



Episode 11: Niche Websites VS. Broad-Topic Websites

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Hey everybody. Welcome to Episode #11 of my podcast. I know I'm a day late, but I've decided anytime the 15th falls on a weekend, I'm just going to launch the following Monday, because I really don't like putting out content on Saturdays and Sundays.

Today I'm going to be talking about niche websites versus broad-topic websites.

What I'd really love for you guys to do, either while you're listening or at the end, is to go to the show notes, which are at 2createawebsite.com/podcast11 and let me know how you feel about the direction you chose with your website.

Are you happy you went with a niche website? Do you feel like it's too restrictive? Are you happy you went broad? Do you wish you had listened to the advice about choosing a more laser-focused topic?

I want to know, because I've never really had an open discussion about this. Especially now in 2015 when so much has changed, I

honestly don't think there's a right or wrong way. I think there's a direction that most people should go, and I'm going to be talking about that in this podcast. But you can be successful either way, and I would love to know what you feel, or how you feel, about the direction you took with your site.

But before I jump into the discussion today, I've got to do a little plug. I don't do this very often, but I want to say thank you to those of you all who have supported my Udemy courses. Something really cool happened. About a couple of weeks ago, I saw an ad on Facebook for my affiliate marketing course.

What happens when your course sells well enough, it gives Udemy confidence to throw money into promoting the course for you. So they will buy Facebook ads, AdWords ads, and all that kind of stuff for your course.

I was on my site and I saw my course being promoted in one of my AdSense units, which means Udemy took out Google Ads for my course, and the same thing for Facebook ads. And actually, Rob Cubbon – shout out to Rob – he actually sent me an email and told me that he noticed that my course was being promoted on Facebook, which is always a great sign. For those of you considering doing online courses and using Udemy, one of the benefits of using them is if your course sells well, they will pay money to promote it for you.

If you're already a customer, I'm actually getting ready to update the course. I have discovered an email auto responding strategy that is basically converting 1 sale in every 11 hits. I told you guys I was going to master email marketing at some point, so I'm going to be updating the course with those videos. Really excited to share that.

So thank you guys for the support.

If you want to learn more about making money with Udemy, you can listen to podcast #9, which is at 2createawebsite.com/podcast9 and I give you more details on the whole Udemy platform.

All right? So enough of that. Let's jump into today's topic.

One thing I've noticed about niche websites is that a lot of people don't really get what a niche website is. Sometimes I'll get a comment that will say something like, "I chose the niche of sports or fitness," and I sometimes even use the word incorrectly. Fitness, sports... those are all broad topics.

A niche website is where you have a laser-focused or a laser-targeted audience. For example, instead of having a website on sports, which is a very, very broad, competitive topic, a niche website would be something like "soccer moms who live in Denver." Because if you send out an email to someone if you have a generic sports website, you don't know what percentage of people like football, soccer... You don't know what percentage are men versus women. You don't know where they live. It's hard to focus your content to everybody on your site.

But when you know that your audience is soccer moms from Denver, you know a lot. You know that they're female. You know that they're moms. You know that their kids are of a certain age range. And you know where they live. Because of all those things, when you send out content, generally your conversions are going to be better. Your open rates are going to be better, because you know exactly what these people want to know or want to learn or want to read about.

I can speak from experience on this issue, because I have a broad site and I have a very niche website. There are really, really big differences between the two. [2createawebsite](#) is NOT a niche website. I mentioned this in my last blog post, and a couple people commented on that. One person didn't even realize that.

The reason it's not a niche website is because back then, you didn't really have to be that strategic. You could just focus on some keywords you want to rank and just build up content and get a lot of traffic with Google, and it didn't matter that your site was not very niche. I just talked about a lot of different things, and that's

sort of how my site evolved. I started off talking about creating a website. Then I moved to AdSense and affiliate marketing and Pinterest, social media... I got away with that because of when I started. If I had started that site today the way I started in 2002, let's keep it real – I would not have had the same amount of success.

And you guys, don't let a comment like that discourage you. That doesn't mean that you can't still be successful today. This is exactly why I do these podcasts and blog posts, because I just want my new followers to understand that things are just different. You can still have success, you just have to have the right approach.

If I were to start this site today, I would probably do something more laser targeted, like maybe only focus on a specific kind of website, or do what... I can't think of her name, but her site is designyourownblog.com and she focuses on designing websites or creating websites on a budget. That's a very good angle for this particular space. Rather than just doing all kinds of websites, she focuses on helping people save money, which I think is another great way to take a profitable topic and then have your own angle.

But back to my point, the other disadvantage of having a non-niche website is that when you send out content, your content is never going to be targeted to everybody on that list. People subscribe to my site for different reasons. Some people are just starting their sites. Some people just want to learn about AdSense. Some people just want Wordpress tips. It's just sort of the nature of my site, because I talk about so many different things. The people who subscribe because they want AdSense content may not be interested in Wordpress tips or affiliate marketing tips.

Now I've been able to get away with that because my audience is big enough where I can do that, but I generally wouldn't recommend people do that today. Unless you do what I'm going to be talking about later on in this podcast and when I mention some examples that you can follow.

I've certainly learned with having a true niche website like my hair

site, the conversions are so much better when you know specifically who your audience is. When I look at my Amazon conversion rates for my hair site, they are amazing. It could be 7%, 8%, 9%, 10%. If you know anything about marketing, 2% is considered the average many times, so to have conversion rates up in the 9- or 10-percentile, that's really, really good.

I discussed this on my last blog post. I sent out an email back in December to that list. I actually don't send out a lot of emails, because it's more of a profitable hobby site, as I like to call it. But I sent it out to 1100 people on my list, and over 1000 people opened the email. You guys, that's a 90% open rate. That's almost unheard of with email marketing. If I can get a 35% or 40% open rate on 2create, I'm doing good. But 90%? I've never had that kind of engagement on 2createawebsite, simply because people subscribe for many different reasons, and it's not really a niche website.

So does that mean you should never, ever go broad like I did with 2create? I would never say never. I generally tell people to try to find a defined niche if you can, but you can still be successful with a broad site. You just have to understand that times have changed, and you just can't write generic content and expect to get a ton of traffic from Google to get that jumpstart like you could years ago.

I understand why a lot of people choose to go with broader, more competitive topics, because a lot of people feel that niche websites are too restrictive. They feel like they won't have enough content to write about if they go too narrow, so they go broad because they have so much information to share.

Also, I think the lack of knowledge about marketing a website plays a role. What happens is a lot of times people have ideas for a website and they just think, "Oh, if I build it, they will come," and they don't understand how the search engines work or how competition works, so they go broad simply because that's their interest.

I don't know how many of you remember the blog post I did a couple of years ago where I featured four websites that were

successful, and one website was a cooking website. Cooking would be an example of a very broad topic. What a lot of people do is they'll just put up websites with a bunch of recipes and expect to rank. Today that's much harder to pull off.

But in the post, I featured a woman named Amelia. She has a website called Bon Appattempt. It's a play on the phrase "bon appétit." Her unique was, first of all, she's funny. She's a good writer, so her writing was very entertaining. What she did was she took fancy dishes and she made them very simple. Her angle was her comedic spin and her easy approach to fancy dishes. That's an example of taking a broad topic and finding your own approach.

Another example... If you're on my list, you probably got the email that I sent out about a week ago, where I talked about a forum member who had a breakthrough after a year or so of running his website. Just like a lot of you, he had chosen a very generic, broad topic. He chose the subject of tech news.

What a lot of people do is they begin just writing news on a various topic and they get lost in the sea of all the reporting websites. He realized, "I can't compete with TechCrunch or Wired. I need to do something to stand out. I can't just wait on Google to send me traffic to these generic tech news articles.

Now he didn't really find a unique angle, but he chose to start working other areas. He started using social media more. He got his website accepted to Google News, and that started bringing 1000 to 2000 extra visitors per day.

How many of you guys know you can submit your website to Google News? I have to be honest, I didn't know that. You've got to check out his post. It is so revealing, and I'll put it in the show notes at 2createawebsite.com/podcast11 so you can check it out.

The great thing is he's been very good about responding to questions. After I sent out the email, of course, people commented and asked him questions, and he's been responding. It's a very, very revealing post. He talks about he removed some AdSense units and

actually started making MORE with AdSense when he had less ads, which is counterintuitive to a lot of people.

But to me, that makes perfect sense. Advertisers want to bid on websites that are clean and look professional. If I'm an advertiser, I'm not going to want to bid on a site that looks junky and cluttered with a bunch of ads, because that's more competition for me. His AdSense revenue started going up when he removed a lot of the ads.

But that's a whole other topic. Going back to the whole broad topic vs. niche thing... Yes, he's in a broad topic of tech news, but he decided to start working other areas, like social media and Google News. That's what you have to do.

If you don't want to go niche and you would prefer to stay in a broad topic, you either have to find an angle like Amelia did with Bon Appéttempt, or you have to decide, "Look, I need to get social and work other angles like social media or use other sources, like Google News."

And here's the other thing I wanted to mention, too: not all niche sites are profitable or have good profit potential. Just because you find a hole that you don't think has been filled, that doesn't mean that that's going to be an instant goldmine for you. There might be a reason nobody is in that space, maybe because there's not a lot of money there or there's not a lot of demand there.

When you're considering a topic, you've got to do a little bit of research. Go to Google, type in some related keywords. See if there are any ads that show up on the right side of the page or at the top of the organic search results. If you don't see a lot of advertising, that could be a sign that there's not a lot of money in that space.

Check Google Trends. If you see that the keywords you put in are not trending or the trend is declining, that's a sign that people aren't as interested in this topic anymore. When I started my natural hair site, that topic actually started to trend right at that point, so that was a great time to enter into the space.

You can also do research on forums or Facebook groups. See if there's some type of common thread or common question that you see coming up all the time with these Facebook groups or these forum posts. That will give you an idea if there is a hole or a gap that needs to be filled.

Check the affiliate networks, like CJ.com, ClickBank, JVZoo, ShareASale. See if there are affiliate programs in this space. That's another way to see if there's any kind of money. Is there a product that you can create? An eBook? A course that people would be interested in? You've got to think about these things when you're researching your site. You can't just assume because you've found a niche that there's a lot of profit potential. There might be a reason there's nobody in this space.

The other thing people get caught up on is finding a niche all to themselves. My opinion – and you guys may disagree with this – is any niche worth going after is going to have some competition. Don't be afraid of a little competition. That can actually be a good thing. It's not about finding an area that has absolutely no competition. It's about finding a way to stand out among that competition. That's really the key.

You guys, this is 2015 where every other person has a blog or a website these days. Chances are somebody is going to be in that space. That's OK. You just have to work on being unique.

My M.O.P. for this podcast is I do believe most people should try to find a niche. Just based on my own experience, I find that the conversions are better, it's easier to target your content to people. But if you can't and you really just want to go with a broader subject, that's fine. Just understand what you're up against. I believe that a lot of people, when they start their sites, don't realize what they're up against. This is not a build-and-they-will-come type of deal. You have to market your site. I want people to really get that.

I really would love it if you would leave a comment in the show

notes at 2createawebsite.com/podcast11 because I want to have an open discussion about the topic that you chose. Do you regret it? Are you glad that you did? What advice would you have to someone getting started today? Do you need help with your site? I will be there to answer questions, and I am sure there will be other people in the comments that will chime in as well. Let me know! Head on over to the show notes.

Thanks for listening, everybody. I'll talk to you on the 15th of next month.