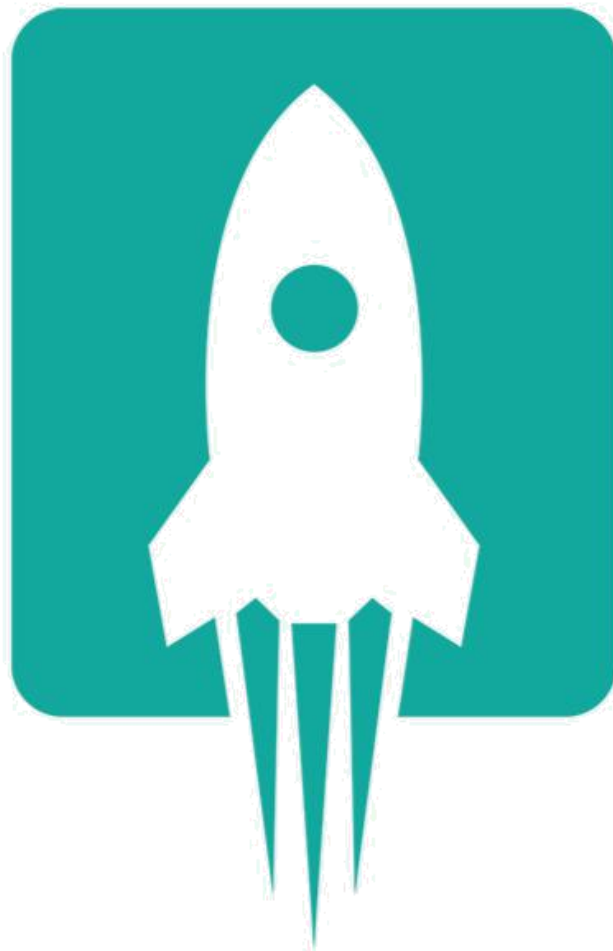

THE 7-STEP BLUEPRINT TO LAUNCHING A PRODUCT



The 7-Step Blueprint to Launching Your First Product

A product launch is a fantastic strategy that digital marketers can use to ensure that they truly maximize the sales potential of their digital products.

If you've spent time or money creating an ebook, an online course or a piece of software, then you need to ensure that it makes maximum impact when it goes live. If you just quietly release your product by adding a download link to your website, then you're going to miss out on thousands of sales – not to mention the opportunity to work with affiliates, to build authority and to strengthen your brand.

A good product launch can take a poor-selling product and turn it into a bestseller. In this guide, you're going to learn exactly what it takes to manage a successful product launch and to ensure that people can't *wait* for your product to go live.

And we're going to do it in just 7 simple steps...

1 Create Your Digital Product

Of course, the first thing you'll need to do in order to launch a digital product is *make one*. Until you do this, you'll have nothing to launch and that means you can't expect to make much of a splash when you go live!

So what is a digital product? There are plenty of options here but some of the most popular choices for marketers are:

- Ebook
- Online course
- Video series
- Seminar
- WordPress theme or plugin
- Other software

Any of these will give you the ability to sell unlimited copies with zero overheads. That in turn means that you can recruit affiliates and share your revenue and it means that you're minimizing the likelihood of a failure. Your product can't fail when you only need to sell one item to breakeven!

Make sure that your product is unique, that it is original and that it has a real 'emotional hook' that will draw in your buyers. You can also help it to sell more by adding lots of

extras, whether that means videos, access to a VIP area on a website or perhaps a free report.

Making the product means either writing an ebook in Word, creating a video with some filming and editing equipment, or outsourcing the entire process to a third party using a freelancing site like UpWork (www.upwork.com).

2 Tease Your Digital Product

If you have an audience already as a blogger or a social media marketer, then that means that you have a built-in customer base that you can market to.

That also means that you can start to build anticipation and interest for your product as early as possible. Don't announce your product yet (we'll come to that in a moment) but instead make it known that you have something on the horizon. You can do this simply by saying:

“Stay tuned because I have something very exciting to reveal in the coming weeks... it's going to change everything!”

This allows you to follow the recommended sequence when it comes to hyping and selling a product: AIDA. That stands for:

Awareness

Interest

Desire

Action

Here, you are piquing interest and making your audience aware that something is going to be available in the future. That will make them more receptive when you eventually share more information and it's also a good example of something known as 'presuasion'.

This is also a particularly good time to ask your audience what they would like to see. This is one of the great things about a product launch – it gives you time to consult with your audience and to make sure that they actually are interested in the thing you're about to spend ages developing. By getting your audience to vote on the kinds of things they'd like to see from you, you can get them more involved in the product (and thus more emotionally invested) and you can also verify that the audience exists so that you aren't risking spending a long time developing a product that no one will go on to buy...

For that reason, this step two should actually start around the same time as step one. Once you begin work, let people know while simultaneously keeping the nature of that product shrouded in mystery.

3 Create Your Launch Materials

Now you're going to create your launch and marketing materials.

So that means you're going to make your press release (a letter that you will send to the press, telling them about your new product and why everyone should care), a sales page (a single page that exists solely to promote your product and collect sales) and maybe some other things like some email swipes for your audience and maybe some banners, cover materials etc.

This can also be a good time to come up with some posts for social media and for your blog.

So why are we doing all this now? That's because we're using a technique called 'pre and pick up'. In short, once you announce your product, you will want to start promoting it heavily. This can take a lot of work as you're sending out emails, creating videos, creating sales materials, managing affiliates etc...

And what happens if you get ill? What happens if you get very busy and don't have time? Or what happens if you just lose enthusiasm? In all those scenarios, you're going to lose momentum and you're going to lose your audience.

Conversely though, if everything is written and everything is ready to go, then you can simply hit 'send' when it comes to the right time and you can be sure that it is all there and ready to go.

And by setting up your sales funnel, affiliate page etc. right now, you can also test that everything works to avoid things going awry on your big launch.

4 Announce Your Digital Product

Once the product is finished and all of your materials are in place, you can now announce the digital product thereby entering into your 'pre-launch phase'. Now the world knows precisely what the product you're creating is, they know why they should care and hopefully they're excited and ready for it to go live.

You're now going to use this opportunity to create the maximum impact though so that this is big news and so that it gathers lots of attention. And if you *can* then the best way to do this is by announcing the launch through a big news

outlet. This might be a website in your niche or even a magazine. To do this, you're going to offer that big outlet the chance to exclusively cover your launch and be the first to break the news. And to do that, you will need to create a press release.

While you might feel nervous to give a media source exclusivity on your big launch, it's actually a very good strategy because it means that you'll be getting coverage from other sources too who get the news from there.

In other words, if the Verge were to cover your technology review (which is probably aiming a bit too high but just for argument's sake...), then you would find that every other site like Engadget and Wired would also cover it soon after because they'd read the news there.

A press release is a small letter that is designed to encourage the press to cover your story. The key to using these successfully is to make sure that your press release is an actual *story* that will be interesting for the intended audience of the chosen website or magazine. If your press release is just transparent self-promotion, then don't expect anyone to cover it.

5 Recruit Affiliate Marketers

Now your product is common knowledge, you can go about finding affiliates. Of course an affiliate is someone who will promote your product for you in exchange for a commission and this way, they can help you to gain more sales that you wouldn't have gotten otherwise. You'll often give away as much as 70% of your profits but in doing so, you'll be able to recruit more sellers and thus make more money overall. In other words, it's better to earn 30% of 100,000 sales than 100% of 20. The higher the commission you're giving away, the more money you stand to make – though of course the product should also be *good*.

You can also encourage more affiliates in a few other ways. Supplying them with free marketing materials to use can be a big help for instance, and this is another reason why it is such a good idea to create your materials prior to your pre-launch phase. Another tip is to run a contest. This will encourage competition between your affiliates and get them to put in more work in order to try and earn your cash prize. At the same time though, it will also just be an added incentive for them to choose to promote your product over the countless others.

In order to find an affiliate, you will need to find an affiliate network. The two most popular ones right now are JVZoo

(www.jvzoo.com) and ClickBank (www.clickbank.com). Both of these will help you to promote your product and find affiliates and they vary only slightly in terms of the people who use them and the tools that they provide. Take a look at both, but either will do the job just nicely.

6 Hype Your Launch

Now you're approaching your pre-launch, it's time to push hard and make sure people know about it and are ready to buy!

You can do this using all the usual channels you would use to promote anything else. That means social media of course, where you can post regularly about your upcoming product but also feature events. Having a 'launch party' can be a great promotional strategy that will make your product seem even bigger and even more important and which will look great on social media. Likewise, you can work with affiliates by giving them early access to review the products. That's great for their channels and it also means more exposure for you.

You can also run contests on social media. That might mean offering money off to anyone who can get you enough likes, or it might mean consulting the audience to let someone choose the name of your book. Again, the more

your audience feel they had a part in the creation and success of your product, then the more successful it will be!

You'll also be increasing the frequency of emails to your audience at this point, making sure that they feel that the hype is gaining momentum as it draws closer. You can also use a timer on your website and even embedded into the emails!

Part of the key to success here is timing. You need to ensure that your pre-launch phase lasts long enough to get people really thinking and talking about your product but it is also important not to let it go on for too long so that people start to lose interest. A few months as a maximum is a good idea, whereas a few weeks is probably closer to the norm.

7 Go Live!

And then when the day comes... go live! Make sure that everyone knows you're launching and then sit back and watch as the orders come rolling in!

Your work isn't done here though, you're going to need to watch the orders, watch the metrics and tweak everything to try and further maximize your potential.

Another question is how long the launch itself will last. You might want to sell your product indefinitely, or you may want to have a short window of around 7 days which will create a huge amount of scarcity, urgency and hype. If you want the best of both worlds, then consider running a short term special offer when your product is brand new, which can cause a similar level of excitement.

And then when it all quieter's down, it's time for a debrief. This post-launch phase will help you to decide what to launch next... and then the cycle begins anew!