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Episode 158- Quit Burning Down Your Marketing

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.

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This weekend, I did something I really should not have done. I tried to catch up work on a Saturday. I know why I did it, but I think deep down I also knew it was going to burn me out a little bit, and it did. But there I was, laptop open, coffee in hand, convinced that I was going to figure everything out in one weekend. And here's what happened. I started poking around in my offers, and some of them aren't really converting the way I wanted them to. So I naturally did what any reasonable marketing strategist would do. I started blowing the whole thing up. Within like 45 minutes, I had reinvented my entire offer ladder. Again, like I haven't already done that a hundred times already. And by the time I finally finished, I was frustrated and overwhelmed, and I hadn't actually made anything better. In fact, I made everything worse. Sound familiar? Have you ever looked at your business and thought, maybe I just need to start fresh? New website, a new lead magnet or freebie, a new niche, a new course, maybe a new Instagram strategy. And suddenly you're halfway through the redesigning of your entire business model again, and the thing you already built never really got a good shot. Maybe it's just me. I don't think it is. I think this is one of the most common and most costly traps entrepreneurs fall into. And honestly, it's sneaky because it feels like you're making progress, right? It feels like momentum, like you're improving everything so you can make more money, but it's not. It's really scattered marketing in disguise. So let's dig into that a little more.

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Okay, so here's the thing about creative people. And if you're an entrepreneur, you're a creative person, whether or not you call yourself that or not. Creating something new is exciting and it gives you that dopamine hit. You see somebody else's beautiful opt-in or their gorgeous new course, and something kind of lights up in your brain. Your wheels start spinning and you start thinking about the colors and names and thinking, I could do that and make it even better. And boom, you're off to the races, running in a totally different direction than the one you're supposed to be in. But here's the problem: it's very unlikely to move the needle in the long run if you never let anything compound. It's like, I don't know, ribbing out your garden every single month because the tomatoes aren't growing fast enough. Instead of letting them be, checking the soil, the watering schedule, and figuring out if they're even getting enough sunshine. So why do we do it? A few reasons. One, novelty gives us a dopamine hit. New things feel exciting and refinement feels kind of tedious, right? Number two, creating something new is kind of emotional relief. If what you built isn't working, it hurts a little bit. So starting fresh feels like you're starting fresh emotionally too. And number three, and this one's a sneaky one, it helps us avoid looking at the hard data or the feedback or the scary question, what if this could work if I just fixed it? Psychologists actually have a name for this. It's called the IKEA effect, the tendency for people

to overvalue things they just created. That's why your new idea always feels more magical. You built it, you love it, and you believe in it. But the old thing, the thing that's already out in the world, that one starts to feel a little meh or even a little embarrassing. Launch mode gets applause. People chew you on, it's exciting, and you share it. Optimization, on the other hand, gets, I don't know, spreadsheets and silence and a lot of staring at numbers that aren't as big as you want them to be. It's the messy middle. But here's the tricky thing.

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Optimization is where the actual money is. Big companies know this. Apple doesn't come out with a brand new different type of phone every year. They refine their existing iPhone. They reiterate it. They obsess over it year after year. And the iPhone is still the most popular cell phone in the US and in the world. That's the energy that we're going for. Most businesses already have enough ideas and enough offers. What we don't have is consistency, optimization, tracking, and honestly, enough traffic to even know what we have is working. Most marketing problems aren't idea problems. They're optimization problems. They're scattered marketing problems. Too many directions and not enough depth in any one of them. It's like trying to knock down a wall, hitting it in different spots all the time, when in fact you're only going to get results if you hit it in the same spot over and over again. Brandon Bouchard talks about this in his book, High Performance Habits, the idea that high performers aren't just working hard, but that they're obsessed with optimizing. They focus relentlessly on the activities that produce the highest ROI. And instead of relying on motivation or bursts of inspiration, they build systems to create those things. In marketing, that looks like this: optimizing your landing page, writing better hooks, sharpening your calls to action, improving your follow-up sequence, strengthening your messaging, improving your onboarding, increasing your conversion rates. That's not glamorous work. It's not really even fun work, but it is growth work. Now I want to pause here a second because I know you might be thinking, Janice, are you telling me to stop being creative? Absolutely not. Creativity is one of your greatest business assets, and we entrepreneurs are really creative. This is not about shutting that down. This is about where you aim it. Instead of creating another freebie, another course, another rebrand, another social media account, what if you turn that creative energy onto something that you already have? What if you use your creativity to rewrite your welcome sequence, punch up your homepage so it stops traffic, test different calls to action to see what actually gets the most clicks, maybe rename your webinar so people feel compelled to show up? Or maybe it's just to improve your trail to the sale so it actually makes sense to the person on the other end. My favorite way to put this is to use your creativity like a mechanic and not like an arsonist. A mechanic, of course, looks at what's already there and figures out why it's not working and he fixes it. An arsonist just burns it down and calls it a fresh start. Don't be the arsonist of your business. Been there, it's not fun.

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Okay, let's talk a minute about what's in your control and what isn't, because scattered marketing often happens when we feel that things are out of control and that we're grasping for something that feels like we'll be able to fix it. You cannot control the algorithm, you can't control virality, you can't control the economy or what your competitors are doing, but you can control how consistent you are, how clear your messaging is, how much traffic you're driving, how well

you follow up, and whether or not you're testing, learning, and reiterating. Okay, so let me show you what scattered marketing looks like in real life because we love to do this thing called blame the platform. That sounds like this. Facebook ads don't work for me. I tried them. My website isn't drying enough people, so I think I'm gonna redesign it. Or my webinar didn't sell. Webinars must not work for my audience. Let's diagnosis. Ask yourself for the webinar. Was the topic wrong? Was the audience wrong? Was the traffic too low to draw any real conclusions? I'll talk more about that in a second. Was the call to action confusing or buried? Was the promise of the offer weak? See what I mean? It's not a failed webinar. That's a webinar with a lot of variables that haven't been tested yet. And here's a big one that I see all the time. Businesses abandoning their strategy before they even have enough data to know if it's working. Most people don't need a completely new strategy. They need enough traffic to know whether their current one is really doing

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this job. Here's the truth about data. A funnel with 40 visitors tells you pretty much nothing. A funnel with 4,000 visitors tells you exactly where the leaks are. Small data creates emotional decisions. If you have 200 people on your email list and get five people to register for an event, you don't have a statistically significant amount of data to really understand what happened. The answer is just to drive our traffic and then watch where people drop off. I want to talk for a second about what consistently starting over actually costs you. Because this is what happens. Your audience gets confused and they don't know what you stand for anymore. Your brand loses consistency, which kills trust. Your systems never really get finished, so they never get to work. You lose momentum, and that can take a toll on us as entrepreneurs because you start feeling like your goals aren't being met. You never collect enough data to make any real decisions. And ultimately, you burn yourself out trying things over and over again. Every time you start over, you reset your learning curve and you start from zero again instead of building on what we already know moves the needle. Businesses grow from compounding improvements, not consistent reinvention. And scattered marketing, jumping from task to task, from tactic to tactic, platform to platform, offer to offer, is the fastest way to stay stuck. Before you burn anything down, ask yourself, what if the answer isn't creating something new? What if the answer is improving what's already trying to work? Because sometimes the breakthrough isn't in the next shiny idea. Sometimes it's in finally giving the thing you already built a real and fair shot. Fix the leaks, optimize the journey, stop the scattered marketing, let things compound. You've already done the hard work of building something. Now do the brave work of refining

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it. But before we go today, if today's episode hit home and you're not sure where you actually need to focus your marketing energy right now, I have something for you. If you feel like you have scattered marketing, take our free quiz to find out the gaps in your marketing. It'll help you figure out exactly where the biggest opportunity is. So you stop the scattered marketing and start putting your energy where it'll actually move the needle. Head over to [Janicehostager.com/forward slash quiz](http://Janicehostager.com/forward-slash-quiz). Takes about two minutes, and it might be the thing that changes how you approach your marketing for the rest of the year. And longer, I hope. The links are all in the

show notes for today. You can find them at myweeklymarketing.com forward slash one fifty eight. Thanks so much for hanging out with me today. I'll see you next time. Bye for now.