

Stefani of December Oak | How to Build a Website That Converts

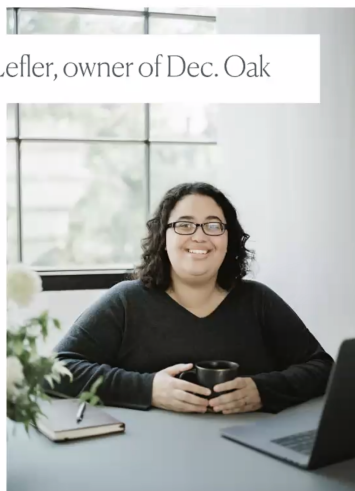
<https://decembereoak.com/>

FB Community: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/profitablepursuit>

Hi, I'm Stefani!

- Started my business in 2014
- Creating websites since 2001
- Went from HTML & CSS to platforms that are drag and drop

Stefani Lefler, owner of Dec. Oak



- Started business out of a near death experience
- Woke up from a coma and realized that could have been it for her
- Want to build a business based in happiness



WHAT IS A WEBSITE, REALLY?

The number one tool in your business.

1. Full control over your messaging and brand
2. Where you bring income to your business
3. Promotes connection and is the hub of your business

Your website is the one place you have full control over **how you're perceived**

A website helps you **express your business** in order **to communicate your value** to **connect with your ideal audience**

Your website (the hub of your business) is where you bring in INCOME, so you want to make sure it's optimized to bring in your money!

Yes, you can just DM people but your website is where you have **full control over the experience** and that **experience shapes how they perceive you**

This is the place where you can showcase every part of your business without a physical store. Use it to show people what we're doing *and* what we do best.



BUILD WITH INTENTION

- Website is meant to educate and build trust with the visitor
- Write out 1-3 goals (and at least 1 future goal)
- Map out the website
 - What pages do you need to convert a visitor into a client, customer, or student?
- Create paths using calls to action

Build With Intention

- **Website is meant to educate and build trust with the visitor**
 - What questions do the people have who come to my website?
 - What questions can I answer for my visitor
 - They want to know if you're a good fit to solve the problem they have in front of them
- **Write out 1-3 goals (and at least 1 future goal) *that you want to achieve on your website***
 - 1 goal could be to get inquiries
 - If someone's not quite ready to reach out, what ways can you still connect with them and foster a relationship (path to socials, email list, bring them to a freebie)? That can be another goal.
 - Do you have a shop & services? Help them take the path you have in mind for them simply.
 - Try not to pull people in too many directions
 - It's not as common these days that people visit every page
 - Think about what types of visitors are coming to your website to figure out your goals
- **Map out the website**
 - What pages do you need to convert a visitor into a client, customer, or student?

- A lot of people think bigger is better, but sometimes the simplest is better
- Create paths using calls to action (buttons on websites)
 - What enticing offer can I make throughout the website can I use to guide someone from point A to B to C?
- By the time they get to your contact page, you want them to understand your process, services, see and like your portfolio and be ready to reach out OR give them another option on that page if they're not quite ready to reach out – give them somewhere else to stay connected (social, email list, blog)



WRITE OUT YOUR COPY

- Yes, *before* you design anything at all
- Ask yourself, what do you need to say to the visitor to achieve your goals?
- When writing, think of headings and sections of the site to stay organized and influence the design itself
- Focus on answering questions

WRITE OUT YOUR COPY

- **Yes, *before* you design anything at all**
- **Ask yourself, what do you need to say to the visitor to achieve your goals?**
 - Service provider - what can you say to make someone feel really confident reaching out (explain your process, talk about clients you love working with so people can connect with that, how can you solve their pain points before ever reaching out, find a way to explain your expertise, testimonials, why you're such a great choice to solve the problem they're facing)
- **When writing, think of headings and sections of the site to stay organized and influence the design itself**
 - What is the tag line you can use to hook them in just a few seconds (who you are, who you help, and how you do it)
 - they'll know why *your* approach is a *unique* solution to their problem
 - Helps you know how to design and format
- **Focus on answering questions (look at your FAQs)**
 - About Page - do they ask about your experience, your background, your industry in your initial calls or emails? Think about what people actually ask about you to help you figure out how much personal vs professional bio you may need to give.
 - Portfolio Work Websites don't have enough copy

- Why are YOU the best option for fixing and solving their problem? Images only can't tell them that

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CHOOSE YOUR SITE PLATFORM

- Keep your goals in mind
- Invest for the future now if possible
- To hire out or DIY?
- The key is to maintain the site yourself or have someone on your team able to do it

CHOOSE YOUR SITE PLATFORM

- **Keep your goals in mind**
 - Do you need a shop? Find a platform that has easy capabilities for a shop
- **Invest for the future now if possible**
 - If a shop is one of your main future goals, choose a platform that already has that capability so you don't have to change platforms down the road
 - Knowing your goals allows you to reassure yourself that your website is working well for YOU instead of switching to another platform just because it's the shiny new thing
 - Maybe you don't need all of the features right now but it'll easily adapt to your needs in the future. Pick the one that will grow with you best even if it's more expensive now
 - Can hurt your SEO to switch platforms
- **To hire out or DIY?**
 - It's not custom or not custom, the opposite of custom is a template – not uncustomized
 - Think of conversion capabilities
 - You want as much custom as you can so you're not trying to fit your special approach into a predetermined template
 - This can limit what you think is possible for what you can achieve through your website
 - Pick a template that can be changed to what you need
 - If you're ready to invest in a professional, this will help you upgrade visuals and plan with more strategy from an expert
 - DIY allows you to be a part of your site every step of the way
- **The key is to maintain the site yourself or have someone on your team able to do it**

- Don't have to keep hiring out a developer yourself – takes money and time



REPRESENT YOUR BUSINESS VISUALLY

- Your brand and photography/graphics are essential in this step
- Think of your brand as a design system rather than logos, fonts, and colors
- Add visual interest with images, patterns, illustrations, etc. to break up text
- Use font hierarchy
- Add small details to enhance the site, like animation, interaction, and unexpected features

REPRESENT YOUR BUSINESS VISUALLY

- **Your brand and photo/graphics are essential in this step**
 - Great visuals are how they determine if they can trust you and if you live up to the quality they want to hire?
 - Your images should match the quality of what you provide
 - Letting people down visually can completely miscommunicate the quality you provide
 - You can be transforming people's lives but if it looks visually disheveled, they won't trust you or they'll question the quality of the offer
- **Think of your brand as a design system rather than logos, fonts, and colors**
- **Add visual interest with images, patterns, illustrations, etc. to break up text**
- **Use font hierarchy**
 - Keep header fonts consistent, subheaders, paragraphs, etc.
 - At most 4 fonts
 - Instantly makes everything look more orderly and professional
 - Use colors consistently - If you use one color for background of section, use that color throughout the website to tie everything together
 - Make sure to think of which photos would pair well with text
 - What images or graphics can break up the text
 - Make it skimmable and easy to read
- **Add small details to enhance the site, like animation, interaction, and unexpected features**
 - So many small businesses are starting to look very similar, so think outside the box to stand out
 - How can you add a fade or an interaction like a click through to reveal more info
 - Keeps them more engaged unlike a template that is usually more stagnant



1. BUILD YOUR WEBSITE WITH GOALS & INTENTION, THINK STRATEGICALLY
2. WRITE YOUR COPY FIRST, KEEPING IN MIND THE QUESTIONS YOU ARE ANSWERING FOR THE VISITOR
3. CHOOSE A SITE PLATFORM YOU CAN MAINTAIN & UPDATE THAT WILL GROW WITH YOUR BUSINESS
4. BE THOUGHTFUL WITH YOUR VISUALS, MAKING SURE THEY TELL YOUR BRAND'S STORY AND COMMUNICATE TRUST

RECAP

- **Build your website with goals & intention, think strategically**
 - Think of what questions or what you can do to help visitors become fans of your work and who you are
- **Write your copy first, keeping in mind the questions you are answering for the visitor**
 - Ways to make sure you're answering questions beyond just the pretty photos you take
 - Educate and invite people into your business so you can make people feel confident that you can solve their problem
- **Choose a site platform you can maintain & update that will grow with your business**
 - Allow yourself to grow *into* your website
- **Be thoughtful with your visuals, making sure they tell your brand's story and communicate trust**



Use heat maps to see how people are using your site and make small improvements
It's never going to be perfect but you can always improve it and make it better!

Suggestions & Questions from the chat:

- If you're a wordpress person, the AVADA template is a great "in between" (template vs custom) because it is SO customizable. Endlessly.
- Especially when some people think that a website doesn't matter for their business. Often, if I see a business on social media, I'll go to their website to learn more. If it sucks, most likely I won't do business with them.
- Or websites that go completely against the status quo user experience expectation, so it's really difficult to navigate and you end up getting frustrated and not wanting to spend time there.
- Thoughts on landing pages (esp. for two similar but different services on the same site)?
- Keep it simple - what do people need to know about you to say YES? The rest of the fun stuff you can add later
- Make it so simple that it's boring - it's TOO complicated when you try to get cute and creative
- I've created a 1-pager landing page and it's converting like crazy...one call to action - (here it is if you'd like to see it) <https://sendfox.com/jube>

- Book Recommendation - The Buying Brain
 - https://www.amazon.com/Buying-Brain-Secrets-Selling-Subconscious/dp/0470601779/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=The+Buying+Brain&qid=1606758215&sr=8-2
 - Tons available here if you want to purchase the book from an independent bookstore: <https://bookshop.org/a/906/9780470601778>

Q: Re: clicking through - I've always heard that you should give clients the info they need in as fewest clicks possible. (less than 3, ideally 1) Do you feel the engagement of clicking through is a better strategy?

Stefani's Answer:

If you can get them to where they need to go in 1 click, that's best. You can let them dig in with 2-3 clicks if needed

Q: Most of us love to do 3 directing points on our home page - do you recommend we do that with about, services/products, then blog or contact? Just with what we offer and keep the about/blog/contact in the top menu only if they need that? So sort of how do you lay those out.

Stefani's Answer:

- **Home Page Tips**
 - Entice and tease them with what else you do
 - When you walk into a store you're introduced to everything you can go to
 - 3 call to actions on your website.
- **What to include on Home:**
 - About
 - Your service
 - A free way you help people (blog or freebie)
- Guide them on each page through the journey
- The navigation bar is for quick links really for people who have been here before
 - Nav Bar
 - If you have 8 pages on your site, but there are 5 top/key places people really need to get to, put those in the nav bar
 - The other few pages can get linked to throughout the site
 - Footer
 - You can add links to every page on your site here if you want
- There are two types of clients - Rabbits and Tortoises
 - Rabbits
 - They will act now, will quick buy and jump right to what they need
 - Tortoises
 - Need more engagement need all the guidance

- **Give both the opportunity to engage with your website**

Q: I've noticed that recently my clients have had lots of questions given the uncertainty around 2020; would you recommend an FAQ page or a blog post? Is there benefits for one over the other SEO wise?

Stefani's Answer:

- Absolutely, recommended for wedding industry or anyone directly affected by COVID - have a page that answers all questions!
- Maybe link to it in a banner that says "We would love to answer your questions about COVID here"
- Create a page for it so it lives on your site and you can design it out rather than just a blog post
- Shows how seriously you're taking it and know that we're all struggling
- Gives them some peace of mind that you already understand and have a plan allows them to feel more confident in booking you
- Shows that you approach anything that comes up with empathy, passion, and thought, which is a good reminder even when COVID is a thing of the past

TO DO

Work on website and pair up for a website audit with someone in your pod!