



172. Why Your Website Gets Visitors but Not Customers

[00:00:00] One of the first websites I designed was for a side hustle business that I had when my kids were little. I loved designing and making invitations, you know, for like birthdays or weddings and events and so on. But these were the early days of websites back in the early 2000s. So I went to the library and got a book on HTML and CSS for dummies.

Now, if you know me at all, this couldn't be further from my wheelhouse. But I was determined to learn how to make a beautiful website that could sell my invitations far and wide. It actually took me months to learn how to code a site with Adobe Dreamweaver, which was an investment in itself at the time.

And when it was finally complete, I uploaded all the images of my invitations and I nervously uploaded the site. Honestly, I thought that people would start finding my site and ordering that very day. So I was ready to go. Yeah, it didn't go like that. And it took many weeks before it was even crawled by the search engines and longer still until I learned how to optimize it for traffic.

Ultimately business owners I knew saw my website and started asking me to build a website for them, and that became a design and marketing agency of its own. Well, since those days, websites have changed a lot. They've become faster, mobile friendly, and have moved not only from search engine optimization, but also answer engine optimization for AI.

But one thing that hasn't changed is that your website does a lot of heavy lifting for your business. If you have an online business only, it really becomes the part of the business that your people can access. It becomes your front door, so to speak. But the reality is that you have only a few seconds to capture the attention of your visitor before they click away. So the pressure is on to make sure that you're able to communicate a lot in a short amount of time, seconds in fact. That's a tall order for any website.

Here's something I want you to know [00:02:00] though. A beautiful website and a website that gets you clients are two totally different animals, and today I'm gonna show you the difference. So here's where a lot of us land. We've got a website, maybe we paid someone to build it or maybe you DIY'd it on a template site, and it looks good, but it's just not bringing in customers.

And so you start thinking, "Maybe I need a redesign, or maybe I need more traffic." But hold on. Before you spend money or weekends that you don't have, I want you to change the question. The question isn't, is my website good enough? The real question is, when somebody actually lands on my site, what happens next?

Because most of the time, your visitors will look and they leave, and that's the leak we're fixing today. Okay. Back in my design agency days, I used to tell every client the same thing. There are five layers to a website that actually works.

Number One, design. How it looks. Does it represent your brand? Is it easy to read?

Number two, UX, the user experience. That focuses on the underlying logic, the structure and the journey the visitor takes.

Can people find their way around, or is, the menu in a weird place? Number three, copy. Those are the words you use and how clear and persuasive they are on your site. Number four, the SEO, or search engine optimization, and the metadata. This is how you can be found by the search engines. And now there's a new piece to this, AEO, but

We'll talk more about that next week, so hang on to that one. And then layer number five is the sales, whether the site actually moves someone toward becoming a customer. Now, here's the part I really want you to pay attention to. Most small business websites have got layers one and two handled just fine.

Design and UX, it's pretty basic. It works. You can click around. Nothing too weird. And then they skip four and five, the ones that get you [00:04:00] found and get you clients. If that's the case, it's less of a website and more of a digital brochure. It sits there and looks nice but doesn't really do anything. So today, the pretty part, you've got that.

We're not touching that. Design and UX, we're letting you handle that part of it. We're fixing the layers that are costing you: copy, SEO, and sales. And real quick, if you've heard me talk about the trail to the sale, honestly, your website touches almost the entire thing. Awareness when someone finds you through search, consider when they land on a page, compare when they're sizing you up against everyone else, evaluate when they're looking at your offer, sell on your sales page, even supersize when you point them to the next best thing for them.

But here's the catch. Your website can only convert the attention you send it. It can't create that attention out of thin air. Even the SEO piece, your site could get ready to be found, but your site's not out there hustling traffic

Even when the site looks amazing, you need to be aware of what's going on under the hood. Your SEO and metadata are really important because that's what the search engines read. So I always recommend people learn simple SEO and now AEO techniques so that you're aware of what's happening on the back end of your site.

And if you are working with a web designer, you need to double-check to make sure that they have that part covered because some do not. Some of them focus only on the design part. So here's the biggest leaks that I see in websites and how I would fix them. Leak number one, there's no clear next step.

Your site becomes a dead end. So you've got the homepage, an about page, service page, maybe a blog. It's all on there. But if someone lands and they're maybe a little interested, and then what do you want them to do? If you don't know, they definitely don't know either. So they leave. Every page needs one obvious next step.

Just one, not five. It's book a call, [00:06:00] take a quiz, grab the guide. One clear thing. When you point someone down a hallway with 10 doors, they pick none. So give them only one, and they'll walk through it. I get that you might have a lot of lead magnets. I know I do too.

But think through the journey that your customer takes on your site. What do you wish they would do next? Maybe it's get on your list or book a call. Think through that journey, and take them down the path step by step.

Okay, leak number two, your website talks about you, but not them. That's where the copy comes in.

This one is everywhere, and I talked about it in last week's episode too, but it's something we've all done. Your site talks about you. You might say, "I've been doing this for twenty-five years, and I'm passionate about this," or, "I have a degree from this school, and I have a master's degree from this."

And listen, I get why. It feels like we're supposed to highlight why we're qualified. But the truth is, a first-time visitor does not care about you yet. That will come later. They care about one thing. Do you understand the problem they are stuck on, and can you help them?

So flip it and lead with their problem in their words. Feeling like you're dieting all the time and still not losing weight? That makes your customer feel seen, and people buy from people who make them feel seen. That's why I recommend putting vital information on the top of the homepage above the fold, as they say: what you do, who you help, and what they should do next. That's the page you're likely to end up first on your website.

Even the About page isn't really about you. It's about how you and your experience can help them. That's why they can trust you. Now, one you're in there re-writing this, don't accidentally delete the words that people are actually searching for. When you write for your customer, you're also writing to get found by Google.

Two birds, one stone. Just don't swing so hard toward the clever words or the industry jargon that you [00:08:00] strip out the plain, ordinary words that people actually search for. Keep those in. There's a lot of SEO tools out there like Ubersuggest or moz.com, and you can certainly use those to let you know what terms people are searching for.

Most of those have a free plan too. But here's the beautiful part. The words that make your customer feel seen, they're the same words she types into Google or asks AI. So that's a

starting point, and those are the words to use in your headlines, subheads, meta description, and body copy.

But start with the simple things. How do I lose ten pounds by Christmas? Or what are the best hiking shoes to buy? That's their language, and it's likely your best SEO bet too

all right, leak number three, nothing catches the buyer who's not ready to buy yet. This is the one that quietly costs you. Most people who land on your site aren't ready to buy today. They're looking, they're kicking the tires, so to speak, and that's totally normal.

But if the only options on your site are buy now or even book a call, and they're not there yet, they'll leave, and you never hear from them again. Gone for good. Unless you give them a small yes, something low commitment, a quiz to take, a guide, a checklist, something that says, "Hey, not ready yet? Totally fine.

Grab this and stay in my world." That's how you stop losing the 90% who aren't ready yet. You catch them instead of watching them walk away. Then you can grow that relationship through email

And you should put a call to action like that on every page of your site. Okay, so that was three quick leaks that you can look for on your site. Remember, a beautiful website was never the goal. A website that does its job is what you're aiming for. You've got design, UX, the pretty parts all handled. What's been costing you is the copy, the SEO, and the sales, layers three, four, and five. Give every page one clear next step. Talk to them and their [00:10:00] problem, not about yourself, and catch the ones who aren't ready to buy yet. That's it. Unless you want a whole new look, new content, or to spend a lot of time and money, this is probably all you need instead of a redesign. Just add the layers that you skipped. Next week, we're gonna talk about driving traffic to your site because as I found out with my first site, they won't come on their own.

But get your site ready to go first. That's the first step. There's no point in driving a bunch of people to a website that leaks customers. You'd be working so hard to get them there and then losing them the second they arrive. So plug the leaks first, and Next week we'll figure out the one traffic source That's actually worth your time, including that AEO piece, how people are finding businesses now through AI, not just Google. It's changing fast. You're gonna wanna hear it. One thing before you go, remember leak number three, the small yes? I just wanna give you one myself. You can take the marketing clarity quiz.

It's at janicehostager.com/quiz, and we'll tell you exactly which stage of the trail is where you're losing people so you're not guessing. Two minutes, go ahead and find out what's actually costing you a client. Thanks so much for joining me today. For more information about anything we talked about, visit i'll see you next time. Bye for now