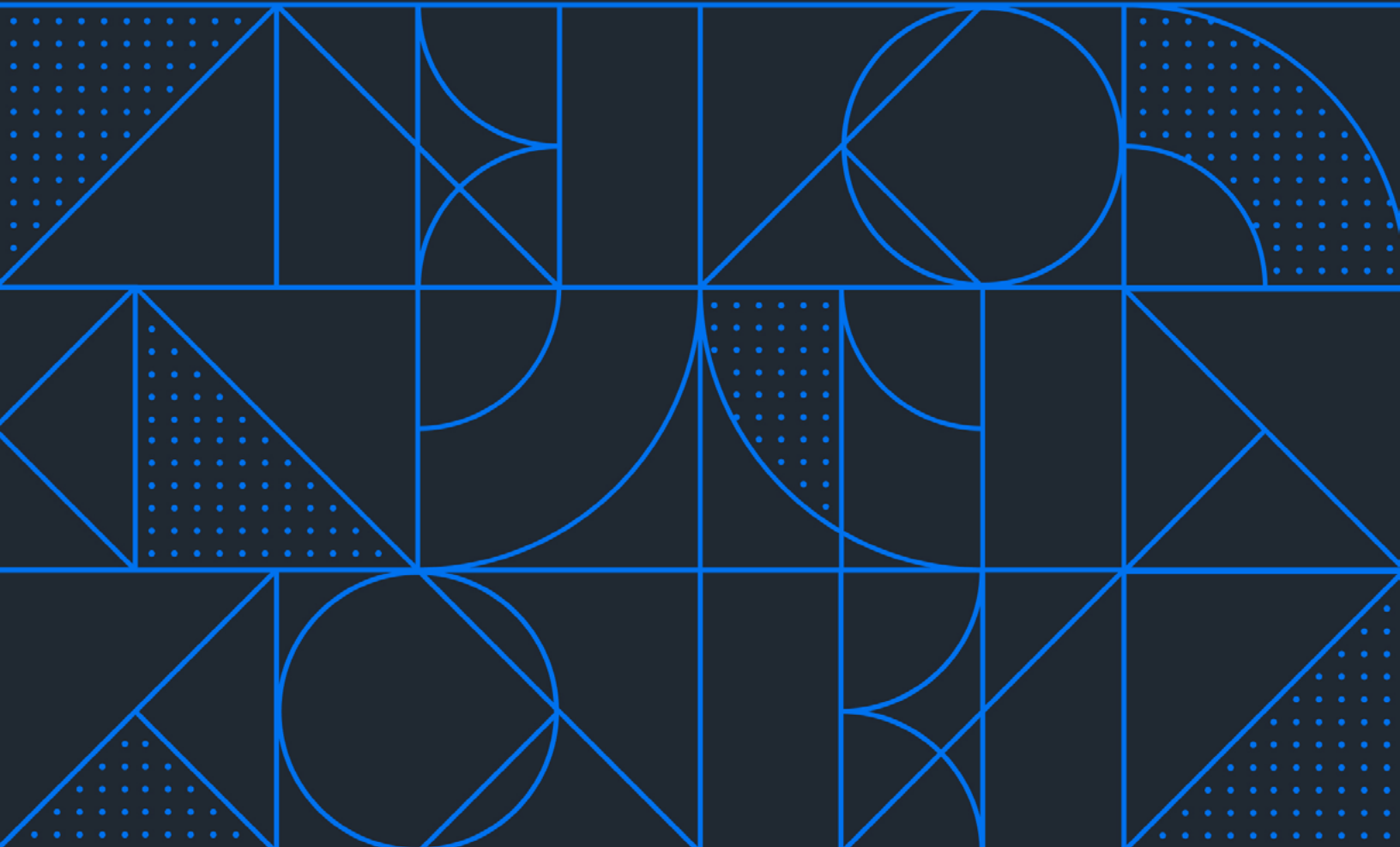


The ultimate guide to create and sell online courses

Your knowledge has value.
An online course can help you monetize it.



Why should you create and sell courses online?

Because your knowledge has value, and there are people out there who would gladly pay to learn from you! Online courses and e-learning are a massive opportunity:

- The e-learning market is expected to be worth \$325 billion [by 2025](#).
- Digital education and e-learning had more than \$46 billion in sales in 2018 (the most recent year we have data for).
- Global e-learning and course consumption has increased dramatically during the pandemic, and many experts expect that to continue.

[Is selling online courses profitable?](#) With those numbers and the right know-how, it definitely is. Selling online courses can be a great source of passive income once you have an established customer base.

Your online course can also serve as a marketing tool and strengthen connections with your clients. Use your online course to show people what your brand is about. Show them what makes you better than the competition. Build strong relationships and watch how loyalty and advocacy for your course grows.

The best news is that anybody can create and sell online courses. All you need is some knowledge and the ability to speak on a subject with passion.



Wanna know how a makeup artist took her in-person, service-based business of 17 years online — with no coding or tech skills required?

“Building my own online business has completely changed, not just my professional life but my entire life as a whole.”

-Tiffany Lee Bymaster

[See Tiffany's Story](#)

1. Choose a subject that sells

According to a recent study, 42% of entrepreneurs fail because there is no market for their product. To get a better idea of what types of online courses sell, take a look at some of the top things people want out of an online course:

- To gain knowledge for a career change or to start their first career
- To boost their career opportunities with additional certifications
- To continue their education
- To prepare for an academic test
- To learn a new skill or subject

It should come as no surprise that the highest-selling courses are often career-related. Here is a shortlist of some of the most profitable online course subjects:

- Computers and technology
- Business and entrepreneurship
- Arts and crafts
- Health and fitness
- Education
- Writing
- Lifestyle/personal development
- Entertainment
- Social science
- Science and math

These are broad subjects to help guide your thinking. To maximize your success you should try to find a more niche topic within these subjects.

For example, in arts and crafts, you could create an online course on using social media to promote an Etsy store. Or in computers and technology, you could teach a beginner's course on coding. We'll dive deeper into choosing your niche in the next section.

2. Create your online course



Now we'll go over the basics of online course creation:

Hone in on a specific subject

The first step in creating your online course is figuring out what specific subject you will teach.

Some tips for choosing the right subject include:

- Choose a focused and niche topic rather than a broad one. Having a broad topic usually means more competition. The more focused your niche, the easier it is to convey expertise.
- Have expert-level knowledge. Keep in mind, being an expert on a topic might mean you have better-than-average knowledge. You don't have to be a genius or have traditional credentials.
- Know who your audience is, what their problems are, and how you can teach them to solve those problems.

Get the right gear

After choosing a specific subject for your online course, it's time to start making it. You'll want to keep production levels pretty high. Remember, people are going to pay good money for your class. Your courses should be better quality than what you'd get with an average YouTube vlog.

To start, you'll need:

- **A good HD camera.** The [Canon VIXIA](#) or [Sony CX405](#) are both great options.
- **Lighting.** You don't want it to look like you are recording in a bunker. Shop around for professional lighting. Lighting rings are a cheap and effective way to light yourself for online course videos. You might also consider a [studio lighting kit on Amazon](#), which will have everything you need and costs around \$100.
- **Editing software like [Wevideo](#).** If you already have a professional level of editing experience you might opt for software like Final Cut Pro. However, if you have minimal editing experience or none at all, Wevideo will allow you to make professional-looking videos with graphics, royalty-free music, background images, and more. It is one of the best video editing software on the market for non-professional editors and is relatively inexpensive at only \$15.99 a month.
- **A green screen.** The green screen allows you to swap out the background for any image you want. It makes it easier to add images, graphics, and b-roll footage.
- **A script.** If you want to use a full script there are apps like [Teleprompter lite](#) that you can use to turn a laptop or tablet into a teleprompter so you can read the script while looking into the camera.

It's fine if you can't afford a professional setup. Try with whatever equipment you can get your hands on. Just remember that a more professional-looking product is often perceived as more valuable by your audience. If you can, invest in yourself.

Lights, camera, action!

Once you've picked a subject and have all the right gear, it's time to shoot some video!

Place the green screen on the wall behind you. Make sure you pull the green screen taut so that there are no wrinkles or sagging as that can show up in the videos when you edit the background.

Then set up the camera on a tripod in front of you and place the lights behind the camera. Once you have your little mini-studio set-up it's time to record.

Do a test recording first to make sure that you look and sound good. If you see any sort of shadow on your face or body, adjust the lights accordingly to eliminate it.

One thing that has helped people like [Ryan Deiss](#) and [Ryan Levesque](#) create great video content is recording each video at least three times. For whatever reason it takes about three times to REALLY nail the delivery.

3. Choose where you want to host and sell courses online

Your online course needs to live somewhere online. You'll want a hosting system that makes the course easy to access, lets you customize it with your branding, and looks professional.

There are three options for you to host and sell your online course:

- An online course platform designed to meet all the needs of a course creator, from video hosting to marketing (more on this below).
- Self-hosting. Set up your own server with a hosting company to host and sell online courses from your own website. While it can be expensive and a bit technical, self-hosting gives you complete freedom and power over your material.
- An online course marketplace. The final option for hosting is to use a learning marketplace such as Udemy or Masterclass. Marketplace platforms host your course and let you customize your branding. Note that these platforms tend to have restrictive rules and may charge for up to 50% of your revenue.

3 types of online course platforms

An online course platform is a hosting solution specifically designed to help course creators grow their business. There are three types of online course platforms.

1. Standalone platforms

- Provide everything you need to host your course along with support and educational resources.
- Some stand-alone platforms have marketing functionality, but it is usually very limited.
- Best for solo entrepreneurs or small business owners who want a turn-key way to create online courses and don't need a platform to create marketing/sales funnels and automations.

2. WordPress plug-ins/themes

- WordPress plugin platforms are inexpensive tools that allow you to create and sell an online course with an existing WordPress site.
- May require better-than-average technical skills.
- Only buy plugins from reputable companies that have been around for a while and have successful students. Your whole business can be shut down for days or longer if you buy an off-brand plugin from a fly-by-night developer.
- Best for course creators who already have a WordPress site that gets a lot of traffic.

3. All-In-One platforms

- Provide everything you need to create and sell courses from your own website.
- Features may include website builders, marketing automations, course hosting, and community management tools.
- Some all-in-one platforms (like Kajabi) won't take a single cent of your revenue, but others will. Do your research!
- Best for anyone who is looking to create and sell courses online, regardless of experience level.



For Jon, creating an online course meant freedom from the corporate world.

“The grind of the commute and the 9 to 5 job was not something I was passionate about”

- Jon Acampora

Is an online course the answer you've been looking for?

Kajabi's all-in-one platform can help you create, market, and sell your online course.

[See John's Story](#)

4. Decide how much to charge for your online course



How much should I charge for my course?

This is one of the most common questions when trying to figure out how to sell courses online. Pricing can be a bit of a guessing game. It will take some trial and error to figure out the perfect price.

It's not until you create and sell online courses regularly that you'll know what your lifetime customer value is. For now, you're going to have to do some calculating and testing.

Online courses can cost anywhere from \$5 to \$2,000. Your first online course is probably going to fall somewhere within the \$50-\$200 range. This can vary based on your topic, audience, and expertise.

When determining the price of your online course, consider the following:

- How much you spend to create, host, and market the course.
- Competitor pricing.
- Your target audience's income level. How much do you predict they are willing to spend?
- The result you are promising. How much is it worth to your customer?

There are 3 basic ways you can structure payments when you sell online courses. These include:

1. One lump sum payment for lifetime access to the course.
2. Lower, recurring membership fees (e.g. monthly payments).
3. **Multiple payments**, or a payment plan, where the audience can spread a one-time cost over multiple payments.

Evaluate your target market to determine how you want to structure payment. Are they able to afford a high cost? Or is it a group who might be more willing to buy if they don't have to spend too much up front?

5. Increase the value (and price) of your online course

One way to increase the price of your online course is to add value to it. You can do this by:

- Offering bonus materials
- Using upsells
- Include bonuses in your digital course

Every good online course offer has bonuses. You can build a solid offering of bonus material by:

- Building relationships with other experts and including their content as a bonus.
- Creating your own supplements like reports, case studies, templates, and extra lessons.
- Offering referral bonuses to students who invite a friend to take your classes.



Make sure that you explain the value of these bonuses to your audience and relate them back to the overall promise of your course.

Include upsells in your digital course

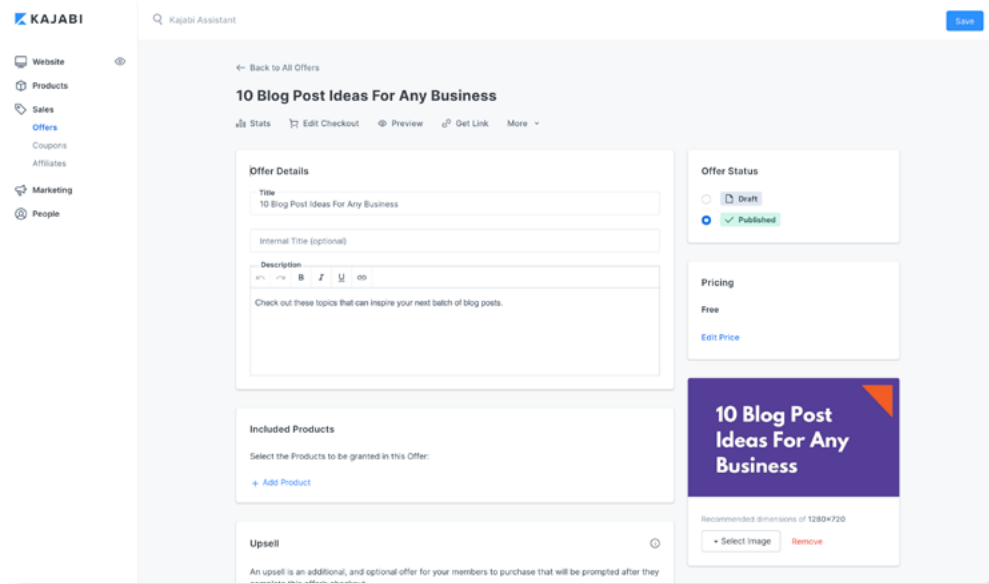
One of the best ways to make more money on your course is to offer additional products during purchase. These are called upsells.

Upsells create another purchase opportunity before the initial transaction is over. Here are two easy upsells basically everyone can offer with their first course:

- **Coaching.** You can offer one-on-one coaching over phone or video calls, email coaching, or even in-person coaching. One-on-one coaching is often a high-priced item because it requires your undivided attention
- **Live group training.** Offer a group training with more in-depth teaching and discussion topics. You can offer group training on a monthly webinar, or through a community such as a Facebook group.

Both of these products are great supplements to your online course and should be appealing to your market.

Kajabi offers what's called a **"one-click upsell"** where a second product or service can be added to an order at the click of a button. Best of all, users don't have to enter in their credit card details again.



6. Seed launch your online course

With your online course produced, it's time to see if it's ready for the public. Test your course out to help you find any kinks you can resolve before launch.

Online entrepreneur [Jeff Walker](#) likes to talk about a “seed launch.” This is a small soft launch to help verify there's a profitable market for your product. This type of launch is ideal if you have a small list (30-100 names), or no list at all.

The seed launch will enable you to:

- Converse with and refine your target market
- Uncover the most significant questions and needs
- Identify what the market really needs, wants, and is willing to pay for

The beautiful thing about a seed launch is that you don't have to create a whole marketing sequence for it.

You could have a seed launch by sending a free trial offer to a small segment of students from:

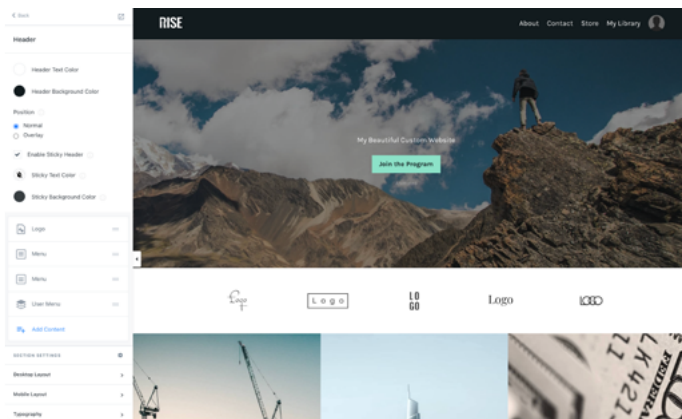
- Your email list
- Followers on social media
- Friends and family
- Networking events

You may not sell a lot of courses with the seed launch. That's okay. Your main goal is to gauge the interest from your audience and test to see if the idea is viable and valuable.

Take what you learn from your seed launch and incorporate it into your overall marketing strategy.

7. Market and sell your online courses

Just because you build it doesn't mean they'll come. You're going to have to [market your online course](#) for it to be successful. Marketing is building a relationship with your customers, with the ultimate goal of getting them to purchase or engage with your business.



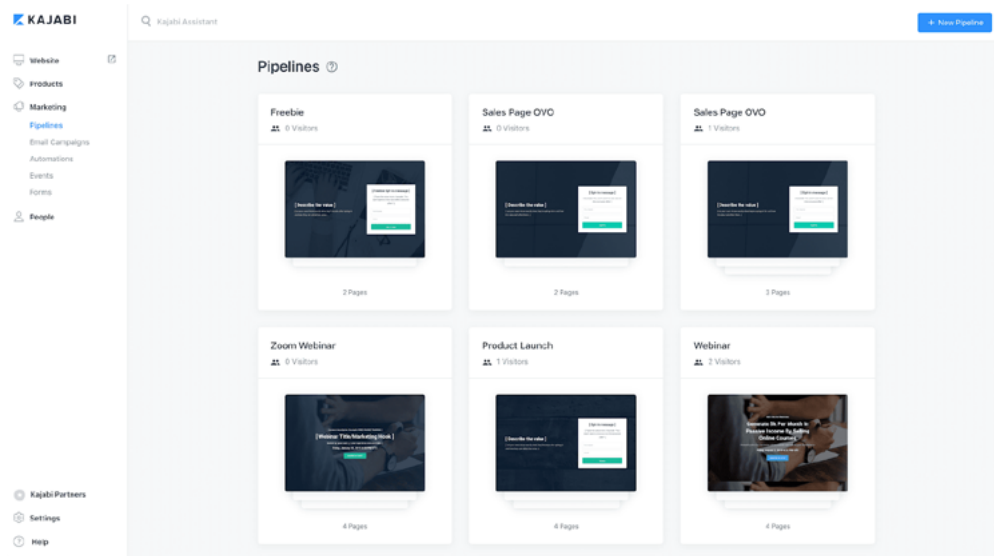
Here are just a few ways to market and sell courses online:

- Create and optimize your website. Your online course should have its own [sales page](#) to inform customers about the course and persuade them to join.
- Create useful marketing content. Start your own blog, create marketing videos, or participate in Facebook Groups.
- Boost your social media presence. There are [billions of people](#) on social media every day. Make sure you're engaging wherever your audience is on social media.
- Build an email list. Email continues to be a powerful marketing tool. You can build an email list by using social media and creating forms on your website.
- Partner with other entrepreneurs. You're not in this alone. Sometimes, you can [partner with an existing online entrepreneur](#) to sell your course. Reach out to those you admire and see how you can partner in a mutually beneficial way.

You can automate your online course marketing with tools like Kajabi. We've created [marketing pipelines](#) that will help you move potential customers through your sales funnel.

How to choose the right market for selling online courses:

To be successful, you'll need to design your online course to be appealing for a target market of people who can buy it.



You must determine who your digital product is for and what it will do for them. That means finding the people who are most likely going to buy your online course, based on what you're teaching and the result you're promising.

It's always tempting to have the largest market possible. After all, if your market is 300 million people, you only need less than 1% to be successful, right?

The reality is that large markets are often crowded and competitive. It's best to start with a core target audience (even if it's small) and serve them well. You can always create other courses to expand your target market.

As your brand grows, you may find that your digital course resonates with a different audience than you originally thought. Be flexible enough to respond if your market evolves or changes. Be sure to incorporate data and learning into your approach.

8. Create a buyer's journey for your online course

A buyer's journey is the series of choices your target audience makes while researching a purchase.

There are three major stages in the buyer's journey:

1. **Awareness:** Your market is aware there's a problem. They're starting to look for solutions.
2. **Consideration:** Your market starts looking for solutions to that problem.
3. **Decision:** People in your market make a purchase.

Your marketing efforts should help guide potential customers through the customer journey. Each step will require a different type of content strategy.

For example, here's how you might use a video and social media marketing strategy in the buyer's journey:

1. **Awareness:** Create an educational video addressing the biggest pain points of your target audience. Publish and promote it to a broad audience on social media for the widest reach.
2. **Consideration:** Create a customer testimonial video where a past student of yours discusses how much your course helped them. Share it with your followers on social media.
3. **Decision:** Create a FAQ video about your online course to make the purchase process a breeze. Answer the questions yourself so viewers can see your expertise and get to know you better as a person.

How you craft your buyer's journey will depend on your target audience and preferred marketing channels. Don't be afraid to experiment with different content types. You might just stumble across a strategy that makes your online course sell like crazy.

9. Get people to purchase and recommend your courses in the future



So you've come up with an online course, marketed it, and sold a bunch. Now what?

It's time to make sure that your students enjoy as much success as possible. When your students feel that they gained something from your online course, they are more likely to purchase other courses from you in the future.

More importantly, a happy student is likely to tell their friends and family about your course. Word-of-mouth marketing is the most effective way to sell online courses and costs you practically nothing.

You can ensure your students' success and happiness with these tips:

→ **Focus on customer experience.**

Ask yourself: How do you make your customers feel throughout their interactions with your business? Are you creating a positive and memorable experience for them?

→ **Once you have launched your course go through the marketing pipeline yourself.**

What does it feel like? What is it missing?

Map out your student journey. As you create and sell your online course, you want to get an idea of what your students go through. The better you understand and support your student's journey, the more they'll spread the word about their fantastic experience.

Use a software called [Fullstory](#) to watch how your students interact with your course. Map out their journey from start to finish. Make notes of what milestones, small wins, and setbacks there are.

→ **Foster a community.**

Many of the most successful online courses have a community built around them. This is where students can interact and support each other.

Social media is the most effective medium for fostering community. Create a Facebook group, make Instagram Live videos, or start your own Twitter hashtag to maximize engagement.

→ **Encourage your students to re-watch your content.**

The more your students go through your materials, the more value they will gain from it. Be sure to recommend re-watching specific modules in your community, on your live chats, and in your course.

→ **Get and apply feedback.**

Another way to help your students succeed is to listen to them. Gather feedback on your course through assessments or email surveys. Use their responses to make your course better.

→ **Consistently update your course.**

You should update your course at least once a year. This shows your students that you care about them having the most up-to-date information, even after they bought your course.

→ **Add troubleshooting and FAQ content.**

As you update your course and get feedback you may start to notice patterns in the user experience. Take the opportunity to turn those problems into troubleshooting and FAQ content.

By addressing the most common questions, you make it easy for students to find the help they need while reducing the amount of time you spend answering support tickets.

→ **Keep track of your students' progress.**

Keeping track of your student's progress is easy to do when you just start out. This can become more challenging as your business and the number of students grows.

Pick two to three students to keep an eye on. Follow them on social media, send them emails from time-to-time to check in. These students will be your canary in the coal mine to flag any potential problems.

Follow these suggestions and your students will feel heard, important, and that they spent their money wisely. A happy customer base is the foundation for selling online courses long-term.

Real-life Kajabi Heroes who successfully created and sold online courses



Whether you want to create a side-hustle or start a completely new business, an online course is a great way to generate revenue online. Here are some types of entrepreneurs who could be good candidates for creating and selling online courses:

YouTubers: Creating an online course is a great way to monetize your following on YouTube. YouTuber Jordan Cheyenne uses Kajabi to make over \$40,000 using a variety of income sources, including an online course.

[In this video](#), she goes through her income streams and gives a blueprint for success for anyone using YouTube.

Podcasters: If you have a podcast, creating an online course can be a great way to generate revenue while also increasing your authority and getting your message out.

[Angie Lee](#) uses her podcast to promote her courses on niche marketing and using Instagram stories.



Authors: Selling an online course based on your book is a great way for authors to add an additional revenue stream to their writing career.

Rachel Hollis the NYC Best-Selling author of mega-hit “Girl, Wash Your Face.” and sequel “Girl, Stop Apologizing” created an online course with Kajabi to grow her fempire.



Speakers: Speakers often find that as they become more successful, they are still stuck trading time for money. And there are only so many speeches you can give.

[Brendon Burchard](#), one of the world’s most successful speakers, initially started using Kajabi to sell his books, but eventually, he used Kajabi to create a variety of online courses that give him passive income between speeches.



[See exactly how Brendon Burchard designs his landing pages on Kajabi to sell!](#)

Coaches and Consultants: Coaches and consultants are another group that really benefit from selling online courses. Coaches can break out of the time-for-money trade, while consultants can create and sell trainings for companies and individuals alike.

James Wedmore is a coach who helps entrepreneurs master their inner game to become unstoppable. James uses Kajabi to get his message out and help even more entrepreneurs unlock their hidden potential.



If you have a skill, a passion, an audience, or content that people want, then selling an online course is a great way to generate revenue.

How a Kajabi Hero used online courses to become a NY Times Best Selling Author

While many businesses create and sell courses online to generate revenue, others also use online courses to market and generate leads. Online courses can play a big part in your overall [content marketing strategy](#).

Our very own Kajabi Hero [Chalene Johnson](#) flipped the script a few years ago and created a free online course to build her email list.

Here's what Chalene did:

- First, Chalene's created a Kajabi course called "The 30-day push challenge".
- In the 30-day push challenge, Chalene taught goal setting in a very simple way.
- The goal of the product was to help her students reach their big goal for the year in just 30 days.
- Chalene filmed one video a day for 30 days and let the Kajabi system take care of the rest.
- With Kajabi, no matter when a student joined the 30-day push challenge the system automatically delivered the right videos in the right order!
- Chalene announced the 30-day challenge in December and by January had more 75,000 people join!
- The 30-day push challenge was so successful that Chalene continued to use the free course to build her list for more than 5 years.
- That list also helped Chalene become a New York Times best-selling author!



Chalene says

"Without that list, I built using Kajabi, I would not have become a New York Times Best Selling Author."

The 30-day push challenge worked so well that it was Chalene's only lead generation tool for 5 years!

Start Selling Your Online Course

Let's recap the nine essential steps for selling your online course:

1. Choose a subject that sells. Consider something that will help people advance in their careers or beef up their resumes.
2. Create your online course. Use the right equipment and script to ensure you're producing high-quality content.
3. Choose where to host and sell your course. What type of platform will you use? Are you technical enough to do it all on your own, or is an all-in-one solution better for your needs?
4. Decide how much you will charge. It'll take some trial and error, but typically online courses start out between \$50 - \$200.
5. Increase the value (and price) of your course. Use upsells and bonus content to increase the value of your offering and price up accordingly.
6. Seed launch your online course. Release your course material to a small list and make any necessary adjustments before launching it to the public.
7. Market and sell your online course. Create marketing content and use channels like social media and email to get the word out about your course.
8. Create a buyer's journey. Create a sales strategy around the different steps of the buyer's journey.
9. Get people to purchase and recommend your courses in the future. Do whatever you can to show your customers you care and that you're listening. They will become loyal advocates for your brand and help keep your business going in the long run.

Now that you're armed with the knowledge to successfully create and sell an online course, it's time for you to go out and use it to generate an income. Use this checklist to help you stay on track.

Create and Sell an Online Course: FAQs

How do I sell a course online?

To sell courses online, you'll need to create niche-focused educational/instructional material. Host your course on an all-in-one platform, where you can market it and build a community of students. Define your target audience. Create marketing and sales content for the Awareness, Consideration, and Decisions stages of the buyer's journey to encourage people to buy your course. Promote your course on social, email, and online.

What online courses sell best?

People changing careers, starting careers, or developing skills to further their careers tend to buy online courses more than anyone else. Many top-selling courses focus on computers and technology or business and entrepreneurship.

How do online tutorials make money?

Online tutorials make money by providing value to learners. Instructors can leverage their expertise to create lessons that help people solve their problems. You can charge people one lump sum for access to all your online courses or make it a recurring monthly fee.

What makes an online course successful?

There are many factors that go in to making an online course successful such as level of demand and a good marketing strategy. Nothing, however, factors in more towards a successful online course than the quality of the content.

How can I make money selling online courses?

To make money selling online courses, identify your areas of expertise (areas where you have above-average knowledge) and the people who can benefit from that expertise. Create lessons that help those people understand the topic and solve specific issues they have. Last but not least, plan on how you're going to disseminate the course. Promote it with solid content and video marketing and support it with a well-built website.

Turn what you know into a thriving online business.

When you choose to share your knowledge with a simplified, all-in-one platform like Kajabi, you'll find it's easy to monetize your life skills (whether you're teaching fitness, cooking, finance, or something else) without having to pick up new tech skills in the process.

With Kajabi, you can:

- Create professional digital products
- Launch fully-automated sales funnels
- Build beautiful websites
- Send effective emails
- Manage customer relationships
- Track key metrics for growth
- And much more

But we know it takes more than the right tools to get started. So we've packaged our most impactful content into the Idea to Income Kickstart Program. These resources will show you how to build your business on Kajabi, including:

- Bonus video training to guide you step-by-step from product creation to your first sale.
- Video tutorials from entrepreneurs who started out new on Kajabi and went on to become thriving online business owners.
- A free one-on-one onboarding call with a dedicated member of our success team.

To learn more about the Idea to Income Kickstart Program and start your free trial of Kajabi, click the button below:

[Yes, tell me more](#)