

myweeklymarketing.

Janice Hostager: 0:04

I'm Janice Hostager. After three decades in the marketing business and many years of being an entrepreneur, I've learned a thing or two about marketing. Join me as we talk about marketing, small business, and life in between. Welcome to My Weekly Marketing. Let me ask you something. Do you start every year saying, this is the year I really go all in and hit my goals? Maybe it's 10K months or a new offer or maybe growing that email list. But then by March, you're kind of tired and you're behind and you're wondered how you've worked so hard but don't have much to show for it? I hear you. I have struggled with this thing for years. So in this episode, I'm going to pass along some things that I've learned about goal setting over the years in business and from being a marketer. First of all, working harder isn't the problem. Working without clear goals is the issue. For years I told myself I didn't need goals. I thought that giving everything 100% was enough. I'd pour all my energy into getting new clients or doing more on social media or switching up my website. But doing just made me tired. And then I was overwhelmed and frustrated at the end of the year because this was going to be the year I've made real progress. But all I was at the end of the year was worn out. I think I'm more stubborn than I thought I was because it took me a few years to learn this. Goals don't create pressure, they create clarity. So now I'm sharing how I start my year with goal setting. And just a side note, ideally you want to do this before the beginning of the year, but if that didn't happen, now is better than not at all. And at the end of this episode, I'm going to tell you how to get a free guide to walk you through all the steps I'm going to talk about today, because this is a lot of details for a podcast episode. So I wanted to do a guide to help you through the process. So get ready for that. Okay, so as we're starting a new year, it feels really good to get our business in order too, don't you think? For me, that means going to Target and getting a brand new calendar and then getting out a pencil to fill it all in. I do use a Google calendar for my day-to-day events and meetings and tasks, but I like having a paper calendar to see the entire year at once. Some people like those big year at a glance wall calendars, but I like something that's on my desk, but either one will work. So I start with the big rocks, the things like launch dates, vacations, holidays, because I've learned the hard way that these things are non-negotiable, especially vacations for my mental health. Other events are also big things like client events, anything that is a big immovable date that's on the calendar, I want to put those on first. Then I mark launch and promotion runways, the weeks that lead up to a launch or a promotion, so that I can make sure I have time to schedule emails and do webinars and make calls. And the little rocks, like the marketing daily tasks or the things that need to happen consistently, like creating content or scheduling webinars or scheduling

podcasts, those can get happen around the big rocks. Although I think I'm wired to be goal-oriented, I used to not actually set written goals for myself. I'd have them in my head, but nothing written down. And I'm sure there's a lot that a therapist could unpack about why I did it that way. But I think I hesitated because I thought if I didn't meet them, I'd feel horrible. So instead I just gave everything 100% and told myself that was the best I could do. But, and this is current-day Janice, talking to a younger Janice, giving everything 100% sounds noble, but it's actually one of the fastest ways to burn yourself out. Because here's what really happens when you just try hard without clear goals. First, you confuse effort with direction. It feels really productive to give yourself a lot of work, you're super busy, you get tired, and you're doing a lot, but you're often pouring energy into things that don't actually move the needle. Not everything in our business moves the needle for sales. And let's be honest, a business that doesn't make money isn't a business. It's a hobby and an expensive hobby at that. Personally, I can spend hours tweaking my website or wordsmithing emails, but I've come to realize it's a really good way to feel like I'm making progress without leaving my comfort zone. Do you have any comfort zones that can be a little too comfortable for you? Those are areas where you spend a lot of time, but they don't really actually result in sales. Effort without direction does not equal progress. It just equals exhaustion. Second, without goals, you can't measure what's actually working. If the plan is, we'll see what happens, then it becomes impossible to know which marketing tactic brought in a lead or which post actually converted, or which campaign just needs a tweak instead of being tossed out entirely. When you don't track things and compare it to goals, everything feels random. Or worse, it can feel like something's working or not working, but you're not looking at the numbers so you don't know for sure. And when things feel random, you stay stuck because you can't improve what you can't see. Third, without goals, you unintentionally overinvest in the wrong things. Without clear goals, most small business owners default to tasks that feel easiest, platforms they like instead of the platforms that convert, or fun creative stuff instead of the revenue drivers. I used to own a design agency and I love designing websites, which means I can very easily waste hours making my site prettier. What I should be doing is creating ads for a webinar or writing emails or doing something that actually results in sales. Do you have something that you like doing, maybe hanging out in Canva or tweaking fonts or posting on Instagram? Here's your tough love moment. If it's not making you money, you need to delegate it, automate it, or eliminate it. Goals force clarity, and clarity creates momentum. When I sit down to write a goal, I know it means I have to get honest and intentional with myself. A concrete goal forces questions like, what am I actually trying to achieve and why am I trying to achieve it? How much income do I want my business to make this year? How will I know when I've actually got there? Because if you're not clear about where you're going, how will you know when you arrive? Or what levers actually move me there? What actions or offers or

marketing activities really support that goal and make it possible? Once you answer these questions, your week has a shape and your tasks have priorities, and your marketing has a purpose, driving sales. Fifth, goals reduced overwhelm, weirdly enough. Most overwhelm doesn't come from doing too much. It comes from not knowing what you're supposed to be doing or feeling like everything is equally urgent. A goal creates boundaries and helps you prioritize, and it creates a clear pathway from where you are now to where you want to be. And I don't know about you, but I love a good pathway, especially in marketing feels like a jungle. And finally, goals create confidence because you can see the progress. And listen, I can almost guarantee you this you will have a promotion that bombs. I've had more than one. It can feel personal, it can make you question everything. You blame the ad, the landing page, or the title, or worse, you blame yourself. If this sounds familiar, I've been there for sure. But here's the thing, so has everybody else. When you have goals and metrics, you can actually learn from what happened. Maybe the ad converted well, but the landing page didn't do so well. So it wasn't you, it was the page. Or maybe the offer was solid, but one link or message was kind of off. That feedback loop is powerful because suddenly you can see that you're not feeling, you're refining. And when you can see progress, you keep going and set a new goal and you try again with better results. Rinse and repeat again and again. That's how every successful business owner learns by doing. Okay, now that we've covered why goals are not the enemy and why they're really important, let's talk about where to start. Because this is where people, me included, get stuck. First of all, goal setting doesn't need to be complicated. You don't need a 20-page planner or a vision board unless that's your thing. What you do need is clarity and a simple process you can actually follow. So if you're listening to this while you're driving or walking the dog, just mentally note this and grab the planner later and then it will help you guide you through all the details. Okay, step number one, pick one outcome for the next six to eight weeks. Not trying to do everything, just one outcome. This should be a needle-moving business result, not an intention or a vague sort of vision. For example, it needs to be something like book 10 sales calls by next Friday, or enroll 25 people in my program by January 30th, or add 300 qualified email subscribers by February 15th. Notice I didn't say get photography redone or update my website. Those are important too, but they're brand marketing. All marketing is either brand marketing or performance marketing. Brand marketing is the things that don't move the needle as easily, but they're still good for your business. Typically that's social media, podcasting, or things that are good to do, but you want to limit them to about 20% of your time. The performance marketing is goal focused. These are the needle movers, the things like list growth, sales calls, or conversion events. Also notice all the goals I listed have numbers. That's on purpose. I want you to be able to say, by this date, I will achieve this specific result. And this is interesting too. Research in psychology shows that verbalizing an intention increases

commitment because it moves the goal from a vague thought to an explicit decision. I know this sounds a little woo, but it's grounded in science. Psychologist Robert Cialdini calls it the commitment and consistency theories. It tells us we have a deep need to align our actions and our beliefs and our words with what we've previously said or done. So once we commit publicly or verbally, our brain wants to behave consistently with that commitment. Your brain hates being a liar, so it tries to help you follow through. If you can't say it clearly, your brain can't work toward it clearly. Okay, step two, make it measurable and time bound. Just like I talked about earlier, if it doesn't have a number and a deadline, it's not a goal. It's really just a wish. Grow my business isn't a goal. Make \$8,000 in new revenue by March 31st is a goal. This isn't about pressure, it's about giving your brain a finish line. This is the part that used to trip me up. Why not just pick a huge random number? This is what's key. The right number is not random. It's reverse engineered. Most people do this backwards. They pick a number because it sounds good or they wish it would happen. That's how you end up saying, I want \$20,000 a month, but have no idea how you're going to get there. Or I want 10 clients, but no idea is where they're coming from. Instead, you want a number that passes three filters. Okay, filter number one. What do you actually need or want this goal to support? So what income do you want this goal to generate? Or what future outcome does this goal unlock? The goal number is not the goal. The goal number is a tool that helps you get something else that you want. So instead of saying I want 300 subscribers, you want to ask, what would 300 subscribers do for me? That's what serves a purpose. Let's say the goal is I want to make \$100,000 this year. That's like the big North Star. But that's too big to act on every day. So you need to break it down into supporting goals. So you might say, okay, for that to happen, I need to consistently bring in new revenue. So you pick a short-term goal and you say, I want \$6,000 in new revenue in the next eight weeks. That number isn't random, it's serving the bigger \$100,000 goal. Next we choose a goal number that supports a \$6,000 goal. Let's say your offer is \$1,500. To make \$6,000, you need four sales. So now your goal number is four sales in eight weeks. That's a supporting goal. But wait, sales don't come out of thin air, so you ask, what needs to happen before the sales? So maybe for you it's sales calls or emails. If your close rate is 25% on a sales call, for four sales you'll need 16 sales calls. Now your working goal becomes book 16 sales calls in eight weeks. Why? Because that's a lever you can actually pull. That's something you can actually do. And now your marketing finally has a job. Your marketing goal is no longer make more money this year. It's fill my calendar with 16 sales calls in the next eight weeks. Everything gets filtered through that. That's how a number serves a purpose. Okay, filter number two, work backward from the offer. For example, if your offer is \$1,000 and your goal is \$6,000, that equals 6 sales. If your offer is \$250 and you have a \$5,000 goal, then you need 20 sales. If your goal is 10 new clients, how many calls does that usually take? This keeps your goal grounded in reality

instead of wishful thinking. And filter number three, use your past data. You don't need perfect numbers here, you just need some idea of how well things convert. So ask yourself, what have I done before and what's my normal conversion rate? That's why keeping track of your data each month comes in handy. But if you haven't done that, go back and take a look. It's valuable information for you to move forward. For example, if one out of every five calls usually closes, then you need 50 calls to get 10 clients. If my email list converts at 5%, I'd need about 340 people on my list to make 10K from a \$597 offer. If 30% of webinar attendees buy, then for 20 sales, you'll need 67 attendees. So now your number is realistic and feels achievable. Once you have your number, ask yourself, does this feel like a stretch or am I setting myself up for failure? You want that number to feel slightly uncomfortable, but still believable and reachable. Not, I've never done this before, but I'll triple everything and see what happens. Or not, I'll just pick something tiny so I won't fail. You want to say to yourself, I can see the path even if it takes some effort. The right goal number is the one you can reverse engineer, support with actions, and recognize when you've hit it. If you can't explain why you've chosen that number, it's probably not the right number for you. Okay, step three, choose two or three lead actions. In business, there are lead measures and lag measures. If you're not familiar with these terms, let's use dieting to explain this. If you want to lose weight, your goal is the lag measure, the number on the scale. Lead measures are how you change the number on the scale. It's what you eat and how often you work out and so on. Your lag measures won't change unless your lead measure does too. So lag measures are what you want and lead measures are what gets you there. Most people obsess over lag measures, but lag measures are slow and often out of direct control. So like dieting, the number on the scale is directly influenced by what you eat. Lag measures tell you whether you succeed, but only after the fact. In business, some examples of lag measures are revenue, sales, and profit. They are called lag measures because they lag behind the work. You don't wake up one morning and decide to have sales. Sales happen because of a bunch of things you did before. Lag measures answer the questions, did this work? But they don't tell you what to do today. Lead measures are the numbers you can control. Lead measures are the actions that drive the lag measures. These are the things that you can directly control right now, like emails sent, sales calls, books, DMs or follow-ups done, webinars hosted, ads launched. Lead measures answer the question, what do I need to do to achieve the goal? This is where confidence comes from because the effort is finally tied to impact. So every good goal should look like this. A lag goal might be to make \$8,000 by March 31st, and your lead goals or your lead measures are to send two emails per week, book 20 sales calls, run one webinar, and follow up with every warm lead within 48 hours. These are the actions that should actually drive that result. Note that these are not everything you could do, they're just a few things that matter most or have the most potential impact. And here's

the thing, limit yourself to just a few. More than that, and you're right back in the overwhelm camp. Okay, step number four, put these actions on your calendar. For me, if it's not on the calendar, it's not going to happen. Goals don't fail because people aren't motivated, they fail because they never get time protected. So I literally block off writing time, call time, follow-up time, outreach time, or offer creation time. These are important meetings with your future self. So you need to treat them like they're important. Step five, to find your minimum viable week. This is one where I just encountered this week. This is especially important if you're a solopreneur or have a small team. If you've ever had a week where you plan to get a ton of things done and you end up with a horrible cold that slows you down, or a family member that needs help, or a client who needs some extra attention, then you need to create a minimum viable week. Literally all three of those things happen to me this week. So you need to ask yourself, if this week goes sideways, what's the bare minimum I can do that still moves the needle? Maybe it's just one email or one sales call or one action. This is how to stay consistent without burning out or quitting the moment life happens. Because life will happen at some point. That is guaranteed. Okay, step number six, create a simple scoreboard. You don't need to buy a fancy software for this. You just need a way to track your micro goals, and that could be a spreadsheet. Just track a few things once a week. Things you did, like your emails sent out, the calls you made, and things that happened as a result. The leads, the sales, etc. When you can see the numbers, the stress goes way down. You're no longer guessing, and you can see it in front of you. You can copy the script for next time. Step number seven, do a weekly check-in with your goals. This is on my goal chart for 2026. 15 minutes, same day every week, meeting with my goals to stay on track. I have a journal that I plan to write down what moved this week, what didn't work, and why, and what's one thing I'm going to focus on next week. That's it. No spiraling, hopefully. No overhauls, just a small strategic adjustments. So here's a summary. Set one clear goal, choose the actions that support the stage, track what works, rinse and repeat. That is how momentum is built. And as I told you earlier, I have a free guide that will walk you through all the steps of this. You can find it at JaniceHostager.com forward slash goals, but I'll put the link in the show notes too. So that's it. Thanks so much for joining me today and mapping out your goals for the new year. And if you like what you heard, I'd be honored if you'd give me a positive review on Apple Podcasts or your podcast platform of choice. For more information about anything we talked about today or any of the links, you can find the show notes at myweeklymarketing.com forward slash 140. Thanks for joining me today. I'll see you next time. Bye for now.