



Episode 24
Developing a Winning
Marketing and PR
Strategy for 2022



**Maria: [00:00]**

Hi! And welcome to Designer Discussions. Today we are super excited to talk to you about making the perfect marketing plan for 2022 with the Designer Discussions team.

Intro: [00:10]

Welcome to the Designer Discussions podcast. Tune in each week where we discuss marketing, branding, PR and business advice for design professionals.

Mirjam: (00:29)

Okay, Jason, so we're into 2022, and everybody is thinking about how they're going to plan out their year and execute those plans. And I am a stickler for strategy. And I think it's really important that you look at your plans in a strategic way. So you're going to talk about the marketing plan in particular. But in order to do that, you first have to have a goal. You have to set your overall goals for your business. And I know there's a gazillion people out there who teach you how to do that. But then the marketing plan and the PR plan also should really feed into those overall goals so you can hold yourself accountable. And at the end of the year, see if you have reached your goals. Right. So, Jason, when you have your business goals, let's assume the business goals are set. So how do you go about creating an effective marketing plan that can support those goals?

Jason: (01:34)

Good points. Good points, Mirjam. I would say it all starts with a plan. There's a quote that I like to use from Dave Ramsey. He says a goal without a plan is a drink. And it's so true that we all have these astronomical goals that were after. But how do we set a plan to make that stuff happen? Next month? I'll be at the KB and I'm going to do a session on this. And one of the things that I'm going to talk about is setting the codes and the targets.



Jason: (02:04)

And then you want to start with the end of the year. And then you want to create quarterly goals and monthly. So you want to reverse engineer everything. So you want to start at the end of the year, how much do you want to make? What are your revenue goals for 2022? Where do you want to be? Do you want to be double where you are now? And so that begins the framework. So once you know what that is, now, you can reverse engineer. So. Okay, say, for instance, I want to make 2 million next year. Now I could say, okay, I could deploy that by twelve. So this is how much I need to make per month. Now you can say, okay, well, how much do my services cost? So how many people do I need to have on board to meet that monthly goal? And now you can reverse engineer that and say, when I talk to ten people, how many do I close? Do I close? Two out of ten, four out of ten. So that's your closing ratio. Now, if I need to make X amount a month and I need five per month. And I have, like, a 25% closing ratio. I need to talk to 20 people now you're actually setting up the plan. So you know what you want to make at the end of the year? You know what you need to do monthly. You know how many people you need to have to set that goal? And now we can say, okay, how do I attract 20 people or leads to talk to? And so that's where we are going to get into the weeds next month when I have them. But I'll be high level here. But there's a number of platforms. There's a number of avenues that you can take, one being SEO, social media video. But we have the top ten digital marketing trends for the year. And one of them, I'm going to start with that we talked about in episode 19 was email marketing. So we talked about email marketing, and a lot of people sleep on this Avenue. But email marketing is vital because as we saw last year with the Facebook debacle, Facebook went down and all of their properties.



Jason: (04:14)

WhatsApp, Instagram? Everything went down. So a lot of business owners found out firsthand what it's like to not have social media. And the two things I always preach about is having your own website in your own email list because you own those properties. So email is vital. So I'm not going to get into that a whole lot, because if you head back to episode 19, I get into depth on that. So that's one I'm going to talk about next video. We all know video is hot, and Instagram changed their whole algorithm last year based on video because they were getting their butts kicked by TikTok. And so now they're into the video realm. So if you have an image or static post, it does not get the same attention or engagement as a video. There are some tricks that you can do in terms of that. And Maria, later on she's going to talk about not in this episode, but in a future episode about TikTok and what she's learned from that that can help you out. But in terms of what I hear from designers, not knowing what to do a video on what I tell a lot of designers is just look at what you do every day. Your processes is an aspect that separates you from other designers. Video that video, what it's like working with you. So the end user or your potential client can see what it's like working with you over the other designer down the street. So you can start to differentiate yourselves from others. And when you are on video now, people get to know like to trust you. That is the differentiating factor that will separate you from others. So video is vital. The last one I want to touch on is having an omnipresent approach and what that means. It's like some people call that omni channel where you're everywhere that the end user is. So first of all, we're going to first define who is your target audience. So you need to do this. And there's a mini exercise that we had in episode six where we had talked about how to define your target audience. So relook at that. And then there's an exercise in there. I won't talk about that. But once you define your audience, now you can use that to say, Clay, where are they?



Jason: (06:33)

What platforms are they on? And so now you can have an omni channel or omnipresent approach to meet them where they are. And you could develop a message that resonates them. And so those are the three things that I really want to touch on that once you know your numbers, you could break that down to monthly. And now you know how many people you need to sign up, and then you know how many leads you need to talk to to meet based on your closing rate. Then you can start to get into the weeds of how do I get these leads so I can grow my business.

Maria: (07:05)

I like that you're taking control over what your income is going to be this upcoming year through a marketing plan. I think a lot of people think that business is just what your processes are, what your business strategy is and your current referral base of clients. And this is really pulling back and showing that one third of all business is marketing. And if you don't have a marketing plan, and if you're not proactively marketing your business, you cannot predict your growth. You cannot change your trajectory. You cannot improve your clientele base. You are 100% dependent on what you already have. And if you don't like where you are and you do want to grow, moving forward, it is going to be essential to understand that it's in your marketing plan that you can make those changes just to talk about that. Too, and just emphasize that writing down your goals is vital. One of the things I will also talk about is there was a Harvard study done where they interviewed graduates. 84% of the graduates that they interviewed had no specific goals. 13% of them wrote the goals down that they actually wanted to achieve, and then 3% had specific plans of how they were going to accomplish those codes and what they found out. The 13% that wrote down close made twice as much as the 84% that did not.

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**Jason: (08:43)**

And then the 3% made 97% more. I mean, may almost triple as much more as the other 97%. So having the goals and writing them down and then having specific plans is what you need to do. As you said, Miriam, everyone at this time is going to have they're going to hear from everybody here's how you plan or whatever. But whatever you decide to do, make sure you write it down and you have a plan of action to accomplish it, and you follow up with it, at least quarterly to see if you've hit the mark. And if not, you can revisit. Why did you not hit the Mark? What do you need to change? So you're on track. But if you're not tracking it, nothing will get done.

Maria: (09:31)

It's so true. And I'm just curious to get your perspective, Jason, because when you set goals, there's different philosophies, right? You can be just humble or not ambitious and just set goals that you pretty much know you can achieve, or you can be a little bit more ambitious, or you can sort of shoot for the stars. It's like, what is your recommendation? What do you do for your business? How ambitious do you think people should be when they set their goals?

Jason: (10:08)

We actually, honestly, we do both. So I have the practical way with the team that we actually set with the team on where we want to be at the end of the year. Then I also have my aspirational ones as well. And so I actually do two claims. I don't recommend that for everybody because they may not have time to do that, but you want to do the practical one based on your growth. See if you analyze where you were last year, where you were the last couple of years and see what your percent is that needs to foretell, okay. Am I happy with that? So if I've grown 15% a year, am I happy with that? Or do I want to grow further? And if you do, you need to be a little more aspirational so you could put your own feet to the fire and hit those codes. But if you're happy with where your growth trend is, then you just need to have more of a practical approach of how I grow in these next few months and into the year. So really look at where you were over the last few years to see if you're happy.

**Jason: (11:03)**

And if not, you may need to change up some things. But if you're new, then I would suggest you either look at the competition, you hire a coach, or you do something because you don't have that track record to lean.

Mirjam: (11:22)

I think that's so smart and so interesting. I've actually never heard that you would have two plans, but it makes so much sense to me. And I think part of being happy with where you are and where you want to go is not just about your business, too, but you also have to be realistic of what the impact is on your life. And I see this in my own business as well because you'd like to be ambitious, but then you end up working so much that it negatively impacts the rest of your life. So I think there's all these not just the business marketing questions, but the work balance that needs to feed into it as well.

Jason: (12:07)

One other item I would tie into. That is when you create your plan, have an accountability partner, whether that be somebody on your team, whether that be your spouse, whether that be your business partner, somebody that actually knows that you have the heat goals and plans in place so they can hold you accountable. Because if you only do it for you and you hide it, then it'll be easier for you to say, Well, I didn't meet the goals, so it's not a big deal. But if you have somebody else holding you accountable and that will meet with you every quarter and say, okay, you said you were going to be, or you will go do X-Y-Z. Where are you? And so if you don't have an answer or if you haven't met that which you know what happens. Life happens as you say. But they could then ask the next question, why? Why didn't you hit that? And so now you really got to look in your sales. Did I do everything I was supposed to do or that I needed to do to get the go? So having an accountability partner is just as important as developing the goal in the plan.



Maria: (13:09)

So Mirjam, the guy that is on Shark Tank recently published a couple of videos where he said what he looked at where his female run businesses were having lower turnover of employees and faster growth than his men run companies. And they said that strategically, women tend to place attainable goals along the way, and it makes the employees have higher morale, whereas the men only set the one aspirational goal that they have for themselves. And that causes a lot of drag on the employee base. So actually you should have two sets of goals. You should have one set of goals for your employees, and those should be the attainable. This is the standard growth. Let's see if we're doing better in our growth, and then you should have an aspirational goal. And one thing that can be really helpful is sometimes when you look at your aspirational goal, instead of looking at it like I want to make money and put it in my pocket. You can say I want to add value. So it's a lot easier to say because we can start to see it because it's very easy to see that one year my goal was to add \$1 million of value that year. And I did that within six weeks on two real estate investments for people. And so once you start realizing that you're adding such high levels of value in such short windows of time, you start to start to see who you are and what your value is differently than if you were to just say, I want to make an extra \$100,000 or make \$100,000 or do a million dollars in revenue. You can start to see that maybe your power is somewhere else in what the value is that you're providing. And so you can also look at it from a value provider perspective as well for your aspirational goal.

Mirjam: (15:07)

I love that so much. Wow, that's really good.



Maria: (15:11)

Just to add into that as we plan for this year, I want us to also remember our why most business owners did not open or start their own business firm to make money. It was to achieve something, whether it's to have your time back, where you spend time with family, whether it was to travel. So what is your why so really understand that? And when you plan for this year, make sure to add that into your plan. So if you have in there, I want to spend more time with whoever that is, make sure you also plan that in as well. Because if you forget your why, sometimes that leads to burnout. So remember what your why is and add that into your planning.

Mirjam: (15:57)

I love Simon Sinek, who wrote Start with Why? So yes, very smart guy. One thought that I had to and it ties in a little bit with what Maria said about value, because I feel like that is something you can control to a certain point. Whereas when you set these goals that are outcome focused, it's like things can happen that are not within your control, and you can definitely miss your goal. I'm sure we all have in the past in my field in PR, it's very soft. Right. And there's a lot of things you don't have control over. So one way that I like to look at it, and one way that I like to plan is that I plan for what I can control. So it's basically how much effort I put into it the activities that I'm going to undertake that will hopefully lead me to my goal. But in PR, it's like you never know if that project is actually going to end up in the issue, or maybe it gets bumped for something else. But you have to set yourself up for success and you have to put in all the work and all the effort to maximize your chances of achieving your goals. So I like to track not just results. But if I said I'm going to send out five pitches this month and I did it, that's a win. So that's another way I like to plan. And I like to track because it's achievable because it's in my control, and I don't have to rely on other people to get there.

**Mirjam: (17:44)**

And if you share it in a group and hold yourself accountable to those standards, we do this in my membership. It definitely helps, because a year is a long time, and maybe in January, you're all fired up and you're going above and beyond and you go crazy and then you get tired and you get busy and it just gets hard to stick with it. So having that accountability, I agree 100% with you, Jason, is absolutely critical.

Maria: (18:16)

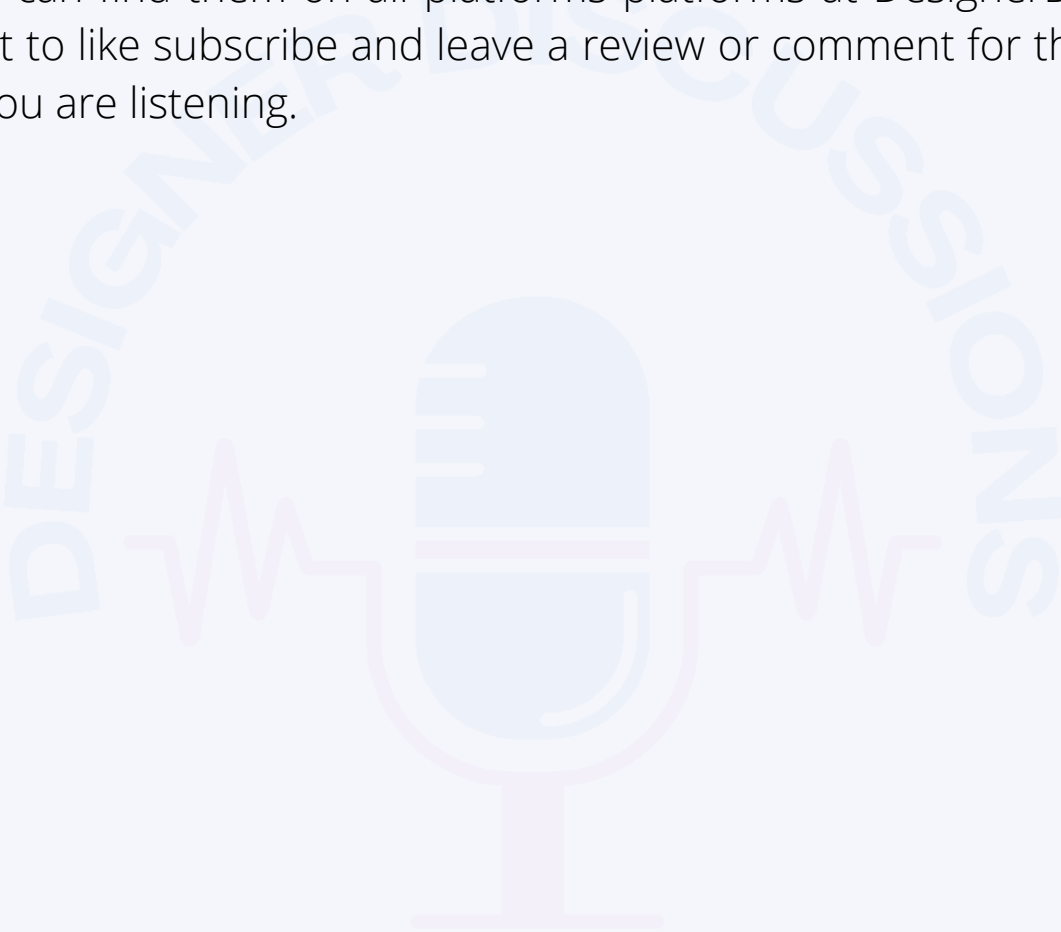
I started writing a blog post about this. It's sort of like being pregnant. You are having a baby. You're super excited about it. You spend all this time and energy planning for the baby. And then once the baby gets there, it's that first trimester after the baby is born, that you realize what parenting and having a baby is actually about. And that is also what first one of twins. That is what marketing is for interior design. We all have this great ability to make beautiful homes and produce these great projects. But if we aren't using what we've created, we aren't experiencing the whole aspect of owning a business and having something that can grow on its own and having something that will grow and develop and continue on beyond what we are doing. And so it's super important to just take a step back. Start looking at your marketing. This is what Designer Discussions covers is a lot of the marketing essentials that each designer should be doing for their business. We have some really great podcasts coming up this year. They're going to cover some of the small details, the little things we can be doing on a weekly basis that can truly impact us without us having to have that marketing degree that it appears we all need. Right. So I'm Super excited to have you here. Please subscribe to our podcast, and we have so much great content for you coming in 2022. And if you're going to be a KBIS, we want you to come by and see us in our booth, and we have free exhibit hall passes for anybody who's interested, but you got to get in touch with us.

**Maria: (19:55)**

Send us your email so we can get you that opportunity.

Outro: (20:01)

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