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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. Hey, welcome back to My Weekly Marketing. Today we're going to talk about something that secretly scares a lot of small business owners, being on video. I know this because 90% of my clients grimace when I ask them to do a video. And honestly, I completely get it. I took a television production class way back when I was in college, and I always wanted to be behind the camera because I was so critical of myself when I was in front of it. And even since I've had my own business, it took me a long time to be comfortable being on video. I'm a lot more comfortable now, but I think it's because I'm a recovering perfectionist, and truthfully, I'd much rather write something than explain it on video where I might mess up or be embarrassed, right? But if you have a website in a business, and you probably do, creating a video to communicate your brand wins hands down over text alone, because our brains are wired for visuals and for storytelling. Think about how much more we can communicate in a video than we can with a written word or even just a picture. We process it faster, remember it longer, and we feel it more deeply. Video taps into emotion, tone, and body language in ways that plain text just can't. It doesn't just tell your story, it lets people experience it. And that's why it sticks, it spreads, and it sells. That's why I'm excited about my guest today. Mariana Henninger is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and the founder of Brand Magnetic. Known as the Queen of Brand Videos, she's worked with brands like Microsoft, Hulu, and HP, and now she helps small business owners craft short emotional brand videos that connect. The kind that make people say, "Wow, I feel like I really know you." Today we're breaking down what a brand video actually is, why it's a secret weapon you didn't know your business needed. And she's going to give us tips about how to make one that builds trust and sells for you. I'm telling you this conversation is going to change how you think about video. So let's dive in. So before we get into the how-tos, because I have a lot of

how-to questions for you, can you share first what drew you into filmmaking and storytelling and why it's such a game changer for a lot of businesses?

Mariana Henninger: 2:46

Yeah. So I worked as a documentary filmmaker for about 15 years. I was originally drawn to documentaries because I watched a documentary when I was in college. You know, they rolled that old TV on wheels. Maybe it was a substitute, you know, a sub-teacher or something. And it was the first documentary I watched. It was about the ExxonMobil scandal. And I forgot what that doc is called, the fantastic doc. And I was blown away. I was like, what? I am so enthralled by this story. I'm so moved. I'm so connected. I'm so inspired to do something about this issue. And I realized that's what great documentaries are. So not all documentaries accomplish that, but the good ones do. And I realized, wow, there's a way to tell a story that makes me care. Whereas previously, maybe I would have just not been interested in it. And that's how I got into documentary storytelling. So I had the really awesome privilege of traveling the world. I've been to Afghanistan, Haiti, Ukraine, Middle East, and all these places everywhere. And the two things that I took away from my time working for the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, and then finally NBC for about five years. The first one is that I needed to know which parts of this person's story was going to make somebody else care. And so it was a lot about thinking on my feet and as I'm meeting people, just understanding, okay, this part is important for the story. This part is interesting, but it's not really going to move the needle in terms of getting people to feel something. The second thing that I learned through my years of flipping around the world with a camera was that I didn't have a whole lot of time to get people to trust me. And so that to me is the biggest skill set that I learned, aside from the storytelling, was just understanding how to get people to trust me really fast. Like, how can I show them that I'm going to do their story justice, that I'm not going to twist this or manipulate this in any way? I'm going to curate it, but I'm really going to help them get their story out and make other people care. And so those two skill sets took me along my journey. I have an Emmy Award and two nominations back here somewhere. And eventually I was doing some soul searching at the time. And I was really kind of obsessed, like secretly very

inquisitive and obsessed with marketing. And I've always had this entrepreneurial spirit in me since I was a little kid. Um, you know, everything from like cookies to bracelets to whatever I needed to do. I didn't have an allowance. I was just like, "What can I sell?" And as an adult, I had a pretty successful career, um, but always reliant on somebody else's budget and somebody else's um, you know, approval before I got to work on a story. And I kind of got to this moment, that 30 rock, and everything was awesome until I was like, man, I could just ride out this cushy life doing this amazing thing that I get to do and get paid really well for it. I could also take the leap and just start my own thing. And I knew that in that starting my own thing, I didn't know exactly what it would look like, but I knew that I wanted not only to build my own business and have that be part of my life story, my entrepreneurship of my own, but also help other entrepreneurs. And I fell in love with the online space, with this idea that so many business owners, whether that's you, the listener right now or not, but this idea that people are building their own businesses from scratch, right? And they're like bootstrapping, they're not looking for investors or VC money and all that. Like I actually worked in a startup for a while and I was like, wow, this is so fascinating. But I love seeing people who are doing this without having to respond to a board of directors or a board of investors or and just having to make that sale, right? If you don't make a sale, you have a hobby and your business dies, right? And so, and so that's those are the people that I'm really inspired to help because the thing that we solve, so yes, it's filmmaking in a way, like it's kind of filmmaking adjacent, if you will. A lot of my students, they use their phone. So we have we have a done for you service that's more high-end and we use like really awesome cinematographers. And then I have a program where I teach you how to do this on your own. And all those students are just using their phone. There's like, it's not fancy at all. But the power here, what what are we doing? The power is being able to get somebody who's checking you out. So we all know what happens in the online space where you're intrigued by something, right? Or see, I see Janice's name somewhere, like on a Facebook comment. I'm like, "Oh, that's interesting. Who's Janice? Let me go check her out." Right? And what am I doing? I'm going on your website, I'm going checking you out on socials, I'm assessing whether I want to pay attention to you. That's like the first sale that you have to make is the sale of my attention. Like, are uh you closing me in terms

of like, do I want to pay attention to you? Do I want to follow you? And then what happens, Janice, is like so many of us who are marketing our businesses, regardless of what that business is, we've been told and sort of accepted this slide that it just takes a ton of volume. It takes putting out so many pieces of content for months at a time. We have to be content machines. In fact, I just heard somebody say, do this identity shift with her audience in the hundreds of thousands, saying, don't see yourself as a business owner. You're a content creator. And I'm like, wow, that's something it's making me think. But at the same time, it's like, that is the only path that we know that we've been told to create trust, to build trust over time, that it takes those six to 12 months of being consistent, showing up all the time, of providing value, all of those things we get told. In when in fact it's been statistically proven, if you capture somebody's heart and attention, that moment that they're checking you out, which I call the Instant Trust Window, you have got it made. What what you're doing, what you need to do there is basically get them sold on you, make such a strong impression on them, make them feel like they can trust you so that when you're ready to pitch or wherever they come across your services, or maybe they then go and look for your services, they're already sold on you. You've already done all of that hard work up front. And so that's what I help my students do. I'm so sorry for the long answer.

Janice Hostager: 9:16

No, yeah, that that is uh so perfect because I think I- I work with a lot of one-on-one clients that would do as a fractional CMO. I'll work with them. And one of the first things I'll say is that you need to make a video. And they just sort of the color walks the comes out of their face, right? So they just like, oh, I hate doing videos, you know. And well, I don't know what it is about why it's so we get so uncomfortable. We're fine talking to somebody in person, but as soon as a video camera gets turned on, it's just like I I don't know. I certainly have that effect. It's like the the green light kind of thing. An episode episode of Brady Bunch when I was a kid where this like I think one of the characters they saw the light on the camera and they just froze. And that would we'd be totally me. Um, and I've gotten better over time as you do it more often, you know, you get more

comfortable with it. But I don't, I don't know what it is that makes us uncomfortable about putting out videos.

Mariana Henninger: 10:13

I think it's just a muscle that we need to exercise. Um, you know, so I don't really focus on video content all of it, right? We focus on creating a specific video that is perfect for people like you or other people who struggle with being on camera all the time. And and what that does is like this one video is going to pack a punch. It it's very, it takes a while to create. So it's not something that you do overnight. It's not something that, you know, it's a reel that you shoot very quickly and it's here today, gone tomorrow. And hopefully somebody saw it. It is something that every single person who comes into your world should watch. Um, but it does take a while to create. So it's a bit of a, it's an investment in terms of your time and resources, but it then becomes an evergreen asset that works for years to come. So that's what I focus on. But we have a whole bonus module on camera confidence and all of that, because it is a struggle for a lot of people. We're not born with a phone in front of our faces all the time. Um, I my my biggest sort of quickest tip around that is well, two things. One is to kind of reframe your mind around it, which is a lot of folks struggle with this like, oh, I don't look pretty, or you know, to be honest, Janice, my hair is not looking the best today. Um I'm coming from an overnight trip and I wish I had time to wash my hair. I didn't. It doesn't look that great. But I'm not a model, right? I'm here to teach, I'm here to serve. And when you really come from that position of, I'm here to serve my audience, um, you know, yes, you don't show up like a slop, but you reframe the fact that you don't need to look perfect. You don't need to, you know, and and the more you do it, and that's so the the second piece of advice is comfort, you know, getting comfortable with it comes from doing it over and over and over again.

Janice Hostager: 12:01

Yeah. I can speak to that as well. Yeah, right. Yeah. And I think for me, what I started doing was just videotaping myself, doing things around the house or talking to the camera and just for myself, you know. And once I got used to the process and I think I

was kind of embarrassed about it too, you know, once I get over it, you know, yeah, it got a whole lot easier.

Mariana Henninger: 12:23

It really becomes no big deal, right? It becomes a very natural part of doing business. That's maybe the third reframe that I would encourage folks is that, you know, if you are super self-conscious pulling your phone out in the middle of the street and talking to your phone, A, just make people think it's FaceTime, right? You're FaceTiming your mom. You're so that's that's kind of become a normal part of culture thanks to thanks to Apple. But the second thing is I just, if I ever have any hesitation, I just remember I'm a business owner. This is for my business. Like I'm making money. It's okay. Like who cares what other people think? It's really not about them. It's just about you as a business owner doing what you need to do for your business, right? And um not making it about yourself.

Janice Hostager: 13:07

Totally, totally.

Mariana Henninger: 13:08

I do a lot of tough love with my students around that.

Janice Hostager: 13:10

Oh, but you know, sometimes we all need that, right?

Mariana Henninger: 13:14

Yeah. Like, do you want to make money or not? Do you want to serve people? Do you want to impact? Do you want to do the thing that you've been dreaming of? You know?

Janice Hostager: 13:21

Yeah, yeah. This is so funny because this a brand video is actually on my list for the week because I don't have one on my website. So not for the week, but it's like it's on my list. And so we'll have to talk afterwards because you know, I didn't know where to start. But anyway, um, so this really becomes sort of a video like. So tell me a little more about this kind of brand video. Is this sort of a sales letter, or is it sort of like, here I am, this is what I do, this is how I can help you, this is how I address your problems.

Mariana Henninger: 13:48

Right, right.

Janice Hostager: 13:48

Or all of above.

Mariana Henninger: 13:50

For sure. So brand video is unlike any other video you've ever watched before because what you just described there, VSL's, video sales letters, uh, marketing video, right? And then the second sometimes people are like, is it like an explainer? Um, and then the second one you described is more of an about me video. So it might seem confusing that I'm saying your brand video is not an about me video or a sales video. And the reason is because it really is a different way of looking at your story. First off, we don't really, I mean, the story is the medium, but the focus is this one question. How do we want your ideal client that's coming to you for the first time? How do we want them to feel at the end of watching this video? And it and this can vary a little bit from person to person, from business owner to business owner. This didn't come to me overnight, but I've created a framework from helping a ton of students. I was like, oh my gosh, these are the commonalities that I'm seeing over and over again. And I call them the "trust triggers". So, what we want at the end of that video is trust, however that looks like for each person, the specificity of that answer, what's going to dictate, you kind of reverse engineer back into your story. So I'll go over that in a second. But the four trust triggers are these. Most people coming to a brand or a business, they need to feel four things in

order to make that connection, to feel that really big jump in trust from feeling like you're a stranger. Oh, like what are what are they selling? What am I going to be sold on? Or like, is this gonna be spammy? You know, depending on what niche you're in. There's a lot more, especially with AI nowadays. Oh my gosh, don't get me started. There's like so much forward-facing AI that we're like, we don't know what's real. But are we chatting with a bot? Is awful. Yeah. But anyway, so the four trust triggers are they need to feel that you first of all get them on a very deep level, right? So it's very, it's a lot deeper than your run-of-the-mill demographics. So if you're if you know anything about marketing, which I'm sure you do because you listen to Janice every week, it's it's really about understanding very deeply what is it like the fifth layer deep that they want. What is the thing that they really fear? What are they moving away from? What are they moving towards? How can we get deeper than like, oh, they want freedom, or they want their taxes done, or they want, you know, that that sort of surface level result. How can we go way deeper than that? Typically, it's time, right? It's some, it usually goes back to like, I just want to own my time. I want to be, I don't, I want, I don't want my time to be taken up by something that would normally take me more time to resolve. So how can I get it done faster so that I can go and spend time with my family? And a lot of that revolves around their values. So when you get them, that means you understand what's valuable for them. Trust trigger number two is that you care about them. You're not just out to make money off of them. You're not just treating them like a prospect with a number attached to their name on a spreadsheet. Uh, you're not just sending bots to convert them, right? You really truly care about that individual who is looking for a solution for their problem and ultimately that deeper thing that they want. And so, how can we show that we care about you or I care about you, or Dennis cares about her clients or future clients? Um, that they're more than just a number on a I I always use this analogy that your people are more than just a number on their stripes screenshot, right? Screenshot of their stripe account. Oh, right, yeah, yeah. Because you see a lot of those floating online. I don't want to be a number on your screenshot of your stripe account. I'm Mariana and I have my own needs and I want to be treated like a human. And if I'm gonna pay you for something, that's what I want in return. Number three, so you get them, you care about them. Trust trigger number three is that this is where the expertise

comes in. So a lot of folks are marketing, if they are expert-based businesses, maybe somebody in your audience sort of fits into that category. Or, you know, typically if you have a business where your knowledge means something, right? Where you develop something different than your competitor, you're still an expert-based business in that sense. So that's where that credibility piece comes in. That's where that happens. So you might notice I put that in number three for a reason. A lot of businesses will lead with that in order to build trust. That's also where your case studies and your testimonials that all falls into category three. Like, how can I sort of proof around the fact that I've that I can handle this and I can do it really well? The way to know if you're hitting trust trigger number three is really awesome. It's like the most sort of visceral reaction of a sigh. Can this person feel like once they invest in me, they can just sigh, a sigh of relief, like I'm in good hands. We know that feeling when we've invested in somebody that we've loved and has come through for us. So that's the feeling that we want to trigger as soon as people meet us. So, how can we do that? Um, number four is the fourth trust trigger is that we vibe. So this is where the personality piece comes in. This is where the like in no like and trust, which we often forget about. So people do care about your personality. They, this is where the values fit in as well. You know, do I resonate with the values of the person behind the brand, right? A lot so much more consumer decisions are now revolving around the values of the brand. And so the values of the founder, the values of it's usually uh we work a lot with founder stories. So we look at those four trust triggers, and those are the sort of end results that we want in terms of that feeling that we want to generate. And then we, as I mentioned before, we reverse engineer into the founder story to not look at the big milestones of their lives. Or sometimes it can be why they started their business, sometimes it's not. Sometimes the business is just the end of the story, what we call the pivot to the mission. So we we look at how to tell that story by understanding which parts of the founder story are relevant to get those feelings surfaced.

Janice Hostager: 19:54

Okay. I want to get to that in a second.

Mariana Henninger: 19:56

Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 19:56

That sounds great. So I just want to repeat these to make sure that that I have them all because I have my little sticky note here. Sure. So you want them to get you on a deep level. You want them to know that or you care about them. You want to show that you have enough expertise that they would have a sigh of relief. And you want them to like you and understand your values, right?

Mariana Henninger: 20:17

Right. Yeah. I mean, I guess I guess you want them to like you. And it's it's less about getting them to like you and more about like, how can I show my personality? And if there's a (inaudible) there, then they like me, you know, just as a natural consequence of that. But yeah.

Janice Hostager: 20:30

Yeah. Yeah. And I think sometimes that's where people get stuck, is that they want everybody to like them. You know, it's like-

Mariana Henninger: 20:37

Yeah, you might have that extreme and then the other extreme where people are like, where it's it's not about me. I don't, you know, they're kind of hiding behind um, you know, it's just about my customer. I don't want to talk about myself. I was like, dude, your customers want to know who you are. They want actually uh your about me page or about us page is the second most visited page on any website. Yes. People care about about the about.

Janice Hostager: 21:02

And the story behind it for sure.

Mariana Henninger: 21:04

Exactly.

Janice Hostager: 21:04

Yeah, yeah. So, okay, so I'm sorry to interrupt you because you were about to go into um, I think which was my next question is like, where do we start when we're putting something like this together?

Mariana Henninger: 21:13

Right. I think it's it we started getting to know our audience really deeply. People I'm talking to when they were like, "Well, it's not about me." And I was like, you're correct. It's not about you. So even your brand video, we're using your story, but it's not about you. It's a marketing tool. It's a tool, it's a trust acceleration tool. And so the idea is again, how can we take somebody from really cold to really hot as quickly as possible and doing it in one single fell swoop, watching one video? And so it's understanding the first trust trigger, which I get deeply. So you could spend a lot of time and energy just on that first trigger. The other ones are a bit more plug and play, if you will, in the sense that it's more internal that way. How can I show you that I care? How can I show you that I'm the expert? Lots of people do that all the time. So that's a little bit more easy to identify. Like, what are the things that we know are gonna make people see you as the expert? And then the personality traits that they value. So I'll give you, I'll give you and your listeners a really awesome tip that I teach all of my students, my clients, and it's this one really valuable golden question that you need to ask. So it's not just the question, but it's when you ask it. So what happens is that we do, we tend to do a lot of market research either with people who don't know or vaguely know our brands. In fact, years ago, I was hired to film some focus groups for American Express. And I thought it was so fascinating. And like everyone knows American Express. So there's a lot of brand familiarity, but they are not people who are necessarily like about to buy from you or

anything like that. And then the other type of market research that we might do is with our current customers, our current clients. We might ask them things. And both are valuable, right? But the most valuable moment to speak to your market, if you will, to your customer is the moment that they buy from you. And the reason that's like such a golden moment is because they've just come through this journey, this buyer's journey of building that trust, right? So all they know is your forward-facing messaging, what you've shown the world, right? What you've published, what you've put out there. They don't know what it's like to work with you. Maybe they've heard it from other people, but again, that's just from the outside. That is the moment that is like the source of the best gold possible because they have not yet been tainted, if you will, by the trust that's built when they do start working with you. So when you ask them or when you talk to them at that very moment, I actually do recommend that you have somebody else do this interview just because they're seeing you as the service provider and the expert they're paying for, or again, depends on what kind of business you have. But you might be the person delivering the thing they paid for. And so it's helpful to have somebody else either on your team or an outside person. We we do this for our clients where we have this interview on their behalf, in part because it makes them super comfortable to share anything, in part because it's not as awkward where they've just bought from you and now you're asking them something. Anyway, most people are fine. So the thing to ask them is why did you buy from us specifically? That's like a golden question.

Janice Hostager: 24:25

Love it.

Mariana Henninger: 24:25

Because what you want to flesh out, and by the way, that first answer is probably not gonna be the right one, the one that you really want. You're gonna want to go deeper and deeper. We we teach this in our program, like how to how to go past that surface level. But what you really are looking for is identifying the parts of that journey up to the point where they said yes, up to the point where they clicked by, right? And what stuck with them? What so what what were the things that like moved the needle towards yes? You

know? And so I do this every time somebody joins my program. I send them an email and a if not like actually getting them on the phone or on a Zoom call. I ask them that and have gotten such amazing answers to really pinpoint what was it about me, my story, my marketing, like what part of my messaging is really landing for my ideal client. Um, and then sometimes what I'll do is once I've started working with them, I'll filter through that lens and identify like, oh my gosh, these are real dream clients. So these are the people that I want to attract more of. And then I look back at their answers, like, okay, this moved the needle for them. So yeah, I just wanted to give you that really awesome marketing tip. That's a great place to get started.

Janice Hostager: 25:38

I love that. Part of what I teach in my course too is that the sale is not the end of it either. And I think a lot of times people think that it's like, oh, I sold one. Okay, it's all good then.

Mariana Henninger: 25:46

On to the next.

Janice Hostager: 25:48

Yeah. Right, yeah. But getting that information so soon after they bought, I think that is brilliant. So I love that. I might just steal that from you.

Mariana Henninger: 25:56

Do it, please.

Janice Hostager: 25:57

Yeah, all right. Okay, so you have all these pieces and you have more to go to, right?

Mariana Henninger: 26:03

If you if you've gotten that far, you've you've got a lot of work ahead of you to do it right. I really emphasize in my program that it's not a quick process. It's not something that you were gonna do overnight or even in a week. And part of that, part of that, the beauty of that really is that you get time to digest and come back to it with fresh eyes and kind of really do some soul searching around what you want to be known for, but also more this is something that's uh a little deeper, Janice, which is um you're not really creating this video that's your autobiography. You're creating a marketing tool that's like really ninja and really in-depth. And what that means is that you're not gonna pack it with the parts of your story that are important to you. We we talked about that, you know, a few minutes ago. It's more about that specific curated part of your story and how to tell it in your audience's language or using as much of their own language as possible.

Janice Hostager: 27:02

Brilliant. Yeah.

Mariana Henninger: 27:03

And, you know, it's funny because I always say this because in my head, that would be an objection that I would have or a question that I would have. I have actually never gotten this question from anyone, but I do like to explain that you might be, well, this is strange, you know, like it's my story, but I don't get to tell this part of it, or I don't get to emphasize that thing that's really important to me. It's like you have all the rest of your marketing. You have, you know, a million, you can create a million posts around any of these other parts of your story, right? You can tell them in your emails, you can tell them on stage, whatever, you know, whatever you want. But it's I'm not, I'm not telling you to stick to this one story for the rest of your business. But this is just the the again curated part of your story that's going to make the biggest impact the moment that cold audiences meet you for the first time. And by the way, they're like, this is a video that you can use for pitching media. You can use it to land stages, you can use it to land podcasts. Like it's the video that goes before you to make that warm environment of like, now we've gotten to know each other. You know, so it's incredibly versatile, is like the biggest ROI that you're ever gonna get in a video. Um, and now we're in the process

of A-B testing different funnels to just like be able to show and quantify that that conversion uh metric around the brand video.

Janice Hostager: 28:26

That is so cool.

Mariana Henninger: 28:27

Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 28:27

So what I hear you saying is that what what you really need to do is start really putting things down on paper, um, kind of going through your story in your head, maybe, or figuring out what part of your story to tell.

Mariana Henninger: 28:39

Yeah. So I would say again, start with your audience. Start talking to them the moment they buy from you. And then once they've identified the things about you that they love, right? What was it about you that made them say yes? Um, what what specific parts of your expertise were needle movers for them? What specific parts of um your messaging? Yeah, what what really stuck with them? That's what you want. That's the gold. And then you're gonna look at your story. And, you know, there are two types of stories. So there's like an overcome story and there's a passion story. And everybody's story falls into one or the other. I don't care who you are. I've never met anyone whose story is not one or the other. And typically service providers tend to fall around the passion story. And obviously, everyone should be passionate about their business. So sometimes my students are a bit confused, like, do I have a passion story overcome? It's like you're passionate. However, if you have a story that we simplify the hero's journey to a ridiculous level of simplicity, which is you've got a life before, you've got a turning point moment, and then you've got life after. And then the fourth part of the story is very unique to us. We we call it the pivot to your mission. So this is kind of like I couldn't help

but start this business, right? And so if you have a before and after type story, you have an overcome story. If you don't really have that if you are maybe a designer or an accountant and you help people with a thing that you're obsessed about, because please be obsessed about what you do. Right. Two people you want to work with, right? And so hopefully you're obsessed about what you do. That's that falls into more of a passion story. The framework for the passion story is a little more flexible. And typically, what we want to find is how are ways that we can demonstrate that passion. So I'll give you an example. One of my students, she's Julia, she's the podcast teacher, is her kind of branded name. And but when we met, she did not have a podcast. So her entire business is around helping people create their podcast. Uh and she didn't have a podcast at the time. Now she does. She was kind of like, Brianna, how the heck do I tell my story? Like, I'm not somebody who didn't have a podcast and like learned how to do it. Now I'm I'm obsessed with it. And I, and so we did the work, right? So we started by understanding, okay, so how what do your people love about you? And she's like, I know that they love that I simplify things like step by step, you know, little by little. I we we take chaos and like confusion and like overwhelm. And I just like simplify it. I used to be an elementary teacher and I I used to teach kids, and that's what I love to do. And so that's what we did. So we found the story. So in her case, you sprinkle in stories a little bit more than the sort of overcome story arc that we talked about. And so in her case, is how when she was a little girl, she worked at the library and she loved putting the books in, or no, we start with like the story of her as a little girl with uh putting the markers, markers in rainbow order and then working the library and putting the books all neatly. And then the story of her being a teacher as well, kind of dipped into that really quickly. And then the other sort of really important visual, because we don't do b-roll, we do emotional visuals. Your visual should be a real character in your story to really drive the emotions. So you turn chaos and confusion into something orderly and beautiful and simple and make sense. And I was like, okay, so what are your hobbies? So that's another place that we can look for visual opportunities. In her case, she was like, I love working with nature personally. Like, I love exploring nature's visuals. Uh, and she was like, Mariana, I'm not an outdoorsy girl at all, but I love jigsaw puzzles. And she kind of threw it out there. And I was like, ah, perfect. What is a jigsaw puzzle? Aside from

something that's chaotic and messy and all over the place when you start, but you have a roadmap and it becomes something beautiful and you have her piece of art. And so that's one visual that we use to illustrate that idea that she loves taking things that are messy and just making them simple and beautiful. And obviously, we tied in the podcasting through there, but I am talking so much, Janice. Oh my gosh, you're asking me one question. I'm like, here's a whole book.

Janice Hostager: 32:45

No, I am so glad you're doing this because all of these things that you're saying are questions on my notes here. So this is all perfect. So you said you don't use B-roll. So how do you pull something like that in? Like to stop it from being just a talking head video.

Mariana Henninger: 32:59

Oh, no, for sure. I mean, it's traditionally called B-roll. We just intentionally call it emotional visuals because we want it to be very intentional, right? So B-roll can be just any sort of visual coverage, right? It can be me at work, and then you see me prototyping on a laptop, right? And instead, we want to focus on what are the emotional states of every part of my story. Like what are the emotions that I want to pull and make people feel? So there's something called narrative transportation. And it's basically when you take people on an journey emotionally with you. There's so much neuroscience around this. They actually put two people in MRI machines and one of them told a really good story. And the other listener, that person's brain waves actually matched the storyteller's brainwave. This does not work with a bad story, by the way. So you can literally kind of mind control somebody through story, right? You can really elicit emotion and be very intentional about how you're doing it and which emotions, depending on the story that you tell. And so we do that with visuals as well, where it's like a narrative transportation. You're really transported into that story through the visuals and the audio as well as like the words that you're hearing.

Janice Hostager: 34:09

Wow, that is super powerful. I mean, I'm stuck, I'm still stuck on what how do you figure out which story you're gonna tell? Because um, it it just is it something that has an emotional hook to it or a problem or illustrates what you are.

Mariana Henninger: 34:22

Do you want to- let's do it with you, Janice. So tell me about your people.

Janice Hostager: 34:26

Okay.

Mariana Henninger: 34:26

Tell me about who you help. If you could only attract one kind of client.

Janice Hostager: 34:30

Right. Her name is Jennifer, and she is 50 years old, and she has just started her business, and she is kind of overwhelmed by what to do, and she doesn't really know where to start. And so she's tried Facebook marketing, she's tried Instagram, she's not getting traction there. She's got a website, but nothing's really happening.

Mariana Henninger: 34:50

Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 34:50

She doesn't really understand SEO kind of the right there. You know.

Mariana Henninger: 34:53

And what does she want to build online?

Janice Hostager: 34:56

She wants to build a successful business so she can spend more time with her kids or that who are now at the house and her and her grandchildren who are coming, you know. So yeah.

Mariana Henninger: 35:05

I know the avatar really well, but it does she have a dream kind of business in mind that she wants to build?

Janice Hostager: 35:12

So my avatar is a consultant.

Mariana Henninger: 35:14

Okay. So she has some sort of expertise that she wants to bring into the online space, maybe do a one-to-many, or at least be able to build a brand, maybe a personal brand in which she helps people. She's a consultant. Okay, gotcha. And how are you helping her exactly, or what part of that journey are you helping her with? All of it or..

Janice Hostager: 35:32

Yes. So what I do, I have a framework I use to call the Trail to the Sale. It starts out getting to know your ideal customer and moving from there into messaging and then the awareness, and then consider, compare, evaluate, sell, supersized serve, and send. So it's like the whole gamut.

Mariana Henninger: 35:50

Oh wow. Two nuts. Awesome.

Janice Hostager: 35:51

The whole thing. Yeah.

Mariana Henninger: 35:52

So essentially they're coming to Janice and they want to "Huh, thank God. Thank God I found you." Right? Like they I feel like you're gonna handhold them through the whole thing. Um, and so tell me a little bit about you. Like if you were just, do you have an overcome story in that you figured this out yourself, or have you always kind of been a business nut your whole life? And this is just sort of a natural progression of that.

Janice Hostager: 36:14

Kind of both. Like I've always been in marketing and I had a design agency for a number of years when we lived in Wisconsin and then we moved to Texas. And so I really felt though in the process of working with an in my design agency, I'd work with a lot of small businesses who I would do a website for, and they didn't really know what to do from there, you know. So I felt like, okay, I need to figure this out for myself too, because at that age, at that time, social media was kind of new. So I had to like, and it's honestly, it's still shifting. Everything is shifting all the time in marketing.

Mariana Henninger: 36:46

All the time, yes.

Janice Hostager: 36:47

So I think there is no cut and dry thing. So that's where I had to turn to the customer and really know their customer journey in order to understand how to help them communicate to their customer. So sort of similar to you.

Mariana Henninger: 37:02

Okay. So in this case, though, I'm noticing a few things that I would probably shy away from. So the design part of your experience is probably less relevant. And I'm just I'm literally gonna throw a spaghetti at the wall. So take it with a huge grain of salt, because I'm working with a little bit of information and not everything I would want. But if I am Jennifer, the fact that you were in a design business is probably less relevant for me than your marketing background. So even if in your mind, it sounds like a lot of your

growth and a lot of like your eyes open to what business owners needed, which is a lot, um, happened during your time in the design business. When I'm in Jennifer's shoes, it's in again, I'm not in Jennifer's shoes. I have worked with people who are. And in my understanding, they want that rock star person, right? And it's almost like sometimes what we think is gonna be a really relatable story might actually do us a little bit of a disservice in positioning us. We want to be relatable, but we're not their peers, right? And so, in a way, I want to understand a little bit more about your marketing background. Um, you know, I guess previous to the the design firm, and what drew you to marketing. So a lot of the answers are kind of around there, like that's sometimes where we find like the best nuggets of the story. So what in the what made you choose marketing?

Janice Hostager: 38:22

Um, I just, you know, I was in college and I took some marketing classes, some advertising classes.

Mariana Henninger: 38:28

But what made you decide to choose those classes? You could have taken, like, Japanese, right?

Janice Hostager: 38:33

Yeah, I I don't know. I I really can't even tell you. I loved, I think initially I was a double major in college. It was writing and then art. So I wanted a place where they could meet creativity and the psychology of marketing. I just love those together. But um, what made me decide to take them? I'm not sure.

Mariana Henninger: 38:53

Yeah, so maybe some soul searching around that. You know, it wouldn't be the bulk of your story, but it's nice. Like I think people love to know what drove you to do something, right? Like that that that piece is really important because there's something in them

telling them to do that as well. And if we can identify some commonality there where we're like, oh, we're both kind of obsessed with this thing. And it's because of XYZ, right? And because we love it so much because of XYZ.

Janice Hostager: 39:18

Um and then-

Mariana Henninger: 39:20

Yeah, go ahead.

Janice Hostager: 39:21

I think one thing that you mentioned early on that that I picked up on was that I always known I'm gonna be a small business owner.

Mariana Henninger: 39:28

Oh, okay. That's great. Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 39:28

Like even when I was working for agencies and corporate. It's like that small business thing kept nagging at me. I would always say, "Okay, I'm gonna remember this when I have my own business, kind of."

Mariana Henninger: 39:37

Yeah. So I think that that's great. There you go. You've probably found like the strongest connection point that would make them hear your story and be like, "Oh my gosh, she gets me. She she gets me," which is trigger number one, right?

Janice Hostager: 39:49

Okay, gotcha. So it's all good.

Mariana Henninger: 39:49

Um and so, yeah, so maybe if we talk about the transition out of the corporate world, out of you know, being somebody else's business, like what made you branch out to do your own thing?

Janice Hostager: 40:00

Well, actually, that was a move to a college town where they had, I was working for an agency in Minneapolis, a larger city, and then we moved to a smaller college town in Wisconsin where there were no agencies. So I had, if I wanted to stay doing what I was doing, I had to start my own business anyway.

Mariana Henninger: 40:17

So interestingly, that might be the case. That those might be the facts of the story, right? Right. We can take a little bit of creative this so this is where we're not lying, obviously, would never do that. But the idea is that we're curating the story, right? We're essentially what pieces can we take out of this that don't put us in a situation where like, well, there's an that was it. No, that was my only choice. We don't want it to be our only choice. We want it to be like, I was born to do this thing. I love it so much. Life just happened to kind of take me in this way. But instead of focusing on that, we're gonna focus on your dream of one day having this, right? And maybe not paint the picture of like that was the only option, and maybe just focus on like this is what I wanted. I wanted the freedom to to be in my kids' ball games. I wanted the freedom to not have to take phone calls in the middle of the night or weekends or whatever. I wanted to not do those things that these women are also choosing not to do. Um, but I knew I needed XYZ, right? And then, and this is where getting their language comes in super importantly because you're gonna have those commonalities in your story. You basically have an overcome story where yes, you had some background in marketing and that helped you a lot. So the expertise piece is going to weave its way into your story. We don't leave it for the end. The force trick trust trigger is not like in order. They're weaved in throughout. And so we're gonna weave in your marketing background. So we're like,

oh my gosh, right out of the gate, she's an expert, right? Right out of the gate, she knew what she was doing, even before she started her business. But when she built her business, she realized all of these other pieces that needed to happen. And um, you know, I'm I'm I'm staying kind of surface level, but that's how I would struck her structure your story.

Janice Hostager: 41:58

Oh, I love that. I really yeah, and you're absolutely right about it because when I became a small business owner who had to do my own marketing, that was when I had to overcome the issues and kind of get to it. So right, we got this worked out. So, how can people find out more about you or your course or or anything else that you have for sure.

Mariana Henninger: 42:19

I'm super accessible on Instagram at @brandmagnetic. So feel free to follow me there. I have a few free resources on my website, brandmagnetic.com. And if you're ready, take one small financial investment leap. I came out with a tool that's blowing people's minds because they're writing me every single day. I'm getting an amazing testimonial about this tool. It's a GPT, it's like an AI tool. And ironically, what it does is that it takes content, takes words and makes them emotionally like really impactful. And so it was built to help you create that instant, that first impression that doesn't fall flat, that really makes you stick out. So it works with words. Obviously, it's not a video making machine, but it's the idea that you need to grab people the moment they meet you and you need to be memorable through words as well as through your brand video. And so it was designed for that. However, my clients and everyone who was buying this tool started just throwing all of their text at it. So it was designed for your About Me page or your intro, your bio. And now they're throwing sales pages and their captions and their emails at it, and they're like, this is a messaging tool. This is amazing. Um I've used it a ton of times already. It's only about two weeks old at the time of recording. But uh anyway, it's called the Instant Yes Machine. It's 27 bucks, which I'm like, this could be an AI tool that's a subscription, that's a whole like SaaS thing. And I'm like, nope, I just want it to be super accessible. So I'm thrilled to have something that gets people, you know. This is this is

me opening the curtains and kind of telling you behind the scenes. I'm thrilled to have something that gets people in my world with a very, you know, easy investment. And they get to see my frameworks at work. So it's all it's it's trained on my Emmy winning storytelling frameworks. It's trained on the trust triggers frameworks, and it's trained on the best conversion copywriter in the world, Eugene Schwartz. Um, a lot of people call him that. So it's trained on these three things, and it really helps level up all your copy. So you can take a look at that if you like it. It's linked in my Instagram. It's one of the top links there, or you can go to [brandmagnetic.com slash yes machine](https://brandmagnetic.com/yesmachine).

Janice Hostager: 44:34

We will put the link in the show notes as well.

Mariana Henninger: 44:36

Yeah.

Janice Hostager: 44:37

All right. Well, thank you so much, Mariana. This was awesome. I think you just gave me so much to think about, and I think my listeners will feel the same way too. So thanks so much for being here today.

Mariana Henninger: 44:47

My pleasure. It was so much fun. Thanks, Janice.

Janice Hostager: 44:49

Okay, so here's the thing I want you to take away. Your brand story is the fastest way to build trust and make your audience feel something. And when they feel something, they remember you. So this week I want to challenge you to start thinking about the moment that changed everything in your business, the why behind what you do, and start thinking about how you can communicate that in a video. So to learn more about Mariana or anything we talked about in today's episode, visit myweeklymarketing.com

forward slash one thirty three. Thank you so much for joining me today. I'll see you next time. Bye for now.