Hostager:** 12:16

Tip number six hire out. This one took me a long time to do because, you know, I was a startup and I didn't want to spend a lot of money, and even now I don't have staff, just VAs. But giving regular work to a VA or contractor is a game changer. I've had VAs do design work, create PDFs, post blogs, manage all the details on my podcast, including booking, publishing my show notes, editing and then many, many miscellaneous tasks that we do throughout the day that we don't really even think about, menial tasks that can take hours will be done way more quickly and less expensively than you can do it yourself. Yes, your time is not free. Putting a dollar amount on your time is a great way to see how much money you're saving by hiring out a VA and you're not wasting it by doing all the things yourself. One of the best books and most convincing arguments for outsourcing or getting a VA is a book called Buy Back Your Time by Dan Martell. Get it or check it out of the library. I'll put the link in the show notes. You won't be sorry. Okay.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:28

Tip number seven: use automation and project management tools. You can automate emails, social media posting and your CRM. This can save you lots of time and let you be able to batch and schedule everything in advance. I use ConvertKit for email, which has a free plan, and right now I use an app called Post-it Plan for social media, although I upload most of my reels directly from my phone and I have to set an alert to remind me to do that each morning, the reason I do that instead of automating my video uploads or my real uploads, is because then I engage with my followers at the same time, since engagement is also a really important thing to do on social media. I also stay organized and track progress with project management tools.

**Janice Hostager:** 14:16

I use Asana for most of my tasks. Again, using templates and repeating tasks makes it so easy. Asana even comes with templates to use, so you don't have to reinvent the wheel. I also use it to work my VAs. I just list my tasks in. Sometimes they include a screenshot video and that can be included easily too. Asana has a free plan, which is

great. I really like monday.com too, but right now I'm pretty entrenched in Asana. I also put most everything on Google Drive. That way, my VAs and anybody else I'm working with can also see those documents, including clients.

**Janice Hostager:** 14:54

I track all the details for each podcast on Google Sheets so that all the people who work on them can see what needs to get done. I seriously don't know what I'd do if they ever discontinued Google Drive, and that's it. When I get things organized, I feel the same as when I clean out a closet. I feel like life will be smoother and easier, because I know it will. I know it will be for you too. So did this help? Overwhelm does not need to be a way of life. All it takes is strategy planning, breaking things down and focusing on what moves the needle for you and your ideal customer. As I mentioned earlier, you can find all the details from today's episode, including a transcript and all the links we about at [myweeklymarketing.com/ 57](https://myweeklymarketing.com/57). Thank you so much for joining me today. As always, I'm thrilled that you spent your time with me. If you're new here, please subscribe, and I hope you visit again soon. If you found this helpful, I'd so appreciate a review on Apple Podcasts too. Thanks again. Bye for now.