



## Episode 2: How Your WordPress Navigation Can Kill Traffic and Conversions

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Today I want to talk about the importance of structuring your WordPress website, both for organic traffic and for the user experience. This is a topic that I've covered a little bit on my blog, a little bit on YouTube, but I've never really gotten into it the way that I wanted to get into it, and that's why this podcast is a great vehicle for topics that I want to expand upon, because I really want to dive into this.

Most of you already know that WordPress was originally designed to allow people to organize their content in a news type format, with the latest content on top and the oldest content on the bottom. The word blog is actually short for web log and it's a logging of articles.

So, if you're journalizing something and you just want your content to be organized from newest to oldest, WordPress' the default structure with the posts streaming down the page is just fine. Or if you're writing about the latest news or latest tips on any given topic, then that may also be fine for that kind of site.

The one thing I want to say in this podcast is that I'm not trying to tell everybody to change the structure of your website. I just want you to think about your site, how it's organized, and is it the best way for your visitors and the search engines. And I guarantee, for a lot of you, it's probably not.

Now, as you probably already know, I have 2 websites for the "2 Create" brand. I have 2createawebsite.com, which is not a WordPress website. Some of you may not even know that, but my blog, which is blog.2createawebsite.com, that site is hosted on WordPress.

Now, I would not recommend having two sites. Since I started 2createawebsite.com long before the WordPress era, that is why that's not a WordPress site, so, when blogging became popular, I set up blog.2createawebsite to sort of have an extension of my main site, so I can talk about the latest and greatest events - things that I'm working on, things that are going on in the industry. So, I've sort of branded my blog as, my news site, or my news section of my site. The blog section of my site is what is tied to my e-mail list. So, every time I put out a new post, it goes out to my list.

Now in a perfect world, you have one site installed under one WordPress installation. There's no need to have two separate websites. So, it's one of those things where, do as I say here, not as I do. I'm working on changing that, but that's a whole other podcast, why I haven't done that yet. There are a lot of technical reasons why I haven't merged the two. So, that's for another podcast.

So, enough about me. Let's talk about the structure of a WordPress website. The great thing about WordPress is that your content can be as static or dynamic as you need it to be. When I say static, I mean pages that are always in the same spot, so when you click on a menu item, you go to that same page every time. Dynamic, for example, would be posts.

So, if you have a link to one of your categories in your menu and

somebody clicks that category, by default, in WordPress, when they click a category, they're taken to a page that shows the content from newest to oldest. Now, as I've already said, for certain types of websites, this setup is perfectly fine.

But, what I really want to emphasize in this podcast is that this is not the most ideal setup for every kind of WordPress site. I think a lot of people get caught up in the semantics of blogging. They hear the word blog and they feel like they have to become a blogger. Not everybody has to use WordPress for blogging. The point of using WordPress, or any content management system is to make sure your visitors get the content they need. For most people, that means having static and dynamic components on your website.

One of the biggest mistakes I see people making with WordPress is they create content informational, tutorial type websites in a blog-like format, without any kind of static information to help the visitor navigate through the site and find what they need. I'll give you an example.

Let's say you have a website on how to sell a home. So, logically, your target visitor is going to be someone who is looking to sell their house. So, if I'm a person and I found this site that supposedly is going to teach me how to sell my house, when I go to the home page, I am either looking for a prominent menu tab that tells me how to get started, or some content at the top of the page that tells me how to begin, because it's a how-to website.

What a lot of people do instead, is they get into this whole blogging mindset, so they just start creating a bunch of posts on various topics within the niche and they stream those posts down the homepage. So, what happens is, you've got someone coming to your site expecting to learn how to sell their home, and they have to weed through all these posts because there's no type of getting started info. There's no static information anywhere. That's a huge mistake when it comes to website creation.

One thing I've learned about having the two sites is that my static site, which is [2creatawebsite.com](http://2creatawebsite.com) has always received much more

organic traffic and time spent on the site has always been way more than my blog and the number of pages people view have always been more than my blog. Always. And a big reason for that is the content is arranged more topically. It makes sense. It's a tutorial website.

I'm not trying to act like I have the best design or the best organization in the world. There are things that I could actually do better, but I must be doing something right, because the site does very well in terms of converting sales. It always has, and the reason I think that's so, is because the content is arranged more topically.

The other thing that I do to help with organic traffic is I interlink my pages together all the time. That's a quick and easy tip that I think a lot of people don't use, especially when they blog. You might write a post and three months later, that post, falls off your site and you never see it again.

One thing you want to do to help your site organically, is to interlink your pages and posts together as much as you can, because when it comes to search engine optimization, every link to a page is a vote. A lot of times when people have their website set up in a total blogging format, where everything is arranged by category and post, they forget to do that and it just becomes one site of a bunch of disjointed posts and that's not good for search engine optimization.

Let's not just focus on search engine optimization. Let's also talk about the user experience. You also want your visitors to be happy, too, right? So, let's talk about structuring the homepage of a WordPress website.

A lot of you like to just link your posts down the homepage and that's fine. That may work for some of you, but for me, personally, I like having a static homepage because I can introduce my site to my visitors, tell them how my site is going to help them and then they can sign up for my e-mail list and then I've sort of captured that visitor, if you will.

The disadvantage of just having posts on your homepage is that what if none of the posts that you've written about recently interest them? Then, you've lost a visitor. Most people are not going to just stick around and dig through a website. I remember reading a stat years ago, and this stat is probably a lot lower now, because our attention spans are even shorter, but I read that the average person reads something like 5% of your website. It's some very very very small number.

I think a lot of times, when we're writing out content, and we're building our sites, we sort of assume everybody is going to dig through it and find all the stuff that we need to find, but it doesn't happen like that. You only have a short amount of time to draw people in. So, if people aren't finding what's helpful to them, what's interesting to them, they're going to leave.

Now, it's important to emphasize there isn't one way to do this. Obviously, you're going to have to figure out what works best for your audience. One thing to consider is how people generally find your site. Most people come to my blog, because they found my main site, or talking about it on YouTube, so a lot of the people are beginners. It doesn't make sense for me to highlight my latest post on that homepage because a lot of that content might not be of interest to them at that point. They're just getting started.

So, I need to introduce my site to them, tell them how to sign up for my e-mail list and let them know what they're going to find on this site. For me, that's what makes sense. You have to figure out what makes sense for your audience.

Here's another way to see if your site's hitting the mark or not. Check your bounce rate for the keywords that your site is getting found for. You can do this very easily by going to Google analytics. Hopefully, most of you use some type of tracking program. I think Analytics is the best. It's free. It's very easy to install. So, when you set up your account, you simply just go to acquisition, keyword, organic in your Google analytics reports.

That will show you you're bounce rate for your keywords. Now I

think there are some misconceptions about bounce rates. Some people focus on their sites total bounce rate and I think that's a mistake.

I'll give you an example. Let's say you have a website that talks about things to do in NY. One of the keywords you get found for in Google is how tall is the empire state building? Let's say that keyword makes up 70% of your traffic. Certain keywords are always going to yield high bounce rates.

For those that don't know, a bounce rate is the percentage of people who leave your site after viewing the page that they landed on. So, if you have a 90% bounce rate, that means that 90% of the people left after viewing that page. Obviously, the lower the bounce rate, the better. So, going back to my example, let's say somebody goes to your site because they type in how tall is the empire state building? Most people who type that in are going to leave right away. They're not going to stay because they've gotten their answer and they're off to do whatever they were going to do. They leave the site.

So, if that keyword makes up the majority of your site's traffic, your overall bounce rate is going to be extremely high and will skew your entire site's bounce rate.

What I like to do, is I look at the bounce rate for my money keywords and the keywords that are closely related to what my site is about. The keywords that land the people on my homepage.

That's a bounce rate I'm most concerned about because if you have a website about how to play tennis, and that's one of the words you're getting found for, but your bounce rate is like 90% for that particular keyword, something is wrong.

Either your content is not good. It's not really helping the person, or, once again, people are getting lost. They're not finding what they need because maybe your content is not organized in the best way. I always keep tabs on the bounce rate of my money keywords and by the time I'm recording this, they're usually in the 40-50%

range.

Let me give you guys some stats on bounce rate. According to blastam.com, the average bounce rate for content websites are between 40 and 60%. The average bounce rate for blogs is between 70 and 98%.

Now you might be thinking, wait a minute, what are you talking about? Aren't blogs and content sites the same? Not really. Because generally, blogs, as I talked about in the beginning are arranged by date and category for the most part, so when people go to a blog, they may see one article that interests them, read it and leave. Maybe they will find the site in Google from a keyword search. They'll read that one article, and leave because the content is not generally arranged topically, like a lot of content sites and that's what they mean in this article when they say content sites. Content sites are generally arranged more by topic instead of date and category.

So, what I'm trying to get you to think about in this podcast, is your content organization optimum for the kind of traffic that you get or the kind of traffic that you want.

Let's go back to the how to sell a home example. If your website is about how to sell a home and you're using WordPress, obviously, one of the first things someone is going to want to know, is how do I start? How do I prepare my home? How do I list it?

So, in your menu, in WordPress, you'll have a tab, or tabs and your first tab might be preparing the home. When someone clicks that, instead of being taken to just some post that you've written on that topic, it would be a static landing page that has more links on more content on preparing your home in the order that people need to read them.

So, that's static content. You do that very easily in WordPress by just creating pages instead of posts. Then you use the menu feature to organize your content more logically. That's really what

I'm getting at here.

My [natural hair website](#) is a great example of a WordPress website that doesn't really look like a blog, but it does very well organically, especially for a site I don't update very much. It actually does a lot better, organically than my [2createawebsite blog](#).

Some of that is because of the niche. The more niche your website is, the better advantage you're going to have. That's why I'm always telling people to narrow down their topic. On my blog, here, with 2createawebsite, I'm always talking about so many different topics, from AdSense, to WordPress, to making money online. You name it. I drive traffic to my blog through my e-mail list and social media.

Gotta love having an e-mail list and this is proof because if I was relying on Google traffic for my 2 create blog, I'd be in trouble.

But going back to the natural hair website, I credit a lot of that to the fact that I interlink the pages a lot, together. I don't use many posts, because I don't really update it that frequently and I don't want to highlight that.

And that's what's so great about WordPress is that you can organize your content that's best for how you update the site, and how your content needs to be found. One of the things on that site is I have a sitemap. I'm not talking about an XML site map like you use for Google and search engine optimization. I have a manual sitemap, like old school style that lists all the content on the site and they can see my articles laid out that way as well. I'm not saying everybody has to do that, but again, it's really about limiting that blog-like appearance that I don't necessarily want for that site.

Now, I have to be careful with what I say here, because, one thing you have to know about my hair site is that it is a hobby site that makes a nice little degree of passive income. I couldn't live off the income from that site alone, although it's doing far better than I ever expected it to.



If you're trying to build a business and make long term income online, obviously, you're going to have to have an element of your site that you update regularly and send out to your e-mail list and all that. I'm not trying to tell you not to use posts. I'm trying to say, make sure your content is arranged logically. That's what I'm saying.

If you're trying to make money and build up a following, you need those posts. You need to update your feed often so people know you have new content. I'm not trying to discourage you from doing that. I'm just trying to get you to think differently about how you arrange your content.

It's certainly fine to use the post functionality for WordPress. In fact, I would recommend it. Just don't forget about static pages and develop a strategy for what you're going to put out in your feed vs. what you're going to leave for your static content.

But let's go back to my natural hair website for a second. I will never forget, last year, I received an e-mail from a lady who said, "I visit a lot of natural hair websites, but I really like your site because I'm able to find information."

She talked about how she always has a hard time finding information on blogs because the information sometimes gets buried. And that's what happens, because you put up a blog post and then 6 months later, where is it? Unless you have a link to your archives on the column of your site, but even then, you have to remember, now when did I write that?

Even then, who is going to go digging in your archives? I don't know about you guys, but, when I'm reading a blog, if the link to the content that the person's talking about is not right there, or it's not in the related post feature below the post, I'm not going to go digging for it and I think most people operate that same way. So, when you interlink your content together often and you have ways for people to find your important information, i.e., using static pages in your menu, it really makes for a better user experience and it's also good for search engine optimization.

You know, I read a lot about why bloggers have a hard time making money with their sites and there are many reasons. Obviously, traffic is the #1 reason, but I believe another reason is because blogs are often times not organized appropriately for how the visitors need to read the content.

Sometimes we get so caught up in the bells and whistles of blogging, we want these fancy widgets, we want these little floating things on the homepage. We want to have these cool looking sliders. All of that is fine and good, but if I'm coming to the site because I want to learn how to do something and I can't find the getting started tab, or the how do I start, menu item, I'm going to leave. Some of you guys can benefit from that type of content on your website. The great thing about those getting started pages? They convert like crazy, because they provide a summary of everything a person needs to know to get started in whatever niche you're talking about.

Now, earlier in the podcast, I mentioned how my static site, [2createawebsite.com](http://2createawebsite.com) has always received more organic traffic than my blog. One thing I need to point out, and it's not fair to not admit this, is that one of the reasons that is, is not just because of the structure of the site. It's also because of links.

When people tend to link to my site, they always link to [2createawebsite.com](http://2createawebsite.com). They rarely link to the blog. Well, because I made a horrible mistake, of putting my blog on a subdomain, instead of a folder, so it's [2createawebsite.com/blog](http://2createawebsite.com/blog), that's the way it should've been. Google treats those as two separate sites. So, any links I get to [2createawebsite.com](http://2createawebsite.com) don't help my blog and any links that go to my blog, don't help the main site. So, one of the reasons that my site, my non WordPress site, does so well is that it's older. It's 4 years older than my blog and as I said, all the links tend to go to [2createawebsite.com](http://2createawebsite.com).

I'm actually going to be doing a podcast on mistakes that I made, hopefully it will be the next one that I do and you better believe, that's going to be top of the list. So, I did want to mention that,

because it's not just about the structure of that site that helps it organically, but when I look at the time spent on page, the number of pages, the viewers, the view per session, it's way higher on the static site.

I believe that's largely because it's structured topically and if you have a tutorial based website, like I do, it makes sense to have pages, static content, to guide people to the important pages. That's how you get those conversions. That's how you make that money. If you just have a blog website, trying to teach someone how to do something and you have a post streaming down the page, it's just not an optimal way for conversions.

So, if this podcast has confused the crap out of you, and you're like, I don't understand what you mean, how do I do this with WordPress? There will be a video on the show notes page, so, go to [2createawebsite.com/podcast2](https://2createawebsite.com/podcast2) and you will see a video explaining how to set this up in WordPress, if this is something you want to do.

I used to be so incredibly critical of WordPress before 2010, because you could not structure your content the way you wanted to unless you knew PHP. So, if you followed me back in 2007 and 2008, I was talking about how people have so much trouble making money with blogs.

A big reason for that was because it was harder to change your navigational structure. But, in 2010, when WordPress 3.4 came out, WordPress started allowing you to change your menus. Now, you can make your site as bloggy, or less bloggy as you want now. You can use all static pages, like I mostly use on my hair site, [naturallycurly.com](https://naturallycurly.com). Again, I will put everything in the show notes [2createawebsite.com/podcast2](https://2createawebsite.com/podcast2).

So, the moral of the podcast, the M.O.P. of the show, is make sure your website navigation caters to how your information needs to be read and absorbed. If you just want a tips blog, and you're just talking about the latest and greatest tips on any given subject, then the standard, blog-like format may be just fine, but if you have an informational, or a tutorial type of website, where steps

need to be followed in a certain way, are you making use of static pages?

A lot of people think static means stale. Static doesn't mean stale, it just means that page is going to be stuck there to make it easier for your visitors to find it. You can still update it to keep the page fresh, but make use of those static pages that WordPress, now, allows us to add to the menu and create silos for your content. Create that silo affect that I will talk about on that video on [2createawebsite.com/podcast2](https://2createawebsite.com/podcast2).

I guarantee, if you have an informational, or tutorial based, titled website, that type of content will help your visitors find what they need. You'll make more money because you will convert more sales because you'll have that getting started information visible for your followers to see, and if your visitors are happy, the search engines will be happy. It all kind of goes together, right?

Also, check your bounce rate in Google analytics. If people are finding your site through your money keywords, or they're coming to your homepage directly, and the bounce rate is super high, something's wrong. What's keeping you from being in that 40-60% bounce rate, which is considered average. Anything below 40% is actually considered very good, excellent, actually. So, if your bounce rate is 90%, for your money keyword, something's rotten in the cotton.

Remember, it's not always about the bells and the whistles, the widgets, the sliders and all that stuff. They're cool, but are people finding what they need? My sites may not be the most fancy things on the planet, but they do convert.

I'm not saying there aren't things I can do to improve, but the good thing about having the static website and the blog, it has allowed me to compare and contrast them and I have learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. Remember, we don't build sites for what we want. We build sites for what our visitors want. When we start creating our sites, we have a tendency to think about, ooh this would be cool and I'm going to arrange the content like this.

Wait, what makes sense for your visitor? Always put them first.

So, that's going to wrap up this show. Thanks everybody for tuning in. I decided that I'm going to do my podcast on the 15th of every month, starting out.

James, of [best-reviewer.com](http://best-reviewer.com) gave me a great tip. He said, "Lisa, as you're getting started, you just really want to make sure you let your subscribers know when to expect your content." That makes sense, right? Especially when you're doing something new. You want to build up a rhythm. You want to let people know when your show is coming out. So, I'm going to do it monthly, on the 15th. I can do them probably more than that, but I would much rather set something that's very conservative, that I know I can meet, than to say, oh I'm going to do it every week and then feel like I have to put out stuff just for the sake of putting out something and then the quality will suffer.

I am going to start with that and see how that goes and after this one, I'm going to be publishing the podcast to iTunes. So, if you go to [2createawebsite.com/podcast](http://2createawebsite.com/podcast), that's going to be the landing page for all my podcasts. So, when this is live, on iTunes, I will have a link to the subscription feed on iTunes for those of you who want to subscribe that way.

I was actually going to wait until after we had 3 or 4 episodes, but seeing how many of you asked about iTunes, I thought, let me just get this out here. Because I have ready that you really should wait until you have a few, so you don't just have one or two episodes out there, but, hey, if you guys are asking for it, then let me get on it.

And it's also important to know that I'm not going to be sending out an e-mail every time I have a new podcast because that could be a bit much in addition to the e-mails I already send out. So, if you want to subscribe to my podcast, and you're not into iTunes, you can just go to [2createawebsite.com/podcast](http://2createawebsite.com/podcast) and I will always have the updated list and there's also another RSS feed for Libsyn that I use to host the podcast, that you can subscribe to, just like you would any other blog.

If you have any questions, you guys know I have a forum, [websitebabble.com](http://websitebabble.com). It's a great place to go if you have questions. I'm there almost every day. If you haven't started your website yet, I would love it if you would come over to [websitepalace.com](http://websitepalace.com) You will get a free 27 minute getting started video on how to set up your WordPress website. It's very helpful for the newbies out there.

Thanks again everybody for listening! Appreciate your support and I will talk to you in the next podcast! Bye!