

# myweeklymarketing.

**Janice Hostager:** 0:05

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

Back in the early days, when I had a design agency business, back like 15 years ago, everybody said that content was king. So I was dedicated to creating a blog post every week, without fail. Every Wednesday afternoon and, if I'm being real, Wednesday nights too I sat at my computer and created what I felt like was the best dang blog post anybody has ever created. Then I would send it out to my email list and that was it, crickets. I'm pretty sure if you've ever written a blog post, you've experienced that same thing at some point early on. But the blog post I threw together in like 10 minutes and posted about how to add a signup form to my website page went viral. Seriously. It was picked up by other publications and I received comments on that post for years. Probably the worst post I've ever created. The reason that did well is that there was nothing else about that on the internet and my article became the sole source of content for that particular topic.

**Janice Hostager:** 1:32

Now. A lot of things about copywriting have changed in the last 15 years, especially with AI, but one thing remains the same. You need to get and hold someone's attention with your words to stand out online. In a world of non-stop scrolling, short attention spans and way too much noise, how do you actually hold someone's attention and turn that attention into a connection with your customer? My guest today knows a thing or two about standing out. She's a copywriter who does not just write words. She writes words that connect, and today we're talking about ways to increase attention, increase visibility and to connect. My guest today is Emily Aborn. She's a small business copywriter, content marketing consultant, speaker and podcast host. If you've been wondering how to get seen and remembered, you're going to love my conversation with Emily. She brings 100% to her interviews. So here's our talk. Well, hey, Emily, welcome to My Weekly Marketing.

**Emily Aborn:** 2:32

Hi, Janice, thanks for having me.

**Janice Hostager:** 2:36

So we're talking a lot about distraction and copywriting today and I want to I kind of want to get into the tactics later. But what was the wake up call for you about how hard it is to maintain attention online?

**Emily Aborn:** 3:03

It's funny so the wake up call did not even happen in an online experience, it was a women's conference and I'm sitting amongst all these women and the speaker at the close to the end of her talk. She still had about 10, 15 minutes to go. She asks us all to take a QR code picture. I don't really know how it works.

**Emily Aborn:** 3:18

I'm not the QR person of one of the slides and everybody takes out their cell phone and points it towards the QR code and take this survey is what she was looking for. So next thing, you know, I think like five minutes had gone by and I looked up and I'm like, oh, I was just like checking my email. I was on I think I was on Instagram. Real quick, you're in this conference all day, so I'm like I'll take this moment to delete some emails. So I look up and everybody in the room was still looking at their cell phones and she had even told us like look up when you're done. So I just noticed like other people were not still filling out that survey. The survey took all of two seconds. They were also checking their emails and they were also looking at Instagram.

**Emily Aborn:** 4:05

So fast forward to like two sessions later and this woman gives us these handouts that have every single word of her talk printed out on the handout. And so, don't you know, I paid a lot of attention to this handout in front of me and not a lot of attention to the person in front of me speaking. So that started me going on this like quest to figure out A. Is this me Like? Am I just like distracted, or is this something that I can work on as a speaker and also as a writer, to prevent people from doing? And so I found a ton of like. If you Google, are we distracted, or are we like, how distracted are we? You will get page after page after page of result and it's very interesting what came up.

**Janice Hostager:** 4:54

That is so true. I have absolutely been to conferences and, and it seems like such an innocuous mistake, right? Like, just use your phone to scan this QR code and then you forget that you've just immediately brought your entire audience to your cell phone

instead of listening to what you're going to say next. Right, I love that example for sure. So how does that? How does copywriting come in with that?

**Emily Aborn:** 5:25

So what I was noticing is that when you're reading something. The human brain naturally spends like half, almost half, of its time distracted, and that's like your normal state, like your brain is kind of wired to just sort of like wander around, like if you've ever meditated or paid attention to your thoughts, there are some very interesting things happening. It's just your brain is just kind of on a little you know who knows where mission all day long. So when we are bringing somebody in to like read our websites or engage with our social media or listen to our podcasts, we can use some specific tools to help keep their brains engaged. Like I don't know if you've ever been like reading a book, for example, and you're just like, wow, I didn't read the last five pages of that book, right. So it's the same thing that happens with our websites and the goal is for our websites they're definitely reading it differently than a book. Like they're coming to our website it should just be a couple minutes of their time, realistically, and we want to make sure that that couple of minutes is honored and well spent and giving them the information that they need. So I'm happy to walk through like some actual do's and don'ts with you on things that I've learned in our copy and some of it applies to spoken content as well.

**Janice Hostager:** 6:33

Yeah, absolutely.

**Emily Aborn:** 6:34

So,

**Emily Aborn:** 6:35

The first one is like not info dumping. And I see a lot of websites like this I'm sure you do too where they give you like all of these stats. It could be anything. It could be all of these stats. It could be really complex language and like industry jargon and just making things really really complicated. And, like I know you want to tell people every single step of your process like in great detail. But that is not the place for it, right? That's more for kind of like once they're already a client, then we're onboarding them and then they need to know all of those details. So just really think about, like what is the goal of this page and how can I keep it as simple as possible and in like natural conversational language? So that was the first one, because, if you, like, I work for a local small business organization. I get to interview their clients and a lot of those websites are just

info dumps. They are just page after page after page of the details and I'm like I don't even know what to ask this person for our interview, because I have to read this dissertation to get through it. So it could be anything again, like any over explanation, any overly detailed stats, vague language, complex language, things like that.

**Emily Aborn:** 7:52

Conversely, though, I'm going to say don't be vague or like empty in what you're saying. Like a lot of people offer these sort of empty, open ended promises. You're like I don't really know what that means, but it sounds nice to step into my, I'm only using this as an example. It sounds nice to step into my authentic power, right, but like what does that actually mean? And I think those things are fine in certain spots, because our brains definitely go through a website in different ways, but you don't want to be like just all fluff and have nothing tangible, because that's also very just. You know, you're going to check out. You're going to be like well, there's nothing really in English here, so I will be moving on.

**Janice Hostager:** 8:34

That is super interesting because I can tell you examples of both of those. In fact, I was working with a client just yesterday and this was in a printed piece. But we were going through one paragraph over and over and over and over again I think there were maybe only four sentences on there and I said you know, nobody's going to read this. I mean, it's not that nobody would read it, it would just be like very few people would read it. And so I think that's really interesting that you know that that's something we don't think about, especially when we've got a message to tell we want to give 100% to selling, whatever it is, our service, our offering, whatever it is. So we want to make sure that it's really clear and that it pulls in everybody. So I completely agree with that. I think that's great.

**Emily Aborn:** 9:25

The other place I see people do this a lot is in their bio.

**Emily Aborn:** 9:29

Like their bio will either be like every single letter behind their name that they've ever achieved or it will just be like I don't really know what that title is, you know, like happiness giver, you're just like I'm not sure what they do, but it sounds nice. So I think those are other things that we can do. Like the bio is already someplace where people when they're reading it for example, like when you're a podcast guest you're just kind of skimming it through. So it does not need to be like this whole, you know your whole life

story and I guess, on bouncing like right off of that and I this is my cross to bear. I love side quests, I love parentheses, I love my little like asides, my jokes, you know all of this stuff and they are fantastic in moderation. They can be totally distracting when they're overused. Like I think tasteful humor on a website is absolutely chef's kiss, perfect, throughout our copy. But I can watch myself like go down this whole side quest and then I'm like, oh my gosh, it's so irrelevant and it was like a paragraph, not just a parentheses. You know so I do. You know I have to be cognizant of it, especially in my podcast too, because I'm there for a reason. It's not that I don't want people to know about my life, I do. I love connecting with people on those things, but I just have to make sure that that's not like the meat of the podcast. You know, I'm really putting the emphasis on like what I'm actually there to share, so that's an important one and that translates throughout our content, whether it be written or audio or when we're speaking from the stage. And then this one I think we could just put as like the fundamental, and that's like don't forget who you're speaking to.

**Emily Aborn:** 11:14

When I'm on a website, I want to feel like you know who I am, you're talking to me and it is like that kind of one to one connection. Even big companies do this really well. I'm like looking at a new email marketing service right now and I'm looking through their sites and I can tell the ones that have taken the time to figure out who their ideal client is, because it talks to me. It's not just like over my head or speaking to some big agency, like it's speaking right to me. So remember who your customers are and use that to your advantage. Don't leave them out, don't. This is not the us, us, us show.

**Emily Aborn:** 11:52

And then the last one, and this is like probably my well, it's not my biggest pet peeve, but it's up there. It's just having like too many links or too many calls to action. So you kind of want to think I like to think of every page having its own goal and its own experience. So, for example, on my homepage, my goal is to get you to go to one of my other pages. I want you to either learn about me or I want you to check out my services. It's really it. At that point I mean, yes, if you're like moved to contact me, I'm happy for that too. But those are my two main goals, because I know that by taking you there you're going to get the information you need to then contact me.

**Emily Aborn:** 12:35

So I always try to give every single page like one main call to action and keep focusing on that call to action, whether that be your about page, your services page, your contact page, etc. But when you start like pummeling in all those links, you know and interlinks

are fantastic, so like that's a way to keep people engaged on your site. If, for example, you have an interlink where it says small business copywriter I'm just using that as an example and people could click that word and it takes them to my small business copywriter page in another tab, right? Because then it's like, oh, I can read that after I do this, all the time I'll have like one website and like 10 links of their site across my screen, because I'm like, oh, I got to read this page and this page and this page and this page. So that's a good tactic, but it's when you just kind of like, try to spread them in all different directions that I would encourage not doing.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:34

Such great tips.

**Janice Hostager:** 13:35

I especially really like the one being in marketing, where you talk about your ideal customer avatar and really getting to know them. In my course I do an entire module on this part of it because I think so many people are afraid to get narrow, so many people are vague and it comes across especially in the copy. Just really getting to know that In fact I always say and I do this myself is that I have a picture of my ICA sitting right next to my computer when I'm writing to that ICA. So I give my ideal customer avatar, my ICA, a photo and everything and have a full background on them, so that when I'm writing to them, I'm writing to them.

**Emily Aborn:** 14:20

I love that and I do that with like. I'm just going to give you a podcasting example. I do that with my podcast. I'll even use that person's name like one listener in my episode, and so then they'll reach out and be like oh my God, I heard my name in the episode today, you know. But I'm literally picturing them the whole time that I'm talking and I'll change it up, obviously depending on what the topic is. But I really I mean, you can do that in anything your email. You're not emailing your whole quote unquote list, you're emailing one person on the other side, a social media post. I'm not like sitting there with all my friends reading your social media posts. It's one person on the other side. So it's easy to forget and it's important Like I don't even say listeners, I'll say like listener or friend. And then same thing on my website. I wouldn't refer to people as like hello, all of you here. I would use one person.

**Janice Hostager:** 15:13

Right, right, yeah, even on social media. In fact, I was talking to a client the other day who would always start her social media posts with hey guys and I said, nope, you're not

talking to everybody, you're just talking to the one, and she has no background in marketing, so she was a little thrown by that.

**Janice Hostager:** 15:31

It's like which one.

**Janice Hostager:** 15:36

But I think it's such a small thing, but it really does have power and especially if you are really, you've got that person in mind when you're writing and your whole email, whatever it is you're writing, comes across differently.

**Emily Aborn:** 15:46

Yeah, that's when people reply to you and they're like, oh my gosh, you wrote that for me or I'm feeling that way too. You know, there really is a big difference. So I have some do's because I don't like to just all, I don't like to totally don't us. Okay, yes, please, all right. So same number of do's for the don'ts to keep us balanced. So do we're doing this right now?

**Emily Aborn:** 16:06

We're like telling stories and sharing personal experiences, and this is such a fantastic way to keep people engaged, because the truth of the matter is there's a lot of options for people to go to, to choose a service provider. There's a lot of options for podcasts, and they're choosing you because of you. So do tell your stories and show your personality and like you want to be yourself, you know, I think that really, that is engaging in and of itself, and I don't care if somebody's like I'm boring. You're not boring, you're not. Everybody puts their shoes on one at a time. We all. You know we're all doing the same exact things, so we're all boring. And especially in the age of AI, I think that there is just something about like being ourselves, bringing in our own unique humor. Like that is irreplaceable, and I guarantee you my AI so far has not replaced mine. I'm much funnier. No, just kidding.

**Emily Aborn:** 17:03

The second one is like, whenever possible, use visuals or like mixed media. So I have a collaborator. Her name is Barb Davids. She's of the Small Business Sweet Spot podcast and when she writes a blog she doesn't just write a blog. It is incredible. She'll have headings and bullets, she'll have little sections of pull quotes, she'll have a little audio clip of the next section. You can read it and listen to the audio. She might have a little chart or a graph. It's really fantastic and if you miss something when you're reading, you

can like have the kind of like visuals next to it to guide you. And it also pulls my attention to like what part of the article might be relevant for me, because maybe the whole thing isn't relevant for me, maybe I just came for the quick tips, you know, and I can see tip one, tip two, tip three.

**Emily Aborn:** 17:54

So I love kind of like mixing up those visuals and I'll do that as a copywriter I'm able to do that with sometimes, like I might treat the text, like I might have a italicized subtitle, you know, or I might say this would look really good in accordion or bullet points, or we'll do different things to the text. So it's not just all like wall of text, wall of text. And honestly, bullet points are not as popular as they used to be. Like, I kind of keep it to like three or five when I'm using bullet points. But I'll mix things up in other ways, like I might use a series of like short, choppy sentences and then do like a really long sentence. So it's just kind of like mixing up the variety of how you're writing.

**Emily Aborn:** 18:44

The other one and we've touched on this is like just making sure I'm showing why it matters to them. Like I'm here for a reason, show me quickly why it matters to me, or else you lose my attention. And this is true for anything. Like it's true for the TV shows we watch, the things we read. The emails we open. All of it.

**Janice Hostager:** 19:02

I just want to jump in. One of the things that I think I always think good copy does is it can communicate emotion. So what you just said makes a lot of sense. It's like why is this relevant for me? And then you can kind of hit on an emotional part of it. Is that just for me, or is that something that is like standard?

**Emily Aborn:** 19:21

Yeah, absolutely, and there are all sorts of ways to do that. You know you can play around with, like bringing somebody into the narrative or whatever you're trying to portray, rather than like have them be outside of it. Right, there's just all sorts of different ways to get them to feel it. You can use sensory experiences like sound, smell, sight, all of that in your language, and play with those. So I like trying to think to myself okay, what are like three different brain types? Like it could be the same avatar, right, but what if their brain is sort of like a visual brain? What if their brain is a sensory brain? You know, what if they're a heart-centered person, like I like to speak to all those different parts of them and bring those all into the page to offer kind of a different experience for the same person.

**Janice Hostager:** 20:07

Great point, great point.

**Emily Aborn:** 20:09

And then this one is like probably my favorite, like for writing. Or I started doing this in my emails and I got away from it and I have to get back, but it's like giving people a preview of what you're going to be talking about. This is best for like long form. So if you're doing a blog or an email, you might see at the top of those emails how they have like a T-L-D-R Too long didn't read.

**Emily Aborn:** 20:33

Sometimes I'll do a little summary. I don't do a T-L-D-DR because, see, I can't even remember the four letters, but I'll do like a little summary at the top that says like what's inside, and I'll just have like boom, boom, boom, and that is like a good way to let them know like okay, a, this email has an end. B, it has a goal right. And C, this is what's in it for me right from the get go, and so they can kind of like move through the email that way. Also, so great for blogs. In blogs I'll also summarize. So I might say like okay, to recap, we had bullet point one, two, three, four, five or whatever you know. Five points are X, y, z. Go forth and implement them.

**Emily Aborn:** 21:13

And it's just a good way to keep people like if they missed, let's say, bullet point number three, they can go back up and be like, oh, I didn't see that tip because I was skimming or I didn't catch that, or how you're supposed to implement that, and that's when I might like to try. So I'm going to go back up and reread it. I think that's, those are my, those are my do's.

**Janice Hostager:** 21:33

Those are great. I mean, I think you've hit everything. I do have some more questions for you here. So one of the things you said is that you know you really want to connect with people because obviously visibility is good, but if you're not connecting, you're not going to probably convert them right, and I love that. You said that you do it for the visual person or the person that really loves facts and figures, and so are you throwing a little of everything into your copy, basically, or what is a way that you can show up or write that turns readers into someone that trusts you?

**Emily Aborn:** 22:09

Yes, I would say. I would say like yes, put things in, as long as you're confident that you can do so intentionally and thoughtfully. So let's say, let's just walk through a website, because I think it's easiest. So at like the top of the page you have like the promise, right Like the brand sort of promise, and that's just kind of a quick way to say here's who we are as a company, here's what we do and we know who you are. It's just your fast moment of connection for them, and then you might have a little description underneath that.

**Emily Aborn:** 22:39

Then sometimes I will have fun and like show them, you know, you want to show them, you understand. So I might have some like pain points or empathy points. I don't like even using, like calling them pain points, but just ways to show them. I get what you're going through and I know it's hard and I'm also here to help you. I'm not doing this in a shysty way, it's a very ethical, gentle way and sometimes I will use those facts and figures or the informational stuff in a more visual way. So one person I have right now it's a charity fund and we're going to line up sort of the dollars that they give every year the amount of organizations that they give to, and then like one other little stat right there, because otherwise it'd just be like you'd just be reading this list of statistics you know about their financials and that's not very inspiring. So it's kind of just thinking of different ways that you can bring in, like to your point, the different brain types and show people different pieces without overwhelming them.

**Janice Hostager:** 23:46

That's a good idea, because that is sort of what comes to mind for me. If I'm putting together a sales page, I'll think, well, I need a section with facts and I need a section with design or something that appeals to every kind of brain type, and I love what you know. That way is so much better to just kind of combine them together so you're not just like having different parking lots on your sales page.

**Emily Aborn:** 24:10

Sales pages are honestly the hardest. Like, I don't touch those with a 10 foot pole, but I do, another way you could do this is to sit down before you start it and ask yourself what are all the questions that this person has I mean, I do this with websites too. What are all the questions I need to answer for them before I get them to take the next step? So like, right here, what is the question that is burning on their mind? How can I answer it for them? And then I just kind of like walk through those. You know you have to arrange the questions obviously sensibly. They can't be like now what? And that's at the top of the page, right, you have to answer that last.

**Janice Hostager:** 24:50

Yeah, yeah, well, that's really good because you do want to counter objections. Basically, their questions are going to be future objections. So you do want to counter them as you go along, so that you're not waiting until they're ready. You're asking them to put down their credit card and they're like well, I've got all these questions. So if you're working that in, I think that's very powerful and I have a sales page template that I use typically and I kind of have that worked in as well. So I 100% agree with that. So I'm curious about your background. So what made you want to be a copywriter, or have you always done this? Is this like something that you dreamed of as a child and went into it? Cause I love people's stories.

**Emily Aborn:** 25:37

I always read the back of the cereal box and the sales on the back of the cereal boxes, Janice. But I actually went to college for health education and it was in college that I ended up working as a copywriter for, like a outdoor sports company. My whole family like worked at the sports company and this was they needed, like a summer fill-in for somebody going on sabbatical. So I got to work as a copywriter and it was not the most inspiring copywriting. Like. It was like technical writing, so it's like about carabiners and things like that, but I loved it. I was like, oh my God, this is. You can get paid to write. Why didn't I go? I'm a junior in college at this time, so I'm like I should have gone to college for this. Nobody told me.

**Emily Aborn:** 26:20

And I've always loved writing. I was the first kid on Blogger, whenever it was a thing. I don't even think it was called Blogger, it was something else, but I was that kid and I'm in my room typing out these novels. So that has always been my love. And when I okay. So I started working for like chiropractors and different health companies as a health educator and it was like in doing that that I did tons of their marketing work and I just kind of like evolved, like, oh, this is actually a job, this is a position, like I didn't know. You know, you're in your 20s and you're just trying to find yourself. So it was. It was through a retail shop that my husband and I owned that I sort of like started dipping my toes into, like what I'm going to do next, and that's when I opened my copywriting business in 2018.

**Janice Hostager:** 27:15

Oh, cool, cool. I've always used copy in my world I mean marketing and I think now I feel like so many of us as small business owners we do. We end up writing our own copy

right. So what I found, and what I've noticed quite a bit with clients, is that they turn to ChatGPT. So what are your feelings about ChatGPT or AI in general?

**Emily Aborn:** 27:38

Okay, so I've gone like a 180 and then 180, back again.

**Emily Aborn:** 27:43

Are you

**Emily Aborn:** 27:43

ready for this? So when it first came out I was like no, I hate this. This is going to replace all of our jobs. I'm doomed, the sky is falling. And then I was like, well, this is actually a good like ideation tool and it can really help me with outlining and, like you know what, refining things and such. Then I started seeing, like all of this people are just actually using it, like they're just using it, copying and pasting and calling it a day, and I don't care what anyone says, I can call it out, like it is so obvious. It has so so many tells not probably everybody can, but they're, you know, a trained eye can catch that in a second and it's not it's.

**Emily Aborn:** 28:25

You might think like, oh, but it saves me so much time and money. But let me ask you this does it save you time and money if somebody looks at it, writes you off as inauthentic or like not being you and then doesn't even read what you had to say? You know it's like that kind of mentality. Or you lose a client because they realize that you're not trustworthy and I'm not saying you're not trustworthy if you're using ChatGPT.

**Emily Aborn:** 28:52

I'm just saying that that could be an outcome.

**Emily Aborn:** 28:55

So, as a writer, I do disclose that I will use it to refine my work. So I'm always making sure that, like what I'm doing for my off on a little side quest here and I will use it to kind of like make sure that I'm aligned. I do not copy and paste what ChatG PT has me use because honestly, I'll read, like even the taglines, I'll read them and I'll be like, oh my God, they're all so bad, they're just not anything I would ever say and the other, like defense against not using it is I don't personally really want to lose my creativity. I don't want to lose like that muscle and I'm really nervous about like people, like they don't think anymore. You know they're just like turning to whatever this next shiny object is and

even having conversations with it and losing the human connection. I'm just like your Chat GPT isn't your ideal client avatar, like you need to go actually talk to your ideal client to find out what they're thinking and feeling.

**Janice Hostager:** 30:11

Yes, yeah, I think it's an excellent tool, but I love what you said about losing your brain, because you do after a while especially and it's so tempting, especially at the end of the day, and you've got to write an email and you're like I got nothing, you know, and then oftentimes I'll turn to it, see what it has to say, and then at least it will spark an idea, you know. So I kind of feel like it's really good for sparking ideas. I also use it for kind of what you were saying, like you'll put a draft you have already completed into ChatGPT or an AI program and look at its feedback, which I found really, really helpful when I was putting together a new course that I've just created too. This is kind of scary, but I would say, in this module, I think I'd like to do this, this and this. Is this too much?

**Janice Hostager:** 30:59

or is it?

**Janice Hostager:** 30:59

enough, do I need to include anything else? And it would tell me and sometimes it would be wrong I felt like it's telling me to include it, but I don't think it's a good fit.

**Emily Aborn:** 31:08

It is wrong sometimes.

**Janice Hostager:** 31:10

Yeah, and you know. But there are other times where it said you should also include this. And I'll be like, yeah, I should. So it's really. It was scary to me because it would start giving me strokes. I'm like good job, Janice, you know. And I was like don't talk to me this way. This is creeping me out.

**Emily Aborn:** 31:30

It is using sycophancy to keep us engaged, which is totally a way to keep people engaged. But yeah, it is, I'll be like you don't need to be so over the top. I quickly learned like oh, it's calling everyone a genius, not just me. You suddenly think you're like oh yeah, I'm so smart. But another great way for somebody to use it would be to generate questions for a podcast interview or a sales call. You know, it's great for stuff like that.

**Emily Aborn:** 32:01

I always have to read the questions because I co-host a podcast with somebody and sometimes I'll come with a question and he's like that doesn't apply at all. I'm like, oh my God, I'm so sorry I didn't read it, so you do have to read them. And then, like I love it for outlining it. You know, have trouble structuring things, so super helpful for structure. And then the other recent thing I do like it for is connecting dots.

**Emily Aborn:** 32:27

If you've ever had a great story, you're like I don't know how to make this work with my theme or the goal of this newsletter, right, but it's such a good story. I recently had one where I walked out of an acupuncturist with an acupuncture needle sticking out of my head and I'm like I have to make, I have to figure out, like, how this connects. Fortunately, this one I figured out on my own, but it's so, it would be perfect to like connect those dots, right. Like how does this story relate to the point I'm trying to get across?

**Janice Hostager:** 32:56

Yes.

**Emily Aborn:** 32:56

You don't, I don't say like can you draft it for me? I'm just like can you connect these dots for me? Or like, give me an inroad right and then I can go.

**Janice Hostager:** 33:03

Right.

**Janice Hostager:** 33:04

Yeah, yeah, and one of the places I do see a lot of people using AI, and I know it's AI because I get a lot of emails from people, as you probably do too, saying can I be a guest on your podcast, and they all sound alike.

**Emily Aborn:** 33:19

The exact same email.

**Janice Hostager:** 33:21

Yes yeah, and I think you know people need to be aware of that. That. You know it may sound really good, but if everybody's using it, you're blending in, you're not standing out

and it's you're not likely to probably get the attention of the person that you want the attention.

**Emily Aborn:** 33:36

Yeah, a hundred percent. It just makes them annoyed. You know you're like great thanks. Did you even look at my show?

**Janice Hostager:** 33:42

Yes, yeah, and most of the time, honestly, I don't think yeah, but everybody's busy, right? No shade, I'm just saying.

**Emily Aborn:** 33:51

No shade, but don't do it.

**Janice Hostager:** 33:53

Yeah, okay. So now we're going to do a game called Rapid Fire Takeaways.

**Janice Hostager:** 34:00

So I'm going to ask you some questions.

**Janice Hostager:** 34:02

I don't have a timer or anything, so not a huge amount of pressure, just enough pressure, all right. So I'm going to ask you some questions and I'd love to hear your feedback on it. So ready.

**Emily Aborn:** 34:14

I'm game.

**Janice Hostager:** 34:15

All right. One underrated place people aren't showing up enough online.

**Emily Aborn:** 34:27

Okay, I did this recently. A friend was launching a new product and she roped in a couple. Not roped in, she asked a couple of us if we would like help her make posts around the product. There was no affiliate, no kickback, nothing. We just were like, if you're excited to help me share this thing, please help me share. And I everybody was so psyched to help her out. I mean, she must have had 30 people doing posts for her

during her launch and it blew her away like how seen she felt during that. That opened up for me like, oh, that is such an underrated way to collaborate on social media as small business owners.

**Emily Aborn:** 34:59

And even just like maybe you just have somebody on social media where you're like, let's be each other's commenting buddies. You know to like get some sort of traction on the post. So I think that's what I would say.

**Janice Hostager:** 35:10

I love that idea. I mean, yeah, you don't need to pay anybody to do it, you just ask them. Yeah, all right, one copywriting pet peeve you wish everyone would stop doing.

**Emily Aborn:** 35:23

Okay, I love the word authentic so much. I love it, but I don't like it as copy because it just doesn't work anymore. It's like we have become numb to the word authentic, I think, and so I would say that is probably one I would say, find a different word. There's so many wonderful ones that describe authentic.

**Janice Hostager:** 35:45

Yeah, and that's what I use ChatGPT for a lot too, is my thesaurus, you know, just like I need another word for this, and I don't know what authentic means really either. So I'm with you on that one. One easy way to be more you in your marketing, more of yourself and your own personality, your authentic self.

**Emily Aborn:** 36:04

So I guess I would say, like, okay, I'm going to say, ask your partner or your closest friend or somebody very close to you in your life, what one word describes your personality, how they perceive you. Maybe you do this with a couple of people and then, if that feels right to you, like if that's like, oh yes, I am that you know, let like focus on that word for a little while and letting that through in whatever you're doing, like, oh, how can I show my you know silly side or my quirky side, if that's it? Or how can I be a little buttoned up and professional on my website? So I guess that would be my encouragement is like, don't just ask yourself who you are, because it can be really hard to see yourself and know your personality and like how that even comes through. But getting somebody else's perspective on it is such a fun way to. It also gives you like a little tiny permission slip. Not that you need it to be more of that thing.

**Janice Hostager:** 37:04

Right, right. Yeah, that's a good point, because people, if you ask people and they all say, oh, you're so funny and you don't think you're funny or whatever, you can pull that out of your personality. And it is hard because I feel a phrase I like to use a lot is a jar can't read its own label, and that is so true. I think we all need mirrors. You know, our friends are people around us to be mirrors. So one visibility tactic that's working right now that most people aren't using aren't using Collaboration.

**Emily Aborn:** 37:42

It is the theme of my month on my podcast right now and I swear by it. It is how I built my business. Collaboration they look there are so many different ways to do them. It does not have to be like an event or webinar, but harness the power of collaboration because basically, it takes your message, multiplies it and then helps you spread that further together. You know. So that is, and you're not doing it alone, which is sometimes the hardest part.

**Janice Hostager:** 38:04

Right, right, one thing you always include in writing a headline or a hook.

**Emily Aborn:** 38:09

Who and what, who I'm talking to and what this is going to get for them. I mean, you don't have to do it overtly like that, you know, like for the small business owner who wants to, but there are ways to do it, like always, just make sure the headline clearly gives a who and a what.

**Janice Hostager:** 38:26

Oh, I love that. I don't think I do that, so it's hard. It is hard. One thing you fix on 90% of homepages. So, we talked a little bit about this earlier, but I think it's just like a focused goal for the homepage, you know, like giving it a clear call to action, clear next steps and not overwhelming them with information, love it.

**Emily Aborn:** 38:53

One mistake people make when trying to be relatable. Okay, Janice and I did talk about this earlier, but it's when people use these trending phrases like I don't know who needs to hear this, but it's basically trending stuff. I think trends are fine, but when you overuse them, you do blend in more than you stand out. So I don't know them all because I don't use them all, but there are things that start in trendy ways. I guess is my guess.

**Janice Hostager:** 39:18

Yeah, yeah, anything cliché probably yes yes. Yeah, one copywriting lesson you learned the hard way.

**Emily Aborn:** 39:25

Okay, I think probably the hardest part of being a copywriter is you get feedback from people, a lot of different people with a lot of different brains and a lot of different preferences. And so I have learned the hard way many, many, many times that sometimes something is really beautifully written and somebody still will not like it. Sometimes you will not like something and somebody absolutely loves it. So that is something I have learned A lot of writing and what we are drawn to is simply a matter of preference, and that's why it is important to know who your ideal client is, because you kind of want to understand what their preferences are going to be when they're reading your writing.

**Janice Hostager:** 40:11

That's a really good point too, and I think too, because I went to design school for one of my degrees and one of the things that we had to do was stand up and defend our designs in front of the class and take the negative, which was the best training ground ever. And I think, whenever we're writing for anybody else, or even if we're writing for our own company or own business, knowing that it's just a thing you know, you put it out there. Anything creative, you do the best you can in your way, and if they don't like it, then it is what it is. I mean you can change it, but you're never going to please everybody for sure.

**Emily Aborn:** 40:48

I used to get so worked up about it. Even if somebody wanted to change a period to like an endless commas, I'd be like that's not correct. But now I'm just like no, if that is how you want it, like I. Obviously I'm not going to let them totally go off the rails with grammar, but I will be cognizant of the way that they they like to phrase things and write things.

**Janice Hostager:** 41:14

The copyright lesson that I learned the hard way was early on when I was in grad school. I'd had an internship in public relations and as an intern, I put out a press release without double-checking the spelling of someone's name and I had to call every recipient of this press release that went out like a hundred different offices and say, hi,

I'm the intern. I just wanted to tell you that I made a goof up. So, anyway, it was very humiliating. So the thing that I have learned is to always, always, always, double-check spellings. So for thing that I have learned is to always, always, always double check spellings. Yes, so for the small business listener that is feeling like their content or their copy is kind of getting lost in the noise, what would you say to them?

**Emily Aborn:** 41:52

Simplify, simplify, simplify, simplify and get rid of all of the unnecessary. Simplify and get rid of all of the unnecessary. There's this beautiful quote and I cannot, for the life of me, remember who says it but remove the unnecessary so that the necessary can speak. And I think when we get it's like going through your closet right. When you get rid of all of that stuff that you're not wearing anymore and you don't need and it's all extraneous, then you have room to start choosing those curated pieces that you want to add back in. So don't be afraid to kill your darlings, as Stephen King says, and delete things and save them somewhere else if you want to, you know, if you really don't want to say goodbye to them forever, but do delete as much as you can, and I mean that as a person who loves my words.

**Janice Hostager:** 42:40

I had this quote on my bulletin board when I was in high school. It was words are like sunbeams the more they are condensed, the deeper they burn, and I know it's a famous quote. I don't remember who said it, but yeah, it's out there. But I thought, oh, that is so true.

**Emily Aborn:** 42:55

I'm going to add that to my website With the credit don't worry.

**Janice Hostager:** 43:00

Yes, I think it was someone famous, I just don't remember. It's been a long time since I had a bulletin board in high school, but anyway. Well, where can people find out more about you and if you have any resources to help them be better writers?

**Emily Aborn:** 43:14

Well, thank you for that offering. I would love for people just to connect with me on emilyaborncom and then that way, if you are a social media person, that's there. If you like email, you know I do give a lot of like writing and marketing tips in my emails, but however you best like to connect, it's all on my website. So emilyaborn.com.

**Janice Hostager:** 43:36

Sounds fabulous. Thank you so much for joining me today Emily. Appreciate it.

**Emily Aborn:** 43:41

Thank you, Janice.

**Janice Hostager:** 43:42

So the next time you're staring at a blank screen wondering what to write, remember what Emily said about being clearer, truer and with words, less is more. To learn more about Emily or anything we talked about today, visit [myweeklymarketing.com](http://myweeklymarketing.com). Forward slash 122. And if this episode gave you something to think about, would you do me a quick favor? Share it with a business friend too. Thank you so much for joining me today. See you next time. Bye for now.