


The Creative Entrepreneur's Guide to

# PASSIVE INCOME

*HoneyBook*

| **RISING TIDE**

Photo by Dmitriy Frantsev



You know the “dream,” right? Swaying in a beach hammock while your business bank account grows—all thanks to passive income! But... what does that *really* mean? And what can *you* do today to start earning passive revenue, scale your business, and do more of what you love? We can help.

***This month’s guide shares:***

- The secret to getting started—and how to do it
- 3 steps to market and sell your passive income product
- How to earn passive profit through email funnels and affiliate marketing

And more! Keep reading to increase passive revenue in your creative business today.



# Table of Contents

**1**

KEY TIPS

**2**

3 STEPS TO MARKET—AND  
SELL—YOUR PASSIVE INCOME  
PRODUCT

By Phyllis Brasenell

**5**

THE SECRET TO GETTING  
STARTED WITH PASSIVE  
INCOME? CREATING CONTENT

By Paige Brunton

**8**

3 STEPS TO CREATE AND  
DIVERSIFY PASSIVE INCOME

By Bethany Lee

**11**

HOW TO SELL VIA AN EMAIL  
FUNNEL TO EARN PASSIVE  
INCOME

By Aleya Harris

**14**

5 REASONS WHY YOU CAN  
CREATE AN ONLINE COURSE  
OR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

By Shafonne Myers

**17**

HOW TO LEVERAGE THE  
CONNECTIONS YOU ALREADY  
HAVE THROUGH AN AFFILIATE  
PROGRAM

By Zoe Linda

**21**

HOW TO PITCH YOURSELF FOR  
SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

By Laylee Emadi Smith

**24**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND  
RECOMMENDED RISING TIDE  
BLOG ARTICLES

**25**

OTHER ULTIMATE GUIDES

**26**

WHO WE ARE

## GET FEATURED

We believe in elevating the voices of our community, and we'd love to elevate yours! Submit content for an opportunity to be featured in next month's Rising Tide Society TuesdaysTogether PDF guide. [therisingtidesociety.submittable.com/submit](https://therisingtidesociety.submittable.com/submit).

## KEY TIPS: HOW TO EARN PASSIVE INCOME

1

**THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE ENDLESS.** No matter your skill set, the opportunities for passive income are endless. It's not *only* course creation or selling photography prints. Instead, you can earn passive revenue from membership sites, like Shafonne shares on [page 14](#), to speaking opportunities, like Laylee explains on [page 21](#). Don't limit yourself. Start with this guide to determine what exactly your potential for passive income can be, and get to work in building it out on the front end, so the opportunity for selling continues to grow.

2

**START WITH CONTENT.** Not sure where to begin? Don't let intimidating overwhelm hold you back. Every successful passive revenue stream starts with valuable content, leading as the expert, and building your audience of loyal followers. Paige shares all about the importance of valuable content creation for your passive revenue streams on [page 5](#). Then, once you've got your content strategy rolling, don't forget about the chance to sell with a high converting email funnel. Aleya shares her key tips on [page 11](#) that will make you money in your sleep.

3

**FOLLOW UP WITH MARKETING.** It's true... passive income is a misnomer. While it may sound like a "set-it-and-forget-it" kind of revenue stream, the key to earning potential is in the follow-up. It's in the marketing. Once you've built your passive product, launched (maybe even with affiliate marketing like Zoe on [page 17](#)), and started seeing those dollar signs roll in, *you're not finished*. Continue with your marketing, content strategy, and more. Finally, every passive income launch is the opportunity to evaluate the success and where you can improve... and build out a better product and process the next time. It's a passive income journey, not a destination.

### FREE UP TIME FOR PASSIVE INCOME

With HoneyBook, you can keep everything in one place with one online tool that simplifies managing documents, payments and client communication. By simplifying your 1:1 client process, you'll have time and energy to scale your business with passive income.

[START FREE TRIAL](#)



# 3 STEPS TO MARKET—AND SELL— YOUR PASSIVE INCOME PRODUCT

Phyllis Brasenell

Photo by Laura Oslen

Raise your hand if you want to make passive income in your business? I'm guessing it's all of us, right? But here's the thing:

## **“PASSIVE INCOME” DOESN'T REALLY EXIST.**

**It does sound pretty dreamy right?** Create a \$97 course, throw it on your website, then jet off to live in a hammock under a coconut tree somewhere only accessible by two charter planes and at least one super sketchy ferry ride.

**The idea of passive income is misleading because “passive” implies you don't really have to work.** You can just “set it and forget it.” But the truth is that passive income product? It takes hours of work upfront to create. And then? You need to market and promote it, consistently, to reap the benefits.

**Which is why I prefer calling “passive income” leveraged income.** Why? Because it's more accurate and sets you up with realistic expectations of the process. You frontload the (unpaid) work to create your product and then you can make more revenue, with less input, as you get better and better at marketing your product.

**And your marketing is really about relationship building. Remember: no matter what you're offering, you have to take your potential client through the same 5-step journey** to attract, engage, nurture, invite, and delight them. It's

the whole idea of building your know-like-trust factor before someone's willing to fork over their hard earned cash to you. Sometimes your client moves through those steps quickly, but even so, no one gets to skip that stuff.

So how do we set ourselves up for max impact with a leveraged income product? **Here are quick tips to get you started:**

## **1. NURTURE YOUR EMAIL LIST TO BOOST PASSIVE INCOME**

Email marketing is the single most powerful tool you can use to make your passive income dream a reality. Sure, you'll want to utilize social media as well but here's why you want to make email marketing your top priority:

- Email is a much more intimate way of communicating with your audience. These are people who've raised their hand and said “I like what you're about, tell me more!” and given you permission to go directly to their Inbox. Compare that to being part of a mindless scroll where you're just one of hundreds of other accounts in the mix.
- Speaking of mindless scroll, for most of us in the service or creative space, our open rates for email run around 20% or higher. Whereas on social media—unless you're paying for ads—you can expect about 5-6% of your content to be seen by your followers.

The more consistently you've provided value to your email list before launching your passive income product, the better, because all of us have to earn the right to sell.

You can take your regular email communication one step further by creating a funnel to intentionally lead new subscribers down the path to buying your passive income product.

## 2. CREATE A SERIES OF EMAILS THAT:

- Explains the value of your product
- Helps the reader envision what result/transformation they'll get
- Positions you as the go-to guide on their journey
- Communicates that you understand their challenge
- Gives a clear call to action to purchase your product

## 3. DON'T FORGET TO CREATE AN IRRESISTIBLE LEAD MAGNET!

You can craft a killer email funnel but if no one gets on your email list in the first place, you've just wasted your time.

### Make sure your lead magnet:

- Directly relates to your passive income product. Don't put together a freebie on how to save money in your monthly budget if you're selling a course on decluttering your home. Your passive income product should be a logical next step from your lead magnet.
- Provides high-value, actionable content. You want your reader to walk away with something they can do *right now* to see a result. Getting your audience a quick win inspires confidence in you and your ability to help.
- Is short and sweet! It's tempting to stuff lead magnets full of all our brilliant knowledge but reign yourself in. Only aim to solve *one problem* with your lead magnet. You want to leave people thinking, "man, if that's what she can teach me in this little freebie imagine how good her paid stuff must be!" Truly, the best lead magnets I've seen are just 1-3 pages long!

Expect your passive income—aka *leveraged income*—product to take a big time investment upfront. Then, honestly, spend about as many hours again nurturing your email list. Make these steps a priority:



- Deepen the relationship with your audience by consistently communicating to your list long before you release your new product.
- Craft a powerful lead magnet that relates directly to your paid product.
- Build a series of emails to introduce your product, paint the picture of its value, position you as the go-to guide and, finally, clearly invite your reader to buy.

Over time you can refine your lead magnet and funnel but the first step is getting started. That's the hardest part! It'll take time to get yourself to that hammock under the coconut tree but be willing to take imperfect action and you'll be on your way to passive (leveraged) income.



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# THE SECRET TO GETTING STARTED WITH PASSIVE INCOME? CREATING CONTENT

Paige Brunton

Let me guess, you've heard about the benefits of adding a passive income stream to your business, and you want in!

("Toes in the sand while my business runs on auto-pilot!? Sign me up!")

Still, there seem to be a lotttt of steps needed to get the passive income ball rolling, and if you're being honest, you don't know where to start.

What you REALLY want to know is the absolute surest step to getting started with generating passive income, so you can make the best use of your time and energy.

Which leads me to . . .

## **Step 1 in generating passive income: Create content.**

(Yes, even before you have your exact idea for a passive income product!)

Why is this the best first step you can take? Let me explain.

### **1. CONTENT ATTRACTS PEOPLE INTERESTED IN YOUR TOPIC**

(And therefore are likely to be interested in your fabulous paid passive income product on that same topic in the future.)

If you plan to sell anything, you are first going to need someone to sell to.

When you're offering 1:1 services, you can do your marketing in-person and get enough clients to run a solid business.

Passive income products tend to be a lot cheaper than 1:1 services so with this business model, you're going to need to sell at scale, not just in-person.

That means you're going to need to do your marketing at scale, and consistent content is the quickest way to build up a following of people who are legitimately interested in learning more about your area of expertise!

When the time comes to launch your passive income product, your audience will be made up of people who are genuinely interested in your topic, because they spent the time searching for info on your topic.

That means they're action takers and bootstrappers, and they are more likely to seek out additional resources in the future to get the job done!

Which leads rather nicely into my next reason for getting serious about content creation!

### **2. CONTENT ESTABLISHES AUTHORITY & TRUST**

You may feel like you are giving it all away for free, but the hand-holding you provide now will keep those same action takers coming back



again and again, making you the obvious choice for future queries.

Some of them may use your content to DIY their thing start to finish, and that's totally cool.

But they've seen the way you hold nothing back, and when and if they are ready to level up, they aren't going to think twice about grabbing your paid passive product if they think it will allow them to skip weeks, months and even years of expensive trial and error.

If you want to be seen as the expert on your topic, you need to be providing REAL answers... and not just one time on some dusty old FAQ page.

Sticking to a schedule for your content lets people know they can trust you to keep showing up for them and that they don't have to go it alone.

They will trust you have their well-being (and not just your bank account) in mind when you do share the good news about your passive product.

Bottom line: you can be a total expert on your topic, but if you aren't putting yourself and your answers out there on the regular, people looking for what you're offering aren't going to find you very useful.

Or worse...they won't find you at all.

### **3. CONTENT HELPS PEOPLE FIND (AND STICK AROUND) YOUR SITE**

You want to make it as easy as possible for people searching for information on your topic to find you.

How do you manage that? Creating consistent content around your topic is the surest way to let Google know that you are highly relevant to that person's search!

Once Google decides you are highly relevant to a topic people search for, you are suddenly going to rank muchhhh higher in those search results!

(Meanwhile, your competition who is not creating consistent content on the topic, will be nowhere to be found.)

Getting people to your site is just one challenge, and the second? Getting them to stick around for as long as possible!

One of the ways Google and other search engines or social media platforms determine the usefulness and relevance of your site for certain keywords is by paying attention to what visitors do once they get there.

If a bride-to-be discovers your site in their search for a "Seattle Wedding Photographer," the last thing you want them to do is quickly scan your portfolio, check out your prices, and then return to their search and click on another link.

(That's called 'pogo sticking' and it tells Google that your site didn't satisfy the searcher, meaning Google will rank your site lower in the results for future similar searches.)





Having tons of compelling content on your site for the searcher to peruse through and maybe help them prepare for their wedding is going to make them want to stick around and get to know you for more than just your prices.

Because no matter how cutesy your “About” page is, it isn’t going to be nearly as useful as your content when it comes to genuinely helping people with the topic you’re an expert on.

#### **4. CONTENT HELPS YOU PROMOTE YOUR FREE OPT-IN GIFT**

If you’re following ANY of the biggest names in online business, you’ve probably heard them consistently preaching one thing. “The money is in the list.” (Your email list that is!)

**An email list is the absolute most valuable asset in any passive income-style business.**

But how do you build your email list? With a free opt-in gift!

But once you’ve created a free gift, how do you get people to actually give you their email & download it?

You could drop a link to a free resources page into your bio or your site’s main navigation, but if you have yet to put out any useful content, people aren’t going to take your free thing very seriously!

Your own content is the most relevant and organic place to be dropping hints about opting in to your email list through the use of freebie opt-in gifts.

If they found your blog post or YouTube video extremely useful, they are going to want to get their hands on whatever other free thing you have to offer.

Even if it means giving you access to their inbox!

The more useful content you have, the more opportunities you have for plugging freebies that relate to that content.

SO hopefully I’ve convinced you that creating content is the BEST first step when you want to add a passive income stream to your business ... but what about after that?!

What happens next that actually starts bringing money into the bank?

Those next steps are all outlined in my passive income roadmap. You can grab a free copy here: <https://paigebrunton.com/passive>

(... I hope you see what I just did there. Free content > opt-in gift. Just practicing what I preach y’all!)



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# 3 STEPS TO CREATE AND DIVERSIFY PASSIVE INCOME

Bethany Lee



Photo by My Equestrian Style

The phrase, “*Work smarter, not harder,*” has always been in the forefront of my mind since starting my equestrian lifestyle brand in 2016, but that saying is easier said than done, isn’t it? We spend full days knocking out to-do lists, answering emails, and putting out fires and before we know it, it’s 9pm and we peel ourselves away from our computers to scarf down some food, roll into bed, and do it all again the next day. *No? Just me?*

The true meaning behind passive income is earnings derived from an enterprise where constant action isn’t needed. I had a lot of misconceptions when I was first introduced to it. For so long, I thought it was a character flaw to have my hands in so many things, be multi-passionate, or pivot my brand. I felt insecure that if I made big shifts, it was a sign that I was failing in my business. I eventually harnessed my passions and implemented this three-step process to create and diversify my passive income streams.



## 1. TAKE ON THE EDUCATOR ROLE.

Laying a foundation is something you need to do if you haven’t already. We always teach our workshop or online course attendees the idea, “*Everyone is an influencer.*” I know, it sounds so cliché, but you have the ability to influence your community with the words you say, the stance you take, and the products or services you stand by. Take advantage of this opportunity by taking on the role of the educator. Blog posts are a great way to show your knowledge in many different avenues and show your areas of expertise. You could also collaborate with others in your industry. Create a design or product to give away, set up a contest, or get together for a photoshoot to grow your community and elevate your position. You can also start a podcast or be a guest speaker on one.

One of the main reasons I started the Equestrian Podcast was to interview top professionals in the industry... but as a result I became viewed as an expert simply by association. Lastly, try pitching yourself to magazines and other publications. A really effective way to showcase yourself as an educator is through features on other platforms! Don’t be afraid to shoot some emails out or ask other peers who have already been featured for an introduction email.

## 2. OUTLINE YOUR POTENTIAL OR CURRENT PASSIVE INCOME STREAMS.

Let's get into the nitty gritty of how to start seeing those passive income dollars skyrocket! Whether you have or haven't started implementing passive income streams, you may already have some streams without realizing it! Make a list of all the areas of your business along with sub-categories where passive income could or does happen. Here is my passive income chart below for reference! Whether you have one singular business or you dabble in many, jotting them down like this always helps my brain find connections and create a plan.

PASSIVE INCOME DIVERSIFICATION CHART				
FACETS OF BUSINESS (One per column)	MY EQUESTRIAN STYLE <i>An equestrian fashion and lifestyle influencer platform</i>	EQUESTRIAN PODCAST <i>Host of podcast to talk about areas of the industry</i>	EQUESTRIAN WORKSHOP <i>Online and in-person business coaching for female equestrian entrepreneurs</i>	TIDEWATER INVEST <i>Rental properties and flipping houses with my husband</i>
PASSIVE INCOME STREAMS	Affiliate Marketing	Sponsored Ads	Ad Space	Ad Space
	Digital Products	Digital Products	Digital Products	Digital Products
	Online Courses	Online Community Group	Online Courses	Investment Property
	Ad Space		eCommerce	
	Stock Photography		Online Community Group	
	eCommerce			
			EQUESTRIAN WORKSHOP	TW

For example: with the right property management in place, sponsored ads and ad space require little upfront work to generate income on a video, podcast, or website. Digital products, online courses, affiliate marketing, and e-commerce are set up so you can create a product once and reap the benefits on your website or shop. Membership or online community groups have monthly subscription plans, but besides a little interaction and structure, the members navigate and communicate with each other. Lastly investment properties are close to passive and powerful for long term wealth.

Outline what this looks like for you. How can you categorize your passive income? Diversification allows you to “*divide and conquer*” in a way where you can test out many methods and find what is the most successful for you and your brand. It also allows you to create passive income that pulls at all of those heart-strings within the passions of you and your community. Finally, something that may be selling like hotcakes one month might lay dormant the next. Diversifying your passive income streams allows you to maintain success within your business in different areas instead of having outside factors that are out of your control dictate your revenue.

## 3. CREATE A SPECIFIC PLAN OF ACTION.

Once you have created and packaged all of your offerings, a clear plan of action is essential to finding true freedom within your passive income. If you put forth the time and work to launch these streams, they will be able to essentially run themselves in true passive income fashion. The launch of your offer

can make or break your passive income. Develop a marketing strategy leading up to your launch. I like to set a launch date and work backwards to schedule paid advertisement, collaborations, content, and associated freebies.

Before you have officially arrived at the start of passive income, you need to manage all of these revenue streams. The key to this management is outsourcing. Make a list of tasks that need to get done in your business and assign yourself the ones you absolutely must do. The rest should be sent off to someone who has more time or can do it just as well (*if not better!*) than you. Personally, my two modes of outsourcing fall between my internship program and online freelancers. Consider bringing on college students as interns who need experience in your business niche. The majority of my interns earn college credit through their internship, so you can see if they have the option to get an independent study program approved with their advisor and school. From there, I like to screen record myself and go through all of the tasks I want my interns to do, save them in a Google Drive folder, and give them access as learning tools. On the plus side, you only have to do that one time and then they are ready for future interns. I also use freelancer websites to find the person who edits all the audio on my podcast. Not only is the price amazing, but he is so reliable and does an incredible job.

Any business can create and implement passive income into their business. And if done correctly, you can make a monumental impact in your community without having to sacrifice your sanity, quality time with your family and friends, or your passions in life. I want to encourage you to look into how you can benefit from passive income if you are a multi-passionate business owner such as myself. You can play out all your ideas in a way that still draws your ideal client back to your “why” in a cohesive way. At the very least, having multiple streams allows you to see what performs well and what doesn’t and pivot accordingly. If you can take hold of the educator role, develop a clear plan of action for your offer, and implement these tools into your launch and marketing strategy and you will be running on autopilot in no time!



Photo by My Equestrian Style



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# HOW TO SELL VIA AN EMAIL FUNNEL TO EARN PASSIVE INCOME

Aleya Harris

Have you ever wanted to create revenue on demand from a captive audience? What if I told you you may already have a powerful asset to help you do just that?

Most creative businesses who are using email marketing collect email addresses but don't know how to leverage them to make money. To use email to generate passive income, you need to capture the right audience, serve that audience with helpful information, and then sell to them by positioning your service as a solution to their problem.

## CAPTURE THE ATTENTION OF YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

Email addresses are the currency of online content marketing. If you want to sell to someone via email, you have to earn the right first. You do that by promoting and giving away helpful, relevant content to your ideal customer in exchange for their email address. That free content is called a lead magnet or a lead generator. This content should help your ideal customer better understand their problem and know what the steps are to solve it.

For example, if you are a wedding planner who specializes in micro weddings, you might create

a guide called "The Ultimate Guide to Planning a Micro Wedding." In the guide, you would outline the dos and don'ts of planning a micro wedding and may even throw in a checklist so that your potential customers know all that would be involved.

One of the big questions about giving away free content is, "Does that mean they are just going to do it themselves and not work with me?" Most likely not. Your lead magnet should not give away all of the details of the process. It should just seek to help your future customer identify what their problems are, not provide the step-by-step on how to solve them. That is what they would get from working with you.

## Benefits of a Lead Magnet

Using a lead magnet to build your email list has several benefits:

- You can pre-qualify your leads, which makes the sales process much easier. Say "bye-bye" to the tire kickers! Since you have pinpointed your ideal customer's problem and are speaking specifically to it, you are more likely to attract only those who are interested in your services. Plus, you can use the content of your lead magnet to address any early objections and benchmark pricing.

- You will position yourself as a helpful expert who uses empathy and credibility to build relationships. Yes, the cliché of “you only get one time to make a first impression” is true. If your first impression is a useful lead magnet that shows you understand your ideal customer’s problem and are there to help because of your expertise and experience, you are well on your way to positioning yourself as the perfect solution to their problem.
- Sales for those who work in the creative industry are relationship-based. It is difficult to sell your services to someone who doesn’t know you or how you operate. Instead of pushing the sale right out of the gate, promote your lead magnet, develop a relationship via email, and then sell once your prospect knows, likes, and trusts you. You will save yourself ad spend, effort and frustration.

## SERVE BEFORE YOU SELL

### Selling to a Cold Email List

Once you get someone’s email address, you need to welcome them with a nurture sequence and then email them weekly. The automated nurture sequence that you send directly after someone downloads your lead magnet is a great place to continue the conversation. If you capture email addresses and don’t do anything with them, you have an email database, not an email list that you can use to make money.

If you haven’t been engaging with your email list, start now. Since your list is “cold,” you can expect that your first few emails will cause several people to unsubscribe. That’s ok. They weren’t going to buy from you anyway and they just saved you the trouble of trying to connect with them.

### An Engaged List Is Better Than a Big One

The key to selling via email is not the size of your list, it is how engaged it is. You can make

thousands of dollars off a list that only has a few hundred people on it if they are made up of your ideal customer and they are loyal members of your community. In fact, once you start emailing your list regularly, you should begin to periodically cleanse out your cold subscribers to make your list as powerful as possible.

How do you build your email community? You participate, give, and support from a place of genuine service. You have already given away something of value. The first 3-5 emails that your new subscribers receive from you should deepen the value of your lead magnet, build rapport, teach, and inspire. Only after you do that should you send a sales email.

### Use Nurture Sequence Emails to Trigger Buying Behavior

Your lead magnet and your nurture sequence email series use several emotional triggers to set you up for the sale.



Photo by Priscilla De Preez

- **Reciprocity:** When someone gives something to us, we feel obligated to give something to them in return. By sharing additional information and being helpful, you will bank reciprocity points that you can cash in when you ask for the sale.
- **Trust:** Showing up consistently with solutions to your prospect's problems will make them see you as someone they can trust. Trust is the foundation for all good relationships and you can't sell to someone without it.
- **Likeability:** You become likable when you are relatable, kind, generous and honest. Those first emails can incorporate a slightly vulnerable story about yourself, or talk about your favorite things and how they are related to your prospect's pain points. People buy from people who they like.

## ASK FOR THE SALE

The relationship you are building with your ideal customer is an exchange relationship. They know you are running a business and are aware that they connected with you based on their need to solve a problem. Now, it is just up to you to ask for the sale.

Your nurture sequence emails have already done most of the heavy lifting for you. Your sales email should be short and to the point. Include these elements to make it more effective:

- Talk about the problem that you brought up with your lead magnet.
- Position yourself and your services as solutions to the problem.
- Use testimonials, data, and any social proof to help your potential customer visualize what it would be like to have you solve their problem.
- Sprinkle in some language of what they are risking if they don't work with you to solve their problem
- Ask for the sale with a direct call to action that you repeat at least twice inside of the email.

If the prospect doesn't buy based on your sales email, don't get frustrated. Keep nurturing them weekly and send promotional emails to your list at least once a month. That is a surefire way to earn passive income from your email list.

[Click here](#) to download 4 free nurture sequence email templates, including a sales email. These will help you get started with making money with your email list more quickly and easily.



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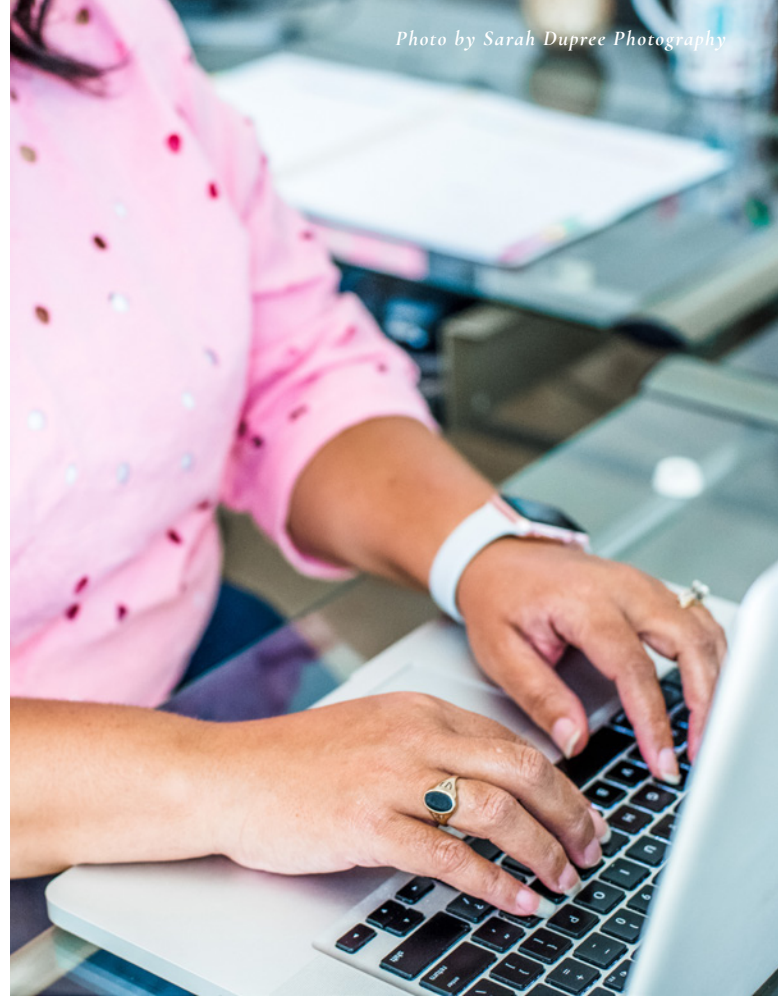
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# 5 REASONS WHY YOU CAN CREATE AN ONLINE COURSE OR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

Shafonne Myers



Everywhere you look online now, you see online courses and memberships that offer anyone who has a little time and money the chance to gain new skills. With no commute to a physical classroom, these educational opportunities allow anyone no matter how busy they are or where they're located to learn. Here are five reasons why you should be creating online courses and memberships for passive profit.

## PEOPLE NEED HELP AND YOU CAN PROVIDE IT

People get on the internet to find information they need. If you can address a need in your target market and teach them how to fulfill or solve it, you can help people. People ultimately pay money to get rid of or solve a problem. So if you aren't solving a problem then you might need to re-evaluate your business model. This benefits your audience, but it also benefits you by building relationships. After people take your course or join your membership, they'll continue to follow you and they may take future courses.

## YOU CAN BECOME AN EXPERT

Creating online courses and memberships help you to become an established expert in your field. Right now, you may not feel like much of an expert. What on earth can you possibly teach people? But if you think about it, there is a great deal of knowledge you've gained through running your business. This is knowledge you can easily teach others (and you can research to fill in any gaps). The way I like to look at it is, if you are at least one step ahead of someone you can teach them something. You'll become the go-to for information for your audience, and their go-to when they need your products or services.

## CATCH UP (OR SURPASS) THE COMPETITION

There is a decent chance none of your direct competitors are running online courses or memberships for their customers. If they aren't, this puts you in a unique position. A very good

position! Among the competition, you're more than just another business, but also a valuable learning resource. This gives you a tremendous competitive advantage because most customers will come into your world and interact and learn from you before they actually buy from you.

If your competitors are already offering online courses and memberships, it's even more essential that you start doing so as well. Find a unique angle or a unique approach to what you're teaching to set your course or memberships apart. There can always be someone else teaching the same thing you do, but do they teach it like you? Do they have your special sauce? That's what will set you apart and make you unique.

## PROFITS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

You can sell your online courses and memberships and truly profit from them. And when I say profit, I mean passive recurring income that you make in your sleep. Imagine waking up to consistent payment confirmations, or the chattering of notifications that you had another sale! NICE RIGHT?

There are free courses available online, as well as a great deal of free information, but if you can provide real value, offer something unique, and market your courses and memberships well, you can charge a good price for them and you'll see enrollment.

Even better, you can use your online courses and memberships as a way to build future profits as these digital products build a relationship with your audience. Even if you offer a free course, you'll establish yourself as an expert and trusted source of information.

There are many ways to profit from online courses and memberships, including running a short free course that leads to a longer premium course. Or even having a premium course that then leads to a backend membership that members of the course can join to continue implementing what you have taught them in the course. You can also build a passive income by creating courses that students can take at any time and that runs mostly through automation. These would be evergreen courses. They don't require launching, but always have open enrollment.



## IT'S EASY

It's much easier than you probably imagine to create and run online courses and memberships. It just takes a bit of organizing and preparing. You can research to gather whatever information you need to fill in knowledge gaps. Your digital products will exist and be managed on a platform specially designed for courses and memberships. And once you run one, it gets much easier to do the next.

Online courses and memberships offer a great way to reach your audience and if you're not doing it now, you're missing out on a great opportunity. And literally leaving money on the table. I don't know about you but I'm not in the business of leaving money on the table!

Looking for more information about adding passive income to your wedding business? Download my free Ebook on [20 Profitable Offerings for Wedding Professionals](#) and discover if digital products are a good addition to your creative business.



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*All photos by Sarah Dupree Photography*

A top-down view of a desk with a laptop, a notebook, a candle, and a succulent. The laptop is open, and the notebook is also open, showing a page with a small plant illustration. A candle is lit, and a succulent is in a small pot. The background is a light-colored wall.

# HOW TO LEVERAGE THE CONNECTIONS YOU ALREADY HAVE THROUGH AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM

Zoe Linda

Photo by Daria Shevtsova

Wouldn't it be amazing if you could ditch traditional marketing efforts and build a team of people who sell your product FOR you?

If you're worrying that no one will go out of their way to promote your product, think again.

We all know how important it is to have #CommunityOverCompetition—something that Rising Tide has taught us from Day 1—but how do you really come together with others to help you grow your passive income?

**Hands up if you have a list of past clients or customers.** Maybe you only have three people you've worked with in the past, maybe you've sold a course to over 100 people, or have 50 members in your membership?

**Hands up if you have a number of business friends.** This could be people in a mastermind group, people you talk about business with, friends who want to support you in your business, etc.

**Hands up if you have friends or acquaintances who offer something similar to you.** Maybe they offer the same thing to a different clientele or maybe their services are slightly different from yours.

**If you put your hands up to any of these, you already have a group of connections that you can harness when you start an affiliate program to sell more digital products!**

More often than not, business owners think they aren't ready to start an affiliate program because they're thinking:

- *How am I going to find people to refer customers my way?*
- *Who am I going to invite into my program?*
- *How am I going to grow my affiliate program and get more connections?*

BUT, if you're reading this, I'd bet my hat that you probably already know a lot of people who would be GREAT fits for sending new leads your way through an affiliate program!

Before I go into how to get started with an affiliate program, let's dive into the basics and all the



Photo by Nicola Fioravanti

amazing benefits of getting started with this collaborative strategy to increase your passive income.

## WHAT IS AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM?

If you're reading this, you're likely already familiar with affiliate marketing. I'd even guess that you're an affiliate for someone else's product.

Maybe you share a referral link to a software you use (i.e., HoneyBook)? Or perhaps you've taken part in a friend's course launch as an affiliate?

Well, we're talking about affiliate marketing at the *other* side of the table.

An affiliate program is made up of a group of people (your affiliates) who share your product and receive a commission for each sale they send your way.

**It's essentially word of mouth with a finder's fee.**

## HOW DOES AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM WORK?

You provide others (your affiliates) with a trackable link that leads straight to your e-book or product (this is known as an affiliate link). If someone clicks the affiliate link, they will be cookie'd for a set amount of time and your affiliate software will be able to track if a purchase is made.

When someone purchases a product through an affiliate's link, your affiliate will receive a percentage of the sale amount (their commission).

You would use an affiliate tracking platform or an in-built solution in your checkout software to make sure the commissions track from link click to purchase!

## WHY SHOULD YOU START AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM FOR YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS?

Selling a digital product is hard enough as it is without adding affiliates into the mix. Why should you bother?

Word of mouth is a powerful thing, folks, and working with affiliates and influencers is essentially **strategic word of mouth**.

Did you know that 92% of consumers trust referrals from people they know? And that word of mouth is the primary factor behind 20% to 50% of all purchasing decisions?

When I first ran a launch with affiliates, I had them to thank for 53% of the sales! After having an affiliate team for over three years, I now make more from digital product sales as I do from client services - woohoo!

Here's a quick rundown of the key benefits of having an affiliate program for your business:

- **Increased brand awareness** - By working with a select group of affiliates, you can get yourself and your product in front of your ideal audience in a strategic and organic way
- **Reaching a new audience** - You're going to reach whole new pools of people who have never heard of you before through your affiliates and their content
- **Increased warm leads to your site** - Warm leads are people who have a positive preconceived sentiment around you and your brand vs. cold leads who have never heard of you before (from something like FB ads or Pins)
- **Increased SEO performance from backlinks** - Influential affiliates have a positive effect on your SEO, which will mean that you get more referrals from search engines, which means more sales
- **Make meaningful connections** - You won't just give them an affiliate link and run in the other direction. You can cultivate great connections and relationships through an affiliate program
- **And, ultimately, increased sales for your products** - And, of course, by having an affiliate program you'll see an increase in sales from affiliate recommendations!

## HOW CAN YOU WORK WITH AFFILIATES TO PROMOTE YOUR PRODUCT?

The best thing about an affiliate program is that it's super flexible; you can make it as simple or as complex as you'd like!

Here are some ways you can make an affiliate program work for you:

- **Start an evergreen program** - This is an affiliate program that is always open for business with extra promotions and pushes throughout the year. This is best for business owners who have evergreen products such as an evergreen online course or a Shopify store. An evergreen program requires ongoing management but, like I said, it's flexible so you can cap your affiliates at a certain amount to make it easier to manage. Examples include ConvertKit, The Contract Shop, Amazon Affiliates.
- **Invite affiliates to support your launches** - If you run your products on a launch-by-launch basis, then you can invite affiliates to take part in each launch but the cart is closed for the rest of the year. Getting affiliates involved means your launches are a little bit busier than usual but, with the right affiliates, they will be able to get results that far outweigh the time spent.
- **Host one-off collaborations (such as Joint Venture (JV) webinars)** - Instead of seeing your affiliate program as a whole group of people, work on the basis of organising individual collaborations with each of your affiliates. These could be things such as JV webinars, freebie swaps, or product bundles.



## WANT TO LEARN HOW TO START AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM OF YOUR OWN?

If you want to learn more about starting an affiliate program for your digital products, you can [click here to download my free Affiliate Program Starter Guide](#).

This guide walks you through:

- How to create an affiliate program strategy that works for you
- 10+ affiliate tracking software recommendations
- Things to consider when setting up your affiliate software
- The 6 promotional assets you need to provide affiliates with
- Ways to find authorities and influencers to join your affiliate program
- How to reach out to potential affiliates for your team and start influencer outreach



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Questions?

# HOW TO PITCH YOURSELF FOR SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Laylee Emadi Smith



Pitching yourself as a speaker or expert educator can be intimidating- but it doesn't have to be! Whether you are reaching out to a podcast host (a great place to start speaking), an event organizer or coordinator, or considering starting a business as a professional public speaker there are some best practices that most experts would agree on.

*Disclaimer:* as an Educator for Creative Educators I see one common mistake repeatedly. That mistake is **giving up too soon**. I want to share this to remind you of how long it took you to become truly great at something; allow yourself that same amount of time to grow into a great speaker. Prepare yourself to hear a few “no’s” along the way, and celebrate all the “yes’s” as well!

Let's start by talking through four things you can do to better prepare yourself for pitching speaking opportunities. And because I believe that we can't prepare without knowing potential pitfalls, we will also address a few things to avoid when pitching.

## FOUR THINGS YOU SHOULD DO WHEN PITCHING:

Of course there are so many factors that go into getting started pitching, but these four tips will hopefully give you a solid starting point.

1. Be very clear and very specific on WHAT you want to talk about. As a podcast host, I get pitched daily by people who want to be a guest who have no clear topic or an unclear description. What I hear that is most alarming when I do ask for a topic is the phrase “I'm happy to speak on whatever you want me to speak on.” That's a huge red flag to anyone who is in charge of sourcing speakers. While I'm sure that as an established and experienced person you have a lot of knowledge, it's not up to who you are pitching to select what you're best at or what topics you are well versed in.

You don't want to put any more work on the host or their team. Showing that you have clear and well thought out areas of expertise helps make it easy for them to say yes.



- Put in the time to select the right fit for applications. For example, if you are pitching to a podcast, take the time to listen to a couple episodes of the show you're pitching to make sure that it makes sense for you to join them on their show. If you are applying to an in-person event, research their previous events to ensure that their audience could benefit from your knowledge. Avoid jumping into a pitch sight unseen.

I know it seems safer to cast a wide net and try to get as many opportunities as possible (and that's true to an extent), but if you haven't done any research you could end up in a conversation that just doesn't make sense for you, for the host, or for their audience. At that point, that is just a waste of everyone's time. So take the time to do some research and *make sure* it's a good fit before telling them in your pitch that it's a great fit!

- This might sound contrary to the last point I shared, but I have another tip regarding the size of the net you cast: look outside your typical or comfortable community. For example, some of my most lucrative speaking engagements had nothing to do with the creative industry. Speaking at local events, doing research about what types of communities could benefit from your **area of expertise**, and pitching those communities has several advantages. It's a great way to diversify your income, to practice your public speaking skills, and to fill your portfolio and media kit. Like any other skill set, the more opportunities you have to practice, the faster you will develop your skills, and the more in demand you will be as a speaker!
- This last tip is something that I like to encourage anyone who is using speaking as a passive income or secondary income stream to keep in mind. As you start to book speaking engagements and press,



you want to have an offer to send your new audience to. Now, don't take this as my encouraging you to turn a speaking engagement into a sales pitch (I would advise the opposite in fact). This is just something to think about as your audience grows. If you do an incredible job speaking and your audience wants the opportunity to continue to learn from you or work with you, are you prepared to send them in the right direction to make that happen? Do you have a way to continue that relationship? That is something to consider as you begin the process of speaking and educating.

### Now let's talk about two things *not to do* when pitching yourself as a speaker

Again, while every host, event founder, and booking coordinator is different, these two points are pretty well agreed upon as do-nots:

- Don't just slide into the Instagram DMs or pitch yourself in person.

Hear me out; this does not mean don't ask about the process, or try to build a relationship in person or via messenger. This

means don't just jump into an ask right off the bat and in an inappropriate setting. Whoever you are pitching to is a human who will likely feel cornered and is also likely not thinking about booking speakers in that moment. By catching them off-guard you're not exactly creating a great impression.

Do your research first. Look on their website for a speaker application. If there isn't one, you could consider sending a friendly email asking if they have an application process; and again be clear on your topic or the value you feel you can bring their platform. Sometimes in the creative industry our lines of professionalism can feel a little blurred- don't let that happen when you pitch!

2. Don't get discouraged by hearing "no." Remember, so many factors go into deciding what speakers to select for conferences, events, podcasts, etc. The

high volume of applicants, the topics desired, the budget available, and the list of factors goes on and on! A lot of times "no" can actually mean "not right now," and while it's always a good idea to re-evaluate and make sure you're offering the best pitch possible, it could just be something totally out of your hands. So when you hear that "no," take a beat, double check your pitch, and move on to the next one with confidence!

I hope this gives you a great foundation to start your pitching journey as a speaker! For more advice on becoming a Creative Educator (from speaking to mentoring and everything in between) you can [subscribe to The Creative Educator Academy email newsletter here!](#)



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# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1** Do you have any passive income sources in your business? Why or why not?
- 2** Have you ever participated in any kind of affiliate marketing?
- 3** If you could educate your audience on one topic, what would it be?
- 4** What is one thing you can do this week to take a step toward passive profit?

## RISING TIDE | HONEYBOOK BLOG POST



**EMILY TEBBETS**

How I Diversified my Income with Airbnb



**STEPHEN DIAZ**

Level Up your Income with the 4 Levels of Value

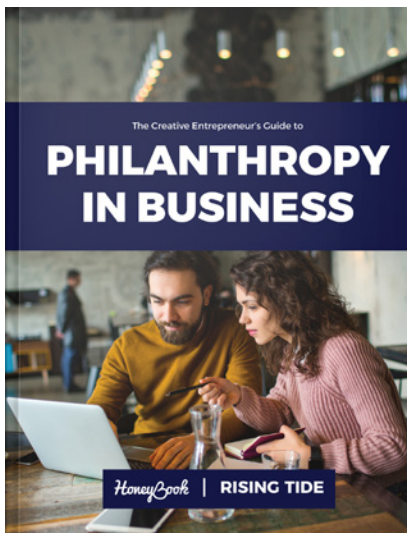
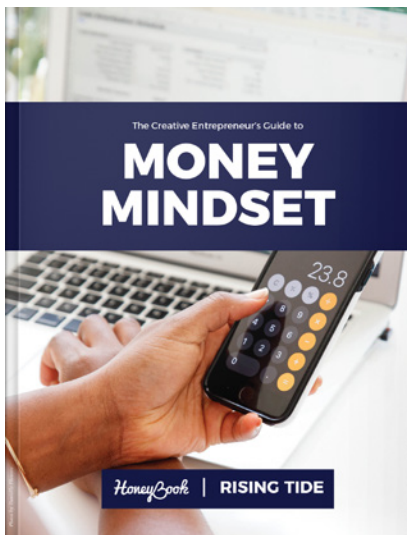
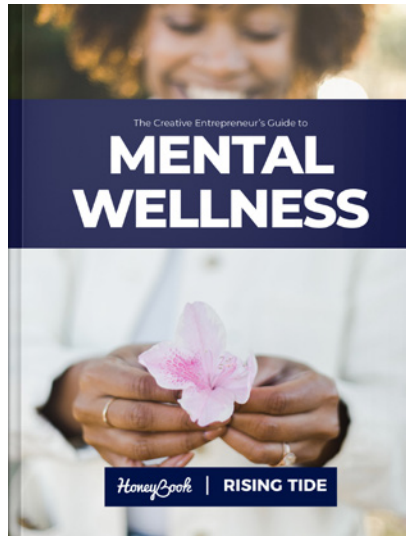


**KATHIE WIEHANNE**

5 Passive Income Streams You May Not Have Thought Of

## WANT MORE CONTENT LIKE THIS?

Check out our other Ultimate Guides to help scale your business.



## WHO WE ARE

The [HoneyBook | Rising Tide](#) team believes an empowered creative economy will change the world. By elevating the voices of creatives, sharing their stories, and building a thriving online and offline community, we support creatives in their pursuit of a sustainable livelihood.

Empowerment begins with saving creatives time and money. [HoneyBook](#) helps creative entrepreneurs manage their businesses more efficiently so they can do more of what they love. With [HoneyBook](#), creatives can send brochures, proposals and invoices; create the ideal customer experience; and track payments – all in one place. Equally as important are sharing knowledge and providing support. That's why [Rising Tide](#) is a community and living library of educational resources, including blog content from thought leaders, monthly guides, online summits, and over 400 monthly meet-ups across the world to help creatives succeed in business.

We're also passionate about supporting the communities around us. To date, we've given over \$130,000 to nonprofits including Pencils of Promise, The School Sessions, U.S. Dream Academy, The Birthday Party Project, Thirst Relief and more. We've also partnered with Pencils of Promise to build a school in 2018 funded entirely by community donations through our 2017 RISE Summit.

We believe that magic happens when creatives gather, support one another and are empowered to pursue their passions. We believe in community over competition. We believe in empowering the creative economy to rise together.

*Photo by Oliva Reed*

