

**WHY LAUGHTER REALLY
IS THE BEST
MEDICINE**

**UNLOCKING LINKEDIN'S
HIDDEN GEM**

**MASTERING YOUR VIRTUAL
ELEVATOR PITCH**

**HOW TO ASK FOR
THE SALE**

VINITA SALOMÉ SPEAKS ABOUT

**THE TRANSFORMATIVE
POWER OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

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WELCOME.

This month I embarked on my 45th lap around the sun and I celebrated in style by reliving some of my youth at a concert by a band I loved as a teenager. It was a fantastic show, and it was so fun to connect to that part of myself that would go to concerts all the time!

Sometimes, as the days, weeks, months and years pass us by, we lose bits of ourselves. I don't even mean in big dramatic ways, but more often in quiet ways that we don't even really notice. That's why it can be so beneficial to reflect and rediscover the things that make us who we are.

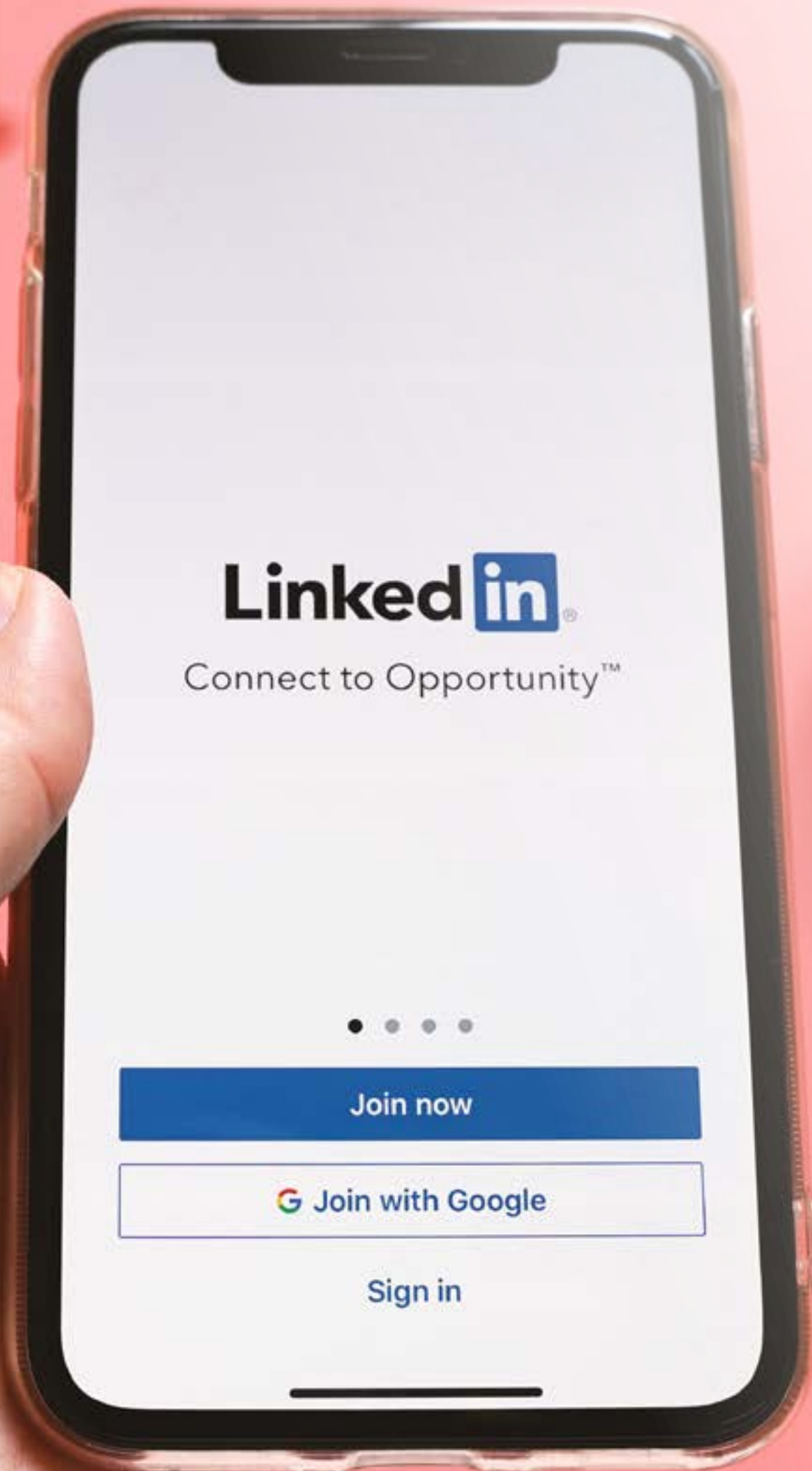
This is also the process I've been going through with House of Hives in the last few months. Bringing it all back to the core of who I am and what I bring to the table. More news about that will follow, but today I wanted to invite you to explore that question for yourself. Who are you at your core and how does that show up in your business?

Mags Thomson

Editor In Chief



EVEN AS A TEENAGER, I WAS A WRITER...



Unlocking LinkedIn's Hidden Gem

Maximizing the Featured Section

If you're looking to make the most of your LinkedIn profile and create authentic connections that resonate with your mission, then it's time to delve into the hidden gems of your profile; one of these is definitely the Featured section. Today, we'll explore how you can harness the power of the Featured section to present yourself in the best light and connect with your audience on a deeper level.



By [Sophie Lechner](#)

Before we dive into the details, let's take a moment to understand the significance of the Featured section. Think of your LinkedIn profile as a journey that you're guiding visitors through. Just like a well-designed website, you want to capture their attention and guide them through your story. The journey starts with your banner, offering a visual snapshot of your personal brand. Then comes your picture, headline, and... the Featured Section. This section acts as a door into your world – a gateway to your experiences, values, and achievements.

Consider your Featured Section as a mini-website within your profile. Unlike your external website that might not receive immediate attention, your LinkedIn profile benefits from a captive audience of

over 900 million people. This is your chance to captivate visitors with compelling content that showcases your expertise, values and mission.

Adding the Featured Section to Your Profile

Adding sections such as the Featured Section to your profile is a straightforward process. Begin by locating the “Add Profile Section” button at the top of your profile page. Upon clicking it, a pop-up menu will appear, and within the “Recommended” category, you’ll find the option to “Add featured.”

To populate your Featured Section with content, simply click the “+” symbol located at the top of the section. This will present you with a range of choices, including adding a post, newsletter, article, and more. Selecting your preferred option, you will be guided through the process of adding that specific item. For instance, if you opt for “A Post,” you will be presented with a list of your previously shared posts, each accompanied by a “Feature” button. Click this button to incorporate the chosen item into your Featured Section.

Should you want to manage your featured items, whether to remove or rearrange them, locate the pen icon at the top of the Featured section. To remove items, click the “Remove from Featured” button beneath the respective item. For rearranging posts, click the up and down arrows (↕) at the top. You can now effortlessly reorder your posts by clicking and holding the three horizontal lines (≡) symbol on each post, allowing you to drag and drop them to your preference.

What to Add to Your Featured Section

So, what kind of content should you feature? The key is to focus on what matters most. Think about the top three aspects you want potential clients or partners to know about you. These could include your mission, the results you offer to clients, and your unique

origin story. To truly make an impact, mix and match different types of content to cater to diverse preferences.

Here are some suggestions, but get as creative as you like:

Articles and Origin Stories: Share your story and insights by linking to an article that outlines your origin story or business journey. This not only engages readers but also adds a personal touch to your profile.

Top Posts: If you’ve had a post that garnered significant attention, make it a highlight in your Featured section. It showcases your expertise and the engagement you’re capable of generating.

Testimonials Carousels: Leverage the power of client testimonials by creating a carousel of images. These visual snippets provide social proof of your expertise and build trust with your audience.

Podcast and Newsletter: If you have a podcast or newsletter, the Featured section is prime real estate to promote them. It’s a convenient way to draw attention to your audio content or curated insights.

Short Introductory Video: Videos offer a dynamic way to introduce yourself and your offerings. Keep it short and impactful, inviting viewers to learn more about you.

How to Maximise LinkedIn for Your Marketing!

Unlocking the potential of your LinkedIn profile’s Featured section allows you to craft a captivating narrative that speaks to your mission, values, and expertise. By combining various content types you can create a profile that not only attracts attention but also builds meaningful connections.

LinkedIn is a platform where authenticity shines, and your Featured section is your canvas to let your mission-driven personality radiate and allows you to make your LinkedIn profile a true reflection of who you are and the

value you bring to your network.

But there is more to LinkedIn than simply optimising your profile. Here are some pointers on how to use LinkedIn’s features to your advantage.

Engagement Is Key

While crafting compelling content is vital, remember that engagement is the heartbeat of LinkedIn. A well-structured profile with engaging content draws people in. Interact genuinely with your connections by commenting thoughtfully on their posts. These interactions showcase your expertise and make your profile stand out in their minds.

Navigating Connection Requests

When it comes to connection requests, quality trumps quantity. Don’t fall into the trap of accepting every request that comes your way. If someone sends you a request without a meaningful message, it’s a red flag. Meaningful connections start with a personal message that explains why they want to connect. Aim for authentic interactions that foster relationships.

The Art of Tagging

Tagging others in your comments can be a powerful tool for engagement. It brings attention to your insights and encourages people to join the conversation. However, use tagging thoughtfully. Tag people who will genuinely find the conversation relevant, and avoid overloading your comments with unnecessary tags.

Creating a Standout Headline

Your headline is your digital first impression. You are allowed to use 207 characters in your headline, but in many places it cuts off at 40 characters. Make those 40 characters count by focusing on your mission and how you help your target audience. Give potential connections a clear understanding of what you offer, and why they should explore your profile further.



About Sophie Lechner

Sophie Lechner created the MAGNET Model to help mission-driven entrepreneurs build authentic relationships on LinkedIn that will propel their business and mission forward.

Over the last 20 years, her activity on LinkedIn has led to speaking engagements in the US and abroad, podcast invitations, finding clients and partners, and it even led to an interview in Forbes.

Sophie works with clients one-on-one through courses, group programmes and workshops.

[Connect with Sophie on LinkedIn](#) and check out her Featured Section for lots of resources on how to make the absolute most of LinkedIn in your marketing efforts.

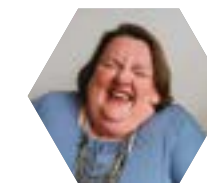
CRAFTING COMPELLING TESTIMONIALS: A GUIDE TO SHOWCASING YOUR UNIQUE VALUE



So, you know using testimonials can boost your business, but you don't know how to really use them and you're worried they might end up sounding as generic as "great gall to work with." Don't worry; I've got you covered! Today, let's dive into the world of testimonials and see how to make them shine and showcase your unique value.

By *Mags Thomson*

Testimonials aren't just about patting yourself on the back; they're your secret weapon for connecting with potential clients and showing them the transformative power of what you offer. But let's be honest; generic testimonials don't do justice to your awesomeness. They lack the juicy details that potential clients crave. They're like a plain cheeseburger in a world of gourmet burgers. So, what's the solution?



Ask the Right Questions

Instead of just asking for a testimonial, guide your clients with specific questions. Ask about their surprising moments, their favourite aspects of working with you, or what they'd tell a friend about their experience. These questions provide handholds for them to share a more engaging story about your collaboration.

When crafting questions for testimonials, focus on moments that made clients think, "Wow, this is incredible!" or "This changed my life!" Capture the emotions and experiences that set you apart.

Edit and Polish, But Keep the Essence

Don't be afraid to edit testimonials for clarity and impact. It's like adding just the right seasoning to a dish. Typos might make them seem careless, and that's not the impression you want. However, always ensure the sentiment remains intact, and always check with your client to sign off on your edits.

Maintain the authenticity of your clients' voices in the testimonials. They shouldn't sound like you wrote them. Let their unique experiences shine through.

Tailor Your Testimonials

Consider your audience. If your potential clients haven't worked with you yet, focus on the information they need to make the decision to buy from you. Show them the results or describe your unique process.

Diversify Your Use of Testimonials

Don't feel obligated to share the entire testimonial every time. Mix it up based on your communication goals. Use different sections for your website, social media, newsletters, or special offers. Think strategically.

Highlight the Best Bits

When selecting what to showcase, emphasise the most compelling stories and experiences from your clients. Make potential clients envision themselves working with you.

Craft a Call to Action

Don't just stop at the testimonial; encourage engagement. What do you want your audience to do next? Start a conversation, book a call, or explore your services? The testimonial is the appetizer; the call to action is the main course.

Timing is Key

Ask for testimonials shortly after working with your clients. Waiting too long can diminish their enthusiasm. But, remember, some experiences need time to marinate.

Now, go out there and collect those amazing stories that will take your business to new heights!

NAVIGATING BOUNDARIES WHEN RECOVERING FROM HEARTBREAK

Boundaries play a pivotal role when recovering from heartbreak, an aspect often underestimated. Many folks think they can maintain a friendship with their ex-partner without setting boundaries. They believe in the possibility of continuing as if nothing has changed. The reality hits when you feel invaded, suffocated, and needing space. Suddenly you realise that everything isn't the same, and you need to make some changes!

By [Lanise Thrasher](#)

Setting boundaries might mean not engaging in unnecessary conversations. If there are kids involved or essential matters to discuss, sure, let's talk. But if it's just about the weather or some casual remark, you don't have to respond in detail, if at all. It's about protecting yourself from unnecessary emotional turmoil.

People often hurt themselves by neglecting to establish and enforce these boundaries. We let others tap dance all over those lines until we find ourselves stuck in that same hurt place, unable to move forward. Saying no to others and a resounding yes to yourself is a crucial lesson. It takes time to figure out what works best for you, especially if you've been stuck in old patterns.



“THE TRUE COST LIES IN NOT HAVING BOUNDARIES – IT’S SELF-INFLICTED PAIN”

Boundaries Are Not Limited to Romantic Relationships

Our ability (or inability, as the case may be) to maintain healthy boundaries spills over into every nook and cranny of our lives, including the workplace. I've learned this firsthand over the years. We all want to give our best at work, but there comes a point when you glance at the clock, and it's already nine o'clock at night – you're still working. That's when you need to put your foot down and set boundaries.

It took me a while to grasp this concept because I was always in the “work, work, work” mindset. The real eye-opener, you know when it really hits you that boundaries are non-negotiable, came during my divorce. Before that, when I was happily married, my manager never called me late. We had our work hours, and that was it. But the moment I became single, suddenly, the late-night calls started. I thought, “Hold on, why is it okay to call me late now?” It dawned on me that in the eyes of my manager – without a partner at home who could object, the boundaries disappeared.

That's when I realised I had to set boundaries, pronto. I started saying, “When I'm done working, I'm done working. Good night, see you in the morning.” Sure, there were days I might have logged in to finish some work, but I did it stealthily. People didn't even know I was there. Why? Because I didn't want them to think it was okay to send a quick message at 8 p.m. – it is not okay.

Setting boundaries became a crucial skill, not just in my past job but also in my current one. I've encountered colleagues who boldly

declare their boundaries at 5:05 – “I log off at 5 o'clock, catch you tomorrow.” And you know what? I respect that. It's a game-changer, acknowledging that you don't have to bend to the demands of others perpetually. You can say no, and declare your unavailability.

Boundaries aren't just about romantic relationships; they're your safeguard against being stretched thin in every aspect of life. It's a lesson I've learned, and it's a lesson I make sure to pass on to others. Boundaries matter – not just for your sanity but for a healthier, more balanced life.

Don't Underestimate How Much Boundaries Affect Your (Mental) Health

People tend to believe that not responding to someone else's needs or expectations will cause harm. However, the reality is quite different. The true cost lies in not having boundaries – it's self-inflicted pain.

This realisation becomes critical, especially when dealing with mental health. Boundaries play an important role in maintaining our mental well-being. Without them, we can find ourselves overwhelmed, driving us to the brink of insanity. It is important not to allow others to walk all over you because, inevitably, it can lead to physical and mental health issues.

In my personal journey, I faced a profound health challenge in 2019 – shingles. I was shocked! I had allowed both a stressful work environment and the infringement of my boundaries to compromise my immune system. The consequence was severe – 19 days confined to the house (which before Covid was unheard of), multiple medications, and a reset of my immune system.

This experience was a turning point that taught me the utmost importance of self-care and how boundaries play a vital role in that. Despite being someone who does a lot for others, I had to prioritise myself. Setting boundaries became a non-negotiable part of my life. Even in the midst of health challenges, I learned to say no to answering the phone for everyone. I established a 'Do Not Disturb' policy, allowing myself the space and time to rest.

Implementing these boundaries significantly improved my well-being. There are days when I intentionally disconnect, watching TV without engaging with anyone. It's a reminder that I cannot be of help to others if I'm not well. Communicating these boundaries with my family, especially my mom, became essential. Even during challenging times, setting clear expectations about my availability ensured a healthier balance.

Transformed Relationships Through Boundaries

The impact of embracing boundaries on my relationships has been profound. By not constantly compromising my own well-being, my connections with others have become significantly healthier. There's now a mutual understanding among people in my life that they can't trample on my boundaries.

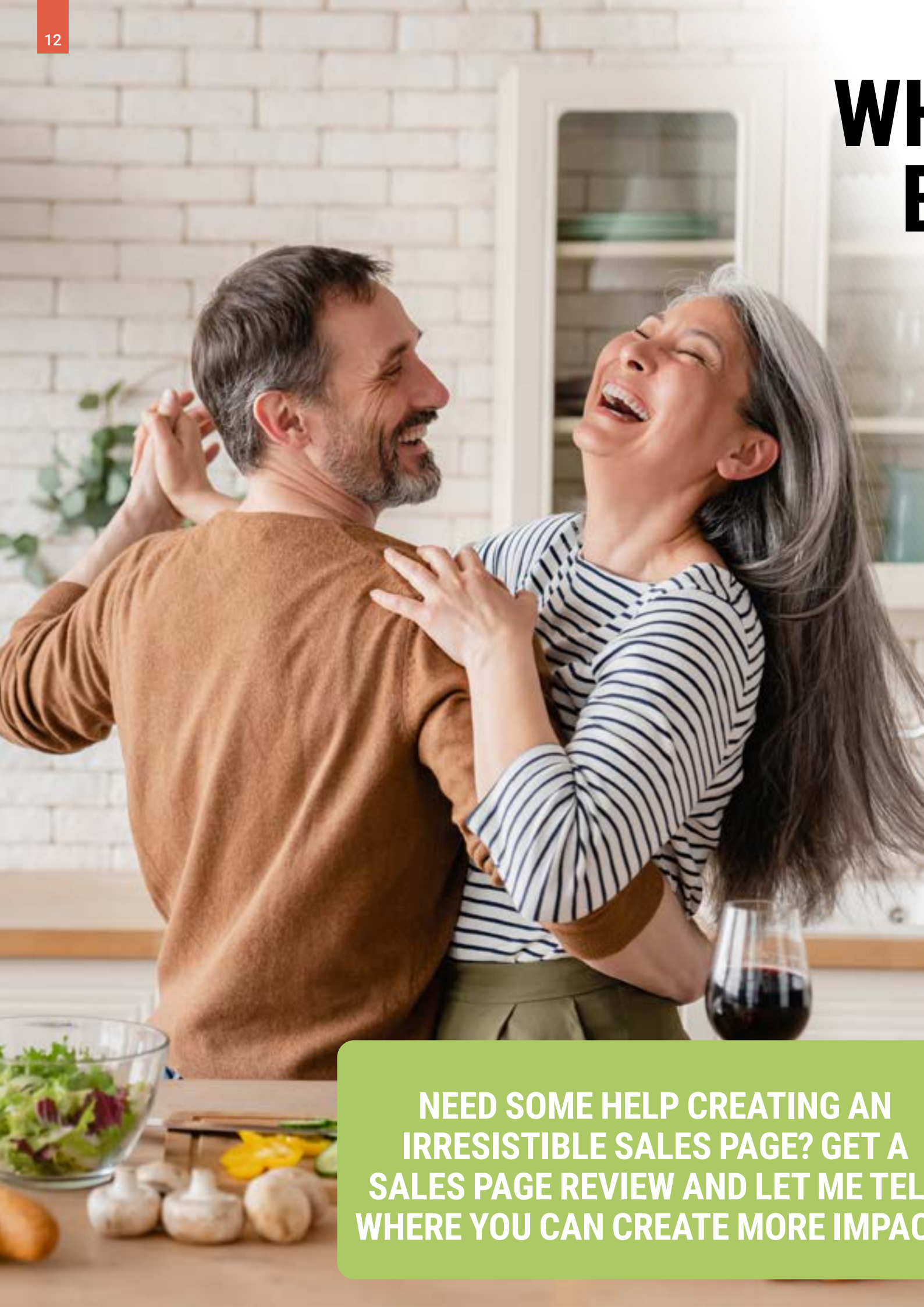
This newfound respect for my personal space has paved the way for more meaningful and genuine conversations. Previously, when my boundaries were disregarded, conversations felt forced and burdensome. Now, because others recognise and honour my boundaries, there's an authentic desire to engage. It's no longer a chore; it's a choice.

I've noticed a positive shift in my interactions. Instead of avoiding calls and messages, I eagerly pick up the phone, excited to connect with those who respect my need for space. It has transformed mundane exchanges into heartfelt conversations. Now, when I ask, “How are you doing today?” or express genuine interest in someone's well-being, it comes from a place of authenticity.

This shift in dynamics is palpable. I find myself reaching out with warmth and enthusiasm, addressing friends with genuine affection. The transformation in my relationships is not just in the absence of discomfort; it's in the presence of a newfound connection. I'm no longer dodging calls; I'm embracing conversations with open arms, fostering bonds that are stronger and more meaningful than ever.

In essence, boundaries are not just about protecting ourselves from external pressures; they are fundamental to maintaining our mental and physical health as well as healthy relationships with ALL people in our lives. Recognising this truth has transformed my life, fostering a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between boundaries and well-being.





**NEED SOME HELP CREATING AN
IRRISISTIBLE SALES PAGE? GET A
SALES PAGE REVIEW AND LET ME TELL
WHERE YOU CAN CREATE MORE IMPACT.**

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS BEHIND THE BENEFITS?

Have you ever thought about what your client is REALLY getting out of working with you?

As entrepreneurs and business owners, we spend so much time crafting the perfect programme or service for our clients. But when we want to sell it, we get stuck in the nuts and bolts of our offer, and we fail to speak to our clients' imaginations.

By Sandra ten Hoop

What Problem Are You Solving?

I am not the biggest fan of pain-point marketing. Playing on people's fears or stress isn't really the vibe I like to create. However, it is important to understand what problem you solve for your clients, and how that problem affects them.

Even without pushing that pain button in your copy, you need to understand it. Take me as an example. I know that right now you may be feeling overwhelmed and uninspired to write sales copy. Or you are frustrated that no one seems to be reading your carefully crafted sales page and feeling persuaded to click the Buy Now Button.

I know that, and it has informed the information I share and the way I communicate it. I've been talking you through some of the essential pieces of your sales and marketing copy in my articles in FEM because I know it will help you become clearer on your messaging, communicate more effectively with prospective customers and improve your sales.

Without understanding what drives your clients to look for your product (which is their discomfort with their current situation) you have a giant blindspot when it comes to your communication.

So ask yourself what the problem is that you help solve and how that impacts your ideal clients' life.

Selling the Solution

You have obviously given a lot of thought to your product and service. You understand how it can help your clients, but they don't! It's up to you to help them understand what makes your solution exactly what they need. What will they get out of it?

Think about an airline ad. Can you picture it? Do they show you what plane you will be flying in? What inflight movies they will be showing or how they will load your suitcases onto the plane?

NOPE!

They are showing you sunny beaches, laughing families and friends have a great time together. You need to do the same thing around your service. People are less interested in the nuts and bolts of your offer and far more interested in hearing why THIS is the solution for them. How will they benefit and how will that change their life?

So, consider what it is that your clients gain from working with you and find the benefit that is behind that benefit.

Are they gaining more time? Great! But what does that mean? Time is an elusive concept. More time to spend with their kids, however? Now that speaks to the imagination.

Are they becoming fitter? Again, that doesn't really mean anything. What does fitness get them? More energy to play with their dog or dance with their partner?

When speaking to your clients about the things they will gain from working with you, ask yourself what it means in tangible effects AND what the ripple effect will be in their life and that of the ones they love. Because isn't what we really want for our loved ones to be happier?



FIVE REASONS EVERY ENTREPRENEUR SHOULD WRITE A BOOK, NOW

You may ask me, “Mags, there are so many books out there. Why should I bother?” and that is exactly the question I will answer for you today. Because there are many ways that a book will transform your business, and it isn’t the passive income of potential book sales.

By [Mags Thomson](#)

The lack of a business book is probably not the lack of wanting to write. The statistic that’s usually quoted is that around 85% of people want to write and anywhere between 1% and 5% actually make it happen.

Statistics about wishful thinking aside, I am here to say that if you are an entrepreneur and you want to grow your business? You need to write a book. Like, right now. Publishing a book will transform your business in countless ways, but mostly it will do a lot of heavy lifting for you.

#1 - Become The Go-To Authority

The most important reason to write a book is to establish yourself as an authority, because this is the point that, in turn, will impact all the others I will discuss here today.

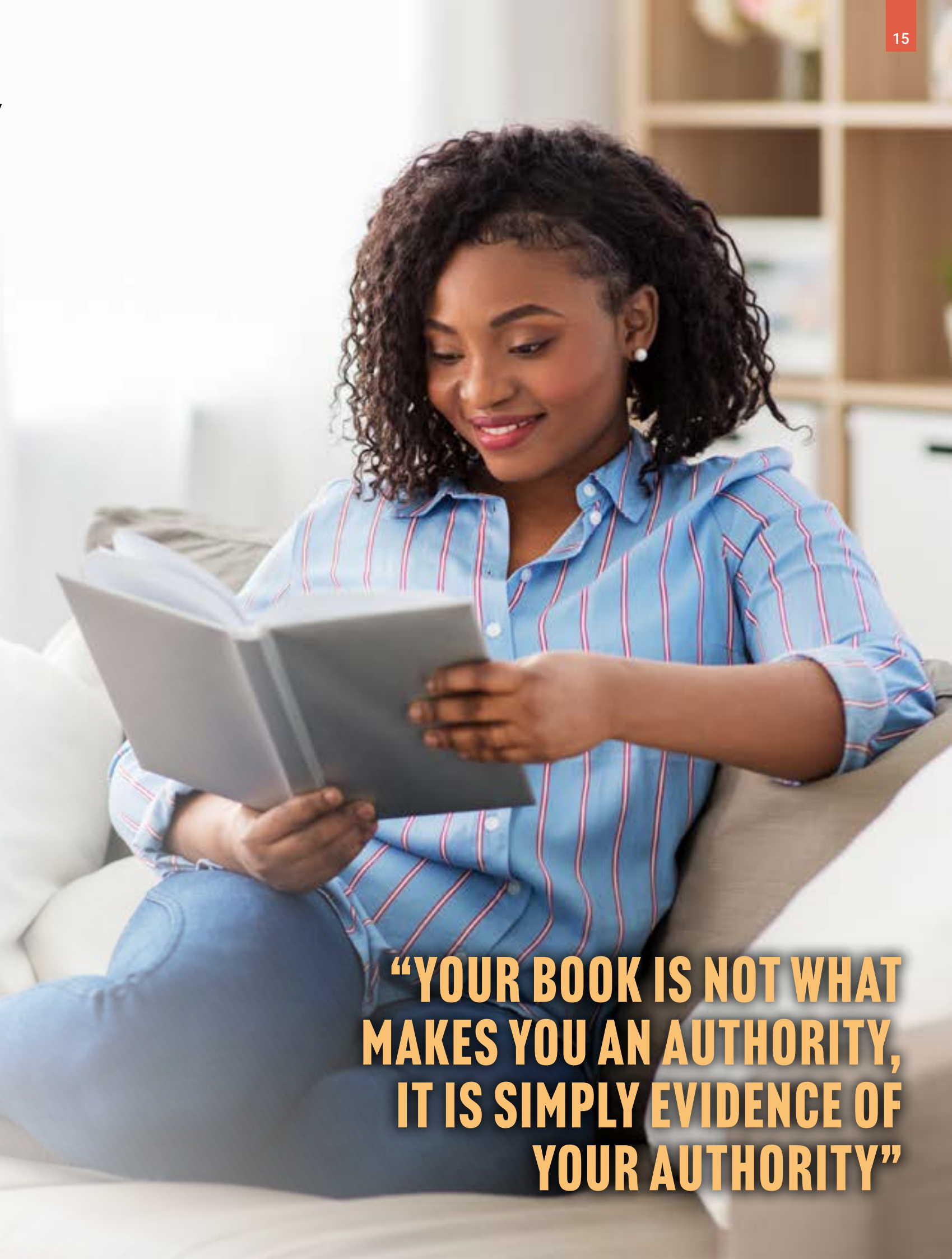
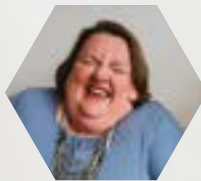
As Kyle Eschenroeder puts it, a book is a declaration that you’re here to lead. You are letting the world know that you have something to say, and you are saying it. This is the best way to get people to listen, pay attention, and establish you as the go-to person on this topic. Even people who haven’t read your book, just by knowing you have written a book on the topic,

understand you have a wealth of knowledge about this topic. Why else would you have sat down and written about it?

So, your book is not what makes you an authority, it is simply evidence of your authority. This doesn’t just lift your personal profile, it also boosts your business’s brand. Especially as a solo entrepreneur, you are your brand and your brand is you. So, if you are the go-to person, that makes your business the go-to provider.

#2 - Boost Your Marketing Endeavours

Your book will make you more visible online, and that is without the marketing campaign you will execute around your book launch, although creating content around your book is obviously a great asset to your marketing campaign. But there are more benefits that you may not have considered.



“YOUR BOOK IS NOT WHAT MAKES YOU AN AUTHORITY, IT IS SIMPLY EVIDENCE OF YOUR AUTHORITY”

Your listing on Amazon, your author profile there and on places like Good Reads with link-backs to your website, will improve your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) scores. This means that your website, which sells your services and products, will be listed higher on Google searches, making it more likely people will find and trust your business.

On top of your content marketing, the book can create an amazing funnel for your email list. By giving away a free copy or sample, you can build your email list. This means that you can communicate with your readers about your offerings, but there is an added benefit, which we will discuss next.

#3 - Increase Your Visibility

Having a book out there is going to help you connect to a whole new arena of people. You will be able to get on podcasts, write guest blogs, land interviews and other forms of publicity that you haven't even thought of yet.

Your growing authority, your larger reach and audience, will all combine to get you noticed by larger platforms and meet the criteria for greater collaborative opportunities. This will then help you grow your audience, reach and authority even further, making the effect cumulative.

**BY BECOMING AN AUTHOR,
YOU WILL POSITION
YOURSELF AS AN AUTHORITY
IN THE EYES OF YOUR
CLIENTS AND YOUR PEERS.
- MARTIN JONES**

**Would you like some help writing YOUR book? I would love to help!
Join a collaborative project OR let me ghostwrite your whole book for you
CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER**

#4 - Create A Human Connection

There is no better way to build trust with your potential clients than to connect with them on a personal level. Your book is the ideal vehicle for that. You get to share your story, your personality, your sense of humour ... I could go on.

These are the stories that people will remember, and possibly even share with their friends who are looking for just the kind of coach, consultant, or small business they need.

#5 - Make More Money

Your self-published book may make you some money, but it may also cost you money. That is, you need to invest in an editor, a designer for the cover art and you may need some help with the specific marketing of your book. Hiring these professionals will cost you, but they will help you put out a good book. It is important that the book you put out meets the standards you want people to associate with your business; how else will it compel your readers to buy from you?

Because THAT is where your book can make you the money. The credentials of being an author, the brand authority, your increased visibility, and the leads that your book can generate, all help you find more clients. And they also mean you can start increasing your fees as a highly sought-after coach or consultant.

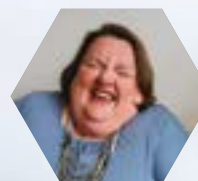
So, your book may not be the passive income gold mine some people tell you it is, but it will absolutely help you make more money in your business.

Some Added Benefits:

- Increase your chances of a "traditional" book deal. Publishers are much more likely to consider working with you if you already have experience and a readership.
- Books are a great way to leverage word of mouth, people lend and recommend each other books they have found useful and inspirational.
- Working with an editor (which I highly recommend) will improve your writing skills, which is going to help your business and marketing all around.



THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF PHOTOGRAPHY



I had the absolute pleasure of speaking to Vinita Salomé about the transformative power of photography and why an image is worth a thousand words when it comes to creating connections with others and ourselves.

By *Mags Thomson*

Vinita's business is all about images, whether that's brand photography and portraiture, creating her own inspirational images or helping people (re)connect to themselves and their creativity with her courses. It's all about the way that images and photography help us see the world and our connection to ourselves and the subject.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself, Vinita?

I was born in Okinawa and lived there until I was seven. At that time, there was an American base there, so we could use both dollars and yen, even at places like McDonald's. I have vivid memories of sipping on root beer during those days. Then, my family moved to Osaka, then Kobe, where I attended an international school until I was 17.

At 17, my mom and I relocated to India due to her illness. Doctors suggested being close to family might help, so we made the move while my brother and dad stayed back. I remained in India for 13 years until my dad returned after the Great Hanshin Earthquake in '95. Later, in 2000, I moved to the Netherlands, where I've been for 23 years now – the longest I've lived in one place.

Growing up in Japan, I attended an international school in Kobe. It was

there, in the ninth or tenth grade, that I discovered my passion for photography through classes taught by an English teacher named Miss Hand. We used to go on photo walks, and she even displayed our work in the school corridors. Seeing my photo up there sparked something in me, and that's when my journey with photography truly began. Years later, when I started my own photography business, I managed to reconnect with her on LinkedIn and thanked her for introducing me to photography despite being an English teacher.

Q: Do you think having lived in so many countries influences your work?

I believe I naturally notice subtleties and nuances in things. Growing up surrounded by multiple languages (I speak five), I've learned to observe people's mannerisms, conversational nuances, and how

things flow. This attentiveness translates into my photography too.

When conversing with someone, I'm not just hearing their words but also observing them, seeking to capture that intangible quality that shows their personality, especially during brand shoots. Many clients have mentioned that in my photographs, they see their true essence shining through, even though these shoots are often staged for branding purposes. I think that's what good photography is really about, to be really seen and daring to show the vulnerability to share yourself with the world.

Q: How do you think photography can transform a person?

It's like when we listen to music. Sometimes it moves us so deeply that it leads us to do something else, maybe go for a walk, or it can lift us out of a bad mood. Music transcends language barriers, and that's the essence I want to convey in what I do.

When I capture someone in a photo shoot, it's all about them being seen. They're putting themselves out there, and when I'm behind the camera, I aim to capture their essence. I want them to take those images and, first and foremost, look at themselves and feel moved. It's about them being happy with the pictures. Throughout my business, the underlying aim is to touch you, to touch your heart, so that it prompts you to take some action, to be moved in a certain way.

When it comes to branding photography, it's a more extended process. It starts before the shoot, and by the time my clients receive their images, that's the journey they've gone through. They move through all these emotions because we're naturally very critical of ourselves. You take those pictures and then start analyzing - "Oh, is this how I look? Can I do this differently?" We all want to look good in photos, especially when presenting ourselves to the world. So for branding, it's about showing your best self. The branding side involves creating these moving stills that will inspire people to make a move and take the next action, which in the context of marketing is to buy from you.

Q: What is a misconception people have about the value of good brand photography?

I often find that the true value of images is often misunderstood, especially when it comes to how you can use your images. Why are they consistently considered so expensive? Well, sure, some photographers might not charge much, while others may have higher rates. But what really matters is what you can achieve with your images and what they communicate about you - that's where their true value lies.

Think of it this way: images serve as a visual representation or a narrative, particularly in branding, reflecting who you are. In today's world, instant gratification is dominant, and you only have a brief moment to capture someone's attention. That's where images play a crucial role. They can illustrate what a person does, how they do it, and what makes them unique - all in a single glance. This is the kind of value that can halt your potential clients in their tracks.

Photos foster an instant connection and convey a lot about a person. Even with something as simple as a postcard, it communicates a sense of something, evoking a particular feeling. That's the essence. Each image, whether it's for branding, business, or any other purpose, is a powerful tool. They encapsulate your story in an instant, painting a vivid picture for people to see and understand.

Q: I'm glad you mentioned images for other purposes, can you tell us about your postcards?

I create postcards and prints with photos I have taken that convey something, invoke a feeling or speak to a particular essence. It's similar to how an image can inspire or nudge you towards taking the next step. It doesn't always have to bring about a dramatic change. In the realm of branding, these images serve as a bridge to connect with your clients and inspire a sale. In a similar way, my prints transport you somewhere.

For instance, there was this one card I shot a while ago. A friend mentioned how the white

tulip card reminded her of her late mom, bringing back memories they shared together. It's similar to how music can take you on a journey, triggering emotions and memories. Sometimes, when we are lost for words, images can help us process our thoughts and feelings and transform us. Maybe a single image can't truly transform someone, but I sincerely believe it can evoke a sense of peace.

Q: Do your photography courses fit in with this idea of transformation too?

It's a crazy story actually how I first came up with my courses. About a decade ago, there was a [Women's Business Initiative](#) meeting. We were creating vision boards. On mine, I had this article called "Life Through the Lens." It was about a course helping people deal with trauma or tough times. One part of the exercise was to go out, take pictures, and then reflect on what you captured. This concept stayed on my vision board for around 10 years.

When COVID hit, that course suddenly popped into my mind. It took me about three weeks to put my own version of it together. I made two versions so far, "Life Through Your Lens" and "Love Through Your Lens." I'm also working on a third one, "Business Through Your Lens."

Each course consists of a number of creative prompts that people can go through daily or at their own pace. The idea is to help you notice the beauty around them, especially during challenging times. It's a way to make you stop, appreciate your surroundings, and tap into your creativity through photography.

Find out more about Vinita Salomé

If you would like to know more about the transformative work that Vinita offers the world, check out her [website](#) or connect with her on [Instagram](#).





FINDING REWARDS BEYOND FINANCIAL COMPENSATION



Sometimes we are lucky enough to work with a client who doesn't just benefit from our skills and expertise, but who also inspires learning and enriches our lives. For me, one such client was Felicia Gatson, who came to me for help designing custom workshops and micro curriculum for her DEIB training and consulting business.

By [Janifer Wheeler](#)

Felicia is an intelligent, heart-centred entrepreneur who exemplifies servant leadership. I have designed over 80 micro modules and three workshops with her - equalling over 10 hours of engaging, useful DEIB training content.

Clarity of Vision Leads to Energised Co-Creation

Felicia had a very clear vision and understanding of her learning goals. She provided concise guidance on how she wanted to present the content, which allowed me to focus on delivering the most relevant and impactful materials. Her clarity and expertise made the collaboration smooth and efficient.

As we delved into new topics and explored innovative ways to enhance the learning experiences, I got increasingly excited about our work. Felicia's passion for continuous learning and willingness to explore new approaches energised me and our collaboration. This energy created space for unexpected outcomes to emerge.

While designing custom workshops together, I inadvertently developed a new and more refined process for creating workshops. This unforeseen development improved the efficiency of Felicia's and my work together. Moreover, it allowed me to more clearly define what is included in a custom workshop design, both in terms of deliverables and price.

Collaboration Can Create Win-Win Situations

This unexpected outcome highlighted the value and growth that can arise from collaborative partnerships. Not only did Felicia walk away with innovative resources, I was able to update my offering to reflect our experiences together.

Now our Custom Workshop Design includes:

- Agenda or Syllabus with Clear Learning Goals and Instructional Timeline
- Lecture Content for Each Learning Goal with Note-Taking Guide
- Interactive, Instructional Activities that support Learner Engagement:
 - Examples: videos, role-play, group or partner collaborations, icebreakers, games, etc.*
- Reflection Questions that allow learners to practice and apply information to achieve learning goal(s)
- Supplemental Resources Section to Support the Topic
- Research or information gathering to support topic development
- Editing/Review of Content
- Final Copy for Publication or Presentation by Client

**Guides DO NOT include graphics, graphic design, slideshow creation or presentation design, but I can refer if you need these services.*

Working with Felicia Gatson and The Gatson Group has been a fulfilling journey. Felicia's clear vision, passion for learning, and openness to new ideas have made the experience enjoyable and rewarding. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to her DEIB training and consulting business and for the inspiration she brought that improved my offering.

I look forward to further collaborations with passionate and inspiring entrepreneurs who push boundaries and make a positive impact.



3 SIMPLE METHODS TO MAXIMISE YOUR MEDIA EXPOSURE

Public Relations (PR) is a powerful tool for gaining visibility and connecting with potential customers. Unlike traditional advertisements, PR allows you to share your expertise, opinions, and stories, creating a more authentic and human connection with your audience. With strategic PR efforts, you can build authority in your field and leave a lasting impact on your target market. Here are three effective ways to make the most of your PR exposure.



By [Mags Thomson](#)

#1. Showcase PR Mentions on Your Website

Boost your brand's authority and improve your website's SEO by listing and linking to articles, podcasts, or shows where you were featured. By displaying media features on your website, visitors can see that you have valuable insights and that others value your expertise. From an SEO perspective, external links act as third-party endorsements, signalling to search engines that your content is credible and valuable.

#2. Tag and Share on Social Media

When sharing the articles or media features you were part of on your social media platforms, be sure to tag the respective publications. This engagement not only increases exposure for your post but also improves algorithms' perception of your account. When the publication shares your post, engage with it as well, fostering a relationship with them. This proactive approach generates more exposure for your content and enhances the visibility of your other social media posts.

#3. Create Additional Content Around the PR Mention

Leverage the PR feature as a foundation for new content. Use it as a launching point for a live video, podcast episode, or blog post. You can elaborate on your contributions, respond to other contributors, or provide more in-depth insights related to the article. Link back to the original feature and tag the publication when sharing your new content. This approach enhances the traction gained from your PR efforts and reinforces your expertise.



HOW TO ASK FOR THE SALE

It may seem like the most obvious thing in the world, if you want to sell your amazing product or service you need to offer it to people. It may surprise you then, how many people make it so difficult to buy that people just give up!



By [Sandra ten Hoop](#)

Imagine your marketing efforts have paid off, someone has decided they want to work with you! That's amazing! But then, they hit your sales page, and there are so many distractions or you are missing some vital information... Suddenly, your future client becomes confused and discouraged and they give up before actually hitting the Buy Now Button.

Here are a few important things to keep in mind to make sure you don't miss out on your sales!

Be Open About Your Prices

Nobody likes a surprise charge or an unexpected bill. Restaurants list the prices of their dishes, so we can have an educated guess as to what the bill will be AND if we even can afford the food. Will we have a starter? Are we ordering a glass or a bottle? Will we sit down or move along to the local chippie?

Nothing is more frustrating than getting excited about a service or product and then realising we cannot afford it. That's why people often stop browsing your website when they cannot figure out your price point.

This is a piece of sales page advice you can implement today: make it clear what the cost is going to be early on!

Today Is the Day

A vital ingredient of your marketing copy is timing. In other words, why do your ideal clients need to buy from you today? This is not about pressuring people into buying, but about highlighting the importance of solving their problem.

What would happen if their problem continues?

Why is now the perfect time to get started on the solution?

How soon can they expect results from your solution?

Be Clear and Concise

I'm great at sales strategies, but I cannot just spend 40 hours a week being on calls. It'd drain me energetically. The same is true for many of the people I work with.

They simply hand me their offer or sales pages and I will work my magic at my own time and provide a written rapport. That way they can review and implement the suggestions at a time that best suits them.

This is also the focus I have with my clients. Who are they trying to help and what are they truly trying to help them with? That's what we cater the message to while staying very close to my client's voice. That's what will sell it to their audience. We'll make it easy to read, and make sure it hits the right notes and has a good rhythm to it.

But it's not a template that uses the same exact sentences in the perfect order. And we're not talking about 30 pages, 500 testimonials, 600 modules 28 sales buttons. We're talking about one or two pages at most. The purpose is to build their audience in an organic way, with a lot of focus on connection, understanding and respect.

Do you need some help making sure your sales page hits all the right notes? Then my Sales Page Review is perfect for you!

WHY LAUGHTER REALLY IS THE BEST MEDICINE

In the chaotic dance of life's challenges and stressors, uncovering joy can sometimes feel like chasing a slippery eel. But fear not! There's a simple remedy waiting to burst out of all of us – laughter.

By [Cathy Nesbitt](#)

Unfortunately, this magical medicine has been kept under wraps for generations. It's high time for us to reclaim our joy and laughter. Let me take you on a journey through my laughter-filled life and shed light on the enchantment that is laughter yoga.



Laughter Is the Opposite of Stress

To me, laughter stands as the polar opposite of stress. The science may not exactly say that, but it sure feels that way. Stress clutches us, stops proper breathing and unleashes stress chemicals like cortisol and adrenaline. It throws us into fight, flight, or freeze mode. Laughter, however, is a switch of pure magic. It releases the love drugs – dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins. It's not just a sound; it's a physiological antidote to stress.

Consider this: when stress knocks on the door, our breathing becomes shallow, oxygen leaves our brain, rushing into our muscles, preparing us to escape the stressful situation. It's a survival mechanism that, in our modern lives, often doesn't serve us well. Our body has two nervous systems – parasympathetic and sympathetic. The sympathetic, or stress mode, activates fight, flight, or freeze. On the flip side, the parasympathetic mode is known as rest and digest. This is when our body takes care of all the processes that are not vital to us escaping a tiger but ARE vital to our health and happiness.

For example, I recently learned that our body uses a staggering 80 to 90% of its energy digesting our food. Stress throws a spanner in the works, diverting our body's attention from nutrient absorption. Result? Our meals become somewhat futile. It underscores the vital importance of slipping into rest and digest mode before diving into a meal.

Our stress response, a relic from prehistoric times, hasn't evolved much. Back then, stress was a reaction to immediate life-threatening situations – hello, tigers. Today, our stressors, annoying as they may be, are probably not life-threatening. Modern stress isn't a sprint away from danger; it's a marathon of job pressures, technological hiccups, and the intricate dance of social dynamics.

In the wild, when animals survive a predator chase, they shake off the stress. What do we do? We store the trauma, one event piling onto the next. It's time we take a cue from our wild counterparts and shake off that stress.

Navigating this modern stress jungle demands a shake-off, much like animals do. Mindfulness,

deep breathing, meditation, a stroll in nature – are all excellent tools. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, except, perhaps, laughter.

How to Incorporating Laughter Into Your Daily Practice

Starting my day with a big smile, accompanied by deep breaths, sets the tone. I have a laughter buddy – a friend who joins me for one minute of focused breathing followed by two minutes of belly-shaking laughter every morning. Throughout the day, I actively seek moments that make me smile and feel good. It's about finding the positive in every situation. It's about singing along to the music you love or doing a dance while you go about your chores.

Attending laughter clubs online, [including my own on Tuesdays](#), is a non-negotiable part of my routine. Laughter clubs, for me, are not just about laughter; they're about intentional joy.

Laughter isn't just about jokes or comedy; it's about intentional exercises. Laughter yoga embodies this philosophy – laughing specifically for the health perks. Laughter is contagious, a shared experience that elevates our collective energy. Changing our mindset about laughter is crucial. It's more than a simple act; it's potent medicine.

Underestimated as it may be, laughter is a cardiovascular workout. Sustained belly laughter for 10 to 15 minutes equals 30 minutes on a rowing machine or 300 sit-ups. The benefits are plenty, but most importantly, it's a joyful and cost-free activity. No memberships required—just a willingness to embrace the simplicity and effectiveness of laughter.

If laughter is the best medicine, consider this your daily prescription. Laugh away, my friends!



10 WAYS TO GET BACK IN THE FLOW OF WRITING!



We've all been there—sitting in front of a blank screen, feeling stuck, and struggling to get the words flowing. But fear not! I've curated a list of my absolute favourite writer's block busters that will banish that blinking cursor and ignite your creativity once more. Say goodbye to writer's block and hello to productive writing sessions that leave you feeling inspired and fulfilled.

By *Mags Thomson*

#1. Cultivate the Habit of Writing

Challenge yourself to write a little every day. Whether it's journaling in the morning or jotting down a gratitude list before bed, make writing a part of your daily routine. Building this habit will keep your creative muscles engaged and ready to tackle bigger writing projects.

#2. Take Notes Everywhere

Never miss a moment of inspiration—carry a notebook with you or use a note-taking app on your phone. When ideas strike or you stumble upon something inspiring, jot it down. These notes will become invaluable references when you sit down to write.



#3. Immerse Yourself in Reading

When writing feels challenging, turn to reading. Delve into the work of other authors in your genre and language. The stories and prose will fuel your creativity and reignite your passion for writing.

#4. Braindump Freely

Set a timer for 20 minutes, grab a pen and paper, and let your thoughts flow. Don't worry about structure or organisation; just get your ideas out of your head. You can sift through them later and find hidden gems.

#5. Speak Your Words

Sometimes, expressing your thoughts orally can be more comfortable than writing them down. Record your voice on your phone, organising your ideas as you speak. You can transcribe the file later for written content.

#6. Set Time Aside and Write

Be firm with yourself and schedule dedicated writing time. Start with 30 minutes or an hour, and commit to writing during that period. Don't overthink; simply let the words flow.

#7. Unleash Your Creativity

Rekindle your creative spirit by exploring other artistic endeavours. Engage in drawing, painting, making music, or trying out new recipes. Allow your creative juices to flow in different ways.

#8. Craft Your Writing Space

Create a comfortable and supportive writing space. Clear away distractions, make yourself a cup of tea, and set the ambience with music that inspires you. Writing in the right environment can be transformative.

#9. Move Your Body

Physical activity can spark creativity and clear mental blocks. Dance, take a run, or enjoy a leisurely walk. Get out of your head and into your body to find fresh inspiration.

#10. Write About Writer's Block

When all else fails, write about your writer's block itself. Examine your feelings and the barriers holding you back. Acknowledging these emotions can lead to breakthroughs and renewed motivation.

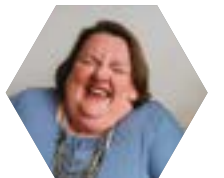


MASTERING YOUR VIRTUAL ELEVATOR PITCH

On social media, there are often posts where people are invited to promote their business. I see so many people comment and not make the most of that opportunity. In the fast-paced world of social media promotions, it's crucial to make the most of every opportunity to showcase your business.

By *Mags Thomson*

Avoid these common pitfalls and craft an impactful virtual elevator pitch that leaves a lasting impression on potential clients.



The Link 'n Dash

So many people just drop their link, and that's it. Not only are not all business names very clear, it feels kinda careless and arrogant. As if you couldn't even be bothered to write something.

It is important to realise that people will not make an effort to figure you out. You have to make it easy for people to understand who you are, why they should be interested and where they can find out more.

The Essay

No explanation is not great, but neither is writing an essay. Again, people want to quickly understand who you are. This is the first impression they get of you, so they won't want to spend 10 minutes reading an essay only to conclude that your service or product isn't for them.

The Ghost

Many people drop their promo and move along. Not only do they not comment on other people's comments (which admittedly, I don't always do either) but they don't even respond to people asking follow-up questions. That's always a missed opportunity to connect, have a conversation and leave an impression. Even if that person won't end up buying from you, your offer is MUCH more likely to stick in their mind.

- 1. Make sure that your comment covers your bases, and is simple and to the point.**
- 2. Have some genuine interaction with fellow commenters and interact with any replies you receive.**

Crafting your Virtual Elevator Pitch

Much like your elevator pitch, this virtual version will need some work. You want it to be short, packed with all the right information and super clear.

Let's look at some examples, and dissect what does and doesn't work.

"Personal development coaching services. I also have a dope-ass podcast."

In general, I would only ever promote one thing. Either your services OR your podcast. This keeps it simple and makes it easier to get to your point.

"Need a shot of inspiration? Visit WEBSITE"

Okay, this is WAY too general. Inspiration for who and about what?

"I am an ADHD life coach"

This is a little more specific because it mentions ADHD, but are there specific challenges she helps with? Does she work with a specific target audience? I still can't fully tell if she offers something I or someone I know may need.

Answer These Four Questions

When you have a few sentences to create immediate clarity on your business, you need to make sure you answer these four questions:

What do I do?

Why do I do it?

How do I do it?

Who do I do it for?

The most well-known version of this is the I-Help-Statement. It's not super original, but it's a great starting point when crafting your virtual elevator pitch.

I HELP (who) (what) by (how) so that (why)

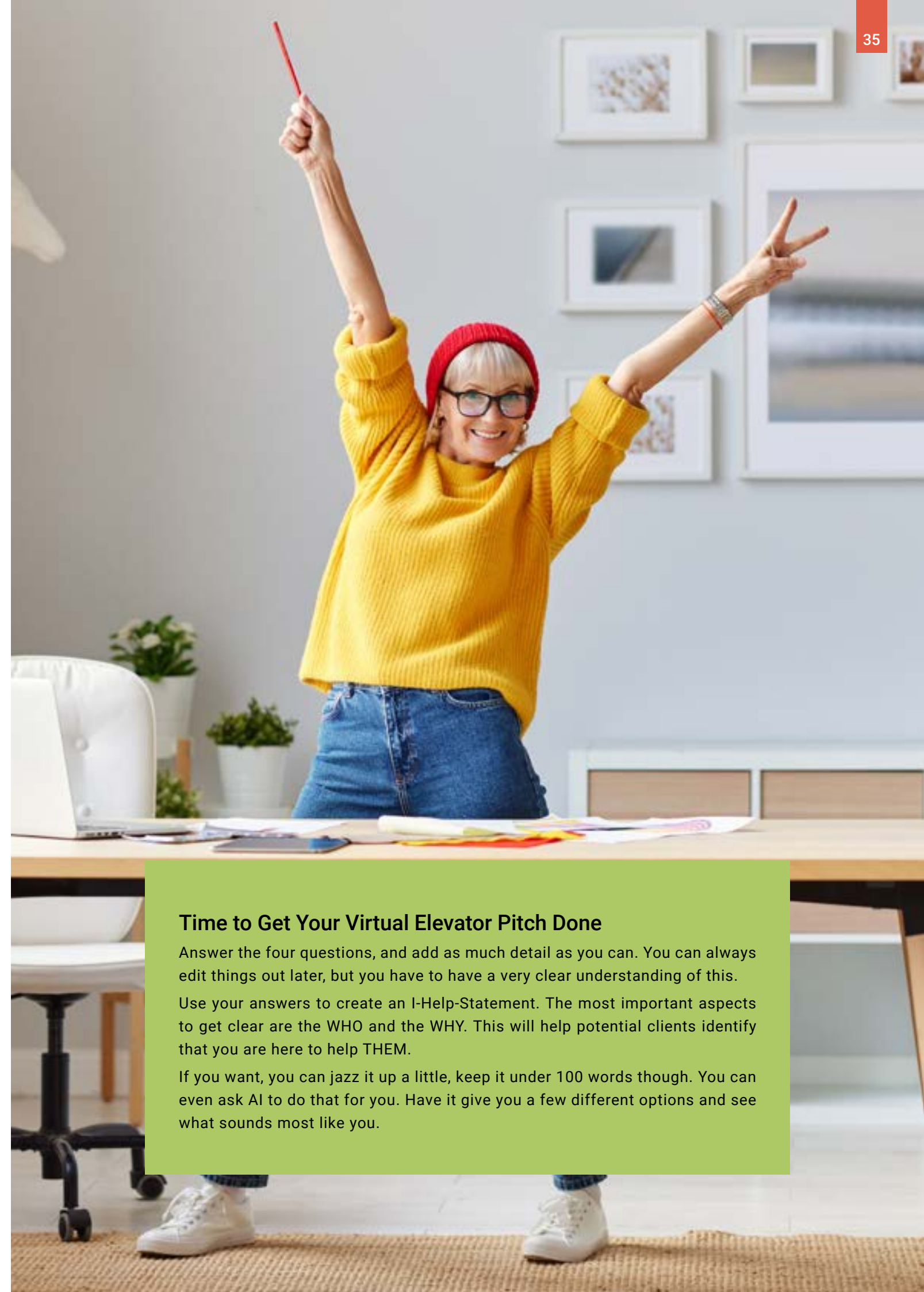
For example, *"I help impact-driven entrepreneurs to integrate their stories and messaging by asking them some thought-provoking questions so that they feel inspired and equipped to create marketing content that makes their magic leap off the page, resonates with clients and amplifies their influence in the world."*

You can just share a statement like that, but you can of course jazz it up a little:

"Are you an impact-driven entrepreneur? Are you feeling overwhelmed and anxious when it comes to content creation? Fear not! I'm here to help you transform that dread into excitement and confidence."

"By getting crystal clear on your messaging and identifying the stories that resonate with your ideal clients, content creation becomes a joyful and effortless process. Your magic will leap off the page, forging instant connections with your audience. And that's how you amplify your impact!"

"All you need to do is answer a few thought-provoking questions, and you'll say goodbye to anxiety and hello to content creation joy!"



Time to Get Your Virtual Elevator Pitch Done

Answer the four questions, and add as much detail as you can. You can always edit things out later, but you have to have a very clear understanding of this.

Use your answers to create an I-Help-Statement. The most important aspects to get clear are the WHO and the WHY. This will help potential clients identify that you are here to help THEM.

If you want, you can jazz it up a little, keep it under 100 words though. You can even ask AI to do that for you. Have it give you a few different options and see what sounds most like you.

ARE SALES IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER?

Visuals are a powerful way to communicate a message and play an important role in making a sales page engaging, memorable and persuasive! So, let's have a look at how you can use visuals when optimising your sales page.

By *Sandra ten Hoop*

There are a few ways in which the graphics you use on your sales page and in your marketing help you connect with your prospective clients in a significant way.

- They help to illustrate the benefits of a product or service and bring the message to life.
- They break up text and make the sales page more visually appealing and easier to read.
- They help to create a more professional and polished appearance for the sales page. This increases the perceived value of the product or service and builds trust with potential customers.
- They make the sales page more engaging and memorable, which increases the chances of visitors making a purchase.



It seems pretty clear that adding high-quality images and graphics is very important, but what makes those visuals high-quality?

How to Decide What Visuals to Use

It's important to use appropriate visuals that align with your target audience and the message of the sales page.

For example, if the product is targeted towards children, it would be appropriate to use bright colours and cartoonish images.

If the product is targeted towards a professional audience, it would be appropriate to use images that are more sleek and sophisticated.

If you work (mostly) with women, you may pick softer colours and images of women.

All of these considerations are part of your visual brand and will contribute to how enticing your overall marketing message is.

How You Can Use Images to Tell the Story

Images and graphics can illustrate different elements and benefits of your product or service and make the message more relatable.

For example, using images of people using the

product or service can help demonstrate how it's used in real-life situations.

Infographics or diagrams explain complex concepts and features in an easy-to-understand way or make statistics about the service more accessible.

How Effective Are Your Visuals?

Have you included graphics on your sales page? How do they contribute to the effectiveness of your sales page?

Sometimes it can be hard to evaluate your own website. You poured your heart and soul into it and it is hard to be objective.

That's where my expertise comes in!

As a certified persuasion strategist, I can give you a point-by-point review of your sales page with practical suggestions on how to improve the content, flow, and persuasive powers of your page. I will make sure you stop waffling and start selling!

Want to know more or book your sales page review (I can review an existing page or the draft of your sales copy), head to: salespagesupport.com.



**FEM IS A HOUSE OF HIVES
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Editor in chief: Mags Thomson

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