

Unlock the secrets to 7-figure online businesses [Special offer: Join Starter Story](#)

How I Built A \$120K/Year Business That Helps Authors Publish And Market Their Books



Steve Kidd



Published: May 16th, 2023

ABOUT

BUSINESS

TOOLS

SAVE



Steve Kidd

Founder, **Thriving Best Sellers, LLC**

\$10K

REVENUE/MO



1

FOUNDERS

0

EMPLOYEES

Hello! Who are you and what business did you start?

Hi, my name is Steve Kidd. I am a third-generation minister, an international best-selling author of 21 books and counting, and I have the privilege of helping people write, publish, and market their books to best sellers and beyond.

As awesome as helping people share themselves with the world is, what I really do is help people discover their purpose and share it with a world in need. I show people the up level, the next, the more in life that allows them to see that their cloud doesn't just have a silver lining, but it is silver covered in cotton candy.

I've had the honor and the privilege to work with several thousand authors and those authors equal more than a million lives that have been touched by the books that they have written.

I offer a Done For You program for people who do not have time to write their book but know

they need it. I have a Taught To You class for those who wish to learn how to write their book themselves.

And I have a Marketing You program for people who have written a book and would now like the book to be a best seller; whether your book is brand new or 20 years old I can make your book a best seller - guaranteed!

I went through a painful divorce in 2020 and my wife was my business partner, so though I have been in business for 35 years I had to completely restart from scratch. I was able to still hold as a \$100,000 gross revenue company for that 1st fiscal year and since then have experienced a 20% year over year growth as I rebuild.



What's your backstory and how did you come up with the idea?

I started selling at five years old. My parents had purchased greeting cards and holiday napkins for my older brothers to sell and they quickly found that they weren't really interested in selling. Being the naive 5-year-old that I was I ask if I could sell them.

My mom packed up a bag assuming that I would come back in a few minutes. Instead, I came back with an empty bag and a pocketful of money and I've been in sales and marketing ever since.

I started a marketing company in February of 1987 which became an Internet digital marketing company before the word the Internet actually even existed. In 2007 my then-wife and Second youngest daughter went on a mother-daughter trip to visit the filming locations for the movie Twilight.

They blogged about their travels and turned that into a book I helped them publish that book

They blogged about their travels and turned that into a book I helped them publish that book and made the book at one point the number one best-selling movie-related travel guide on Amazon. It was with this book that I learned just how powerful being a best seller is and how necessary, if not mandatory it is for marketing. I took the experience of this and began ensuring that all the clients I worked with didn't just have a book but were best sellers.

Encouraged by a coach, we put together a program that anyone could do to write, publish, and market their books to bestsellers. We beta-tested this program with 20 people at the end of 2015 and ended 2015 at \$60,000.

In 2016 we helped 156 people become best-selling authors and reach over 180,000 people with their books, growing our little company to nearly half \$1,000,000. I have been working with authors, helping them share the unique brilliance that is them with the world ever since.

Take us through the process of building the first version of your product.

In the early days of doing books, there was a lot of hard work before I had a system. Learning to manipulate programs like InDesign to show up the way that you wanted things to work with graphics people. Doing layouts.

So all of those were things that I had familiarity with; I had never done them on this larger scale. There were several iterations to that first book before it ever looked right. Even though, at the time, I was writing, editing, and publishing a weekly local magazine, doing the full book was a new experience.

I had to create all the steps of capturing the content from the author and organizing it in a readable format to have the complete content for the book. When I began to bring on employees, and I created a system, there were nearly 50 steps originally, which now has grown to over 75 steps to go from start to finish to create a person's book.

Each step needs to be overseen and supervised to provide a consistent and quality book that the author loves.

Describe the process of launching the business.

We have been a marketing company for years and had been doing books for high-end multi \$1,000,000 clients for nearly a decade before we created our system to make getting your book done a reality for everyone.

We went to a networking event and shared with a small group of people an opportunity to be part of our beta group to test out the new system that we had created to make it accessible for anyone to write, publish, and market their books to best sellers.

Out of this group, we had 20 people who signed up to do their books during the months of November and December of 2015. The beta price for our program, which is now \$15,000, was for those first 20 people, \$997. From the money raised by those people, we were able to start a new division of our company helping people with their books.

Our program gives a person everything they need to do their book. We use an interview format

to help them write their book. This process includes my story development editor going through their interview, arranging it, as well as going through it and letting them know what additional information or clarity we need to finalize the content of their book. Which allows anyone to get a book written.

From there, we edit the book, do the cover, and format the book for eBook and print. Then we do what we do best. We set up the book for them on Amazon in an account that they own (which is extremely important because many services don't do this) so that their book will not only become a best seller at launch (which we guarantee) but also will allow the book to rank well any time traffic is driven to Amazon.

We also learned very quickly that that price was far below even giving it away and cost us far more to cover costs than we earned. We slowly ratcheted up the price throughout all of 2016 and, by the end of that year, had landed a price point of \$5997, which we later discovered was still far too low but allowed us to create enough cash flow for the company to get things off the ground, Up and running and then demand.

“ Follow your passion. Though something trendy MAY make you some or even a lot of money for a time, ultimately, trends change.

Though we had good cash flow, the biggest lesson we learned was that competing on price and trying to be affordable for everyone was a recipe for us always being just a little bit behind what we needed to really continue growing the company.

Since launch, what has worked to attract and retain customers?

In 2016 the marketing of our program was relatively simple. We were an active part of the Ewomennetwork, And of motivating the masses, and from these two organizations, we drove 156 customers and built a Facebook group of nearly 1500 members. As we expanded into other organizations and networks and continued building our Facebook group, we ended up with a Facebook group of about 3500 members.

The problem that began to arise in early 2019 was the changes in the algorithm four Facebook made groups less and less effective to the point where we moved from having approximately 10% of the group participating in any event we did to less than 1/10th of 1% actively participating in any campaign we did.

From there, we moved to do paid advertising on Facebook and LinkedIn but again, because of the changes in the algorithm, we quickly found that regardless of the daily or monthly amount we spent in our ad budget, Facebook ads were not converting as they had been previously.

We had to find a different way. Word-of-mouth advertising only works when you control what words are coming out of people's mouths, and so we began to develop relationships with strategic partners who had complementary services to ours and begin driving traffic both to them and to us.

It is about finding companies that are not your competition but have a service that what you do will help their customers, and what they do will help yours. As an example in our case, I work

will help their customers, and what they do will help yours. As an example, in our case, I work with a company that helps people create and manage a podcast. Because these people are already creating content, it is a natural fit to take the content they are putting out into the world in book form.

Another company we work with is books people as a guest speaker on podcast and on live speaking platform. This is a great add-on for our customers and as a marketing company, I know that if their clients are best-selling authors it helps them get many more bookings and be more marketable. This currently is the most effective form of marketing that we are experiencing.

We are now in the process of developing a community-based app to create our own family of our exclusive people in our exclusive community to help them get their book written, learn the nuances of publishing it, and most importantly marketing in it not only to the best seller but all of the things that come beyond that. We are excited about this new venture.

How are you doing today and what does the future look like?

At the end of 2019, my wife, who was my business partner, chose to go a different direction in her life, and as a result of the divorce, I found myself with the system that I created and the knowledge as well as very powerful track record, but I had to start essentially from scratch.

Add to that some of the economic upheavals of the last couple of years, and we've learned a lot of lessons which I'm happy to say have allowed us to be in a place where though the company is currently smaller, we're now streamlined and poised to truly expand not just to where we were at the high point but far beyond that.

With offerings, services, and a community truly capable of meeting the needs of the market, it is as wide and broad as the customer base that we've always served.

Our short-term goal is the launch of our community and the expansion of our done for you program to also include a step by step do it yourself course allowing people to take very small baby steps and work their way through all of the over 70 steps necessary to truly write a powerful book, publish it, and make it not just a best seller but the foundational element to everything that you do in your marketing.

Our long-term goal is to move the company to an average sales annually of about \$10 million we now have the systems built to be able to do this.

Through starting the business, have you learned anything particularly helpful or advantageous?

The biggest thing I learned through this process is how important everybody's voice is. So many systems make a person prove that they're worthy or even put them down as being less than others.

But the truth is each of us has a unique talent that is absolutely in demand and needed by the world. No matter who you are, the truth of the matter is there's somebody who though you may be saying the same thing that everyone else is, that particular person we'll never truly get the

be saying the same thing that everyone else is, that particular person we'll never truly get the help they need until you share who you are, what you know, and your passion with the world.

Someone is waiting on you!

What platform/tools do you use for your business?

We recommend writing your book via interview. We use the enterprise level of [Zoom](#) has transcription built into it for conducting our interviews and recording the core content of a person's message.

From there, since we are dealing with the written word, we rely heavily on [Word](#). Ironically with all of the other tools that can be used to write and format a book, a Word document (and it is saved as a PDF) is still the best tool to give the best layout for a person. Though we have and use the entire sweet of Adobe products, in the end, Microsoft Word still serves our clients best.

For my radio show, I record the interviews in Zoom and do the post-production using [Adobe Audition](#).

What have been the most influential books, podcasts, or other resources?

To this day, the 2 most influential authors for me are C.S. Lewis and Terry Brooks. Both of them understand the need to engage with (and sometimes even do a 4th wall break and talk directly to) the reader. A book that makes the reader feel as though it was written for them and the author is talking directly to them is always the best.

Advice for other entrepreneurs who want to get started or are just starting out?

Don't get caught up chasing a trend. Follow your passion. Though something trendy MAY make you some or even a lot of money for a time, ultimately, trends change.

When we instead follow our passion and do the thing that we were meant to do, that thing that burns inside of us ignites us and we are always ready and wanting to talk about and do more with is the thing that even in the toughest of times (and every business will go through them) your PASSION is what will pull you through and bring you to the other side to a brighter future.

Where can we go to learn more?

- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Linkedin](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [To Schedule a FREE session](#) to talk about your book with me

If you have any questions or comments, drop a comment below!



Steve Kidd, Founder of Thriving Best Sellers, LLC



Pat Walls, Founder of Starter Story

Want to find more ideas that make money?

Hey! 📧 I'm Pat Walls, the founder of Starter Story.

Get our 5-minute email newsletter packed with business ideas and money-making opportunities, backed by real-life case studies.



Your email here



JOIN STARTER STORY

See exactly how online businesses get to millions in revenue

- 4,818 founder case studies
- Access to our founder directory
- Live events, courses and recordings
- 8,628 business ideas
- \$1M in software savings

Join Starter Story



You might also like:

- 40 Lucrative Ways to Make Money on the Side
Pat Walls
- 5 Ways To Create A Product Prototype [With Exam...
Pat Walls
- How To Validate Your Business Idea
Pat Walls

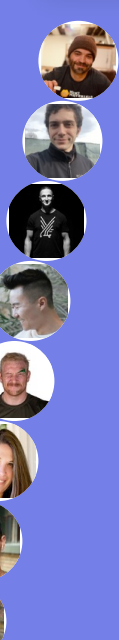


Unlock the secrets to 7-figure online businesses

Dive into our database of 4,418 case studies & join our community of thousands of successful founders.



Your email here



Join thousands of founders

See *exactly* how online businesses get to millions in revenue.

Our 4,418 case studies show you how ordinary people built businesses to millions in revenue - all starting from a simple idea or side project.

These aren't just case studies - they are real stories, from real founders who share their most intimate details with you - down to the exact amount of money they are making.

How did you come up with the idea? How did you find your first 10 customers? How much money are you making?

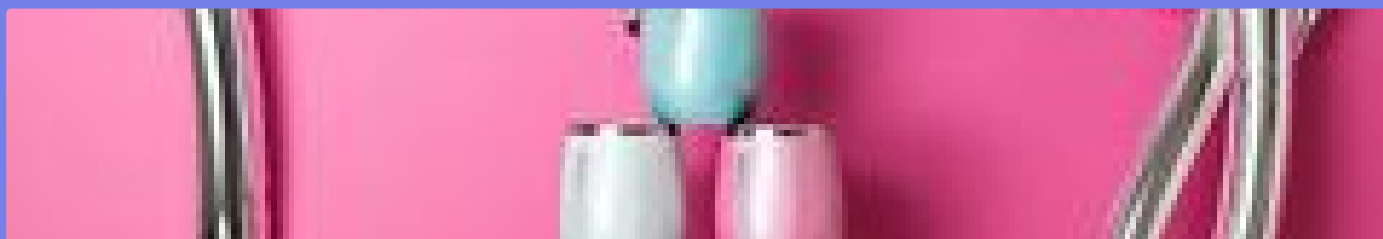
Our 4,418 case studies break down these exact questions. Every industry, trend, and how much money you can make.

You'll realize these people are just like you - and that, deep down, you can do it too.



Dylan

I Grew A Drinkware Brand To \$1.1M/Month At 23 Years Old



Drinkware brand

\$12M / month



Chris

How I Started An SEO Agency For Lawyers Generating \$3.6M/Year



Seo agency

\$10M / month



Matt

How I Started An \$8M/Year Stock Market Research Website



Finance blog

\$2.13M / month

Over 4,000 more case studies like these...

Surround yourself with founders who have been there before.

Building a business is lonely. And it's easy to feel stuck.

"How do you take the first step? How do you know you're making the 'right' progress every day?"

You finally have a place where you can ask these questions, get advice, and see exactly how successful founders did it before you.

You're no longer building alone, because you have thousands of founders who are telling you to keep going.



Michael

\$1.08M /YEAR



Scott

\$300K /YEAR





Chad

\$1.2M/YEAR



Garrett

\$300K/YEAR

Resources to keep you building



Abhishek

\$12M/YEAR

Building a business is not a game of luck.

It's about taking action every day.



Sampag

\$432K/YEAR

You'll get access to courses, frameworks, weekly live events, alongside a group of people that genuinely want you to succeed.

You'll start making real progress, and experience first-hand what it's like to put your ideas into the world.



\$1.68M/YEAR



Tricia

\$600K/YEAR



Michael

\$264K/YEAR



Everything you get



4,818 founder case studies

Explore our archive of 4,800+ case studies and get new stories every morning. Filter by industry, revenue, country, growth methods, and more.



Community of founders

Ask questions, get advice, uncover deeper insights on case studies, and get exclusive access to our private founder directory.



Courses and live events

Tap into our library of resources, including courses, live events, trainings and more.



8,628 business ideas

Access the world's biggest living, breathing database to help you find your next idea, side project, or product to sell.



200+ growth playbooks

Discover the 201 most effective ways that founders are growing their business right now.



\$1M in software savings ⓘ

We've exclusively negotiated discounts on 240+ tools that are proven to grow your business.

Don't take our word for it



Sam Parr

My First Million

I love this website.



Rand Fishkin

Moz / SparkToro

Love Starter Story's transparency.



Johne Vang

Be The Match

You can't find this information anywhere else.



Trent Baren

Instagram

So much valuable information.



Bilal Budhani

Entrepreneur

I was hooked on Starter Story as soon as I discovered it. Resonated with me right off the bat.



Jenn Leach

Millennial Nextdoor

I made over \$5,000 from my Starter Story membership in a week!

Don't miss out on creating your next big thing.

Enter your email

Starter Story



Jamie

Starter Story: Learn How People Are Starting Successful Businesses

\$1.62M/YEAR

About
Support
Privacy



Michael

CASE STUDIES

All Case Studies SaaS Case Studies Blogger Case Studies E-Commerce

\$1.2M/YEAR

BUSINESS IDEAS

Low Capital Ideas Make Money Blogging E-Commerce Ideas



Michael

START YOUR BUSINESS

How To Find Ideas TikTok Bio Ideas Learn SEO Grow Your Business

\$3.6M/YEAR

MORE STUFF

Share Your Story About Us Advertise With Us Impact



FREE

Wanna see 52 business ideas you can start with less than \$1,000?



Your email