

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: 0:30

SEO, or Search Engine Optimization, is something that can always be improved. I know on my own website it can suffer from poor SEO from time to time, so there should be never any shame when you feel like you have issues with your SEO. I think, as busy business owners, we're always spinning so many plates right, especially with marketing. We're producing blog posts or posting on social media or did I send out an email this week? Or there's always something to be done. But one of the things I really like about SEO is that if your website is well written for your ideal customer and SEO optimized, you don't have to focus on it every week.

Janice Hostager: 1:13

So much in marketing expires or feels like a treadmill of tasks, but not SEO. Yes, you need to be aware of what to do for SEO if you're adding content to your site. So it's not like a complete one and done task, but by and large, it's far less time consuming than any other type of marketing. So my guest this week is Rachel Lindteigen. She is a genius when it comes to SEO, and one of the things I love about Rachel is that she makes it all sound so easy, because it really isn't all that complicated. Rachel is the owner of Etched Marketing and she's an industry pro with more than 20 years of marketing and copywriting experience. So here's my chat with Rachel. Hey, Rachel, thanks for joining me today.

Rachel Lindteigen: 2:01

Thanks so much for having me. I'm really excited.

Janice Hostager: 2:04

So I'm going to jump right in and then we'll hear your origin story in a little bit. But SEO, Search Engine Optimization is something that I have noticed with clients and people who ask me questions that it feels overwhelming to people or is just kind of overlooked. They know it's important, they know it's something they should pay attention to, but they don't really know where to start. I guess maybe that's it, so why do you think that is?

Rachel Lindteigen: 2:32

I think, because SEO has this reputation for being technical, and people because they maybe don't understand it and it's a really acronym heavy happy industry. Everything is words that you're maybe not familiar with or you haven't heard before, and, I think, people because it kind of early on, there were a lot of developers that were doing more of the SEO things. There weren't really marketers as much and I think it just was viewed as this very technical thing and there were. A decade ago, SEO was quite technical. There were a lot of things you had to do to help Google understand your website, but today it's truly about the quality of your content and the words on your page and helping Google understand them.

Rachel Lindteigen: 3:22

So I try to help people understand that SEO is content visibility. That's really truly all it is. You need to do a few things on your website to make it easier for Google to understand what you're saying on your pages and when you do that, Google starts to get to know you and they like you and they trust you, and when they do that, they start to show you or your website essentially to more people and you get more traffic. So really it's a great thing and it's something that we all should be doing. But I bet you know the same as I do. A lot of people let that fear of the unknown stop them, and so they don't get, or they just simply don't know what to do first. I hear that a lot, especially from my students. I don't know what to, I know it's important, but I have no idea how to get started.

Janice Hostager: 4:13

Oh, that's so true. I love what you said too about it having been technical a long time ago, which it still is a little techie, but you know, for most people I don't think it's anything that you need to get under the hood too much of your website to get to. But what Google has said recently, of course, is that it really designed or write for your audience first, and for SEO second. Because when I first did my first website way back in the dark ages, when I had to code the whole dang thing, you know it was like, okay, you got to write for the search engines, got to write for the search engine, and that has really changed and I'm so glad it has because it's giving it really puts smaller businesses on a level, more of a level playing field. I would say, right?

Rachel Lindteigen: 5:01

It does it makes it better.

Rachel Lindteigen: 5:05

So Google's been saying write for your audience for at least a decade. So people are coming out now and they're saying this has changed and helpful content blew it up. And this, no, it's the same. Where you and I can talk is like the Wayback Machine in the early days, where people used white text on a white background, so the words were there, but it didn't show up. I mean, there were a lot of cheater tactics that people did 15 years ago that you cannot and should not do today. You will get in trouble. Do not put white text on a white background to have words for the search engine, but not your customer.

Rachel Lindteigen: 5:40

We really, today, the way that Google has evolved, it's all about providing the best value, the best information, the most helpful content. That's why that was their biggest algorithm update was helpful content. That's really truly what they want, and they've been saying that since 2012 was when Panda and Penguin started coming out and they started looking at, and I never can remember which one is links and which one is content, but they hit us with black and white animals about,

Rachel Lindteigen: 6:09

well, 13 years ago, and that was when they said stop this, write good content, have it be nice, build safe links. Don't go get links from link farms. And to this day, do you get emails from somebody offering you high DA links. And don't buy links, guys. No matter what you do, do not buy a link.

Janice Hostager: 6:30

Right, right.

Janice Hostager: 6:31

So how about you now? How'd you get involved in all of this?

Rachel Lindteigen: 6:35

So funny story. I went to journalism school. I was going to host the Today Show. I was not going to be an SEO expert because I'm old enough that it didn't exist. Google did not exist. When I was in college, we still had to stand in line to use the email computers in the library. So I'm not young. So I got into it because I ended up going into marketing instead of journalism. And as I got into marketing and I started out doing all different things and then in like 2008, I really fell in love with digital. I got to start working on websites, I got to work on content and email and then it just changed. When Google came after us with Panda and Penguin, all of a sudden all the companies were saying hire a journalist. And it was like, all of a sudden, that journalism degree it hadn't really

paid much 10 years before paid a fortune because of how things were changing. And so to this day I laugh. I spend most of my time creating content.

Rachel Lindteigen: 7:46

But I got into Search Engine Optimization because it let me make a good living creating content, really figuring out, I look at SEO and keyword research. It's helping me figure out what the story is. So my journalism background is right there, because I'm figuring out what is it that the audience wants to learn about. So it was not intended. It didn't exist when I was in school.

Janice Hostager: 8:07

Right, right, yeah.

Rachel Lindteigen: 8:09

But I fell in love with it through the evolution of seeing digital marketing really start to emerge.

Janice Hostager: 8:15

Right, yeah, and like you said earlier, the two go very much hand in hand. And I know we were talking a little bit before we started recording here. As I work with businesses doing marketing strategy and marketing plans, part of what I do is a website analysis and so many times I'll look at business owners who have hired a copywriter and assuming that everything was okay, and hired a web designer and assumed that they would have just taken care of that stuff. But really not all of them think in that way. Not all of them work in that way, and it's a question you really need to ask. If you're having your website designed or redesigned and you're hiring a copywriter, you really need to say: is this going to be optimized for SEO?

Rachel Lindteigen: 9:02

Mm-hmm. Well, and beyond that, you need, as a business owner, to know what that means, because I've seen situations where I've had students come into my course with these websites. They've had someone design and they've been told it's SEO-friendly, it's optimized and it's wrong. Because the person they're paying to do it doesn't know what they're doing, because they don't have the right background. That's what kills me is when they've hired a consultant or they've hired somebody to build it for them. They think they're good and they're like why am I getting no traffic to my site?

Rachel Lindteigen: 9:36

And you can look at it and you're like oh my gosh, you don't have this, the basic optimization or you're targeting a keyword you're never going to be able to rank for. Like I'm sorry, but this like I'm not being mean to you it just this isn't going to work for a small business. So we've got to adjust what we're doing and you have to know - I always tell my students you have to know enough to protect yourself from the people who are out there who are going to try to take advantage of you because you're a small business owner and they think you're an easy target. So my job is to teach you enough to protect you so that if you do hire someone in the future, you know how to verify that they're doing what you're paying them for.

Janice Hostager: 10:17

Yes, thank you for saying that. I love that because, yeah, and I feel like there is so much that well, in so many ways, people are out there to scam small business owners, but especially SEO, because it's something that a lot of people don't even want to think about because it seems complicated, it seems, like you said, technical, but it like, like you said, we really need to know that to protect ourselves, if no other reason, and I think if you're doing blog, if you're doing weekly content, you need to know that anyway.

Rachel Lindteigen: 10:49

If you're creating content and you're not optimizing it,

Rachel Lindteigen: 10:52

you can stop wasting your time writing blog posts or creating show notes for your podcast. Content that's not optimized is not going to get found by Google. It's not going to get shown to people. So if you're not going to put the time and effort into doing the SEO on those pages, just stop creating the content or create it, knowing I don't care about ranking, I don't care about getting traffic. I just want to write this blog post for the heck of it. But then why wouldn't you learn so that you could get traffic to it? Because a website or a blog without search engine optimization done on it might as well not exist in Google's eyes.

Janice Hostager: 11:32

Right, right, yeah. Well, I suppose there's an argument for doing content for your customers and sending it out. But you're right, why wouldn't you do it? I mean, somebody is. If your customers are interested in somebody else is probably going to be interested in it too, so you might as well do them the advantage of making sure that it shows up in search results.

Rachel Lindteigen: 11:53

Yeah, help them find you, because people are searching. Especially when they're searching Google, they're looking specifically for something. They need help, they have a question, there's something they want to buy. If you show up, you're going to have a really good chance of converting them, because Google is saying, hey, here's somebody that I think can help you with what you're searching for. But if you don't do the basic optimization, Google doesn't know that you can help them, so they're not going to show you Right. So, yeah, if you're going to create it, you might as well, it's not an extra, it's just it should be part of your creative process.

Janice Hostager: 12:32

Yes, yeah, In fact I like to make it the first step. I do a little keyword research before I even, well, I don't put pen to paper, but that's what I was going to say before I even start out, you know before you dig in, because you need to know if this topic it's a good indicator, it's a good litmus test for if your ideal customer even cares about it, because sometimes we get something in our head which is a really good idea to us...

Rachel Lindteigen: 12:56

But nobody cares, yeah, nobody cares.

Rachel Lindteigen: 12:59

But I do it the same way and that's what I teach my students. That's why we say keyword research is so important, because not only can it help you choose what keyword to go after, but it gives you all sorts of content ideas and exactly that it tells you whether or not you should even create this content, and I've had some people I've talked to like you can use a lot of what you learn in keyword research all over the place. You can use it on social channels, you can use it in emails, because you're speaking in your customer's voice. That's really all it is. Is understanding what your customer is searching for. So the fact that you do that, I'm going to bet you get more traffic to those blog posts that you create, because you know somebody's searching for that information already.

Janice Hostager: 13:41

Exactly.

Janice Hostager: 13:43

Okay, so let's dig into the meat here. For someone who is just starting out with SEO, what are, like, the top three things that they need to know?

Rachel Lindteigen: 13:51

So there are a couple basic rules. The first one is going to be that each page on your website needs to have different keywords, because Google is only going to show your site and this is really, really important, guys. Google's only going to show your website two times for any given keyword. So this means if your website is optimized and you have five pages and all five pages use the same keyword, you only have two chances to show up. But if all five pages use different keywords, you have five chances to show up.

Rachel Lindteigen: 14:30

So you're hurting yourself if you're using the same keyword on every page, and that's something I see happen a lot. When website designers or developers do the optimization for you, they put the same keyword or the same title tag and the same meta description across all pages. So that's one of the first things I want you to understand is unique keyword, and then unique title tag and meta description, and if you don't know what those are, those are what shows up in Google when somebody searches for you. They show up above and below your URL. So that's the first thing that a potential visitor is going to see to help them determine whether or not they come to your website.

Janice Hostager: 15:14

Okay, I'm going to stop you real quick here. You said that they will show your site two times. So what you're saying is two different pages on your site, not that if they search for something, they're only going to show it twice and otherwise you're out of luck, kind of thing.

Rachel Lindteigen: 15:27

Correct. Two different pages. So if you have the same keyword on five pages, you have two chances versus having five chances for different keywords. The other thing is like single versus plural. You don't have to worry about that. Ten years ago we had to worry about that. So if it was shoe versus shoes, we had to optimize for both. You don't today. So don't think I've got a unique keyword because I have a single versus a plural. Choose different keywords and what you want to think about is what is the best keyword for this page? And when we say keyword, just think about what would my customer search looking for information on this page. That's really what a keyword is. It's what somebody's going to put into Google to search to find information. So that's the first thing is we need to kind of understand one per page. Go ahead, I can tell you got a question.

Janice Hostager: 16:20

I'm sorry to interrupt you, I just don't want you to get so far ahead. That Okay, so talk to us. Maybe you're going to talk about this later. But long tail keywords versus I don't know it's called short tail the regular keywords. Yeah.

Rachel Lindteigen: 16:31

So that was the next place I was going.

Janice Hostager: 16:38

Okay, well then I'll let you carry on.

Janice Hostager: 16:39

Go ahead.

Rachel Lindteigen: 16:39

Great minds. So that's the next thing that I see is that people don't understand what keyword to choose. So when we do keyword research and we see keywords in there and it's like, wow, this one has like 10,000 searches a month. If I could rank for that and I got 10,000 visits which you're not going to get 10,000 visits because not everybody's going to come to your website when they search for that but if you're in position number one on Google on average you're going to get 37% of the traffic is usually what we see in the research studies. So if there were 10,000 searches a month, you could potentially get 3,700 visits from that one keyword. However, if that one keyword usually with that kind of search volume, it's going to be super competitive and it's probably going to be a short one. You said short tail. I grew up learning fat head. Oh, I've heard that it's usually just a single keyword. So, for example, shoes or glass, or potentially it's two. Maybe it's home decor.

Rachel Lindteigen: 17:45

When I worked at my last agency, I worked with very, very large brands. We could rank them all day long. For things like that. I had clients that ranked number one for mirrors and picture frames and Christmas decorations and gallery walls. But let me tell you, they made millions a year. Some of them made over a million a month from their organic traffic. So they were not small companies, they had hundreds of stores nationwide.

Rachel Lindteigen: 18:14

So, as a small business owner, are you going to rank for a keyword above somebody who's in the mall that has 400 locations? No, so leave those keywords to them. They're not going to be good for you as a small business owner anyway. What you want to look for is what Janice said. Janice, sorry, was long tail.

Rachel Lindteigen: 18:37

So long tail is going to be something that's generally three to six words. It may even be a phrase, it could even be a question. Often you'll see questions in your keyword research, but it's further down the sales funnel. So, rather than being mirrors, it might be someone searching for retro mercury glass mirror for a bedroom. So it's got a lot more detail. There's also going to be a lot less search volume and I don't want you to worry about that because you're probably going to have a better chance to rank for it and the person searching mirror versus retro decorative mercury glass, whatever has a much better idea what they're looking for. So if you can rank on page one for that long tail keyword, you have a better chance of converting that customer than someone who just lands on your website looking for mirrors because they have no idea what they're looking for, versus somebody who has a very specific query. A very specific query with less search volume can work wonders for you, especially as a small business. Less competition, better chance of converting and making money.

Janice Hostager: 19:54

Love it, love it. That is so true too. I mean, even as a searcher, if I'm looking for something specific and I was doing this just a few weeks ago, can't remember what I was looking for, maybe like shoes, velvet shoes, it wasn't that, but it was something really specific that I had in my head that I wanted, and it can get kind of frustrating if nobody ranks for those things.

Janice Hostager: 20:18

So if you have them, put them out there, because I was ready to buy and when I found them I laid down the money, put down my credit card and bought. So yes, you're right, they're further down the sales funnel, but they're also people that are ready to lay down their money, so love that.

Rachel Lindteigen: 20:36

You don't need as much traffic coming in if the people are ready to buy. And it's funny because I kind of stumbled with mirrors, because shoes is normally my example that I give and I walked through that way and I was like, why did I go mirrors? What was I thinking?

Janice Hostager: 20:50

It works.

Janice Hostager: 20:52

People like mirrors too, so it's all good stuff.

Janice Hostager: 20:54

Yeah, yeah, and it really does get more challenging, though, if you are in like a B2B space or where you're looking at something that's not quite as easy to think about or rank for, but the same principles apply. You really just break it down to what people exactly people are looking for, and that will help you a little bit. Now you probably have more points to go over, but since I'm talking right now, I got one more question here for you. Is it okay to throw in that other keyword? Let's say you are selling a mercury glass mirror. You also have the word mirror in there. Like you said, you're probably not going to rank for it, but it's okay to have that in your meta description, your title tag, your headlines, right?

Rachel Lindteigen: 21:41

It is.

Rachel Lindteigen: 21:41

So what I always recommend and what we do is we choose one primary keyword for the page. That primary keyword is the one that has the best key. Everybody says what's the best keyword for me, the best keyword for you is the one with the most search volume, that you have the absolute best chance of ranking for, meaning it's not super competitive when you go to Google using an incognito browser window, super important, incognito, not your normal Chrome browser. When you go and you search, you see websites that are similar to yours. That helps you really understand. Okay, I have a good chance of ranking. So we choose that keyword. That's your primary...

Rachel Lindteigen: 22:21

You're going to use that in all the places that Google is going to look. The places Google's going to look include your title tag, your meta description, your URL, your headers, your photo file name, your photo alt text, your copy, all of that. Now, if you want to go after more than one keyword, you can use that additional keyword in your copy, in your headers, if it'll fit in your title tag or your meta description, you can do that as well. So, when a page ranks position number one, it often ranks for multiple keywords that

are either words you've used or similar derivatives, because Google understands semantic search today, like they understand that things are semantically related.

Rachel Lindteigen: 23:05

So 10 years ago, we did have to worry about single versus plural and all that. We don't today, so Google's made it easier for us. So, yes, you can use additional keywords, but always, always, always, choose one as your primary focus and use that in all the places, and I know I went through them really quick. But there's a freebie that we're going to talk about, we'll share about later that has the checklist and all the information and even pictures of what these things are to make it easier for you, because I know this can feel like I'm talking a foreign language.

Janice Hostager: 23:38

No, I'm glad you have that, because it kind of does. There's just a lot of moving pieces to this, for sure. So what now? I like to use a tool called Ubersuggest, which is a paid tool, but I use it for clients as well, so for me it's worth the investment. What do you recommend that people use? Do you go right to, now, you used to be able to just go to Google Ads or AdWords, now they call it search ads but you used to be able to go to their tool and use it right away. But if you're not running ads, you don't have access to that anymore. Nor do you have the amount of information that you can tell whether it's high ranking or not.

Janice Hostager: 24:21

Do you have a tool that you recommend?

Rachel Lindteigen: 24:21

So I've always recommended the Google Keyword tool within AdWords. Unless it's changed very recently, you can still access it. You just have to set up an ad and turn that ad off. But you do have to go through the setup process, you do have to put your credit card in. All of that. It still gives you the competitiveness and I will go verify because I haven't been in it in the last month but normally it still gives you the competitiveness and all that. However, that competitiveness information is for paid ads, not for natural search. But what we've always found is that it's very similar, because if people are paying to rank for a keyword, they're also going to be optimizing for it, trying to rank for it from an organic perspective, because that cuts down their costs for paid. So that's the one that I grew up on, that I've used forever. It was much easier years ago, before it was part of AdWords and you could just Google and go straight to the keyword research tool, and it was much easier.

Rachel Lindteigen: 25:20

At this point, I do actually use Ubersuggest, the same as you. I've used all sorts of them over the years. I think as a small business owner, as an entrepreneur. We need to look at what tools do we truly need in our business and what is the price point on them. There are some SEO tools out there that are fantastic Things like Ahrefs and Moz and SEMrush, and you know what. They are hundreds of dollars a month and you don't need that as a small business owner.

Rachel Lindteigen: 25:50

Something like Ubersuggest that is a very low cost option works great. It'll give you an opportunity to do your keyword research. It'll give you link building information. It'll let you track your keywords and see what's going up and what's going down. There's also one you can use. I teach my students about that, Small SEO tools. If they're not at a point where they're comfortable investing in a program, Small SEO tools is a free one. There are so many ads on that site today. I don't like that part of it. It used to be much better. There were a lot less ads a few years ago. It doesn't track for you, so you'll have to update and take your tracking and all of that and keep track of it yourself. But that's a free option. It'll give you your ranking and it'll also do the keyword research side of things for you.

Janice Hostager: 26:40

Oh, good to know, and I haven't been on Google AdWords for a while anyway because I have somebody else managing that for me. But you're probably right, so don't take my word for it. I just know that it changed over like eons ago and I would, in the early days of the internet, you used to be able to go and find out lots of information for free from Google.

Janice Hostager: 27:01

They're not as general as it seems to be.

Rachel Lindteigen: 27:03

It was awesome Do you remember when you actually got keyword level data in analytics so you knew exactly what keywords were driving traffic to your website and you could look and see I got this many visits and made this much money from this and then term not provided? Yeah, yeah, yeah, this many visits and made this much money from this and then term not provided. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I miss. Those were the glory days where

you could actually see everything. I know they say they did it for privacy. I think they did it to try to push more people to buying ads.

Janice Hostager: 27:34

I really do, yeah I, I would agree with you. Probably maybe both we'll give them the benefit of the doubt, but yeah, so when a new tool comes out now I like learning that from Facebook, learning that from you know all the social media apps I am like on it right away because I know that what I'm using for free is going to disappear and it's going to be, you know costly down the future. So, anyway, but okay, anything else that someone just starting out with SEO should really be aware of or know and implement.

Rachel Lindteigen: 28:05

I think we've talked about the main things, and that's pick different keywords. Use your keyword in the places that Google will look. Choose one that you have a good chance of ranking for. Write high quality content that provides value to your customer. Let's touch on AI real quick as we talk about tools.

Rachel Lindteigen: 28:24

Let's touch on it super quick, because I know there are a lot of people out there who love AI and I'm not one of them. I'm not in love with it the way some people are, but I think it can be a really good helper. If you're not like me and if you're like my son, my poor nine-year-old thinks that writing a five-page or not even five-page five paragraphs, is the hardest thing on the face of the earth and he hates it and he does not want to do it. And I'm like how can that be hard? I write every day. If you're more like my son than I am, than me, and you're like I don't want to write all the time, use those tools to help you. Use them to brainstorm, to give you ideas, to create outlines, to give you a rough draft. Ask it to take a look at what you've written and tell you how you could improve it. Like all of that. But please, please, please, do not ever host content that ChatGPT or Claude or whatever program you're using has created for you, because that content is not unique. That content is a regurgitation of stuff that already exists on the web. Google does not want that. Google has come out and said we don't want that.

Rachel Lindteigen: 29:45

Initially, Google said nothing AI period. Then they did update, probably a year or so ago, and they said, okay, you can use it, but use it in this way. Then we had the big update. I know a lot of bloggers and different people were really upset about the core update in September, October of 24 that took out so much of their traffic and their rankings, and we also had a big update in March of 24 that took down all well, it was about 50% of the

sites that were cheating that were having AI create their content for them. Google went after it. Because a year ago you could have ChatGPT write a ton of blog posts for you and you could rank. But Google is never going to let cheater tactics win for long. As soon as they figure out what's going on, they're going to stop it and that's going to be the next update.

Rachel Lindteigen: 30:45

So what I want you to think about this is the most important thing when we're talking about SEO and we're talking about Google. I want you to think about Google in a different way. Google is more than a search engine. Google is a search engine, but Google is a business, and the way that Google makes money as a business is by selling ads on their search engine. And if people come to the search engine and they search and the results that they get are not helpful, they are junk, they are AI content, et cetera they're going to stop coming to Google, which means they're not going to be able to sell ads. They're not going to make as much money.

Rachel Lindteigen: 31:22

So Google is going to do everything in their power to make sure that the websites that they show at the top of page one or on page one are the best possible answers for the queries that people are searching for. Page one matters because nobody goes to page two. 99% of people only look at page one, so page two doesn't count. They're still going to try to have good content there, but for Google, they're doing everything they can to protect it. They want a good user experience because Google now has more competition coming than they've ever had to deal with. They've been the behemoth. They've been the one with the big market share.

Rachel Lindteigen: 32:02

Now, with some of these AI tools, we've got Chat GPT. They're adding Search GPT. Now they're saying there could potentially be the same number of searches a day in Chat GPT as Google five years from now, which means Google has to be proactive and they have to do everything in their power to keep really good content so they don't lose their market share. And that also brings the question is SEO dead? No, it's evolving. It's continuing to change. SEO has been dying for 15 years. Every time there's an update, every time there's an algorithm change, SEO is dead. It's not dead, guys, it's not going away. And the reality is Google's been saying create really great content for us for over a decade. So create really great content and then optimize it for Google and you'll be fine.

Janice Hostager: 32:55

Yeah, yeah, I do use ChatGPT actually quite a bit for idea generation and I'll sometimes use it for social media, but oftentimes, especially at the end of the day, van, I can't put a sentence together.

Janice Hostager: 33:10

You know, you're tired and it's like, okay, or sometimes I'll do it for a paragraph in an email. It just comes out clunky, and so I'm rewriting it, and ChatGPT has given me a hand in that. But it will be interesting to see when SEO and the AI combine forces and I think it already has in some cases so that you could just ask them what are people searching for about shoes in Wisconsin, or something, right? So I can see that happening in the future for sure. So as a tool, I think it works, but go ahead.

Rachel Lindteigen: 33:52

I was going to say I think that day is coming. Right now, ChatGPT, in particular, the data, the information is a little outdated, it's a little behind, but I think that day is coming and we're seeing so many different AI tools. I love them for brainstorming and ideas and, like you were saying, revisions and and stuff. Just don't have them write for you. Don't publish content that they've written for you. It's possible five years from now, they may be able to, a year from now they may be able to do it, who knows? But today, don't do that. So that's really the biggest thing I see and I wish it could. And I'll also say I know you mentioned ChatGPT. I personally have found Claude. Have you used Claude. ai?

Janice Hostager: 34:31

I haven't, but you like it better.

Rachel Lindteigen: 34:33

I think and I'm not the only one who, because I heard from a friend who said I think Claude is better. I think that Claude actually produces better content like better ideas. It sounds a little better. I've used it for email subject lines, though.

Rachel Lindteigen: 34:53

I really like that.

Rachel Lindteigen: 34:54

It was actually Rick Mulready. He was speaking at a conference I was at in May. He was the one who said, oh Claude's way better than ChatGPT and I was like really, we're just sitting chatting off to the side. I was like you taught me Facebook ads in 2018.

Janice Hostager: 35:17

Right, yeah, yeah, well, and I think you're right, it's evolving to the point where we don't know where it's going to end up. So all we can do is deal with what we have in front of us today, optimize today, but, like you said, it's all regenerative, so nothing it spits out is unique, and I've talked to a lot of people that are in the industry and they have said the same thing, which is I can usually spot something that's been written by ChatGPT.

Rachel Lindteigen: 35:46

Oh yeah. You can tell it doesn't sound like a person.

Janice Hostager: 35:52

They seem to use some obscure words over and over again.

Rachel Lindteigen: 35:55

Yes.

Janice Hostager: 35:56

And it's I can't even think of the words right now, but I could. It's like ugh, yeah.

Rachel Lindteigen: 36:00

Yeah, you can tell.

Rachel Lindteigen: 36:01

And I think Claude sounds a little more human than ChatGPT, but still you can tell that it's generated. It's generated, it's not from a person. That's why we say edit it, like, read it out loud when you're writing, even if you're having those tools, help you. Read it out loud, because if it's not gonna flow you're gonna tell so much faster when you read it out loud versus if you just because if we just read it silently we're gonna hear what we want to hear in our brain.

Janice Hostager: 36:30

Yeah, that's totally true. So is there something that we miss with SEO? And I think, like when I was coming up with this question, I thought, oh, I know what she's going to say. She's going to say link building, but that may not be it. Is there something that we miss with SEO that would be really helpful for us. It helps us rank higher, just generally speaking, but is not done or we put off or something like that. Maybe something new.

Rachel Lindteigen: 36:57

Yeah. So I didn't touch on link building, because link building is still important. It's still high. All of that. Google is kind of removing the importance level for it, but it is still important. So if you can get and I like to say, earn links, don't ever go out and buy them. Don't ever try to get them like community affiliations and partnerships and do podcast interviews and be, you know, interviewed in publications and things like that. Like, think of it more as digital PR than link building, so that's important.

Rachel Lindteigen: 37:31

Another thing that I really think that especially small business owners need to understand, need to know, is that there are a couple things from a technical perspective, but they're not technical, they're not hard. So one of them is you need to make sure that your website is HTTPS. It needs to have a security certificate. Google is not going to rank you if you are not a secure site. You just get a security certificate through the back end of your website. It's not a hard thing, but you need to make sure you have that. Because if not, if somebody sees you and goes to click, they're going to be.

Rachel Lindteigen: 38:07

Google didn't give this big warning. It says this site is not secure. Proceed with caution. It could hack. It could like you don't want to be that site. Yeah, so that's one of them.

Rachel Lindteigen: 38:15

Another one is we need to be minifying, meaning making our image files smaller, because most times when I see a website that has a problem or doesn't rank well or is slow, it's because our picture files are really big. So you can use a tool called Pingdom or you can use the Google Page Speed Test, put your URL in it and just have it tell you what your grading score is. One will give you I believe it's an A through F, and the other one, I believe, gives you a number score. Some of them do like a red, yellow, green. What you want to look for is a website that passes a speed test, because having a speedy site is very important to Google because, again, people aren't going to wait for your site to load. People are going to go to somebody else, they're going to click, they're going to be like nope and they're going to go to the next guy, so they're not going to keep ranking you high, because Google understands how people interact with your site. So those are a couple of tech things.

Rachel Lindteigen: 39:13

The last one I want to say is make sure your site is responsive. What responsive means is that it looks good on a phone, a tablet, a laptop like it doesn't matter what size screen somebody's looking on. It still looks good. They understand what it is and, more importantly, it works. Most times today, you don't have to worry about that because WordPress and Squarespace and ShowIt and everybody, their templates are responsive. But that's just an important thing is to take a look and make sure your website works, no matter what size it is.

Janice Hostager: 39:49

Love it.

Janice Hostager: 39:49

Let me just go back to what you said about speed, especially on mobile, because is it still like most searches take place on mobile now, or is it 50%?

Rachel Lindteigen: 40:03

Most searches take place on mobile and they've gone to mobile first. Indexing Mobile is the focus because most people use mobile, so it's really important. From that speed standpoint, it's also really important. Take a look at your home page and just see on mobile, on the screen, what information shows up without scrolling at all. Can somebody who land... it's not an SEO thing, it's just a marketing thing. But can somebody who lands on your screen figure out what you do? Because if not, they're not coming back to you. They're on their phone. They're multitasking, they're doing different things. They're not going to come back to your page, so make sure they can see what you're doing immediately when they land on that screen and on your phone.

Janice Hostager: 40:52

Yeah, yeah, and one more thing about mobile too. I think is important to realize that they're not getting a Wi-Fi signal usually if they're on their mobile phone, or oftentimes if you're out and about and maybe you're looking for a business, a brick and mortar business. If you've got a mobile phone that you're looking at, you need to make sure that your address is clear, that you can find something easily, that your images are not so large that it, like you said, takes forever, and then people just get frustrated and click off. So all really good tips. Thank you.

Rachel Lindteigen: 41:20

You're welcome.

Janice Hostager: 41:21

So we have covered a lot of things today. Of course, there's always more. How can people find out more about you?

Rachel Lindteigen: 41:27

So my website is etchedmarketing.com. There's a freebies tab on there. It's going to have the beginner's guide to SEO. It's going to walk you through what all of this is. There's a webinar that you can sign up for called SEO 101. It's going to walk you through a little more of this. It's going to give you an opportunity to join me in Simple SEO Content, which is my SEO course, where I teach all of this and I help you and guide you through it.

Rachel Lindteigen: 41:53

I also have a podcast called Simple SEO, where each week, you get a new tip. My podcast episodes are like 10 to 15 minutes. I keep them real short and sweet. It's just something that you can take action on today. I feel like I missed something, but I don't know. I'm across social. I'm not as active on social, but I am on all the social channels, but definitely the podcast. Oh, I also am teaching podcast SEO. So if you have a podcast and you want to learn how to do all of this for your podcast, there's a beginner's guide to podcast SEO and there's a new podcast SEO course.

Janice Hostager: 42:29

Awesome, all good stuff. Okay, and of course, we'll put all the links in the show notes for today. So thank you so much, Rachel. I sure appreciate you taking the time and, as always, I learn so much from my guests and today is no exception, so thank you so much.

Rachel Lindteigen: 42:44

Thank you

Janice Hostager: 42:45

Wow. Rachel's shared a lot of great stuff. I know we shared a ton of information today, so Rachel has put together a free beginner's SEO guide and a lot of other good tools to help you with your SEO. I'll put the links to everything we talked about on today's show in the show notes for today. You can find them at myweeklymarketing.com/90. And, speaking of SEO, reviews are kind of like SEO for podcasts in that they help others find us. Plus, a good review would make my day. So if you've enjoyed the show, please spend

just a couple minutes giving me a review. You can do that at myweeklymarketing.com/review. Thank you so much for joining me today. See you next time. Bye for now.