Week 1 Live Q&A

Hi everyone, welcome to WordPress Demystified, week 1. This is a live Q&A. I am watching the comments. It is amazing how much stuff Facebook puts on the screen when you're trying to go live. It changes every time, but I have the comments there, so if anybody wants to ask a question live, feel free.

I'm here.

So thanks to those who have sent through some questions or asked some questions during the week. It's great. So if you see me switching between screens, it's just so that I've got the list in front of me. Hi, I'm just wondering, One of the questions that came up is, what do I delete?

So this came from somebody who has a wealth of knowledge, and I think we can agree that all of us have a wealth of knowledge in our own fields, and she is just concerned that she has put so much Onto her homepage. It's kind of like when somebody asks you what you do and you suddenly spew all this information out at them.

So the answer to what do I delete is actually thinking about the strategy.

Strategy and alignment, that was this week's.

If you're clear on who your ideal client is, and I do say if you're clear, because I know that can take some trial, trial and error type of thing.

Once you're clear on who your ideal client is, even if it's not long-term, even if it's just for now, then think about the problems that you're solving for your ideal client.

Excuse me. Think about what would be useful. Just shows it's live. Can't edit that out. Um, think about what would be useful for them, because the content that you're putting out there, the services that you're putting out there, are solving their problems.

So it doesn't matter if you have a service that Don't know why that came up, but if you help adults to swim, if that's not one of their problems, if one of their problems is something completely unrelated, that's not what you need to put on there. So it is really because we're trying to guide the strategies to guide people closer to you.

Let's say to guide the right people closer to you. Because if people aren't interested and they drop off, that's fine. Okay, it's not a problem. It really isn't. We're actually not here to serve everybody.

And I can't remember if I've put that video up. I think it was a bonus one. If we, if we talk to everyone, no one actually listens. That may be the bonus video that's coming up for the weekend. But yeah, so If you look at it through the strategic eyes of, this is my ideal client, this is who I'm trying to serve, this is their problem, I think it becomes clearer on what you need to delete either from your homepage, and it may not— okay, it may be removing it from your homepage and putting it somewhere else.

I may not be— it may not be, you know, delete it entirely. It may just be moving things around. So it feels more seamless when people are coming to your website. So thanks for that question. By the way, if I answer any questions which bring up more questions for you, either put them in the comments or drop me an email.

This is an interesting question. How do I know that it's going to be good enough?

How do I know that it's going to be good enough? And this is both the content and the website.

I think in our heads, okay, I think in my head, maybe not in your head, that I think it has to be perfect. And if you've been around me for a while, you know I am a recovering perfectionist and control freak.

The only way to know if it's good enough is to actually put it out there.

It really is. You've got to put it out there to test it in your market.

They, if you have something like analytics on your website. It can be Google, Fathom, there are other analytics, Google is not the only one.

You can track if people are coming to your website. So the good enough is just such a broad term. The good enough can be, we're thinking about what do you want from your website to begin with? Okay, because What one person thinks is good enough for a website may be something completely different from another website. So you've got to think about what you want from your website.

And this brings up another question that I'll get to in a minute. But if you're kind of thinking, okay, I want bookings from my website, I want bookings for this service from my website.

You can see where people land on your website, where they go through, where they drop off.

You can even have, if you know, with plugins, you could even have like a heatmap plugin to see where they move around on the page with the mouse.

So, is it good enough? Depends on your own high, on your own standards. And I was about to say high standards. Because I think we do have high standards, and we think that it has to be perfect, and it has to be perfect first time.

I'm listening to myself say this, and my advice goes to me as well. It doesn't have to be perfect. It's not set in stone. It really isn't.

Anything can be changed. Absolutely anything. So, put it out there. And let your clients know, or let your clients inform you whether it's good enough.

Because I can tell you things, other web designers can tell you things, it's actually when it's out there, that's when we know whether it'll be working or not.

Oh, the question I said that was leading me to Is somebody— it's actually an answer to a question rather than a question, but I sometimes get, I don't know what I don't know.

And that's true. Yeah. You don't know. I don't know what I don't know. However, coming to somebody like me, I do know.

And part of that, I don't know what I don't know, I'll say that again.

Keeping hold of that, I don't know what I don't know, actually holds you back.

If you think of, okay, I don't know what I don't know, and let's find out. If you add something like the curiosity on the end of that, It means that you can come to somebody like me, for example, and say, my website isn't doing XYZ, or I don't know what I don't know. How can my website be better?

How could my website do this? And if you can frame, I don't know what I don't know, And with some curiosity, you know, a sentence filled with curiosity, it will move you rather than keeping you stuck. And I'm talking about that from my personal experience with, I don't know what I don't know.

How do I prioritise what's an important one to update? Now this can refer— I'm not sure whether the context here Is content or techy stuff?

How do you know what's important to update when it comes to content? Is again thinking about your ideal client, thinking about whether your business has changed. So yeah, I speak to some businesswomen and hey, I can hold my hand up to this as well. You know, I've changed branding only a few months ago. I changed domain, I changed branding.

My services in the last 2 years have changed a lot.

I have more specific services. So if you are saying what's important to update and you're thinking about content, think about has your ideal client, your niche changed over that time? Or have you changed over that time with the services that you're delivering or the mode that you're delivering?

And then look at the content that is aligned with who you are now. Now, not last year, not 5 years ago, not even 10 years ago.

And certainly if you've been doing blogs for for, you know, 10 years, I'm not saying to delete them. They may want to be updated.

You may want to put something on there to say, you know, these services are no longer offered, or I've changed my thoughts.

The only reason I say you don't necessarily want to remove them is because if you're getting a lot of traffic to your website through them, It may be that that traffic could still be part of your ideal clients, depending on how much your business and your services have changed, of course. So this is where all the strategy comes in and the alignment comes in. Now, if you're asking what— how do you prioritise what to update, thinking technically, This is when it helps to have a professional on site if you don't have one already. Now the reason I say that is because when I run my web care services, so web maintenance services, I have monitoring on my clients' websites and monitoring that is available to developers, I would say, and designers more than it is to the general public. Because even if you signed up for the same service, let's say that you're, you're, you're DIYing your maintenance, okay, you're looking after your own maintenance.

Even if you signed up for some of these services that I use, unless you have experience on the technical side of WordPress, they're probably not going to mean much to you. And in fact, what they'll do is overwhelm you. And I know this from some clients who have left the service and then come back to me because they're overwhelmed by, what does all this mean? It creates more confusion rather than clarity. Whereas when I use some of those services, I can look at that with my experience and say, Okay, this is an important one to update.

In fact, some of it would even tell me that depending on the service that I'm using. So if you're watching the recording, this may not make sense, much sense to you, but it was only a few weeks ago we had all the PHP, that there was a vulnerability in PHP.

And all PHP had to be updated. Apparently, I've heard that the Japanese Prime Minister actually went on TV asking people to update anything with their PHP, and certainly the Australian Cybersecurity were sending out emails saying how important it was, you must update this.

Now, because I'm in that world, I knew all about it. I knew which ones were the safe levels of PHP. And by the way, if you don't know what PHP is, sorry, my tech head was on then. PHP is the coding language that WordPress and many, many other things are written in. So it's the programming language behind WordPress.

Because I'm in that world, I knew what should be updated, what was already safe. However, I guess it, it still surprised me that people who were trying to manage their own websites knew nothing about it unless they were on my email list. And I think that still surprised me. And it may be that some heard about it and just had no idea where it was. In fact, I think I had one response to my newsletter that said that.

They said, okay, I knew something was going on. I didn't understand what it was until I got your email.

So there are things you can do. It's one, it's one of those can versus should you. I don't like using the should word, but you get what I'm saying. You can be overwhelmed by the amount of information that comes into you. And without the experience or knowledge to actually use that, that can just be more confusing than anything else.

Why do the things that I have used for ages suddenly update and then just break?

Why do the things that I've used for ages suddenly update and then just break?

The answer to that would probably be, it's not— it may seem like it's just breaking. I would suggest it probably— so WordPress is the core, and then plugins and themes all link in to the base of WordPress.

And sometimes they are not updated. You have to update everything in the same sequence, so your theme has to be updated and your plugins have to be updated and your core has to be updated. WordPress core, not my core.

Um, so all of these need to be updated together, and even when that happens, sometimes plugins are abandoned or themes are abandoned. So what abandoned

means is that they were put out there in the world with the expectation that they would be updated.

And then the developer is often doing that as a side hustle. So they've created this, they've put it out there, they may not have the time to update it anymore. And so what happens is you don't receive any updates to update the plugin because there are none there. However, the plugin just sits there and isn't updated by the developer, and then that's when it seems like everything crashes because you update the things around it, but that plugin can be using an older version of PHP, for example, which was talking about, the programming language. The programming languages change.

It may be that that plugin no longer works nicely with another plugin.

It's when things like that happen that if you're doing your maintenance on your own, it's worth reaching out to somebody like me to see if— well, not if, but how I can look at things to see what's working, what should be working for you.

With my website health checks, I found that abandoned plugins like this can slow down a website. They can cause all sorts of issues, but it's So that's kind of— that's one reason why something you've been using for ages can suddenly break. And I know it can be incredibly frustrating. It's happened to me with websites as well. You know, I'm using something and an update has come through.

It's a bit like when they send updates through on your phone and suddenly everything changes. It can be like that with, with websites.

This feels like I need to mention about doing backups. I know we're talking about strategy and alignment, but if you are doing your own DIY stuff on your WordPress website, or even if you've got somebody like me looking after it and you're updating the content, please, pretty please, Do backups beforehand. If you haven't got a backup on your website, book either a free session or a WTF, WordPress Tweaks and Fixes, session with me for half an hour and let's get that sorted. Because when something does break, you want to be able to recover and recover quickly.

This, this isn't kind of strategy and alignment, but it's come through. So, how would you know if your website has been hacked?

Often you don't know.

I have had people come to me with hacked websites that are very obviously hacked.

Like, one, it had what we assume it could— it was some oriental type of writing all over it. Any links that you clicked on went to some casino website. So that was a very obvious hacking of the website. Another reason why you need backups, by the way. And away from your hosting.

So some of them are very obvious.

Others I've, I've come across that are far more— they sit in the background and they just monitor things. And then they may, like when you click on a contact form, the details may go somewhere else.

It's like they're lying in wait for something to happen rather than be too obvious.

Prevention is always better than cure.

If you want to book a session with me, I can set up security on your website.

Again, It depends on your technical levels whether this will just confuse you or whether it will give you clarity. But there are plugins that will help.

If, yeah, there's, there's plugins, there's other services that can help. And I don't want to get this too technical because I know a lot of the people that are going to be watching this, it's going to be split between those who do DIY And those who think, you know what, this sounds great, I can't do it, let's hire Karen. So I know there are 2 different camps watching this, and I just want to make sure that everybody's covered and everybody's happy.

So some of the other questions Is, well, I don't know whether it's a— it's not really a question, it's more of a statement that I've just added stuff and stuff and stuff and now it just doesn't feel structured anymore. So this is a bit like one of the earlier questions of what do I delete?

You've added stuff and stuff and stuff and Let's face it, we want to share what we know. We want people to trust us, know, like, and trust us.

If you've added stuff and stuff and stuff, was that because there was no strategy behind it? Yeah, I'm speaking from experience here. I have got— when I transitioned from KISS to WPFG, WordPress Fairy Godmother, this year. I actually went back and looked through some of the blog posts and it's like, is this serving me? Is this serving my clients or my prospective clients?

And a lot of the time the answer was no. It was one of those, oh God, I have to write a blog post. What can I write a blog post on? Oh, that'll do.

It had no strategy behind it at all other than I needed to get a blog post out.

So if you've added stuff and stuff and stuff, it's now time to think about, okay, what's the strategy behind that? Is any of it useful still? Can it be updated? Can it be amended? Yeah, all thinking about your ideal clients.

And what their, their needs and wants are.

Another question that came in, to have the home button in the menu, the home, or not?

And, and this actually, you would think It's a technical question, and it's not. It really isn't. It's a strategy question, and that's why I've kind of decided, yeah, this does belong here. Not that I had that many questions that I'm tossing any out, by the way. I'm not.

If you send me a question, I promise I'll answer it. The home button or not is a strategy question because It depends on what your ideal clients know.

In the last month, I have spoken with several businesswomen who have either designed their own website or the designer has told them this is what they're going with.

The home on your menu is important if people don't know how else to get to your home, the homepage.

For some people, they know, and it's been around for years, that you can click on the logo and you go back to the homepage.

And because some designers will have a million and one things in the menu, They feel that the home is too— is taking up too much real estate when people should know just to click on the logo.

However, when I've spoken to people, and I've seen surveys on this, a lot of older people may not realise that you can click on the logo to go back home. To the homepage. So if they've gone exploring down blog posts and all sorts of things and they want something that was back on the homepage, they don't know how to get there. Strategy is about keeping it simple and making sure your ideal client can find their way around your website.

I have seen, um, done where they have no Home on the menu and the logo isn't clickable to go back to Home. So the only way you can go Home is like back browsing on your, on the browser, keep hitting back until you get back to the homepage.

So Home button or not on your menu is a strategic decision.

I always like it there. It's simple. It's obvious. It's keep it simple, sweetheart.

You don't know when somebody's going to be on your website. It could be 2:30 in the morning and they can't sleep. Yeah, okay, I'm using a personal example there, but it could be. Keep it simple. And if you've got a million and one things, In your menu bar, I would suggest that your strategy has lost its way.

Because why are you serving up a million and one things on your menu bar? I actually made the decision when I reorganised mine that I would have no dropdowns from the

main menu. That made me think. It made me think strategically, what should be on now? Where should things link through to?

So home button or not, even the menu, everything on your website is about strategy. If I could say the word, it's about strategy. It really is. You want to think about, and this is why it, I understand how overwhelming it can feel when you're either doing a DIY website or your designer is asking you questions about your website. And by the way, if a designer isn't asking you questions, you're gonna get what you're given and not necessarily what's right for you.

The designer, your developer, should be asking you questions, and if they're not, you probably need to come and see me afterwards. This is the truth of it, because it may not be working for you. Either that, or they specialise in your niche so well that they think you've— they know exactly what they're doing and exactly what you need.

But your designer or developer should be talking to you, extracting from you what you need to make your website successful. They should be building in the strategy for you. Unfortunately, I don't see that very often, which is why I started week one with strategy and alignment.

The other— again, it's not a question, but it's a statement. My website isn't doing anything.

And that just raises so many questions for me. It's like, how do you know? Why isn't it? What should it be doing? What do you want it to do?

I know that's a lot of questions, but if your website isn't doing anything, there, there is so much that surrounds that.

For your website to generate leads, bookings, you've got to have traffic going to it. Now I know, I know the build it and they will come. That doesn't often happen, if ever.

So part of the strategy when you're building your website or when it's being built for you, hopefully when it's being built for you, is the strategy around marketing your website.

Your website isn't sort of up here all on its own. It's part of the network, a framework of bringing your ideal clients closer to you.

So for that to happen, we have to think strategically even before the website is designed. Now, if you're thinking, hang on, Karen, I've already got my website and I've no clue about any of that, Fine. Book a call. Start with a free 15-minute appointment. If you don't know me that well, or you've just happened to come across this, book a free 15-minute appointment.

Let's talk about the strategy of your website. Let's talk about how you're marketing your website, how you're bringing traffic into your website, because it's not doing anything, maybe because it's not being found. An aside, but a true story.

A woman came to me a couple of years ago and said, my website isn't working. Okay, how do you know it's not working? She said, I can't even find it in Google.

I said, well, how long has your website been up now? She said, 6 months.

It was a WordPress website and she'd been on a course to DIY the website.

What they hadn't told her— so she had put the content in somewhere, it was then moved across from their training session to the live session, to her live hosting. What they hadn't told her was there's a little checkbox in WordPress that says it's okay for, for Google to access the website, to track it, and that's got to be a blank, a blank checkbox. If it's ticked, it means Google's not allowed to look at it. And this is what had happened to her. She had been waiting for this website, her website, to be found.

Build it and they will come. And Google wasn't even looking at it.

There's, there's lots of little things that can trip people who are DIYing their websites up, which is why I have a suite of services that can help people who have DIYed or people who have had their website designed by somebody else And want me or want a professional to look over it to get a— it's like a second opinion with a doctor. So, but yes, if you're— if it's not doing anything, we need to work out why it's not doing anything. And then if it's something technical like that, or if it's the strategy that people

are coming in being confused Is my copy still relevant since I've changed? Now, I may have answered this in one of the earlier questions.

If your business has changed, your copy needs to change with it.

If it's— okay, I guess it depends on how much your business has changed. Let's qualify that. Yeah, I was going to say, But if it's been a big change, then yes, your copy needs to change with it. And with your copy, I'm talking about text and images as well. One of the things that hasn't come up as a question, but I know people react to when I tell them this, that if you are your brand, your image should be on the homepage.

And why I'm I'm thinking about this is because if your business has changed and if you're querying whether your copy is relevant, then you may want to check your images as well.

There's, there's nothing like landing on a website and you're thinking, that's not the person I was following on socials.

Because maybe they look completely different, different hairstyle, different hair colour than what you were expecting.

With strategy and alignment, we're really trying to get rid of any friction points. We don't want any points of confusion. We want it to be simple so that people land on your website. They recognise you. They know they're in the right place.

They learn quickly that you can solve their problem.

And then there's some step that will take them closer to you.

In my head, I know people have funnels and mountains and all this sort of thing. In my head, it's like a spiral.

And you are the sun at the centre of the universe, and they are slowly spiralling in towards you, getting them closer and closer to you. And it needs to be things that are simple and things that people can trust.

As an example, and I know I'm going off on a tangent here, as an example, if you put, you know, Buy now, you know, you've got your image there, you've got what you do, who you help, how you help them, and then you've got buy now, and it is the most expensive service you offer that's like millions of dollars.

It's unlikely that your website's going to work for you from that alone because people tend to be.

Unfortunately, we are trusting less online, and rightly so. There's a lot going on online. We've now got AI to deal with as well. So you have to build up trust with people because anybody can now put up a website. It doesn't— I'm not saying it's effective or it's good, but anybody can put up a website and claim to be something that they're not.

So we need to gently guide people to you and need to do it in a simple way.

Now I think that is it for the, for the questions. Oh, there is one more.

How can I have all this on the website and still be me?

I think it is so important to still be you, and to me to be me.

Your website is a representation of you and your business, just from your ideal client's point of view.

So it is still important to be you. It is, if anything, in days of AI, and we're not sure at times what's real and what isn't, it's more and more important for you to be you. Because that's what's going to draw people in.

And so the more you, you are, the better it is.

And I've genuinely seen this.

A client who will remain nameless, I did her web design many years ago under a white label agency. So it just meant I was just doing the techie stuff and somebody else was

doing the design and telling me what they wanted. And I had never met her at that stage, and it was a beautifully designed website, absolutely gorgeous. And then I met her on a live call, and she is very down to earth. She's somebody who will drop an F-bomb without thinking about it.

She is funny. She is, she's an amazing businesswoman, and I've met her, and then I compared that with her website, and it's like it's not the same person. She had her website redesigned a few years later. The website is now bright and bold and in your face, and it is so her. It really is.

And it's like, yeah, that, that's, that's you. That's your website. So it's important to still be you. It's more important than ever to be you.

I hope this has been useful. It's my first live Q&A for WordPress Demystified, and WordPress Demystified Is it's the first time I've run anything like this. I got the idea, I'm running with it. We'll see what happens.

It's been a joy to do this for you today. I have really loved it. I'm sure I've goofed up in lots of places, but the great thing with it being live is I don't have to try and edit it or redo it. You get me just being me, and it's important that you're you as well. If you have any questions, if this has brought up any questions for you, please put them in the comments or email me or message my page.

Get in touch.

I've loved doing this. I hope it has been useful. I will get the transcript out and try and highlight the questions. So if you're somebody who, like me, who wants to skip and go through bits. I'll make sure that's there as well.

This is me, Karen Leslie, your WordPress Fairy Godmother, asking you to just be you and keep shining. Next week, next week is SEO. Hmm, so get your SEO questions, get them out, get them ready. Because I'll be repeating, repeating. I'll be doing another live Q&A next Friday.

So bring all your SEO questions, all your juicy SEO questions.

I'll see you live next week. The videos will be released. I've learned from the tech this week. I will get them up earlier, so I'm not cursing them.

Have a wonderful weekend.

If there's anything you need with WordPress, just reach out.