STAND OUT + SELL OUT

The 9-step *comprehensive* checklist to craft a standout website so you can raise your rates, sell out your services, and build brand buzz (even if you do just *one* small step at a time).

Made with love by:

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0: COMMENCEMENT - introduction + instructions

The harsh truth:
Your website is a brick ceiling on your business growth. And it's holding you back from being able to charge the rates you want (and need) in order to avoid burnout.

But it's not your fault.
Just blame the metric shit-ton of misinformation bouncing around our entrepreneurial bubble.

And it's totally fixable.
In this comprehensive checklist, I'm giving you the *precise* 9 steps you need to craft your standout website so that you can own your expertise, promote yourself with confidence, AND attract more high-quality clients. Because the quality of your website determines the rate you can comfortably charge for your services. So to SELL OUT you need to STAND OUT.

ABOUT MY PROCESS:

This is content-first, goal-driven design.
Unlike many other designers that start with "branding" (read: aesthetic choices), I use a content-first approach to design. Because my #1 priority is the user experience. By crafting a delightful experience for your people, you'll not only keep them coming back, but you'll position yourself as someone that's credible (showcasing your badass skillset) and crave-worthy (making your people feel connected to you).

ABOUT THIS CHECKLIST:

The goal:
To understand the process + steps to crafting a standout website that sells out your services.

What makes this different?
This is more in-depth and specific than any of those generic website checklists. This checklist focuses on the *actual* strategic process of crafting a unique + user-friendly website, it does NOT cover the specific tactics of lead generation.

Who is this the perfect fit for?
For service-centered business owners that want to go from DIY to dramatically different – without spending $10k - $20k hiring professionals. They want to be able to write, design, and build their websites and sales pages in an effective + professional way so that they can scale their businesses.

In this comprehensive checklist, I'll walk you through each step of the website process, including specific tasks and additional resources. So you can craft a standout + sell out website that's scalable + sustainable for your online service-based business.

1: CORE - your personal brand

Step one of crafting your standout website starts with you. YOU make your website (and brand) stand out. So it's absolutely essential that you identify your unique characteristics so that you can inject plenty of your personality into all aspects of your online presence.

Because you want to:
➔ Break free from the template
➔ Rebel against the status quo
➔ Challenge both the trendy + the traditional

… within the creative constraints of web development best practices and user-friendly design patterns, of course.

To do:
❏ Discover who you are and how your personality shows up (and how you want to show up for your brand).
❏ Uncover your personal superpowers –what comes easily to you that others may struggle with. (This is usually a universal skill you have that's not tied strictly to your work).
❏ Your brand story part I (who you are, what you do, why you do it, where you came from, and how you got here).
❏ Find those connecting threads/themes that weave through your story, your superpowers, and your personality expression. For the latter, check out the "Extra Resources" below that may help you connect the dots.
❏ DELIVERABLE: Jot down your superpowers and a few adjectives to describe your personality (both in terms of how you prefer to be seen and how other people likely see you).

Extra Resources:
● [Firestarter Sessions](#) by Danielle LaPorte
● [Fascination Advantage](#)
● Laura Garnett's Book [Find Your Zone of Genius](#)
● [16 Personalities Test](#) (aka Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)
● [Primary Archetype Test](#)
● [Natal Birth Chart](#)
● [Color code](#)
● [Brain Type Assessment (BTA)](#)
● [The Enneagram](#) (free version)
● [Human Design Chart](#) (PS: I love to nerd out on HD, so [ask me anything](#))

2: CUSTOMER - your target audience

Before you can create a *craveworthy* website, you need to know your audience. That's where my undercover research comes in. It is the gathering of information and data as it pertains to your ideal client, their pains and aspirations.

To do:

- ❏ Identify 3-5 online communities where your ideal client is hanging out and perform "undercover research" (aka observation-based research).
- ❏ Make use of free "coffee chats" as research weapon by asking a few questions that might uncover some of their struggles or desires as related to your niche.
- ❏ Record your discovery calls and then take notes or transcribe them to source phrases that you can use in your site copy.
- ❏ DELIVERABLE: After doing 1-3 hours of research to really understand your ideal client, fill out your client "Empathy Map".

Extra Resources:

- Web Foundations Workbook - for the Empathy Map
- My Website 101 mini-course
- Blog: walking through my research technique
- Article: incredible Medium post about the "transformation" our client's crave
- AI-powered transcription service

3: CONTRAST - your competitive edge

"With tens or hundreds of potential options out there, you have to answer the question, 'why should I buy from you?' If you don't answer that question quickly, your potential customers or readers will move on. It's really pretty simple."
— FIZZLE

To do:
- ❏ Perform a competitive audit for the top 3-4 peers in your niche – noting any gaps in how they're targeting your people.
- ❏ Review weeks 1+2 to uncover your brand message, following the [Web Foundations Workbook](#) (in the "Extra Resources" section).
- ❏ Journal on your brand story part II (how you do that voodoo that you do in a way that's *different* and why your people should care).
- ❏ DELIVERABLE: Write your Brand Contrast Statement (aka your Unique Selling Proposition, aka your Positioning Statement).

Extra Resources:
- [Blog: my post about creating Brand Spark](#)
- [Fizzle's 'Ultimate Guide' to finding your USP](#)
- [Web Foundations Workbook - for the Brand Message](#)
- [My Website 101 mini-course](#)

Example:
"I help creative entrepreneurs craft standout websites so they can sell out their services —*because you can't follow the crowd if you want to be seen as an industry leader.*"

4: COMPASS - your brand voice + vibe

Think of your compass, as your brand's "North star". It's your motto, your vibe, the qualities that you want to emit and the feelings you want to evoke. A good place to start is by defining your *personal style*.

You can find your personal style preferences everywhere – from the clothes that attract you, to the way you decorate your home. The things that you love about a cozy room are often the same things you'll love when it comes to your website.

And this is a very good thing to be aware of. Because, a lot of times, people will be confused by the word "branding" or they'll feel like web design is so abstracted as a concept from what they're familiar with, that they don't know how to begin to make design decisions.

So the lesson is: start with your personal style and preferences in your home, wardrobe, and workspace and come up with adjectives to describe those characteristics.

To do:
- ❏ Identify your style adjectives.
- ❏ Pair those adjectives with some of the words you jotted down in week 1 (CORE).
- ❏ Go on an aesthetic scavenger hunt via Pinterest, using these words, and snip images that align with that vibe.
- ❏ DELIVERABLE: Using those images, curate your brand "mood" board.

Extra Resources:
- Figma - the design app I use for 99% of my digital design.
- Blog: incredibly thorough post on this process by Caroline Zook
- Quiz: on uncovering your "voice vibe" from Ashlyn Writes
- My Website 101 mini-course

Example:
My brand COMPASS words are: rebellious, liberating, intentional, and minimal.

5: CONFIGURATION - your site flow

The configuration is one of the most important aspects of a website, yet it's often the most overlooked. Configuration is about how the content is laid out on a page, how pages flow together, and the overall site architecture. So, select a single primary call-to-action *per* page (for example, on my About page, the primary action is to visit the Services page).

To do:
- ❏ Consider your ideal client's "buyer's journey" and what they're looking for when they land on your website.
- ❏ Then think about your business goals for each page of your website (for example, the objective on your homepage may be to get people to sign up for your email list).
- ❏ Blending your business objectives with your dream client's desires, sketch out a flow chart that diagrams how a user might move through your website.
- ❏ What pages are needed? What sub-pages are needed? What will be displayed in the navigation?
- ❏ DELIVERABLE: Create your site flow chart.

Extra Resources:
- ● Session 4: Architecting a Standout Website
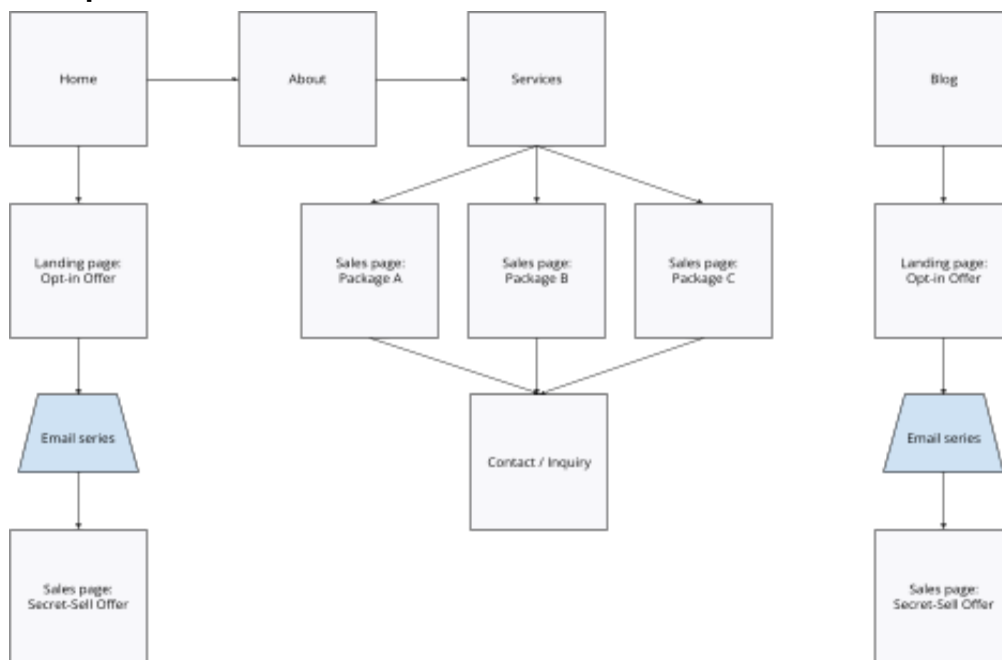
Example:

6: COPY - your clear + compelling words

As online creative entrepreneurs, we have to market ourselves. And what is marketing, if not writing? Even if you post photos on Instagram, you still have to write a compelling caption.

Words are at the heart of what we do, regardless of what we really do. Because without compelling content, we're never going to attract our dreamy clients. And so, it's important that we get to know our client's problems and aspirations and then learn to speak to them effectively.

And, remember, speaking effectively means you're having a 2-way conversation. Remember what they want as much as what you want for them.

To do:
- ❏ **Think of every page as a sales page**, you want to tell the story or transformation from point A to B. Outline some ideas for each of your main pages.
- ❏ Then use your research from step 2, to fill in your outlines with exact words and phrases that you found your audience using to describe their struggles and successes.
- ❏ The idea here is that LESS is MORE. Don't overwhelm them with words, write just enough to pique their curiosity and **consider how you can convey some of these concepts visually**.
- ❏ It's a two-way conversation and so any links or buttons (where the user clicks) should be written from their POV (point-of-view).
- ❏ DELIVERABLE: Website copy (home, about, services, contact, sales, optin, etc.)

Extra Resources:
- FREE Homepage Blueprint Masterclass (includes a template for homepage copy)
- Blog: On the importance of good copywriting
- Copyhackers blog
- Airstory - this is a great free app that you could use both to collect your audience research AND then you can also use it to write your content.

7: CURATION - your visual components

Before diving into design, I want you to think about this as CURATION more than CREATION. By curating from your existing assets, stock sources, and other resources like Creative Market, you'll reduce much of the friction associated with creating a website.

The key to curation is to make sure that all of your elements work together *cohesively* and that everything on the page is there for a *reason*. Being intentional and minimal will help you create something high-quality *even if* you're not really a designer.

To do:
- ❏ Gather any existing visual components that you have and want to keep using (logo, favicon, icons, brand graphics, photographs, fonts, and colors).
- ❏ What's missing? Do you need to supplement some of your brand photos with some stock images? Do you need to re-do your logo?
- ❏ Pull out the moodboard you created in step 4 and use it to curate 3-6 colors you'll use for your brand.
- ❏ DELIVERABLES: All the visual components that will go into your website or page.

Extra Resources:
- Blog: how to source + edit photos
- My Website 101 mini-course
- Blog: awesomely in-depth post by Caroline Zook
- Creative Market
- Stocksy
- Unsplash

8: CONTAINER - your cohesive website

You're almost there! This is where we bring all your hard work from the previous 7 steps together into your cohesive website design (which you can think of as your brand container).

To do:
- ❏ Start by opening up your design app of choice (mine's [Figma](#)). Then make an artboard about 1440 pixels wide by (maybe) 4000 pixels tall. This will be your home page design mockup.
- ❏ First, add in the copy and start formatting the text on the page.
- ❏ Remember your brand COMPASS and vibe that you're going for. Is it spacious and minimal? Then make sure you're not crowding your words together, give your page breathing room.
- ❏ Next, add in your colors, photos, and icons where you'd like them to go on the page to highlight and visually portray certain aspects of your message.
- ❏ When it looks about 80% (you'll never achieve 100% perfection), export all of your design assets and run any PNG or JPG files through an image optimizer (see "Extra Resources").
- ❏ Then build your page in your website platform of choice (Squarespace or Webflow are my top picks). *Note, in this build phase, I continue to iterate on the design. With every "touch", I'm making tweaks. A website is ever-evolving.
- ❏ Repeat with your remaining site pages.
- ❏ Then TEST EVERYTHING on multiple browsers and devices!
- ❏ FINAL DELIVERABLE: Your standout webSIGHT 😍

Extra Resources:
- [Blog: How to customize a Squarespace website](#)
- [Blog: how to 'steal' design inspiration effectively](#)
- [Image optimizer: TinyJPG](#)
- [Image optimizer: Kraken](#)
- [Design app: Figma](#)

9: CHECK YOURSELF - your finishing touches

There's no need to wait until your site is fully built, you should start running through these checks as soon as you get into the copywriting phase.

To Check:
- ❏ Clarity: Am I speaking in a clear voice (not overly clever or cluttered with jargon)? Are my visuals clearly aligned with my brand message? Is the overall *vibe* of the page clear? **Is it clear what action I want my site visitors to take next on any given page?**
- ❏ Cohesion: Do all of the elements on each page and on my website work together to support my brand mission and message?
- ❏ Connection: Does my copy connect with my audience? Is it consistent with how they view themselves and how they want to be seen? **Does it make them feel seen?**
- ❏ Contrast: Have I sufficiently + successfully contrasted myself from the would-be competition? Have I made it clear how I'm different?

Other Resources:
- Free Homepage Blueprint Workshop
- Website 101 Mini-Course
- #SummerWebsiteSeries: Elevate Your Site in 4 Weeks
- Create an MVP with my QuickSell Kit

10: CONCLUSION - next steps

After going through all the steps in this checklist, you should have a truly redefined website presence. And, if you'd like to show off your hard work, please email me with your before and after photos so I can tell everyone about your BADASS skills.

But, just in case you got tempted NOT to put in the work, let me give you a kick in the rear.

If you choose NOT to do something about your website, the truth is:
> You're putting a brick ceiling on your package prices and limiting your business growth potential.

By taking steps to improve your website CLARITY, COHESION, CONNECTION, and CONTRAST:
> You'll have a standout website that attracts top-tier clients, allows you to double your rates, and builds buzz around your brand.

ABOUT ME:

Who am I? **I'm your website's secret weapon.**

I'm not the pixel-pushing designer that you'd hire to make a website that looks like everyone else's. I help you ditch the website shame by getting clear on your zone of contrast to craft a site that's engineered to capture and convert. I help you cut through the bullshit and get strategic with your site so you can spend more time working with the high-quality clients you love.

I've worked with over a dozen creative entrepreneurs to craft websites that increase their client conversions. On top of that, I've taught more than 100 students my method of creating user-friendly websites through my online courses.