**LWQA episode 127**

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I'm your host. Dr. Katie Linder. On this episode. I want to tackle a question that I get pretty frequently and that is how often should you be updating your professional website and this is actually maybe a more complicated question than you might think because there are different aspects of the website that you might want to be updating.

And so I want to cover some of the different ways to think about this and offer my own recommendations based on what I do and also what we do for our website. So the first thing that may or may not be good to hear is that there are some areas of your website that do need really frequent updating and this is stuff that's happening behind the scenes in particular.

If you're using like on WordPress, for example a theme or you have plugins those will have pretty frequent updates in the same way that any of like the apps on your phone have updates that you need to run. And it's really important to run those updates when they come through for security reasons because often times those updates include security related changes to make sure that people cannot do anything bad to your website.

They can't kind of like hack into your website through these plugins or through these different themes you might be using and I know WordPress the most and so I know that there are different. Lots of different ways that people can kind of mess with your website if you don't have these things updated.

So that is something that I would say. We're definitely looking at all the websites we run weekly if not more frequently to make sure that those things are being updated when they need to be. Now the nice thing about WordPress at least on the back end is that it does kind of give you a heads up when those things have updates and you can just go in and run them and it's kind of almost like an automated thing with that platform.

So it's not super difficult to do but just like any other updates on your computer or you don't want to leave it for a long time where you have lots of updates that you need to run. The main thing that I think people mean though when they're asking about how frequently they should update their websites are two other areas one is content updates and the second is aesthetic updates.

So in terms of content updates, one of the things that I really recommend is trying to build out the content of your site in such a way that it doesn't require frequent updating now on my professional website. I have to go in pretty. And update things of like dates of different programs that I offer and things along those lines, but I've tried to have certain pages where the content is relatively static.

I might go in every six to 12 months and kind of do a review of that content to see if it is still what I want it to be but in general I'm not going in, you know on a weekly basis or a monthly basis and updating fat. Now the area where this is usually a most frequent issue, especially for academics in higher education professionals is making sure that if you're linking a CV to your professional website or resume that that is kept up-to-date and the trick that I use for that especially so I don't have to go in and keep updating the actual link to those things is I create a folder in Dropbox.

That is basically my most recent CV folder. And I try to update my CV on a monthly basis. I typically have enough going on through like conference presentations or webinar presentations or other talks that I'm giving or Publications that are coming out that I do need to be updating that CV pretty frequently or I'm just going to lose track of things.

And so what I do is I keep a running kind of save as file of all the versions of my CV for a particular year and. Here is over. I'll kind of collapse it all into an archive folder. But I take the most recent version. I create a PDF of it and I move it into that most recent CV folder. So I don't never have to change the link to that folder on my website, but I know that I'm updating the document that is within that folder so that whenever someone clicks on that link, there are always going to get the most recent document of my CV that I've updated.

Now this also works really well for things like headshots bio statements anything that you know, you're going to be updating on a relatively consistent basis. You can create a folder of those documents and put that link to the folder on your website. And then really you're just switching things in and out of a folder rather than constantly switching links on the website and you don't have to worry about whether or not those things are up to date.

So in terms of other content, some people will want to include on their professional website, like upcoming conferences that they're attending and things along those lines. But unless you have ways of automating that with your calendar through some kind of plug-in feature or something like that and you're kind of hand updating that or manually updating that I would say you want to be careful about putting that kind of stuff on your website because you do have to remember to go in and update it now a good example of this on my own site.

I have an episode guide for all of my podcasts and because I published three to four different episodes every week. I'm not going in every two days and updating that episode guide now maybe I should be but I just all I often forget. I don't have the time and what really triggers me to update that is I pull from that episode guide for my monthly newsletter.

So at the very least every month, I'm going in and kind of cleaning up that episode guide and making sure it all the recent episodes are on there. But those are the kinds of things that you can choose to set up or not on your website because it will require you to go in and make pretty frequent updates to make sure that everything on your site is really clear and up-to-date now, I probably don't need to go into why it's important to have updated content on your website.

But particularly for people who might visit and who are strangers to you or your content. Obviously, you'd want to give them kind of the best impression of having up-to-date information. So that they know that that's a really relevant place to find out content or information about you and the work that you're doing and so I try really hard to have updated content on my website so that when people go there they know that this is kind of an active space that I'm using to share about my work and my professional life.

Okay, so that leads us to the aesthetic updates of your website. And if you've been following me on my website for a couple of years now, you know, it's undergone some pretty significant changes. And when I first kind of relaunched my professional website and the summer of 2016, I would say it's gone through at least four or five pretty major aesthetic shifts since that point.

And part of that is admittedly because I like to play with website design. So I happen to go in and kind of play around with different themes. I use a theme called divvy pretty exclusively now and went if he has new things that come out, you know, I like to play with that and I get some of that playthrough working on client websites, but I also really like to always be looking at my own site to see how I want to update it and make it really clear what it is that I do and.

Important to me so I would say anesthetic update review should happen every six to 12 months or so, and I typically do mine on the shorter side. It's typically every six months and that may or may not include actually adding new content pages to my site because as I offer a new product or service I will frequently create a web page for that and Link it on my site and a good example of that is the recent page I added for my seven weeks to radical self-trust group coaching program.

But what I would include in that aesthetic update review is look first of all at the structure of the site and whether or not the menu structure is still working for you and if people can still navigate relatively easily to the main things they're going to want to find when they're coming to your site.

If you've added content over time. It may be that you need to redo that structure and a good example of that is I used to keep my books my podcast my web. There's a lot of my projects on one page and I kept it as like a main navigation page where people could cut then kind of go out to a bunch of different other areas.

I have since changed my navigation to have one page on my site just for books and one page on my site just for podcast and I've really tried to separate some of those things out as I've gotten more things in each area. It's made more sense to give them their own space. So you'll want to look first at that structure to make sure that the site is.

Working for you in terms of where you have put things and the amount of priority that you've given things in terms of the space and the scale on your site. Then you'll want to look at things like the theme so if you are using something like WordPress or even something like Squarespace, you're going to have certain templates or themes and you'll want to look at things like it.

Does it need to be updated in terms of just. Looking contemporary. Sometimes you can use a theme a couple years back and then it just looks kind of dated and you'll want to update that you'll also want to look at things like color like font Choice. You'll want to check your head shots and other images to make sure they still feel kind of contemporary and fresh.

And you'll also want to look at things like your homepage to make sure that still really representative of who you are and what you do a lot of people on their homepage will put some kind of Bio statement and head shot and you'll just want to make sure that that bio statement is really still making sense and it's still highlighting the things that are most important to you.

So those are just a few things to consider with your website updates, but I think that as you can hear some things are going to be more frequent than others and the best way that I found to do. This is definitely put a marker on your calendar just to kind of trigger you to remember to take a look at this stuff.

But I've also found because I'm in and out of my website so much that. After a while like I'll just start to notice something that is kind of bothering me or I don't like it as much and I know it needs a refresh and then when I do one of my creative Retreats like I did this past December I had definitely scheduled into that creative Retreats and website updates of what I wanted to do for my own site in addition to some of the work that I was doing on client sites as well.

So. In some ways I treat my own website. Like I would a client site and I look at it in the same way so that I can be updating it and keeping it as fresh as I would for a client. So I welcome your questions about website updates. You can always tweet to me at Katie double underscore Linder. You can email me a contact a Katie lender dot work or you can connect with me on Instagram @ KD underscore lender, and I doubt you'd want to write me a letter about your website, but you could definitely do that.

You can address it to Katie Linder PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon nine seven, three two one. Thanks so much for listening to this episode life work. And a is part of the radical self-trust podcast Channel a collection of content dedicated to helping you seek self-knowledge nurture your superpowers playfully experiment live your core values with intention practice loving kindness towards yourself and others and settle into your life's purpose learn more about the rst channel and access show notes and transcripts for each episode at Katie lender dot work / podcasts.

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