

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. Today we are diving into what is working for blogs right now in 2020 and yes, this is a slightly different topic than what we usually chat about here on the podcast, but I want to start occasionally adding in a few more business related topics because I know that many of you who listened to it are also not only creating your homestead but you're also dreaming of creating a business that can sustain your homestead. And like I've mentioned before, I love learning about business running businesses just as much as I love milk cows and Mason jars. So I wanted to give you some of my thoughts and research today. I'm your host Jill Winger and this is the podcast for people who are disenchanted with conformity. If you like to swim upstream while society rides the river of least resistance and you're a trailblazer, a Maverick, a homesteader, a modern pioneer, or a backyard farmer, you have found your tribe.

Speaker 1 ([01:16](#)):

So it is obviously right now very wintery in Wyoming. There's not a lot of things to do outside. And this is the time of year where I spend a little bit more time on the computer than normal mostly because there's not a lot else to do on the weekends. But I have been cleaning out my blog, doing some auditing on my different software and old blog posts and what's working and what's not working. And in spending a good number of hours on that this past weekend I couldn't help but really be taken back by how much things have changed and it feels a little bit sometimes like my blog is a time machine because there's lots of old posts. You know, I've been doing this for 10 years, which blows my mind. And as you know, there's this chronological history of us on the blog for the past 10 years throughout this whole homesteading journey.

Speaker 1 ([02:19](#)):

And I was going through some old posts this week, you know, deleting some cause they were horrendously bad, horrible photos, really weak content. But just reading some of the things I was talking about back then and how I was talking about it. And let's just say a lot of things have changed, a ton of things have changed not only in our lives and my perspective and my mindset, but also just in looking at what worked five years ago, 10 years ago online. Nothing is the same. It's such a different world. And I thought it would be a great topic for a podcast because I, a lot of you are looking at starting some sort of online presence, a blog, a YouTube channel, a podcast, a social media account, in the hopes that it will someday or maybe it already is, create income that can help further your homestead dreams.

Speaker 1 ([03:17](#)):

And so I thought it would be fun to go into some of the things that used to work and that no longer work to give you some perspective and some inspiration in how you can move forward in 2020 to really maximize the time you are spending on a brand or an online presence or whatever your creating. So I think the biggest factor in this that has caused such a shift, and this is really just a normal phenomenon that happens in any industry, but the internet and blogging especially, or social media is so much noisier than it used to be, and this is a normal progression. It's not a bad thing, but it's more commonplace obviously than it was 10 years ago. Everybody has a blog, everybody has a website, everybody has a Facebook page, and there's a lot more competition. So what I had to do 10 years ago to start getting eyeballs on my website or my content is completely different than what I have to do now to get eyeballs on my content.

Speaker 1 ([04:33](#)):

There was almost a little bit of this vibe of, of if you build it, they will come back in the day. That does not exist anymore. I can assure you that is dead. And the problem is that a lot of folks still are holding to that belief that, Oh Hey, if I put up a website or I slap up a blog, I'm just going to get magical people finding the blog without any effort. On my part. And that's where a lot of folks start getting really frustrated. They spend money to build out websites or platforms and then it just doesn't pay off. So there are three things that you can do with what you're creating with, whether it's a platform on a video based platform or podcasting or blogging or whatever, to help streamline this process to make sure that the work you're putting in is going to result in traffic and readership or listenership or potentially income down the road.

Speaker 1 ([05:37](#)):

And these three things, I just want to warn you, they're not like specific, they're action items, but they're not like go buy this plugin or go buy this piece of software because there really isn't a magic bullet for this. It takes a lot of soul searching to be honest. And that's the piece that a lot of folks really struggle with. So if you can commit to doing a little bit of soul searching, a little bit of journaling, maybe some praying, maybe some deep thinking to figure out who you are and what you're doing and where you're headed. You'll be so far ahead of the game, but it just is the heavy lifting. So here are the three things that I believe in 2020 are going to be absolutely a necessity in order to grow an online presence. All right, so number one, you've got to know your mission and your purpose in what you're creating.

Speaker 1 ([06:33](#)):

And I don't care if it's a blog or if it's some sort of online retail business or it's a YouTube channel. Vague and generic absolutely will not cut it anymore. It used to work, you know, people would start blogs all the time back in the day that was like Jill's website of everything. And then they would magically become famous in a couple of years, right? With lots of traffic and lots of ad income does not work like that anymore. I can assure you, if you start Jill's website of everything today, no one will read it. Maybe not even your mom. Like that is not what works. So how people on the internet consume content has changed. And because the novelty of the internet has really worn off quite a while ago. Now when people get online and they want to read blogs or they want to watch a YouTube channel or they want to do different things to consume content, they want to know kind of why they're consuming it.

Speaker 1 ([07:35](#)):

I need to have a reason behind it. And the only way for you to be able to create purposeful content is if you know your mission and what you're about. What are you an expert in? What are you passionate about? What can you bring to the world? Okay, how are you going to set yourself apart? And this is a process. I'm going to warn you. I know a lot of people when I work with my coaching clients, this is the part that they come to me and they're like, I don't know. I like all the things I want to help everyone. I don't know how to narrow it down. I don't know what I'm an expert in. And I can assure you that there is something inside of you that is a message that you are meant to share with the world, but sometimes it can take some digging to figure out what it is.

Speaker 1 ([08:25](#)):

And by digging, I mean lots of self reflection, lots of thinking, lots of journaling, lots of talking through it, maybe with your spouse or with your friends just to kind of um, sort through all the ideas floating around in your head. But it is a process and you might have an idea of what it is and then it will continue to be refined the longer you go. But it's crucial to do the work, to spend the time doing the heavy lifting

to figure that out. Now, one idea I have for you is that if you're not quite sure or you have kind of a vague idea of your mission or where you're headed with what you want to create, I would recommend opening up an Instagram account if you don't already have one. And start experimenting with your messaging and your content and the different topics there before you spend a lot of time and money building out a blog or a website.

Speaker 1 ([09:27](#)):

So what I'm seeing happen all too often as I have people come to me and they say, I want to start blogging just like you, and I'm going to go pay someone \$1,000 to set up my blog and build a design out. Or I'm going to Google my eyeballs until they're raw and try to figure out how to do it all myself, you know, hundreds of hours to figure out, um, all of the deals of WordPress and hosts and domain names and site security. And you're going to try to figure all that out. But they don't even know really what's, what the website or what the blog or what their platform is about yet. They just know they want to say, I have a website. And so a lot of money is wasted. A lot of time is wasted. Basically just the shoot the shotgun approach of let me build something and then I'll figure out what it's about.

Speaker 1 ([10:14](#)):

And so to avoid that wasting of resources cause I want you to not drive yourself crazy. Open up that Instagram first. Experiment with names, experiment with your audiences, experiment with the community and serving them and creating content for them and see if it feels good to you. Number one, if you even like talking about it. And then number two, see what sort of things that community needs and how you can serve them. And that will save you a lot of time in the long run because it is a process of getting your mission figured out and it will kind of be revealed in layers. So give yourself a little time to figure out how to unpack those layers before you go crazy on a website. And it's also really important at this point to get clear with yourself if you are doing this blog or this platform as a hobby or a business because it's going to look a little bit different.

Speaker 1 ([11:11](#)):

And if it's just a hobby and you just need a creative outlet, and you just want to post stuff and show pictures of your flowers or show pictures of what you're cooking or pictures of your kid, that's cool. But it's going to be a different route than if you're eventually hoping to create an income from what you're doing online. And if you're not sure, if you're kind of like, I'm not sure which one it will be, I'm going to say, then that means it's probably a hobby. And when it's a hobby, you don't have to be as mission oriented. You can kind of post whatever you want, just share it to your family and friends. But I'm guessing if you're listening to this episode, you want it to be a business and then you need to be committed to treating it as a business.

Speaker 1 ([11:50](#)):

And we know that a successful business, whether it's online or it's in retail or it's brick and mortar or whatever, they know who they are and they know where they're headed. Right? So we're going to treat your platform the same way. Okay. Number two, not only do you need to know your mission, but you need to know what problems you are solving. And one of the biggest mistakes I see people make as they start a business or they want to start a business or they create a YouTube channel or social media accounts or a blog and then they just proceed to kind of ramble about their life and treat it like an online diary. And they think people you know, are going to be really engaged with them if they just share what

they're doing on a day to day basis. This did work, you know, five, 10 years ago you could develop a following just by talking about what you had for breakfast, but it doesn't work anymore.

Speaker 1 ([12:50](#)):

The exception being if you are a celebrity or you are some sort of existing influencer in the online space, then people tend to actually want to know what you had for breakfast that's engaging to them, that's relatable to them. And you can build a client base just talking about your everyday life. But otherwise, if you're just a normal person without a huge celebrity following, people really only care about how you're going to help them, okay. And you might help them. There's a couple of different ways to do this. You might help them by entertaining them, right? You might help them by inspiring them with a beautiful decor, beautiful food or beautiful gardens. Like they might look at your page, look at your blog or your Instagram and go, Whoa, this girl has the most amazing house. I want my house to be like hers. So I'm going to follow her to get ideas, right?

Speaker 1 ([13:44](#)):

So you can make them laugh, you can inspire them or you can educate them. So maybe, you're not particularly, you know, entertaining as far as humor goes. Or maybe you don't have this aspirational lifestyle setting that you live in, but you know how you know about stuff, right? You know how to teach and you know how to educate and you want to show people how to do things. So that's another way that you can help people. But it's important that you figure out not only your mission, like I said, but who you're serving and what their problems are. So for me, particularly in the homesteading space, I know that I have an audience of people who are, many of you want to start a homestead. You don't already live on a hundred acres. Some of you do, but many of you are wanting to get started with your homestead.

Speaker 1 ([14:36](#)):

So I sit here and I think, what sort of problems does my audience have and how can I help them solve those problems? Maybe it's how to start your garden. Maybe it's how to buy your first chicken. Maybe it's how to find land. And I use that thought process to help me understand how I can speak to my audience, how I can create content for my audience. And when I, I know I hit the nail on the head because people will tell me things like, how did you know? I was thinking about that yesterday. It's like you read my mind. And that means I love getting those comments because I'm like, bingo. I figured out what their problem was. And I helped give them a solution. And that has been kind of my M.O. For growing my brand over the years is how can I inspire and encourage and educate.

Speaker 1 ([15:24](#)):

And again, kind of like the mission, uh, establishing your mission. This is another thing that takes some thought. This takes a lot of listening to the type of person you want to serve. So figuring out who they are and figure out where they're hanging out and then listen, whether it's in a Facebook group or it's at a local event, or you're talking to someone one on one, figure out what they're saying and what those problems are and then how you can create a solution around that. It might be a free solution. It might be a paid solution, a product or a service or a course. But that's gold right there. Solving a problem is, I think, the golden ticket to creating a successful online presence. All right. Number three. It's really important, I think, to think outside of the box, especially, you know, I titled this podcast episode, what is working for blogs in 2020 but honestly, you don't even really need a blog in 2020 per se because there's

so many other platforms where you can create content that will then bring an audience to you potentially if you're speaking the language to the person that you're trying to serve.

Speaker 1 ([16:41](#)):

So a blog is fine. But there's also podcasting, there's also YouTube, there's also Instagram and Facebook, and there's lots of different ways to create a tribe. So I'm not going to say that every single person needs a blog. It's, I don't think it's 100% necessity. It depends on what sort of things you'd like to create. If you like to write, if you'd like to be on video, if you like to talk into a microphone like I'm doing right now, you have to figure out where your personality will shine and where your people are hanging out. Okay. And a blog may or may not be a fit for you. Only you can answer that question. But I will say that if you do decide a blog is part of your strategy, it's really important that you focus on quality content, not quantity. And there, you know, there's so many blogs, there's millions and millions of blogs out there and Google is kind of the God of the blogs.

Speaker 1 ([17:45](#)):

And so Google controls who gets to your blog, excuse me, through different, you know, search engine searches and traffic. And so unless you have a way to direct a lot of people to your website or your blog on your own, you're going to have to learn how to play the Google game. And that's a little bit of a time investment. It's actually a lot of a time investment to figure out what Google likes and how to optimize your blog and website and how to create content that's going to resonate with the search engine. And then the search engine will then send you traffic. And so I'm not saying all this to discourage you, but I want you to know that if you do decide a blog is the way to go. There's a definite learning curve. But honestly, there's a learning curve with any of those platforms.

Speaker 1 ([18:28](#)):

Learning how to shoot good video or learning how to record a podcast. So it's an investment in your education, uh, but if it does come down to an actual blog, you're going to learn, need to learn how to play well with Google. And right now it's all about quality. So it's not about publishing five short blog posts a week just to say you published. Rather, it's about really good content that's solving a problem that's speaking to your mission and that's helping your audience. So to wrap it all up, it is still very possible to build an online business in 2020. I think the tools are better. There's more options than ever before. But if you're ready to take this path or you're ready to, maybe you're already on this path and you want to improve what you already have created, I would just say my biggest piece of advice is be ready to learn.

Speaker 1 ([19:22](#)):

Like buckle up and be ready for some big time personal development. Be ready to stretch yourself. Be ready to play outside of your comfort zone and learn new skills and try new things. Because it's all about being more targeted and more focused than ever before. And it's fun. Honestly, I see it kind of like a game. I love being a total nerd and learning about Google strategies or how to do better on YouTube or how to make better podcast content. Like I find that bizarrely exciting and hopefully you will too, if this is an Avenue that you would like to take. But it's all about staying focused and serving your audience. So if you are looking for some guidance in growing your online presence this year, I have recently opened up a mentoring program for a select number of people and it's designed for folks who are very serious about taking their business to the next level.

Speaker 1 ([20:20](#)):

There is a monetary investment involved cause I want people to be all in. But if that sounds like something that is interesting to you, go ahead and shoot me an email over jill@theprairiehomestead.com and let's chat to see if we're a fit. And that's it. Don't forget to hit subscribe. So all the new podcast episode show up in your app automatically just makes it a little bit easier for you. And if you found episode hopeful, take a screenshot of it or take a picture of your notes posted over on Facebook and or Instagram and tag me so I can check it out. Thanks for listening my friend and we'll chat more on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.