



READY TO TURN YOUR WEBSITE INTO A MARKETING MACHINE?

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DEAR SMALL CREATIVE BUSINESS OWNER

WE'RE IN THE
SAME BOAT, YOU & I



I don't know about you, but of the many plates in life and business that I need to juggle, marketing my business is always the biggest hustle and the loudest nagging voice because it feels like there is always so much to be done and that everyone else is doing it better anyway.

Ever heard the phrase 'comparison is the thief of joy'? Sure, it's true. But what the hell are we meant to do about that? Ignore everyone else? Go our own sweet way?

It's easy to say that we should only focus on creating our own authentic message , but we still need to make ourselves heard above the noise of social media.

Over the next few pages, I want to tackle some myths about running a small creative business and give you the practical website and marketing hacks that have worked for me, as I've built The Design Space into a successful niche design business.

Some of these actions are quick fixes and others take more thought and more effort, but all of them can be done relatively quickly. And if you do all of them, you will be seriously levelling up your marketing game.

BEFORE WE GET STARTED.

I want to bust some common myths, so that we're all starting on the same page.

MYTH:

If your work is good enough, the bookings will come.

REALITY:

Just putting your work out there doesn't cut it these days. The competition is fierce and there are a lot of people shouting 'pick me' in the digital world.

You need to be saying **'this is why you should pick me.'**

See the difference?



MYTH:

You should ignore what everyone else in your market is doing and just do your own sweet thing.

REALITY:

You need to know what your competitors are offering, so that you can stand out from the crowd, by being memorable whilst you tell your clients what you can do for them.

The last part is the secret. Stop being so polite and start being creative with what you are showing and telling people. You need to stand for something.

MYTH:

One day, you'll finish your website and you can sit back and just count the money.

REALITY:

Hahahaha. If that was true, I wouldn't be sitting here writing this gorgeous ebook for you. Yes, it's a great resource (if I do say so myself) but it's part of my overall, ever-evolving, ever-changing marketing strategy.

Does my marketing strategy work? Hell yeah. You gave me your email, didn't you?

BUT the minute you gave it to me, a well-oiled machine sprang into action. All the helpful emails, the prompts to join my Facebook group, the links to free resources? All automated, all of the time.

Sure, I have to keep things fresh by creating new content - no one wants to see the same old marketing messages going round and round - but the system stays the same. And you can do this too.

...cont/

SO IN SHORT WE NEED TO...

1

MAKE OUR WEBSITE CONTENT WORK HARDER

Keep an eye on the playing field, note what's going on and take steps to get noticed for doing something different.

2

STOP BEING SO DAMN POLITE

Once we have their attention, just putting our work out there isn't good enough. We have to tell people why it's better, do it with style and be memorable.

3

TAKE THE RELATIONSHIP BEYOND THE CONTACT FORM

We need to create an automated system that does this over and over again (or at least does some of the heavy lifting).

**Sound good?
Let's get into it.**



MAKE YOUR WEBSITE CONTENT WORK HARDER

Your social media

It's Monday morning. You should be doing something boring, like emails or editing or filing receipts. But if you work from home and if you're anything like me, you'll probably be idly scrolling through some form of social media to see what everyone got up to at the weekend.

Some of those people will be your friends, some will be your competition and some will be both. But most of their posts will be saying and doing exactly the same thing.

'Look at my cute dog'.

'Look at my cute kid'.

'Look at my yummy breakfast'

'Look at this cool cake I made'.

'Look how far I ran'.

'Look at this lovely image I shot'.

Look, look, look. Look at me. Look at my work.

Go on. Pick your phone up and go have a little look on Facebook or Instagram. (Don't be too long - I'm trusting you not to get distracted!)

See what I mean. These posts are nice but they are like junk food. They don't fill you up with knowledge. The post might show you something beautiful, but it doesn't feel like you're learning anything of real value or making a meaningful connection. 'Sit back and admire' doesn't really inspire anyone to take action.



The key is showing

THE RIGHT MESSAGE
TO THE RIGHT PERSON
AT THE RIGHT TIME

And not just once, but several times. You have to show them that message until it feels like choosing anyone but you is too much of a risk.

So let me ask you something.

Would you trust me to build your website?

Of course you would (well, I hope so anyway).

And why do you trust me?

Because I've told you and shown you that I can build great websites, probably more than once. That I have good technical knowledge and that I specialise in solving your specific problems as a photographer or creative business owner.



Some of you reading this may have been in my audience for some time. You will have seen me sharing my knowledge, tips and expertise many times. You will often see posts and content from me (clue - if you visit my website, you'll see more content from me in your social media feeds).

Now I **could** relentlessly post about beautiful websites I've built, but I don't do that because people tune it out. Posts like that just become part of the 'look at this thing' background noise.

How did you end up here, reading this, for example?

Because you saw something I was offering, that could solve a specific problem you are having. ie. get more business.

You signed up for this e-book because you thought you could learn something.

What's the common thread running through all of this?

My website, packed with useful content, that I direct you to again and again. I don't just direct you to my website of course. I direct you to a specific piece of content that will solve a problem for you. And that (hopefully) is the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

So here's my question.

**What are you putting out there that people
REALLY, REALLY WANT?**

Your blog

Here's how this relates to your small, creative business.

Let's say you're a wedding photographer, writing a blog post about a lovely wedding you've shot. I bet this is how it goes...

"I had the privilege of shooting the (insert dramatic adjective) romantic / to-die-for / enchanting wedding of XXX.

Set in the beautiful grounds of (insert venue name because you think it helps with SEO), the ceremony was filled with love / doves / flowers / tears of joy.

Didn't they look lovely?"

Obviously I'm paraphrasing a bit.

Great news! The couple who star in your blog post are going to love it.
Not so great news. You've already got their money, so why on earth are you writing a polite recap of a day that's been and gone?

And writing up blogs about shoots is boring for you too, right? Same old, same old. And if it doesn't excite you, it certainly won't excite anyone else.

When everyone is shouting 'look at me', instead you can be saying 'let's take a look at how this relates to you and what you need.'

This is why people buy wedding magazines or read wedding blogs. Because they are looking for information that will help them plan **their own wedding**.

So here's your challenge.

You need to place yourself in the role of 'expert' and ask yourself:

What needs do my ideal clients have?

What problems can I solve for them?

What are they likely to be most worried about?

What expertise can I share with them that they won't already have?

Every blog post you write, even it's about a shoot or a piece of work you've done for someone, needs to be written with your future client in mind.

Here's an example. Read both of these and tell me which one you'd be more likely to click on.

"Head over to the blog to see Sarah & Rob's beautiful beach wedding. It's gorgeous!"

Not bad, but kind of bland, right? Beyond Sarah and Rob and their immediate family, the appeal is pretty limited.

Now, try this instead:

"Are you organising a destination wedding? Find out how Sarah & Rob organised their dream wedding in Hawaii on a shoestring budget and created a beautiful outdoor space for their beach reception with just a few accessories. Sarah's top tips will save you money without compromising on style."

Boom! This is going to appeal to a far wider audience because they can learn something useful whilst enjoying your beautiful images. Once you start to look at all content creation from this perspective, it stops being a chore and starts getting exciting. Every piece of content creation, from social media to blog posts, becomes an opportunity to solve a problem for a potential client.

ACTIONS

1. Identify your clients' pain points

- Make a list of the things your clients are most likely to be worried about. Be as specific as you can.
- Make a list of tips that you know due to your experience and expertise. Again, be specific.
- With the questions above in mind, write two or three blog posts (or could be videos) to answer those questions.
- These blog posts will be your cornerstone content and act as lead magnets. ie. mindblowingly good content to kickstart your relationship. By the way, this ebook you're reading? It's a lead magnet of course.

2. Give your best content a facelift

- Find past posts which show off your most killer work and rewrite them with your future clients in mind.
- Ask yourself what was it about that job / thing / shoot that other people in the same position would love and learn from? Was it the people you photographed? Great. Give two or three tips about how to relax and enjoy your own wedding.
- Was it the venue? Cool. Point out two or three locations where they can get killer shots. Was it the killer sunset? Explain about planning your timeline around golden hour.
- Don't forget to re-title those blog posts to appeal to your ideal clients and not your past ones.

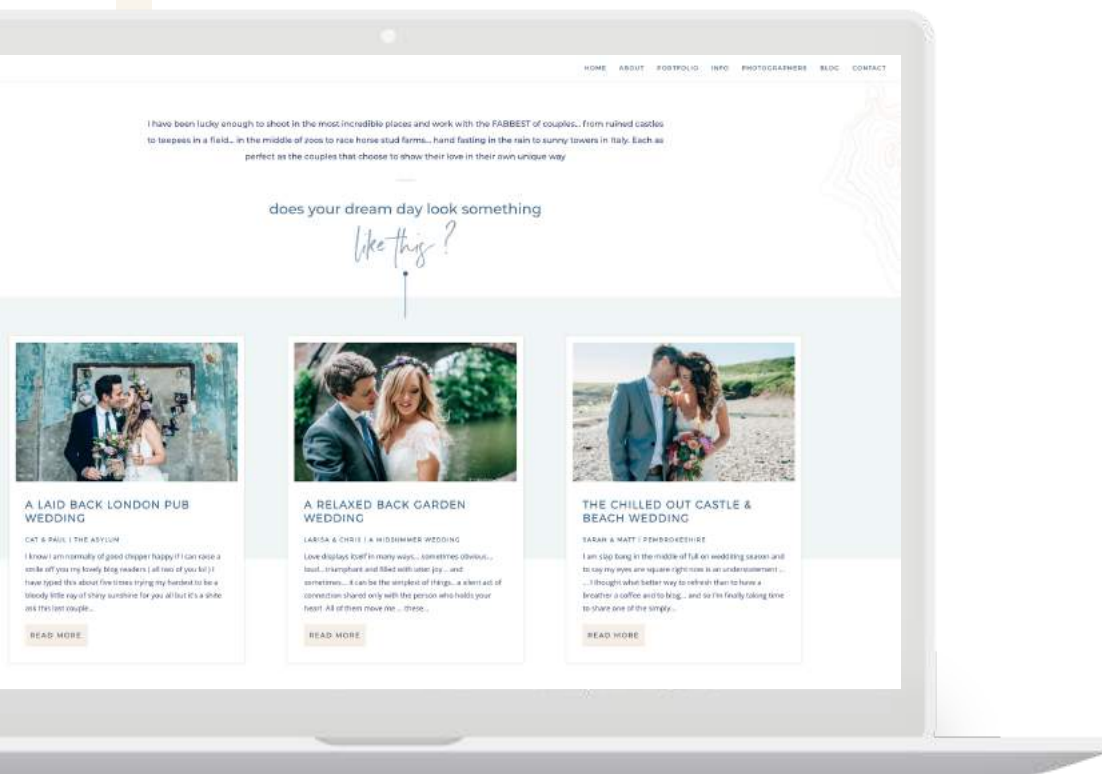
...cont/

CHECK OUT THIS PORTFOLIO PAGE

EXAMPLE

From the moment you land on Andrea's Ellison's website, she lets you know the ideal client she is looking for. Chilled out, relaxed and fun loving.

Hit her portfolio page and the message couldn't be clearer. The titles of the blog posts she shows below her main gallery describe exactly the kind of wedding she wants to book.



Visit andreaellison.co.uk

STOP BEING SO DAMN POLITE

2

**It's time to tell people what you can do for them and why
YOU should be the one to do it.**

MISTAKE #1:

Ninety percent of websites I see are so polite.

And polite = dull. Sorry, but it's true.

When you're busy trying not to offend anyone, you're also not going to attract anyone. Put it this way. Is your dream client polite but distant, all business and reluctant to give away anything too personal about themselves in case they offend you?

Of course not. If you don't want that person, don't be that person. It's perfectly fine if you're not everyone's cup of tea. In fact, it's a good thing.

I'm sure this isn't news to you. You've probably been told by plenty of other people that you need to 'attract your ideal client', to 'know them inside out'.

It's the first branding exercise you always get asked to do.

Fine, you know them. Then why the hell aren't you speaking their language? So many of my clients are warm, funny, laid-back and are absolutely kickass at doing their job. But you wouldn't know it from reading their website.



MISTAKE #2:
No brand proposition.

You need to reach out to your ideal client, tell them what you can do for them to solve their specific problem. And you need to do it on your home page.

Remember, your home page has only one job to do and that's to get people to click just once and get further into your site.

Don't hold back - you might never get another chance.

MISTAKE #3:
Not setting your portfolio page up to sell.

Remember the 'right people, right message, right time' concept? Your portfolio pages are where you put this into action on your website.

Firstly, let's talk about what happens when your name is in the running for a job. Your ideal client sits down with a partner, relative or friend to show them the shortlist.

You're on their list. High five.

But wait. Maybe you don't have a 'best of the best' gallery and your number one fan has to dig through a load of blog posts to find the killer images they saw last time.

Or maybe you've got a huge gallery that's not all-killer-no-filler and it goes on and on and on...

They get bored. They click away. You're off the list. Game over.

If there was a ruthlessly curated gallery of your bestest ever epic shots, they wouldn't get bored. And if you're worried that people want to see a full gallery of the same thing, cool.



Suggest some blog posts below that do exactly that. And of course, you already know which blog posts those should be, right?

Yes! Those carefully rewritten posts that target your ideal client, that are useful, that scream, "click me because I can tell you something that you really want to know".

Remember Andrea's portfolio page? *That's* what I'm talking about.

ACTIONS

1. Craft your brand statement and put it front and centre.

I realise this comes to some more easily than others. We can't all be writers. If you don't know where to start, this simple exercise will lay the foundations for you.

Exercise:

- Describe your business style or product in 2 words.
- Describe your ideal client in 2 words.
- Add your 'unique twist'.
- Then tell them what you believe.

Then put it all together. I'll go first.



Stunning, easy-to-use website templates
for small, creative businesses, with unlimited support.

**WE BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE
CAN BUILD THEIR OWN
BEAUTIFUL WEBSITE**

2. Forget the me, me, me. It's all about them.

Go have a look at your home page.

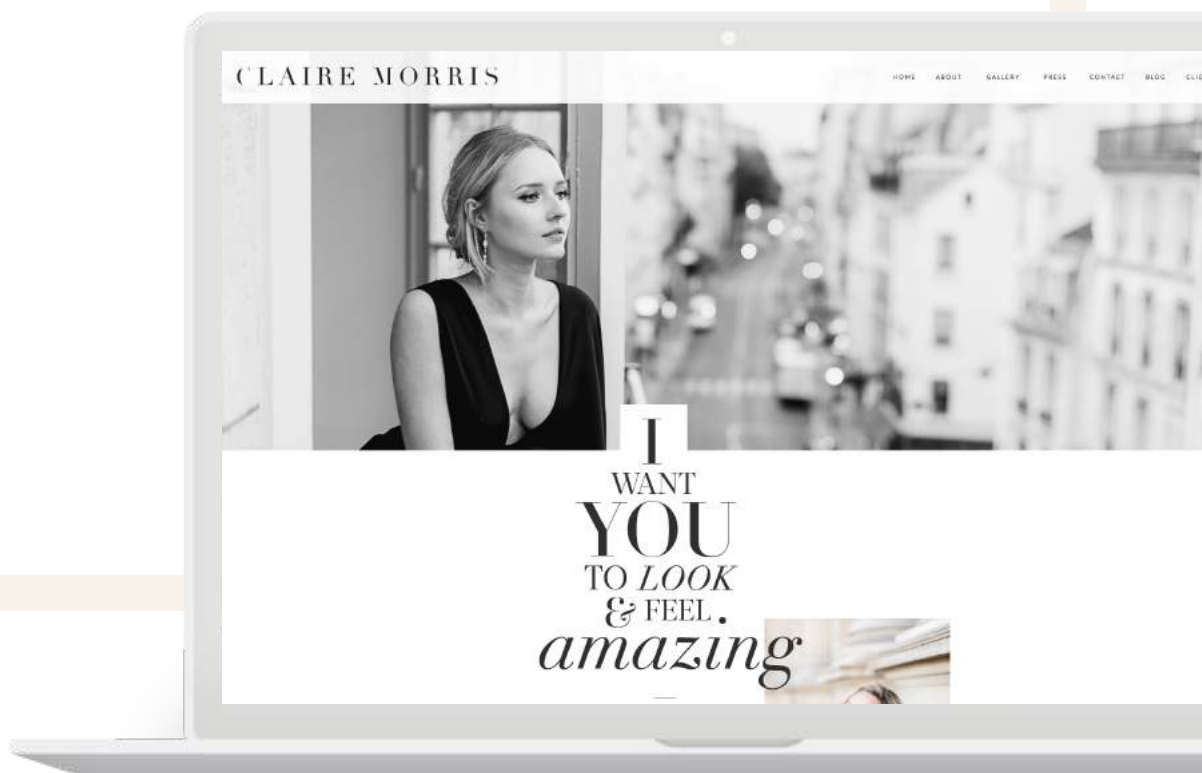
Is the first piece of text all about you? Does it go on about you? Does it mention or describe your ideal client anywhere on your home page?

If it doesn't, it needs to. Describe them and tell them what you're going to do for them. They'll feel right at home.

EXAMPLE

Check out Claire Morris' stunning home page. The first paragraph is so highly targeted that you're left in no doubt that Claire can deliver exactly what her dream client wants.

Visit clairemorrisphotography.com



3. Ruthlessly edit your portfolio page

You must have a best-of-the-best gallery. Give your potential clients the tools they need to sell you to themselves and other decision makers.

Be ruthless. Every single image in your gallery has to earn its place. No duplication. No filler. Don't hold anything back.

Go find those key blog posts that speak to a niche you want to reach and put them right underneath your gallery.

You want to shoot a specific kind of event or client? Show it now.

Attract or repel.

Do one or the other.

Don't do nothing.



TAKE THE RELATIONSHIP BEYOND THE CONTACT FORM

Getting visitors to your contact page isn't the end game. Instead, this is where the real fun begins.

Let's say your visitors like what they see and they're ready to get in touch. They complete your contact form, press submit...drumroll....

"Your form has been successfully submitted".

The moment they press send is the most excited they are ever going to be about hearing from you and what do you give them?

The standard contact form success message. Snooze.

This is your golden opportunity to **not** do what everyone else does - to stand out from the crowd.

In fact, this could be the beginning of that beautiful relationship.

It's time to level up.

First, don't leave them hanging. Instead, send them to a 'contact success page' and get creative. How about throwing a little informal video in there?

(And I mean informal - **here's mine**. I get upstaged by my own cat).

Why not add some really useful blog posts that help establish you as an expert? Eg. If you're a wedding photographer, show them some posts about....wedding planning of course!

Remember, you're the expert.

You've probably been to more weddings in a year than most people attend in their entire lifetime.

And don't forget to direct them to your social media. If you love Insta, chances are that they love Insta - it's the perfect place to tempt them with your Instagram feed.

But wait, there's more...

Your contact success page is more than just a page. It's a secret marketing weapon that very few small creative businesses use. In fact, whilst writing this ebook, I filled out 100 contact forms on photographer websites and not a single one was using it.

You know how you visit some websites to browse their products and a few hours later, you're being stalked all over social media?

(Yes, dear reader, I bought the Mahabi slippers. They wore me down.)

The secret is Facebook retargeting ads.



RETARGETING ISN'T JUST FOR BIG BUSINESSES

Why?

Firstly, it costs next to nothing because you are only targeting the specific people who have visited your website. You can even narrow it down further to people who have visited a specific page like...you guessed it...your contact success page.

Imagine filling out someone's contact page, been redirected to a cool video message and a bunch of helpful blog posts and then, the next day seeing...**NOT** an ad....but....

Instead, how about a video showing you doing your thing?
Or maybe a super helpful blog post?
Or a beautiful slideshow of your best work...

That's right, you can choose to show the very people who have just filled out your contact form **any kind of content you choose**, just to give them an extra nudge towards choosing you.

It doesn't have to be salesy. It can be subtle and it can be cool and completely in line with the rest of your brand messaging.

And to do it, all you need is the Facebook pixel installed on your website. (Of course, the Facebook pixel can do a helluva lot more, but that's a topic for another time).

And you don't have to stop there.

How about showing people a specific piece of content, if they read a specific blog post? Or view your gallery?

Remember, you are dealing with a very small number of people here, and you are showing those exact people more content, for just a few bucks, on both Facebook and Instagram.

Organic reach can't do this. Even boosted posts can't do this. Facebook retargeting can do all this and more, for a fraction of the price.

And what better place to start than with your hottest leads - the people who have already filled out your contact form? Who already have you on their mind.



ACTIONS

Map out every step beyond your contact form.

- Get rid of that default form success message. You know who you are.
- Create a contact success page to redirect your keen-as-mustard prospective clients to.
- Get creative with the contact success page. Make the video. It doesn't have to be a creative masterpiece. It just has to be genuinely you.
- Install the Facebook pixel. Do it now.
- Retarget your website visitors. All of them. Show them different pieces of content on social media, depending on which pages they visit.
- At the very least, please please please retarget those very few precious people who have actually filled out your contact form.

WE'RE NEARLY THERE

Let's recap.

SOCIAL MESSAGING

Share content that's focused on solving problems for your dream client to help you stand out from the crowd.



THE KILLER HOME PAGE

Get that brand positioning statement done! Tell people who you are for, what you are going to do for them and do it with passion.

CONTACT FORM & BEYOND

Cultivate your hottest leads by surprising and delighting them after contact and re-targeting them with problem-solving content.



SO, ARE YOU **READY TO DO THIS?**

I hope so, because these are the strategies I use in my business every single day and so do many of the world's most successful online businesses.

You might be selling an offline product, but just like me, you're looking for your clients on social media and these actions will help you to stand out in a noisy, crowded market.

**Send the right message, to the right person, at the right time.
Be memorable.**

You got this.

PS. To help you get this stuff done, I've gathered all of the action points into a handy print-off checklist on the next page.

PPS. WHO AM I?

[Read my story >](#)



ACTION SUMMARY



Craft your brand statement and put it front and centre.



Make your home page all about them.



Ruthlessly edit your portfolio page.



Have one gallery of killer shots.



Target your dream clients with niche blog posts. Rewrite them if you have to. Think like a pro blogger and give them the info they really need.



Map out every step beyond your contact form.



Build an entertaining and helpful contact success page.



Retarget your enquiries with creative content on Facebook & Instagram.



WANT TO CHAT ABOUT THIS BOOK?

Join our friendly
Facebook group

The Design Space Lounge

