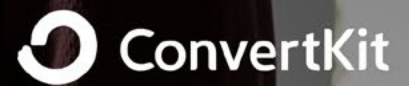


# *Selling* DIGITAL PRODUCTS *in 2021*

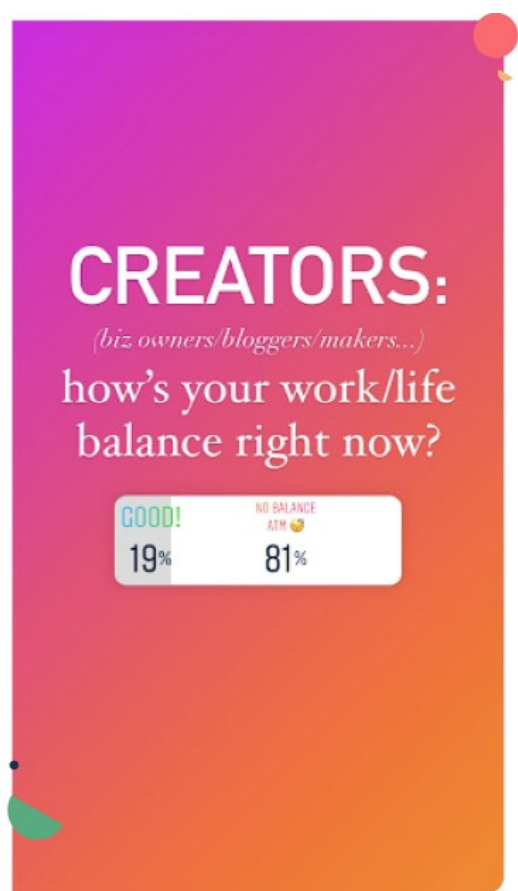




# The creator's guide to selling digital products in 2021

**2**021 is the best time to be an ambitious creator. But that ambition sometimes has a dark side: we're spending too much time chained to our laptops and working, with little balance in our lives.

When I polled my audience on Instagram and asked how their work/life balance was, an alarming 81% said they had no work/life balance!



I asked my audience how their work/life balance was with options to vote: "good" and "no balance at the moment". [Image via @dananicoledesigns on Instagram](#)

Can you relate? As a creator, you're likely doing *all-the-things*: building and launching new products, marketing, customer service, content creation, accounting...

Sounds like a lot, doesn't it?

But it's not only tiring, it's limiting. There will come a time when you can no longer juggle all your tasks on your own while growing your business.

## So what's the ambitious and burnt-out creator supposed to do?

You need to sell digital downloads. It's the perfect solution for the creator who wants to stop trading time for money!

## What is a digital download?

Unlike physical products that you can touch, see, smell, and hold in your hands, digital products are intangible items.

They're electronic files like software, templates, PDFs or MP3s, that you sell and deliver online. And you don't need to make them from scratch each time an order comes through, which means you can grow your income without growing your to-do list.

## What are the benefits of selling digital downloads?

Aside from the potential to make loads of money, here's why you should consider selling digital products in 2021:

- **Low cost:** Digital products have low overhead (and a high-profit margin). You don't need a warehouse to store them (just a computer!), and you don't need to assemble and deliver each product.
- **Simple distribution:** Shipping physical products can be a nightmare. You have to deal with returns, tariffs, duties, taxes, and product regulations. Luckily, digital products don't require any shipping.

- **Access to a large audience:** Since you have no shipping constraints, you can sell your digital products to anybody in the world, no matter where they live.
- **Passive income:** By selling digital products, you can finally [disconnect your income from your time](#), and who wouldn't want to earn more while working less?
- **Low barriers to entry:** Do you have a computer with internet access? Great! You (likely) have all you need to create and sell digital products.
- **Ecommerce is rapidly growing:** The amount consumers will spend while shopping online is [estimated to grow 8.8% annually until 2025](#). The easiest way to take advantage of that growth is by selling digital products.

Now that you know why digital products are so lucrative, it's time you come up with your own digital product to sell!

**ConvertKit**

## 6 reasons why you should sell digital downloads this year

Here's why you should consider selling digital products in 2021:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LOW COST</b><br>Digital products have low overhead (and a high-profit margin). You don't need a warehouse to store them (just a computer!), and you don't need to assemble and deliver each product. | <b>SIMPLE DISTRIBUTION</b><br>Shipping physical products can be a nightmare. You have to deal with returns, tariffs, duties, taxes, and product regulations. Luckily, digital products don't require any shipping.           |
| <b>ACCESS TO A LARGE AUDIENCE</b><br>Since you have no shipping constraints, you can sell your digital products to anybody in the world, no matter where they live.                                     | <b>PASSIVE INCOME</b><br>By selling digital products, you can finally disconnect your income from your time, and who wouldn't want to earn more while working less?                                                          |
| <b>LOW BARRIERS TO ENTRY</b><br>Do you have a computer with internet access? Great! You (likely) have all you need to create and sell digital products.                                                 | <b>ECOMMERCE IS RAPIDLY GROWING</b><br>The amount consumers will spend while shopping online is estimated to grow 8.8% annually until 2025. The easiest way to take advantage of that growth is by selling digital products. |

convertkit.com

## What types of digital products can I sell?

Here are some ideas to get you thinking. We also have an entire post dedicated to over [60 digital product ideas](#) to give you even more inspiration.

### 1. Design bundles

Elements like brushes, patterns, and icons can really vamp up your designs, but making these elements from scratch can take hours. Premade elements in design bundles help people make eye-catching designs without needing to create each element.

[Dann Petty](#) sells digital brush strokes for designers who want to emulate a marker in Figma:

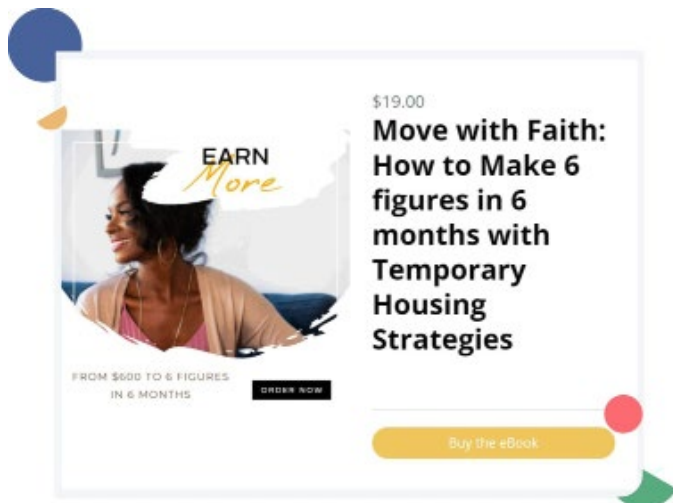


Dann sells Figma brushes for people to use in their designs.

[Image via Dann Petty](#)

### 2. Ebooks

Now is a great time to [make money selling ebooks](#): Revenue from ebooks is expected to [grow an average of 3.2% by 2025!](#)

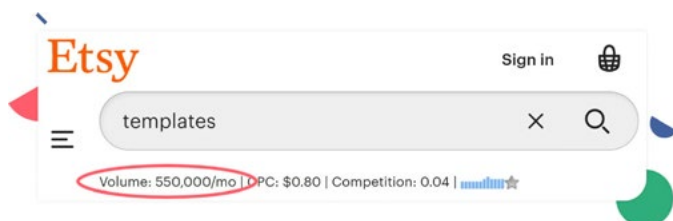


Package your knowledge up into an ebook to sell! [Image via Move With Faith](#)

And if you have a blog, you probably already have the material you need. Take all those blog posts you've spent hours writing and [re-package them into an ebook!](#)

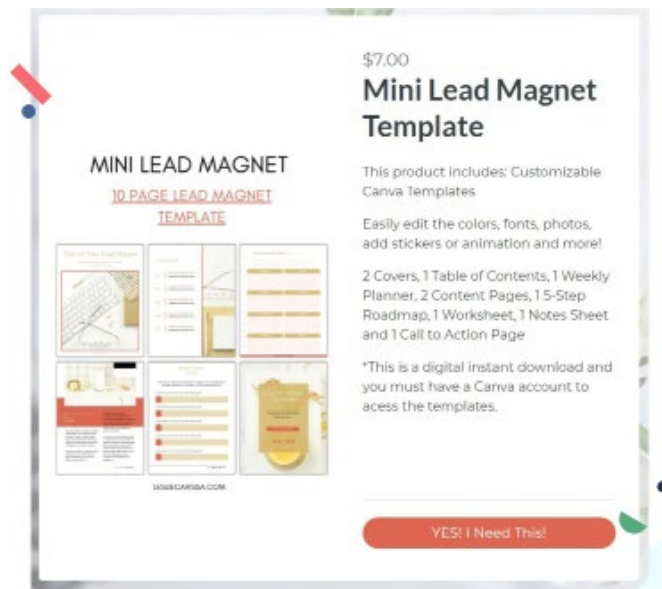
### 3. Templates

Template receive a whopping 550,000 monthly searches on Etsy alone:



Templates are a popular search term on Etsy. [Image via Etsy](#)

In a world where time equals money, people turn to templates to help them save time.

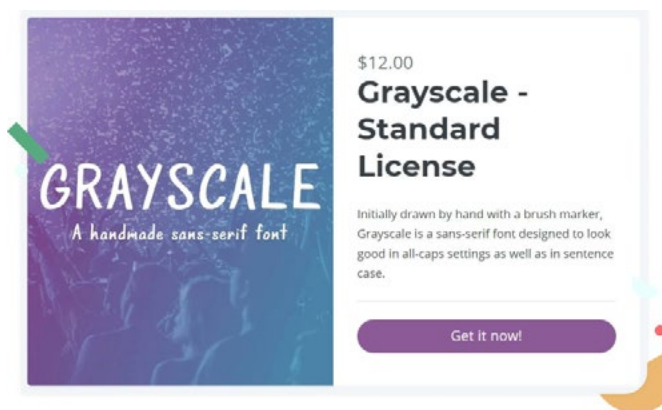


A collection of lead magnet templates. [Image via Leslie Carissa](#)

These lead magnet templates by Leslie Carissa are the perfect solution for creators who aren't savvy designers but want a visually-appealing lead magnet.

### 4. Fonts

[Fonts are a great digital product to sell](#), especially because [66% of people surveyed say they prefer to purchase fonts in packages](#) (hello, upsells!).



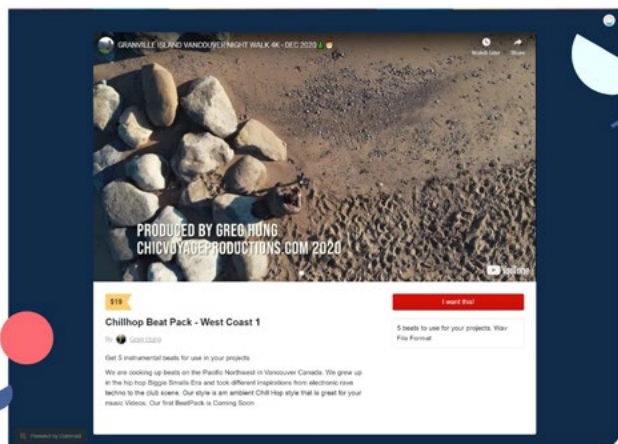
Individual fonts and font bundles for sale. [Image via Charli Marie](#)

You can offer individual fonts, just like [Charli Marie](#) has done, or bundle them together for higher sales.

## 5. Music

The obvious digital product to sell as a musician would be your songs, but beyond [selling your music](#), you can sell beats, jingles, samples, and stock music.

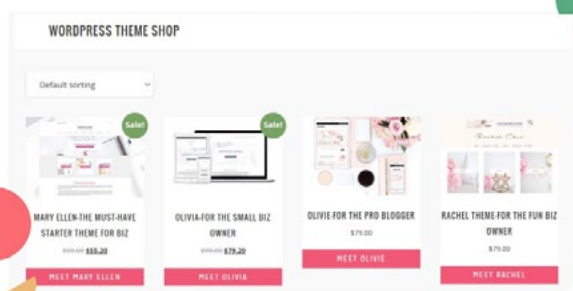
Take [Greg Hung](#), who sells beat packs for people to use in their own music:



Beat packs for sale. [Image via Greg Hung](#)

## 6. WordPress templates

If you're a web developer, your skills are in high demand via cost-friendly websites. Premade website themes give people a chance to DIY a visually-appealing website.

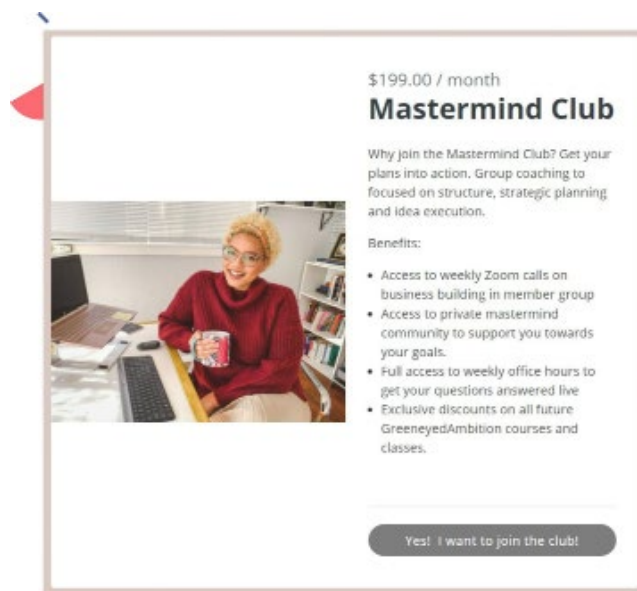


Wordpress themes for sale. [Image via Sarah Eggers](#)

[Sarah Eggers](#) sells WordPress themes for those who want to forgo the headache of trying to code their own website and don't want to hire a web designer.

## 7. Subscriptions

You digital products aren't limited to one-time purchases! [Jese Gary](#) has a membership where students pay a monthly fee to remain part of her mastermind.



Jese Gary sells a subscription to a monthly mastermind. [Image via Jese Gary](#)

Subscriptions can go beyond courses; as long as you're delivering fresh content you can turn your digital product into a subscription.

## Where can I sell digital downloads?

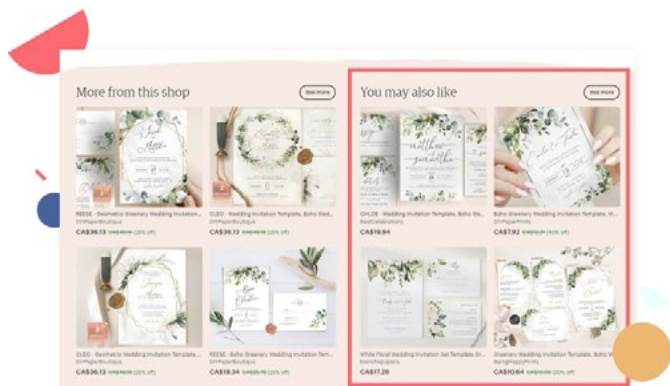
Once you've figured out what to sell, it's time to find a digital products delivery system to get your products into the (virtual) hands of your customers. Here's what we recommend.

### 1. Use online marketplaces

Online marketplaces are specifically for physical and digital goods. A few marketplaces we see creators using include:

- [Etsy](#)
- [Gumroad](#)
- [Podia](#)
- [Fastspring](#)

But marketplaces all share a couple of drawbacks. If you choose to sell on an online marketplace, your products are always next to other creators, making it easy for potential customers to miss your products.



Etsy displays competitor products right on your shop's page.  
[Image via DIYPaperBoutique on Etsy](#)

When I browse products on Etsy, Etsy recommends other products I may like right on someone else's shop page...far from ideal if you want to capture as many sales as possible!

Online marketplaces also charge transaction fees, which can eat into your profits.

## 2. Sell digital products on your website

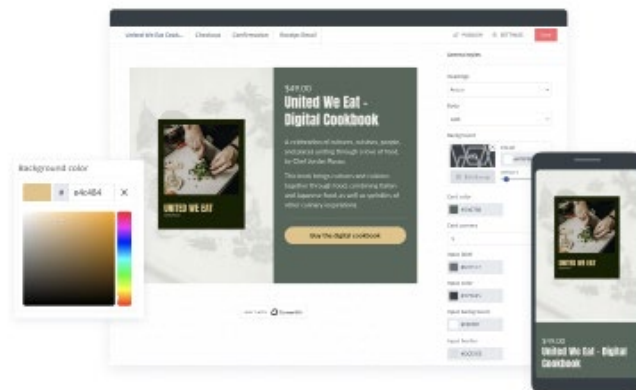
Another option is to sell digital products directly on your website. You can set up your own digital goods store on:

- [Shopify](#)
- [Squarespace](#)
- [WordPress](#) (with plugins like [Woocommerce](#) and [Easy Digital Downloads](#))

While you may not have to worry about your competition popping up alongside your products, managing a full [ecommerce platform](#) can be cumbersome, and many aren't built for selling digital downloads. Plus, when technical issues arise, they often fall on you to fix (and we're trying to get you away from working 24/7, not add more to your plate).

**The solution? ConvertKit Commerce.** [ConvertKit Commerce](#) is a simple tool to help sell digital products and subscriptions without an ecommerce website. You can:

- start selling right away (no need to pull any all-nighters trying to code and design a website)
- quickly integrate payment processors so you know you'll be paid
- upload as many different products as you want; ConvertKit Commerce grows with your business and offerings
- connect your branded domain or use the domain ConvertKit provides



ConvertKit Commerce is the best way to sell digital products because you own your platform and don't need to worry about your competition interrupting your customers while they browse!

The best part: You can use [ConvertKit Commerce](#) in tandem with different online marketplaces to expand your reach as much as possible!

## How to sell digital downloads

Getting started with selling your first digital download is easy. Here's four easy steps to help you start growing your income:

### 1. Decide what you're going to sell

Before you pick a digital product to sell, you need to research your audience to uncover their pain points so you can develop an irresistible offer.

You want to [understand your audience the same way you understand your best friend](#); get to know what they like and dislike and what problems they face. In turn, you'll be able to figure out what product you can create to make their life easier.

If you skip this step, you might end up creating a product that is useful **but not essential** to your audience, and you want the latter. Doing some digging to uncover what digital product your audience wants will give your product the best chance at being profitable.

You can get to know your audience by:

- **Doing work for them:** The easiest way to understand your future customers is to [provide a service and work for them](#). You'll get paid to understand them and will have money to fund your digital product venture.
- **Speaking with them directly:** Discovery calls and surveys (via platforms like [Google Forms](#) or [SurveyMonkey](#)) can help you ask your audience questions.
- **Joining relevant Facebook groups:** Did you know there's a Facebook group for people pretending to be ants in a colony? No niche is too niche for Facebook! There's a good chance you'll find a group (or several) specifically related to your audience. Join those groups to see what people are talking about.
- **Reading forums:** Forums like [Reddit](#) and [Quora](#) can give you insight into your audience. Just search for topics related to your niche to see what people are asking.
- **Joining Slack channels:** Slack is an instant messaging platform. Google "*Slack communities for X*" to find any Slack channels for your niche. Once you join the channel, you can view questions and conversations that your audience is having!
- **Reading product reviews:** Head to Amazon or any big ecommerce site and search for products in your niche to see what people like (and don't like) about the product. This can help you identify what's missing in the market and what gap you can fill.

Once you have a strong grasp of your audience, you can brainstorm different product ideas and select the one you want to sell.

## 2. Make your digital product

It's time to [bring your digital product to life](#)! As you're creating your product, ask yourself these questions:

- **What format will you deliver the product?** Beyond your digital product's file type, you'll need to decide whether you want your product to be a one-time purchase or a subscription.

- **What can your buyer expect from your product?** Understanding the end-goal will help you create a digital product that meets your customers' expectations.
- **Can you integrate this product with other products down the road for upsells, cross-sells or other big-ticket items?** It's ok if you don't currently have other products to use as upsells or cross-sells; you can create this digital product with upselling in mind so that down the road, you can increase your profit with more product sales.

## 3. Price your digital product

[Pricing your product](#) feels as easy as trying to hit a bullseye with a blindfold...luckily, these steps will point you in the right direction:

- **Research other similar digital products to see their price points:** There's a good chance you aren't the first person to come up with your product idea, and that's a good thing! You can use your competitors to see what price point your audience is willing to pay for a particular product, and use that information to guide your pricing.
- **Ask your audience, but not outright:** You don't want to ask, "*Hey! What would you pay for my latest ebook?*" The secret to finding out how much your audience will pay for your product is to uncover what they've already paid in the past for similar products. Don't forget to leave enough room in your price to account for any [promotions and discounts you plan to run throughout the year](#)
- **Focus on the value your product provides:** [Value-based pricing](#) is essential for digital products. Unlike physical products, where price is based on the cost to produce, digital products are passive. They don't require many (if any) costs to maintain after your initial investment. Instead, focus on what your customer gains from your product. Will they earn more money? Reach their goals faster? Save time? Uncovering the value will help you price your product!

## 4. Launch your digital product to the world

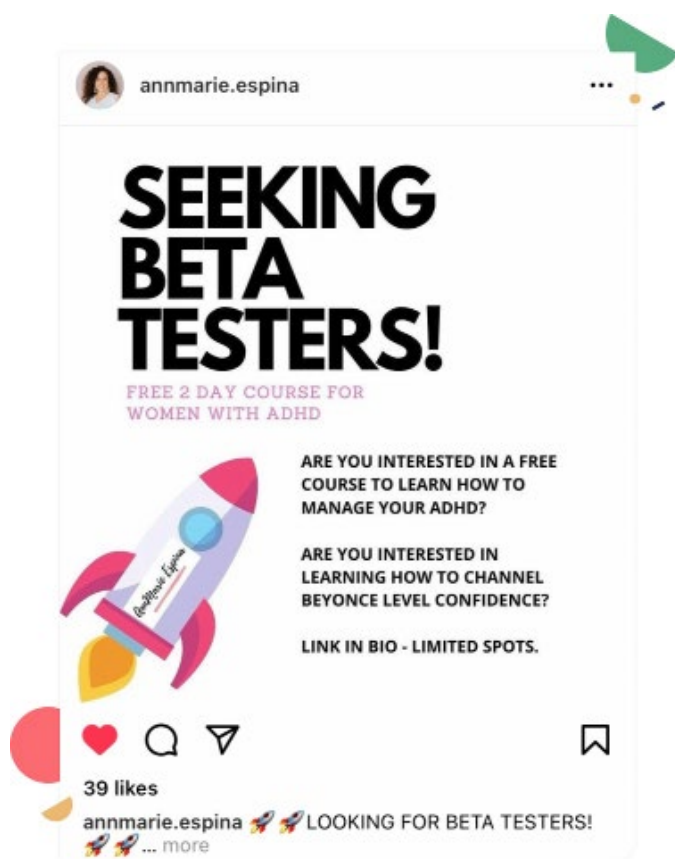
By this stage, you're eager and excited to launch your product. Haphazardly throwing together some [social media posts](#) won't get you the attention (and sales) your hard work deserves.

Instead, follow the below steps for [running a well-planned launch](#); your bank account will thank you later.

## 1. Beta test

Want a quick way to get feedback, testimonials, and even paying customers? Try beta testing your product with a small number of prospective buyers.

When [AnnMarie](#) started her new business coaching entrepreneurs with ADHD, she didn't have an existing audience to promote to. Instead, she used a free beta test to launch a new program she put together. AnnMarie says, *"I LOVE beta testing because it allows you to really put your product out there and get an idea for what people love."*



AnnMarie's post looking for beta testers. [Image via @annmarie.espina](#)

Her beta test resulted in a five-figure launch! The lesson? A beta test can help you [have a profitable launch without a large audience](#).

## 2. Create your sales funnel

A [sales funnel](#) is a series of emails that guide your subscriber from potential customer (top of the funnel) to paying customer (bottom of the funnel).



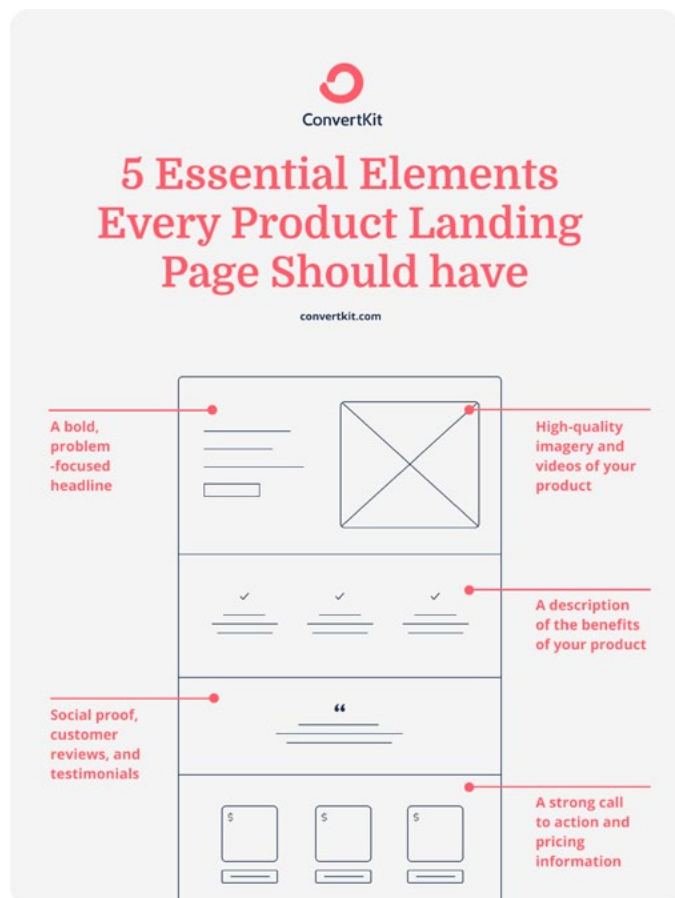
[Email marketing is a powerful way to sell your products](#). And since you can automate your sales funnel, **you can sell more without working more.**

## 3. Develop a landing page

Your [landing page](#) is the salesperson for your digital product. It's where you'll direct your audience so they can get more information, sign up for a waitlist (if you haven't launched quite yet), and purchase your product when it's ready to go!

[High-converting landing pages](#) contain these elements:

- A bold headline
- High-quality imagery of your product (since you're selling a digital product, you can use [digital product mockups](#))
- A description of the benefits of your digital product
- Social proof and testimonials
- A strong call-to-action and pricing information



You can use [ConvertKit's landing page templates](#) to whip up a gorgeous high-converting [landing page](#)—no coding required.

## 4. Share your products with the world

After beta testing, collecting emails, building your sales funnel, and putting together a landing page, it's finally time to launch your digital product!

Here are some quick tips for promoting your launch:

- Use your sales funnel to send multiple targeted emails
- Share your new product on your social channels
- Host a webinar to tease your new product
- Go live to answer any questions your audience might have

You can (and should) post multiple times about your digital product to reach as many potential customers as possible (just be careful not to spam your audience).

## Make money selling digital products

Now that you know how to create digital downloads to sell, it's time to take back your freedom without sacrificing your profits. To start, [sign up for your free ConvertKit account](#).

■ Dana Fiddler



# The Truths and Myths Behind Passive Income

## P assive income- myth or miracle?

Maybe it's a little bit of both.

I think we can all agree that money doesn't grow on trees, that there's no such thing as a free lunch, or whatever your parents said when they were teaching you the value of a dollar. But how do you feel when you hear the phrase "passive income"?

It's a polarizing topic in the online blogging and business community that comes with a lot of baggage and honestly a lot of confusion. The name can promise quick and easy riches for anyone who doesn't do enough research to truly understand the concept. But for those who tackle it with wisdom, know-how, and a little guidance, passive income is actually an amazing revenue stream that can help bloggers exponentially grow their business.

Since it's so misunderstood, let's first establish what passive income actually is before we talk more.

## What is passive income?

According to the king of passive income, Pat Flynn, it's ["building online businesses that take advantage of systems of automations that allow transactions, cash flow and growth without requiring a real-time presence."](#)

Let's unpack that, shall we?

What Pat is saying is that a passive income business is one that has created processes that do the manual, daily tasks for it so that the owner doesn't have to. That means that aspects of the business can run freely without anyone needing to monitor it from a computer screen.

What I would add to that definition to clear it up even further is:

*Passive income is a recurring revenue stream that does not involve constant hands-on work from its creator. A business owner can create passive income, only after investing time*

*and hard work upfront to create valuable products and those automated systems to keep it running.*

So it's not about how little you work or finding ways to not work at all. Passive income is about leveraging your time to have greater impact and grow your business. It's about investing a lot of time in your business at the beginning to create products that people can't ignore and processes to keep your customers feeling cared for so that you can benefit from it all later. It's all about learning how to scale your business so that as you make more sales you don't create more work on your end.

## The benefits of passive income

Every blogger should have at least one stream of passive income for their business. Bills, insurance, rent, product creation, paying team members – it all adds up. When it's you against the world and you're working for yourself, you need all the extra income you can get. These extra revenue streams can be just what you need to provide for your family, contribute to your vacation fund, or take your blogging from a side-gig to a full-time job.

The biggest pro for passive income is the freedoms it can offer you. Of course the first thing that comes to mind is the financial freedom. The more successful passive income streams you create, the more financial stability you can build for you and your family. That kind of freedom can reduce stress and fears about the future. It can also help you hire amazing, talented team members.

But the benefits go far beyond the financial freedoms. These streams of income can free up your time, your focus, your passion, and your creativity as well. Once you've set up the right automated systems to scale your business, that means you have more time on your hands to think about bigger picture things. You can step away from the daily tasks of product fulfillment, customer support, and bookkeeping to think about the high-level strategies that will continue to grow your business. You can spend your time doing the creative things that got you there in the first place.

It also means you have freedom to create even more passive income businesses. After you've done all the work necessary to secure that first business, you can start thinking about the next one. The better and more

systematic your automations, the more talented and numbered your employees, the more passive income streams you can create.

## The myth of passive income

It may sound sneaky, but passive income is not entirely passive. Aspects of it are, but in reality, there is no way anyone can run a successful business at an entirely passive rate. No matter how efficient, forward-thinking, or experienced you are, there will always be work to do.

There will always be marketing that needs to be done to get new subscribers, updates to old products and services to keep up with trends, emails and questions to answer, every day maintenance to do, and new products to create. A completely hands-off business just doesn't exist.

It's not about finding ways to not work, and I think it's that misunderstood "hands-off" concept that leads to so many passive income businesses failing. You can't create something, forget about it, and then expect it to thrive. Nothing works like that. Your plants will die, your food will mold, and your business will tank.

*The days of being able to sell an information product for hundreds or thousands of dollars and not provide any real support are limited. People are done spending their money on programs where they feel like a number and can't get actual support from someone who knows about their life or business.*

*The refund rate alone in the online information product market backs my thinking here. For many high-end programs, refund rates run as high as 10-12% because people are sold one thing and then realize they don't just need the information – they need real support to implement what they are learning!*

- RACHAEL COOK

## Why passive income businesses fail

The inherent flaw in all failed passive income businesses is the mentality behind it's creator. If a business owner

is focusing on how fast they can walk away from and stop working on their business it's never going to get the opportunity to succeed.

Businesses take work, dedication, and passion. When the focus is on making quick money so you can walk away from your business, you're missing out on all the things that will make your business successful and thriving. While there are many aspects of business that are skipped over with this misguided mindset, the main ones are:

**Customers.** Anyone working toward a passive income business with the wrong focus forgets all about their customers. Customers want to know that you care about them and you have to build that kind of trust. They want to know that you're there for them and that you're excited to teach. It shows them that you believe in your product and brand and goes a long way to establish your authority and credibility.

As soon as your audience starts to feel like you're not in it for the long haul, they'll turn to someone who is. And they'll pick up on those feelings quickly. If you're only putting in a marginal effort, you're not giving them enough reason to trust anything you could offer. If you're only in it for the quick dollar, it will show. And if you don't truly believe in your product, neither will a customer.

And without customers, no one will be there to buy what you're selling. You need that loyal following of people who believe in you and your brand to keep coming back for more. No business can succeed without it.

**Competition.** You are not the only player in the game. Successful business owners keep up with their competition to stay in that game. They've got to know new trends and what motivates customers to choose other brands. They've got to do research on their own products to find out why purchases are being made (or why they aren't). Staying relevant requires constant updates to your product and websites, analysis, and time for high-level thinking as well as daily upkeep work.

Honestly, the work is endless. Keeping up with the competition and the industry should keep most business owners on their toes, but if you're off pretending that your business can run without you while still making millions, you've probably forgotten that other people exist at all.

**Expansion.** Realistic passive income businesses work because their owners have figured out how to scale production by growing their business with capable, talented team members. However, if you're constantly vacationing on the beach, never checking in, and leaving your team to do all the work for you, you either won't be able to keep your team or you won't even hire one from the get go.

A team that gets the job done right and well is a team following an invested, hard-working, and caring leader. If you're not there in body, spirit, and excitement, your team won't be either and your business will not grow.

## What it takes to build a passive income business

The Internet is overflowing with people devoting their careers to building passive income streams for their business. The business potential is limitless, but I don't think everyone who tries has the potential to succeed.

So what does it actually take to create a passive income stream? Here are a few things I believe you need.



### The right mindset

By now you could probably guess that the first thing you need to build a successful passive income business is the right mindset. Before you start any kind of business, you need to check that your motivations are geared toward creating value for your customer.

Are you in this only for the money? Are you only considering your personal gain? Are you trying to hand off all the hard work to someone else and take all the credit? If so, you will not be a successful passive income business owner.

To make real money, to see big growth, and have a realistic passive income business, you have to come in focused on creating value for your customers. You have to want to be in the trenches (not forever, but definitely at the beginning), doing the hard work. You have to have a heart to see your

customers learn and grow from what you offer and you have to be so passionate about your topic that you eat, sleep, and breathe your work.

If you don't have that value-centered, customer-loving, passionate mindset about your work, your customers will smell the fake on you and run the other direction.



### Good work ethic

[You have to show up every day](#) because there's no such thing as an overnight success. Behind every successful passive income business there are years of building audiences, failed products, and slow but sure growth. A successful, realistic passive income business owner knows and is prepared to put in a lot of work...and I do mean a lot.

*It takes an incredible amount of work and discipline to build the products and systems that allow you to earn passive income. And the people who have that drive and motivation in the first place, generally are not the types to "rest on their laurels" once the money starts coming in.*

– MARIAH COZ



### Scalability

Beyond your personality, work ethic, and actual products, there is one thing you must be able to do well if you want a realistic passive income business. I'm talking about scalability. If you want your business to grow and still be able to step away from being completely hands-on, you have to hire a solid team and then set up the right systems to automate the work for you.

All successful passive income business owners have learned how to leverage their time by delegating daily tasks to team members and automating processes so they can grow their audience and provide more value to more people.

As the saying goes, the difference between a six-figure business owner and seven-figure business owner is how many checks they're willing to write.

Are you ready to scale your business using email marketing automations? To help you get started, we've created a handy [How to Make Email Marketing With For You Toolkit](#). With this Toolkit about automations, you'll find out how to use automations to streamline your email list and put email marketing to work for you while you sleep.

■ Dani Stewart



# Why Every Entrepreneur Should Consider Starting with Services

**T**here's a common misconception for many bloggers and online business owners that they need to have a product ready to go when they first start their business. And it makes sense. If you plan on making money from your business, you need something to sell.

But here's a little tip from me to you— if you're a new business owner, you don't need a shippable product to start your online business. In fact, you shouldn't start with a product. Instead, you should start with services.

If you're a first time online business owner, it would be easy to think you should get started right away by building your first product and selling it to everyone you can. You might think you have to have your product fleshed-out, created, shiny, and shelved for the hoards of customers that will inevitably beat down your door as soon as you hit publish. But the reality is that it's hard to jump straight from a full-time job to selling a product.

When products fail to make money or gain enough traction to sustain a business there's usually a common reason—the

customer. More specifically, it's the fact that the customer doesn't want the product you created.

*Entrepreneurs frequently fail to validate the idea of their startup's product with customers. That was my big mistake as I launched my first startup, Just A Five. Nobody wanted what my company had to offer. I ended up wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars on building something that nobody wanted.*

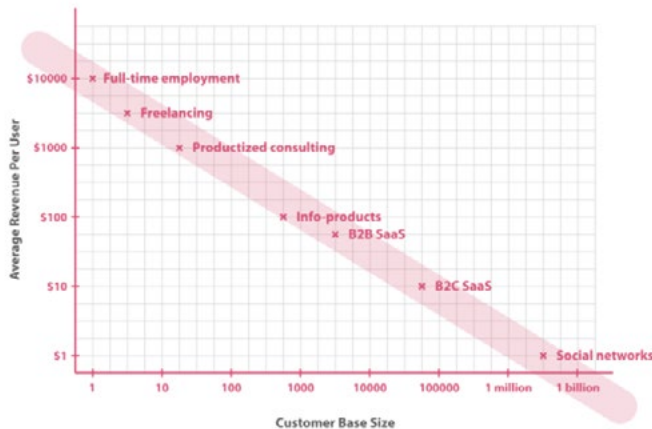
— JOHN RAMPTON [ON ENTREPRENEUR.COM](https://www.entrepreneur.com), FOUNDER AND CEO OF [DUE](https://www.due.com)

There's an obvious disconnect I see here between the online business owner creating what they believe is a worthy product and the customer seeing no value in it. I think that happens because many entrepreneurs simply don't have the necessary experience yet.

It's really hard to come up with a great product idea out of thin air. There's so much that needs to happen before you actually create a product and you can avoid much of that heartache by starting with services instead. Sacha Grief has a great framework for why this is the case, and he calls it "The Product Spectrum."

# The Product Spectrum

The problem with jumping from zero to product is exactly what [Sacha Grief explains with his theory called the Product Spectrum](#). Sacha uses the product spectrum to show how taking the leap from a full-time, salaried day job to freelancer to software founder gets harder and harder to accomplish.



As you can see in his graph, Sacha has plotted out a rough estimate of how much revenue per user per month you might need to earn and how many customers you would need to replace your full-time income from your day job.

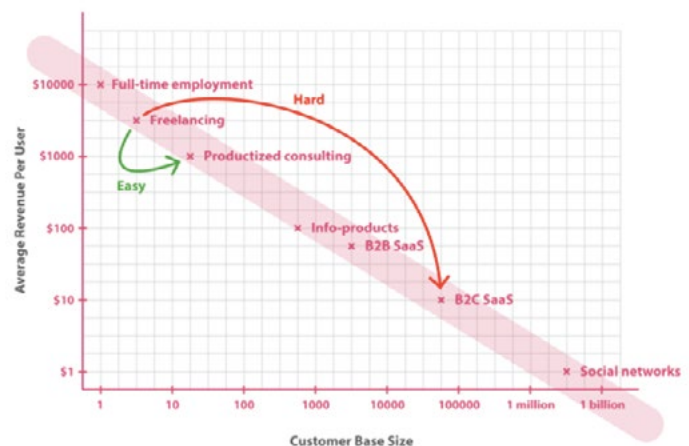
Now, can you imagine going from full-time employment to freelancing? Of course! Freelance work is fairly similar to the work you might do at your salaried job. It's pretty easy to understand how the skills you're using in a day job would translate into the skills you would need to deliver a service for a few clients. That's part of the key: you only need 5-10 clients paying you \$1,000 a month to replace your day job income.

Similarly, can you see how you could [take the leap from creating info products to creating a B2B Software as a service \(SaaS\)](#)? By the time you've created an information product and made a full-time living from it, you have experience with a target market, you've learned how to use marketing tools to reach that audience, and you've gained a bunch of customers. If you can partner up with a developer or build a tool yourself, you won't need many more customers than you needed selling info products.

Nathan (the founder of ConvertKit) is a great example of the transition from info products to B2B software. That transition would have been much harder if Nathan had tried to start ConvertKit right after leaving his full-time job years ago. After all, it was hard enough even after he had built [an info products business that made close to \\$300,000 in one year](#).

*Building a business is always hard, but making the jump from one type of product to the next is much easier when entrepreneurs follow the product spectrum.*

It's when entrepreneurs ignore this advice and try to leapfrog a couple steps that the problems can start. Here's how Sacha illustrates that problem:



As Sacha points out in the graph above, going from freelancing straight into a B2C SaaS would be extremely difficult. There's a good chance you haven't had the experience needed to lead a team, create and launch a product, interact with a wide customer base, or do any of the daily upkeep that growing a successful, profitable business takes.

Obviously, there will be the wunderkind exceptions of the world, and I should also say that I'm primarily talking to all my new business owners out there. If you have years of experience in productized consulting, it's very possible you could take the big leap to starting a B2C SaaS company. Experience is everything. But to all my newbies out there, [you've got to put in the time to get where you want to go](#).

Here's the key takeaway of this section:

*Going from a day job to launching an information product is much harder than starting out with a service. Start with a service and save yourself the heartache.*

Now, let's get to the three major benefits of starting with services.

## 3 Reasons Why Every Entrepreneur Should Start by Selling Services

You've probably heard that old adage: "Stop trading your time for money." People who give this advice use the reasoning that you can make more money by selling something (like a product) that isn't limiting by the amount of time you can invest. After all, time is a finite resource.

Most new entrepreneurs don't realize that in order to *stop trading time for money* you have to be making money from your time to begin with. "Stop trading time for money" is great advice for entrepreneurs who have already taken the first step by selling services.

For everyone else, here are three reasons why it's so valuable to start with services.

### Get Paid to Understand Your Audience

Great product ideas don't always come from your beautiful brain. Sorry, pal. It's true. Great product ideas often come straight from your audience. After all, they are the ones you're creating the product for. Shouldn't it be something that they actually want and need?

[The first step in developing a marketing plan is to become obsessed with knowing your audience.](#)  
*That's right, obsessed. It doesn't matter how much money you spend on Google Adwords, or how many conference booths you rent out if you are off-course with knowing who your audience is.*

- RYAN BATTLES

What you think is the best, most-effective, problem-solving product might not translate into the needs of your

audience. The very best way to learn about the needs of your audience is to get paid to help them solve their problems.

Once you've built a product, you have a solution to sell. People either buy that solution or they don't. When you're selling services, you have a chance to sell to the needs of your audience. When you're having a sales conversation, you can listen carefully for the problems your potential client is experiencing, put together a thoughtful plan to solve for those problems and then deliver your services.

In the process of delivering similar services for your target audience, it's much easier to begin to see trends across your customer base. Those trends are what make it easier and easier to move along the product spectrum to productized consulting and then info products.

*Starting with services is a great way to get paid to get to understand your audience.*

### Services are the Ultimate Minimum Viable Product

Once you've gotten to know your customer's wants and needs, do you think you're ready to put your head down and create the most monumental, full-fledged, all-the-bells-and-whistles product you can create? The answer, my friend, is "no".

Before you go spending time, money, and energy in creating a ready-for-market product, the next practical jump in your product launch would be to create a minimum viable product (MVP). This is a product with just enough features that allows you to ship to your early adopters. This low-key version helps you work out the kinks and see how your customers interact with your product.

While you can absolutely have your MVP be any kind of product, i.e. courses, eBooks, blogs, I would suggest that you launch a service as your MVP. I'm not trying to downplay products by any means. However, there are so many big benefits of launching a service-based MVP.

With a product, there might be at least a month's worth of work to put even an MVP together. Think about the time it takes to create a course, get images ready for an eBook, or set up new blog.

On the flip side, there is practically no prep-work needed to launch a service. With a service, all you need to do is create a landing page where you can send customers to hire you. Or, even better, you can reach out to potential customers directly for sales conversations without ever touching a website.

*Launching a service is the fastest path to a minimum viable product.*

## Gain Customer Testimonials + Build a Product Hypothesis

By working closely with your customers you will have a more in depth understanding of what stage they are at with their businesses and how you can create a valuable product to help them. This kind of close relationship is priceless. By providing a service and working directly with your customers on their business, you can begin to build your authority in your topic at the same time you build trust.

It's this personal touch that will really help your early customers identify and connect with you. These happy customers will become your social proof through testimonials and case studies around how your service helped them level up. You can use these same testimonials to help you sell your future product.

After you've had some time in the trenches with your customers, figuring out their wants and needs, you can use those trends you found to form a hypothesis about a product your customers might need and want. We call this *the product hypothesis* and there's no better way to form that hypothesis than services.

Your product hypothesis should be based on the trends in the common pain points you've seen amongst your freelance customers. What do they have in common? Of the problems they have in common, which are the ones they've already paid you to solve for them?

You should use the product hypothesis you create to build a sales page for a product and "pre-sell" that product, which is sometimes called a beta-launch. This is a great way to find out whether people will buy the product you've dreamed up without putting in too much work up front. [The best way to sell a product online is to first test your market to see if people actually want to buy it.](#)

Pre-selling a product will not only save you months of wasted time creating a product that doesn't fit your audience, it will also help you gain momentum for a product that will work. When you engage with your audience and ask them what they want, they start to feel more involved with you and your brand. They'll have stake in what you create and will be excited to have even a little part in the process.

These invested people will be your pre-sale audience. And if you can get them interested and hitting the purchase button before you've even created your product, chances are you're on the right track. If they don't buy, then you know for a fact that you should keep delivering services until you can come up with a new product hypothesis.

*Save yourself months of heartache from a failed product by using services to gain customer testimonials and form your product hypothesis.*

## Create a great product by starting with services first

Creating a great product starts long before it's actual creation. Some of the most successful online entrepreneurs know this because they started with services and used their learnings to build a product they knew they could sell.

Sadly, so many online business owners don't realize this. Instead of taking the time to truly understand who their customers are and learn about their wants, needs, and problems, they rush into creating a product that they think is the answer to the problem. They work off assumptions, take big leaps, and subsequently end up taking big falls because of it.

But now you know better. You can avoid wasted time and the heartbreak of failed products by getting started with services first.

What service will you start with? Share your idea on Twitter along with this article and see what your followers think!

■ Dani Stewart



# How to Build a Valuable Product From a Simple Idea

**W**ith all that influences us on a daily basis, it's easy to become an "idea person". You know that guy, right? Chock full of ideas, but fairly short on execution of any of them. Maybe you've even been that person... don't worry, we all have at one point or another.

There's no such thing as a bad idea, right? Ideas are fun, they're exciting, and they're full of possibility. Ideas are a spark for creativity too. They're a playspace for our brain and they often lead to even more ideas. Plus, you're passionate about a lot of things, so you're bound to have plenty of ideas if you let your mind run free.

But if you're serious about building your business, those ideas need to move quickly into one of two buckets:

Bucket A: Idea Not Worth Pursuing

Bucket B: Idea Worth Pursuing

As a creative, business-minded person, you're inherently going to fill Bucket A much faster than Bucket B. Your

ideas that you end up not pursuing could take too much time, not make you enough money, or they could be ideas that you simply need to set aside for the greater good of your business. That last one, by the way, is the hardest to swallow.

As entrepreneurs, we have to look at our ideas through an analytical lens. When we take this approach, we might realize that an idea is a great one, but not one that will serve our business goals right now.

For example, you might have an idea to run an online summit to help you grow your email list. You know you're great at connecting with other professionals who would want to be involved. You have the topic in mind and have even connected the summit theme to an offer you'll extend through your follow-up email sequence. So it's a great idea, yes? Bucket B?

Not so fast. While that summit might seem like a great idea at first glance, you realize that organizing a summit with so many moving parts and pieces is too much work for you to manage on your own while you continue to serve your one-on-one clients. Juggling contributors, daily emails to your

subscribers, and simple tasks like building the landing page start chewing up more time than you have to give. You realize your one-on-one business will suffer if you pursue the summit without additional support.

So that idea goes into Bucket A.

But what about those Bucket B ideas? Those ideas worth pursuing? How do you go from idea to finished (and profitable) product?

That's what we're diving into today, and there's one big takeaway I'll share at the end (but don't just scroll to the bottom here – let's go through it and see if you notice a trend, okay).

## 8 Steps to Go From Idea to Finished product

[Regina Anjou](#) is no stranger to big ideas *and* big action. As a guide for the Infopreneur (an entrepreneur who sustains their business on information – read: digital products), Regina has turned well over a dozen of her Bucket B ideas into products, from easy downloads to long format eCourses.

Over time, Regina has developed an [easy-to-follow pattern to take her ideas from the bucket and turn them into money-making products](#). In short, those steps are:

- Position
- Plan
- Preview
- Price
- Package
- Promote
- Produce
- Protect

Regina loves the letter P.

In fact, here's a note from Regina with a few more useful P words in it:

*Releasing courses, learning how to create content that helps, figuring out how to sell your materials . . . it all gets more organized and efficient as you go. Things start to make sense. Things start to flow.*

*You start to see patterns. You become more epic at it. I truly believe we will never become “perfect” at releasing courses or other information products, but we can certainly figure out what works well and set ourselves up to learn more as we go.*

Ah yes, the one idea we MUST let go of: the idea of being “perfect”. Speaking of which, here's Regina again:

*I'm pretty much afraid of launching almost everything I've launched: Will it be useful? Will people like it? Is it helping? Is it pretty enough? Are people tired of me? If you wait until you feel “ready” . . . until you're sure of something, it will never get done.*

So let's unpack this a bit more since you're never going to be “ready” anyways.

## Phase 1 – Idea to Action

Figuring out your core concept for your idea is exactly where you need to get started. Forget the logo design and brand colors and fun naming exercises right now. What you need to focus on is that main message your product is delivering. For best results, get down to that action step your buyer will take to see an impact in their own life or business.

Let's use Regina's course [The Epic Business Lock-In](#) as an example here.

**Idea:** Provide a space for online business owners to actually work on their business.

**Problem:** Many people who start online businesses work full-time during the week and “side hustle” on the weekends. They don't have time or money to travel to a conference or in-person event.

**Solution:** A virtual retreat over a weekend complete with community aspects like live calls and a Facebook Group to talk to other participants.

Regina's Position with this course is that it's possible to build an incredible business with infoproducts. You just need to set aside the time to make it happen.

Now she's on to her Plan.

Remember, The Epic Business Lock-In likely didn't even have a name at this point. The Plan phase tends to move quickly since it's more idea generation (and your brain is really good at those ideas).

As you're planning you'll want to look for these key points:

- What's the format of the product?
- How hands-on will you be in the delivery of the content?
- What is the deliverable at the end of the course? What can a buyer expect to take away?
- What can you surprise your buyer with? Asked another way, how can you take this product to the next level?

Planning for Regina's course could look like:

- Decide on weekend-long format and pick a weekend to host it
- Block off time for live calls
- Separate out learning into four distinct "tracks" so that there's a single deliverable at the end of the weekend
- Add community element with a Facebook Group and lifetime access

Now, you'll likely want to go a tiny bit more in depth depending on your format. In this case, Regina has some live elements so her potential buyers might want to know what happens if they have to miss some of the time, they might want to know if everything is recorded, etc.

But don't worry about building it out too much because here's where the fun happens:

## Phase 2 – Set Your Idea Free

In Regina's list of "Ps", this phase is Preview, Price, Package, Promote.

This phase is that scary part Regina mentioned earlier... it's time to share your idea with the world and get feedback. For The Epic Business Lock-In, Regina took to Periscope to talk directly to her audience and give them live answers to their questions (all while taking copious notes on where she could do a better job of explaining the course up front). You can do this phase in a number of ways, but one of our favorites is through a free email course.

With your email course, you're going to walk your readers through one section of the bigger offering you've dreamed up, or you could give them a super high level overview of what's to come. The free email course for The Epic Business Lock-In could have been a five day series starting with a link trigger to choose your "track" followed by four more days with one key lesson from each specific track. The final email of the series is an offer to join Regina and the community in the full program.

The key to this phase is to provide value also while asking for feedback. Give them actionable steps they can take (a great way to test content for your course!) and ask them to reply to you with what they're learning along the way. You can have this interaction via email, on Twitter, in public groups, or over a webinar.

This second phase is about developing a bit more of your course details too. And that, my friend, includes price.

Regina points out some good things to consider regarding pricing:

- Your time, tasks, and emotional expenditure
- Material inputs, fees, and cost of goods sold
- Business overhead and what you want to invest in your business
- The client's perception of the value you are adding to their life or business with your course
- Competitor prices and market prices
- How many of each course you expect to sell per week/month and how much of your income you want those sales to make up
- Gut feeling and testing the market

With a large audience and multiple tracks, Regina was able to keep the costs down on The Epic Business Lock-In and price each individual track at just \$55 – with an [option to upgrade and get all four tracks for one bundled price](#).

## How to price your product

Since her hands-on time is done in a group setting, Regina can factor that into her pricing too.

Does your product include a 1×1 session with you? Brand new materials you've created? An expensive piece of software to deliver the course? [Think through all of these points, set a price, and share it.](#)

Oh, and here's a secret about pricing: it can always change.

Set it higher than the market will respond to? Provide a discount code to your email subscribers or offer a payment plan.

Priced it a bit low? Call it an introductory price and let people know the price will be going up when you launch it all again.

The last part of Phase 2 is, unfortunately, the part most people jump to right away. But you're reading this so you'll have covered all of our other bases first. Now it's time to wrap that product up with a bow and hand it over.

But guess what? We're still not building out the product yet. It's simply time to package it.

## How to promote your product

In order to formally promote your product, you'll want to create a landing page or sales page with all of the pertinent details. At this point in the process, this step should be easy. Your planning phase gives you the outline of what you're selling, your position gives you your main talking points on that sales page, you've nailed down your pricing, and your audience feedback from your promotion gives you a well-rounded FAQ section.

[You're ready to create a page like this.](#)

This is what that whole "Minimum Viable Product" thing is about. Popularized by Eric Reis' *The Lean Startup*, a MVP is [a product with just enough features to gather validated learning about the product and its continued development](#). It's a great way to avoid developing products no one wants. Take an idea out of the box, unpack it a bit, and then show it to the world to see if anybody wants your thing. When you've done it right (following these steps above), you get to know quickly if you should move on to Phase 3.

## Phase 3 – Make It Yours

Produce and Protect might be the most exciting part of this process but, unfortunately, it's where most people start instead of end. But you're not going to make that mistake, right? You're here and you now know that this fun part comes at the end – in Phase 3.

You'll notice this part is the shortest part we'll talk about. That's because at this phase the hard work is done! Sure, you have to do the work of creating that thing you've tested and (possibly already) sold, but you are now so very clear on what your product looks like, this phase is just a matter of setting aside the time and getting it done.

At this point in the process Regina got to work building the true content for the Epic Business Lock-In. Sure, she knew all along what she was offering, but why create worksheets, slides, and graphics if you don't know that someone is going to buy it. (Hence, the promotion phase first).

Once it was sold, Regina could take her expertise around building out a course and, well, build it. But what can you do if you've never built a course before? I have just the thing for you: [The Ultimate Guide to Creating Online Courses](#)

Once you've built the product, it's time to protect it. You know that friend of a friend who had her sales page completely copied or found the carefully crafted title to his product listed on someone else's product page? Yeah, that can happen to you too if you don't protect your work.

As a lawyer for creative bloggers, Autumn Witt Boyd is all too familiar with this problem. You can learn about her [five steps every blogger should take to get legit legally](#) so you're prepared for this product and many more to come.

## But Don't Stop There

Just like ideas are plentiful, product types are too. Products don't just look like digital products for many bloggers. You can use this same game plan for physical products or even live events. While the deliverable looks different in the long run, the three-part plan doesn't change much. Turn your idea into action, take it to the public, and then reign it back in and call it your own.

No matter how big or small your idea might be, you now have a way to sort through, find the gems, and turn them into products that make you money and leave you fulfilled at the end of your day. And that, as Mastercard would say, is priceless.

■ Val Geisler



# Unique Digital Product Ideas for Your Niche

*“Blogging is like therapy for me and I’ve enjoyed getting to share our family’s story here with you every week. When I first started blogging, I sank hour after hour after hour after hour into this blog with no intention of ever monetizing the site,”*

- SHAYE ELLIOTT, FOUNDER OF [THE ELLIOTT HOMESTEAD](#)

While many of us get started with our businesses as a form of therapy or simply pure enjoyment, the New American Dream is to work as little as possible while making as much as possible. And if you want to do that with your blog, you’re going to need to look outside of trading time for money (consulting, mentorship, etc.) to digital products that create that [magical “passive income”](#) everybody talks about.

Now, I know you’ve heard of passive income before, but you might be thinking, “I did start this as a hobby and I do want to monetize it, but my audience just won’t buy digital products. On top of that, I can’t think of a single digital product to create. I’m just not really a ‘sales’ person, ya know? Can’t I just keep blogging and do my sponsored posts and Google AdWords?”

I know. And you can certainly keep up that ad and sponsored content game plan—if you want to limit your earning potential.

When you keep your blog revenue focused on the amount of ad space you give up on your site and the number of sponsored posts your audience will tolerate, you automatically set a cap on your earning potential. When you incorporate digital products, your potential is only limited by the number of products you create and how you market those products to your audience.

And I’m here to tell you that there IS a digital product your audience is looking for no matter what your blog is about. In fact, Mariah Coz posted on Twitter asking people to share their profitable digital products in fringe niches and [she collected 30 responses](#).

On top of that, monetizing your blog with products can be life-changing. It was for Shaye:

*“That being said, at some point I began to monetize the site. It all started with the release of my cookbook last year which brought in more money than we*

originally anticipated. Frankly, I thought my Mom would buy a few copies for Christmas gifts and that'd be about it. But after investing over a year into putting it together, I was so thankful for it's financial provision for the family. With that cookbook money, we were able to purchase our dairy cows, put up corrals, stock up on hay for the year, get our chicken flock started, and even plant a few annuals (that died, but that's not the point). The cookbook gave us money that we weren't accustomed to having in our normal, day-to-day budget and so we were able to use it as 'building the farm' money."

Yes, Shaye's cookbook is a physical product you can touch and feel, but she is a smart business owner and offers [digital copies of that same cookbook](#) that require no additional packing, shipping, or signing on her part.

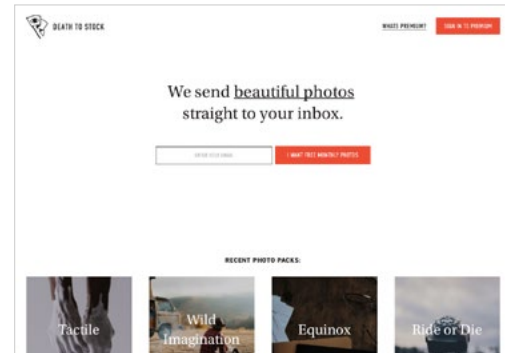
Look: there's a solution right there! Offer a digital version of a physical product you already sell. See, we're making money already.

But you want more options, right? You need to see what's possible and learn how it might apply to your business. I get that. So I've rounded up 19 more ways to put digital products into place in your business, complete with examples so you can see how others are rockin' it.

## Types of Digital Products You Can Sell

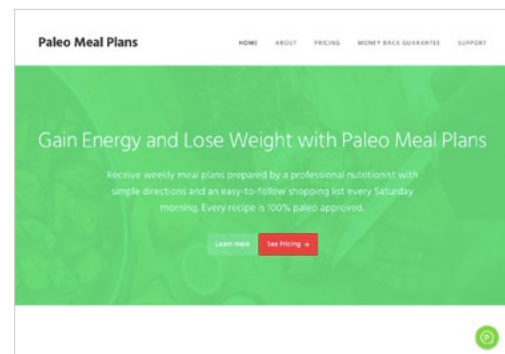
### Photography

Have a passion for the camera and the ability to shoot great images? We're all tired of seeing the same old same old stock photos out there, so turn your lens toward shooting stock images that stand out. You can charge a monthly fee (like [Death to the Stock Photo](#) does) or you can do a pay-per-download model.



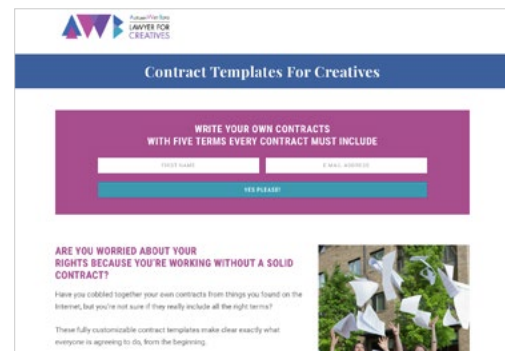
### Recipes/M meal Plans

If you're one of those savvy cooks who has your meal plans written up and recipes all ready to go each week, consider packaging custom meal plans for your readers. Meal plan and recipe packages range from monthly subscription models to one time downloads.



### Templates

Put that law school degree to use and help your audience protect themselves with some legal disclaimers. Templates can range from copyright infringement text for the bottom of a website to full blown contracts that can be customized.



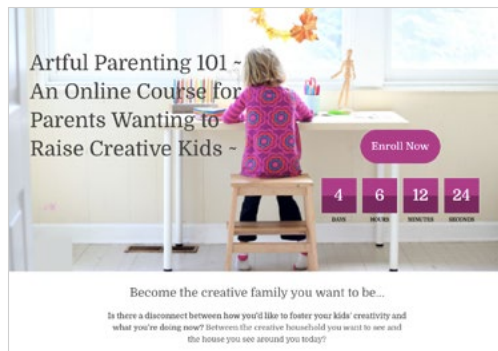
## eBooks

You've likely heard by now that eBooks are a great way to get your message in front of your readers. But try to think a bit outside the box with your eBook and offer some add-ons and options to make the most of your revenue potential beyond the written word.



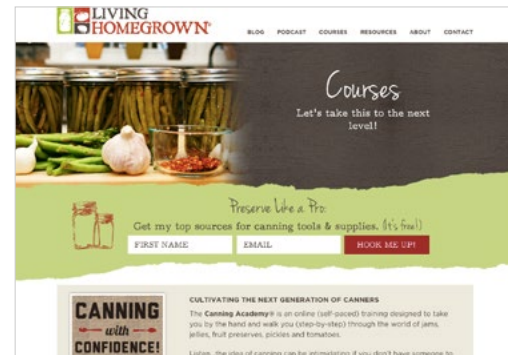
## eCourse

Have something to teach, but your audience is spread all over the world? Utilizing videos, screencasts, and slides, you can create a powerful eCourse that serves your niche and maximizes your bottom line.



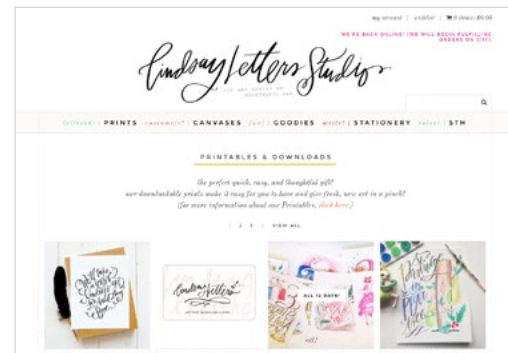
## Tutorials

Sometimes packaged up as eCourses, tutorials are a great way to teach a portion of what you know to your followers. A tutorial can be a standalone product or it could be just a taste of a bigger eCourse so you have a built in up-sell at the end of the tutorial.



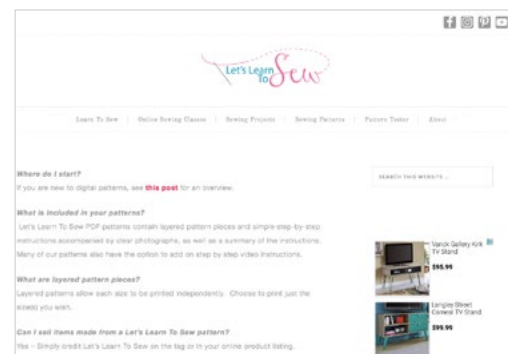
## Artwork

Let your audience adorn their office walls with your art, hand lettering, or photography prints. Offering ready to go (or even printable) artwork helps your followers bring more of your work into their life and it gives you an opportunity to be seen by more and more people over time.



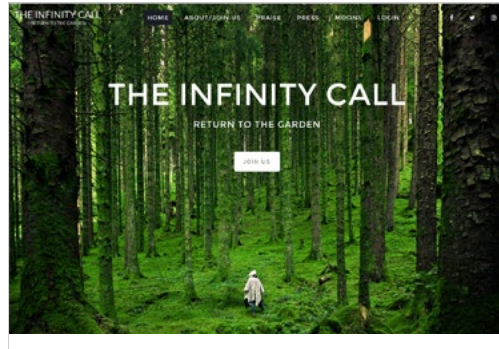
## Patterns

Lots of people know how to sew, but pattern creation is an art that many are not gifted with. If you have the talent and willingness to share, offering patterns for instant download on your website is a smart move.



## Audio Recordings

Maybe your best work is done by audio. So you offer some live sessions but, darn, not everyone can be there at the set time. No worries! Simply offer the audio download as an option for anyone who can't make it live and you have a ready-to-go digital product from your live event.



## Video Courses

While audio is great, some things are better explained with visuals. If what you teach is one of those things, video lessons are going to be your best bet. By offering video courses, you're giving that feeling of what it would be like to be there live with you without the overhead, travel, or additional cost it might take to produce a live event.



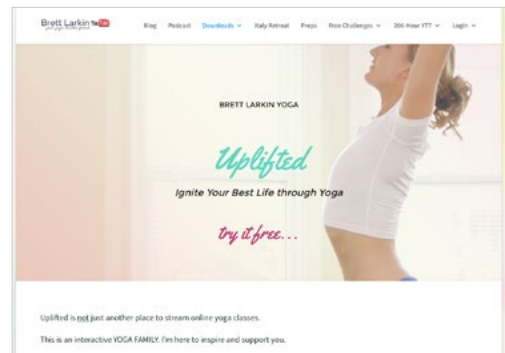
## Email Course

One of our favorite ways to create digital products, email courses give you direct access to your reader in their inbox and they allow you to deliver multiple types of content through the links you provide. Email courses also train your readers to expect emails from you which ultimately means they're more likely to open your future emails and newsletters.



## Membership Site

You might have years of experience and backlogs of videos, audios, or written lessons. Or maybe you have content you want to produce over time, but you don't want to wait to get students in the door. Membership sites are the ideal way to deliver large amounts of content over time to an invested audience who comes back month over month.



## Plugins

If you're techy in nature and see a problem you can solve, a plugin might be your digital product of choice. Maybe you want to build the best social media buttons, email opt-in pop up form, or blog comment platform. If you can build it, a plugin is a way to see some revenue come in consistently over time as the awareness around it grows.



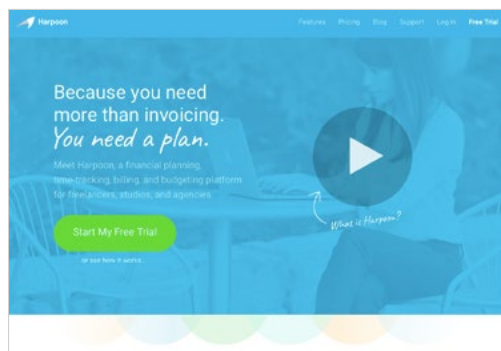
## Webinars

Yes, most webinars are free, but if you're already recording them for a replay, why not package them up and sell them after a set period of time? You've just spent an hour (or more!) teaching what you know, use that webinar to create revenue that lasts long after the live event ends.



## Apps

Ahem. We might be a bit biased here but building an app (like, oh, the best email marketing app out there) can lead to big growth over time. You can start small with an iPhone or Android app or you can go big with a fully developed web application.



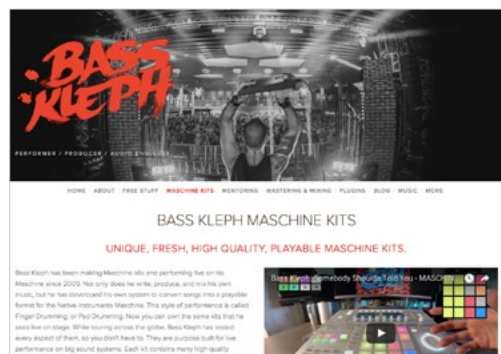
## Website Themes

We all want our websites to stand out. If you have the chops to build a custom theme from scratch, consider packaging it up and selling it to others. Selling a theme gives you an opportunity to also sell add-ons for the theme, courses on how to use the theme, and even membership sites for your theme users.



## Original Music

Podcasts, video intros, YouTube channels, and promotional bits all need music, and we're tired of hearing the same thing over and over again. Musicians have the unique ability to sell original music for download in a package or as individual tracks.



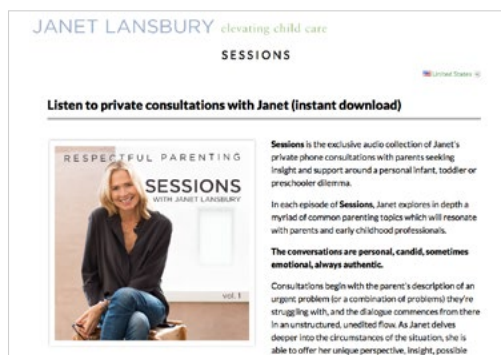
## Printables

If you find yourself constantly drawing things for your kids to color or cutting out shapes from something you sketched, consider creating some digital printables for your audience. They've followed your blog about your crafty adventures, why not let them play along while you collect some well-deserved revenue from it!



## Coaching Recordings

You'll want to get permission from your clients to do this, but recording and selling your coaching sessions can be incredibly beneficial. Sometimes we don't know what we don't know, but hearing someone else's question could jar something for us. Listening in on another person's coaching session could be priceless and it's worth exploring if your audience would be interested.



## So what will you create?

And now it's in your hands. With over a dozen examples of how you can turn your digital product dream into a reality, what's stopping you? Get to work – and then share your product with us on social media so we can celebrate your success!

 Val Geisler



# How to Sell Physical Products on Your Blog

**W**hen you hear the phrase, “Earn a living with your blog” do you automatically think about digital products? If so, you’re not alone.

Aside from ads/sponsorships (which all non-blogger-muggles believe is the monetization holy grail), [most bloggers believe digital products are the best way to grow your business](#) and [find that sweet passive income](#). It is the obvious choice, right?

By creating digital products for your business, you have little overhead, you don’t need to worry about packaging or shipping, they can be easily updated, and your scalability is endless. You can also be relatively hands-off as your digital product customer base grows, leaving you time to create more and more digital products for your shop.

But while these information products in fact may be the backbone of the professional blogging industry, there’s still something beautiful and unique to be said about physical products. I’m talking tangible, hold-it-in-your-hands, feel-

the-weight-of-it, and put-in-on-your-mantle kind of physical products.

## The benefits of physical products

Yes, physical products will take up more of your time and money. You’ll have to get it manufactured, packaged, shipped, and stored. But don’t let that scare you. Creating a physical product for your blog can give you an incredible and unique advantage over all your digital product producing peers.

1. **Physical products generally have a high perceived value.** As you probably know, [the perceived value can affect how much a customer is willing to pay for your product](#). So, in this case, a physical product will almost always beat a digital product. There can be an actual value placed on it because you can see it, use it, and know what it does.
2. **You can do demonstrations with a physical product.** Selling a digital product that you can’t see involves a lot of salesmanship. You often need to rely on social proof and faith in your brand to make sales happen. But with

a physical product, a customer can touch it and feel it. They can actually see how it works, what it does, and how it will benefit their life. No brand faith required.

3. **Physical products can be used as an extension of your digital products.** Think of what you're teaching on your blog in your courses, eBooks, etc. Whether you're educating your audience on cooking, finances, wellness, or leadership, there is always a possibility to create a physical product that can correspond with your lessons.

*"I look at the products in my Etsy shop as an extension of my blog. Through my blog, I encourage people to live positively, purposefully, and productively, and the products in my Etsy shop reflect that. I write a lot about productivity, and the notepads I create allow people to take that one step further and really implement my tips.*

*I also sell coffee mugs and t-shirts. For me, wearing a shirt or drinking from a coffee mug with a fun quote is certainly something small, but also something that can genuinely lift my spirits, and I hope others can take away the same positivity."*

- ERIN OF [VERY ERIN](#)

4. **There's an added personal touch when you create something tangible and hand it off to another person.** That bit of humanity is important to keep in today's world as we take steps further and further away from how our grandparents did business. That personal touch can also help your customers feel like they're part of your community.

*When I created my site back in 2013, I never thought I'd sell physical products. But I have found that the physical products contribute to the sense of community. It's something your audience can hold that represents the space you occupy online and in their lives. ... It was and remains important to me to develop and maintain an authentic, non-pushy way to sharing our offerings with our audience. So we focus on providing value to our list, and in return they become an even more invested member of our community with the mug to prove it.*

- TONYA AT [MYFABFINANCE](#)

There truly is a simplistic beauty to selling a physical product.

## The downsides of selling physical products

But it's not all happy customers and hand-crafted work. There are some big drawbacks to get over if you want to sell physical products.

**The first downside you'll face as a physical product creator is the cost.** Businesses that create and sell physical products operate on a very different financial basis than those creating digital products. They have to think about the cost of manufacturing and shipping. There's overhead, inventory, and storing to also consider. After all, once you've created your product, you have to put it somewhere, and I'm guessing you don't want your living room to become your warehouse.

**The second downside is the lack of scalability.** Creating and keeping up with your physical product is going to take a lot of your time, particularly at the beginning. Prototyping, testing, creating, and manufacturing an actual physical product is no easy feat. Unless you can afford to hire a team that handles that day-to-day creation, packaging, shipping, and customer support, it will be difficult to scale your business.

While these are definitely big hurdles, they are by no means insurmountable. People do it every day. Are you ready to be one of those people?

## How to sell physical products on your blog

Selling a product online is easier than ever these days. A newbie could have a storefront up and running in no-time with shops like Etsy and Shopify. [And you really do have your pick of the litter when it comes to choosing an e-commerce platform.](#) But when you're selling a physical product, there are a couple other steps you need to think about.

Of course, you need to figure out how to manufacture your product. Will you make it on your own or will you outsource it? Or will you even be selling something you've created?

There's a ton of bloggers out there selling other businesses' goods. Think about all of your friends who sell essential oils or resell items on Etsy and eBay. They're all selling physical products online!

But for the sake of not keeping you here all day reading this one blog post, let's just talk about the beast that is shipping.

## What is a fulfillment center?



Making the sale is nowhere near the end of your journey. Now it's time to actually get your physical product to your expectantly waiting new customer. There are a couple ways you can go.

- You could handle packaging and shipping on your own/ with your team
- You could look into a fulfillment center

Going at it on your own has its benefits. It allows you to be flexible and it's cheap (yes please!). Most bloggers selling physical products will start out shipping on their own. It's basically wise to stay in this DIY stage until your business is growing and you're creating enough revenue to expand your process.

But once your business has reached the point of your inventory taking over your living space, [it's time to look into third-party shipping and fulfillment](#). And it will be pretty obvious when the time comes.

- You'll be too busy to spend hours boxing your product up.
- You'll wish you were working on a new product instead of standing in line at the post office.
- You won't know how to keep up with your orders with just you and your small team.
- And most importantly, you'll have the wisdom to realize

you have enough money to outsource so you can move onto bigger-picture, high-level thinking.

Moving your product to a fulfillment center is a big leap, but well worth it when the time comes.

- **You can avoid long-term leases** from renting your own warehouse space which also leads to **saving money from not having to hire staff** as you scale.
- Using a dedicated, efficient fulfillment center will also save you money in the long-run because **they can leverage packaging and shipping costs**.
- Finally, by letting a professional take care of all your logistics, **you are free to put your mind on the creative side to your business**. You'll suddenly have more time to do that work that will keep growing your business.

The next step is to find the [right fulfillment center for you and your physical product](#). All fulfillment centers function differently and many specialize in certain areas of business. Try to find one that specializes in your industry and already works with businesses similar to yours. This will help you know that they can handle whatever needs you might have.

## Pros and Cons of Using Amazon's FBA

One of the more popular fulfillment centers right now is Amazon. I mean, we use Amazon for everything from ordering granola bars to Christmas gifts, so it makes perfect sense to add them into our business process, right?

[Amazon's FBA can be your one stop shop for warehousing, packaging, and shipping](#). If you haven't checked into their services yet for your physical products, it's time to look now. Here's a quick overview of the why's and why not's to choosing FBA for your fulfillment needs:

Pros:

- **No hassle shipping and returns.** Never again waste your time at FedEx. Amazon will handle all your packaging, shipping, and even returns from customers!
- **It's cheap.** No matter what stage you're at in your business, it's likely [you can afford to work with FBA](#).
- **Automatic Prime.** When you use FBA, your products are automatically available for Prime delivery. Gotta love that 2-day, free shipping.

- **Multi-channel fulfillment.** You're not limited to only selling on Amazon. You can point any storefront you have to your FBA account and Amazon will handle it all.

Cons:

- **Stale inventory.** Once you reach the stage of shipping thousands of products, it's possible you'll lose track of what you have in the warehouse. You might end up storing more than you need and end up paying rent for product that will not end up selling.
- **Difficulty in shipping to Amazon.** Amazon has a strict ASIN/UPC system. This means you have to label each and every one of your products individually, pack them up into multiple shipments and then send them off.
- **Limited access.** You can't just walk into the Amazon warehouse if you're hearing that there are quality problems with your inventory. You will need to either have it removed and shipped back to you or rely on Amazon's employees to double check the product inside their fulfillment centers. Not completely ideal.

## Ready to sell physical products on your blog?

Now that your mind is buzzing with the possibilities of selling physical products, it's time to make your move. Create a storefront, find a fulfillment center, and get selling! The world is waiting for your entrepreneur-focused books, cheeky coffee mugs, gluten free brownie mix, hand-dyed fabrics, beer-scented candles, essential oil starter packs, or whatever it is you're selling.

Did this blog post help get you ready to sell your physical products? If so, tell us about it on Twitter and share it with your product-loving entrepreneurial friends.

 *Dani Stewart*



# The Complete Guide to E-Commerce Platforms

**Q**uick question for you: has your blog helped you to ring the NY Stock Exchange bell? Have your brand's logo displayed on the NYSE building? Stay at a castle? Play Monopoly with Daymond John? Have Daymond endorse your product? Or meet Tony Robbins, Russell Simmons, Tim Ferriss, or Marie Forleo?

A select few can answer that with a resounding yes, and Cathryn Lavery is one of them.

Cathryn is a self-described "making junkie". Over the years, she's made digital products, physical products, and everything in between. If it can be thought of, designed, or made, Cathryn has had her hands in it, and she loves being in that position. Her colleagues call her the best designer they've ever met and one of the smartest marketing minds around.

So how did Cathryn's business afford her those incredible opportunities above? Was it a degree in graphic design? An MBA from a fancy university? Having a business handed to her by a family member?

Nope, no, and no freaking way.

Cathryn took a background in architecture, \$500, and an extreme passion for design and has leveraged it into [a full time design company that replaced her corporate career in less than two years](#). All because of an e-commerce store called Calm the Ham.

E-commerce, shortened from "electronic commerce", is how people sell products or services online. While many bloggers offer services and sell them directly through payment processors like Stripe or Paypal, makers like Cathryn often find themselves needing a more comprehensive way to sell their products online.

Once Cathryn dipped her toe into e-commerce, her business began to take off.

"That store was eventually my vehicle to freedom and allowed me to leave my full-time job in 2014," [Cathryn said in a recent Medium article](#). Because of her success with Calm the Ham, Cathryn's blogging career has also shifted on her personal website – she now teaches people how to find the same kind of launch success she has experienced.

*“Over the past few years since I’ve left architecture and exchanged it for entrepreneurship, many people have asked me what my ‘secret’ was. If I had to drill it down to one thing it would be simply this, ‘I made myself uncomfortable’. What does this mean?”*

*It means I moved beyond doing the things that were comfortable to me so I could expand my horizons. Had I continued doing the same things I had always done, I would get what I had always gotten — which I knew was not what I wanted. This meant meeting new people who were doing the things I wanted to do, learning new skills (specifically around creating and running a business) and overall gaining new experiences.”*

– CATHRYN LAVERY

While it’s clear that e-commerce has had an incredible impact on Cathryn’s blogging career, it’s worth looking at things the other way around.

## If your main revenue source comes from your product sales, what benefit is there in maintaining a blog on an e-commerce site?

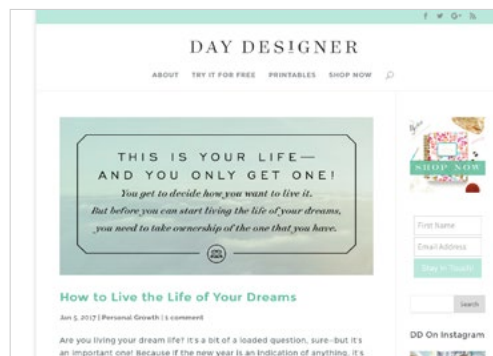
### SEO

Search engine optimization is Internet speak for how search engines (like Google) find you. The more quality keywords you have on your website for your particular niche, the higher you rank when someone Googles you. Since very few people click past that first page of search results, getting high up on the list can do a lot to add to the visibility of your brand.

Take Day Designer, for instance. A wildly popular day planner brand, Whitney English and the Day Designer team could be happily focused on creating new products and celebrating them with their community. But Whitney and her team are smart marketers and they know the power of good SEO in an otherwise crowded marketplace.

By writing blog posts covering topics their ideal audience wants, they rank higher and higher in search rankings

for keywords like “goal setting”, “finding focus”, and “productivity and time management”.



### Customer Features

A blog is an opportunity to show off your customers to the rest of the world. Mama Malas runs a regular series of customer profiles and they also feature moms in their surrounding industries. By taking advantage of their blog, Mama Malas is able to show off higher profile women like Elena Brower.

Here’s the bonus of customer features and profiles like this: when you include links to other websites on your own blog, search engines think more highly of you. It’s a complex system, but search engines generally like it when you play nice with other people on the Internet. As such, your website gets rewarded for linking to other websites. Bonus points when that other website also plays nicely with others and is linking to other reputable sites.

Did you notice that keyword there? Reputable. When you’re linking out to other websites, be sure that they are a reputable source and that you feel good about sharing their site with your audience. It’s good for you, good for search engines, and good for your audience.

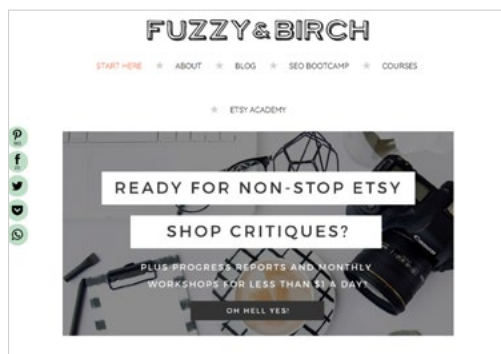


## Teach Everything You Know

Ah, the ConvertKit motto, and something you may have even adopted for yourself these days. Your blog isn't just another page on your website to keep up with. It's an opportunity to [teach your audience everything you know...](#) and potentially create additional revenue streams.

Jenni at Fuzzy and Birch is no stranger to teaching everything she knows. While her products at [Fuzzy and Birch](#) were able to get her out from under a job she hated, Jenni knew that teaching others how she did it would add value to her offerings and become a platform to reach an entirely new audience.

Pro tip from Jenni here: when you reach a new audience and they love what you teach, they're likely to become customers on the product side of your business. Trust is trust and that can come in the form of digital education or physical products.



And there's endless ways to start your blog! Here are a few [suggestions from our friends at the e-commerce platform Shopify](#):

- The story of your founding: the history, the vision, and the growth
- Your products: where it came from, how it's made, and its special features
- Tutorials for how to use your products
- Announcements for a sale
- Events you're running or participating in
- Advice on products, not just your own
- Company updates
- Developments in the industry
- Something fun you found on the web. It could, but doesn't have to relate to your products.

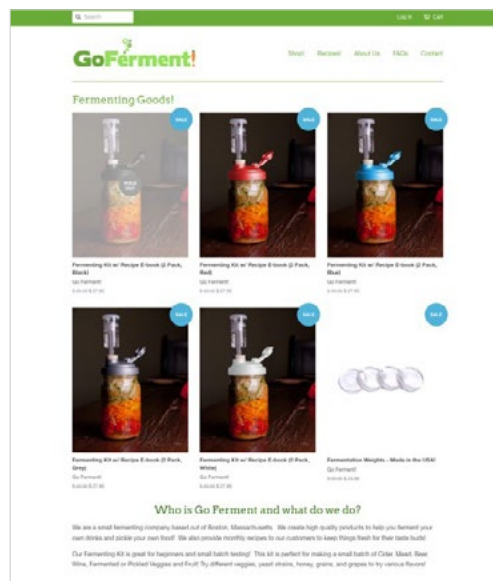
Don't feel limited. If you sell foodware, blog about your favorite recipes. If you sell funny t-shirts, link to jokes and cartoons you enjoyed this week. If you sell your own art, you can discuss your favorite paintings. These aren't hard if you know your products really well.

Now that we've established that e-commerce stores clearly need a blog and that bloggers might want to consider adding e-commerce to their offerings, it's time to pick a platform. In our tireless quest to make things just a bit easier for you as a blogger, we've compiled the pros, cons, and best reasons to use the most popular e-commerce solutions out there.

Ready to unpack the options? Read on:

## Shopify

It's no surprise that Shopify is on our list. It's one of the most popular e-commerce platforms out there and for good reason. With Shopify you can host your entire website on their robust templates, choose a point of sale option for your in-person sales, or even make use of their social buying buttons on your favorite social media channels.



Pros:

- User-friendly interface.
- Not many other e-commerce platforms offer point-of-sale too. Great for in-person sales.

- On the 'Lite' plan, Shopify offers one of the most affordable ways to start selling online using an e-commerce platform.
- Zero transaction fees when you process payments with Stripe.
- Shopify has been around for a while and has a solid reputation.
- Third-party apps and integrations galore!

#### Cons:

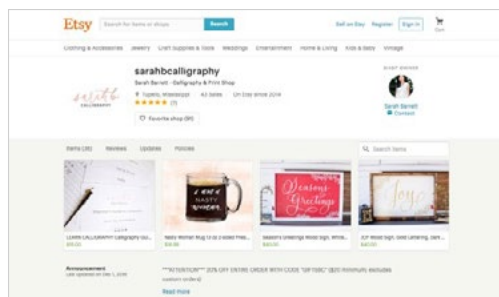
- If you use a third-party payment system, transaction fees are unavoidable.
- Product images have to all be cropped to the same size before uploading or they might not appear in an organized and clean way in your shop
- You only get three product options per product (though you can create up to 100 variants of a single product)

Shopify is a great place to launch your e-commerce business, especially if you plan to sell your products in-person too. They also offer a [14-day free trial](#) so trying it out for yourself is easy to do!

## Etsy

While you might know Etsy as a place to shop for the most unique gifts, the handmade makers of the world have long called Etsy a staple of their business operations. And it's easy to see why. Etsy makes selling online simple, straightforward, and beautiful.

Etsy's mission is "to reimagine commerce in ways that build a more fulfilling and lasting world" – and that they have done. Etsy has been a certified B Corporation since 2012, proving their commitment to both community and the environment.



An Etsy shop adds a community element to your store – your customers can see ratings and reviews, they can favorite your shop to their own profile, and more.

#### Pros:

- Reputation. Etsy has an established one so you know your shop isn't going to disappear overnight.
- Community! There are forums for your questions and answers and the community is incredibly active.
- Unlimited number of items in your shop.
- Offers instant digital downloads (for digital products)
- Promotes the handmade lifestyle/mindset

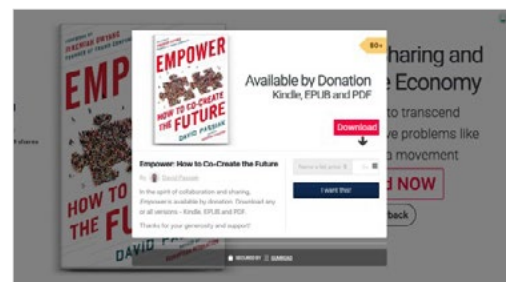
#### Cons:

- There's a fee for every listing plus a transaction fee for every purchase.
- Your shop is hosted on Etsy so you won't have a customized domain.
- Can't brand your shop beyond your logo in a regular Etsy shop (though they do offer custom sites for an additional fee).
- Oversaturated in some areas like jewelry and textiles.

If you consider yourself a "maker" or you embody the handmade mindset, Etsy could be the perfect option for you. You can get started on a standard Etsy site or [build a custom site on a free 30-day trial](#).

## Gumroad

Typically considered as a solution for digital products, Gumroad has quickly become a contender with the likes of Shopify and Etsy with their physical product options and custom website solutions.



#### Pros:

- Digital and physical product options
- Product delivery is built in for digital products

- Funds are directly deposited to your bank account
- Clean and easy-to-use interface
- The payment modal is incredibly user-friendly
- Integrates with lots of external apps and systems
- Affiliate program so others can get paid for promoting your product

Cons:

- High processing fees
- You'll need an SSL certificate from your website host to use the 'overlay' feature (shown above)
- Mostly popularized as a digital product platform, could be harder to setup physical products here
- It's buggy. There are features long-time customers are grandfathered into as free but they aren't able to be updated without paying.

## Self-Hosted Options

There's DIY and then there's D.I.Y. (The periods in between really drive the point home here.) Some DIY is good as a business owner. You want to get your hands a bit dirty when you're building your thing. So you shoot your pictures and you upload your items and you write your product descriptions and it's all managed by a larger company (like Shopify or Etsy or Gumroad). And that's all good.

Then there's the bigger DIY that scares off a lot of bloggers. It's the kind of DIY that requires a bit more technical know-how. While not impossible for even a novice, self-hosted shopping carts are often more challenging to get up and running than an all-in-one solution (like we just showed you above).

Long-time blogger Steve Chou knows a thing or two about selling products online. While he might not have had an Etsy shop or sold physical products through Shopify, [he can speak to the pros and cons of self-hosted options with e-commerce.](#)

*As long as I've been writing tutorials on how to open an online store, I've always advocated going with a free open source shopping cart and hosting it yourself as opposed to signing up for an all-in-one hosted e-commerce solution.*

*After all, if you host your shopping cart yourself,*

*you're in charge of your own destiny. You have full control over the source and no one can suddenly raise prices on you. Plus, there are many cool things that you can do on your own that the big hosted solutions won't allow you to do.*

*But after running this blog for a couple of years now and listening to reader feedback, I've come to realize that using an open source e-commerce solution and self-hosting may not be the right solution for everyone.*

And Steve's right. Self-hosting is not for everyone, but if you have the technical know-how and the time to pull it all together, a self-hosted option might be for you. If that's the case, here are our favorites:

## WooCommerce

One of the most popular self-hosted platforms, WooCommerce is typically used by a more experienced shop owner (though many start out using WooCommerce up front). [WooCommerce does integrate directly with ConvertKit](#) so communicating with your buyers is even easier than ever.



Pros:

- WooCommerce is a plugin that connects to your WordPress website. Many people are already on WordPress so this is an easy transition.
- It's free!
- The team at WooCommerce works hard to make sure your site stays as secure as possible. They are always updating the plugin so it stays compatible with your version of WordPress without lifting a finger on your end.
- Since it's WordPress based, there's a large community

ready to help you at any time should you need it.

#### Cons:

- If you want to customize WooCommerce, it can cost you a pretty penny.
- Images and text don't always display properly without customization (see point above).
- It's connected to WordPress. As much as this is a pro, it's also a con as WordPress updates and subsequent WooCommerce updates could make it buggy from time to time.

## Magento

An open source platform with complete flexibility over your online store, Magento allows for a completely customized e-commerce website and includes some robust features.



#### Pros:

- The features are incredible and Magento provides a pretty easy-to-navigate interface
- Small and medium sized businesses can get away with the free community version of Magento
- Flexibility with completely customizable templates
- Community power comes into play with long-standing users who offer help in real time and even have add-ons and plugins to support your needs

#### Cons:

- If you need the full enterprise version, it's going to set you back \$18,000/year
- You need a dedicated server for a Magento site. Normal hosting platforms don't play nicely with this software and it can end up running slowly if you don't use a dedicated server.

- You'll likely need a developer to help you set it up and Magento-specific developers are sometimes hard to find and they can also be pricey

### Shopping Cart versus e-commerce provider

Many e-commerce providers, like the all-in-one and self-hosted providers above, offer a robust set of tools to help you succeed. Depending on the provider, the tools can include inventory management, coupon creation, reports, customer database management, and more.

But what if you don't need all of that? What if you just want to sell a few products and don't need or want a ton of bells and whistles? Do you need a full on e-commerce provider to do that?

Most likely no. A simple shopping cart solution will do.

Now, of course, an e-commerce provider has a shopping cart built in, but a shopping cart only provider will give you, well, only a shopping cart. It's the ala carte option to selling online. Our customers just love using Digital Product Download (DPD for short) and SamCart.

## The Decision is Yours

Now that you know why you might want an e-commerce solution, what options you have for selling your products online, and more than you could ever want to know about this topic, what are you waiting for? It's time to make a choice, get it set up in your business, and start selling your products today.

Did this blog help you decide what e-commerce site to start using? If so, share it on Twitter with your friends to help them out too.

■ Val Geisler



# How to Turn a Successful Blog Into a Growing Software Company

**I**f you're running a successful infoproduct business, why would you drop it all to start over with a software company? Why would an otherwise happy and profitable entrepreneur ditch it all for what on the surface looks like harder work, longer hours, and more headache?

Who would be crazy enough to turn a well-oiled machine of a blog into a SaaS company? Better yet, who has the audacity to do just that when they barely know how to write in code?

## Laura Roeder

"I'd always had this interest in starting a software company, a SaaS company, but there were a few major, major problems with that plan," Laura Roeder, founder of MeetEdgar, said from the stage at Digital Commerce Summit in 2016.

"The first problem is I didn't and still don't know how to code. I used to code websites in about 2005, 2006. WordPress came along, and you had to learn PHP. I kind of peaced out at that point. That's about as far as my website knowledge went. I can still build you an HTML tables-based site that is gorgeous, but if you want anything more modern, not me."

Laura went on to list even more potential stopping points:

- Missing knowledge around UX/UI or how to make a piece of software easy to use
- Zero experience in the software world
- Busy teaching online courses through infoproducts (with zero time to learn any of the above)

And this is where the story behind MeetEdgar becomes a love story.

See, as Laura was coming up against these struggles blocking her from fulfilling her dream of starting a software company, she met her lead engineer (and now husband) Chris.

Some people meet the person of their dreams and start thinking about babies. Laura and Chris thought about a different kind of baby altogether.

"When a marketer like me gets together with a guy like Chris, we think, 'Okay, maybe we can make a company together.'"

So they did. It took two years for them to land on something that was viable and would make a great product. They combed through the brilliant ideas Laura had, the back-burnered projects, and, finally, Laura's products that were selling really well.

They landed on one of LKR's signature products: [Social Brilliant](#).

"I was teaching people this methodology of putting all your social content into categories, and then cycling through those categories to repurpose your content, since only less than 10 percent of the people who follow you see any social media status update that you post. So it's really smart to post them again. Doing this process involved an insane amount of grunt work and copying and pasting from the spreadsheet over to the tool.

Based on my knowledge at that time, I literally thought this wasn't possible. I thought, 'This is such an obvious idea. There must be a reason why the tools don't store a library of your content. There must be a reason why the tools don't repeat it over and over again. I guess that's not possible.'

I can remember the moment, actually. We were living in London at the time. I remember standing in our kitchen and just complaining to Chris about, 'This is so frustrating, and it takes so much time.' I'm like, 'I guess, you can't program it. I don't know what the deal is.' And he said, 'Oh, I can build that in a week.' Which, if [you know developers], you have to quadruple everything they tell you. He did not build it in a week. But he did end up building MeetEdgar, the product that has turned into this bigger business today."

## Nathalie Lussier

While Laura didn't have software experience to back up her big SaaS idea, she did have marketing chops to flex with the right partner.

Nathalie Lussier had years of experience (like Laura), marketing chops (like Laura), and she just happened to know a bit about software engineering to boot.

On Steve Chou's podcast, [My Wife Quit Her Job](#), Nathalie shared more about her evolution from blogger to software founder:

"It's a really interesting story, because I like to call it my spiral staircase since I studied software in school. I didn't actually go into that field when I graduated, because I started this business. It almost felt like I threw out the baby with the bathwater, because I had all this training, but then here I was [on my blog] talking about healthy eating which had nothing to do with technology.

At the same time people kept asking me, 'Who made your website, and how are you doing all these technical stuff on your own? Can I hire you?' In the beginning I actually put these people off. Then finally I realized there's enough people who are asking this. Maybe this is actually something that comes super natural to me. Maybe I should go in that direction."

For Nathalie, changing out the type of content she was writing was a tipping point in her career.

"When I did that, that became the first time I hit the 6 figures in my business. I started actually designing people's websites. I did that for about a year until I basically maxed out on my capacity of being able to do that."

As her newfound website design business grew, Nathalie started to think about the kind of business she had dreamed of owning. She was busy hiring other designers and developers to work with her. She was consulting and doing much of the implementation herself. But this service-based business wasn't her dream.

Sound familiar?

Nathalie wanted to teach more people what she knew about simplifying technical and complicated things. So she started building courses to provide that training en masse. And while moving from being a service-based business owner to a product-based business owner made things less complicated for Nathalie, she knew that she could make it even more simple.

"I realized, okay well I can simplify one more step by actually making software that does it for you. That's how I brought my husband into the business, and got him to quit his job so that he could co-lead this company and be our main developer for all the different software products that we've since released."

Oh yeah. Nathalie has one of those developer husbands too. But remember how she studied software development and did those website designs? Nathalie didn't take the same approach that Laura did of hiring to her weaknesses. Nathalie and her husband became a powerhouse duo who could do more together than they could apart.

And what they did was answer one question over and over again:

[What is broken for the specific people I care about and how can I fix it?](#)

Problems like this:

"I was teaching people how to create beautiful opt-ins on their website, but they still had to learn some HTML and some CSS code to really make it look how they wanted. My husband and I developed the PopupAlly plug-in which is actually ... It lets you do pop ups as well as embedded opt-ins on your site and really design everything without needing to touch any code. That was really from seeing people struggle with me trying to teach them all these things, so that now they can just install it, and customize it the way they want it to be and it's really, really easy."

Nathalie and her team went on to create an entire suite of products all housed under her newest brand, Ambition Ally. By identifying the opt-in problem, the membership site problem, and course completion problem, team [Ambition Ally](#) has created a software solution to what might have otherwise been solved with a service or a product.

## Nathan Barry

Of course, we can't talk about going from blogger to software without mention of our own founder, Nathan Barry.

Nathan is, at heart, a software kinda guy. While "build a SaaS company" might not have been on his annual goals list, he's always worked on apps or software of some kind

while building his blog and audience. [He even talked about it on the Reach podcast](#). When Nathan started blogging he was building apps and eventually transitioned to writing books about building and launching apps. He kept it all very close to what he knew well.

He wanted to teach everything he knew.

So while researching audience building as he went off to sell his books, he was learning about best practices with email marketing and was fascinated by it.

"I'd look at this and go, 'I'm a software guy. I know design and I know coding, and this shouldn't be so difficult.' I felt like every time I learned a best practice, I was fighting to implement it.

I thought, 'You know what, I'm going to go for the next challenge in building an online business, and start a SaaS app,' because I wanted that recurring revenue, and I wanted to build a software product."

Nathan invested \$5,000 of his own savings into building the email app and set a goal to turn it into \$5,000 a month in revenue within six months. His goal? To solve a problem for bloggers and product people:

"[I thought] 'What if I built an email tool for people like me, people trying to build a blog and sell products to them?' That's where ConvertKit started."

## The Process

The process of turning a blog or product-based business is much more simple than many people think it is:

### Step 1: Identify the problem

Laura, Nathalie, and Nathan all identified a problem that people struggled with. Laura and Nathalie had tried solving those problems with products but ran into one consistent struggle: it could still be even easier.

Nathan found the same thing:

"The core problems were, once I wrote them down, I couldn't tag my customers, I was having to create multiple lists, so I couldn't talk to people differently, based on who

was a customer and who wasn't. I was pitching people on products they had already purchased because I didn't have a good way to do that."

But identifying the problem isn't enough.

"What you really need to think about with software is software does not exist as an accessory," Laura said. "Software exists as something that a machine can execute instead of a human. With MeetEdgar, Edgar is actually sending out your social for you. Other tools, you have to load up your queue. Edgar loads up your queue for you."

## Step 2: Build the solution

For all SaaS founders, this is the lengthiest part of the process. Not to mention that it's ongoing as once you launch a product, you constantly improve it and iterate on it. Nathalie's first product was Popup Ally but that just led to three other products. ConvertKit has been around for over three years and has consistently improved over time. MeetEdgar's functionality has grown with each passing day.

While this step might seem like one of those "it's harder than it looks" kind of things, it's important to remember that you just have to start somewhere. And don't fret if you aren't the builder. Like Laura, you have skills to offer too.

"So many software developers create products that never go anywhere. They don't have these business skills, the team and cash skills. The marketing skills are incredibly important if you want anyone to find out about your software.... You don't need to be a programmer, but you do need to understand what's happening at your company."

## Step 3: Get structure in place

And speaking of that company... whether you're the developer or the idea person, moving from training to software means managing a team of people who are more of an expert in certain areas than you are. But don't worry. These are just business skills and if you've been running a business based on courses, you likely already contain everything you need to be successful here.

"You need to recognize your own limitations as the person making the decisions... The team you need to launch software is very small. You obviously need someone to make the thing. You can have a freelancer create a basic marketing site logo. I would say you need some hours

for some initial copy. This is something that a lot of software companies forget. They launch with no marketing sequence. If you launch with some basic marketing sequence, your life is going to be much more successful."

## Step 4: Money

"I had saved up \$25,000 from the last year of iPad app store sales and had that as a buffer. I went back to working on the iPad/iPhone apps and then also freelancing on iOS design." – Nathan Barry

How are you going to fund this venture? It might seem like an obvious point to make, but not enough people consider how they'll fund one project after another. In fact, this step is important for any type of business – infoproduct, blog, SaaS, brick and mortar. You want to know (preferably before you get too far in) how you're going to pay for the expenses a business brings (see Step 3)

## Step 5: Treat it like a business

This could feel like Step 1, but it's truly a mindset shift you need to make to see success.

So don't just say, "I'm going to launch this side project. We'll see what happen." Make it a core part of your business plan and build your other offerings around it.

## Step 6: Build your audience

It's important to note that if you're going from blog to software, you might already have an audience built up. Nathalie took the approach of inviting all of the subscribers from her blog to her software business and she was blown away at the response:

"There were so many people who emailed and who said, 'I've been waiting for you to do this.' I was like, 'What? That makes no sense.' For some reason, people were curious about my website and all the things I was doing."

So don't discount the list you've spent time on already. But take that list building to the next level with your software business and focus on building your email list for your new offering. Webinars worked for Nathalie, personal invites worked for Nathan, and Laura did it through [powerful content marketing](#).

## Step 7: Take it one step at a time

“By the end of 2015 MeetEdgar was the majority of our revenue, as opposed to in 2014, when it was only 10 percent. I’m very proud to say in 2016, 100 percent of our revenue comes from MeetEdgar. We have shuttered the training business entirely. You can see it’s a three-year transition for that to happen.” – Laura Roeder

Going from products to software doesn’t have to be a turn-on-a-dime move. Yes, it will be messy. Yes, you’ll make mistakes. But planning out a longer transition period will keep you solvent and help your audience decide if they want to come on this new ride with you or not (psst: that audience will be your first customers so you want to treat them well)

## Don’t let your past limit your future

As people who seems to always look forward and never back, Laura Roeder, Nathalie Lussier, and Nathan Barry would likely all give this same advice: don’t let your past limit your future. And Laura puts it well:

“Everything is learnable. Everything is figure-out-able. Hopefully, I have some life ahead of me, and I don’t want to just be limited for the rest of my life by what I’ve done already.”

The lessons of running a software company apply directly to any blogging business. When you can build on what you’ve already done, notice the big problems around you, and find a solution that adds ease and simplicity to people’s lives, you’re on the track to major success.

■ *Val Geisler*



# It's Time to Stop Worrying About Your Product Pricing

**F**or everyone out there making money off your blog, I'm sure one of the biggest challenges you've faced is your product pricing strategy.

It's difficult to know what value can be placed on a product whether it's digital or physical and there is so much to take into consideration before you make your final decision. It can either stop you in your tracks or leave you cycling through pricing theories until you've completely lost your mind.

Do you anchor your pricing? Do you compare your pricing to your competitors? [Or does the Power of Nine really have all the power?](#)

Before you know you it, you've questioned yourself into a corner and pushed your launch back four months.

But here's a big secret: No one actually knows the true value of anything. There are no Better Business Bureau guides that say all online courses should be priced at \$X.

And there's no way to really compare prices of what you've created with what someone else has created. Once that starts it just becomes a race to the bottom to price your product low enough to beat the competition. You, your product, and your audience deserve better than that.

The problem with product pricing is that it doesn't exist in a vacuum. You can't just look at an eBook and say, "Thou shalt cost \$14.50" and it's done. Well, you could, but that's probably not the wisest marketing strategy.

Now I'm going to say something a little crazy– What price you set for your product doesn't matter. All that matters is that you price it.

## Your product pricing strategy doesn't matter

I know that might sound like it has no base in reality, but let me explain. Focusing your efforts on pricing upfront can cause some roadblocks and misdirected values. Like I said earlier, you might keep pushing off your launch because you're worried you aren't pricing your product correctly.

You'll also be putting too much emphasis on your bottom line instead of creating value for your customers.

Creating revenue isn't in and of itself a bad thing. It's absolutely integral to building a successful business. But when you're solely focused on making the big dollar signs, you're missing out on why your business should exist. You should be teaching everything you know and should be creating value for your customer. It should be about creating an experience that brings your customers back for more time and time again.

You need to take your mind off your price tags and put it on the experiences your customer goes through to find, learn about, and purchase your product.

The girls at [Think Creative Collective](#) say it best so I'm just going to pull straight from them:

*We learned very early on that the actual number behind what we offered (whether it was photography session, canvases, logo designs, or branding) was the lowest thing on the list of concerns for our buyer. So we put our focus elsewhere.*

[When you don't focus on pricing, a lot of amazing things happen, including:](#)

*You're less stressed about your product selling  
You focus on adding value to your offer  
You attract the right people who are so ready to buy what you're selling  
You launch things quicker and with more confidence*

Doesn't that sound freeing? Abigail and Emylee really have it figured out. Once they were able to step away from the pressure of perfectly pricing their products, they learned they could spend more time on what really matters- the customer experience.

You might be asking yourself, "So if the price doesn't matter, what am I supposed to do? Should I just give it all away for free?"

I'm all about freebies as incentives and sneak peeks. But if you're wanting to create a sense of value around your course, please put some dollar signs in front of it. It's like when you give a course away for free, you might think you're being altruistic, but in all reality you're telling your

audience that your course isn't worth their time or that it has no value. By giving it a price tag, you're automatically proving it has value.

In other words: It's not about what you price your product, it's about how your customer perceives it.

## Perceived Value

People buy because of how they feel and that's what you should be selling- the feeling, the experience, and the results for your customer. When you focus on your customer's perceived value of your product, you're automatically going to direct your efforts into creating an experience they will enjoy and want to recreate.

[Val talked with the Think Creative Girls on Ep 14 of our podcast, Reach](#), to hear more about their "the price doesn't matter" stance. What they said was mind blowing.

*"Sometimes you just have to talk about your product differently to make sales go up. We've seen our \$300 course do better if we've simply changed the sales page or changed the pitch. Not anything about what's in the program or the price, but just how we talk about the course, how we're attracting our audience, or how we're education them about the product.*

*We like to tell our people that the last thing you should change about what you're trying to sell is the price. Change or tweak everything else before you get to that."*

Are you making it clear to your customers how your product will help them solve their pain points?

Are you explaining your product in a way that everyone can understand?

Are you making the purchase process an effortless journey through your sales funnel?

These questions will dramatically change how your customers see the value in your product. If they can't read your fragmented sales page and if they don't even understand what your product is or how it will take them to the next level, no price on Earth will get them to hit the purchase button. But if you can show them how their life

will change by using your product and make the process of buying it seamless, you'll be sure to have your repeat customers.

## Perceived value product pricing strategies

While I've told you not to worry about pricing your product, the fact of the matter is, you still need to do it. If you want a successful online business, you need to create products and services and sell them. So, if you're in the same boat as many bloggers out there, wondering how to put a price tag on their newborn baby products, here are a couple perceived value pricing strategies to think about.

### Pay What You Want

The Pay What You Want (PWYW) strategy is obviously when buyers pay the amount they want for your product. In some cases, bloggers will set a minimum price, and/or a suggested price as a guide for the buyer.

One word of caution– sometimes PWYW ends up being that your customer pays zero dollars, so this strategy is a bit of a risk, but definitely has some pros.

**Pay What You Want can help you grow your list.** Put that product behind an opt-in form on a landing page or website to help grow your list. This is a must if you're giving your audience the chance to get your product for free. You've got to make sure it's worth your time if you're not getting paid for it. Also, if you are giving them a free option, I would suggest putting up a time limit up. A little scarcity is always a good idea.

#### **Some people will pay more than what you expect.**

You might be surprised to hear that if you give people the opportunity to give you more, they actually will. [Ryan Delk of Gumroad](#) has seen it happen over and over again with vendors on his site. In an interview he did with Tom Morkes, [Delk shared a little of what he's seen](#).

*“The interesting thing about Pay What You Want is that people fundamentally underestimate how engaged and excited the top 1 to 3% of their audience is about the things that they do...”*

*So what we've seen is that when someone releases a PWYW product, the average price paid...will increase pretty dramatically. There are a couple products that started at \$3 and when they went to \$1+ (Pay What You Want anything over \$1), the average price paid went up to almost \$5. So that's about a 60% increase in the average price paid (which is also equal to total revenue) ...*

*We've seen in a lot of cases where the average price paid goes up significantly after switching to PWYW because you're letting people value the product for themselves.”*

You see how that perceived value really kicks in here? If you do your job at talking up the results, explaining it well, and making it easy to get, your customers will see the value in your product and it will absolutely pay off.

## The Bumpsale

[Jason Zook](#) is known for some wacky stuff. He's let companies buy him for a day to wear their branded t-shirts, he sold his last name, and he even sold his future for a while. He seems to always have something interesting up his sleeve and his price bump strategy was no exception.

The Bumpsale method bumps up your product's price after every purchase. For his initial experiment, the price went up \$1 each time some made a purchase. So if you're a customer seeing this happen, you realize that the longer you wait, the more the price is going to increase. It's really an amazing experiment in scarcity. If you're on the product's landing page and seeing the price bumping in front of your eyes, Zook eventually created a tool for anyone to use his method at [bumpsale.co](#).

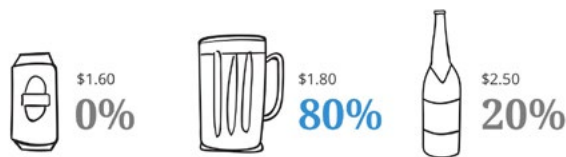
In this case, the perceived value comes from other customer's buy in. If you're on the product's landing page and seeing the price bumping in front of your eyes, what are you going to think? Most likely you're going to believe that other people are finding value in it and you're going to buy in as well.

# The Bracket

In his book [Priceless: The Myth of Fair Value](#), author William Poundstone shares one of the most famous pricing experiments. In it he shows that an audience will believe a price is perceived reasonable when put compared with higher and lower priced items. It's a long explanation, so [I'm just going to pull directly from an article ConvertKit founder Nathan Barry wrote about it.](#)



People were offered two kinds of beer: premium beer for \$2.50 and bargain beer for \$1.80. Around 80% chose the more expensive beer.



Now a third beer was introduced, a super bargain beer for \$1.60, in addition to the previous two. Now 80% bought the \$1.80 beer and the rest \$2.50 beer. Nobody bought the cheapest option.

Huh, that's actually not good. The seller actually lost revenue in this case through bracketing. But that's because he bracketed his price down. The story continues.



Third time around, they removed the \$1.60 beer and replaced it with a super-premium \$3.40 beer. Most people chose the \$2.50 beer, a small number chose the \$1.80 beer and around 10% opted for the most expensive \$3.40 beer. Some people will always buy the most expensive option, no matter the price.

**So by bracketing the price up- meaning that the third**

**price point was the highest and not the lowest like in the first example- revenue increased, showing that through bracketing you can push people towards the middle option.**

Remember, pricing doesn't happen in a vacuum. A lot can be perceived by the context you present your product in.

## Pricing for your audience

There is a lot of mindset work when it comes to pricing. Ultimately it's about what's right for your audience.

Are the new bloggers looking for a course to help them set up landing pages? Then you need to offer a price in the lower range. Or do you have big business customers looking for a course to help their employees learn Quickbooks? Then you most likely can go for a high range price.

What's best for your audience will ultimately be best for you. If you're customers are happy and purchasing, you'll know you're doing your job of creating valuable content for them.

So for now, just let go of the stress surrounding pricing. Take a deep breath and use your brain. Trust your instincts and pay attention to the advice that makes sense for you and your business.

Have you ever felt stumped by pricing? Let's talk about it on Twitter. I'd love to hear how you overcame it and how you price your products now.

■ Dani Stewart



# How to Create a Timeline for a Successful Product Launch

**E**very good product deserves a great launch. After all, with all the work you've put into creating your beautiful, world-changing product, you need to make sure it gets the recognition it's due.

Enter the product launch plan.

From learning about your customers, writing persuasive and exciting content, beta testing, and choosing the promotion channels that work the best, it's important to put a plan into place so you don't miss a thing.

To help you start your own product launch plan, here's a general timeline of steps to take to help you gain momentum and have a successful launch.

## 4 months to launch:

**Get advice:** Start talking about your product to your mentors, people in the real world, and potential customers.

Get that elevator pitch ready.

**Customer development:** Your product should be a reflection of your customers. To find out if what you want to create is something your customers need, you first have to know your customers.

- [10-Person Rule](#)
- Create avatars

**Messaging and positioning:** Once you have the information from your emails with the 10 Person Rule, it's time to come up with your messaging. How will you position your product? Think about:

- Who it's for?
- What does it do?
- Why it's better than similar products?

## 3 Months to launch:

**Create a launch plan:** Work backward from your goal launch date and think about every step and marketing

activity you need to take to make sure your launch is successful.

**Create launch content:** Think about all the collateral you will need to sell your product and start drafting copies,

- Demo decks
- Product screenshots
- Sales materials
- Landing page
- Website updates
- Emails
- Sales page
- Swipe copy
- Homepage takeover for opt-in forms

**Pick your channels:** Not every marketing and advertising channel will work for your launch, nor does it need to. And it's not about what channels work best for you. Find out what channels your customers hang out the most, pick two or three of those, and focus your efforts there. Channel examples include:

- Specific social media channels
- Product Hunt

**Prep your team:** If you have a team, teach them your positioning/message. Make sure they are ready to sell.

**Go-to-market strategy:** Compile all this information in one place for easy access.

A holistic document of all launch activities, planning, and goals. This can include pricing recommendations, market research, competitive analysis, and any other relevant information you might need.

**Find promoters/affiliates:** You most likely can't launch on your own. Find influencers in your industry who might be interested in helping you out. Take some time during this month to make a list of these influencers to contact and send your product to for beta.

## 2 Months to launch:

**Beta:** Write and send an email to potential affiliates and send them your product to test and review. Make it extra easy on them to review your product by including swipe copy for their blogs and social media.

This Beta step is very important. These influencers will help you evaluate your product before you release it publicly and can give you valuable feedback about what works and what doesn't.

**Start building anticipation:** You can't just release one day. Without any notice, no one is going to know what you're talking about and they won't care. Here are some examples of building anticipation:

- Create a landing page about the product with a "stay in touch" opt-in form.
- Put a banner on your site hyping the product that links to your product landing page
- Talk to your social media followers: Ask them questions to make sure you're still on track

**Finalize launch content:** Take all the customer information you've been gathering and make sure your launch content is still on par. Ask a friend/hire a professional to look over it and edit to make sure it launch worthy.

**Gather reviews from your beta testers:** Add beta reviews to your landing page and seed throughout social media. These reviews will add to your social clout and brand authority and trust.

## 1 month to launch:

**Announce your launch:** It's time to start announcing your product to the public!

- Post about your launch on your blog. Have your opt-in form link to your landing page.
- Start your email sequence to your opt-in list.
- Set up your opt-in form for your blog main page.

## 3 weeks to launch:

**Check in with affiliates:** Make sure your promoters have everything they need to spread the news about your product.

**Start seeding social media:** Post teaser videos and images on social channels, blog posts, etc.

## 2 weeks to launch:

### Set up shopping cart

**Research paid traffic:** Facebook Ads, Google Ads, etc. if interested.

**Create sales funnel:** For people who click to opt-in and for after they've purchased.

**Create thank you page:** For people who purchased.

## 1 week to launch:

### Set up your product in your storefront.

**Check all your links!** Before you launch, do a final check to ensure that everything works– buttons are functioning, forms are working, copy and creative looks good, etc.

## Week of:

**Keep sharing on social media and through your email list.**

**Make your launch an event:** Everything is more exciting when you take the time to promote it well. Here's a couple ideas of how to make your launch extra exciting:

- Host a webinar
- Hit the podcast circuit
- Host a TwitterChat
- Release a new (longer-than-a-teaser) promo

## After:

**Pop the champagne!** You did it! Launching a product is no easy feat. In the craziness of a launch, it's easy to jump from prep-work to post-work, but it's so important to celebrate every little victory you can as a business owner. So take a little time to revel in your success.

**Follow up for testimonials:** About a month after your launch, send out an email asking your new customers what they thought about your product.

**Take your feedback and make your product better:**

Everything your customers tell you is important. Make sure to listen to them and take that data from your launch to re-work your product for your next launch.

## Share it!

We put this handy graphic together for you to pin for later and to share with your friends. Enjoy!



■ Dani Stewart



# How to Use Email Marketing to Sell Products Online

**H**ave you ever walked into a wholesale store and immediately felt overwhelmed? There's so much to look at between the 5 gallon salsas, the excellently priced refrigerators, and the barrells of bright white tube socks. Even if you come in with a shopping list, it's easy to get lost in the expanse of the aisles upon aisles of products.

Wouldn't it be easier if someone knew what you needed and had it all waiting for you at the register?

Now think about your readers. They're all over the Internet. They're scanning websites, reading blogs, ordering toilet paper online, watching Facebook videos—and then they land on your site. They head to your shop tab and scroll through your beautifully taught courses, well-researched eBooks, and dozens of carefully designed printables. But without any direction or sales assistance, they feel that same overwhelm as you did at the wholesale store.

Everything looks amazing, but it's too much for their over-Interneted minds to handle. And instead taking time to

read through your product descriptions to find what they need, your reader closes the tab and moves back to an easy-to-scan social media app.

So how can you fix this? How can you make all your amazing products more marketable and less intimidating? How can you make it easier for your readers to see their benefits and then in turn, easier to click that Buy Now button.

It's simple. Email marketing.

No eye rolls, please. I know we're a company dedicated to creating a solid email marketing process for all you bloggers out there, but seriously, have you actually thought about how email marketing can help you sell your multitude of products?

## How email marketing can help you sell your online products

Email marketing can be huge for selling products online. The problem is that most online marketers are either doing

it wrong or they're just not doing it all. I'll get to some ways to do it right in a bit, but first I want to tell you why you should even be doing it in the first place.

### You're selling to a targeted list

When someone subscribes to your list, they're giving you permission to get back in touch with them. It's with that permission, you can now put any message you want right in front of that reader who has already shown their interest in your business.

Now think about how almost everyone checks their email at least once per day and many people check their email incessantly. That means email marketing makes sure you get the chance to target the right person at the right time with the right message.

### Using automated emails saves you time

Automations are the ultimate time-saver of the email marketing world. The less time you have to deal with things like pitching, educating, and selling, the more time you have for the kind of high-level thinking you really want to do.

### Email marketing is personalized

While not putting time into those things I mentioned above might sound like a bad move, setting up email marketing automations for those systems helps you create a more personal touch to a wider audience than you could have ever done manually.

With segmentation, link triggers, and sequences, you can fine tune each message to target a very specific audience. It makes communication between business owner and reader much more personal, which can mean increased authority which then leads to increased revenue.

### You can build trust and a relationship with your readers

Email marketing is so similar to building a relationship in real life, but we often forget that when we're sitting behind our screens looking at a bunch of avatars. And forgetting to build a solid relationship with your email subscribers is one of the biggest mistakes I see in email marketing these days.

By using sequences with email marketing, you're able to

inject your personality into every email. You can tell your readers a story about how your products will benefit their lives. You can be hospitable and create a process that makes understanding your product simple and exciting.

That's the main thing- remember is to be hospitable. Think about how you want to be treated when you walk into that overwhelming store and create that same feeling for your customers.

## Ways to use email marketing to sell online products

Now that you know why email marketing is an important aspect to selling your online products, it's time to tell you how to actually apply email marketing to your online business.

The first thing to remember when selling with email marketing is that **your emails need to be written in a way that's entertaining as well as educational**. The people reading these emails have allowed you into their sacred inbox, so you have to treat it respectfully. Deliver only valuable information to them and always focus on the experience and not the product.

Second, when it comes to selling your variety of products online, **it's important to think about how they all relate to each other and how they relate to your customer**. Do you have products that could naturally be sold hand-in-hand? Are there products that make sense to purchase after another product is purchased? How can your products work together to sell themselves?

By doing this you can create some fun, educational, and entertaining emails to present your products to your customers. Here are a couple examples of those emails:



### Welcome Emails

A welcome email is the first email someone receives when they join your mailing list. You can have a welcome email for customers too, but in this case, we're talking about a

welcome email for new subscribers who haven't bought anything yet.

In the beginning of this new relationship, you have the chance to make a great first impression by being friendly and helpful. One way of being helpful is to clearly communicate about targeted products and how they are beneficial to your new reader.

Example: Let's say you're a blogger who focuses on teaching indoor gardening practices. If you know your new subscriber came to your emailing list from an opt-in form about indoor fruit plants, you can create a welcome series that triggers an educational course about indoor fruit plants and links to your specific eBooks about dwarf lemon trees and strawberry bushes.



### Bundle emails

Everything is better in pairs, right? Figuring out what products work well together and then selling them as a bundle is always a fun way to engage with your customers. I know when I hear the word "bundle", I automatically think the purchase has an added value and usually comes as a limited time offer.

Example: If your reader is purchasing your Indoor Gardening 101 course, before they finalize their purchase, you can create a bundle to go along with the course that includes your favorite seed packets, an indoor greenhouse, and branded gardening gloves. Not everyone will opt for the extra products, but there will always be people who get excited about bundles.



### Thank you emails

Usually thank you pages are just dead end landing pages, but there's actually a lot of sales potential here. You can find some fun ways to add a little revenue that many bloggers never think about by simply adding a few links to

similar products.

Example: If a customer just purchased your eBook on how to grow basil indoors, it's a solid assumption they might also be interested in your email course about indoor gardening. By linking to that course which links to your other indoor gardening eBooks as well, you're not only increasing your sales, you're also helping your customer learn more and save them the time of looking around the Internet for that information you already know they want.

### Classic ConvertKit email marketing automated sequence

All of those emails and more can be created into automated sequences with a standard formula. It's one we use everyday and it's what we teach as an email marketing best practice.

This formula is a set of eight emails that you can use to teach, introduce, and sell your products no matter what they might be. Now, eight emails is a lot to explain right here after all this other information, so if you're interested, [head on over to this blog post about an introductory sequence to learn more about our formula.](#)

## Do you use email marketing to sell online products?

If you're worried that pitching and selling your products will give you a sleazy-salesmen vibes, have no fear. First, if you're running a business, you have to make sales. There's no way around it. And to make those sales happen, sometimes you have to ask for them. You don't generally wake up thinking, "Who can I give money to today?" do you? You readers aren't either. So just ask.

Also, by packaging your products together in exciting ways is actually honoring your readers' time. If you can build trust and authority with your readers, they will love that they can go to one place to get all the information and products they need. Honestly, they'll love for it.

Do you use special packaging or sequences to sell your products with email marketing? If so, share this articles with your blogger friends and help them get with their email marketing too. We're all in this together!

■ Dani Stewart



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