

Promoting and Selling Your Product Offerings

Since that movie came out in the eighties, the phrase “build it and they will come” has become a cliché for what you don’t want to do in business. Even though it’s a cliché, it’s something you absolutely want to avoid. You don’t want to build all this stuff and just cross your fingers, hoping that your prospects and customers will eventually find you. If you’ve done a good job selecting your niche and structuring product offerings, that will certainly help stack the deck in your favor.

But the bottom line is this: “Build it and they will come” is fiction. The truth is that you’ve got to be proactive. You’ve got to take action to get your offerings in-front of your prospects---because your prospects can’t buy something they don’t even know about.

However, when it comes to promotion there are a ton of different options and hundreds of different tactics to choose from. Online or offline, if there’s a communication mechanism somewhere, there are easily a dozen different promotional tactics and approaches wrapped around it. From search engine optimization and affiliate marketing to social media and pay-per-click advertising---even just trying to understand the jargon and the terminology can make your head hurt.



So, how do you get started? How do you know what to do from a promotional perspective in the early days, when you're just trying to get going? Here again, the infopreneurial blueprint can make things so much easier to understand in the beginning and it can make things far more effective in the end. As we've discussed, each element in the blueprint has a unique function and objective---each has its own role to play in making your little info-business "machine" actually work. So as a result, each area of the blueprint also has unique promotional opportunities, considerations, and timing.



Viewing your efforts through the lens of the infopreneurial blueprint can not only simplify your understanding as to which promotional activities you can and should be engaging in, it can make it much easier to understand the *sequence* of those activities. In other words, it can help you understand what you should be doing first, next, and so on.

Start With Your Lead Capture Offering

The point of your promotional efforts in the area of Lead Capture is likely to be somewhat obvious to you by now. You're simply trying to grow your list of leads and prospects, creating a pool of people who are interested enough in the topic to engage with you---a pool of people who can eventually *buy your products*. Remember, you're not just looking for email addresses here---if they aren't a potential customer for your products, then they aren't truly a prospect.

Now in this area, the question of "when" you should start growing your list is almost as important as "how" you should start growing your list. You see, if you're building-out your product spread *in sequence* from left to right over time, as discussed earlier, you can start growing your list of prospects as soon as you bring your lead-capture offer online. And while you're working on your front-end product, your lead-capture allows you to create and cultivate a list of people who can buy that product when it's ready.

Earlier, we also talked about how you can solicit input from these prospects---input you can use to make your front-end product as compelling and appealing as possible.

For all these reasons and more, it's great idea to start promoting your lead-capture right away, even before you have any products to sell. The sooner you start, the bigger that captive audience will be when you actually do have something ready to sell.

And if you've set-up your online storefront the way we talked about in the last video---following the basic site specification we walked through---you're going to have a bunch of free information that can act as "bait" for these fish you're trying to catch or these prospects you're trying to capture and cultivate.

Promote the Value of Your Free Information

You've got your lead-capture offer---a pithy report, an intro video, something worth providing a name and address to get ahold of. And, you've also got the little articles or blog posts you've written to help demonstrate your expertise and enhance your credibility. So at this stage, the value you're going to promote to your niche is the free information you have available right now. In doing so, you'll start the initial flow of traffic to your website and you'll start adding prospects to your e-mail list.



Once you have that lead-capture offer in-place, you'll want to highlight it wherever you can. Don't underestimate the power of a compelling offer for free information. People who are interested in the topic or niche are information sponges and they will investigate your free report or whatever just to make sure they don't miss something important. So think about how and where you can highlight it as soon as it's available.

For example, put it in your email signature. Instead of just signing-off with, "Best regards, Jill" put another line down there with the title of your free offer and the link to your website. It's a very simple and easy thing to do, but it gets your free offer (which is likely your most-compelling offer) in-front of the people you interact with, without you have to remember to do it.

Now don't get carried away with this---just use a line or two of text. And do not put an image of your report or your logo or whatever in your email signature. Spam filters hate that stuff and might prevent your message from even getting through.

Here's another idea---it's a bit more involved, but it's pretty clever:

One budding infopreneur had double-sided business cards printed up as soon as they had their lead-capture offer available. These cards had the standard stuff on one side, and a little ad for their lead-capture offer on the other. Every interaction they had---every event they went to, every meeting they attended---they'd pass this card out and generate leads. So think about it and figure out ways to systematically highlight your lead-capture offer wherever you can.

Reach Out to Your Personal Connections

If you've selected a niche that's near-and-dear to your heart, you probably already have personal connections to people in that niche. You probably know people who share the interests or passions you're building your info-business around. Reach out to them. Let them know what you're doing. Let them know about the free information you have available. Ask them to take a look. Solicit their opinions.

Don't be shy. Be proud of what you've built so far and recognize that it has value.

A lot of people get hung-up on reaching-out to their personal connections in the niche. They worry that somehow they're going to be perceived as one of those people who are constantly trying to sell stuff to everybody they know. But one of the beautiful things about this model---particularly at this stage---is that you're leading with free stuff. You're not asking anybody for money. You're just letting them know about some valuable information they might be interested in.

So don't be shy---look at it like you're doing them a service.

As you reach-out to your personal connections, always keep your niche in-mind. Friends and family members are great. But if they're not in the niche, then their opinions---though interesting---are just not all that relevant. So make sure you're reaching-out to personal contacts and connections that actually fit your niche. Their feedback will be more valuable and if they get on your list, they might actually become customers one day.

Reach Out to Online Gathering Places

If you've selected your niche wisely, there are places where members of your niche get together. There are places where they gather or congregate. There are places where you can reach a bunch of them, all at once. These gathering places might include certain blogs, certain chat-rooms or forums, maybe a club or an association, a social-media group, maybe even a specific magazine---it all depends on the niche.

Whatever shape they take, these gathering places or aggregation points are great places to highlight the free information you have available.

For example, let's say there's an association that members of your niche tend to belong to. Well, the people who run that association may be perfectly willing to highlight your free information in their next member newsletter. Your free information is a valuable resource and the association is doing their membership a service by pointing it out.

Similarly, the editor of a blog that your niche tends to gravitate toward may be perfectly willing to review your information and if it's good, tell their readers about it. And if it's forum or social media group, you yourself might be able to let the rest of the group know about what you have available. Of course, with these types of groups, you'll want to make absolutely certain you're following the established rules and proper etiquette along the way.

The point is that you have valuable resources available, for free, and these aggregation points are great places to let people know about them...also for free.

Free Information Still Has to Be “Sold”

Now, even though you're not asking for any money and your articles and lead capture offer are essentially free, you still have to “sell” people on the idea of visiting your site to consume them. But don't let the notion of having to sell your free offerings put you off. We're not talking about these hyped-up, over-blown promotional pitches that attempt to get the prospect to do something that's not in their best interests. That's not really selling. That's manipulation and it's not at all what I'm talking about.

Simply put, when you reach-out to your personal connections or reach-out to these gathering places, you need to be very clear about why someone would want to check-out your information. Good salesmanship is very often just a matter of proactively telling the other person “why” and “how” something meets their needs---so they don't have to try and figure it out for themselves.

So as you do this stuff, think about what it's in it for them. How will they benefit from consuming your free information? What will they get out of it? How will it meet some need they have or address some problem they're struggling with? Then just articulate those things. It can be as simple as that.

SIDEBAR: You'll also want to make sure you're proactive in addressing some basic concerns people might have once they do reach your site. Privacy is big deal these days. On your lead capture form, make sure you're linking to your privacy policy to let people know that you're protecting them. It seems like a small thing, but it can make a big difference.

Cultivate Your Prospect List Over Time

Once you start capturing some leads and adding people to your prospect list, you'll want to cultivate them. You'll want to keep them engaged and enhance your credibility over time. Essentially, you want to get this captive audience into a position to eventually buy from you. Imagine that!

You're going to cultivate your prospects using more of what brought them to you in the first place---more content and more information.

On a regular basis, weekly or monthly at a minimum, you're going to send your prospects an email and let them know about some more information you have available---an article or post you've written, a new tip or trick you've discovered, an insight you've had about the topic or the niche, etc. There are lots of

possibilities here and these cultivation messages don't have to be massive tomes---just valuable nuggets of information that keep people engaged and enhance your authority.

Once in a while, it's a great idea to sprinkle-in a research or feedback opportunity. Reach out to your prospect list and ask them something related to the front-end product you're working on. For example, Jill might ask her prospects about their top five problems or concerns when it comes to starting a new catering business. Then, she could hit these problems and concerns head-on in her front-end product, making the product that much more appealing and that much more likely to sell.

Another benefit of these "feedback opportunities" is that prospects tend to feel more engaged with, and invested in, someone who cares what they think; someone who asks them for input; someone who genuinely wants to know what their issues are.

What About the Search Engines?

We've talked a lot about reaching-out to initial prospects in your niche, and proactively letting personal connections and gathering places know about the free information you have available. But what about the people who are already looking for the kinds of information you have available? Shouldn't you be trying to catch these fish, too? In other words, shouldn't you be trying to appeal to the online search engines?

Technically, the answer is "Yes, you should." But guess what? If you're doing the things outlined above, then you're *already* working to appeal to the search engines.

You see, search engines today base their rankings on two things for the most part: 1) relevant content, and 2) relative popularity.

So, all of this stuff you're doing to build your list of leads and prospects---publishing more relevant articles and posts, getting gathering places to link to your site, and so on---that's all helping to make your site more appealing to the search engines. Do a good job with that stuff and you're likely to be rewarded with good rankings in the search engines---it's really a "two birds with one stone" sort of thing.

In other words, you shouldn't get all wrapped-up in search engine optimization right now. By doing the other stuff you need to do, you're covering the fundamentals on that front by default. Of course, there's paid advertising on the search engines. But don't worry about that either. Not right now. There might be a time for it, but it's later and not now.

Promoting Your Front-End Product

Following the blueprint, the next stage of your promotional efforts is all about promoting and selling your front-end offering. This is about converting interested prospects into paying customers, and starting a buying relationship that could ultimately last for years.

However, just because your front-end product is technically finished, that doesn't mean you're actually ready to sell it just yet. After all, there's more to selling a product than just having the files or the final deliverables completed.

You also need to develop a good sales pitch. You'll want to describe the product in compelling terms on your sales page, or your "pitch page" as it's called here at ClickBank. And as discussed earlier, you'll want to provide a lot of specifics around what's in it for them---the benefits they'll receive, the concerns they'll have addressed, the problems they'll solve or avoid, and so on.

But you don't have to just beat your own drum---at least not entirely. Reviews and testimonials are often the most powerful things you can include in your sales pitch. Why? Reviews and testimonials have a lot more credibility because it's not just *you* saying your products are great, it's *someone else* saying your products are great.

So it's a good idea to recruit some people from your personal network or your prospect list to review your product before making it more broadly available. Ask them to provide feedback and a testimonial or review you can use on your site, if they feel so inclined. You can use the feedback you receive to tweak your product and make it even better. And on your pitch page, you can use the testimonials and reviews to help prospects get a more accurate sense of the value they'll receive through your products.

SIDEBAR: There *are* rules and regulations surrounding the use of testimonials and reviews. So make sure you've got everything documented and work with ClickBank's Business Services Team to make sure everything is in-compliance with the regulations.

Launch Your New Offering to Prospects

Once you're ready, you could simply put your new product up for sale on your site and announce its availability to your prospect list. But if you've got a decent sized prospect list, a more effective approach might be to "launch" your new offering. What's the difference? Well, with a launch you're turning the mere availability of your product into more of an event---something that prospects can anticipate, look forward to, and even participate in. As a result of the anticipation, you can often drive more initial sales.



So what do you do? Basically, you just become a bit more transparent with your prospects as you're working on your front-end product. In your prospect cultivation messages, you tell them what you're working on and when you expect it to be completed. When you send-out your requests for feedback or research input, you let prospects know that it's going to be incorporated into your upcoming product. As you gather pre-release testimonials or reviews, you share them, and let prospects know that they're just days away from being able to get the product, too.

Essentially, you're creating a just little more drama and anticipation around the release of your product---so that when you finally do make it available for purchase, it's not a complete surprise to your prospects. Instead, it's something they've been waiting for or something they've been looking forward to.

Again, this may seem like a minor nuance. But the difference between simple "awareness" and eager "anticipation" can be significant. It's the difference between prospects saying, "Oh, I see Jill now has this product available," and them saying something like, "Finally, I can buy this product I've been waiting for!"

Get It With Lead Capture and Cultivation

Once you've launched your front-end product and it's out there available for sale, you'll want to integrate it into your lead capture and prospect cultivation flows. Of course, you don't want to be obnoxious about this. The blueprint is designed to get prospects comfortable with you before trying to sell them something, so you've got to let the model work for you.

But you *can* put some references in there for prospects that are ready to step-up a little faster.



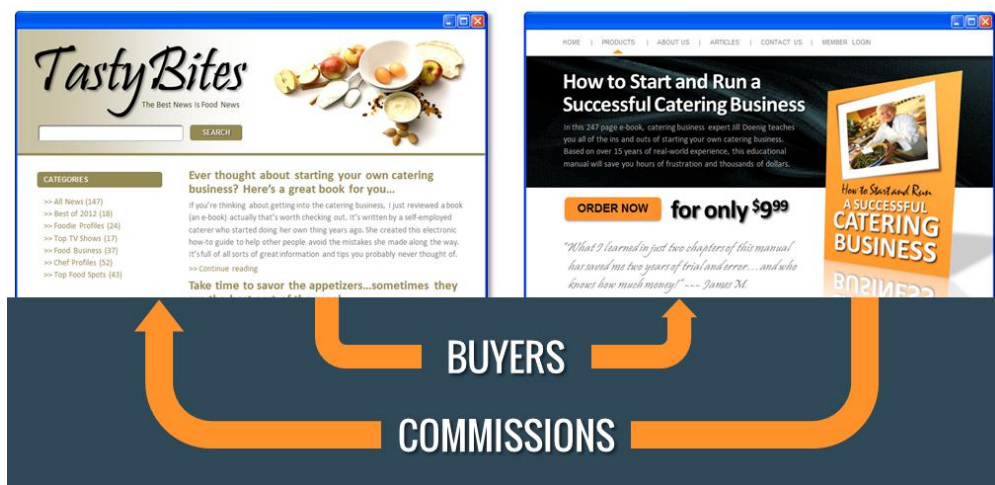
For example, you could put a little ad for your front-end product at the end of your lead capture offering. If your lead capture offering is a report of some kind, add another page or two at the end to make those who might be interested at that point aware of the product you have for sale. If your lead capture is a video, add a screen at the end or put an ad on the page where the video is running. As another example, your follow-up or cultivation emails to prospects could include a little note--- or a postscript, or even an ad at the bottom---highlighting your front-end product.

It doesn't have to be complicated and you certainly don't want it to be obnoxious. But you *do* want to make sure that every lead or prospect you get from now on, is made aware of this product that you now have for sale. Some will go for it early. Some will take more cultivation over time. But all of them should be aware that the offering exists. Remember, they can't buy what they don't know about.

Leverage Performance-Based Marketing

Now that you actually have a product for sale at ClickBank, you can take advantage of one the most powerful promotional developments in recent times: Performance-based online marketing, which is also known as affiliate marketing. Simply put, affiliate marketing is where someone promotes a product online and gets paid a commission on the resulting sales.

For example, let's say a foodie blogger runs an ad on their site, promoting Jill's "How to Start a Catering Business" e-book. People who click on that ad will go to Jill's pitch-page for that product. If some of those people actually buy Jill's e-book, the blogger---or affiliate, as we call them---will then get paid a commission on each sale they referred.



It's a really simple concept, and it's extremely powerful. Unlike traditional advertising, you don't have to pay for promotion *up-front*. Instead, it's performance-based and you only pay an affiliate---the person or entity promoting you---on the sales they actually generate for you. It's like having an army of online salespeople who all work on a commission-only basis.

Of course, the mechanics behind all of this can get pretty complicated---tracking visitors and sales to specific affiliates; making sure that everybody gets paid the right amounts and paid on-time---all of that stuff is pretty complex. But ClickBank takes care of all of this complicated stuff for you, so you don't have to worry about it. Working with ClickBank, you can leverage the power of affiliate marketing in a really simple and straightforward way.

ClickBank Makes Affiliate Marketing Easy

ClickBank was a pioneer of affiliate marketing going all the way back to the early days of the Internet. As a result, we've got a lot of affiliates. We have over 100,000 affiliate marketers out there online, from all over the world, promoting products that have been created by the infopreneurs who work with us. And now that you have a product for sale---something you can pay a commission on---you can set yourself up to tap-into this vast network of affiliates.

We have a Marketplace, where our affiliates go to find products they can promote. So you want to make sure your listing is complete and compelling there. And, as we touched on in the discussion about setting up your storefront, you want to make sure you have a page on your site where affiliates can go to get promotional materials, learn about the target market and key messages, that sort of thing.

Here's an extremely important tip:

As highlighted previously, the most successful infopreneurs make most of their money on the back-end. As a result, they recognize that even if they don't make any money at all on the first sale to a new customer, they'll make it up and more on the subsequent back-end sales they'll ultimately make over time. With this perspective, they're willing to pay affiliates a much larger commission on their front-end products. And not surprisingly, large commissions attract a lot more affiliates.

So, don't make the mistake of setting the commission levels on your front-end offerings too low. Paying a 75% commission might seem like a lot for a single sale. But recognize that you're not paying for a single sale---you're paying to acquire a new customer that you'll sell to, over and over again, for what may be many years into the future.

Partner With Other ClickBank Vendors

The affiliate marketing functionality that ClickBank provides as part of its platform also makes it very easy for our vendors---our infopreneurs---to partner with each other.

Let's say Jill the Caterer looks through the ClickBank Marketplace and finds another vendor, or another infopreneur, who's selling into a similar, food-service oriented niche. Maybe they're promoting a guide on how to become a chef or a short-order cook. Most certainly, some of these people will have at-least considered catering as a potential way to leverage their newfound skills---which makes them pretty decent prospects for Jill's offering.

Jill can reach out to this vendor and suggest that they work together. If he agrees, the other vendor can promote Jill's offerings to his customer list---maybe through a review or a recommendation---and earn the affiliate commissions on any resulting sales. Jill wins by acquiring more new customers in a manner that is both cost effective and very efficient. The other vendor or infopreneur wins by earning even more money from customers he's already sold to.

And ClickBank is there as the trusted intermediary---making sure everything gets tracked properly and everyone gets paid what they're owed, accurately and on-time.

This can be a really powerful way to grow your business. So once you've got things set-up to offer meaningful affiliate commissions, be sure to explore your options and opportunities for partnering with other ClickBank vendors.

Recruit Affiliates Specific to Your Niche

Tapping into the existing ClickBank affiliate network and partnering with other ClickBank vendors are both great ways to leverage this performance-based marketing capability that's built into the ClickBank platform. But they aren't the only ways. In fact, one of the best ways to leverage this capability is to reach outside of the ClickBank universe and recruit your own affiliates---affiliates that make sense for your business and fit your niche.

In the previous example, we talked about getting a related ClickBank vendor to promote your offerings to their lists. Well, what if you want to partner with another infopreneur in your niche who's not in the ClickBank universe? No problem at all. They just sign-up for a free ClickBank affiliate account, get their tracking code, and tell us where they want their checks to be sent. It's as simple as that.

And remember those online gathering places we discussed before? The blogs, forums, associations, and so on? Well, now you don't have to rely solely on their goodwill to promote your *free* information. Now you can go back to them with a *financial* incentive to promote your front-end product. Just like the foodie blogger promoting Jill's e-book, they can earn affiliate commissions for putting your offering in-front of their readers or visitors.

Today, most of these gathering places and aggregation points will look at affiliate commissions as just another way to get paid for advertising space. Of course, it's not an up-front payment and it's performance-based. But if your offering is right for their audience, your affiliate commissions are meaningful, and your outreach to them is professional, they'll take you seriously.

Cultivate Your Customers Over Time

Once you're selling your front-end product, converting prospects, and building a customer list, you'll want to continue to cultivate that list over time. You'll want to keep your front-end customers engaged and primed, so that they can eventually buy your back-end offering. Imagine that!

Just as we discussed with your prospect list, you'll want to follow-up with more information on a regular basis---monthly, at a minimum. Of course, with your customers you have a slightly different task than with your prospects. As your customers have already purchased a product from you, they've gotten a healthy dose of your basic information and you've likely built-up a bit of credibility along the way as well.

With customer cultivation, you'll *reinforce* your credibility and authority by providing even deeper and more specific information. And because you know that all of these people have purchased your front-end product, you now have a consistent base of knowledge you can use as a spring-board. In other words, you can reference concepts that are in your front-end product and just go deeper on them or provide more specific guidance. Remember, just as your prospect cultivation acts as a "sample" of your front-end offering, your customer cultivation should act as a sample of your back-end offering.

And here, too, it's a great idea to sprinkle-in a research or feedback opportunity. Reach out to your customer list and ask them something related to the back-end offering you're working on.

What About Paid Advertising?

At this point, it's not unusual to start wondering about whether or not you should be buying advertising---actually spending money, upfront, and out-of-pocket---to promote your front-end product. Well, don't worry about it. Frankly, it's just too early in the process to even be thinking about traditional advertising.

To do traditional, paid advertising correctly and profitably, you have to have a solid understanding of your conversion ratios through the various stages in the blueprint. You also have to have a pretty clear picture of how much a customer is actually worth to you, over time. And if all you have to sell right now is your front-end product---and you're just getting started doing that---you don't have enough information to make spending money on traditional advertising anything but a very risky gamble.

Your best bet at this stage is to fully-utilize performance-based marketing---affiliate marketing---until you get your back-ends selling and you have a much better understanding of the various metrics and ratios associated with your business. With affiliate marketing, there's almost no risk, because you only pay when a sale is actually made. And when done right, it can generate a lot of new customers for you.

So while you're getting the rest of your product offering and the rest of your business up-and-running, try to squeeze as much as you can out of affiliate marketing first. *Then* we can talk about paid advertising.

Launching Your Back-End Offering

Let's recap where we are. First, you started promoting the free information on your site to build and cultivate an email list of prospects. Next, you launched your front-end product to these prospects, and also began recruiting commission-based affiliates and partners. As a result, you're starting to make sales and starting to build and cultivate a customer list.

Following the blueprint, the next stage of your promotional efforts is all about promoting and selling your back-end offering. This is all about getting front-end customers to step-up and "pay more to get more".

Remember the launch process we talked about for your front-end offering? Well, launching your back-end offering is a good idea as well. It's just that in launching your back-end offering you're talking to *customers* instead of prospects. But the basic process is pretty much the same.

As you cultivate your front-end customers, you're letting them know about the back-end offering you're working on and when you expect it to be available. As you reach-out to customers for feedback or research input, you're letting them know that it's going to be used toward enhancing this other product that will soon be available.

Again, you're just building-up a little anticipation for this new offering you'll be releasing. In effect, you're pre-selling it or you're creating demand for it, ahead of it actually being available. You're creating a line of people outside the doors of your little storefront, waiting for it to open, waiting for the product to be released, so they can finally buy it.

Of course, there's a line between building anticipation and hyping something up beyond all credibility. So just be factual about what you're trying to do, why you're doing it, and how you believe it will help your customers. In other words, be authentic and be truthful. Customers these days are craving somebody they can trust and someone they can believe. So be that someone. It's not only the right thing to do, it's good business---because in the end, you'll be rewarded with loyal customers who'll buy from you again and again.

Integrate It With Your Front-End Efforts

Once you've launched your back-end product and it's available for sale, you want to integrate it into your front-end offering and customer cultivation flows---just like you did when you integrated your front-end product into your lead capture offering and prospect flows.



Here again, you can put an ad for your back-end offering at the end of your front-end product. And, you can highlight your backend offering in all of your customer cultivation messages or e-mails.

In fact, with your customers, you can be a bit more overt about promoting your back-end offering. Of course, you still shouldn't be obnoxious about it. The last thing you want is for your customers to unsubscribe and tell you that they don't want to hear from you ever again. But you've built-up enough

trust and credibility to increase the amount of pitching you ultimately do. For example, you can dedicate entire messages to promoting your back-end offering---what it is, what it entails, what's in it for them, the benefits others have seen, and so on. If it's a good value, your customers will want to know about it.

Remember, at a minimum, you want to make sure that every front-end customer, from this point forward, is made aware of this back-end product that you now have for sale. And just like before, some will go for it early and some will take more cultivation. But all of them should be aware that the offering exists because, again, they can't buy what they don't know about.

Consider the Skippers and Collectors

Earlier we highlighted how some infopreneurs essentially keep their back-end offerings hidden from public view. In other words, customers have to buy the front-end product, and only after that, are they made aware that these back-end offerings even exist. There are, however, a couple of very good reasons to make your back-end offering visible on your website, as soon as it's available.

First of all, there are two types of prospects this will appeal to: skippers and collectors.

Skippers are prospects who are ready to "pay more to get more" right now. They don't have to go through the whole sampling process. They're ready to get the most complete thing you have to offer and they're prepared to pay for it.

Collectors are "information sponges". These prospects are really, really interested in the topic and as a result, they're consuming every piece of relevant information they can get their hands-on. In a traditional bookstore, these are the folks who don't just buy one book on the topic they're interested in---they buy *every* book on the topic they're interested in. So make your backend products visible on your website. You'll still want the primary focus to be on your lead-capture and front-end offering, but let the skippers skip and let the collectors collect.

Let the Proven Blueprint Work Its Magic

Don't make the mistake of leading with your back-end offering. It's really tempting once you have it---after all, you make more money when people buy your back-end product, and it's ultimately where you want customers to end-up anyway. So why wouldn't you just want to lead with it?

Remember that the blueprint is structured the way it is precisely because the vast majority of prospects are not yet ready or willing to spend much money with you. It's too big of a risk for them. Instead, they'll sample you through your lead capture offering. They'll get comfortable enough to spend a little money on your front-end product. Then, and only then, will they be comfortable enough to spend even more money on your back-end product.

So you need get comfortable with the idea that most of your external promotional efforts are going to be squarely-focused on promoting your lead-capture and front-end offers. They're the first steps, and they create the ready and willing customer-base for your back-end offering.

Keep in mind that others have already tried to do things differently. They've already tried to lead with their back-end offerings. But the blueprint endures. And most successful infopreneurs use it---because it works. So let it work for you.

Optimize the Blueprint Throughput

As effective as the blueprint is in general, you'll still want to take steps to improve the flow or the throughput from front to back in your specific situation. It's perfectly normal to have quite a bit of fallout between the stages. Only some of the people who sign-up for your lead capture offer are going end-up buying your front-end product. And only some of the people who buy your front-end product are going to end-up buying your back-end offering.

Nonetheless, you want to try and minimize this fallout wherever possible. You'll never get everyone to convert from one stage to the next, but if you can increase the throughput at the various stages by even 10%, it'll have a big impact on your ability to promote your business moving forward. Why? Because your ability to promote your business is directly related to how well your little machine converts prospects into profits. It's like this:

Let's say that after going through your machine---lead capture, front-end, back-end---100 leads end-up generating \$200 in profit for you. Well then, how much can you invest in promotion to attract 100 leads? If you invest more than \$200 attracting 100 leads, you're losing money, right? But on the other hand, let's say your machine does a better job of moving people through the stages and 100 leads end-up generating \$1000 dollars in profits. Well, now you can invest much more to attract those leads while still making money.



It's really pretty simple. The more effective your machine is---the better the throughput---the more options you're going to have when it comes to promotion.

Work to Keep Subscribers Hooked

If you've got a continuity program as a back-end offering, one of the easiest yet most overlooked ways to increase the average value of your customers or increase the profit output of your little machine is to just get your subscribers to stick around for a longer period of time. It seems kind of obvious, but sometimes people miss it. They get so caught up in generating more new leads and more new customers that they sometimes take their existing customers and their existing subscribers for granted.

It's important to keep in mind that if you can make some improvements that get an average subscriber to double the length of time they stick around, that's worth more to you than acquiring a brand new customer. And as we just talked about, the longer an average subscriber sticks around, the more you'll actually be able to invest in getting even more subscribers in the future.

So keep an eye on the tenure of your back-end subscribers (how long they stick around and stay subscribed) and try to extend it. Remember, that's already your business to lose.

Can You Consider Paid Advertising?

The answer to the question above is yes. At this stage of development---if you've got all the elements of the blueprint up-and-running---you can indeed consider using paid advertising. But we've seen a lot of people waste a ton of money on paid advertising---to the point of actually killing their little businesses.

So before you start spending money, up-front and out-of-pocket, on any kind of advertising, you should ask yourself three questions:

- Are you leveraging performance-based marketing to the fullest? Really? Have you done everything you can to get affiliates to promote your products? To partner with other people serving your niche? To get gathering places to promote you in-exchange for a commission? Have you tried to get the places you're thinking about advertising with to accept an affiliate commission instead of an upfront payment?
- Is more traffic and more leads really what you need? Or are you just not converting enough of what you already have? Are you just not getting enough throughput from one stage to the next? Have you done everything you can to optimize your current flows?
- Do you know enough to be certain you'll see a return on your investment? Do you have any experience with the type of advertising you're considering? How much time would have to invest to learn everything you need to know? Would your time be better-spent recruiting affiliates who are already experts in that type of advertising?

Now, we're not trying to discourage you. Rather, we just want you to be sure that you're doing the right things, in the right ways, and for the right reasons, before you invest your hard-earned money in something that may or may not work for you.

Reducing Your Risks on Paid Advertising

If you've answered all of the questions and you're dead-set on spending money upfront on paid advertising, here are seven important tips that can help keep you out of trouble:

1. Promote your lead capture offering, not your front-end product. In most cases, to get the most for your money, you'll want to maximize the number of prospects you generate. And your free lead-capture offering is often your best bet for that.
2. Focus on end-results, not intermediate steps. Purveyors of things like pay-per-click try to sucker you into thinking it's all about the clicks, because that's how they make money. Don't fall for it. Focus on the result you're after---qualified leads and sales.
3. Calculate the response you need. Use your throughput metrics to determine the response you'll need to breakeven on the investment. Will you need a 100 leads to eventually generate enough sales to cover it? Or will you need 1000? Is that realistic? If not, run away.
4. Track everything, all the way through. Online or offline, every ad can be tracked. So do it. And do it all the way through, so that you know the actual value of the resulting prospects. Remember, you won't get a return if prospects don't end-up buying.
5. Test small and fail fast. Run a smaller test first. Track the results to see if a larger buy is really worthwhile. And keep in mind, response will typically go down a bit as you scale things up, so factor that in when making a decision about buying more.
6. Start digital. Before trying something offline, see if there's an online or electronic version that will be easier to test and track. For example, does that association you're thinking about advertising with have an electronic member newsletter?
7. Optimize and negotiate. Use your upfront breakeven calculations to negotiate better rates. Use the results of your tests to negotiate better rates. Always be optimizing your spend---shifting money toward the winners and away from the losers.

Promoting Your Offerings Step-by-Step

As we discussed in the beginning, you can't sit on your laurels and just expect business to come to you. It just doesn't work that way. You have to be proactive and you have to take steps to get your products in front of the people who can buy them.

And even though there are a ton of confusing options out there, and hundreds of different tactics to choose from, you *can* make sense of it---there *is a way* to break it down, so you can understand exactly what you need to do and when you need to do it.

Viewing your promotional efforts through the lens of the infopreneurial blueprint and taking things step-by-step can make things so much easier to understand in the beginning---and ultimately, it can make things far more effective in the end.

ClickBank Is Here To Help You Succeed

Through this introductory training series on how to become a successful ClickBank infopreneur, we've given you a lot to think about and even some homework to do along the way. The fact that you've gotten this far speaks volumes about your potential for success in this business. So we sincerely hope you'll continue to move forward and turn your knowledge into a little business of your own.

As you do, please remember that you're not alone. We at ClickBank are passionate about the infopreneurial opportunity and we're here to help you at every step along the way.