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Lawrence: Lawrence Neal here and welcome back to highintensitybusiness.com. This is episode 255. Today's guest is Greg Merrilees. Greg is passionate about really good looking website design that gets results. Over the past few years Studio 1 has custom designed over 1,500 websites for some high level entrepreneurs including Kevin Rogers, Perry Marshall, Jordan Harbinger, James Schramko, Chris Ducker and Ezra Firestone. They even designed a website for Frank Oz the voice of Yoda, Miss Piggy, other Muppets and Sesame Street characters. They currently have a team of 20 people who work remotely. Greg, welcome to the show.

Greg: Thanks so much for having me Lawrence. It's a pleasure to be here buddy.

Lawrence: You're welcome. I've been excited to obviously have you on the show because I feel like this is an area which really needs some attention in my particular industry. There's a lot of entrepreneurs in high intensity training who run one-on-one personal training studios who've been in this business for decades and suffice to say, a lot of them have left their websites alone for longer than they should have. Some of them don't even... In fact, many of them don't have websites and some will even say that they don't need one and we can discuss that. But I do feel like it's such an important factor to get the website right in today's world. If you want to attract the right client, if you want to have a high conversion and generate more leads, if you want to attract trainers and build a great team around your business, I think that the website is so important.

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Lawrence: So yeah, excited to talk to you about this. So let's see, I'm just thinking of we've obviously worked together before, you were very helpful in doing the branding, the logo, the style for my own business. And we're talking to you about a web design for our studio here in Galway. And I've just been so impressed with you, everything I've seen in terms of content you've done with our mutual friends, the web designs you've done for people, the process we went through with you. I just feel so comfortable and confident and it's really nice to see someone who's all about results. And there's plenty of web designers out there who can create a flashy pretty looking website, but I'm not interested in that. I'm interested in websites that actually drive the outcomes we want and it's really refreshing to see someone who's very much on that same page as me.

Lawrence: So that's awesome. So you're a great fine is what I'm trying to say. So obviously I would highly recommend you to, in fact, I already do and I'm hoping that people will connect with you to start working on their websites. So I guess as a way to start this one off, I'd love to talk about a little bit history. How would you feel and you've been in this game for ages, so how do you feel website design and maybe we can try and make it... Or this might be general but we could try and make it relate mostly to the fitness world. But how do you think website design has changed over the last sort of 10 years or so?

Greg: Oh, enormously. I mean, because technology and internet speeds have changed. If you go back 10 years ago, people were using flash animation that was the latest trend in website design right? It's not even a thing

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anymore, but then also with internet speeds exponentially improving over that time. Back then if you just had a little bit of a graphic like an image on your website it was pretty amazing. But these days it's all about images and branding and it's limitless these days to what you can actually have your site look like and also the way it functions as well. There's no limit to things that you can make happen on your website.

Lawrence: Awesome. So how important do you think it is in today's world to have a good website for a gym or a studio business?

Greg: I think it's important and just because if you go back before the internet really, your shop front was really the shop front of the business you know what I mean? And you had a receptionist and things like that. But these days, if you use your website in a smart way which we're going to talk about on this podcast, then you can actually let your website be your shopfront and be an automated sales and marketing machine. So it just constantly, if it's designed right can bring leads to your business and that's the thing that everybody wants in their business is. I mean, you can rely on referrals sure which is great, but you can't just rely on referrals. In my opinion you should be using your website to attract more leads and then to start the conversation in a fitness business and potentially get people into your studio.

Lawrence: Yeah, I agree and I think a lot of the leaders in our industry would absolutely attest to that. I think it can be quite an overwhelming area, depending on if someone is outsourcing it or maybe trying to do it themselves. How do you decide how websites should look and behave?

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Greg: Well, we've got a pretty detailed process because we want to get a good result for our clients and so if we just think right here's a template, and don't get me wrong templates are fine if you're starting out. Grab a template, test your offer and see how that goes until you start making money and then invest in high converting website design. But realistically, a website it should be designed to give you your business like, I don't know, an authority you know what I mean? It needs to have its own brand, you need to differentiate yourself from your competitors. And so if you do use a template, you are just going to look like everybody else.

Greg: But if you think about all that, you just touched on leaders before in niche as well realistically, they wouldn't have a template website. They want to be unique, they want to be seen as a leader and they want it to be a custom brand that's unique to their business. So depending on where you're at in business, you can start out using a template but then I believe you should be invested in your brand. Because I mean there's about 2 billion websites probably not in the fitness industry, but on the web-

Lawrence: I don't know, it is probably close to that probably.

Greg: Yeah, probably. But that's doubled since 2014 so you can guarantee there's a lot more competition out there. So you really have to zig when everybody else is zagging and be different.

Lawrence: So yeah, no this is a great place to start. What do you think again, from a fitness studio perspective what do you think are the main aspects of a website that need to be prioritized in this particular context?

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Greg: Yeah. Number one is you should lead with value. So don't just get people to come into your gym without giving them some sort of incentive to get there. I really see a website in this space to be a conversation starter. Give people a free health assessment or a free dietary plan or something that's related to getting them fitter and healthier. Just something that's related to your particular unique offer. But yeah, I mean you can also have multiple offers on your website so it might be for people that have never seen your site before. Let's say you have a blog or a podcast or anything like that's helpful content that attracts people organically to your website. You might do some paid traffic as well, but let's just say you got some organic people coming to your website they might find it through Google.

Greg: You want to have something on your site that's catering to the cold traffic that have never heard of you before. And that might be a free PDF download in return for an email address. And then you might have something else for people that know you a little bit, they trust you a little bit and then they're ready to come into your gym. So that's why I say a free assessment. And then you might just have something for people that might be repeat customers, haven't visited you for a while and that's essentially just giving people your timetables so they can book in and pay for sessions essentially.

Lawrence: Awesome. Yeah-

Greg: So it's kind of cold, warm and hot.

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Lawrence: Yeah and that's excellent. And it's just sort of occurring to me as we talk that people are going to probably go and look at my website and I will just say that my website is not ideal. And it's obviously something we're talking about Greg and probably a 2020 project for me to actually get it completely upgraded and that's highintensitybusiness.com. So don't use that as a kind of template while we're talking, there'll be better templates for you to refer to for sure. And ones that I'm personally fond of for those that are interested in looking into this is discoverstrength.com and theperfectworkout.com.

Lawrence: Perfect Workout have just redone theirs, I think Discover Strength actually have just redone theirs as well. And both have very, in my opinion, very good websites that do what I've been talking to Greg about this for a long time and I've heard how he evaluates website efficacy and websites that drive results. And I feel like they really do a tick most if not all of the boxes. So just to provide some narrative on what you said there Greg and you talked about the free assessment, the value, the offer it needs to be kind of front and center. Which is I guess something I would have thought of sort of common sense, although you say that but perhaps a lot of people have it buried somewhere on the site.

Lawrence: So it's quite popular in our industry to either have a free workout because the type of high intensity training we talk about which is strength training, is hard to sell if you're describing it to someone or even showing a video. People really need to actually feel it and go for it to really understand and

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appreciate it. And so hence why a lot of them try and drive these introductory workouts. They try and get people in for free, put them through the session and then the workout will almost sell itself to an extent. And so that free workout offer, if that's what people are going for where should that be on the homepage? Should it be front and center? Should it be in the top right? Should it be both? How do you position stuff like that?

Greg: Yeah, on the homepage. When I was saying lead with value before that's really when somebody lands on your homepage, you want to see it right there. Your homepage above the fold a bit. You see when you first land on the page without scrolling, we call that above the fold and really on there you want to have a unique selling proposition. So letting people know exactly what it is that you do, how you're different to your competitors and how people will benefit from your offer. And then straight under that you want to lead with value and that's where you would have that free offer all above the fold. And another thing above the fold as well is some social proof like some testimonials or one killer testimonial. Or even like if you have somebody in your industry that raves or has given you a bit of praise, like a quote from an expert you can put that there as well. But yeah, they're kind of the three things we like to have above the fold, the USP, lead with value and social proof.

Lawrence: Awesome. Just on testimonials for a moment, we talked about this on a separate call but it can be if you're starting out so I guess this is more relevant to the startups. But if you're starting out, it could be a bit of a

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chicken and the egg scenario, you kind of don't have the testimonials in the beginning. Have you got any tips on how people should go about it? It's a case of look, if you're a startup, you don't have testimonials therefore you just have to operate without them. And you need to just get people through the door, get people results and get testimonials as quickly as possible or are there other creative ways you thought to get these on the website? How do you think about stuff like that?

Greg: Well, for instance with your industry, I would say that for HIT for instance it's quite a new kind of concept and you probably need to educate people on what it is exactly. So you can use what's called borrowed referrals, sorry not referrals, but authority from other experts. Like for instance you could bring on I don't know, it might be a quote from an expert in your industry that is talking about how HIT gets really good results. So I mean, you do need some form of social proof even if it's not directly from yours it's still good to put it on there. But like you said yes, as soon as possible I encourage people to get testimonials from your clients.

Greg: And a lot of people are scared to ask them, but you can put it into email automation as well, which we can talk about if you like. But yeah realistically, a website's going to get a better result if you show testimonials and we'll talk about that soon too. But I just want to say that another thing you can do is just prove your authority. So you might be brand new to this particular business, as in a new online presence. However, you might have 10 years of experience so talk about why you've started this business and why you are the trusted authority in this space.

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So that alone and then lead with value will be enough to get people into your door and then you can prove it. You can get them results.

Lawrence: Yeah, these are some great points. Just on the endorsements this is something that I found out recently which I think would really help people. Obviously you and I were talking about okay, where can we get endorsements for our studio? And I'm fortunate enough to have some great connections in this industry that are willing to help. And the fact is that a lot of the people listening to this podcast also have the same and similar connections that they can leverage to provide those endorsements on their website. People that endorsed their way of exercising who have a high profile. For example, one I will mention and he won't mind me just saying this is I emailed James Fisher PhD who's an exercise scientist who's very well respected in resistance training.

Lawrence: And he said to me that we can actually take direct quotations from the scientific literature and use the names of the office and their image on the website because you're not doing anything untoward, you're taking something that already exists in the public domain and attributing to someone. So Greg this might not mean anything to you, but I guess for those listening you could take a snippet from a paper by someone like Stuart Phillips, James Fischer, James Steele, Brad Schoenfeld. Any of the respected resistance training scientists, exercise scientists out there, take a really compelling quote from one of their studies and then actually put that as part of your sort of testimonial social proof section on the website. Another really good one I think people might want to use is Simon Melov's

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study on how exercise reverses aging, which is just a very popular study in our world Greg. And so yeah, I had no idea you could do that, just thought that was something that was illegal.

Greg: Yeah. And just make sure you reference them obviously. But somebody will think "No, I'm just going to steal that quote, pretend this person knows me." But don't be misleading like that.

Lawrence: Yeah. Good point. Okay, awesome. So we've kind of set the scene then talking about some of the key attributes and things you need to focus on. And do you want to continue on from your point of view what are the main aspects of like as a high converting website?

Greg: Yeah. So let's say you are an existing business and you do have social proof. There's many ways to display social proof on your website and especially a fitness business website. Like before and afters are super powerful. Now you can't use before and afters in your Facebook advertising campaigns and things like that, but you can use them on your website. And show before and afters but also if you're going to show a picture of a before and after, you might want to talk about the results that they got and the amount of time it took to get that result. And then maybe even it depends if you have different programs name the program that they used to get that particular result. And yeah, that's just the visual, but then you might also pair that up with a testimonial from that particular client so it's even more believable.

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Greg: And if you want to take it one step further try and get that person on video as well so then what you're actually doing is creating a case study. And in that video, or on a particular individual case study page of that person, you would talk about their situation and what their challenges were before they came to you. And then you talk about how you actually help them and the steps that you took them through and how long the course was and all that sort of thing. And then show the results that they've got in pretty much not a long page, but it might be like two or three folds on a webpage. And you can go into as much detail as you want, but the beauty of that is the new prospects that come to your website they'll identify with that particular person. You might have someone males different age groups, females different age groups, depends on what your offer is but you're going to attract more of that particular demographic if you do that.

Lawrence: So, okay. So your testimonial should be, I mean, it makes sense, isn't it? That it should be aligned with your ideal target market.

Greg: Yes.

Lawrence: So people listening should really have identified okay, who is my ideal target market? What is their demographic, psychographic? And then I guess in the beginning beggars can't be choosers their testimonials. But as you grow and as you hone in on who probably is the best fit for you it's best to certainly focus testimonials to that as well. You can see that actually with the Perfect Workout who I believe target mostly older women. Those testimonials are a funny enough older women, so it makes sense, right?

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Greg: Totally. And one thing that I see a lot of, well, it's really a mistake that people make is they'll say as seen in and on and heard on or whatever, and they've got all these sort of big name logos on their site. Now some of them, they may have just kind of brushed with a little bit in their career or whatever. But the problem with doing that sort of thing is people may look at those logos and A, they kind of disregard them anyway because people just think everybody does that these days. but B, people might think, "Oh, they don't mind kind of business because the only sort of want to attract those bigger kind of clients or they're they're part of that bigger picture. And I want a small independent business that's going to give me one-on-one attention." So yeah, just be careful of the types of social proof you put on there. You really just want to put people that you want more of.

Lawrence: Awesome advice. Any others points in terms of features maybe you could dig into? I guess, I don't want to overwhelm people so what I would to get to is just what you think would be an ideal kind of phase one from a fitness website perspective. I know we've talked about the homepage, the value proposition, the free offer and you sort of touched on other offers in terms of a content upgrade like an ebook or something. But I'm just curious what you think would be important from a phase one in terms of other pages and features a website has to have.

Greg: Yeah. Well, just even stick on the homepage just for a minute. And I just want to talk about photos and videos and just things on your site. I see a lot of people use a lot of stock images and things that. Which I guess is okay if you don't have the budget for a photographer, but I can't stress

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enough to use a real photographer. Get them to come to your studio and take real photos of you and you helping your ideal customer because it's real and once again, people will identify with that. A lot of people are quite scared to put themselves in video on their website but video is sort of taking steroids... Sorry, taking photos and [crosstalk 00:22:55] steroids you know what I mean? It's really just letting people see exactly how you can help people and yeah, I just can't stress enough how important video is on a website these days.

Lawrence: But if I remember rightly, you don't think video is good when it's one of those videos where it's running in the background as soon as you go to the website. Is that right? Because they can slow the website down and certainly what I've experienced before going on people's websites.

Greg: Yeah, totally. I mean, that's just one of the reasons because it slows the site down but it's actually a proven conversion killer to have A, a moving video background and B, an image slider where an image sort of rotates into another image and then another image. People think that's trendy and "Oh, I want my website to be dynamic and look exciting," but it's actually proven in like 90% of split tests. And these are split tests by conversion experts that I follow like Pep Laja from ConversionXL, Tim Ash from Sitetuners, MerchLabs and yeah, these are kind of the biggest guys that do all the tests, thousands and thousands of tests. Yeah, 90% of the time most websites, those types of things will reduce conversions.

Greg: So yeah, it's A, because it slows the side down but B, it's really distracting. You might be trying to read something over the top of that

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image or video and then the video behind you is just distraction. Or it might be you're trying to read something just underneath where that video or image slider is. But you're trying to read something and then this distracting thing above in your eyesight is just moving around. So people tend to just leave those sites and yeah, that's one of the reasons that they kill conversions.

Lawrence: Okay. So you basically want to a still image over the video where people can click, play and that's what you want really?

Greg: Yeah, totally. But yeah, and then also you might be a bit of an authority in your area or your local area or whatever. You might, for instance be part of I don't know, a charity, you might give back or you might speak on stage I mean just basically anything else that you do around the business that's going to show that you're part of that whole movement or an association to do with that business. Put photos of you with those types of things and that once again can boost your authority. So really what we're trying to do on a website is to build trust, because that's the end goal.

Greg: To build trust is show that you've got a unique product that it can help people. Have social proof and realistically your customers or your clients or whatever you want to call them are the hero and you're their guide. So you don't want to position yourself as the hero, you just want to show that you're an authority and you position your customers as a hero and that's pretty much the way we structure our homepage.

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Lawrence: Awesome. I feel like Greg you have an amazing checklist in front of you that we're sort of going through I'm I correct?

Greg: I don't right now but I do have-

Lawrence: It's just off top of your head?

Greg: Yeah [crosstalk 00:25:59]

Lawrence: But now the reason I ask you that is I feel like it'd be better for me to just ask you what do you think is next in terms of in terms of successful web design?

Greg: Yeah. Well, I'm just trying to keep it kind of logical and try and do the homepage and then we can go to other pages if you'd like. I mean, because realistically on the homepage just to sort of round this out you want to have clarity because clarity equals conversions. And realistically, people don't give a shit about you when they first come to your site they only care about what's in it for them. So you've got to look at your website in the eyes of your prospects and that's why we say you've got to be the authority and the guide. But you don't want to come across as the hero, you want to show that you get results for other people. So once they see that then they'll think, "Oh, maybe they could help solve my problems as well."

Greg: So yeah, just think about your site in the eyes of your prospects. So that's kind of the homepage, but I would also say we treat it like a gateway to get to the other internal pages. So for instance, above the fold we might

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have that lead magnet which will go to a it could be a pop-up or it could be an individual lead magnet page. Then like I said before, you might have something for cold, warm and hot, but they all link off to other pages as well. And then as you go down the site, we want to talk about benefits, you want to have social proof, we want to talk about your programs the features, just a snippet in each section. And once again you have a call to action in each section that then links off to the individual pages. We also like to have a little about section and then potentially a blog section and then maybe another lead magnet and then the footer. That's pretty much how we design every homepage.

Lawrence: Cool. And just to dig into some of those a little bit more. In terms of the about page I love what you've done for others in terms of the timeline. And what I mean by that for those listening is where you have basically a line going down the middle and you show people in the about your journey over whatever it is 20, 30 year period or time you've been in business. And you give snapshots of that journey and it's just very easy to consume and it's quite enjoyable to see that. And I feel like something that could be quite powerful in our niche, but I could be wrong. So Greg, what do you think the about page has to have for it to be effective?

Greg: Yeah, absolutely. So the about page above the fold should sort of tell a little bit about how you can help your prospects, so you don't want it to be about you when they first land on a page. However, they do want to know about you. They want to know who's behind this website or this business in general. So what we like to do have a blanket statement on top the top

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of the page saying how you can help people, what the benefits are to them. And then underneath that or in my case I've got a video which is kind of my journey. But underneath that we have a section that starts off with a headline here's our journey so far or our journey or something around journey. And then the milestones that we like to put on is just really a headline.

Greg: It might be the year that you started, it might even be 10 years ago the year that you started this particular passion I started this passion in 2007, whatever the case is and then you just have a headline, a little paragraph and a photo and then you go down to the next milestone and the next milestone. And all these milestones are just things that are completely relevant to your journey that helps position you as the authority to deliver what you deliver today. And we also put in not just authority boosting things, but social proof amongst that timeline journey as well.

Lawrence: Yeah. That's awesome. Before we move on to some other questions, what else is there in terms of really important features that the website needs to have? Or do you feel like we've covered most of that now?

Greg: Well, I think strategy is that a lot of people don't really have on their website, especially fitness business websites if they're just starting out. So by strategy what I mean is, let's say you've got this you're leading with value that's a good strategy for a start instead of trying to get people to buy stuff on hello. But then let's say they opt in for something, take them to a thank you page. Instead of just putting a little bit of text on a thank you page that says, "Hey, thanks for downloading this or booking a free

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session." That's a really good opportunity to build more trust and potentially offer the next thing in your funnel.

Greg: So if they've downloaded the free ebook, what I recommend is having a face to camera video and just with energy and getting them excited talk about the fact you know, hey, thanks for downloading the free ebook I hope you get a ton of value out of it, et cetera here's some things you might learn. Hey, by the way we've got this free session and then educate them a little bit on the benefits of that free session and then invite them to take action on that free session. And then you have a call to action button and that's what you want them to click on. So it's really a lost opportunity unless you put some other offer on that thank you page.

Lawrence: Awesome. I mean, you had a very brief review of some of the businesses that we won't mention in high intensity training, you had a look at some of the websites some examples. Should we go onto what you think about what you've seen and some of the common mistakes, things you think have been done well and mistakes you see and opportunities for improvement. Obviously we'll be very mindful of not mentioning any kind of names or anything like that.

Greg: Totally. So number one on one of the sites that we've we've had a look at together it just has a clever short statement on there. But the problem with that is it's too clever, it doesn't mean anything it keeps you guessing and there's no clarity in how somebody's going to benefit and you know what it is that you actually do. So don't be too clever with your USP. I mean, unless you're Apple or Nike or then you don't even need one. But if you're

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a startup and nobody knows a thing about your brand, you really need to in my opinion either invest in a professional copywriter or really just write something that's unique and has clarity. Explains clearly what you do and how people benefit, don't be too clever and try and put a two to three word USP together.

Lawrence: That's it, isn't it? Because as you were explaining to me on our call the other day, these companies like Apple and Nike have spent decades or years I should say and a ton of money, like billions probably at this stage. Really promoting their brands so that they've become the go to in our heads for those types of services and products. And people often they realize that and they'll jump straight to having a somewhat abstract logo and name and value proposition from the start when I think in the these days, clarity like you keep repeating for good reason is really the way to go. And just because like you say, it's so much more competitive now and it's far cheaper and effective to have a very clear business name and from the very beginning and a tagline as opposed to just being abstract about it.

Greg: Yup. Couldn't agree more. And so then there's not much else above the fold. I mean we do have a photo and I guess that potentially could be the target market so that's probably a big tick. It looks a natural photo not a stock image so that's good. Then there's kind of like a gap and it's a pretty poor design. I can see that they built it on Squarespace and they've used the free version. Nothing wrong Squarespace like I said, if you're starting out it's fine but the problem with the free version is down at the

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bottom it says powered by Squarespace and people can click on that and they leak off kind of thing. So we try to prevent leakage points but still that's kind of minor.

Greg: But yeah, underneath that main image it talks a little bit about what they do but there's no clear offer, there's no call to action above the fold. So, because you'll find if you put heat maps on your website, which is just showing when people visit your site where they've been all over your site it has little hotspots essentially. You'll find majority of people don't scroll. Now that's not a bad thing because the majority of people that come to the website aren't ready to buy or opt in or do anything. But it's the ones that do that you want to make sure that you've got the right message in and the right structure to entice them to read and want more. But this doesn't do that at all, so there's no call to action, there's no reason to keep scrolling.

Lawrence: Yeah. Just on the leakage for a moment, I find that really interesting. So a lot of people, most people will have links to other properties, social media is a common one. Now your perspective on this is that if people click that they're leaving your site and that's not what you want I'm guessing. But the counterpoint to this, and I'd love to hear what you think about this is what if some people want to have the view of, well some of my prospects love spending time on Instagram or Facebook or fill in the blank, therefore I'm going to link to that because I want to send them to my entity that's on their favorite platform and engage with them there. So that was like a

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counterpoint I had in my head. So what do you think about that? What's your perspective on that?

Greg: Well, my opinion is you want to do your marketing on Instagram and Facebook and social media to attract people to your website. In my opinion, you shouldn't be taking people off of your website to those platforms because I mean, ultimately you want them to come to your website. That's where your offers are, that's where you can get them on an email list. You can't do that on social, you can't create an email list and believe me, an email list is the number one place where you will get conversions if you have offer. And you build that list and you nurture that list and keep them warm and keep delivering value, you're going to get a ton more engagement and sales essentially from your email list than on social media.

Greg: So yeah, I believe you should be trying to get as many emails addresses as possible. So bring people from social media not the other way. And so look, yes have links to your social media on your website, but only in the footer of your website and not on any opt in pages or sales pages because they are leakage points. But you do want to show people that you do have social channels however, I would say that if your followers are very small numbers, it's probably not going to do you any favors. So I probably wouldn't have them if you're a social media followers are very small.

Lawrence: Yeah, I could already agree with what you said I think that's great advice. Okay, do you want to continue with the critique?

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Greg: Yeah. Sure absolutely. Just on the social thing quickly, I really love an Instagram footer. Let's say it feeds in from your live Instagram into your website and what we do, what we make sure of is that we use a plugin that when somebody clicks on those images of the Instagram footer, it just opens up on your website and you can scroll through all of those images and comments on your website without leaking off to the social platform.

Lawrence: Clever.

Greg: So yeah, back to that site. Okay scrolling down. Well also there's no navigation. I mean, it's got home and testimonials, but maybe because it's such a new business. Another mistake I do see on a lot of websites is they only have a hamburger menu. Which is what you would have on a mobile when you see those three lines in the top corner and then press, it'll drop down on the page menu. But yeah once again, I mean they're proven to not convert. We tried it on our site about three years ago and yeah, people just weren't clicking through to the pages that we wanted them to. So yeah, it's something you should never do. But all right, let's talk about-

Lawrence: I can totally attest to that. I have one of those on my site and yeah it does not get... It used to actually collect good click for us. To be fair, that was when I was heat mapping more, I had more discipline around heat mapping and I was using SumoMe, which is a plugin for sharing and they did a heat map. And then one day they stopped doing it and obviously it's free and I reached out to them and said, what have you done with the heat map tool because I loved that tool because it shows you where people are

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obviously clicking on the site. And they just said, "Oh, people weren't really using it so we removed it," and I was probably one of the minority of people that really took advantage of that tool. So just on that very quickly because I think heat mapping is obviously a really great tool for people to figure out where people are clicking on this site and what are the most valuable real estate is on their website. What tools do you recommend for heat mapping?

Greg: Hotjar.com. There's a free version, but if you want the paid version it's like 30 odd dollars a month. I just absolutely love it, I've got it on all of our websites, we encourage all of our clients and put it on theirs. And so what it does, it put heat maps on your site but it also puts a video recording of every single visitor that visit your website. It doesn't have sound, you can't say anything that they're typing it's all privacy protected, but you can see how they behave on your website And all different screen sizes and devices so it is gold. I just review the videos for half an hour once a week and they always notice something that you wouldn't have noticed just testing the site yourself. So hotjar.com is absolutely gold.

Lawrence: And there's a free version as well you said on Hotjar?

Greg: Yeah, there is. It just means you only record a few visitors instead of 2000 type of thing with a \$30 account. But yeah, Hotjar is great and you pair that up with putting Google Analytics on your site and then obviously depending on what email platform you use like for instance, I use ActiveCampaign and then I have a dashboard that plugs into that. So you get to see all these metrics and you pair that up with your qualitative data,

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which is the things you can't measure, just user behavior. And you can get some really good insights and basically your website's never finished anyway. So it just means you keep monitoring these things and testing new things and it'll just keep getting better over time like a an F1 car.

Lawrence: Yeah. Good analogy. Awesome. So is there anything further to add in terms of the constructive criticisms on the websites you've seen in this industry?

Greg: Yeah. So also just below the fold, the first bit of copy that I see is what is this brand all about? Instead, it's a personalized 30 minute total body's trans program, blah, blah blah to maximize blah blah. That's actually quite good, I would put that above the fold in the main USP kind of like the USP and then what it is underneath type of thing. But then underneath that you probably just want to go straight into the benefits or social proof. There is no social proof on this site so that's one thing I'd be wary about. But yeah, then, I don't know, it's got no design either. It is literally just a Squarespace template, so it's not going to look fantastic. Fonts are really small as well, it looks like this site is targeting older women or older people.

Greg: So just be careful of your font size. Go minimum like 18 point or something like that. This looks like about a 14 point font which yeah, is not good for that demographic. And also Serif fonts, which are fonts that have little feet on them, are good and easier to read in books and print material but on website it's easier to read San Serif fonts where you don't have the little feet on the letters. Like... what's a good? Like Helvetic or

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Ariel, that's the type of font you want to have on your website. But a Google web font version of that like Opensense.

Lawrence: That's good, I never knew that I never even thought about that.

Greg: And another thing just on the sort of layout of paragraph words, you want to have maximum of 10 to 12 words in one line before line breaks to the next. And the reason for that is because your screen is a flickering set of lights. And I mean if an Eagle was looking at this they'd be bored and they wouldn't be able to read it because it would just be flickering all over the place because they've got much faster and better eyesight than us. But yeah, it is hard to read if you've got more than 10 to 12 words on one line. So people tend to get lost where they are within a paragraph and try and only have three or four lines in a paragraph before you have a break and do a new paragraph, much easier to read.

Lawrence: Yeah. That's a really good piece of advice, something I hadn't even thought about. I had some critique from our mutual friend James on a webpage and I had big blocks of text. And in my mind it was like, "Oh, people are going read it and it's really valuable and blah blah blah." And he was like, "You need to chunk that right down, no one's going to read that." And so I've since split it up into literally sometimes a few words and a line space. Really short paragraphs because I can see how that could be far easier to consume. That's really good advice.

Greg: Yeah. Because people they just scan websites. They stop at headlines and then if they're interested they'll read the paragraphs because they

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want to read a paragraph and waste their time unless it makes sense. So that's why I can't stress enough good copywriting is essential these days on a website. A really good copywriter will interview you, interview your customers and then put their language, your customer's language on your website. Don't use tech jargon or industry talk. You want to attract people that I didn't know much about your industry so realistically, you just want to talk in their language not your language.

Lawrence: Yeah, that's really good advice. And yeah and I guess the way to do that is really just talk because it's kind of obvious, it's talk to your customers, interview your customers. Get permission to record if you can and actually use the exact language that they use. Something I've made a mistake doing in the past is assuming that I know how people think and what they need. And I'm actually going for a process myself of interviewing my clients and understanding that much better so I can make sure that the content on the site and the copy really resonates with people effectively. This is one of those things when you think you know everything or you think you know enough about something copy and then someone suddenly realizes or shows you that there's a massive flaw in you're thinking. This is one of those moments I had probably a couple of weeks ago on this particular on this particular subject so. So what's-

Greg: I'm guilty of that too.

Lawrence: Yeah, sure. So what's next or do you feel like you've completed the reviewer's M.O?

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Greg: Yeah we're just on the review on this site. They do have a free session but it's right down the bottom of the page which I would just say put right at the top, but that's about it. I think I've done they've done it themselves and they are starting out which is totally fine. But yeah realistically, hopefully they listen to this and they can improve it they'll get a better result.

Lawrence: Awesome. It's quite interesting in our industry there's a bit of a debate, ongoing debate about whether you should offer a free complimentary workout or whether you should offer a paid workout. But your view, I know we're kind of going back to start now but you said you need to lead with value and that value should be I'm guessing free. Whether it's a workout or some sort of free PDF or video or something that's going to help people for free. And that's going to then have call to actions for them to invest later on.

Greg: Yeah, that's best practice, but if you're an absolute authority in your niche you don't necessarily need to do that. And you could offer a paid version I mean, totally up to you. The other thing is I would suggest if you are offering let's say a free PDF even ask for a phone number. Now I know it will reduce conversions because the more fields people have to enter the less conversions. But if you get their phone number you guarantee that if you ring them, they're going to be more interested and more likely to convert than if they don't give you a phone number. So it all these things to be tested, I don't know the correct answer for every single business.

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Greg: It really depends on demographic and there's a lot of variables that are out of all of our control and you don't know until you test. So I would suggest do the free offer first it might even have an exit pop. Which is a bit technical but what it means is somebody lands on your site, they haven't taken action then they go to leave the site and triggered by when they hover over the top few pixels of your website, you have something pop up and say, "Hey, would you to try this offer?" Which might be a different offer and it might just be something you want to test for a little while.

Lawrence: Just a something that as someone told me the have a day. I was talking to Hannah Stael von Holstein, who's the VP of marketing for Discover Strength one of the most kind of coveted high intensity training businesses. And she's great because she's got obviously the know how in our industry, but she's also got a pretty good idea of website conversion and effective websites. And she was saying that one of the kind of neat things is when they asked for the number, a lot of the time Google will auto complete all those other fields. So have you found that that helps alleviate friction because people go just to put their name in and the whole thing auto completes? So maybe we can ask for more and it's not going to add friction to the conversion.

Greg: That's a good point, yeah. As long as that all that's accurate. I've seen some forms that they might be asking for your website address and it'll put in your physical address because it's auto completed the wrong things so you got to be careful of that. But yeah, I mean it's a good point.

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If you can reduce friction and there's auto complete it might improve conversions. All these things are worth testing.

Lawrence: So is there anything else you've noted in terms of common mistakes or should we move on to some other questions before we wrap up?

Greg: Well, just looking at Discovery Strength, they're using ghost buttons. A ghost button, this is for their call to action button, schedule the free introduction workout. It's a hollow button that has a white key line and white text on a busy image. Now that doesn't convert as well as if it was a solid contrast color to everything else around it so hopefully they can learn from that.

Lawrence: Yeah, They'll actually be quite happy to hear that actually.

Greg: Yeah. Because ghost buttons were big probably three years ago but the reason they're not now is because they've proven not to convert as well as a contrast solid button. Yeah. Cool and just on their site, they've got a sticky top navigation which is a really good conversion boost in trick as well with a call to action in it. Which just means when you're scrolling the top navigation stays at the top of the page. So it's always there and then they've got a call to action within that sticky top navigation so that's a big tick to them.

Lawrence: So I'm just thinking about I know people might be asking, okay look, if I do decide to hire a developer or hire you Greg and your team, what is the cost? Can you give people a view on what it might cost them to? And I guess you could talk about in maybe different stages, because we've

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talked about in our own separate core about our own studio what the full complete thing will look over time. But what we're going to be doing just in the beginning. So do you want to just give some high level view on what kind of costs people can expect with their new website if they outsource it?

Greg: Yeah, totally. And look, there are a lot of different price points and I like said you can get a template for \$50. But then what I would suggest is if your business is at a stage where it's making decent money, maybe you're doing a few 100k per annum or something that. And you've got a little bit to spend on your website and your brand, I would suggest there's going to be different price points, but what you want to look for is somebody that gets results. You want to look at their testimonials and things that and you want to see if they've got design style that you like and if they've done similar businesses to yours. And then you want to put a value on what you think that's worth. So as far as let's say you want an extra 10 leads per week or whatever, what's that worth to you?

Greg: Is it worth investing, I don't know, \$5,000 on a new website? Is it 10,000 or whatever that's worth to you? You need to work that out as I'm talking to the listener. And then you're going to get a range. So what I would suggest is just get quotes and get to know, reach out to these people, have calls with these people and then work out which one you're more comfortable with. And all of these things need to come into the final price. But I would suggest for a fitness style business that has let's say six custom pages, that's going to be custom designed custom brand and

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then built on WordPress which is what I highly recommend. Built on a responsive obviously it's for every screen size, you're probably looking at between five and maybe 10 grand and that to me is probably where you're going to get the best return on investment. And remember it's over three to five year periods. So you work that out it's a lot cheaper than the old days where you used to have to invest 50 to a hundred grand in a shop front for instance.

Lawrence: Yeah very true. And I was just thinking this is probably quite easy for some people to figure out if they think about okay, five to 10,000 how many leads would I have to generate to get that return on investment? And hopefully you are calculating your conversion percentage on those leads and you can quite quickly see how this can pay for itself very quickly. I think is very important to spend more and get it right than obviously spend less and get it wrong and costs you a ton more in headache and moving suppliers and just frustration and not getting results.

Greg: Totally. But definitely shop around and look at two to three different web designers and choose a web designer as opposed to a web developer. Because a web designer the way they'll do it and the way we do it is we design using Photoshop and illustrator and sketch or whatever and we don't touch WordPress or the platform. But then once you approve, and we actually offer unlimited design revisions on every page until it's approved, but hopefully your designer does that too, but once it's approved by you then it gets built on WordPress. So you know that by the time you get to the development stage, you're going to be completely

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confident that you know exactly what you're going to get. So I would say hire a designer, not a developer.

Lawrence: Yeah. Now I know this isn't that advisable but what about for those who are just starting out, very low revenue, they really can't afford to outsource the design. Do you have a view on some tips on just how they can get started with a basic website which is going to get them some results?

Greg: Totally. So there is a really good platform, you've actually interviewed the owner of it [10XPRO](#), I can't talk highly enough about that. We're designing custom websites they are coded on [10XPRO](#) because it's so much better than all those other page builders out there. But it has so much automation and built in functionality. It's taking 10 leading marketing platforms and rolling it into one for a monthly fee. To me, that's where you should start out because they've got templates already and you can customize them. So you can still invest in design, get a build on [10XPRO](#) and customize it to be you need to your business and you'll be amazed at how easy that platform is to use.

Lawrence: Yeah. That's cool. So as were talking earlier obviously I had John the founder, John Lint on the podcast recently to talk about [10XPRO](#) and we'll link that up in the show notes. And I guess always looking at his product from the view of building an online membership-

Greg: Yeah, it's more of that.

Lawrence: Much like I have done in a more of a challenging way, stitching bits together as opposed to his which is a one stop shop. Whenever people

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say to me look, I want to start doing some sort of online coaching or have some sort of online subscription business, I'm always pointing them to [10XPRO](#). Because it's premade, everything's stitched together I wouldn't even think twice about not... What am I trying to say? I wouldn't even hesitate is what I'm trying to say, to go with something that if I was starting over. But I haven't really been looking at it and talking about it from the perspective of it can be used for any online business. So is that what John's done with [10XPRO](#)? He's actually made it so that regardless of what your online business wants to do he's made the platform very flexible in that regard?

Greg: He has. However, I mean, I'd let him talk about it, but I would say if you've got a membership site or if that's your plan to build an online membership as well it's perfect for that. But if your plan is to do content marketing like creating blog, podcasts, et cetera I would still recommend using WordPress to build your audience first. Because I mean look, WordPress doesn't cost you anything you know what I mean? Where [10XPRO](#) costs you a couple hundred bucks a month or whatever so you just got to weigh up the cost. And I would say if you're not planning on doing a membership site then... And look, don't get me wrong [10XPRO](#) can work for businesses that don't have an online membership, but just be prepared to pay that price each month.

Lawrence: Yeah, that's good advice. Yeah. Awesome. Alright, so any final thoughts Greg you want to share anything that I haven't asked you about ideal

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website design that you think might be valuable to the listeners before we start wrapping up and getting your details and recommendations?

Greg: Ah, thanks man. I think we've actually covered a hell of a lot, but there is a book by Robert Cialdini called Influence and it's got six principles of persuasion essentially. And they are things that you can put on your website and we've touched on a couple like authority and social proof, but there's a few more that we'll just quickly go through. You get all these six right and you can really boost your conversions because it's tapping into the psychological drivers, the things that drive people essentially to take action and buy from you. So the other one would be consistency. So have a consistent look and feel across all of your touch points from your social media to your website, but have a consistent voice and consistent values. If you're interacting with people on social have a strong opinion about things, be polarizing.

Greg: And you're going to repel some people, but you're going to attract a lot of people as well. So yeah, just be consistent with everything you do in your brand. and then another one is liken. So that's why I say put yourself out there, put yourself on video, et cetera. The more you can show who you are, once again, the more you're going to attract the right kind of people. And yeah, be really interactive with your target audience. Build a Facebook group, have an incubation type Facebook group where you're just keeping new members warm and being helpful and giving as much free value as possible and just being likable essentially. And then we talked about reciprocity which is leading with value, but it's really also like

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you're doing now. This podcast is totally free and you're giving away a lot of gold information, right?

Lawrence: Thanks to you.

Greg: So then people are more likely to want to give back. And then scarcity and urgency is the last principle. It's human nature to desire what there's less of so if you try and include a limited time offer or limited spots in your class or things that, put that on your website and let people know because yeah you'll be more likely to attract more people to take action. But don't use fake scarcity because you'll just lose trust forever.

Lawrence: Great advice. Great book Influence by Robert Cialdini however he says his last name, it's an incredible book and one I've read a couple of times and I probably had to revisit actually. It's one of those timeless books, isn't it? Which should definitely fall on someone sort of top business list for sure. Greg, this has been super valuable, I really appreciate you taking the time. And for those listening, I'm recording this at well 8:30 my time it's now 9:30 and so I'm kind of waking up, whereas Greg is falling asleep in Australia. And so I'm really grateful for you maintaining a good level of coherence because if I were you I'd probably be absolutely crap on a podcast that late at night.

Greg: Hopefully I didn't ramble too much, but yeah.

Lawrence: No, you're were great. So we talked about one of the places you wanted to send people if they're interested in finding out more about you, where would that be?

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Greg: Yes, so go to a studio1design.com, that's the numeral one. But yeah, there's a checklist we've got so studio1design.com/checklist and there's 50 things that you can change on your website from not having to having and you're going to get a much better result. And also we're offering a free website review, so if you go to a studio1design.com review well better get that right. Review... Yeah, sorry. I think it's review-

Lawrence: That's all right, just find it and then let us know.

Greg: There you go, review my website.

Lawrence: [/.com/reviewmywebsite](http://.com/reviewmywebsite) yeah?

Greg: Yeah. And on that, we've got examples of website reviews that we have done for other clients so you can watch those videos. And then we've also showed the before and after and written out the results as well so you can get a taste of how we review websites. But if you want us to it's totally free, just put in your details and we'll review it.

Lawrence: Awesome Greg, thank you very much for joining me. And for everyone listening to find the blog posts for this episode, please go to highintensitybusiness.com and search for episode 255. And until next time thank you very much for listening.

Lawrence will help you optimize your HIT website [inside HIT Business Membership](#)