

Transcript:**Gert Mellak 0:56**

Welcome back to SeoLeverage.com. My name is Gert Mellak. And today, I'm very pleased to welcome as our first guest on the show one of the big names in online marketing and specifically in design, Greg Merrilees. Thank you so much for coming to the show, Greg.

Greg Merrilees 1:11

Thank you for having me, Gert. It's awesome to be here, buddy.

Gert Mellak 1:14

Awesome. You're the founder and director of studio1design.com from Australia, where I understand you're pretty much focused on website design, branding, logo design, especially is the correct?

Greg Merrilees 1:26

It's absolutely correct. Yeah, yeah. Conversion focused websites. Yeah.

Gert Mellak 1:30

Conversion focused. And this was something that caught my attention. Because if I come to see a lot of websites, right, I talked to a lot of online business owners, when we do the SEO analysis, we jump on a lot of calls just to take off, where should we really start. And design is one of the first things that sometimes comes to mind, which is still an outdated design, the owner swears this is working conversion wise, but it's completely outdated. You can see they didn't touch it in 10 years. What I really like about your design before we jump into conversion and other things, is that your designs have a very strong user experience focus. And what I mean by this and we working on a few projects together is that I just noticed from the Google Ads site where I check out landing pages and find where could conversions get lost, where people might be getting lost in the way through their website, your websites have a very clear structure. And this is what I particularly like about your design. So I can completely put myself into user shoes going through those websites, even when I see the design before the website is built. Users in every single state and every single moment know exactly what they are going to do next. And I think this definitely still sets your designs, Studio1 Designs apart. We've also seen gurus and big names like Jordan, having a Perry Marshall, Chris Ducker, James Schramko, Ezra Firestone or Kevin Rogers work with you, and they definitely also endorse especially this part of your designs. I've even heard you work with Yoda from Star Wars. Is this correct?

Greg Merrilees 3:05

Well, not not exactly. No, actually. Look, we worked with Frank was the original voice. Yeah, that was pretty exciting. Did a couple of websites for him one for his documentary, guys talking? Yeah. So that was exciting.

Gert Mellak 3:18

Awesome. That's great. Could you please tell us a little bit about your background? Tell us where you come from? How do you come from to design? How the studio1design get really?

Greg Merrilees 3:27

Yeah, totally. I mean, look, I've had my business, you know, designing graphics in general, since the year 2000. We started off designing t-shirts, right? And yeah, no, and then looking in Australia, and it sort of happened around the world, the industry went vertical. So all of our clients who were wholesalers were getting squeezed out by their clients who were the retailers that went vertical, right? So all of a sudden, we had no business and this isn't about 2013. And I looked online for a solution. I knew I had to pivot. You know, I had, I had an office full of six designers full time, had local clients, and my wife was even in the clothing industry and she lost her job as well. We had a young family, a little baby and so you had to pivot. So looked online and found podcasts. Right. And, you know, I just love listening to podcasts and learned so much about online marketing and everything to do with conversions and things like that. And so, there's these two podcasters, Ezra Firestone and James Schramko, who you just mentioned before, but had a podcast together called Think Act Get and they said on one of their episodes, they didn't really love their logo. So I thought, yes, I'm gonna design them a new logo. So, yeah, jumped in there designed a logo. They absolutely hated the first one that I did for them, right, but I wasn't gonna give up because I can't give up right. I'm totally unemployable. And so design them another logo and they absolutely loved it. And Ezra, you know, he's sort of New York, hippie voices, hot bang! Which is really cool. And so, from there, you know, he started designing websites for them and then because they both got their own communities, they started getting us to design for their communities and their websites and their brand. And then it just kind of flowed from there and yeah, seven, 850 odd websites later, you know, we just grew our authority. And, and here we are.

Gert Mellak 5:13

That's that's a great story. I understand that. Ezra and especially James already, I also have a very big impact on our business as well. And so I it's really interesting, where, where this comes from, I didn't know about the T shirt designs, actually. Which is funny, funny thing to know about you. On our site on SEO very often, I tell people, there's a lot of buckets to fill, right? And you want to rank well, with a website, our listeners are interested in how to do SEO in a better way. But a very big part and this is very often forgotten and I think underrated, is user experience. Okay, so Google is smart enough these days, to really check out what's the user experience on a site like, and part of the user experience, or probably the biggest part is really design. So my question for you is, what do you think is the role of design when it comes to content? Because at the end of the day, Google is going to assess the content, but the content is obviously embedded in your web design. What are your thoughts on on this?

Greg Merrilees 6:18

Totally. And just to clarify, are you talking about content as in like blog posts and podcasts or the whole?

Gert Mellak 6:24

Content is probably goes a little bit beyond because we've got videos embedded, we're getting more and more podcasts embedded, we've got social components have their own embedded on website, the company's like, very big these days. Mostly, we focus on textual content in SEO, because this in most cases, for most search intent, this is what Google ultimately wants to rank. But this doesn't mean that there isn't a video embedded, because just everybody on the user side wants to have this content also as video everywhere.

Greg Merrilees - 6:52

Yeah, gotcha. Yeah. And look, I mean, like, to me, there's, I mean, there's 2 billion websites online today, apparently, right. So apparently, that's grown like doubled in the last four years. So to me, you have to have a website that stands out and is a little bit different to your competitors. We'll talk about, you know, the templates if you want, but a verse, you know, custom, but yet, to me, your website is your storefront. And it's usually the first place that people go to check you out. So, you want to make sure that it not only ranks well, but looks good. And so therefore, you know, to me, we follow like this thing called SPIN Selling, which is, stands for an acronym: situation, problem implication, need. And we kind of put that into our website design, because really, the visitor of the website doesn't really care about you, they only care about you know them, and do you have a solution to that problem? Right? So they're asking themselves things like, you know, what do you offer? How do I benefit from your offer? You know, Do you have proof that your offer works? Essentially, why should I choose you over your competitors? Does your website look credible and trustworthy? And then, you know, like, do you have a clear pathway and an action plan for me to take like, and I, you know, call to action. And so really, we want to put that, you know, not just into a beautiful looking design, but into the the copywriting as well, so that, you know, they can find what they're after? And they can they have a solution, you know, they know that you have a solution to the problem. And guess what Google loves, when they send traffic to a website where you solve their problem as well, right? So yeah, to me, that's the way we design. So it's not just about a pretty design, it's getting that balance, right between a pretty design, and a conversion focus. And conversion, focus means just giving, like providing a solution to the visitors problems.

Gert Mellak 8:38

Now, I love that I love especially what you said initially, a website is your storefront. Very often you walk down the street, and you decide based on what you see in the storefront whether you enter the store or not. Right, it's just the usual thing to happen. What the relation to SEO, though here is that there is a thing called Pogo sticking in SEO and Pogo sticking, what we use the term for is that we click on a website, we go back to Google, we click on another website, we go back to we we click on another website, we are in such a hurry, obviously, that very often, we don't even spend two seconds on a website if it if it's low to load, or it doesn't look trustworthy, as you say, or credible, as you're saying, and go back immediately. So the first impression for SEO even before the content is just very often what moves the needle. So you could have the best content out there. You could be the highest authority in your industry. If the design we ask people of. And very often I understand sometimes people do a B testing or something like that. I've even seen people put in the logo in two versions of the logo because people reacted differently to the website and spent more or less time or converted higher or lower just because of these aspects. I had, I have a friend who's an architect, and what he says I very often get reminded to this and he says when you enter a room, your feeling is like the total of all the details you perceive, right? So, it's not like which furniture do you have in the changing the furniture is going to move, everything is like everything you feel your sensations, your feelings, your visual impact, all everything is going to make an impression on you. And very often I get reminded of this when I open up a website, so they might have a cool design, but the logo is really old and outdated. Or they have a very nice website design, but the font is too small, or there's almost no space between the lines or, or stuff like that. So I can very much then relate based on data when we analyze a website, why there is such a high bounce rate, right? So so people are coming in with 80, 90, 95% bounce rates and I'm like, Yeah, okay, I don't, I'm not who should be criticizing their design, but I'm just a look, check out all these designs of your competitors and check out yours, what's the gap, and we try to kind of bring people towards the user experience is one of the main gaps here. So that's definitely awesome feedback. And another thing we have just talked about in the last episode, is user happiness. So Google wants to make users happy so we as website owners need to have design that makes them happy. And just things like bounce rate, or the first impression, as you were saying, having a credible website absolutely plays into this. You mentioned themes or templates before and that really want to go into this because our listeners are online business owners. And I noticed from my own experience, the first thing when we want to start a website, it's just so easy these days, my preference is themeforest. net. I go there when I would just download the theme that looks nice that seems to be fit my industry. What's the issue with this or raised in another way? When should a business choose a template? When should a business go after a custom design?

Greg Merrilees 11:47

Yeah, look, it's great question. Look, to me, if you're starting out, get a template, or use Click Funnels, a lead page is one of those page builders to test your offer. The number one thing is to get your offer up quickly, right and test it, see if people want to pay you for what you've got, right? So that's when template websites really, really come in handy, because it pretty much instant and there were \$100 or not even sometimes. But then right? If you are making money, if you if your offer does convert, then it's time to invest in your brand. And your website, I believe anyway, because you think about all the industry leaders out there. I mean, sure, they may have sat on a template, but you can guarantee none of them are going to have a website that's built on something on theme forest or wherever, right on a template. And, you know, the reason is because like they want to be seen as an industry leader, and they want to look unique, they don't want to look like everybody else. And that's unfortunately what happens with website templates. Everybody's got the same sort of look and feel. And it looks like a template where we like to use brand elements and brand personality. In our custom designs, we only do custom design, but I mean, yeah, it's not cheap, I get it. So you know, you've got to make sure you're making money before you invest in a custom design. But yeah, like I said, industry leaders, they only have custom websites, because they wouldn't want people to think that they're not as awesome as they are by going to their website and saying that, Oh, that looks pretty average and just a template.

Gert Mellak 13:16

Sounds good. So starting out with templates is okay in your point of view, but one business is going it's time to strengthen the brand, invest in custom designs, set yourself apart from the rest from the crowd, and get to step up your game. Right.

Greg Merrilees 13:32

Exactly. Yeah. And look, I made some of those templates, they may look okay, but a lot of them are not really conversion focused, you know. So just you just have to be careful. And yeah, I mean, like I said, test your offer. But if it's your your goal to have a template for years and years, you'll probably find that you'll get diminishing returns because of the fact that it's getting older, it gets harder to update, things break and you get frustrated. That's what we hear from people that started on templates, yeah.

Gert Mellak 13:59

Absolutely. And it's also very often the speed issue, right? So templates are not out, we need to understand the templates are not being built to convert well, they are built to look nice on the template side. Right? So they need to they need to be sold. So they have all kinds of components we have been doing. I've been doing ecommerce programming for 15 years to 16 years before I started with SEO so my background is rather technical. And I remember so many people come to me with like a very nice theme and they just wanted me to install this theme on their Magento store or Shopify store or whatever it was back then probably PrestaShop and whatever what else we were working here in Europe and the thing was that ended inside okay now install this theme but we don't use need this slider we don't need this component. We don't need the sidebar, we don't you take everything away and decide looks very very crappy. Right? So this is just templates. Either you like the template as it is. You install everything and you're okay with the speed issues that come with templates very often because they just had so many different components at the back end. This is JavaScript files and CSS files, a lot of files, and sometimes hundred hundred and 50 files get loaded, just to present the website. But they obviously did a good job selling this, but they didn't think about how this inside is going to rank afterwards, we'll decide how the site is going to convert afterwards. How do you guys go about making sure that your designs convert?

Greg Merrilees 15:29

Yeah, so look, we do have three overarching principles, right? It's, it really comes down, it's not so much design, but it's more about the clarity, like the messaging needs to have absolute clarity. And there's and then there's influence. And then there's strategy, right, but they kind of, to me, I've got like a top 10. So there's like three in each of those plus the secret weapon, which I'll talk about. So clarity, right? Like, if you're, if you're looking at your website, you got to look at it in the eyes of your visitors. And you need to make sure that number one, it clearly explains what problem your office solves, right? And who it's for essential that. So really like if you're reviewing your website now, after listening to this, or while you're listening, just answer these 10 questions, basically. So that's number one. Number two would be "Do you clearly explain how people benefit from your offer, right?" And try and look to look at it objectively and not in your eyes. Like one of the biggest problems we see with people writing their own website copy is that they make it all about them, like, I can serve my people, right? Welcome to insert business name, like. And then on top of that, they'll write it all about features, right? But that's not what you've got to concentrate on, you got to concentrate on those benefits over features, short features are important. But you know, think about that emotional hook and that connection with your user, how they're going to benefit from the features that you have with your product or service. So yeah, then three, like, "Do you clearly explain what's unique about your offer?" That's number three. And so what I mean, there is like, if you do a competitor analysis, and you look at all your competitors, you don't want to just copy them. A lot of mistakes, I see people just thinking, Oh, my competitors doing that, so I'm going to copy them that must work, right? But they don't really know if it works or not. But even if it does, you want to differentiate yourself and I can't stress that enough. Zig when others zag and, and then so there's three questions in clarity and then influence. So really, these are the psychological drives. And this is based on the book influenced by Robert Cialdini that we tried to put into, you know, every one of our websites, there's like six principles. But the three most important to me is reciprocity, which is essentially social proof. Right? So you want to show that you have social proof that proves that your that your solution works, essentially, right? So number four question is, "Do you have social proof to show that your social works?" And that could be written or video testimonials, could be client logos, review plugins, they're very believable, believable, because they're third party, you know, case studies before and afters, examples of your work, that sort of thing. And then five, question five influences Do you display your authority, right, so this is psychological drive authority. And so what we mean there is letting people know, like, it could be in the form of impact metrics. So it could be the amount of customers you've helped, sharing your knowledge, especially in blogging, you know, content content in general. It could be, you know, the like, as seen in the social media followers that you've had, professional photos, videos, make sure everything's like top notch, like we said, it's first place where people go to check you out. So if you just put a lot of effort into all of those authority pieces, then you can really, you know, be seen as a leader, essentially. And then number six is like, "Are you being consistent?" So that's the psychological driving code consistency, and based on Robert Cialdini, his book but what we mean there is be consistent with like it might be the amount of content that you're releasing the, you know, release content once a week, or whatever the case is, the look and feel needs to be congruent, like a consistent feel across not just your website, but all of your social media and marketing touchpoints so that, you know, you're essentially become more memorable. And you know, your values and your messaging as well make sure your content aligns with that consistently. Six and then strategy. So the next three questions are like, "Are you leading with value?" Right? That's the number one thing you must do on a website. Biggest mistake I see is people trying to sell on Hello, right. Do not sell on Hello. Does not work, right?

Greg Merrilees 19:42

Yeah, I like that. You know, a lot of marketers say you wouldn't ask someone on the first date to marry you. It's kind of like doing that. So yeah, you want to lead with free content like we're doing now. Or you want to lead with you know, once whether it's free content or a free lead magnet where you're given email address and return sorry, you get any email address in return. And that could be a free checklist, free trial, free video course, whatever, just something that's extremely valuable and is kind of like the first step in your visitors journey that's going to position you as the authority to build trust with them. So, and then that strategy as well, you want to do something on the thank you page, a lot of people just leave that thank you page blank, right. But instead, it's a perfect opportunity to offer something else, right. And whether you're, if you're an ecommerce business, it could be, you know, some sort of upsell. If you're a service business, it might be a free strategy session or something else. And then, you know, have a video face to camera, get them excited for doing that free thing and get them excited to take action for the next thing, essentially. And then yeah, so that's leading with value. And then do an eight, like it is "Do you have a strategy for warming up cold traffic?" It could even be warm traffic, but it's just yeah, giving them that next thing. So the way I like to design websites is to think about like, we're gonna like a 40-question questionnaire to really dive deep before we design. But based on that, we're going to work out a strategy with the client, to really figure out how to take those cold leads and turn them into warm or, you know, hot paying customers. And then number nine is like, "Do you display a clear pathway?" right? Like an action plan. So you just want to make sure that people know before they engage with you how you're going to help them. And I think a lot of people kind of miss that. They just assume that people know what they do. So they don't really display that properly. So they're there. They're the nine questions. And then the secret weapon is, an intense question is, "Do you have a killer website design that makes you look like an industry leader?" And that, to me is, you know, one of the most important things, it's not the most important thing, you've got to get those other pieces right first, but I see a lot of website owners that have those other pieces in place, but their website look crap, because they did it themselves. And that can just let everything on down. So it just ties all those other things together beautifully.

Gert Mellak 22:01

I just had a flashback to my first website designer doing photo shoot. I shouldn't have done that. So while this was, it was a lot of a lot of value here. So let me just recap a little bit. We have the clarity in messaging. We have the influence Robert Cialdini, his book is awesome. I read them the nature reread it again. Definitely social proof being your authority and consistency. Consistency, I think, for us in SEO, in any case, is everything. So whatever you do consistently in the right direction, in SEO definitely works. Interesting. You bring it up in the context of design as well. Yeah, we see in terms of consistency here is that people are very often not consistent with their user experience. So a usability, so they might have like a call to action button in one color and one size. And then on another page, you've got an in a different color and a different size. And then they have their marketing banners, banners with other colors again, and other dialing, so can we from my perspective, which is rather technical and creative, I kind of search for the characteristics of the consistent flow of navigation that put it this way. So users can really identify, really recognize from the first remarketing banner they see or from the first banner they see throughout the website until the checkout, if this is an e commerce site or a lead magnet, if this is an opt in, how they decide is constructed or decide expects them to do kind of in this kind of way, right? Social proof is something we very often talk to our clients about as well. We have like sometimes like a quick audit on our website where people for \$20 or so I can get like a quick assessment. And this is where we walk through these things as well. So we will probably check out whether they have someone backing them up because otherwise among 500,000 search results, there's just one of those right? Yeah, probably 3000 hundred thousand don't have any social proof any anybody backing their their work up? And then I really like the leading with value you mentioned so so a lot of sites don't have don't ask people to do anything or don't give everything away with a lot of clients say, Okay, I can't write all this content. When you're starting out with SEO strategy, they really afraid of giving away their industry knowledge. Whereas most companies and we do this are separate, give everything away. There is nothing, nothing I would have in my bottom drawers something like this. I could pull it out. It's not out there anyway. right? So this is the podcast. This is the YouTube channel. This is the the blog in particular, this is every interview where I am on. We have a book we give away for free, you can get it on Amazon, but you can get it get it for free as a lead magnet or like an entry leading offer where people can just essentially know what's going to happen when they join us. Right and this is just as just proven to be so valuable.

Greg Merrilees 24:49

Is that your ERICA?

Gert Mellak 24:51

The Erica framework. Exactly. So, it's just the way we work right so if someone wants to get to know us, and they want to know how we work, how we deal with certain things, we can certainly just reference the book. It's like, okay, here's the book, you can have it for free read about us. This is essentially what we're going to do from day one. We just got a new client coming in while we're talking. This is what's going to happen from day one when you're with us, right? So we want to have this clarity as well, we have full transparency here. We don't want to be one of those SEO agencies with their secret sauce and their secret, I don't know what, there's no secret, but you can figure out everything in SEO anyway. Right? So yeah, really, I'm really very focused and I think this is something I've tried to do on our website to set us apart a little bit to be as transparent as it gets, right. So you are not going to find another SEO agency more transparent about what they're doing. So there might be people who don't like it, or people searching for an agency that has their secrets, they don't share, which I don't think they exist anyway. But everybody has their preferences, but we are definitely focusing on transparency.

Greg Merrilees 25:57

Sorry. I'm just gonna say it's like a chef, you know, like, a chef will give you the recipes. I have recipe books, but you still want to go to the restaurant.

Gert Mellak 26:06

Absolutely the way that they do it. Exactly. And you can talk about design and what exactly you do, and you're given give me the 40 questions of your questionnaire, I'm not going to be able to reproduce this because I don't have the experience. And especially I don't have the consistency, right. So, and this is what we see as well. Many of my clients know what they should be doing. But this is nothing completely new, we will tell them, but the difference is that they could do 200 things in a given moment. And there are probably five that have an impact. Yeah, mate, midterm short term doesn't exist in SEO, usually midterm, right? So yeah, but they might be focusing on hundred and 95 things, doing hours and hours of work, we can work have hire people to do blog updates and stuff like that, but just not having an impact instead of focusing on five things with 10 hours of their time. And this is where we then come in where we say, okay, the knowledge is out there, there's nothing we would know apart from what we're putting out in what we're suggesting. But the difference really comes in when someone with experience, like I see you assessing designs, or doing web design, someone with experience then comes in and says look, think about it this way, or check out this part of your website, people don't really know what they need to do next. And this is what I really like, and working with professionals where you can see, okay, you can just leverage the experience to just have this laser focus on what really matters. And I think this is very often where some kind of coach or consultant or something like this can step in. Let's make this to wrap this up a little bit practically. What do you think someone could be doing to assess their design? Or they have a good designer should be doing something?

Greg Merrilees 27:43

Yeah, honestly. I mean, I would say like those 10 questions are our top 10. Like, we got a checklist with 50 things, right. And that sort of goes into, you know, what's going to move the needle on various pages and things like that. But the 10 that I just gave the top 10 buy, you can't get any, any bigger, like things that will move the needle, then then just following those top 10 things. So if you like I can, you know, send these to you as checklists, and you can put in, in the show notes. But yeah, just follow those top 10 things. I mean, honestly, they're gonna move the needle at the most, and you can review your website yourself. Say, yeah, that's where I would stop.

Gert Mellak 28:22

Okay, sounds good. So it would take: Do I have social proof, do I come across as in authority, do I have consistency over multiple pages about my messaging and stuff like that. That's awesome. What's the best way to engage an agency like yours?

Greg Merrilees 28:36

Yeah, well, look, there are different types of agencies out there, there's bricks and brick and mortar agencies, you know, there's, you can go on crowdsourcing websites and get designers off there. And really, you know, that's kind of like, and then there's us is like an online version of a brick and mortar, where we don't have the expensive overheads, that sort of thing. So we have 20 people on our team. So that's not that cheap, but it's still, you know, we've got people scattered around in different countries. So what I would do for a start is just look at that there folio, it's probably number one, just see if they do similar type of industries to yours. Be if you like their design style, that's obviously important. And yeah, just try and look at them. Now that you've learned the top 10 things, look at the designs that they've done, and even their website, see if they follow those principles as well. Because to me, you want to get a good result. So if you can, as well try and find testimonials, reviews, case studies on their site, and go through them and read them and watch their videos, because that will give you some pretty good insight on if you think that person is a good fit. And then also try and get a quote from them. You know, even if it's just a ballpark, you don't want to do all this time with them. If you figure out that they're 10 times the price of what you thought they were because the price could range from, you know, \$1,000 for a custom website to 20,000 or then some depends on the business, you know, but there is a big range and yeah, I mean. Honestly, I don't believe you need to pay more than 10,000 for a good custom website that's going to get your results. But you need to do all that research first, do a comparison, maybe look at three agencies, and then make a decision, jump on a call with them. See what you think of their personality? Because that's important as well. Yeah. Hundred percent. And then yeah, then, you know, if you've got all that information, and you're comfortable, then make a decision. But that's kind of process I would take.

Gert Mellak 30:25

Awesome. That's great. What do you think, would be a couple of tips? So we have the 10 steps checklist? We're definitely going to put this into the show notes of this episode number two, another thing that comes to mind are some very common pitfalls you see on websites that people could fix on their site right away after listening to the show.

Greg Merrilees 30:43

Yeah, so leakage points, people have leakage points all over their websites, right. So we're talking, let's say land on somebody's homepage, or even, and you look above the top nav, and they've got little logos on social media, and you click on them, you've gone right? So the purpose of social media is to bring people to your website.

Gert Mellak 31:06

That's a good point.

Greg Merrilees 31:07

Yeah, exactly. So and then be careful. Any links that you've got in your website, make sure they open in a new tab, not like if it's to an external website, make sure it doesn't open in the same tab. Otherwise, your website's gone forever. Videos as well. If you embed in YouTube videos, just be careful, because people can click on that YouTube logo, and they go on to YouTube, and they never come back, they go look at cat videos or whatever they do. And then let's say you've got a landing page, make sure you've got no top navigation, no footer navigation, or you want to have, you might have a navigation that anchor links down that page, but don't have people leak off to other pages. If you're doing paid traffic, sending them to landing pages. Again, no leakage points, even the privacy policy in the footer, make sure when that's pressed, it doesn't leak off to the mothership site, but instead will open in a pop up right and have the privacy policy in a pop up so they close out there. So I only got one thing to do. So yeah, there's just many, many different ways that people can leak off, and you've got to plug those leaks.

Gert Mellak 32:05

That's awesome advice. I remember James Schramko talking about I think it was the last redesign you did for the site, where he talked even numbers about the conversion boost they get they got just by redesigning your site, I particularly love this chooser you have we essentially copied this from us sorry about that one. We copied like the chooser you had on the side where you have like a horizontal bar, we pick up people exactly where they are. So in our case, this might be your ecommerce site that needs more sales, or you have an online business coach and you need more qualified visitors something like that, then you can then lay out as you saying the consistent pathway for different parts of your audience, right. So very often, we're not selling to one single person in one single situation, we're probably selling to 20 different people, and you kind of can group them up into five buckets, maybe or five groups that have different needs and different, different requirements. So the conversion focus, I think, is something that definitely sets you apart.

Greg Merrilees 33:01

That's right. Yeah. And that's just segmenting, essentially. And yeah, I mean, there's a whole book on that called the Ask method by Ryan lobeck. If you want to go deep, but yeah, you're essentially, when you take people to a landing page, you want to be talking to their specific problem and have let them know you have a solution for them. Even social proof should be relevant to that particular audience.

Gert Mellak 33:21

Absolutely. So that's great. Yeah, thank you so much. Let me wrap this up a little bit. So we've got the design is to storefront. And I think people really need to internalize this. This is the first impression, right? You've got, you've just got What's this saying? You've got like one second to make like a lasting impression on an impression that lasts for seven years or something like that. I think in websites.

Greg Merrilees 33:40

I just say you never get a second chance at a first impression.

Gert Mellak 33:43

Exactly, exactly. One as well. So people need to understand that users are not going to give you too much time for this first impression. They're not going to eat an entire 800 words article or a 1500 words article. They're just going to make up their mind by probably your design, how fast it loads, and maybe they get to read the headline, if at all. Yes, and otherwise, they are going to just go back to Google, they don't give you the time to really prove all your knowledge authority. All the other things you mentioned social proof and stuff like that. Very often the decision, I understand, is made before I check this out. But just the overall impression like the sum of all the details is going to tell me is design going to help me or not. I love that you mentioned pricing because you can get a feeling for the pricing based on the design very often, which I found I find interesting when you come to a website, and I guess it's probably going to cost \$500 right? And you can Okay, it's 690 Okay, it was a little bit off, right? And then you come to another website and it's like, okay, they're probably not going to do anything below 5K, and Okay, it's 5k, 999. It's very interesting not to how you guys are doing this magic, so to do to bring this across, but it's definitely fascinating and you can very often avoid useless sales calls just buy the right design for the right audience, I think so even without mentioning a price point, you can kind of get people have a feeling about your price point and get all those useless really sales calls or a wrong clients, not even into your funnel, just by the by the right design,

Gert Mellak 35:18

You made very actionable points here, we're going to put the 10 steps here into our, into an action step list for our clients on episode two, to make this bring this across to download as a PDF. So people can just really assess their site. I think this is a very actionable episode. And I'm very much looking forward to refer people on our sales calls and prospect calls really to this episode, because very often design is the first thing we talk about. Whereas Okay, they asked me, what's the highest impact thing we can do? I'm just on a project right now, the highest impact is definitely design user experience, right? This is a real estate site. And it's just impossible to find the properties. It's really, really impossible. You can't find an office without selecting a bedroom, which doesn't make too much sense anyway. But very often for them, it's really obvious, right? So you don't select the number of bedrooms, and it's in office and the results come up. Well, it works. But it doesn't work for the users. Right? It works technically. But it doesn't work for users. So that's absolutely a great point. And I really like the leakage points you mentioned. So where were people just go away, we did this on some sites, where we use a tool like hot jar for heat maps, yes, the heat maps, and especially on sites where we know this company is great. Google ranks it very high, we have a project that gets this ranking for a very competitive term on number to one or two Google shift is around a little bit. But the site has like in, I think it was an 85 or 89% bounce rate. So we wanted to figure this out and edit hot jar to see how far people really scroll. And we were then able to figure out that they need to change the introduction and come to the point straight away instead of having like in conversational opening, but people just say, Okay, this is not what I was looking for. They don't even read until the juicy part of this article. And this was really just like a click study or you see people click on something you never thought they would be clicking on because they're not interested in that. Right. So leaking points, almost one of the most important thing because at the end for SEO to come back to SEO as well, yeah, it's just the overall user experience of Google is going to pick up all those signals, Google is going to pick up that whoever comes to this website, lands on YouTube. Whoever comes to this website, leaves immediately whoever comes on this website bounces, Google knows all these things, right? They might take them into account directly for your website, or just share this information with other people who are like you in 500 characteristics from out of 2000, maybe, and then make sure that this website doesn't rank as high, right. So all these things really matter. And I really need to bring across here the design for user experience is important and user experiences, more and more getting crucial when it comes to really focusing on how people engage with websites, Google is trying to make users as happy as possible with their search results. So it was definitely, absolutely great, value.

Greg Merrilees 38:18

Just one final thing on that. I mean, you bring up a really good point I love hot jar recommends all clients, and it's just the best. But yeah, the last thing to leave on is that your website is never finished. So even if it's a redesign, or your battery design, put hot jar on put analytics on, check all of your metrics and and then use the behavior and put all that together to create a hypothesis to then you know, redesign essentially.

Gert Mellak 38:41

Awesome, awesome. Yeah, I don't I really appreciate the time you're taking with us, Greg, I know you've got a busy schedule. It's awesome to see you work in in action on some projects where we work together where then get the designs from your clients need to review from an SEO point of view, we can see and I love to see how you focus on the conversions how you focus on a consistent messaging. So thanks for the time you spend today on on this podcast.

Greg Merrilees 39:08

Yeah, my pleasure. Good. Thank you so much for having me and listeners. I hope you get a ton of value out of it.

Gert Mellak 39:14

Absolutely. If you feel that this could be interesting for a friend or business partner, please share this episode. Send them to Studio1design.com. Is this the best way to get hold of you?

Greg Merrilees 39:23

Yeah, I mean, if you've got a question just aim on me, Greg@Studio1design.com. Perfect.

Gert Mellak 39:29

We're going to put this into the show notes as well. This is episode number two, you're going to find all the information and the checklist in this episode. Thank you so much. I really appreciate you listening to the show and get my like you're listening to SeoLeverage.com. Take care. Thank you.