

E199: Your Website Has 7 Seconds to Make an Impression

UN-Market Your Business Podcast — Clean Transcript

CAROL: Hey, how are you? Welcome back to another episode of the UN-Market Your Business Podcast. Today we are talking about seven seconds — because that's really all you have. From the moment someone lands on your website until they decide, "This isn't for me, I'm out" or "This person gets me, let me go deeper." So did you know that your website might be losing visitors before they read a single word that you've written?

Today we're going to discover what happens in those critical few seconds when someone lands on your home page, what visitors are deciding in their head, and how you can make the right person feel instantly seen. All that's coming up in a bit.

But before we get to that, I have to let you know that I only have five — count them, one, two, three, four, five — five more co-author spots in the book *Perfectly Positioned to Soar*. Four amazing, super awesome authors have already come in, gotten their welcome packages, and they are ready to go. So five more spots. Are you one of them? I'm waiting on you. You could be my next bestselling author, because this book is headed to bestselling territory — I can tell you that.

Do I have to remind you that I've got ten bestselling books already, plus a few more I've created for my clients? So I would love for you to be a co-author in this one. How do you get in? I'm everywhere — CSI Corporation, whatever social media platform you want, I'm there. Message me, DM me, or you can go to the show notes of this episode and leave me a message there. You can also email me. However you want to do it, look up Carol J. Dunlop online and connect with me, because this book is going. I'm going to cut off authorship in two weeks no matter what, because we cannot just keep going and going — we have to make it happen.

So I want you in there. Here's what you get: a two-page spread inside the book with your business information, your picture, your website — everything anyone needs to work with you — plus your chapter, a free gift you can offer readers so they can get on your email list, and you can include your favorite scripture or quote. But those are the details, and I'll give you the full rundown once you connect with me. I'm waiting. You don't have a lot of time.

CAROL: It is Tech Time! The technology I'm talking about today is Claude AI — Claude. You know I talk about him all the time. And yes, I call him "him." Don't judge me. We get along just fine about 95% of the time. Sometimes he throws some errors and needs to take a little break, but for the most part he is working and producing and helping me in a big way.

The main reason I talk about Claude all the time is that you can brainstorm with him. You can give Claude the beginning of an idea, and he is going to help you sort through it, flesh it out, and

give you stuff you never even thought about. He is one of the five partners I showcased in my latest masterclass inside the Academy.

If you want to get Claude, just go to Claude.ai. I don't think they have an affiliate system yet, so I'm not getting anything from it — just go sign up. It's actually free. And I think you can get it in the Apple App Store now too, so however you want to access it, just get it. If you're a little hesitant, just try it out. Help Claude learn who you are, what you do, who you serve, and then start using him. Because the productivity gains are real.

The things I've created with Claude — or used Claude to help me create — would have taken me hours, weeks, months to produce. And we can do them in minutes. You hear me? Minutes. If something is going to take you eight hours to get out of your head, write up, and get ready for someone to buy, just think about cutting that down to maybe 30 minutes. Go back and forth with Claude, brainstorm it out, see what comes up. It is a game changer. For real.

Use it now, before the AI bots completely take over. They've already changed a lot — they've taken a lot of the jobs that recent college graduates used to do, and a bachelor's degree is starting to feel kind of obsolete. But I'm not worried about all of that. I'm taking care of me, I'm putting my faith in God, and honestly, I'm a little bit older, so by the time the bots fully take over, I'll probably be out of here anyway. So go ahead and get this thing done. You won't regret it.

When we come back, I'm going to tell you all about those seven seconds on your website and what you can do to make sure every single one of them counts. Stay tuned — be back in just a few minutes.

CAROL: Are you ready to see if you pass the seven-second test? Because your website might be losing visitors before they ever look at anything or click to another page. Today we're going to discover what happens in that critical first moment when someone lands on your home page, what visitors are deciding in their head, and how you can make the right person feel like they've found exactly what they've been looking for.

So first, let's do the seven-second thing. I'm going to count it out so you can see exactly how long you actually have to make an impression before someone decides to stay or bounce.

That's it. That's all the time you have from the moment someone lands on your website until they decide whether they're going to go deeper or leave. Most coaches and service providers assume a slow website or a pretty design is what makes or breaks first impressions. Those things have a lot to do with it, but they are not everything. Because the real culprit is always communication — the communication between you and the person who just landed on your website.

If you have a design they can't figure out, yes, they're going to bounce. But if they stop and actually look at your page, they're going to make a decision very quickly. Research shows that visitors decide whether to stay or leave in the first seven seconds, and they're asking themselves one question: *Is this for me?* If the answer isn't a clear yes, they're out.

Here's what they're looking for subconsciously. First: *Is this for someone like me?* Visitors are scanning for their own reflection in your website. Do they see themselves? Do they see you helping someone like them? A home page that speaks to everybody really speaks to nobody, and your ideal clients will feel that disconnect immediately if the page is generic.

Second: *Do I understand what this person does?* We don't have time to waste. If someone was looking for help with email marketing, followed a great post on social media to your website, and your home page doesn't say anything about email marketing, they're gone. They're asking themselves: what do you do, who do you do it for, and am I included in that?

Third: *What's in it for me?* WIIFM. Why am I on this person's website? Can they do anything for me, and if so, what are the results I'm most likely going to get? You have to hook them before they even think about scrolling. So if your home page answers those three questions — is this for someone like me, do I understand what this person does, and what's in it for me — you've kept them. They're going to scroll, they're going to click around. But if not, they're bouncing.

CAROL: So I just hinted at it — what is the most important real estate on your website? Everything above the fold. If you're looking at a screen right now, everything from the top to about the middle of what you can see without scrolling — that's it. That's above the fold.

This concept comes from when we used to have newspapers. Remember those? They were big, and they used to fold them in half. When you went to pick one up at the newsstand, all you could see was the top half. The headlines in that space were the ones that made you pick it up. On your website, above the fold means everything visible on the screen when the page first loads, before anyone scrolls. That's your window. That's where the decision gets made.

I've seen so many coaches and consultants with real results and years and years of expertise leading with a vague feel-good phrase, a stock photo that could belong to anyone, and a headline that says nothing about who the site is for or what problem it solves. Just a "Welcome to my site." We don't care about your site — we want to know what's in it for us.

So there are three things every home page needs above that fold. Number one: a headline that speaks directly to your ideal client's problem or desire. Not your tagline. Not your business name. Not a clever phrase that only makes sense after someone already knows what you do. Your headline should make the right person think, "Oh, this is for me. This person is for me. I'm home." And it should make the wrong person think, "This isn't for me," so they bounce off. That's actually okay. We don't want the wrong people staying — we want the right people to feel instantly welcome.

Number two: a clarifying line of text, kind of like a sub-headline, that explains what you do and who you serve. It goes right beneath or near the headline, definitely above the fold. Your visitor saw your headline and got curious — this clarifying line is what makes it a yes or a no. One or two

sentences, no jargon, no industry speak. You want to relate to them in the language they actually use.

Here's a fill-in-the-blank formula you can use: *I [teach / coach / instruct] [specific who] to [specific result] without [the thing they're afraid of].* Let me do it quickly with my book offer: "I help purpose-driven entrepreneurs become bestselling authors without having to write the entire book or figure out the process alone." It's a little long, but that was off the top of my head — you get the idea. That's what you do. And they understand it immediately.

Number three: one clear next step. They know what you do. They see the results you deliver. Now what? What happens next? I have a great story about this. Years ago, when I was getting more solidified in my marketing business, I had a meeting with a potential client. It went great — I told her everything she needed to know, laid it all out. And then we got to the end, where I was supposed to say, "I recommend this program for you, and here's how much it is." Instead, I just sat there. She sat there. And then she asked me, "What do I do next? Is there a link or something? How do I pay?"

I was completely leaving money on the table because I did not have a clear next step. I didn't give her a chance to buy. Don't do that on your website. You are the expert. You are the authority. So you have to tell them what to do.

Your call to action above the fold should be one thing — not 25 options, not a navigation menu full of choices. One button. One direction. One invitation. The specific action matters less than the clarity. In most cases, it's going to be a lead magnet that gets them onto your email list, because you typically can't sell someone the very first time they land on your page. It takes around 21 touches — blog posts, social media, a podcast, emails — before people buy. But they are watching you the whole time. They're checking you out. They're waiting to see if someone comes along and says, "Yes, I worked with her and it was amazing." So get them on your list. Give them a clear first step. Let the relationship build.

CAROL: Now here's the piece most coaches spend the least time on — and it does the most work on your entire site. The home page headline.

A magnetic home page headline is not your name and title. It's not a vague phrase like "Live the life you've always dreamed of." I mean, it sounds good, right? But what does it actually mean? You don't want people landing on your website thinking, "What does that mean?" You want them to know clearly and precisely, "This is exactly what that means."

The headline that stops the scroll and stops the bounce is one that names either the problem your ideal client is living with right now, or the outcome they're desperately trying to reach. And it needs to be written in language they would actually use when talking to a friend or typing something into Google. Not industry language. Not jargon. Something that gets to them.

Here's a simple test. Read your current headline out loud — the one that's on your site right now. Would your ideal client use that exact phrase when describing their problem? Does it sound like something they'd say, or does it sound like something from a brochure? If it sounds like a brochure, I want you to rewrite it.

Let me give you three examples of how to turn this around. I'm sure you've seen versions of these on websites before and just felt something — you didn't know exactly why, you just felt, "Oh, that's good." Now you'll know why.

Example one. Before: *Empowering women to step into their greatness.* It sounds good, but it tells me nothing specific. After: *You've spent 20 years building someone else's dream. Let's build yours.* Now that headline speaks directly to a woman who has been in corporate or working for someone else and is ready for something of her own. She knows exactly who that's for.

Example two. Before: *Comprehensive virtual assistant services.* Sounds professional, but what's in it for me? After: *Finally off your plate — the admin work that's been eating your best hours.* That's specific. That's real. And it doesn't even use the words "virtual assistant" — but if you're looking for one, you know exactly what that means and you're ready to explore.

Example three. Before: *Your partner in business growth.* After: *More clients, fewer chaos spirals. Here's how we get there.* More clients — yes. Chaos spirals — every entrepreneur knows exactly what that means. And "here's how we get there" creates curiosity and a next step all in one line.

The after versions are specific. They make a visitor stop and think, "Wait — this person actually gets it. This is what I've been looking for."

CAROL: Alright, here is your challenge. This is the seven-second home page audit. You can do this yourself, on your own home page, right now.

First, open your website in an incognito or private browser window. This is how a web visitor sees your site — without any saved history or cookies. Set a timer for seven seconds, and while it's going, truly look at your website as if you are your ideal client seeing it for the very first time. Stay above the fold — don't scroll yet. But notice if the page makes you want to scroll. That's actually a good sign.

When the timer stops, answer these five questions honestly:

One — can you tell immediately who this website is for? Not kind of, not after reading around. Immediately.

Two — do you clearly understand what problem this website owner solves?

Three — is there one obvious next step? A button, a link, something telling you exactly what to click or do.

Four — does the website feel credible, professional, and real? You know when you land on a site and something just feels off. Trust that instinct.

Five — after looking at the page for seven seconds, do you feel confident moving forward, or do you feel confused?

If you answered "no" or "not sure" to any of those questions, that is exactly where your work starts. It has to be a clear yes across the board. Every one of those gaps can be identified. And here is the really good news: every single one of them can be fixed.

CAROL: Now, your website might not require a full rebuild. But it does require conversion-ready copy, a clear structure, and a real strategy for what your home page is supposed to accomplish. Because your home page is a door to the rest of your business — it's your hub online, and it either lets people in or sends them away. Is your house messy when they walk in? Does it need some cleaning? Or do they walk into a sparkly, clean, refreshing space where they know exactly what to do?

When you can answer that question honestly, you'll know exactly what your website is doing — or not doing — for you.

And this is what's going to help you get that work done, attract clients instead of bouncing them away: the WOW Website Planner. The WOW Website Planner is a strategic — let me say that again — strategic planning resource I developed based on my 30-plus years of building client-converting websites for coaches, consultants, and service providers. It walks you through identifying the gaps between what your home page is doing now and what it needs to do, which is a big part of why so many websites fail to convert in the first place.

The WOW Website Planner helps you map out your above-the-fold content with clarity, plan every section of your site strategically, and get your website ready to convert — whether you work with CSI Corporation or another designer. Go to csicorporation.com/planner right now and download it free. Because you don't have to pay anything. It's free. Download it, do what it says, and then get on your roll.

CAROL: Alright, let's recap what we talked about today.

Number one: you only have seven seconds to get website visitors to stop and look at what you're doing. The wrong people will bounce out — and that's fine. The right people will stay and keep going.

Number two: what's above the fold is everything. Your home page needs your headline, your clarifying line, and your call to action all visible before anyone scrolls. When people are ready to scroll, they should already know what they're getting into. They're ready to learn more, see more, do more.

Number three: your headline tells visitors more than you think. If you have a client-converting headline at the top that tells people who you are, who you serve, how you get the results you get, and what it's like to work with you — all in one sentence? Woo hoo! That is amazing. That is what we're going for.

Would you like free coaching from me? Simple. Just go to UNMarketYourBusiness.com/podcast.

CAROL: Alright, it's time to get this book in your hands. *She Thinks Like a CEO* is a book I brought out a couple of years ago with six or seven co-authors, each of us sharing the technology we use to move the needle in our businesses. You'll see how different entrepreneurs are using video marketing, email marketing, social media marketing, and more to move their businesses forward. Inside, you'll discover the key to achieving success as a dynamic female entrepreneur — and a roadmap for how to leverage modern business technology to your advantage, whether your business is just starting out or already in a growth phase. Go get your copy at csicorporation.com/things.

CAROL: Now, my client success story for today is Sabrina Hammonds. Congratulations, Sabrina! She is a website client — I believe we finished her website last year or early this year. She has been phenomenal to work with, and we're still working together because we handle her ongoing site maintenance, keeping everything up and running and looking awesome.

She is amazing and fabulous. And she sent me a video testimonial about working with me that was so heartfelt and so real — I was sitting there just about crying. It was exactly what I do and why I do it. When we released her new site and got ready to promote it, she landed a new client directly from the website before we had even put anything out there. We knew it had to come from the site because we hadn't promoted a thing. That's a wow moment right there.

Head over to csicorporation.com and look for the blog post on "website shame" — that's where you'll see Sabrina's before-and-after website transformation. Congratulations again, Sabrina!

CAROL: Ready for your spotlight? All you need to do is be awesome — either as a client of mine, or by letting me know you used or followed the advice from a previous episode. Post about it on social media and tag me at CSI Corporation, using the hashtag **#BestOnMarketingStrategy**.

So remember the challenge — the seven-second home page audit. Go through the audit, answer the questions, and then decide your next step. Are you going to fix it yourself, or are you going to hire someone? If you're thinking about hiring help, before you spend any money, download the WOW Website Planner at csicorporation.com/planner and get clear on exactly what you need done. It's free, so there's no reason not to.

CAROL: Now, coming up next — and this is a big one — Episode 200 is right around the corner! I have been working toward this milestone for a while, and it's finally here. And I'm not going to make it about me — I'm making it all about you. Specifically, we're going to talk about the things that are sitting on your website right now that should be building your email list and bringing you clients, but probably aren't. We're talking about your client-converting lead magnet. It's a big topic and a big episode number, so I want you there.

Thank you so much for listening today. I hope this episode brought you value, and if it did, I would love for you to share it with someone who needs it. That helps the podcast get out there, more people know about it, and it changes more businesses. Leave a review on whatever platform you listen on — people are always looking for great content and great teachers to check out, and I want to be in that mix. I want you to listen to me and do what I say, because I've been doing what I say for 30-plus years and it is working. My business is on fire, my life is amazing, and I have clarity and peace. So I think I got something worth saying.

Thank you for listening. Thank you for being here. I'll see you again next time. Bye for now!

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