062 - SEO for Online Courses

Gert Mellak

We had a course purchase people started to trust you before because otherwise they wouldn't give you money. They consumed some of your content. Part of them came come from your mailing list. But even before they came to your mailing list, they probably found something on your site that got them to your mailing list. How did they find it? They found it because it's valuable content, Google decided to rank somewhere and drive a few visitors here and there to this content.

SEO Leverage Podcast Intro Music
Welcome to the SEO leverage podcast, where we talk about search, marketing, and conversion.

Gert Mellak
Welcome back to Seoleverage.com. This is episode 62 of our podcas. I was going through our clients list the other day. And there were two things that really popped up when I checked out this list. First of all, I'm really, really happy I have nothing more than appreciation for our clients. We have clients that have been with us for years, renewing their agreement with us month after month. And this is really by design. I know a lot of agencies out there require clients to sign 6, 12 or even 18 month long contracts with them. But for me, there is no point in forcing anybody into a contract if they don't feel getting the value here. So everybody here has always been on a monthly renewing agreement. But we still have many, many clients who stick with us for years, because they get value with our Erica program. They get value with implementations from my team. So definitely everything here is about long term client retention. And this only works if the value you provide is accurate. The second thing that popped up here is that many many of our clients are online course creators. So people who created a course who have their website, they sell those courses online. And SEO is one of the best ways to do this. Now, if you happen to be running an online course, and you want to grow it with search engine optimization, this is the episode to listen to. Take your pen and paper because there are going to be quite a few things you might want to jot down. First of all, let's get into the habit of working backwards. What is the end goal? The end goal is that someone decides that you are the best online course they can get or afford, or they just want to purchase from you. They make a purchase online and get access to your course. Let's work backwards to where SEO might be coming into play. Before they actually make a decision, they probably went through some sort of decision making process. This can happen in multiple ways. Usually, it's very connected to the kind of value you're giving online for free. This means they might have seen you on a video, they might have been following you on Instagram or watched your YouTube channel videos. Maybe they reached out to you on Twitter and you gave them an answer. Maybe they have been on your mailing list. Why would they be on their mailing list? Because you probably have something to download and they opted in for that. They gave you their name, their email address, so they could consume the content that you put up on your website for free or at a very low rate. How do people find out about those things before they actually come to your email list? Usually, they either see some content on social media, maybe you're running Facebook ads, maybe you're

running YouTube ads to this content. Maybe you also just have a lot of content on your website, and people could actually find you on Google. Imagine how cool this would be if you had content on your website that Google actually thought was absolutely valuable. And Google essentially sends you free traffic. You wouldn't have to run Facebook ads, you wouldn't have to worry about adspend, about higher CPC costs, you would just maintain your SEO and build it out over time, just to make sure that this free traffic can actually reach your site by just making sure that your content and your website is in line with what Google actually wants to rank. So backwards again, we had a course purchase. People started to trust you before because otherwise they wouldn't give you money. They consumed some of your content. Part of them come from your mailing list. But even before they came to your mailing list, they probably found something on your site that got them to your mailing list. How did they find it? They found it because it's valuable content, Google decided to rank somewhere and drive a few visitors here and there to this content. This is now interesting because Google is only going to rank something that provides value and where Google uses, react in a positive way towards it. At the same time, having content on your website nobody searches for it doesn't make for good SEO content or content Google wants to show, because Google ultimately want to respond to user problems, to user queries. So somebody has an issue and wants to find out more about it, they go to Google, and see what Google recommends in terms of content in order to solve their problem. So if you're a teaching how to play the ukulele, and you talk about the best, the most important beginner course, for example, then this might be a good piece of content, Google might want to rank if someone searches for ukulele beginner course, for example. What this also means is continuing to work backwards, and when you create content you already should have in mind, if this is content people might be searching for. Because you could probably talk a lot about the ukulele, but there's only going to be so much information people actually will search for. So having content for the sake of having content on your blog doesn't provide SEO success. This doesn't mean by the way, that this content could not work well on social media, for example. But for SEO, it definitely should be something people actually search for. If you want to find out what people search for, you need to do what's called a keyword research. Keyword Research is essentially a fancy term for checking out what people are typing into Google, or other platforms online. You could head over without any fancy SEO tools we use at agencies, head over to quora.com, to reddit.com, to Twitter, and just see what do people talk about when it comes to ukulele for beginners or into learning how to play the ukulele and then start optimizing for those terms, and we come to this in a second. However, when you're working with an agency like ours, we are providing keyword researches for you. And this allows us to show you a list of keywords around your topic, around what you could possibly rank for, around what kind of content you could build up. We have just had a client receive 20 topics to produce in the next weeks, where know exactly that there are tons and tons of people searching for those topics. The topics are not too competitive, so he actually can rank for those topics. And now it's up to them to produce this content in the best possible way with some of guidelines, we give them on the way to make sure that whatever they produce is actually in line with what Google also wants to rank. This is a very important point because Google just because you have the content on the page might not rank it in a position where it actually matters. Having the best content on page 20 of Google is still great, because it's among the 200 best blog posts out of possibly 500,000. But it's not going to give you any value. However, when you get to page

one of Google, this is actually when the magic happens. This is actually when Google says look, your piece of content is one of the best out there and one of the articles I trust the most. And this is why you're going to rank on page one, and I'm going to drive a lot of traffic to your article, part of this traffic is going to opt in for your lead magnet for the freebie you offer on this article, part of those are going to purchase your course. And this ultimately gets more people into your program. So keyword research is essential when creating content that should drive performance through SEO. Another thing that's really, really important is to actually think about the logical next step once those people come in, what do they need next? And this is where the lead magnet comes in. I've created an entire episode about this lead magnet thing. And I'm going to link to it in the show notes over at SEOleverage.com/podcast. But in in short, it's really about thinking when they come to this article, what problem do they have in mind they want solved. And from that problem being solved, what is going to be the next logical step or what would be really, really great to have when they have solved this problem. Like if this is a beginners course for ukulele players, this could be like a cheat sheet on how to play those chords. This would be the next logical thing that would be great to have. And then people are very inclined to really opt in to get this. They're inclined to give up their name and email address in order to download this. There is a big misconception when it comes to lead magnets. Because people think this is free content. So there shouldn't be any barrier when users come to this site. There's absolutely no reason not to opt in and get deals freebies. But it's not free, people do know that their privacy has value. People do know and do value their name and email address enough to not give it away to anybody. So you really need to build up some trust. You need to give some value upfront in order to justify that you're essentially worthy of receiving the name and email address here. I want to give you also some technical advice to really make sales. One of the article, things article should take into account or you want to take into account when it comes to your content of your online course is that ideally, you have a model matching most pieces of content on your site. So whenever there is a piece of content, there could be a free lead magnet. But there could also be a box that says, Look, this corresponds to what we teach in module four of our course. And what's this going to do? It's going to tell me Look, this is the free information, but there's more. And if I pay, I can get into the course, and learn everything there is about this specific topics. So if this is about beginners chords, the article might teach me three beginners chords, and maybe a little song I can play. But then there might be a model about the 20 most used chords to play 90% of all songs on the ukulele. And this could be a model too of your online course. So people can click directly and get into your program in order to make sure they can learn everything there is to learn. On the flip side of it, I would also make sure that you possibly create some extra models for content that isn't yet reflected in your course. So if there is an extra, for example, on how to purchase the right ukulele, this could be an extra model. And or you could create an extra model around this, even if it's not part of your main course. But if there is content, you really want to make sure you can match it somehow, with the models inside your course. So let's sum this up a little bit. Working backwards is always a good idea. Whatever you're doing in business, try to work backwards from where you actually want to go. So like defining the final destination of the train track, and then laying the tracks back to where you are right now. And this is going to give you a better idea about the steps that are necessary to get there. So you need content that's actually being searched for. The content needs to be in line with what Google wants to show. It needs to be structured around the keywords that are

actually being searched for. And you want to consider the conversions already when you create the content. Conversions are going to happen when you have the right lead magnet and for the logical next step or for whatever users are going to look for after they consume your article. Because then you're going to collect email addresses, and email addresses or your mailing list is going to be the main asset to grow your online course, because those people who are on your mailing list are going to consume your free content for a while. But those are going to be the first one putting out their wallet and actually paying for your course or for a specific mini course or for a specific offering or a coaching session or a consulting session. So get people to your mailing list that actually have opted in for something that was really really valuable for them. And maybe on the email list, find ways to give them additional value. Because if you under promise and over deliver this is the best foundation in order to actually get people across and make them part of this program. If you would like to check out with me how SEO can be applied best to your online courses current situation, where we take out your website, check out your content, and really give you a few tips on the way on how SEO would fit into your overall strategy, head over to SEOleverage.com or send me an email, GERT at SEO leverage.com, Gert@SEOleverage.com. I'm more than happy to jump on a quick call with you. Check out your website together and talk about the next steps. You're listening to SEOleverage.com Thank you so much.