

## **Episode 161**

### **Maximize Book Sales with a Strategic Website**

Jodi Brandon [00:00:05]:

Welcome to the Write publish market podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided that's even better. I'm your host, Jody Brandon, book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20 year veteran of the book publishing industry on the write publish Market podcast. In addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of writing, publishing and marketing a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed of yet. Today, we are welcoming Pauline Wiles to the show. Pauline is an author turned website designer who helps authors and solopreneurs with books create modern websites for strong business results. Her strategic approach delivers a powerful marketing asset that builds authority, grows your audience, and sells your services and programs.

Jodi Brandon [00:00:58]:

British by birth, Pauline is now a contented resident of California, although she admits to an occasional yearning for afternoon tea and historic homes. So welcome, Pauline. I'm so happy to talk to you again today.

Pauline Wiles [00:01:10]:

Hello Jodi, lovely to be here. Thank you.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:12]:

I did read your more formal introduction in the introduction to the show, but can you just give us, in your own words, the quick you know who you are, what you do, who you serve, all the things?

Pauline Wiles [00:01:22]:

Yes. Yeah, I am a website designer. I specialize in wonderful websites for authors and I got into this. I self published six books, realized that other authors were really struggling with the marketing side and the technology side, and noticed in myself that I was loving the creatively quicker payoff of building a website versus actually writing and publishing a full book. So yeah, I now do that full time. I haven't officially stopped writing, but between you and me, there is not much writing going on.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:59]:

Okay. Your secret is safe with me. I think websites are such an important topic for, well, for all business owners, but especially those with a book because I think it's almost like a secret weapon that not enough authors are taking advantage of. So I think my first question is, talk to me about. I know there's two schools of thought here, like a website with a page for your book, or an entire website dedicated to your book. What are your thoughts on on that? Is one better

than the other? Should you get the domain and point it with your book title and point it toward your website? What do you think?

Pauline Wiles [00:02:36]:

Assuming that your book has something to do with your business, then always, always put the whole thing on one website.

Jodi Brandon [00:02:44]:

Love it.

Pauline Wiles [00:02:44]:

Yes, feature the book on your main website, but I see no good reason to send all the traffic to another website to have two things to maintain. Yeah, by all means, if you've bought the domain name for the book, you can point that across to your main website. But unless there's an incredibly strong reason why you need to keep these two parts of your life separate, and I don't think that's what your audience is intending, then yes, definitely. One mothership, shall we say, one website, love.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:12]:

Oh, mothership. There you go. I like that. Well, and I you. I mean, magic to everyone's ears, right? One less thing to maintain. I think we're all looking, but when we can do it in a way that is smart and makes sense, that's even better. So, yeah. Okay, so let's talk about the website then as a whole.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:31]:

Like, how does the book sort of fit in? Like, how should you be thinking about it strategically? Because I know strategy is a big part of your offering, which I think is obviously super smart and something a lot of newer business owners especially don't realize, they just think, oh, I need a website. But the strategy piece is huge.

Pauline Wiles [00:03:50]:

Yeah. The good news is the message is getting through to people that they need a website. But I think there is still a disconnect and people not really knowing then what to do and how to leverage the book and the website. And jodi, you say many times you need to figure out how the book fits into the whole ecosystem of your business and then you can be very savvy for the actions and the interplay between the book and the website. Yeah, I think mainly I'm seeing missed opportunities for authors who don't realize that these two business tools, when you put them together and design them to work together, then you can be onto some really good results.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:30]:

Love that. Missed opportunities. That's a good way to look at it. Yeah, smart way to look. Smart way to look at it. So how should people be thinking about using the two together so that they aren't missing those opportunities?

Pauline Wiles [00:04:43]:

Yeah, well, I would say there's kind of a basic level and then there are some more sophisticated techniques that we might want to talk about. I mean, the basics include, for heaven's sake, if you have a book coming out, make sure you're refreshing your website at the same time so that your branding and your messaging is consistent. I want to see your book not just as a page on your website, but I want you mentioning in your bio. I'd like to see it on your homepage. Ideally even you might get some new brand photos done of you holding your book. Because as we both know, the kudos and elevation of being a published author that your clients and your audience will see can be huge. And then for all of my authors, I have to say, don't get so hung up on the message of buy the book, buy the book that you forget. As you've said, jodi, the money really isn't in the book.

Pauline Wiles [00:05:34]:

The money is in the bigger business activities. Don't get so hung up on the vanity metric of selling the book that you forget that what you might in fact be asking for is for someone to book a consultation call or to take some other first step in working with you.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:50]:

Oh, I love that. I love that. I am 100% guilty of not mentioning my book in enough places.

Pauline Wiles [00:05:58]:

In your line of work, the extra impact that you get of showing that you have done it yourself. Yeah, that is pretty important.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:05]:

Yeah. Yeah. Okay, so, okay, so we should be refreshing our site while we're in the writing process, or should we consider that sort of like a pre launch marketing activity when in the process?

Pauline Wiles [00:06:17]:

Yeah. Assuming you're giving yourself a bit of time between finishing the book and actually launching it, then, yeah, make sure your book cover is ready. Make sure you've got your messaging nailed down for why people should want the book and how your expertise is reflected in the book. And then, yeah, refresh the website during that phase where you're ramping up to launch. And one of my more advanced techniques, if you like, is then to harness the website to motivate and work efficiently with your launch team.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:51]:

And how would one do that?

Pauline Wiles [00:06:53]:

Yeah, so you can use your website to inform your launch team of what's going on. You can have forms and pages on there to recruit them in the first place. And one of your previous guests, Bev

Feldman, would encourage us to make sure we tag them on our email list as being part of our launch team.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:11]:  
Yes, you would.

Pauline Wiles [00:07:12]:  
So that we can write to them specially. And I've seen savvy authors, when they send out advanced copies, they have a forum on the website where people can give their immediate reaction to the book so that then two, three, four months later on, when you actually publish the book, you can get back in touch with your launch team and say, hey, here are the nice things you said about the book the day that you finished reading it. Would you be so kind as to copy and paste onto the review platform into a review?

Jodi Brandon [00:07:42]:  
Oh, that's a great idea.

Pauline Wiles [00:07:43]:  
Yeah. And then you might be using your website to reward your launch team with a few extra goodies. You can incentivize people who send you a screenshot of a review and say that you'll send them a secret page. And for the authors who are aiming for a big splash during the initial week the book comes out, you might incentivize readers and say, hey, do these things, buy the book, send me a screenshot during the first week and I will send you some extra goodies. And those goodies, of course, can live on a secret page on the website.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:14]:  
Fantastic. I love that everything's in one spot, too. That makes it easier to sort of manage because as we both know, there's so many moving pieces. With a book launch and book production, it's nice to think about everything sort of being streamlined like that.

Pauline Wiles [00:08:29]:  
Yeah. I mean, if, certainly if you're, if your book is coming out in, say, October and one of your early readers gives you some really nice praise for it in July, you want to be able to remind them very easily of what they spent.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:39]:  
Absolutely.

Pauline Wiles [00:08:40]:  
Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:41]:  
Yes, absolutely.

Pauline Wiles [00:08:42]:

I think business owners forget not every page on your website needs to be a public page. Not every page needs to be in your main menu. You can set up all kinds of cool things and just share the links then as appropriate with the people who need them.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:55]:

Love that. Love that. Well, and I, again, that's part of the bigger strategy piece, which makes so much sense, but so many of us don't think of. Honestly, that's a great, great point because everybody, everybody should have a book launch team. But I think the easier you can make it for people to help you, the more successful that book launch team experience will be for you and for them coming back in the end to help you. But I always think of that scene from that movie Jerry Maguire, you know, like, help me help you. Like.

Pauline Wiles [00:09:25]:

Yeah, yeah. And you want to make it easy on yourself as well. I mean, the week comes out, you've got plenty of other things going on.

Jodi Brandon [00:09:33]:

Absolutely. Absolutely. Okay, so I know one of the things that you said that you would love to share are mistakes that you see people making, especially business owners writing books. So I, as I was reading that when we were setting up this call, I was thinking to myself, oh, my gosh, how many of these am I guilty of? Are going to be guilty of?

Pauline Wiles [00:09:52]:

So, yeah, so there's the big picture stuff that when people go to your website, they should immediately recognize. There's the book, there's the website. These things are cohesive. It's the same person. This is an important part of your expertise and how you bring your expertise into the world. And then there are lots of tactical things that we see authors missing. So I see book covers that are sort of small and apologetic instead of large and proud. So great job, by the way, Jodie, with your book cover on your website.

Jodi Brandon [00:10:29]:

Thank you. That's good phrasing, by the way. Loud and proud.

Pauline Wiles [00:10:34]:

Yes. I mean, your book is a crown jewel, if you like, in everything that you've got going on. But many authors missed the opportunity to link the book image to somewhere that people can buy the book, especially folks who are on a phone, or they're likely to tap the image and expect it to lead somewhere useful. Of course, if you're available on multiple retailers, you want to give your readers some choices for where they buy. And for any authors who are hoping to have some relationships with local and independent bookstores, then, of course, that's important.

Jodi Brandon [00:11:09]:

Yeah.

Pauline Wiles [00:11:10]:

And then in the book itself, I encourage authors to make a much stronger connection between here's the book, and you can find, find more at my website. So please don't forget to get your website address into the book onto the back cover. Those kind of good places.

Jodi Brandon [00:11:28]:

Yeah.

Pauline Wiles [00:11:29]:

And then we see really smart authors are including reasons in almost every chapter for someone who's reading the book to go to the website for more information and to join the email list.

Jodi Brandon [00:11:42]:

Yeah.

Pauline Wiles [00:11:42]:

So QR codes in the book that lead people to good resources. Additional pages on the website designed to give the reader a deeper experience, you know, whether you share checklists or videos or that kind of thing.

Jodi Brandon [00:11:59]:

Yeah.

Pauline Wiles [00:11:59]:

You've said before, it can be top of funnel. It can be bottom of funnel. Keep in mind that you might have people who've read the book and then come to the website, or there might be people on the website that you want to then read the book.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:11]:

Absolutely.

Pauline Wiles [00:12:11]:

So that's exciting.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:13]:

Hey, business owner, if you've listened to this podcast for a while now, you know how important I think a writing routine is, preferably one that's in place. Before you begin that book writing, though, it's never too late. So if you'd like some guidance in developing one, I've created the ready set write challenge for you to help you figure out where, when, and how you're the most productive writer that's going to make your book writing so much more efficient. Check out [jodiebrandoneditorial.com/slash/readysetrightrightnow](http://jodiebrandoneditorial.com/slash/readysetrightrightnow). Back to the show. Yeah, those are great

points. I think that a lot of people hesitate. They don't want it to feel like they're pushing, pushing, pushing their website in the book.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:51]:

But I think that there are so many ways that you can do it in a natural way without, you know, you're not shoving it down your listeners throats or your readers throats, but, you know, they bought the book to learn from you. So if you have more that you can teach them while also benefiting you by getting them onto your website, then that's a win win. Let's reframe that thought as serving, not selling completely.

Pauline Wiles [00:13:19]:

You're offering value. Books are wonderful. We love our books. But you can offer different formats of information and helpful resources, printable checklists and mini videos and private podcasts and things. All these can be.

Jodi Brandon [00:13:36]:

There's so many options. Yeah. So, so, so many options.

Pauline Wiles [00:13:40]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:13:40]:

What are the things that you think, Pauline, we absolutely must have on the book page on our website? Like, what are the things that you sometimes see people missing that you think, oh, they really, they need that. Like you're saying links to multiple retailers, not just Amazon, for example. I know, I'm guilty of that one.

Pauline Wiles [00:13:58]:

If you're available on multiple retail. Yes. I love to see a mock up image of the book looking like a book. So if it's available as a paperback, an image that looks like a paperback, if you're in other formats, images that give the reader kind of that 3d impression of the book.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:16]:

Right.

Pauline Wiles [00:14:16]:

Certainly some praise from readers. Your book description, of course, will be on there, and that's fabulous. And that gives your, your lens on the book. But it can be very, very helpful to see a few nuggets of information for how readers received the book and the benefits they got from it.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:34]:

Yeah.

Pauline Wiles [00:14:35]:

And I would take the opportunity, even on the book page, to let people know, especially if the book is intended to bring in leads for your business or to sign people up for other programs. Don't be shy to link to those things from the book page because if somebody's got that far, their next step might be to buy the book or it might be to work with you. And then, of course, is the email list sign up because that is a fabulous asset to get that. Permission to keep in touch.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:05]:

Yes, absolutely. Permission to keep in touch. Yes. I love that. Perfect. Well, right. And that's, I mean, if you're not doing that, that's a huge missed opportunity. I mean, the biggest of all, probably, right.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:17]:

I mean, because it all comes back to, everything comes back to that email list because we own it.

Pauline Wiles [00:15:23]:

I see plenty of websites where there's one page about signing up for the email list. And for some reason, we think that our visitors will find their way there and take that action. No, that can be on every page. Pop ups on websites or a whole other discussion. But again, I think as long as you're offering resources and useful information, then you're not asking your giving, your offering. Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:52]:

Right. I love that. Yeah. The book should be, I mean, so we should be linking. So we're linking to the book from other pages on our site and then we're linking from the book page to other pages as well. Right. It's all working together.

Pauline Wiles [00:16:05]:

Yes. Even though in our mind we might think that our visitor follows one certain path through the website, we don't actually know which page they'll come in on, especially for business owners who are publishing blog posts or articles. Many, many of my visitors come in on a blog post page and then I need to remember that it's up to me to guide them to other people pages.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:29]:

Yeah, that's a great point. I think that that's, I try and think that as I, when I refresh my website, when I update copy all of those things, it's our job to tell people where to go next. They don't know. And, yeah. Assuming they're going to find it or figure it out on their own is not always the case. I would say more often not than not the case.

Pauline Wiles [00:16:52]:

Indeed. Yes.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:53]:



Yeah. Okay. So those are good. I wasn't guilty of too many of them. I have to say. I was expect, I was expecting this to be a tough love segment of this interview, Pauline. So I'm feeling pretty good about myself over here right now.

Pauline Wiles [00:17:07]:  
Not at all.

Jodi Brandon [00:17:08]:  
Let's talk about like, time saving features to add to your website was one of the things that I know that you can talk about. And I think we all want that. Anything we can do to be more efficient.

Pauline Wiles [00:17:19]:  
Yeah. So this will depend on the nature of your business, how you're serving your people and what you want them to do. But some of the obvious time savers that get missed appointment scheduling so that people can have an initial call with you. And in that sign up form, I recommend asking the question, how did that person hear about you? A lot of calendar forms don't have that on. And that's a missed opportunity for knowing where your marketing is resonating. I don't want to say an FAQ page that's important, but that doesn't go nearly far enough for answering the questions that you find yourself talking about all the time. So I'm in a number of author groups and one thing that comes up all the time is how do I choose my author email list tool okay. Now, although that's not my main specialism, I have plenty to say on the topic.

Pauline Wiles [00:18:13]:  
So I have a pretty in depth piece on that. So anytime you find yourself answering the same thing, either for prospective clients or in your industry in general, then having a resource on that is a really smart idea on your contact page, some policies about when you will get back to people and even the things that you just will not reply to. I'm sure you get pitched all the time for all kinds of stuff. A little segment on your contact page that says, I'm very sorry, I will not respond to x, y and z, can just make you feel better that you're not actually obliged then to get back location information. Oh, the number of times that I come across a lovely website for someone who clearly has to serve clients in person. So a photographer say, okay, yeah, they look great, they're talking my language, but I've no idea where they're located. So that's essential. Even if you don't have a, you know, a place of business, you're, you're out and about serving clients and then onboarding information, off boarding information.

Pauline Wiles [00:19:19]:  
And yes, some more of those secret pages for clients can be very useful as well.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:25]:  
Yeah, my mind is spinning with all sorts of pages that I could be utilizing on the back end. On the back end?

Pauline Wiles [00:19:33]:

Yeah. I think a good thing to look out for is what is the information that you find yourself copying and pasting into repeated emails or a question that comes up all the time? Certainly those are the clues for where the website can step in and help us.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:48]:

Yeah, that's great information, Pauline. Like the contact page and the location, all those types of things. Because I think when we're designing a website or creating our website, we, the business owner tends to, that seems to be like sort of the last page and like, oh, no, it's just put up a contact form box or something like that. We spend all this time on our about page or our homepage, making sure we get it right. But then some of those other pieces could save us so much time and effort and energy if we just make that page also a priority. Yes.

Pauline Wiles [00:20:25]:

And my recommendation is to add to your calendar every three or four months to test your contact form. The number of contact forms on websites that I fill out and the information just seems to go to a dead end is amazing.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:39]:

Oh, I love that. That is a great piece of advice. Okay, that's great. This was super helpful. What a fun, I mean, a fun conversation, but super, super helpful. I know that the wheels are spinning in my own mind. I can't wait to when we get off of this call, I'm going to take a bunch of notes before I lose it all. But before I let you go, Pauline, please give me a reading recommendation.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:59]:

I always ask for reading recommendations.

Pauline Wiles [00:21:01]:

Yes. So the book I'm reading at the moment, are we old yet? By it's actually by my client, Gary Cole. Very easy to read, upbeat collection of essays on the aging process.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:14]:

Interesting.

Pauline Wiles [00:21:15]:

But the one that I'd like to bring up for your readers is reach by Becky Robinson subtitle create the biggest possible audience for your message book or cause. Not only is the information fantastic, but it's a wonderful living example of how she is encouraging her readers to go back to the website for more useful information.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:36]:

I love that. First of all, both of those books great covers and someone else just recommended reached to me the other day, so I just bought it, but I haven't read it yet, so I'm glad that you recommended it as well. I will move it to the top of my TBR to be read pile.

Pauline Wiles [00:21:50]:  
It's excellent on both those levels.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:53]:  
Okay, that's fantastic. All right, Pauline, I will include all of your information for people to check you out in the show notes. But what's the best, quickest way for people to find you? Connect with you if they want to do that?

Pauline Wiles [00:22:04]:  
It's my website, [paulinewiles.com](http://paulinewiles.com) dot.

Jodi Brandon [00:22:08]:  
Very meta. I love that. All right, we're going to include all of that in the show notes. Thank you, Pauline. This was such a fun conversation and it's super helpful. Very informative. I'm in the process of updating my book, so I'm going to add some tasks to my own to do list based on this conversation.

Pauline Wiles [00:22:25]:  
Yeah, we'll take it gradually. It's a marathon for sure.

Jodi Brandon [00:22:28]:  
Yes. Thank you, Pauline.

Pauline Wiles [00:22:31]:  
Thanks, Jodie.

Jodi Brandon [00:22:32]:  
Thanks for listening to today's episode of the write publish market podcast. I know just how busy your schedule is as a business owner, so I'm grateful you've taken some time out of yours to journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you are looking for even more book writing, marketing and publishing information and support, check out my mentorship membership, the author entrepreneurs Lab, where each month we take a deep dive into one element of the book world with education, a Q and a session with me, your book publishing expert resources, co writing times, and so much more. You can learn more at the link in the show notes. I hope to see you inside the lab.