

One of my favorite parts of being a business coach is that I get a front row seat to so many businesses. And because I coach online, I get to see businesses all across the U. S. and they're all doing different things, trying different strategies. And I hear like firsthand what is working and what is not working.

And so. I thought it might be fun to sit down and share just a couple things that I am seeing working really well for photographers here in 2024 besides paid ads. So completely organic, what is working to book more clients and get more customers. So I'm going to sit down. I'm going to share that with you today.

I have five things to share with you. You're listening to called to both the podcast for ambitious women, chasing both business dreams and little ones. I'm your host, Joy Michelle. I'm a wedding photographer turned business coach and founder of photo boss. I have helped thousands of photographers and creatives grow their businesses here on the show.

I teach about topics like visibility, marketing, mindset. Productivity and going after your dream life. So if you're a photographer or an entrepreneur, there is something here for you. This is not another business and marketing podcast telling you to do more, but rather how you can build your business and your income in less time and with greater ease.

Join me here each week for bite sized and actionable episodes that will encourage you on your call to both journey.

Okay. So the first thing that I see working well right now in 2024 is building referral programs or loyalty programs. And I think we all know that like getting a word of mouth referral is so incredibly powerful. If someone can mention you. in the right room to a person and say, Hey, I recommend that you reach out to this person for your pictures.

I think this would be the right person to go to. Almost nothing is going to speak that level of trust and credibility over your brand. But what can we actually be doing to make sure that that's happening? Cause we, it's, it's slightly outside of our control, but with a referral program or having a loyalty program, you actually are encouraging this in a strategic way.

So if you don't currently right now in your business have a formal referral program where you are not only asking for referrals, but you are incentivizing referrals and you're almost gamifying it and making it fun and saying like, Hey, if you send someone to my business, they do end up being a client.

I'm going to give you this thing, or you're going to get this bonus at your next session. Or if you come back to me, so this is big for portrait photographers. If you have those seasonal clients that continue to come back to you over and over again, having a loyalty program. is so incredibly smart. It's something that I encourage all of my clients to look at and really build in a way that feels like sustainable and you're not giving away everything in that loyalty program, but you're, it needs to be something that is truly incentivizing that person to not go ahead and try a whole bunch of other photographers or not think of anybody else but you.

So this is something I see working really, really beautifully. I just love seeing how my clients have gotten really creative with different ways of creating those bonuses in the referrals or in the loyalty program that actually like their clients are truly excited to talk about. Now, of course, it needs to be said as a little a side note, um, The experience of working with you has to be top notch.

It has to be seamless. It has to feel like you're a step ahead of them. So if your experience that you're giving your clients is not 100 percent dialed in, I actually have a free training all about this. It's called the three secrets to a client experience that will keep you booked solid. And it's really going to walk you through these pieces to make sure you're not missing any of this in your client experience, because yeah.

This could be a reason why you are not gaining the referrals or getting repeat clients as you should be and how to fix that. So I will have that linked in the show notes. It is a completely free class and you can watch that. It's immediate training. I think it's like 20 minutes. It's not an hour long webinar and it is immediate access.

You don't have to pick a time or any of that nonsense. So that training will be down in the show notes. So second thing I see working this year in 2024 is focusing on search engine optimization, going back to SEO. This has been such a secret weapon for me and my own business this year, but also for many of my clients who are full bought into building SEO, getting those keyword dialed in those keywords in their business, dialed in creating content around those long tail keywords, and then optimizing.

Every part of their website, all the pages and all the blog posts for those keywords, because if you don't want to pay for your traffic, search is your best friend. And if you can have Google actually sharing your work and your expertise with people, when they're actually searching for your type of business and your type of photography, that's It is, there's almost nothing better than that because there are so many searches happening.

And if you can actually put your hat in the ring and be showing up on page one of Google, like so many of my clients are because of the work they've put in, then you don't have to pay for those leads. It's amazing. And so really, really focusing on SEO has been amazing. Just a tried and true method. I think it's not always the most exciting thing to be thinking about.

How are you optimizing? Is your website optimized? Are you ranking for the keywords you should be ranking for? And I think we should talk about this more in the podcast. So I do have some episodes coming up this fall that would revolve around SEO. If that's something you want to hear more about and you want me to move those episodes up in the queue so that you can get them sooner, send me a DM on Instagram.

Let me know. Or if you have another concept or an idea that you want to hear on this podcast, please send me a DM on Instagram at [joinmichelle](#). I really do want to hear what you want to hear on the podcast. Okay. Another strategy that is working is email marketing. I see email marketing as so incredibly powerful, even when I, a lot of my clients have very small email lists, but because they have a small but engaged amount of people on that email list.

Like even if it's like 45 people that are in their town that are interested in their mini sessions that would love to work with them again, their past portrait clients or, um, their clients that have raised their hand and said, yeah, if you ever do mini sessions, if you ever do portrait sessions, if you ever have openings at your studio, I would like to know.

And then actually leveraging that in your marketing when you're promoting for any given time in your business where you want to run a promotion, you want to say, Hey, I need to get this many bookings. If you don't have an email list, I do find it to be that extra layer of complexity. It's like, it's going to be really, really hard to guarantee that people are actually hearing from you.

Whereas when you have their email, you can control so much more easily than people can control. You know, just being on Instagram and Facebook and things like that. So email marketing is a tried and true. This has not gone away. And I think if you don't have an email list in your business right now, that that should be next on your list.

Do not let this year end without having an email list, without having something that you can give them a little freebie. telling people why they should get on that email list. And I'll have a couple of videos linked down below. So I did an email

marketing for photographers, two parts to your series over on my YouTube channel.

And it is such powerful content. Those videos are still some of my most popular videos. And I have a couple of blog posts about them. So if you're thinking, yeah, I, this is a good one. I need to address the email marketing in my business, or I'm not really utilizing my email list the way I should be. Go back and watch those two videos.

I will have them linked in the show notes for this episode and over on the blog for this episode. If you don't have an email service provider right now, I always recommend that people start with Flodesk. Um, I will have a link for a 50 percent off code for Flodesk. It is just beautiful. It's easy, it is intuitive, and you'll be able to set up everything that you need in your email marketing using Flodesk.

Um, if you're ready for something a step above that, like if you have More in your business as it pertains to courses and coaching and digital products, I think you should check out Kajabi. Kajabi is an all in one tool. It's what I use in my business. It is really, really powerful. And I'll have a discount code for both of those below.

All right. Number four is Google business profile or your Google business listing, whatever they call it now, they just changed the name, having your Google business listing dialed So I just recently talked about this on the podcast and gave a like full fledged breakdown of exactly what you can do to make sure that your listing is set up for success.

So if you haven't listened to that, head back to episode 113 here on the podcast and it walks you through the three ways to improve your Google business profile and your SEO. And lastly, number five, The thing that I see still working so well this year is Instagram reels and Instagram reels. I've been hearing recently how they're just not getting the reach that they used to get, but I think you have to be really careful who you listen to in this, because what I'm seeing in real time with the reports from my clients is that they are still the best place to be leveraging your time.

And if you're going to be creating social media content, Transcribed It should be in the form of a reel. Like if you only have 10 minutes and you can only do one thing, it should be an Instagram reel. In terms of your time for reach, right? Like the time that you're putting in for the reach that you can get out.

There's absolutely nothing better that I'm seeing right now in terms of what my clients are saying is working super, super well. Okay. So to recap the five things we have building a referral program slash loyalty rewards program, focusing on SEO, particularly in blogging and long tail keywords. Number three is emo marketing.

Number four is leveraging your Google business profile. So go back to episode 113 and follow those steps. One of them is going to be really being serious about gathering testimonials and reviews because those are directly tied to how Google is perceiving your website. local business listing. There's lots of stuff happening there.

So if you're wanting to be found higher on Google, I strongly recommend going back and listening to that episode because it is worth your time. And then last but not least Instagram reels. I would love to hear what's working for you. What is working right now in your business? If you would like to share that with me, I would love to hear it.

Send me a DM over on Instagram and just tell me what's been working and or what's not like, if you have questions, if you have ideas or you'd like me to cover a new topic here on the podcast, you can send me that as well. I would love to hear from you. And I always love getting messages from you guys over on Instagram.

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