

How to start a digital products business

Hi, I'm Justin

I make stuff on the internet.

@mijustin

(*Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter*)

justinjackson.ca

Do you want to:

- Increase revenue
- Earn more \$USD
- Expand your brand
- Diversify income streams
- Wean yourself off clients
- Pivot to a different business

My story

Moved to Vernon in 2012



Working remotely as a Product Manager



My biggest fear was...

***"What's my backup
plan?"***

Started podcast in 2012



PRODUCT
PEOPLE.TV

Focused on "people who build digital products"

Started a newsletter at the same time

Get my newsletter for product people

*To improve your reading experience, I don't use popup forms.
Want more from someone who hates popups as much as you do?*

Email Address

Subscribe!

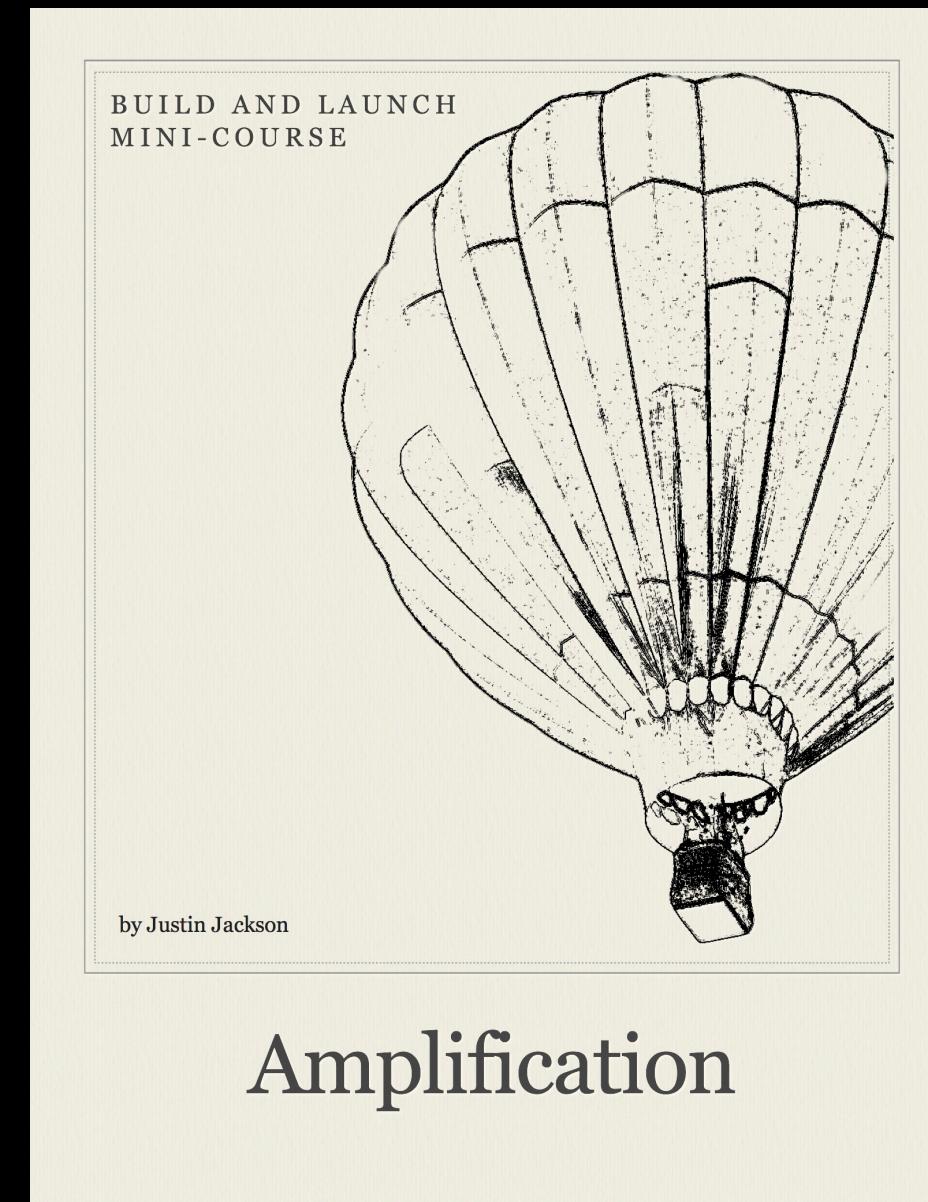
What happened?

I was growing an audience.

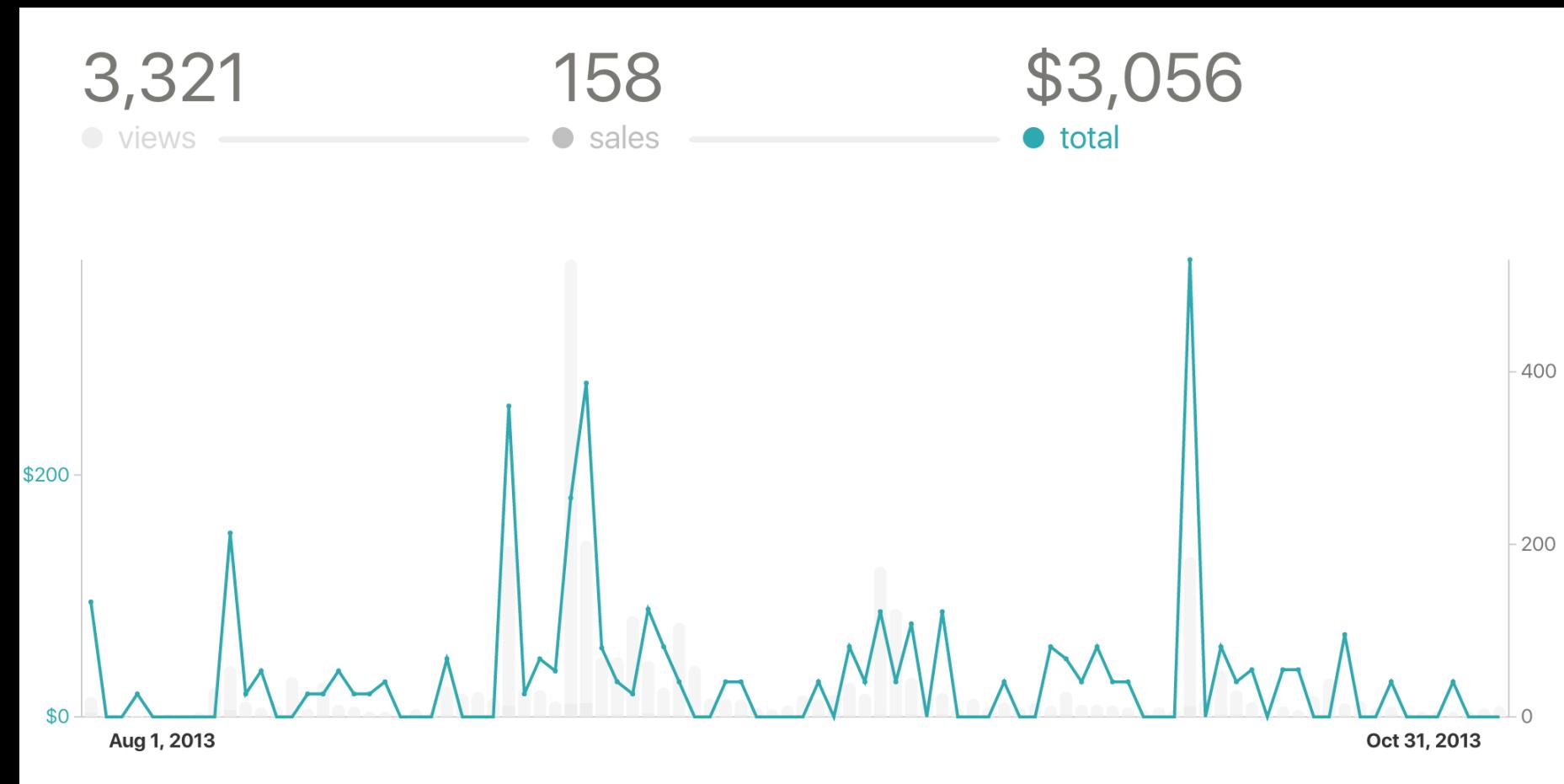
Started noticing...

**People were asking me the same
questions over and over again.**

Decided to answer those questions in a small PDF:



Launched it August 1, 2013



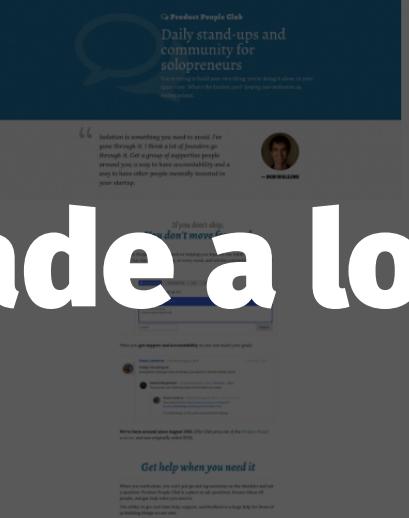
It made \$3,056 in the first 3 months

**2014: I pivoted from being employed to
doing consulting**

**Where did my clients come from? My podcast + newsletter
subscribers!**

2015: made a lot more products in my spare time

- Consulting gave me more freedom with my time
- I kept growing my audience
- I kept looking for opportunities to help them
- Launched web app, WordPress plugin, online workshop, training course



Product People Club

Daily stand-ups and community for solopreneurs



Build Your Audience

Don't launch to crickets: build your audience before you build your product.

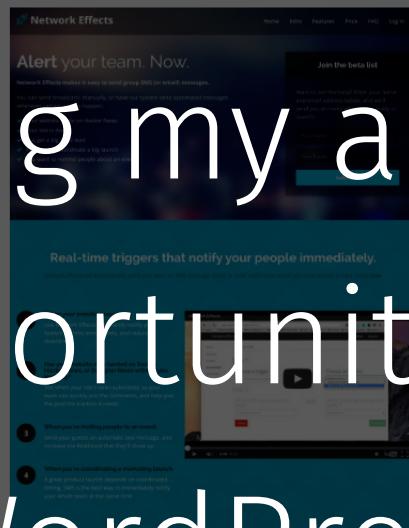
[Buy Now](#) or [Learn More](#)



ProductPress

Turn WordPress into a membership site, using Gumroad.

[Buy Now](#) or [Learn More](#)



Network Effects

Network Effects will automatically send your team an SMS message, email, or push notification when you need people to take action now.

[Buy Now](#) or [Learn More](#)



The Product Hunt Handbook

Learn how to effectively launch your own product on Product Hunt.

[Buy Now](#) or [Learn More](#)



The Hacker News Handbook

Hacker News is confusing. Learn how to use it to reach a bigger audience.

[Buy Now](#) or [Learn More](#)

Marketing for Developers

A guide to marketing your software, apps, and digital products

“I wish I'd had this before I started my last two projects.”

— [Marty Dill, @codemarty](#)

Does this story sound familiar?

It's 1am, and you can't sleep. You've been struck with a brilliant idea and you can't get it out of your head. After fidgeting in bed for an hour, you go down to the basement and start coding.

By 7am you have a working prototype. You keep working on it evenings and weekends; creating new features, refining the design, and building out the billing system. Soon, the whole thing is ready for launch. You deploy it to

Marketing for Developers

by Justin Jackson



October 2015: best launch yet



Another transition:

November 2015: last month of consulting

January 2016: went full-time on my own products

How can you do this?

Start with people

Choose an audience that...

1. You know, understand, and like
2. That buys things
3. That congregates online

***What group are you best
equipped to serve?***

Case study

"I'd like to build software for dentists"

Questions:

1. Do you like dentists?
2. Do you hang out with dentists?
3. Do you want to go to dental conferences?

***What group is already
paying you for your time
and expertise?***



Instagram just got INSTAGREAT

YOUR CUSTOMERS SEE YOUR PRODUCTS ON INSTAGRAM BUT
CAN'T BUY. IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THAT!

GET STARTED

HOW IT WORKS

NOT SURE WHAT WE DO? HERE'S THE LO-DOWN.



SNAP



SPARKLE



SHOP

Upload your photos to your Instagram account.

Add your product URLs to your LIKE2HAVE IT

Watch as users work these fingers and tap their

**How do you find good
product ideas?**

You want to hit a nerve
that makes people say...

SHUT UP AND TAKE MY MONEY



Research + listen

*Research your audience
the same way a biologist
observes a lion in the
savanna.*

Places to do research online:

1. Google (look at related keywords)
2. Twitter
3. Reddit
4. Facebook Groups
5. Facebook search

Places to do research offline:

1. Current clients
2. Your competitors
3. Meetups
4. Conferences
5. Tradeshows

Observe the Job to be Done

Customers have only one need: to make their lives better.

Your job:

Understand the **progress** customers are trying to make **and** what **struggles** stand in their way.

Demo
"math grad student"

Create a hypothesis

Traditional user story:

As a math grad student I want an online course so that I can make it through my first year of grad school.

Create a hypothesis

Jobs to be Done user story:

When I get accepted into grad school, I want to make it through alive, so I can graduate and get a job.

***What do you think is the
#1 struggle in their life?***

**Test your
hypothesis**

***What's the smallest
"product" you could
create that could
disprove your
hypothesis?***

Tiny product ideas

- Workshop (online or in-person)
 - Email course
 - Coaching calls
 - Excel sheet
 - Ebook

What you learn when you launch a tiny version:

1. How hard is it to find customers?
2. Did I hit a nerve? Did I identify their #1 struggle?
3. How hard is it to get people to pay?
4. How satisfied were people with the solution?
5. Do I like the customers?

If the answers are all  then keep iterating on the product.

Excel sheet → web application

Local workshop → online course

Case Study: Remote Workers Club

Hypothesis

As a remote worker I want to receive job opportunities so that I can upgrade my current job or get a new job.

Don't miss the remote job of your dreams

Job sites expect you to go to them. We bring great remote jobs to you.

“

Remote working changed my life. Instead of a 2 hour commute every day, I work from home, or bike to my coworking office. My wife and I were able to move to the mountains, and we ski most weekends.

Once you've experienced working remotely, you can't go back.



—JUSTIN JACKSON

Get job offers
Without headhunters

Looking for remote work? Just fill out your profile, and we'll get in touch as soon as we find a good match. You only have to respond to the opportunities you want.

What we did

1. Launched a paid beta (\$99)
2. Interviewed all 10 customers on Skype
3. Launched MVP: email list + Slack group

What we discovered

Why were they hiring us?

1. Many signed up because they were a fan
2. Many were insecure about their job prospects
3. Many were lonely: looking for community

What did they *really* need?

1. Their biggest struggle: they're not "standing out" from the crowd.
2. To make progress they need better online profiles, better resumes + cover letters.
3. To make progress they need a better personal network

We were sending them job opportunities but their biggest struggle is they didn't know how to apply for a job.

Better solution:

Give them *training*.

- Ebook
- Online course
- Coaching calls
- Email newsletter

Your next steps:

1. Define your audience
2. Add MEGA value to that community for free
3. Earn a reputation as someone who **helps** people
4. Watch for **struggles**. What patterns emerge?
5. Define your hypothesis
6. Launch a tiny product

Tools

The screenshot shows a software application window titled "Coach". At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for "Dashboard", "Settings", "Support", and a green "Log out" button. Below the navigation, a large blue header section contains the text "Build your business with Coach" and "The only all-in-one product for solopreneurs". There's a white input field labeled "Your email address" and a green "Sign up for free" button. The main content area below the header has a white background and features the text "Everything you need to succeed" followed by the subtext "Whether you want to build, engage, or convert your audience, with Coach, you can do it all."

Build your business with Coach

The only all-in-one product for solopreneurs

Your email address

Sign up for free

Everything you need to succeed

Whether you want to build, engage, or convert your audience, with Coach, you can do it all.

withcoach.com/justin

↑ *go there & they'll take care of you*

Increase product sales

Are you a product owner who is struggling to increase revenue?

Let me help you get more leads and sales.

[Book time with me](#)

\$200/hr



Justin Jackson Vernon, BC

Digital Marketing

Email Marketing

...

I've tried everything. Coach allows you to:

- Get booked online for coaching calls
- Start an email newsletter
- Build an online course
- Sell eBooks

Introduction to the Lean Marketing Stack

How to set up Segment

Code sample: the Segment tracking script

Google Analytics - Goals, Funnels, and Reports

Segmentation, Funnels, Explore, Insight, Notifications

What To Do Before You Launch

How effective landing pages work

Exercise #1: start with words

How to design a landing page if you suck at design

Launch Plan & Checklist



This course is for developers who want to earn an income from the products they create. I created it specifically for these three stages:

Tools

withcoach.com/justin ← platform

justinjackson.ca/audience ← build your audience

justinjackson.ca/jolt ← creative marketing ideas

justinjackson.ca/jtbd ← Jobs to be Done

Thanks!

Get my slides here:

justinjackson.ca/bizcamp