

EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 57: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING SALESY AND BEING EFFECTIVE

If you wonder how you can make your blog (or newsletter, or social media) effective, without feeling like you're being salesy or gross, we're going to talk about how to do that today.

But before we dive in, I wanted to let you know two pieces of news:

1. The podcast episodes now have transcripts. Yay! These are only available to email update subscribers; you can subscribe at TaraSwiger.com, the big pink box at the top of the page. If you're already a subscriber to my emails, the link to the transcript page is now at the bottom in each of your podcast emails. If you [sign up today](#), the podcast transcript page will be in the very first email you get, along with my Resource Guide to the best (free) tools for your creative business. You've been asking for this, and I'm so happy that we can do it for you now! As always, you can find links to everything I mention at taraswiger.com/podcast57.
2. Next week I'm holding a free webinar and sending new (free!) lessons on the only three things you need to spend your energy on, in your business. To get free access, sign up at taraswiger.com/lift. You'll also get first access to Lift Off when it opens for the first time in 2015. I've been writing these new lessons all week, and I am SUPER excited about them, they're going to answer the overwhelm that so many of you tell me you're struggling with.

And now, let's get to this podcast episode and how you can be effective at selling your work, without being salesy!

I was talking to a 1:1 client today and she asked me if I have a camera in her head, because these podcast episodes answer questions she had before she even asked. Well, today the episode IS from the inside of her head, because we got to talking about something that I know so many of you struggle with: making your blog posts (or any marketing) effective for your business, without feeling sales-y.

My client was telling me about this great new blog series she's doing, and it's completely related to what she sells. In fact, it does exactly what I recommend your blog does, which is help a potential client feel ready to buy your thing, while providing her with useful information she really wants. The series is starting a lot of conversations, and her readers love it. And I said, "It sounds awesome! Are you linking to your very related product in the posts?" And she replied that she is using pictures from her products in the post. And I said, "Great! Are you linking to the product when you mention it?" And she said, "Well, no, that felt too aggressive."

But, would you link to the item if it was someone else's?

Of course!

Why?

So they get the credit and so the reader knows where to find it if they want to.

Exactly! So why do you think the reader doesn't want that information if it's something you're selling? THEY DO!

YOU'RE NOT DOING ANY SELLING BY LINKING DIRECTLY TO YOUR PRODUCT, YOU'RE SIMPLY PROVIDING CONTEXT.

And I'm not picking on this one client, whenever I talk to anyone about [making their blog more effective](#), I find the same thing - you are writing a blog FOR your business, but you aren't giving your readers the information to buy your product. I find this all the time, on websites I'm just visiting for fun! And you know how I feel as a reader? SUPER annoyed!

If your knitting tutorial using pictures from a pattern, and you don't tell me where I can get that pattern? I'm annoyed! You're making me do more work (search for the pattern, find the page) than I want to. You're making it *HARDER* for me to buy! Stop it!

And I know, you don't want to seem "salesy", you don't want to make a hard sell... But here's the thing: providing a link, in context, is *NOT* selling. It's not.

And this gets at a bigger problem - if you're going to have a business you WILL have to actually make a sale. Which, in most cases, means you are actually going to have to do some selling.

So even if you ARE linking, in context, to your product, in your blog post, that's actually not selling. That's just providing information. Selling is asking for the sale. It's presenting the option to buy, very directly, to your reader.

And this is the reason so many people find that a blog, or newsletter, or social media tool isn't effective at driving sales - they aren't using it to MAKE a sale. They're simply showing up, and maybe being completely awesome, but by showing up, they hope that the reader will find their way to their shop. Well, that won't happen.

In order for any marketing you do to be effective, you have to ask for the sale. You have to not only make it clear that you sell something, but that it has real value to the person who's reading. You should make the next step very clear: if the person likes THIS, they should buy THAT.

To get very specific, this is how you ask for the sale:

You first be sure you're talking to someone who's interested (if they're reading a related blog post, they're interested! If they signed up for your newsletter, they are *REALLY* interested).

Then, you tell them what's available, you give them a link to it, and YOU EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS. Just a slight mention, with no link or no explanation is not asking for the sale. Asking for the sale involves saying, in some way: Buy this here.

Without asking for a sale, you're not going to make one. There are lots of ways of asking. You can put a sentence or two at the bottom of a blog post. You can say on Instagram, "Find this item in my shop, link in profile". You can make your website VERY clear where your shop is (put it in top navigation) and then link to it regularly.

And if just thinking about this is giving you hives, take a deep breath. There is a wide spectrum between "no one knows you sell anything" and "gross and salesy".

Let's look at some examples:

If you blog or Instagram (or use any tool) and NEVER mention what you sell, this is one of the end of the "no one knows you have anything for sale". Also on this end of the spectrum is when you might take a picture of a product, or mention that you're working on it, but you don't give any link or information or even indication that someone could buy it.

At the other end of the spectrum is gross salesyness. Some examples would be if EVERY post, everywhere, is just a link to your Etsy product. Or if, when you talk about your product, you insist that NOT buying it will cause the reader to fall over dead, or fail to be loved, or starve to death. Using scare tactics, only showing up on a tool to link to your product, or overpromising are all at the FAR end of the spectrum of salesyness.

But there is a vast middle.

This podcast, for example, is in the middle. It's completely free, it's packed full of actionable advice that you can use whether you buy something or not, but I also tell you regularly: I sell classes, that are even better than this podcast, and come with so much more usefulness. My [Instagram feed](#) is even farther from "selling", because 90% of my pictures are just from my life ... but I do announce when new classes open and I do have a link to my shop in my profile.

So where are you? Where are your individual tools?

Some people are great at a blog, but their Twitter stream is nothing but links to their shop. Or they're great at a craft show, but their blog never mentions what they sell.

Look at each tool and ask yourself: Would a complete stranger be able to go from scanning this, to buying my product in just 2 or 3 minutes, with 2 or 3 clicks? If not, figure out how to make that possible.

You don't have to change how you do everything today, just pick one tool, and make a point this week to use it to ask for a sale.

When you do, I'd love to hear about it! Tag [#exploreyourenthusiasm](#) on a photo where you tell me how you're putting this into practice. And if you want to learn more about increasing your sales, without all the overwhelm, head to taraswiger.com/lift.

Thanks for listening!