



Marketing Moxie Podcast

Episode 17 – Zsofi Koller on Everything You Need to Know About Working with A Designer

Show notes at: <http://www.maggiepatterson.com/episode17>

MAGGIE: Welcome to Marketing Moxie, Episode #17.

INTRO: Welcome to Marketing Moxie with Maggie Patterson where we get down and dirty on all things marketing for entrepreneurs. Maggie takes a practical, no holds barred approach to helping you take action on what matters to your business, all with her signature moxie and sass. Now it's time to roll up your sleeves and dive in.

MAGGIE: Today, in Episode 17, I have an awesome special guest. I'm really excited for this episode. We are going to talk about all things design and development. A lot of times we talk about branding, but we don't get into the nitty-gritty of design: how to hire a designer, how to work with a designer, and how to make sure your design really reflects you.

I have guest expert Zsofi Koller. She is going to talk to us about her processes, how you can really work better with your graphic designer, how you can collaborate, and so much more. Let's jump in.

Hey, everyone. Welcome back for another episode of Marketing Moxie. Today I have an amazing guest. I'm really excited to talk to Zsofi (zhō-fē) Koller. And I know her name is a little tricky because it's with a Z, but that's how you say it. So if you're ever talking to her, you need to say it the right way. And as someone who had a very complicated last name growing up, I totally appreciate the struggles of having a more challenging first name, so welcome to the show.

ZSOFI: Thank you. And thank you for the great explanation of my name. That's nice.

MAGGIE: Well, I like to take good care of my guests here.

ZSOFI: Yeah.

MAGGIE: What we're going to talk about today, and I'm really excited, is we're going to talk a lot about how to work with your designer and, you know, really how to get those ideas out of your head, help your designer understand. What are some of the things you need to know if you're going to go ahead and hire a designer? Let's just start off with a little bit about the design process and what people should expect from the moment they kind of sign on with a designer.

ZSOFI: Okay. Yeah and, you know, obviously every designer will have a different way that they like to work, so I'm certainly speaking from my own experience. But I know that a lot of the things that I say can at least be translatable to how other designers work as well.

Just one thing I also wanted to mention is that I'm referring to a design process as completely custom, so a complete custom design basically all created for you versus, you know, there's obviously other ways of working with templates or sort of modifying templates that might already exist. So I'm talking about basically designing completely from scratch for a client's needs.

Really, when you start working with a designer, the first real step will always be them getting you to start telling your story of what you want to explain on your site, how you want your site to be seen and understood. It's not like a completely straightforward, like, I am selling X, so therefore my site will sell X, and that's what's on the site, you know, the end. I mean, it's usually a little more complicated than that because most business owners like to showcase a personality.

They certainly like the site to match the aesthetic that gets them excited. And you also want it to be appealing to your target audience. Like if you're selling aromatherapy candles, you don't want your site to have a design that looks industrial or just something that doesn't fit.

MAGGIE: Exactly.

ZSOFI: Yeah, so there's always going to be kind of baseline things that are going to be guiding what you need. But the first way that a designer will start to really understand the specifics of what you really want or what's going to get you really excited is always going to be the design brief, and that's kind of going to be the first step for sure. Once again, this will vary so much between designers. But the design brief should be a fairly comprehensive questionnaire for you to fill out, hopefully in advance of your start date or working together, so you have some time to think about it.

Every designer is going to ask you different questions, but it's really going to be the basics of what story is it that you want to tell on your site. How do you want your visitors to feel? How do you want to present your

message? What is the core of what you're telling the people that come to your site?

Just sort of getting it down on paper and starting to really think about it as a strategy of what am I saying and how am I going to get people to understand what I want them to know the minute they see my site because, the thing is, of course, everyone knows that a site, it has to impact your audience very quickly. No one wastes any time a site that doesn't sit well with them or doesn't resonate with them. People are going to bounce off that site in literally seconds. It has to be so clear. What is it that you want your visits to know immediately?

The design brief will get you to describe that sort of stuff. It will also get you to talk about, hopefully, the esthetic that you really, really like. Start talking about things like what colors do you just hate like, no way, Jose, am I going to have red on my site. I hate the color red, for example. Or just start talking about, like, do you prefer fonts that are more straightforward? Do you prefer fonts that are a little more whimsical and maybe a cursive font?

And I always also like to get my clients to list a few URLs of sites that they like just so I can start to get a sense of what is a successful look for you. Never, of course, to copy, but just to sort of get a baseline so we have something; we have an understanding of how a good site will at least kind of hang together. Always just as a baseline because, of course, a good design will never look like someone else's. It will always put together for your very specific message and needs.

The design brief is how you can start having that conversation. When I design a site, that's my go-to reference always. The more thought that a client puts into it, the more details that are in there, the better it's going to inform me, absolutely.

Another thing that I like clients to do at the beginning of the design process, and I imagine most designers like, is to have my clients create a mood board, either through Pinterest, which is just perfectly designed for that --

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: -- so that's really nice. Yeah, it's just so easy. You can also -- a lot of clients like to do a secret board that you can share with just me and not anyone else, so that's also really helpful for people that are feeling a bit shy and don't want, you know, maybe if they have 10,000 followers, they don't want people to know what they're brewing. So you can create a secret board and just start pinning, like I love this color palette, or these fonts are so gorgeous. Or even something like I really hate this, like if people do this on their site, it drives me crazy. Just pin that there.

It just provides a way for me to really get into your head. Either a Pinterest board, or you can even just do it old school and email photos. I

have all my clients have Base Camp project with me, which is just a Web software that you can share files and stuff. A lot of designers like Base Camp or there are other similar ones. Really anyplace that you can just share visuals and say this looks awesome, or just so we can get on the same page about, like, I love the color blue. This is the kind of blue I mean. There are lots of different kinds of blue. That's the first steps anyway.

MAGGIE: You know what I think is really interesting there is you really hit on a couple things is, you know, probably things we can start doing before the point we even contract or even start looking at designers to say, okay, these are the things I know I like. This is the kind of feel. Because the more clear and specific we can be, the easier the designer's job is going to be, right?

ZSOFI: Oh, absolutely. There's no question about that. And some clients, who are very organized and have sort of been through this process already, sometimes do come to me with a lot of the stuff kind of already squared away. And, you know, a really, like, gorgeous mood board already set up and, you know, really clear idea like, I love this, and I want it to look like this. Of course, that makes my job very easy because it's not that I become a little monkey like puppet, like I will do whatever you say. Obviously it should still be a fun and creative process, but absolutely what you're saying is having that clarity is so key because, in a way, that's really what it's all about for me.

It's about knowing what it is you want to say, and then actually having the confidence to just say it because that's what a good design, to me, is. A good design is when you know that key message, and you just let that message out. The end.

And it's usually very simple. I prefer a simple, minimalistic look. I find that the busier and fussier things get, usually the more convoluted the message is. So when the client feels really sure about themselves, then that's always going to help because then we can really work with that as opposed to, you know, standing on our heads and trying to figure out ways to make a not so clear message work because that doesn't really work very well.

I don't even say that as a way to make clients feel like they have to know, you have to know. Very few people really necessarily have that clarity from the beginning, so it could be an intimidating thought of like, oh, I should just know all this already. I'm definitely a believer in the thing; it becomes clear as you start walking down that path. It's kind of a fine line between being open to what will become obvious as you go through the process, but also having a general, at least general, understanding of what it is you want because, of course, then we can always get too narrow.

I really don't like feeling like a design puppet on a string if someone is saying this is exactly how I want it. You know, here's my sketch. Do this.

Bye. That doesn't really happen, and even if it starts that way, it doesn't usually end that way because that's not very interesting for anybody.

I think one of the benefits of having a designer that you like is you absolutely want that designer's experience and hopefully creative integrity to also influence you as well. That's why I think of it absolutely as a collaboration. Both sides are going to inform the process. And how that conversation works is going to be different in every single exchange between a specific client and designer.

MAGGIE: I think what that really brings up for me, the whole idea of when you go to hire a designer, when you are at that process where you're narrowing down your choices for a designer, what are some of the ways that someone can look for the right designer for them? Obviously the clear vision of the style, things like if someone really specializes in industrial sites, and I want a more flowery, boho type look, they're probably not the best fit. But what other things can you really look for to make sure you have the right fit?

ZSOFI: Yeah. It's a good question. And sometimes the clients that come across my path, I just think, like, well -- I just should ask them how did you even find me. Interesting. Sometimes that comes up in our conversation about what is it that kind of inspired you to contact me. Of course, the first thing that anybody would do is look at a designer's portfolio.

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: That's for sure the first step, absolutely. Look at the designer's portfolio. Like you said, that's key. I certainly will have every site that's in my portfolio speaks to the client's needs, but there's no question that I have an overarching aesthetic that I'm just going to apply because it's just the way I work, and every designer will. You have to like the sites they've done, absolutely, or at least some of them. I mean that's just common sense.

And a similar line, if I'm going to hire a professional to do something for me, I want to know the testimonials. I want to have a sense that this is a good person; that this isn't a person that's going to disappear into a puff of smoke. We've all had experiences like that.

MAGGIE: Uh-huh!

ZSOFI: That just sucks. And it just makes me bummed because I have had so many clients have had bad experiences with designers in the past --

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: -- with that kind of thing happening. It seems to be really a problem in the Web design field. I don't know why. Honestly, I don't know why, but you certainly hear horror stories. I always feel like, well, a Web designer is a lot of things, and sometimes I feel like a little bit of a therapist with clients

that have been burned in the past because I would say at least half of my clients have had a bad experience with a designer previously.

And a lot of them, it's almost like a skittish cat coming in for their dinner. They don't want you to pet -- like they don't want -- like they're not sure if they trust you. They're kind of looking at you side-eyes like are you sure you're going to do what I want you to do kind of thing. And I have to sort of like soothe them. I just understand that there could be a lot of pent up energy about Web designers as a whole, which is really too bad, but I get it. I do.

MAGGIE: And don't necessarily think that's specific to designers. I know that I get that often with clients because people just drop the ball. And I think what people can learn from that is almost what you were going back to the beginning of what you were talking about is the idea of understanding how someone works and their process. If you're not looking for those things and asking those questions, you might be setting yourself up. Do your homework beforehand any time you're going to invest money.

And I really urge people before they work with me. I'm like: you want to check my references? You do it. I want to make sure that I am the right person for you. And if there's someone else who is a better fit, please hire them instead.

ZSOFI: Absolutely. Yes because, I mean, I never think of our work as being that different. If you're writing for someone, or if you're designing for someone or representing someone, you have to understand them. You're going to be helping them express themselves in a medium that they wouldn't necessarily be able to do on their own. That's what design does.

If you're going to have that partnership with someone, you do have to be good fit for each other. I would never want a client to not be totally in on that relationship. It's important. You have to trust each other.

I was talking about the skittish cat idea. It's really about one piece that really helps the relationship work is that feeling of trust between the designer and the client because you do have to trust me. It's the same way when I sit in a hairdresser's chair. I'm handing over my precious locks. Okay, I'm joking. I have short hair. I don't really think of it as that precious. But, seriously, this person with scissors is really going to impact the way that I present myself to the world. This is trust. I don't just jump into anyone's chair for that.

It's the same with Web design. You have to trust the person. Beyond even doing the first things like looking at the portfolio, looking at testimonials, checking references, is also absolutely having a good phone conversation.

I will talk to prospective clients on the phone, of course. And I don't feel good about starting a project with someone unless we have had a good talk on the phone because I want to make sure that we speak in a way

that makes sense to each other. There's nothing harder than trying to design for a client where I'm like, I don't get this person, you know.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: So I like to talk too. I mean, at the end of the day, it's really about connecting with people, and I need to connect with my clients as people, just like they need to connect with me as a person. That piece of, let's talk on the phone, let's have a Skype chat, you know, I'm here to be connecting with you. Let's just allow that to happen versus trying to figure it all out through even just email. That can start to feel a bit meaningless, so that level of trust is really important.

Hiring anyone to do something for you is always a little bit of a risk. It just always is because you're handing something over to someone else to do for you. And you might love it, or you might hate it. You can order a bad meal at a restaurant even if you've eaten there a few times before and the food has been awesome before.

There's always an element of risk. But at the end of the day, you do have to hand over that trust, and doing your homework and covering your bases is going to help protect you. And you should always do that when you hire a designer. There's no question.

MAGGIE: One of the things I know from your work, and you touched on this earlier, is the idea of a custom site, a handmade site versus a site that's out of the box. Can you explain that a bit because, I know for me, even having come out of a corporate environment, I didn't even realize there was this thing, idea of this like prefab templated type site?

ZSOFI: Yeah.

MAGGIE: How do you tell the difference, and how does that all work?

ZSOFI: Well, I guess it's -- I'm just trying to think of a better way to compare it. It comes down to what your needs are, what your budget is, and what's important to you as a client, as a business owner. Some people are very happy to go to the grocery store and get a salad premade out of the produce shelves.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: And it's already got all the ingredients in there, and you just eat it right there. And some people are like, well, I actually prefer to buy the ingredients that I want, put it together the way exactly that I like to eat it. I'm not going to lie. I like to cook, so I like to have my food the way I want it.

When it comes to having a website, I think, do you want a look that could literally be replicated, could be shared by others? That's what happens when you use a template is that it's literally something that you can just

upload and have live on your site within 30 minutes or quicker if you're super fast. You just maybe put in your content and there it is. That's just uploading a theme.

Now most themes, most premium themes, it's customizable to a certain extent. Depending on how comfortable you are, you can take a theme and certainly modify it. You can modify it just with a few details so that if someone who recognizes the theme would come to your site, they would know that you're using that theme, but you obviously have photos that are relevant to your product or whatever versus if you were really good with this kind of stuff, you can take a theme and basically make it unrecognizable and completely modify it. Then, at that point, you're dealing with getting to be pretty custom designed, or you can just have something completely from scratch.

It really depends on your needs because if you're -- generally, the people that I work with, if you're looking for a fully custom site, then it's generally a client that is at the point in their business where they know what they do. They know how they want to be presented.

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: And they just really want something that looks exactly the way they want it to look without any compromise or without any hang-ups about, oh, does it fit the theme parameters. For brand new business owners or for people that, for whatever reason, don't need to invest into their online presence in the way that some business owners might, a template option might work very well. And that can be absolutely great too.

Generally, as a business evolves, it's just going to become obvious to you when you're starting to get constrained by, you know, if your site is sort of out of the box or if you want something just created for you. I think, when people feel those growing pains, and they start to feel frustrated--like, I'm tired of having my site look the same as everyone else's, or I'm so irritated by the fact I can't do this on my site, and I see it on others, and it would just be cool to have this feature or this look--that's when you start to have a custom site. The one thing I love about Web design is that one reason that I'm drawn to it, because I do have a background in book publishing and working with print design, I'm sure a lot of designers are like me because back when I was learning these things, print design was kind of a lot more prevalent.

MAGGIE: Mm-hmm.

ZSOFI: And now everything is moving more and more online. But one of the reasons why I love the transition from print design to online is that, really with online, you can kind of do anything. You really can.

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: I mean, you know, you want it to be usable, and you want people to understand what you're doing, and sometimes there's a fine line between just being creative and being a little too wacky for people to even understand what your site does. I think we've all been on a site like that where you're just like: what the--?

MAGGIE: Yes! I've been quite a few, and you think: what? I'm totally missing something.

ZSOFI: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. But with Web design, the possibilities are really endless, and that's why custom design is fun because it's like this is your canvas. Let's paint it to look exactly the way you want. But like I said earlier, I think that when business owners reach a certain point, or when they are very clear in what they're doing, that's when it becomes obvious that that's the step that they want to take with their Web design.

MAGGIE: Yeah, I think that makes sense too because, I mean, I know right now I'm on a templated site, and I'm starting to have the growing pains. I know it's going to happen. It's just a matter of the intersection of time, budget, clarity because, for me, I'm like I don't want to spend that money until I'm really clear and I'm not going to change it again in three months.

ZSOFI: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I get that. Yeah, it has to be the right timing, for sure, and it is a timing thing. Sometimes clients come to me, and they're like, I have been planning for this for a year now, and I'm so excited. Then sometimes clients will be like, I just want to do it because I'm just excited by the thought of having my own custom site and, like, let's just make it happen. Some people come from kind of all variations on kind of readiness and preparation for it.

MAGGIE: Yeah, I think this is one of those things that is going to be so individual because I know myself. I know I like to change things often, so I'm just going to need, like, that sign from the universe to say this is the time; you're ready.

ZSOFI: But that is another thing that I really love about websites. The same way that you can do anything, I have to remind my clients of this often is this idea of, like, just remember it's not carved in stone. It really does depend on how they're put together, but websites are generally pretty fluid with regards to how you can change it up and how you can update it because I firmly believe that a website is a living document. It's going to evolve.

Some business owners are very into that and are upgrading all the time. I have some clients that I work with that we're constantly just adding things and changing and tweaking. That's how they like it to be. Then some clients will be quite happy with a look for a year or so, and then it's time to make some changes. I honestly find that most business owners, I mean at least after a year, you're going to want to make some changes to the look because I think, first of all, you should because the Web design world, it's a medium that encourages you to change it.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: And if you have a good team, you have a good designer who you can call upon that you've worked with, and you can sort of just have it happen pretty smoothly, then go for it. Then keep modifying and adjusting it. I just say this because a lot of people do have that anxiety of, like, I want to make sure that I'll know exactly what. And I'm not trying to contradict what I said before about, like, you should have a really clear idea. I mean, I think that it's like our ideas can only be as clear as we let them to be, but they're going to keep refining. Like at one point in time you might know, well, this is what I'm saying right now.

MAGGIE: Exactly.

ZSOFI: And then, I think, if you're being really honest with yourself as a business owner and just as a human being, you know, that's going to adjust over time. In five months, that thing that you were really clear about might feel actually not the same because we can't peg these things in the ground and keep them that way, which would be probably a lot more convenient for all of us if our ideas didn't change. But my business is changing all the time, and I like how my website can absolutely change with me.

That's why I do tell people, like, you're as clear with it as you can be, but just accept it is going to adjust and change, and that's actually a great thing. That's why I also really believe in having a good relationship of trust with your designer because, if you've invested that time into connecting and understanding each other and working well together, you should leverage that relationship. That relationship should become a part of your business plan because you know you have someone on your speed dial who can do the changes you need, and your business can evolve with that extra support.

MAGGIE: Yeah, and I think that's the exact same thing I tell anyone, whether I'm working with them on copy or content or anything. I'm like this is where you are today. Your about page, you're probably going to want to change it in three months.

ZSOFI: Yeah.

MAGGIE: You might want to change; you might want to tweak four words on it next week. I think my about page is at like rev number 127 or something.

ZSOFI: Yes.

MAGGIE: Because I'll wake up one day. I'll be like, that word does not work for me anymore. And literally, like, that's the beauty of WordPress and being able to just reinvent things as you go.

ZSOFI: Yes, absolutely.

MAGGIE: Now I know you're starting to do the Web and social site audits. I'd love to talk to you a little bit about that and how that works.

ZSOFI: Sure, yeah. Well, and that's a service that I haven't actually totally launched yet. It's just something I've been thinking about because I think that oftentimes, you know, you might have your site done. Maybe it's a site that was designed for you or has just been modified from a template or whatever, you know, whatever your site is.

MAGGIE: Mm-hmm.

ZSOFI: Sometimes people start to get the sense of like there's something off with their site, or they know there are problems, but they kind of don't know where to start. I just think that having someone audit your site, it just makes sense. It's a great idea. It's like saying, so, you know, just go hang out on my site for 10 minutes, 20 minutes, and just what do you think. How does it work? How does it hang together?

I like to offer this because I think that when you have someone on your site that does have a designer's eye and does work with websites on a regular basis, it can just be a useful exercise. I like to provide people with: if I was going to change your site right now, these are the first things I would do, and this is what I would recommend. I can relate with having that need because I've known in the past when things on my site weren't working, and I've had to say to people, can you just look at my site?

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: And what is it you see when you go there? Because, like I said before, that first three to five seconds of someone being on your site is so key because, first of all, that's how long a lot of people are just going to be on your site. That's the reality of Internet use.

MAGGIE: Yep.

ZSOFI: They're on and they're gone. And you're like, oh, my God; that was fast. So obviously understanding how people process your site when they first see it is really valuable. That's what I like to do in the audit. I like to say, you know, when I'm on your site this is what I think. And it can be a very, in a way, like abstract kind of impression. But it's like, you know, do I get the impression that, oh, this is a confident and polished professional? Or, oh, this is whimsical and fun. Or, unfortunately, this is confusing, and my eyes hurt, and I want to go.

MAGGIE: And there's no way I can do business with this person, no matter how awesome they are.

ZSOFI: Or, like, unfortunately, this person is saying that they do, you know, X, Y, Z, but the quality of their site is just totally contradictory to what they say they do, and that doesn't feel good, and that's not going to work to fulfill your needs in the end. So it's about what does your site say. What is it

that you're actually conveying? And does your site match what it is you're actually trying to do on your site? You know, do the pieces fall together?

It's not like you have to be predictable, but things have to be coherent, so there certainly a sense of coherence and just making sure that it feels cohesive and it's working towards the goals that you actually have. That's the overarching idea behind a website audit. Is it working on a very bird's eye view level? Is this good? Is this a good foundation for your business, because I think now, you know, most of us, the foundation of our business is actually our websites.

MAGGIE: Completely.

ZSOFI: It's the home. Completely, so this is important stuff. You know, it really is. I think, when you're taking a business seriously, when you're taking your online presence and persona seriously, which, as a good business owner, I think you absolutely have to do, you're going to want to make sure that when people visit your site, they're getting the point that you need them to get very quickly.

MAGGIE: And I think you really hit on something, the cohesive and coherent, because I know there's this thing online. I find a lot of times the copy doesn't match the person when you talk to them, or the site doesn't match the person. All those elements need to line up.

ZSOFI: Mm-hmm.

MAGGIE: The design, you, your copy, the experience of your customers, those are the elements of your brand. And the point at which there's this disruption between what I see and what I know, it just breaks down for me so often. I'm like, I don't understand what's happening.

ZSOFI: I know, and I think that happens where there's these disconnects that happen between the different platforms. I think, when people are trying to do too much --

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: -- I think the disconnect breaks down, and it does start to feel meaningless because actually it is meaningless. Just because you have seven social media profiles, and you have your so-called branding on each one, but what does that even mean? Are you just there because you think you should be?

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: I think that's meaningless, personally.

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: And I think that the whole thing just dilutes what it is you're trying to say. I mean, I think we've all seen there are some people online who integrate really seamlessly between all the different social media platforms and really convey their brand very clearly. That is not an accident. That doesn't just happen, you know, just because. That takes a lot of work. It takes a lot of precision --

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: -- in what they're saying. And it takes a lot of confidence in what they're saying because, you know, like it's funny because it takes a lot of confidence in what you're saying, but it also takes a sort of flexibility. This is where it becomes an art, I think. I think, to really portray this stuff well, there is an artistic quality to it because you have to take the basic elements of your brand, and you have to shape them to fit the different platforms. There has to be a fluidity, but you also have to be really clear on what it is you're doing.

If that all just starts to sound really overwhelming, then you know what? You shouldn't be there in the first place. And don't mean shouldn't be online. I mean you shouldn't be spreading yourself so thin because --

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: Yeah.

MAGGIE: It's so true because, I mean, this is something I work with people so, so much on, right? It's like how do we get the fact you have a website out into the world, and how do you show up, and what kind of words do you use because some of, like, you know, every so often someone will be like, well, I think I should be more, you know, edgy. And I'm like, but you're not edgy.

ZSOFI: Right.

MAGGIE: If you're of the person like if you-- You know, the perfect example is if you would never ever drop the F-bomb in real life, please don't do it in your copy.

ZSOFI: Yeah, please.

MAGGIE: And don't show up with a website that's all like, look at me, I'm badass, because you aren't.

ZSOFI: Yeah, I know. It's just funny. I mean, I don't know. I guess it's the idea of like, well, I want to craft a persona to be what I think I should be. But it's like you said, you know, but that just, it doesn't feel right.

MAGGIE: And I think that that's why we need, like, there's always these conversations about being authentic, which always strike me as odd

because, do we really have to work at being authentic? Shouldn't you just be authentic?

ZSOFI: But, I mean, isn't that just such an age-old problem?

MAGGIE: Yes.

ZSOFI: I mean, that problem existed long before the Internet ever did.

MAGGIE: Yes, isn't that true.

ZSOFI: That's why I always come down to that clarity and confidence piece. And that does not just happen. You don't just wake up one day saying, like, I have clarity, and I have confidence.

MAGGIE: No.

ZSOFI: Wouldn't that be amazing? You have to work for that, and you have to put in some time if you're not one of those magic people that has it just happen.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

ZSOFI: Which I don't think really does. It takes commitment.

MAGGIE: Yeah, we've gotten into some deep issues here.

ZSOFI: Well, what can I say?

MAGGIE: We're not even drinking wine and we're waxing philosophical about being authentic and everything else.

If we want to find you and learn more about your design, where can we find you online?

ZSOFI: Well, my website is obviously the easiest place to start, so it's Zsofi Koller Design, and the URL is just my name, but my name is not the easiest, so it's -- well, should I spell it out?

MAGGIE: You know, I'll put it on the show notes for everyone.

ZSOFI: Sure, and because I might be the only Zsofi Koller, at least on this side of the Atlantic--I don't know, maybe there's others--if you Google me, for better or for worse, I'm the first thing that pops up. Yeah, so I'm easy to find because of my name.

MAGGIE: That's awesome. Thank you so much for everything. I really enjoyed our chat.

ZSOFI: Well, thank you, Maggie. It was really fun to chat.

MAGGIE: My hand was literally falling off taking notes during my discussion with Zsofi. I have say that if you haven't checked out her work, you definitely want to hop over to her website. She's got this zen, chic vibe going on that's very, very cool. She works with some really amazing entrepreneurs too that you can really see how she translates their personalities.

Let's get into today's takeaways. Takeaway number one is really do your homework before you hire a designer. Get to understand what you're looking for or what kind of things you like, don't like. Create a swipe file as you're going through the Web and really make notes on what you like, what you don't like, what colors work for you, patterns, textures, all that kind of stuff. That way, by the time you get to the process of being ready to hire a designer, you really have a good understanding of kind of what direction you want to head in.

Your second takeaway is really for you to find the designer that's going to fit with you. Again, do your homework in terms of having a conversation. Do you like what's in their portfolio? Ask them questions to understand their process. Really dive in to make sure that you two are going to be able to speak the same language because there is a little bit of trickiness that goes on with design. They have to be able to get into your head. You need to be able to really and truly understand each other.

Takeaway number three is you want to make sure that your design is really cohesive and coherent with you as a person. You want to make sure it's an extension of you, that you're not creating this persona that's very, very disjointed. It's going to be very difficult for your designer, it's going to be very difficult for your customers, and you're just going to result in a lot of disconnection. So really think about how can I make things, not only just on my website, but how I present myself on social media, that look, that feel, and so it's this nice, clean experience for people.

The last thing you want is a jarring thing where people say, oh, my gosh, what's going on? Because the second people start to question it, if you take away the ease and simplicity, then what happens is you just lose them. You literally have seconds to make a first impression.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode. If you did, hop on over to iTunes and leave us a review. I think we've established, if you've listened to the show before, I'm a little bit obsessed with reviews.

If you want show notes and the takeaways for today's episode recapped, hop on over to www.MaggiePatterson.com/Episode17. And, as always, you can find a checklist or a worksheet to go with the episode. Marketing Moxie is about taking these ideas and implementing, so if you are listening, I encourage you to actually take what you are learning and apply it.

Don't just listen. The reason the show notes are there is so if you're in the car, or you're running--good God, if you are running with me in your ears, kudos to you--so that you can take that information and apply it.

Print those worksheets out. Save them. Use them to their full benefit in your business.

I will see you all again soon for another episode of Marketing Moxie.

OUTRO: Thanks for listening to Marketing Moxie with Maggie. Visit our home base at <http://www.maggiepatterson.com> for show notes and more episodes.

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