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SHELLEY MARMOR

Shelley started her very first travel blog in 2020, and by 2022, she turned it into a multi-six figure blogging business. Today, she owns 5 sites, and even with THREE sites on Mediavine, she earns 60-70% of her blogging income from affiliate marketing.



Decoding Search Intent for Affiliate Success

SHELLEY MARMOR

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[00:00:00.17] - Liz Stapleton

Welcome back to another episode of the Blogger Breakthrough Summit podcast, where I share snippets from sessions at the annual Blogger Breakthrough Summit that help you unravel the mysteries of making money online one episode at a time.

[00:00:17.09] - Liz Stapleton

I'm your host, Liz Stapleton, and today we're diving into the magical world of the customer journey funnel. Trust me, by the end of this episode, you'll be funnel savvy and ready to make some serious cash. Let's get to it.

[00:00:26.22] - Shelley Marmor

To the customer journey funnel. Besides search intent and understanding buying versus browsing keywords. This is the next most important thing that you need to understand about affiliate marketing if you want to make a ton of money doing it. So the Customer Journey Funnel is essentially the buyer, or in your case, the blog readers trip through the purchase funnel, which I am about to show you. But just for reference, this can also be called the buyer funnel, the sales funnel, or anything with funnel at the end when we're talking about marketing is going to relate to this. So here's some illustration so you understand. This is a four-step funnel. It covers basically everything you need to know on the topic of the customer journey funnel. But if you Google this, it's a big rabbit hole to jump down to. You might see much more elaborate funnels. You might see customer journey funnels that go into customer attention funnels. This is a huge topic, but for just to dip your toes in, this is as much as you need to know. And there's our two people jumping and backflipping into the top of the funnel at phase one, which is called the awareness phase.

[00:01:38.24] - Shelley Marmor

So the awareness phase is when someone becomes aware of a place they want to travel, let's say. This may or may not even come from you. They might see a really cool Instagram reel or TikTok of a place. They might watch a movie. They might watch Emily in Paris on Netflix and decide they want to go to Paris. So this doesn't necessarily come from you, but this is when the person enters the funnel at the awareness phase. After awareness, they move further down the funnel to the interest phase. So this is when they're going to begin researching a place they want to go. So they watch Emily in Paris, they saw all the amazing, beautiful locations, and now they're going to Google something like, best time to visit Paris. Is Paris worth visiting? Is it expensive? Is it safe? Those kinds of things that we talked about earlier in the presentation on gathering information. They just have informational intent. These people are not ready to book a hotel. They're not ready to book a tour. They're not ready to book a rental car. They don't want to buy a new backpack for backpacking Paris.

[00:02:42.08] - Shelley Marmor

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They're just gathering information. Then they're going to go a little further down the funnel to the desire phase. Let's say you saw your Emily in Paris, you looked up best time to visit Paris. It happens to be one of the months of the year you were considering. So now you're going to go further down the funnel and your search intent is going to change and the things you search are going to change. So you might Google best neighborhoods in Paris, three days in Paris, or however many days, like a Paris itinerary. A packing list for Paris. So this is exactly where we see our gray area keywords. But these are not the buyers. These are not finger on the button credit card in-hand buyers. Those people are down here, the bottom of the funnel people. They want to book or buy, but they are not interested any longer in browsing. They've already gone through the whole funnel. They've done their homework, and they've researched as much as they needed to research. So you saw Emily in Paris, you looked up the best time to visit Paris. It just so happens to be your birthday month and you're dead set on Paris now.

[00:03:52.23] - Shelley Marmor

Now you're looking at best neighborhoods in Paris because you don't know where to stay. You've found the ninth arrondissement. And you're like, That's where I'm going to stay. So now you start googling best hotels in the ninth arrondissement in Paris. You are ready to book your hotel. So these are the people that we want, the people in the action phase, Bottom of the funnel, people that lead to conversions. Conversion is just a fancy word for sale, where you convert a blog reader into a buyer. So buying keywords, this is what they're going to be searching in the of the funnel purchase phase. Best hotels in Paris, like I said, best tours in Paris, car rentals in Paris, travel insurance for Paris, things that people book. Seems simple, right? But sometimes it doesn't. It's not as simple until someone explains it in real just English terms. So this stuff is probably right in front of you the whole time. But like I said, I work with a lot of one-on-one clients, and people are like, Wow, why didn't I get that? Sometimes you just need to explain. So I hope that all made a lot of sense for understanding really the roots of affiliate marketing.

[00:05:10.22] - Shelley Marmor

So this is what I see the number one mistake travel bloggers make, or any bloggers, when it comes to affiliate marketing. It's what I have seen called the spray and pray, or throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping that something sticks. So when you're not making content with user intent in mind when you're just throwing spaghetti at the wall and you're happy that something sticks. I tell people you're putting in affiliate links, but you're not necessarily doing affiliate marketing. So when you're making affiliate marketing posts, posts that you hope to make a lot of money for you month over month while you sleep, I want you to ask yourself this before you make that post. Is this a hell yes, a buying keyword. Is it a hell no, a browsing keyword? Or is it maybe a gray area keyword? And I hope that you will only make those, hell yes, buying keywords, bottom

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of the funnel, buying search intent posts, because those are the ones you're going to see big money from in affiliate marketing.

[00:06:20.08] - Liz Stapleton

All right. And there you have it. The customer journey funnel demystified. Focus on those hot buying keywords, guide your readers smoothly through the funnel, and watch your affiliate income grow. Remember, it's not just about getting people to your blog, it's about guiding them through this journey and turning them into buyers. Thanks for tuning in to the Blogger Breakthrough Summit podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, don't forget to subscribe, leave a review, and share it with your fellow bloggers.