

# 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.

**Janice Hostager: 0:28**

Welcome to another episode of My Weekly Marketing. Okay, who here is overwhelmed with marketing? This is actually kind of a trick question, because it's something I hear all the time from small business owners. So if you said yes or raised your hand, you're not alone. You can't see this, but my hand is up too.

**Janice Hostager: 0:49**

Even though I've worked in some form of marketing for more than 30 years, I can still get overwhelmed from time to time with marketing. Of course, it's even harder when you're just starting out or if you've been trying to do it all yourself. There's always a million things you could be doing, and we as entrepreneurs tend to be idea people, right? Anyone else in the house with ADD. Not only that, but marketing is always changing. I've been running Facebook ads from the very beginning of Facebook ads, back in the day of the power editor, and every time I log in to create a new ad, something has changed every stinking time. So I don't blame you for being overwhelmed. Not only that, but how many times have you hopped on a webinar or read an email claiming that the key to marketing is blank? Social media, SEO, content marketing, Google Ads. Everyone has advice about what makes good marketing, so it's hard to know who to listen to, am I right? What I want for you is to stop feeling overwhelmed and start focusing on what you need to do to get results. So we're breaking it down into simple steps so you can start taking action right now. Okay, let's get started. First up, marketing strategy. It's a non-negotiable. When I take on a new client, the first order of business is their marketing strategy, along with understanding their goals. Why? Because marketing tactics without a good strategy becomes chaos. At best you're shooting in the dark and at worst it can become some sort of marketing stew that can actually work against itself, and nobody wants that.

**Janice Hostager: 2:27**

Years ago, when I opened my first business, a design agency, I too found myself overwhelmed by marketing, even though it had been my career up to that point. So I really dug deep to figure out a framework that would make sense for not only ads, but social media, websites and every aspect of marketing. I knew there had to be an order

to set up a marketing strategy. So I came up with a framework and I called it the Trail to the Sale™, because it's based on a customer journey map. The reason this framework has served me so well over many years and with many clients is because it's built on human behavior, not marketing tactics or gimmicks.

**Janice Hostager: 3:07**

I have a free marketing playbook download that takes you through the steps that I'm about to talk about, so you can get it by going to [janicehostager.com/trail](http://janicehostager.com/trail) or by visiting the show notes for today's episode. In this strategy, I look at everything we can do to move customers from awareness, to consider to compare, evaluate, sell, supersize, serve and send. Okay, I'll go through each step one by one. First of all, in the awareness stage, this is where you want to ask yourself how will people find me and how can I establish my authority? Okay. After that is the consider stage, where you want to allow your ideal customer to learn more about you. It's also where you want to get them on your email list so you can reach them through your nurture sequence. After that is the compare stage. People are going to look around to see who else can help them with their problem. So here you want to address concerns and really focus on your unique value proposition. How can you stand out in a crowded market?

**Janice Hostager: 4:10**

Next is the evaluate stage. Do you have a low-priced offer or a way that a customer can try you out, then it leads to the sell stage, where people make a purchase. That's where you want to address pricing tiers, counter their objections and make sure they have a pleasant sales experience. Next, you might want to offer an upsell, which I call a supersize. Having an enhanced offer can help here and allows you not to leave money on the table. After the sale, you need to think about two things: serving the customer after the sale and anticipating their ongoing needs, and asking for a referral, and that is a Trail to the Sale™, obviously at a very high level.

**Janice Hostager: 4:52**

I know this can sound like a lot on a podcast, so downloading my marketing playbook will really help you with this. Once this is all written down, it becomes so much easier to tackle marketing since you'll connect with your ideal customer at every trail stop along the way. So you're not going to try and do all the things. You're limiting it to just what will work best for your ideal customer for that single product or service. That will save you time and help you avoid marketing burnout.

**Janice Hostager: 5:22**

Okay, so to get this started, here's your step-by-step. Number one, start with your ideal customer. Marketing becomes so much easier when you know exactly who you're talking to. This is foundational to every step you take in marketing or advertising. You can do that by downloading my free ideal customer planner at [janicehostager.com/customer](http://janicehostager.com/customer). I'll put the link in the show notes too.

**Janice Hostager: 5:47**

Your ideal customer is a combination of who you want it to be and who will be right for your offer, and it involves some research. I like to start with the customer you want, then do some research. I take a deep dive into this in My Weekly Marketing episode number 32 and on episode 47 with my guest Nicole Bernard. But some great places to do research are Facebook groups in your niche, Reddit threads and subreddits, Amazon and book reviews in the comments and in the comments on podcasts and YouTube channels. Now a word of warning. It's easy to get stuck in research mode on this one, but identifying your ideal customer is so important. If you're already doing business, talk to your current customers. A survey works, but I love a phone call or a Zoom call so you can record the conversation and listen to the exact words they use to describe their problem. These words are golden. You'll want to use them in your own marketing. Also,

**Janice Hostager: 6:47**

a lot of small business owners don't like to limit their audience. Some businesses feel like they're right for everybody and they don't want to leave people out. It can be tricky if you have a clientele that's really diverse, like maybe you own an ice cream shop or a gas station but, truthfully, no business is for everyone. If you have an ice cream shop, you know that there's a big difference between who gets ice cream at Cold Stone and who gets it at Dairy Queen. Everyone has an ideal customer. The one that spends the most, tells others about you and is great to work with. That's who you want to be targeting.

**Janice Hostager: 7:23**

Step two, prioritize your goals. Overwhelm can come pretty fast from trying to do everything at once. If you focus on one or two marketing goals to start with, that makes this a whole lot more doable. Often, when you don't have a strategy in place, it's easy to throw ideas at the wall to see what sticks, but that's what will probably get you into trouble, since you aren't functioning strategically. Here are three ways to do that that I recommend. First off, prioritize revenue generating activities first. If your main goal is to increase sales, focus on activities that directly bring in revenue, like an email marketing campaign with a clear call to action or running limited time ads for your best-selling product or creating product tiers on your website. Ignore the pressure to be on every social media platform and concentrate on what drives immediate results. I talk more

about generating quick cash in my episode 58, too. By focusing on what directly impacts revenue, you cut through distractions and zero in on what matters most for your business right now.

**Janice Hostager: 8:29**

Next, build an audience before worrying about multiple channels. You can never start too soon to grow your email list, even if you haven't opened your doors yet. It's easy to get a free download or a wait list on your website to start collecting names and emails for people who are already interested in what you're selling. Also, don't feel like you need to start a podcast or a blog or YouTube channel and then maybe a Facebook group all at once. Pick one place where you know your audience hangs out and go all in in that one place. By mastering one, you'll be able to see real progress much faster. And the third thing create one big goal and one supporting goal. This has worked well for me.

**Janice Hostager: 9:10**

Let's say your main goal is to launch a new product. All your marketing efforts should align with driving attention to that product launch, such as email teasers, behind the scenes on social media, etc. A supporting goal might be to grow your email list, which helps fuel the success of your product launch. Both can be done at once. Approaching marketing with a hyper-focused goal prevents the shiny object syndrome, where you jump from one tactic to another.

**Janice Hostager: 9:37**

Okay, step number three, choose one or two platforms for each stop on the trail. Similar to what I mentioned earlier, you don't need to be everywhere, just where your audience is. For example, if you're launching a product, for the awareness stage, choose to focus on being a podcast guest and maybe running ads to your webinar. For the consideration stage, think of one or two lead magnets or freebies that will grow your email list quickly by focusing on the biggest pain point for your ideal customer. For the compare stage, ask for some Google reviews from a longtime client and make sure your Google business page is up. This will make a whole lot more sense if you download my marketing playbook. There, I have more ideas for what to do with all the stages of the Trail to the Sale™ too. By sticking to the Trail to the Sale™ framework, you'll end up producing marketing in the right order, with the right focus to make it easy for you to focus and to lead your ideal customers to a sale.

**Janice Hostager: 10:34**

Okay, step four, create a simple content plan. Having a plan saves you from scrambling for content ideas at the very last minute. My tip is to create content pillars. Those are

three to five or so arching category topics that are most relevant to your ideal customer and then break them down into ideas from there. For example, if you're a nutritionist, your content pillars might be diet, healthy living, and exercise. Then take each of them and break them down further into individual post ideas. For example, for diet, you could offer five swaps to make your everyday meals healthier, debunking three common nutrition myths and maybe meal prep 101. ChatGPT is a great resource for these kinds of ideas. Just plug in information about your ideal customer and the content pillars that you already have and let it generate ideas. Once you plan your content out ahead of time, you won't need to worry about brainstorming a blog or video topic each week. I talk more about this in episode 78 as well. Think, too, about repurposing your content. If you write a blog post, it can become an email content to your list. Then you can break up that same blog post into short social media posts. Repetition is a good thing and it saves you time and energy.

**Janice Hostager:** 11:55

Okay, step number five, track progress and adjust as needed. Measuring what works helps you improve without feeling like you're flying blind. Trust me, this is something that a lot of people neglect, and I used to be one of those people. When you've got a long list of things to get done, it's easy to check it off and forget about it. But tracking progress on an ad or in emails is so important so you know what's working, and that will actually save you time and wasted effort in the long run. Small adjustments over time can lead to big results.

**Janice Hostager:** 12:29

It's not about perfection. It's about tweaking as you go. Google Analytics, social media insights or email open rates are all excellent ways to see what's working and what's not. If it's not working, just think of it as data. Remember, if it's not working as you hoped, it's not personal, it's just information. Sometimes, when something's not working like we hoped it would, it's easy to kind of feel like it's personal, that people really don't like us, but that's not reality.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:03

Adjust what you're doing. It might be an ad, a landing page or an email, just tweak it and try again. Even the biggest brands out there have marketing that doesn't work and they use the same process. It's all just information. As my coach always says, you either get the results you wanted or the lesson you needed.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:20

Okay, so here's a recap. Here are things that you want to do to conquer that feeling of overwhelm. Number one, a clear strategy helps you focus on what matters most and eliminate unnecessary stress. Number two, by focusing on what directly impacts revenue, you can cut through distractions and zero in on what matters most for your business right now. Number three, understanding your best ideal customer makes marketing way more targeted and less overwhelming. Number four, having focused goals prevents the shiny object syndrome where you jump from one tactic to another. Number five, by sticking to the Trail to the Sale™ framework, you'll end up producing marketing in the right order, with the right focus, to make it so much easier for you and your ideal customer. Number six, content pillars will help you save time by focusing only on what your ideal customer wants to learn, and repurposing content will help you get your message out to a broader audience. Number seven, small adjustments over time can lead to big results.

**Janice Hostager:** 14:23

It's not about perfection. It's about tweaking as you go. Remember you're not alone. Every business owner feels overwhelmed at times, but by focusing on what matters and simplifying the process, you can build a strategy that works for you, not against you. Marketing doesn't have to be perfect to be effective. It's about showing up consistently. I've also included more tips about marketing overwhelm in episode 57. For links to anything we talked about in today's episode, visit [myweeklymarketing.com/81](https://myweeklymarketing.com/81). If you found this episode to be helpful, I always appreciate a review on the Apple Podcast app. Thank you so much for joining me today. Stay healthy, my friend. You're the best. See you next time. Bye for now.