



Kegan Schmicker: Hello, and welcome to the first episode of the Black Frog Designs podcast. I am your host, Kegan Schmicker. In today's episode, we take and look at return on investment. What it means? How it's applicable to your website? Why it should be a requirement to you as a business owner for your website moving forward?

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Welcome back and thank you again for listening to the first episode of the Black Frog Designs podcast. As I mentioned earlier, today, we're going to be focusing on rate of return with regard to your website. The first time I learned about rate of return was by a very enjoyable professor at Butler University. I believe her name is Dr. Stevens.

She was a professor from the Caribbean. Naturally, she had a very rich Caribbean accent which made the class enjoyable, not only because of her accent but her ability to relate information into the real world. To be able to make the class more relatable to the events that are happening around us and additionally, she was just funny. She was a very funny professor who could break up the monotony of the boring nature of the text with some humor.

There's my plug for the Butler University. They are not a sponsor yet so let's go back to the topic at hand, rate of return. Investopedia defines rate of return as a performance measure. It's the measure of efficiency of an investment. Now, we're equipped with the knowledge or basic understanding of return on investment.

I turned to a conversation I had yesterday with an active client, someone who I've just created a brand-new website for, I think, we published it back in December. It's been up now for about six-and-a-half months. I just happened running to him. I was returning to my office, walking on the sidewalk. He was just finished up a workout so very casual, no intention discussing this topic. It just wasn't on the top of our minds at the moment because we're both engaged in different activities, but we had a brief conversation.

At this point, we're both friends so we had other things to discuss. We get to the topic of trying to help businesses understand what the opportunities are on their website, and how they can use the website, and to equip it into their business, to perform different functions, help turn some lead generation and so on. He brought up the topic that he himself has experienced that lead generation and the rate of return on investment that I was talking to him about.

He had a prospect a lead come through from his website or at the very least this prospect engaged with the website during their one-on-one consultation. They made mention of the website on how it helps set the expectations. It built up the credibility of the company and so on. At the time he shared that with me that, "Hey, in my opinion, this is a win for us because the website built for our company seems to be working. People are paying attention. They're complimenting us on that website and so on."

I hadn't heard any specifics on whether or not they were able to actually get this lead and then turn it into a client, but yesterday he shares with me that they did. They were,

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in fact, able to work with them, get some specifics figured out and iron out all the details. They were indeed successful in getting this lead converted to a client.

Even not knowing the specifics of the transaction that took place between the company and their prospect or lead, we can still analyze the situation and say, “The website has worked,” because from 30,000 feet we look at the scenario and say, “The website was successful in attracting this audience member. They navigated to the website. The information that they found, the intuitive layout and navigation of the website impressed them, impressed them so much that it reached out to this company and asked for that consultation.”

At the consultation, they even made mention of the website, complementing it on how well it worked to get them into the door. Then once they're in that door so then it turned into audience member to prospect and now there a lead. Because now, the company had a great proposal and work with them on fine-tuning some details and some figures. Then, they are able to capture them as a client.

At 30,000 feet, not knowing any of the specifics, we know that the website has worked. Now, we're going to transition the conversation about return on investment to why a business owner should view their web designer. A web developer is more of a business consultant online strategist and merely just somebody who builds websites for a living.

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Before we make that transition in our conversation, I have to ask you, do you feel like your businesses getting an acceptable rate of return on their website or are you struggling to get to that next level? Are you a business that doesn't currently have a website and now you're starting to take that into consideration that maybe you do need that website to help you achieve that greater level of success? If so, this is probably a good time for us to have a conversation.

We can start that conversation on my website at blackfrogdesigns.com/begin. From there, we'll fill out a very quick form to ask a bit of information about your company, some of your goals, your target audience, another little detail about maybe your competitors, any other information you want to convey to me. They'll help us start that conversation to figure out what does your online strategy look like and how can Black Frog Designs help you get there.

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We are back. I'd discuss the topic I posed to you before the break which was, why you should view your web designer, is that merely somebody who provides you with web design services? Really is somebody who could offer you some business consulting advice or at the very least an online strategist, someone who can provide you with online strategies to help your businesses become more successful in the future.



I must admit, a little disclaimer here that, I shouldn't speak for all web designers and developers out there that some of them that is what they want to do. They're really good at developing and designing websites and that's what they want to focus on, but for me, that's not what I want to focus on. Sure, I would say that I'm pretty good at designing websites. All of my clients that I had thus far, has always been very pleased with the product I provided them.

Ultimately, what I view my responsibility as is a problem solver. Businesses don't come to me because they just want a website. That's almost always what they tell me, but usually, there's an underlying pinch point or a goal they want to achieve, some objectives that they've identified that they want help achieving.

That's what I view my responsibility as. I'm a problem solver for that business, whether it is helping you attain that next level of success. Maybe there's an issue with the consistency of data that's entering the business through the website so your contact forms are asking the right questions or the required fields are properly assigned.

I relate this by having a conversation with a client here, recently. Someone that I'm hoping to get their website published in the next few days, knock on wood. As I've talked to her about her business and I've really assumed a business consulting role with her as I help her ask the right questions or challenge her on some of her thoughts or ideas to help her become more confident in what she's offering people.

When we're talking to her one of her processes just this past week, she was discussing the process of invoicing clients during that onboarding process. You have a new client come in. You agree upon a specific level of service and therefore, you need to issue the invoice. That's the issue. Her pain point right now is she's realizing that "I'm not really good at that yet."

As this is a very new business for her and a different style of business for her, that this is one of her pain points. She just hasn't really gotten that process down quite yet. I posed her, "As you're building this business and of course, the idea is you're going to get more successful because now you're going to have a really great website. Maybe something that we should consider which wasn't in our focus, in the beginning, is, maybe we should offer the ability for people as they inquire about services, the ability to pay for that service upfront."

You are not actually issuing that invoice, they are instead initiating that payment process. Becoming very qualified leads from the get-go so that they wouldn't even be leads, at that point they become a client so you take in. Right now we go look at the website, we are trying to attract the leads. We take audience members from that website. They fill a very good form, very good onboarding form. When they hit submit they become leads for this company.

Instead, we could take them through that lead process all the way to the client, with just implementing an e-commerce style payment option on there so that they get all the information is already there that they need to make their decision. They fill out that



same form so that she can understand what type of project they're looking at, their information and any other requirements that she needs.

Then the next step in that process is-- By the way, let's just get this out of the way, because they'll say both you and I are a headache. This is what it costs to become a client. This is your initiation fee, your onboarding fee.

It's posing those types of questions, being able to be that type of problem solver for your client to say, "Have we considered this strategy? Or should we instead go in this direction?" To me, that's the role that a web designer should be filling. Because the reality is that many of the people I speak with, who are business owners, are passionate about web designing. They're not very educated on the opportunities that exist with web design.

Why shouldn't that be my responsibility as a web designer to help nurture you through that, to educate you on the opportunities, the expectations that you should have for the website? To me, that's a more profound level of service that I can offer you than just simply a person who offers you a website for a fee. Very much like your expectation should be for an investment advisor. You don't go to them because they can connect you to the market, because they are the go-between to the next décor to NYSC.

No, you go to them because they possess a unique skill set. Their knowledge of the market, they can access your risk profile. Then from there, they can offer you a level of service that protects your investment and grows it. That's the expectation. Why not approach your web designer in that same fashion? I know you can offer me a website, but what else is there? What other advice, strategies or consulting services can you offer me that will ensure my success in my business? What does the whole picture look like?

We get into that struggle because businesses are so accustomed to going into web designers or just people who build websites. Some of them I would say are designers but do have the ability to build websites. Business owners get stuck in that old strategy of what a website is and/or should be. I don't want to say should be as in this is what it should be, but that's what you think it should be.

Businesses do get stuck in the old model where I think a website is merely just an online billboard. It's my online business card where people can type in my business and then they see my contact information, where my business is located and also the products or services that I offer. In today's marketplace that is simply not enough. If that is the strategy that you implement as a business owner, you're not going to be successful with it.

It's not going to offer you a return on investment because you're not provoking your audience members to do anything. You are giving them your phone number, you are giving them your address and you are giving them information about your products and services, but never are you asking them to perform any function that converts them into a lead. You are relying on their own ambition to take that next step. I can

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tell you as someone in the millennial generation, that's not going to happen. It's just not going to happen.

It even surprises me as someone who is very involved with this industry, web design, building sales panels, lead generation is almost comical to me. There's a couple of times where I do laugh out loud, where businesses successfully entice me to do what they want. That's because that's how we're built. We want to be asked. We almost want to be courted by this company just say, "Hey, don't you want to do XYZ?" "Well, yes, I kind of do want to do X, Y, Z, thanks for asking."

Therefore, I thought their contact form or I begin the process of procuring the product or service by signing up. Or at the very least I'll sign up for their free emails to keep me educated, aware, or just make me knowledgeable in what their product or service is.

That is the difference in strategy where before we were relying on the audience member to take that next step, but now we need to ask them to take the next step. They ask that you propose to them is different for each company and for each product and service. Sometimes businesses want to focus on just a small subset of services or one service, whereas others -- of course through our conversations we'll be able to identify that.

That, in a nutshell, is what business owners need to be engaging with when they have conversations with their web designer. Is trying to ask them for the advice on how to implement strategies, how the process should work? What features or functions are available and so on?

As we bring the conversation closer and go back home, we reflect on the idea that I proposed to you which is that, you should view your web designer, not as just someone who builds websites, but is really more of an advisor or a strategist for your company, very similar to you personally or for your business financial advisor. You don't go to the financial advisor because they can buy you stocks, bonds, mutual funds. You go to them because they can implement a strategy for you.

They can align a portfolio of items that help protect you from the downturn of the economy, but also allows you to take advantage of the economy when it's doing well when it's being successful. Similarly to what a web designer should be, they should be a strategist for you to help you implement those strategies, implement new processes, new functions and features on your website to allow you to take advantage of the market, to make you more successful in the future.

That's really my point to you, as business owners is changing that mindset that I'm not really after someone who can simply build me a website. What I'm after is someone who has a skill set to build an entire strategy for me. That includes the different features and functions that I need as a business owner to be successful, not just for today but also for tomorrow. With that closing statement, our time together has come to an end.



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I do want to thank you for listening to the first episode of the Black Frog Designs podcast. A podcast that is dedicated to web design and the intricacies of what that means. I'd also like to challenge us to think about and speak about some of the topics and discussions that really challenge us as entrepreneurs. Being an entrepreneur is so very difficult and we wear so many different hats.

I think it'd be super beneficial to not just dedicate this to web design, but also about the other challenges that we as entrepreneurs face as we try to grow business, make it consistent, stable and in growing in years to come. If there is a topic that you would like to discuss jump on my website, blackwebdesigners.com and navigate to our contact page. Drop me a quick note on something that you would like to discuss related to your business, whether its finance or accounting related, marketing related, web design related.

Any of the aspects that you would like to discuss, drop us a line and we'll do our best to find. If I'm not competent in the topic you proposed, I'll do my best to find those competent leaders in the industry, who can speak upon what to do, what not to do, and how to implement those best practices and strategies.

Again, I want to thank you, my name is Keegan Schmicker. We will be bringing you this content on a consistent basis. Hopefully, we'll be doing an episode at least once every two weeks, to give you new content to digest to learn about how to strategize your website, how to strategize your business, and most importantly be successful into the future.

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