

# don't write *that* book!

## Episode 70:

### “Author vs Book Websites”

**Mike Michalowicz:** Welcome back to the don't write that book podcast where you can learn how to write your bestseller and own your authorship Follow along with us as we give you an insider's view of the book industry now Here are your hosts myself Mike Michalowicz and AJ Harper.

I love that. You're like, I hate this effing month.

**AJ Harper:** I hate it. I'm not enjoying January

**Mike Michalowicz:** When we record, you don't swear, off air, you're a trucker, an ice trucker, apparently.

**AJ Harper:** Oh my God, I'm so cold right now

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's freezing in here. Jess just walked in. She's the office manager at Profit First Professionals and she's like, yeah, we haven't had heat in three days.

**AJ Harper:** She's wearing a coat and a hat to sit at her desk.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And she has one of those little,

**AJ Harper:** a down coat.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. One of those little seat heaters, those back heaters, you know, those little pads.

**AJ Harper:** She offered me socks, Mike.

**Mike Michalowicz:** To wear as earmuffs?

**AJ Harper:** No, just to add to my, you know, and a fuzzy blanket. I've got two blankets on me right now, plus my coat, my coat.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'm wearing my winter coat right now. This is great.

If you think about the absurdity of it, we're in a storage room, that's our podcast room, with egg carton shelves, things everywhere.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** Mm hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's just junk. There's metal junk there. Not junk, but just metal pieces. There's

**AJ Harper:** old electronics,

**Mike Michalowicz:** electronics, books,

**AJ Harper:** shipping boxes,

**Mike Michalowicz:** just coffee cups everywhere and a drill. And you always have to have a drill. Here's a drill sitting here.

**AJ Harper:** There's a, there's a drawer over there that says mice.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, that's right. I hope the Mechanical device, not the actual animal. Yeah. It's just kind of funny, but the quality of the audio is amazing. You, my friends are listening to Don't Write That Book. This is where we transform your journey as an author from one of those people that write one of those books, you know, I'm talking about just

**AJ Harper:** Throwaways.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. And instead write the greatest work of your life, something that can transform. Uh, and this is what I want to acknowledge about you is the, the deep wisdom you have. You've told me about how you experience transformation yourself. And every time I'm writing, I think about that. Maybe at a subconscious level, but I think about that constantly of what's the transformation I'm going through and maybe I shared it on the last episode, but just when writing the new book, Made for Money, Krista and I had, uh, just some deep conversations as a result of producing that book.

I'm like, wow, this is transformational in our relationship. So you had this ability to summarize, to package this awareness for us authors. Um, that maybe we hear it and we don't understand it until later on, but you have this innate ability to plant seeds saying, here's the education or here's their learning moment for you.

And maybe you're not going to be fully cognizant of this until a future point, but you have a way to plant seeds that actually stick and stay.

**AJ Harper:** Hey, thanks. You have, you have a way of simplifying complicated concepts.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Thank you.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. So that, because we, we can't really, if you're talking prescriptive nonfiction, we can't really affect change in ourselves or others if it's complicated and therefore not doable.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Thank you.

**AJ Harper:** So

**Mike Michalowicz:** let me take a sip of my hot cocoa. It's so cold.

**AJ Harper:** You got hot cocoa and not coffee?

**Mike Michalowicz:** No, I got coffee. Just wanted to make it more. It's poetic license. AJ. It's called poetic license.

**AJ Harper:** There's what? So it seems cozier in here?

**Mike Michalowicz:** It seems cozier. If I, if I call my coffee hot cocoa, it just feels, it feels

**AJ Harper:** like, oh,

**Mike Michalowicz:** this is nice out here.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. My feet are so cold.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. The tip of my nose is freezing.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. All right. So let's get, let's go.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. We're talking about author websites versus. Book websites and why I believe you have to have both. Um, I fell into a trap with toilet paper entrepreneurs. So when I wrote the toilet paper entrepreneur, I got one website.

I didn't get the Mike Michalowicz website. I didn't even think about that. It's like, oh, I'm writing a book called The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur and I build around it. And the model for this was Tim Ferriss wrote the four-hour work week. He had the four-hour work week. So it's like, oh. And I consulted with him as too strong of a term.

I met with him one time on a TV show we did together, but I spent 20 to 30 minutes with him in the green room, just me and him talking. And I use that opportunity to extract everything I could from him about books. And so one of the things I became aware of maybe in that

# don't write *that* book!

conversation or subsequent research was, Oh, set up a one website, your book title, because that's what everyone's going to recognize and build your brand.

Well. Later on, he, my perception, became paint his mouth in the corner with the four-hour, he was the four-hour guy. Mm hmm. So the four hour work week became the four hour chef, I think. Four-hour body. Four-hour body. Which, when I heard four-hour body, I'm like, I don't, I don't want to work out four hours a day.

Like, this is some of the stuff.

**AJ Harper:** Mm hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Like, that's absurd. But, I also bought into that principle, and so, I wrote The Toilet Paper. I made The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur. com website. And I started being, being referred to as The Toilet Paper guy. Oh, you're the toilet paper, dude. And I'm like, Oh my gosh. I was aware very early on that.

Um, every piece of work I do is now toilet paper and it's not,

**AJ Harper:** But it was, it was more than that. Remember pumpkin plan was your second book and you had to think about now what am I going to do? Toilet Paper Entrepreneur was actually very high traffic website. You built it quite a, quite a lot of people tuning into that website.

I remember writing content for it. I remember you did the old HARO trick and you got a ton of people coming to that. And then, You realize that you would have to build that for another book called The Pumpkin Plan.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** And you had to think of yourself as an branding yourself as an author.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** And then you had to redo everything.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. It was a, it was a big unwinding, which the cost isn't like you have to erase everything and the world forgets about you, but did have to start again. I think the number one thing authors need to do is brand around themselves, period, period, brand around yourself. And you've been given, a name, that's the brand, unless you want to have a pen name, but you got to live with it for life.

# don't write *that* book!

There's an author, David I can't remember his last name is even worse than the Michalowicz. It's when I say worse, more complicated, like started to Dukowski or something. He's got, he's got more letters than my name. And he said, I'm going to make my name David Steele. And he wrote, he's been writing under David Steele and doing all his work under it.

And he, but he carries himself. So when you meet him, he's like, hi, I'm David Steele.

**AJ Harper:** It's his alter ego.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. It's his pen name. And he said, I did it to, to make it more accessible. It's what John Mellencamp did. When he was John Cougar. Remember that?

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, John Cougar Mellencamp.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, it was, it was, yeah, well, he was John Mellencamp.

Born John Mellencamp, he then became John Cougar, then John Cougar Mellencamp, and then John Mellencamp. So, to reclaim his original name, he was just John Cougar. That was his stage name. He then had to, he wanted to go back to his original name.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, I only know him as John Cougar Mellencamp.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yep, no, it was just John Cougar.

**AJ Harper:** Hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Johnny Cougar. So, um, Lesson one here is own your name or a name, but you got to play that one out.

**AJ Harper:** So you need an author website with your name.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** Mandatory.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Ashton Kutcher. What's his real name?

**AJ Harper:** I really don't know.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Exactly. I think it's Chris. Christopher.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** He looks like a Chris.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Yeah. Kutcher's last name, but people put these pen names.

I know, I know I'm picking on some celebrities just because they're recognized names, but you have to own your name. You are a celebrity in your space. Buy it. And um, if you can't get the .com, there's a couple of techniques you can use. You shared this last week. Start stalking your own name apparently.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, yeah. I mean, I've done it for, um, a nickname of mine and I've done it for AJ Harper and I got both my domains. Harper's a common last name. And so it's hard to get those domains, but I got them and I just kept checking.

**Mike Michalowicz:** There is a tool. I'm going to look it up real quick. I think it's called who is, um, yeah, it's, uh, the who is database search.

You can just Google that. And it will tell you who owns a domain. So I'm going to type in a J. Harper right now and see on the computer who says, and what it comes up with is it's owner information. It has a mailing address. Uh, it has how to contact this individual has all your registry information here.

So if a domain is owned and also your domain expires, uh, just so you know, in February of 2025, your current. So you probably... automatic renewal. Yeah, but I can see you purchased it in 2016. Um, And I can see that you auto renewed it last in December of 2024 and you're up for an auto renewal now that you've put some blockers and restrictions on it.

So use that who is tool to identify if a domain exists, you can actually contact the person that there's. So your emails in here, I can contact you directly or through a broker. Sometimes people put a block. You actually have a block.

**AJ Harper:** Thanks for sharing all that information.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, I'm saying

**AJ Harper:** it's publicly available.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's publicly available. You're welcome. You're welcome. But it's publicly available. So you can do it to mikemichalowicz.com. You can do it to anything. And said, so use the who is tool should domain be reserved. If you want to contact that individual and learn about it.

**AJ Harper:** But the main thing is the question I'm always asked, should I have an author website?

# don't write *that* book!

Should I have an author website or can I, should I have a book website, which is our topic today.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So the answer is both, mother.

**AJ Harper:** Okay. But what if you can't do both and some the very it's very real for some people just do not have the funds to create a second website or time and I always say well then at least have an author website

**Mike Michalowicz:** Sure. I still say do both.

You don't have the funds you do what's called an auto forward. So I,

**AJ Harper:** Oh, I see you. I'm talking about having the actual site, but I see what you're saying. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So what you can do is secure, always secure the domains. I would own ajharper.com and write a must read.com. If I'm not in the, if I don't have the means to create the website for write a must read.com, if I had enough funds to create one website, it's under your domain, the author. Then I'll do an auto forward on write a must read. So you go to your. Host, um, and I, I can't remember the term. I think it's called a registrar, but don't quote me on this, but GoDaddy is a popular one. There's many out there.

You go to wherever you registered your domain and you set up an auto forward. It's a free service. They don't charge you for it. And now if I go to write a must read, it forwards me back to AJ Harper. So at least the domain is driving me where I want people to go and in the future I can make a website out of it.

**AJ Harper:** I do have both. Good. They are separate sites.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Why do you have both?

**AJ Harper:** Uh, well, because my author website is... You know, I, just as I've said, it's, I've got to, people are looking for me and other capacities as well. So it's not just your author website, it's things related to your authorship as well. Maybe you're speaking or maybe you have classes and all that goes in that spot, uh, which, which leads me to also say, if you have a site for your business, that's not enough.

So if it says Michalowicz, it's consulting, that's not an author website.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Agreed.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** It has to be your name, but I have Write a Must-Read because I wanted to have a place where people could find, just if they were just looking for the book and to get downloadable tools and resources, stuff like that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I would say, um, it better be super apparent when someone lands on your website within um, The first look, this is an author that is providing some, um, knowledge or entertainment or whatever, but they get your, your book.

So if you go to Mike Michalowicz, it's that comments example. There is, let's say called the hero image. The first thing you see is a large picture of me. There is my, my mission to simplify entrepreneurship. And then all my books are listed there. So you know instantaneously what this is. I call it the billboard.

And you got to realize that the majority of people that visit your website, I've never heard of you before or just were referred to you once. It's, it's not like someone's like, oh, I like Mike Michalowicz so much. I like AJ Harper. I'm gonna go back to the site every single day and see what's going on. That, I'm sure those folks exist, but that's atypical.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, it's not how, that wasn't my questions. Well, how are people using websites these days?

**Mike Michalowicz:** To me, uh, It's usually to, to gain some form of knowledge to access some material research or to identify credibility. Um, so we'll start with that one first. Someone's like, Oh, there's a book out there. This guy, Mike Michalowicz wrote like, um, let me just, is this guy a real, the real deal credibility?

And so they come on like, Oh, the, in the website gives that impression. So it increases the trust factor. Use what's called the. The billboard mentality. So you and I are driving down the road. We've driven together to restaurants and stuff. You rocket down the road. It's 55 miles an hour. We're going 56 with you.

**AJ Harper:** That's pretty accurate.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right. So we're rocking down the road at 56 miles an hour. And then the billboards there. If the billboard had all the stuff like, Oh, um, Getting divorced? Uh, struggling with your spouse? Want representation that's really extraordinary? Will you qualify? Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

We're your source. No. When you're going down the highway, you have a second to get the message across and call to action. Getting divorced. We're the source. Divorce.com. That is, that is the mentality of a billboard. It's what is the message we're trying to get across. Your website design has to be that way.



# don't write *that* book!

Do not overwhelm people with information. We, I was trying to pull up our Google Analytics. The average visitor on our website is, for the entire website, is there for 45 seconds.

And, we are the exception. We have people staying way longer, so we have these things called hooks that I've designed to keep people engaged on the website.

This guy I interviewed with yesterday, we're, we're recording three episodes in a row. So we talked about it last week, that guy who interviewed me, he goes, I want to talk about your website. Right. But I'm already into this guy. So I'm like, it's going to be a cool question. He's like, uh, you said it was such a powerful currency exchange.

I couldn't leave because you hooked me. And he goes, do you know what it is? I said, I probably pronunciation of my name. He goes, exactly. So you had my website in the very top left. This is how you pronounce this guy's name. You click on it and it says, most people would call it McCallowoods. I like to call it McCallishnitz or something.

And if you keep clicking, maybe there's a few more. And you click and it is another bastardization of my name and it gets crazier and crazier. By 25, it says, are you still listening to, are you still like hooked, like what's your, it starts insulting the viewer, like, or listener, softly. So this guy's like, he goes, I went through the full thing three times.

I couldn't believe how good this was. That little piece keeps people on the website for about 20 seconds longer than average. And I know the longer in the site and you're engaged in a fun entertaining way, the more you're gonna have trust for that brand.

**AJ Harper:** Mm hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So You built. So your author website, billboard mentality, how are you transferring trust? And it's got to be integral to you. Like I wouldn't have a name pronunciation making fun of your own name if that's not who you are. This is who I am.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. You're making fun of yourself all the time.

**Mike Michalowicz:** All the time. Um, have the books right in the beginning. Um, some other, let me tell you some other things to have on your author website.

**AJ Harper:** Sure.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Got to have a speaking page, a speaking link. Now you may not be a speaker. Um, and so the alternative is media and interviews. I actually have both. So I don't think you seek out main stage speaking, but I hope you on your website have a media and

# don't write *that* book!

interview link because people will say, Oh, I just discovered Write a Must-Read. This author has such great insights. I want to interview you, make it easy to access you.

**AJ Harper:** So I'm curious though. I mean, what do you hear from Pete? Give me some numbers. Are you, are you getting people on the email list from your website? Are people, how often are people going? Is it? 'Cause I just feel like I, we still need the websites, but I don't feel like they are what they used to be in terms of a hub where people are hanging with you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We get— This is the anomaly. We get about 80 signups a day on my website. Wow. Our list is one hundred and seventy hundred and seventy thousand. This was interesting. I thought that was a big deal. One hundred and seventy thousand total subscribers have subscribed but may have unsubscribed. Um, we now have 60,000 active subscribers.

I mean, people that subscribed and have stayed subscribed and are seeking things out. The website gets a lot of traffic just because historically we've built a big blog. I don't know how influential blogs are anymore, but we also have tons of resources. So all my books call back to the website.

**AJ Harper:** Yes.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I get an email from a reader. I would say on average every 30 minutes We get about 50 emails a day from readers because in the books it says, please email me,

**AJ Harper:** Right.

**Mike Michalowicz:** so make sure in your books you're calling back to the website have your website be the the repository of content now one thing we're changing Which is a little bit risky, but maybe not historically to get the content and say, come to my webpage. And what's your email? So I can email you the content. What I'm trying to do is get their email address so I can stay in contact with them.

What we're changing over to is it says there and available that just the resources there. And then when the resource itself will say, Hey, want to go further? Give me your email address.

I want to...this to be a friction free experience for the reader and just say, Oh, I got what I needed. Thanks, dude But now I have this content in front of them. I think that's the better play. So we're making that transition.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, I firmly agree in that strategy.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We use pop ups. And pop ups are annoying as all Hell, and they work.

# don't write *that* book!

I would say it's increased our signups by maybe 50%. So we have been 40 signups a day without a pop up that says get all of our entrepreneurial resources and subscribe for our newsletter.

We have a sponsor and this is something so overlooked by authors, particularly in the nonfiction space. Who are the companies, organizations that want to affiliate with you, you know, you see a race car driver, they got sponsors all over the place that they're trying to get recognition. Well, whatever you're writing about, there's businesses that want to get exposure. So Relay, that's my big partner by others. Relay said, Hey, we'd love to be on the website and we'll compensate you or we'll send out free books to people like there's been different compensation models. So, uh, relay is prominently on the website.

I believe you got to have a speaking page if, if you want to be speaking on main stage that represents in my author domain, one third of my income is, and maybe it's a little bit higher, but one third of my income I'll say is just from speaking gigs, now. I'm very lucky.

I got paid a lot of money, but this is, let me tell you the trajectory. Maybe we do an episode just about the speaker side of things. My honorarium is \$45,000 to speak. The, there's always negotiate that always there's sometimes negotiation. I land around 37 to 40 now every single time. It's got to get yesterday, \$37 grand.

Um, Do you know, 40 of those a year that you can see what that's, that's big money. That's big money. Um, and you can sell books and other stuff. When I started speaking, I got, I didn't get 0. I got like minus 500. Like I had to pay for my travel.

**AJ Harper:** Absolutely. You were grinding it out,

**Mike Michalowicz:** Grinding it out. I've only made that, that honorarium over the last three years.

Um, so. I have this whole theory and we can dedicate a podcast to it, but there's different speaking ranges, but I'll give you the quick one. Most folks who are just getting started as an author, I think can reasonably get up to five, maybe 7,000 for a speaking gig. That's kind of starting point. Then you can get kind of this 15 and then there's different levels because you're, you're now put into a market with other people, but I'll tell you if you're Barack Obama, you can get 250 to 500,000.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right. There, there's a concept of the draw. Like at a certain point you're the authority. that serves an audience. And the next level is you draw the audience. And when you start drawing audience, that's when you're speaking fees really start to go up. Um, and I've, I've been blessed to start having that influence.

# don't write *that* book!

I draw a portion of an audience now, maybe 5 percent of the guests come because like, Oh, I know that dude. I love his books. Barack Obama, the whole place is there because Barack is

**AJ Harper:** Right.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Barack's about to lay down some heavy stuff. Um, have a products page on your website. Um, so we talked about, uh, in another episode, Ryan Holiday was sharing one of the best ways to monetize beyond the book he's had is jewelry because it's all, it's, it's unisex in one size so you can have bracelets, necklaces, all these different things.

**AJ Harper:** We're going to do a whole episode on swag coming up.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yep. So you make sure you have a product website. Uh, we have, we have, uh, online education. We have a program. We sell for \$197 on having confidence and how you leverage your,

**AJ Harper:** How does that do?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Okay. Okay. We set, this was interesting. I'm on coupons. com. So we set out, we set as coupon.

I'm not going to say the coupon. I'll say it's called "you rock." If he's right, you rock. You can get one program for free. We've had like I think it's like 10,000 people download these programs for free and now it's on coupons. com. So every single day someone comes on. Well, guess what? I'm getting their email address.

So they're gonna program for free and some people just end up buying it. Um, have your events that are coming up listed on your author website. So all my speaking events, um, are on there. Our own conferences we run are on there. I think we don't do it yet, but we're thinking about linking to, uh, Podcast appearances and stuff like that.

Make sure your resources are, we already talked about that, but make sure your resources are listed there. But by golly, but the most important thing is also have a dedicated book page for every one of your books on your author site.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. I mean, I think if you have a catalog of books, you can do a page with all the books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right?

**AJ Harper:** It doesn't have, you don't have to have a separate page.

# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** You don't have to.

**AJ Harper:** I have something you don't do.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We have a separate page for every book.

**AJ Harper:** On mikemichalowicz. com?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yep. We have a catalog page and then a page for every single book.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, you have both.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. So if you go to—

**AJ Harper:** But you can't, you don't navigate. I guess that's what I mean. You're not navigating to all the different books. You can get, you can get there from the catalog page.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right, so you can just type in, you can go to mikemichalowicz. com and you can click on books and it'll list the catalog.

**AJ Harper:** But then you're, it's not in the navigation panel, each book. That's what I'm referring to.

**Mike Michalowicz:** No, but, actually I gotta look at the site. When you go there and you click on an individual book, yeah, when you go to the home page you see all my books listed at the bottom. When you click on an individual book, it immediately brings you to that book page.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** I always tell my students I, I really like um, Phil Jones' Book page.

**Mike Michalowicz:** His book page or his author site?

**AJ Harper:** Well, his author said I really tend to focus on specific components when I'm breaking down author websites. And for him. I like his book page. The way he's designed it, and the very top of it has imagery of the books in the hands of other people, but then also he has his stats on how many books sold, etc.

# don't write *that* book!

And then he goes right into bulk buys and custom books. Which is one of the ways that he's sold so many books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** He's sold so many books.

**AJ Harper:** So he makes it very apparent and easy to immediately get to custom and bulk buys. And then each book is featured in a catalog listing. Um, and I like the way he talks about the books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'm on his website now. And what a great billboard. Change your words, change your world. It just stays there the whole time.

**AJ Harper:** Tagline.

**Mike Michalowicz:** You know, yeah, you can know exactly what he's doing. Um, what's interesting is I land on his site. He's clearly oriented towards speaking. So yes, you land there and it's, it's, he has a video play in the background that's a constant and it's just him, big audience. Uh, working with individuals. Big audience. It just keeps going there. He does have his book engaged in there to give more authority, but he's oriented towards speaking. Um, that's a good site.

So, uh, but one other thing with book design, I invite people not to look at your favorite authors and then make a compilation of them. I challenge you to look at your favorite products. And try to make a

**AJ Harper:** You mean website. It's not book design, website design. I just want to clarify. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I meant books. Thanks. Don't look at your competition or since the competition, the, the authors you admire or whoever in your space and say, how do I make a better version of that?

Because it becomes myopic. What I did was I looked at all different products I was impressed by or like, and said, how do I make a site like that? My website, if there's anything I pulled from, it was a beer. Uh, an IPA, I don't even remember what it was, I like, this is the coolest presentation of beer I've ever seen.

I'm like, I'm going to translate those core concepts into an author website. And I consistently hear, and my website, the current design has been in place seven to eight years, consistently gets like, this is one of the best author websites I've ever been to.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** Because it's not an author website, it's a beer site.

That's the, that's the trick. Ah. Um,

**AJ Harper:** yeah, I'm kinda exhausted from all of the author websites that have the same sort of feel.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, 'cause what they're doing is they're looking at other author websites and say, oh, this one author website looks like.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That is the bane I think of of anything is we look at the average and we just try to do better than the average, which means you're part of the average. Get outside your domain.

Another thing we did on the author website, I'm surprised many authors don't do this, is I like to poke fun at what most people do they think is the right thing. So one thing is celebrity affiliation. I'll see a lot of authors particularly people that haven't really established a large presence yet. Try to by saying look at I'm sitting next to Oprah here, you know, so one of the favorite sites or elements is I poke such fun at that.

It says Mike is with celebrities all the time and you see a picture of Anthony Robbins and he's high five most people and it's this massive audience and way, way in the distance, like a mile away, there's this like one guy circled it. And you can't even see the guy. So I'm ready. So that's Mike. And I'm like, Mike hangs out with Anthony Robbins.

And then my favorite. Is, uh, Mike grew up with Bill Gates, his neighbor.

**AJ Harper:** Right. Was Bill Gates. Different person named Bill Gates. I'm like,

**Mike Michalowicz:** yeah, he was Bill Gates, but not the Bill Gates you're thinking of.

**AJ Harper:** And that fits your brand. Just taking, taking that, uh, Making fun of yourself goofball stuff, but also making fun of what's an issue in the industry.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Fits my brand. Issues in the industry.

Yeah So what can you do that expresses yourself fully but also shows you is different from the industry because otherwise Oh, you're just another author. You're just another Motivational speaker. What differentiates you but I think the most significant thing is it says,

# don't write *that* book!

you know, Mike's with celebrities all the time and then I make fun of celebrities and that affiliation.

I said, but the real celebrity is you, and I have pictures. This is a social proof technique of people holding my books and I think we have 500 pictures and they come in daily. Here's the trick. The trick, the process. I in my books ask people, please email me. If this book is serving you or you want to commit to a higher level, then when I respond to them, I say, so they email me, I say, congratulations, I am supporting you.

If you want, I'll put you on my website, your picture holding my book. Um, please send it to me with your authorization to use it. And of those 50 emails I get a day, Five to ten. We'll say, yeah, yeah, here's a, here's a selfie.

**AJ Harper:** That's a lot.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, so I'm getting five to ten pictures a day. Say five, say five, say 10%. So five pictures a day. That's 2000. I'm sorry. It's 1500 a year. And we put, we don't put them all up. Sometimes people send kind of bizarre pictures, but, I've never, I've never had one of those. No, I've never had one of those bazaars, but just like, oh, I don't know. Like someone's like, they take a picture holding the book up and there's like a mirror behind them.

It's like, why don't you put clothes on before you take this picture? I guess it's a picture of their face, but you can see a mirror behind them. You know, that type of stuff is like, oh, that was funny. You didn't dress appropriately for your selfie of your face.

Let's see if there's anything else about the author's site before we talk about the book site. Oh, make sure to contact you, uh, Oh, and have your bio media downloads. So if you get interviewed, I was interviewed by Bloomberg two weeks ago, now. The guy's like, Oh, I need some media pictures and stuff so we can put it in the article. I'm like, yeah, by all means, here's the link. And some people after the interview, we'll go to your site and pull stuff down.

Yeah. So put your, your favorite pictures up there, rotate those. We update the webpage. We update the webpage regularly. I think. The core structural design has been the same way for seven years, but the elemental changes, the ads and stuff, it gets addressed frequently. I would say that, well, we still update our blog every day.

Um, but the other elements were regularly updating to accommodate to, you know, what's going on.

**AJ Harper:** Are people reading the blog?



# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** Um, I got to look at the analytics. I'm gonna pull it up. Yeah. It's very hard to tell. It's very hard to tell. Um, because the answer, the short answer is yes, because with Google analytics, you can see what page people are on and how long they're there.

So the people sit there for long. You can also identify what article is most popular. Do you know the top of the, all the articles have written the top five articles is about my, my own net worth. It's one of the most Google search thing. People Google Mike Michalowicz says net worth. I caught this early on because I was doing what's the net worth of somebody.

And so I was like, Oh, so some people do this besides me. And when... What you can do, it's a real, it's the poor man's lobster, go to Google, type in your name, AJ Harper, space, and hit the space bar and it'll do autofills. It autofills with the most common searches. You'll see the six or seven most common things people search for.

I'll do it right now on your name.

**AJ Harper:** You know, you've really just, you're just, um, hanging out all my laundry on this call.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's not, I'm just, it's not your laundry. This is all public domain. I guess it is. Number one thing for you is your books. A. J. Harper books is the number one tip. Now, this is interesting. A. J. Harper podcast, then A. J. Harper Fort Wayne. I don't know if that means anything. Not me. Yeah, A. J. Harper Fitness.

**AJ Harper:** Not me.

**Mike Michalowicz:** A. J. Harper Columbus Zoo.

**AJ Harper:** No.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Okay.

**AJ Harper:** I got nothing at the zoo.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Here's the funny thing. Why not write an article, a blog post on your site called the A. J. Harper Columbus Zoo and spin it to you.

Um, what I'm telling you is this is what people are looking for. This is an opportunity for you to capture this.

**AJ Harper:** Who's, who's, so there's someone at that got, I could be a bad, could be a bad situation.

# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** You gotta look into it.

**AJ Harper:** That person who broke into Columbus Zoo, that person has sprung all the monkeys.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Here's mine. Mike Michalowicz's podcast. Mike Michalowicz's profit first PDF. Mike Michalowicz's book, Fix This Next, the third most popular search. That's interesting. Mike Michalowicz's quote and Mike Michalowicz's net worth. So, Mike Michalowicz's quotes, I should have a blog post about Mike Michalowicz's quotes. You know, own that. Because if I click on Mike Michalowicz's quotes, which people are searching for, Goodreads is number one, AZ quotes is number two, um, Number three is my own website and its staff picks.

So just that's another way to kind of help your website along.

**AJ Harper:** Okay. Okay. This is serious stuff, dude. I'm sorry. I just got a text from Laura Stone, and I normally don't look at these. but it's in all caps and it says good morning first accidental nudity in sprints, and she said that right when you were talking about the camera the person having... what's the

**Mike Michalowicz:** What's the chance of that yeah what are people doing, dude

**AJ Harper:** I'm always telling people in writing sprints, you come as you are, I don't care, towel on your head, pajamas, but please have clothing. I don't care what the, could be a costume. I've shown up with a towel on my head, I've shown up in my pajamas. Um, I don't really care about that, but I always say, please have clothing on.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, that's a, that's a shi

**AJ Harper:** No, I think she said accidental

**Mike Michalowicz:** . Yeah, no, I, no, no, I, I, most nudity like that is, is accidental.

**AJ Harper:** Sorry, sorry for being distracted, but it was so funny. That is funny. That it came through right when you were talking about a person taking a picture, an inappropriate picture.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I can't believe I get it.

**AJ Harper:** But why, why would you send it?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Because they didn't even see it. They're like, so that, what it means it was a dude. So some dude reading, some dude reading Profit First emails me. Now I'm

# don't write *that* book!

thinking he's nude emailing me saying, I love your book. I email him back saying, dude, hope you loved the book. Send the selfie.

He's like, yeah, yeah, totally. Right away, bro. And so he stands there and he takes a shot of his face just to his neck. So you can't assume he's wearing a shirt and the book. And snaps it, but behind him is a mirror and I see his bare ass. And I'm like, how could, was this guy that hyped up to send it? And I'm like,

**AJ Harper:** I don't know. I'm sorry we went off course, but it was all caps and it was uncanny that we were talking about the same kind of thing at the same time.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Uncanny.

**AJ Harper:** All right. So let's go to the book, book site. I have write a must read. com.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'm going to pull it up.

**AJ Harper:** I have, um, a ton of resources, and most people have said to me, Um, why don't you collect An email address in exchange for the resources, because I just want you to have some resources and I get irritated when I have to put my email in to get certain resources.

Now, if I, I think if I wanted to go deeper, so let's say if maybe I did a, um, an hour-long webinar that went deeper on something, I could say, if you want this free webinar, then you can exchange for email. But there's some stuff I just want people to have that. are in the book itself and just easier for people to download.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Let me tell you, let me give you my critique of your website. It's effing awesome. I go to it. It's the billboard mentality. It says a book is for someone. It's big, bold letters. The second I land here, I know it's a book. I see the author name top left, but you're, I'm not buried with the author. I'm here to discover what this book is. There's an order now button.

In the header, there's an order now in the above the fold. So every time I'm scrolling every as I scroll through your site, all I see is these order nows, that's the one action you want them to take. And a great web design always has the singular action. Yes, they can navigate around, but what's the primary action?

You think the reader wants to take and you you always make it available to them. The one suggestion is when I click on order now, it actually scrolls down to another order now, So you you're causing me to do redundancy I wish to order now It just goes to the Amazon page not order now scroll down to another order now where I click again and then goes to Amazon Page.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** Good note.

**Mike Michalowicz:** No minor. This site is so well designed As I scroll down I see endorsements Steven Pressfield, my god, uh, Mike Michalowicz, oh my god, I love...

**AJ Harper:** Can you imagine if I didn't have your endorsement? I know, I'd be like, you're such a

**Mike Michalowicz:** jerk, I'd send you nude pictures.

**AJ Harper:** No, you would not.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I would not. I love that the primary order link goes to the Amazon page.

But you have the alternatives so someone scrolling down within seconds. I can see oh, I can go to indie bound or bookshop book depository I love the great you have such a great photo on there of you. It's one of my favorite photos of all time of you

**AJ Harper:** Hey, thanks

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's on there. But there's a warmth to it. This photo was clearly done with intent. There's there's books in the background, but it's a little bit blur it out. I know you're an author. The warmth is there's color to you and a black and white background. Beautiful. That's a professional photography. Don't put an amateur shot up there.

**AJ Harper:** I think John D'Amato.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Make the investment.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, you know, he's gotten business because of the show. I'm sure he has. I got to You gotta, you gotta, you gotta get a shoot going with him. I'm telling you he's next level.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Okay, you know what? Do you mind hook me up? I have my go to photographer. I love so I almost feel this loyalty.

**AJ Harper:** No, no, no. You could I'm just you could do the book boudoir. Yeah, which incidentally for your website if you had that I'm so sick of the flat book stuff and... I don't know. Yeah, I like what he does where he takes your book and really gives you so many options for imagery. It's just, yeah, I would love to see you have a, I'd love to see what he would do with your catalog, but at any rate, yes, I will connect you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Thank you.

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** Uh, go ahead.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. So I'm just going through some of the elements you have to have, have a singular call to action.

If it may not be get your book for me, If people are coming to my book page, in most cases, I want them to get the additional resources. I want them to immerse deeper. So I often will have the get the free resources, uh, button there, um, as the primary button. If you have a catalog of books, please put your catalog on your page too.

So at the very bottom of writing must read if AJ, if you had six more books, I'd want to see them there. That's why I have with all mine. So you can scroll down, uh, and visit domains. I'm just looking at my own domains. I couldn't get, GetDifferent. com, but I got, go get different. com.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. And you could get Get Different Book.

**Mike Michalowicz:** get different book. Exactly. Yeah. Also, and you did it perfectly in your site. It's in your header, have the links to the social media channels so people can spread the word, um, have the call to action if you can next to it. So we actually have spread the word and you on, um, LinkedIn or whatever. And it goes into LinkedIn and I'll insert.

Hey, check out this book. I'm a fan. So it makes it friction free. You have what's called the hamburger menu. Um, and right above you have the word more. I think that's brilliant. I know exactly what I'm going to get when I go there. Simple, clear calls to action. Have a great image of your book on your book page.

It's so clear that that's, this is a book page. Um, and your, your image is perfect. It's, it's huge. It's big. Um, really well done, really well done.

**AJ Harper:** Thanks. I like, uh, I'm often using your, uh, bonus pages for your books. Were you talking about bonus offers as an example of how to do it?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, nice. Yeah. So the bonus offers.

**AJ Harper:** Is that separate for you? So you have the website, you have your author website, you have the book website, and then as the bulk bonus offers different?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. It's part of the marketing. It is.

**AJ Harper:** So that's three different.

# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, no, it's not a different domain, it's the same domain. But it's usually the multibook offers that you're asking.

I was just looking up, I thought we, we do slash multi after the site. But, uh, let me see for our listeners if they can do it. Yeah. So if you go to [gogetdifferent.com](http://gogetdifferent.com) and then do forward slash multi. M U L T I. You'll see a multiple book offer. Now, this is for the launch period, and this is to get this volume of books out in circulation.

Go Get Different is a great example. We did extensive evaluations of the, what worked for us, the volume of books and what people purchase. We put it in sequence of if you buy a lot of books, a hundred, you get so and so, and then it declines if you buy 50 you get so and so as opposed to the reverse, we found that a diminishing number is actually more attractive.

Some people are shocked by a hundred books. I can't afford that or don't want to do it. That there's as the number gets smaller, it becomes more accessible. The reverse, it actually just builds anxiety. I got to buy 10 books. I don't know about that now, 50. So we found the reverse works better test out for yourself.

The best bonus to have on your book page is the deleted chapters. This is something I learned from James Clear. We call it the lost content. It's cute, I know, it's cute. But, uh, people love that. This is the stuff that got chopped. So that work you did that gets cut during the editorial process ain't wasted.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. I have to just say to everybody, the first time you did it was, I don't remember which book. But you asked me for, can I get everything that we didn't use.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** And I keep a file for every book and it's, it's, it's literally all of them say stuff I did not use. That is the title of the word doc.

And I sent it to you thinking it was going to get cleaned up.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh no.

**AJ Harper:** And then I was mortified when I downloaded the deleted content and looked at it, it's like you just took that dang Word file and dunked it. So now I'm cognizant of that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh you're...you

**AJ Harper:** But I'm not cleaning it.

# don't write *that* book!

I'm not editing it. I'm just it was Just this job. Oh just this mess of stuff. So now I might have a little It's not quite as messy if I send it to you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Um, you can use that lost content also on your main site. So it's not just for the launch period, but you can offer that as a bonus saying, here's, here's what hit the cutting floor.

**AJ Harper:** But you don't keep the multi-offer. You can't navigate to it. You have to know that URL?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Correct. Correct.

**AJ Harper:** So interesting because I have, I think it's good.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, you offer it in perpetuity.

**AJ Harper:** No, not the whole thing. But I think it's good to have a bonus for one book or three books if they're digital bonuses.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, that's cool.

**AJ Harper:** So that you don't have to do anything. They could just automatic. And then the others have a time limit or other scarcity component. Um, personally, I think that's good to have a multi-book offer that's easy for you to deliver the bonus.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I haven't thought about that. I might change my marketing plan.

Um, I do have one kind of hanging, uh, concept on hanging chad, and say concept on marketing that I do want to mention. It really doesn't fit into what we're talking about here, but it did want to mention in a second, um, when you should get the website set up is now because of SEO.

So. I don't care where you are, if your book is still a year and a half away, we already have the domain for the new book. Uh, we're starting the website design. We're getting that rolling. We don't even have the book cover ready yet, but we, we're starting to get the book design set up. So the second the book cover is ready. Why? SEO pre orders, um, and stuff like that. I want to own it.

The little hanging Chad thing, one cool marketing thing we did, I should share this last week is we get, we used to get from Penguin, you both, you and I, the man, you, the, the draft, the one, the one, the one that's the, after the substantive edit, it's the line edit. And you and I are going through, they print it out, right?

# don't write *that* book!

**AJ Harper:** Pass pages.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Pass pages. Overnight. And you know, we got it with page two, you're not going to, we're not going to get pass pages. It's all digital, but we still print it out. And we did it last year.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** With, with All In. I hand write on it. Cause this is the one I go through mainly. So we have two of those that we get one, I hand write on. And the next one is my final review. We auction those off. We sell those.

**AJ Harper:** I know you took one of mine once.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. People go lose their mind over that. Could you imagine having the original manuscript of Stephen King's Misery or something like... some people that are the Uber fans cherish this. So we sold it off. Now we're going to auction. I was thinking, Oh, we're going to auction that off.

**AJ Harper:** But I'm not going to give you mine.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Keep it. Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** I have one. I show it all the time.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** Because in the context of, for my students to say, this is after you've been through every single thing a million times. Look at all my post its. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Look at, I know. I know.

**AJ Harper:** You know, this is what it looks like. So for me, I'm using it as an educational tool, but also I love it and I can't, I, some of them, my hand gave to you and I didn't, again, I didn't know what you were gonna do.

**Mike Michalowicz:** You're like that guy, but it's, it's, it's,

**AJ Harper:** it's pretty cool to look at.



# don't write *that* book!

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's really cool. It's a marketing opportunity. It really is. Um. And so I should have shared that last, last week, but we're going to do that with the new book too. Is here's, this is the original manuscript. There's only one in the world.

**AJ Harper:** Can I keep mine with my post its and my notes?

**Mike Michalowicz:** You can keep yours.

**AJ Harper:** At least we'll have one.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We'll have one.

**AJ Harper:** Besides, which we kind of need it. Remember last time on All In, they kept making errors, they kept making new errors or not getting the errors right, and we had to go through multiple rounds where I had to double check again and again and again.

It was like four or five times. If I didn't have that Physical copy... I would have been, you know what, up the creek. S O. L.

**Mike Michalowicz:** The website. Listen, we have to work within our budgets. The least expensive, yet most expensive, most successful website I've done in just the history of business, not just book site, was when we launched Obsidian launch in the beginning, I didn't have any money scratched together.

So I said, we're going to buy the domain. And then on there, it's, uh, we were initially providing consulting services for small business. We said, we, it was a simple alliance. It's something like, uh, we don't spend our effort money on websites, we spend it on building extraordinary businesses. And we had a phone number there.

And that was my website. Nice, lean in. Yeah, lean in. And sure enough, I got calls from people saying, Wow, I haven't seen that before. Um,

**AJ Harper:** But can I, can I just say, this is... People think they aren't ready to do a website. If you've done your book fundamentals, which is a reader statement, core message, and promise, it's all you need.

You get a photo, you can't do a professional photo, get someone to take it, not a biggie, use your book fundamentals, you don't need the cover. Honestly, just get it going. Just start, just, just start. You have, if you have fundamentals, you can do it.

**Mike Michalowicz:** If, if you don't believe that, uh, you can build extraordinary business with a really simple website.

# don't write *that* book!

I challenge that. Go to Berkshire hathaway. com. One of the most famous companies in history, Warren Buffett's company, Berkshire hathaway. com. Go there, check out their 2025 website. And when you see what they have and what kind of business they're doing, you'll see the power of perhaps the ultimate in simplicity.

That's my big teaser. Anything else on websites? Uh, author or books?

**AJ Harper:** So we come down on author website is a must.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yes.

**AJ Harper:** Do a book website if you can. If it fits your budget,

**Mike Michalowicz:** Please. Yes.

**AJ Harper:** And then, and link the two together.

**Mike Michalowicz:** By the way, have the author website have links back to the book site and vice versa. It's called backlinks. SEO.

**AJ Harper:** And put something up, even if you don't think it's the greatest thing in the world.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Totally.

**AJ Harper:** Just get it, get it going. I, I also would like to say, if you have a book coming out, and you don't have anything on your website about the book, We Have a Problem, you think I'm laughing, you would think, who would do that?

More authors than I can possibly I just can't even, um, why you wouldn't put anything about the book on your website is beyond me.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's, yeah.

**AJ Harper:** So, just do it.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Just do it. Next week we're going to talk about author gear. I was going to bring in my gear bag. I have it so memorized. I actually have like, it's a backpack.

I know what each kind of pocket does, uh, for my author work. So I was like, I'm not gonna bring in the backpack. So I, and you will share the necessary and perhaps the superfluous author gear that yeah. Have to, or could have, I want to invite you to, uh, to email us at hello at dwtbpodcast. com. If you haven't gotten AJ's book, make sure you pick that up, write a

# don't write *that* book!

must read also check out [ajharper.com](http://ajharper.com) so you can learn about the program she has going on. Um, but you can email us at hello at [dwtbpodcast.com](http://dwtbpodcast.com) and we'll answer your questions. We want to hear your stories. We want to see if you want to come to our live event that I'm pining for us to do. Plus at our website, you can get our free resources.

Uh, and if you haven't checked out Simplified and you're an entrepreneurial author, it's with page two. It's my imprint. Maybe there's something there. Thanks for joining us this week. I hope to see you next week when we talk about author's gear. As a reminder, don't write that book. Write the greatest book you can.