The No Sweat Way To Build A Successful Online Information Business

An information business is a business where your primary marketable "good" is information. This can be information teaching someone how to do something you know how to do well, information teaching about something, or information teaching how someone else does something. The bottom line is, an information business sells . . . information.

There are a few basics ways that you can package the information you sell. You can write a book, a booklet, an ebook or a kindle book. You can record an audio or series of audios. Or you can record a video or series of videos. You can also offer individualized or small group assistance with the learning process; we often call this assistance "coaching." And there are a limitless number of ways you can combine those packaging methods to create customized packaging scenarios.

For example, you could create a series of books. You could create a coaching program that is based on the content in the books. You could create a coaching program that is based on the content in a series of audios or videos. You could create a series of materials, perhaps a combination of audio or video, that is specifically designed as the teaching portion of a coaching program. And so on.

The best rule of thumb for deciding which method of packaging to use has two parts:

1) the method you personally like best, whether based on ease or familiarity with the method, and

2) the method through which your particular niche clients prefer to receive their information and training.

If the method you like and they best like doesn't coincide, choose a compromise that best fits your style and their need. You will likely find that there is a sub-set of individuals who will learn it any way you teach, if your teaching is clearer and most effective than the teaching of your competition.

Perhaps this is beginning to sound complicated, and yet, that is the opposite of my intention. I simply want to show you that out of the myriad of ways you can package your training, you simply have to choose one... the one that works best for both you. And in showing you this, I want you to see how easy it is to simplify something that, frankly, holds many people back from starting or easily growing their information business. You see, many people, and perhaps you are one of them, is held back from starting their own information business because of the complexity of choices that exist.

But hopefully by now you see how easy it can be to simplify this step of the process.

Having said that, there are many other steps that are involved in building your information business, and at first blush, they might all feel just as complicated as the step we've just simplified. However, if you use the same simplifying process I've just demonstrated—that of simply choosing the one option or method that makes the most sense to YOU—you will find that the entire process of building your information business can be really simple.

For example, once you decide on your packaging method, you might to choose what kind of website or blog, what kind of traffic, how to reach people, who do you reach, at what level do you teach, etc. And each of those choices has many possible answers.

And you have a choice in the matter—you can spend years wrestling with those choices, and never build a solid information business—or you can simply make quick decisions for each of those categories of questions, and implement your decision. One thing to remember is this: you can always change the way you are doing something, once you are doing it. But if you never get started, you will never have an information business.

For example, let's imagine that you start your business and make the following decisions:

- Packaging: audio
- Traffic: article marketing
- Communication: email campaign
- Kind of website: blog
- Who is your prospect: people with basic problems in your niche
- At what level do you teach: beginners

Let's next imagine that over time you decide you don't like that traffic source, you can always change your traffic source. But the rest of your business stays in-tact. Or perhaps you decide you would rather record videos than audios. That's okay, you simply swap out that element. Or maybe you decide you don't want to use email to communicate, instead you want to use Facebook and Twitter. That's okay too, just swap it out. Maybe you decide you want a static website instead of a blog. Or you get tired of helping beginners; you would rather work with people who already know the basics but are struggling to get to the next level.

Do you see how easy this process of making changes can be?

But the core idea here is that you have started something, even if it's not exactly what you want in the long run. Because if you keep waiting until you have the perfect business plan, you will likely never start your business. One of the common traits of successful entrepreneurs is that they tend to be starters. They start things. They may not know what the future holds, but they simply get started. When Richard Branson started his first cd replicating business, he may not have had any idea that he would own an airline, a soda company, and a philanthropy company decades later - but he just started. When Steve Jobs and Wozniak built their first computer, although they were excited about

changing the world of computing, they likely had no idea of the scope of what that meant. And when I wrote my first ebook, I was simply trying to meet a need my subscribers had told me they needed; I had no idea that 5 years later I would have written 13 ebooks, recorded over 35 audio products, multiple coaching programs, creating a world-level coaching method, Anyone Can Coach, written a published book about the system, and write (to date) 2 kindle books. And of course changed many lives in the process, as people have followed me (not on Twitter, instead following my methods and implementing them in their businesses).

And you may not know the future of your business. But I can promise you this: if you never get started, you will have no future in your business. You must get started.

Okay, enough motivation for now. It is your responsibility to take action on what I teach next. And understand that I am going to teach you how to do each of the elements that is necessary for your business, for example, packaging, traffic, market selection, communication, etc. And I am going to primarily focus on the actual methods that work best for me, for example, audio for packaging, articles and content (like kindles and books) for traffic, email for communication, etc. But recognize that on any particular element, you can change out the way I do it for the way someone else does it that you like better.

But I would challenge you to start somewhere with some way that someone else has already done it, if you have never done it before. You can always "reinvent the wheel" down the road once you have the experience. But if you have never created a product before, you don't have to do it that way I do, but do it the way someone has done it, the first time. Trust me, it will make it easier than figuring a brand new way to do it yourself, if you have never done it before. Once you have done it one way, my way, or someone else's, then decide to do it your way, or a new way that has never been done before. Same thing with traffic—do it the way someone has done it successfully in the past. That might be the way I teach, it might be the way someone else teaches—but do it in a way that is easy to simply follow the directions, instead of having to think up each step as you go.

The reason for all of this is that there are so many elements to learn as you build your business, things like packaging, what to teach, how to teach it, how to find prospects, how to communicate, etc. that it is hard enough to just put all those pieces in place. You don't want to complicate it with not being able to use a proven system for doing each of those steps. It all kind of goes back to the idea of just starting—and you want to have the easiest way possible to just start. Once you have started, you can make changes to individual steps.

Now, having shared all of this preliminary information, warnings, guidance, etc., let's get started with the actual process of the easiest way to build an information business.

The first thought is that everything you do, you want it to be simple. Meaning that instead of using a complicated traffic source, use a simple traffic source. Instead of creating a complicated information product to sell that includes print, audio, video, and

online interactivity, create something really simple: perhaps an audio teaching how to do what it is you teach. You can always add complexity later. Instead of creating a complicated communication method that includes Twitter, Facebook, email, and texting, choose one. Make it simple. You can always add complexity later.

So let's get started.

The first thing I like my clients to create is a simple product that teaches some core idea in their area of niche expertise. This might be a 50 page ebook, or a 2 hour audio. And my personal preference is a 2 hour audio, and I only recommend an ebook when someone is so afraid to record themselves that he never takes action and do it. But probably 90% of my clients start with an audio recording, and unless you find that you just "cannot" do it, I recommend that you start with an audio recording as well.

So why something small instead of a comprehensive course? There are several reasons. One, most people who try to create a comprehensive course as their first product never finish it. They might record 2-3 hours of content, but for some reason, they never finish it. So although they have done enough work to have a sellable product, because they tried to create one big product right up front, they may have nothing to sell. On the other hand, if someone were to create one 2-hour product per week for a year, after a year he might have 50 2-hour products, some of which could be combined to create a bigger, more complex product. But the stress and complexity of creating the big product isn't there up front, and that person ends up being much more productive in the long run.

Another reason is that when you first get started you don't truly know if the market wants what you think they do. Now, you can do months and months of market research to find out—but that still doesn't guarantee you that people will like your huge complex product. Or you can take one week, record a 2 hour product, write a sales letter and start selling it, and find out very soon if people like your product. If they don't, you can simply create a different 2 hour product and see if they like that one. You don't have to create another 30 hour complex course, only to find it is a flop.

So now that you have a product, and perhaps are planning to create a new product each week or each month for the foreseeable future, your next step is to tell people about it. I like to use a 2-step system for that, although you can do it anyway that you want (keeping in mind that when you get started, you want to do it in a way that has worked for someone else in the past, either me or someone else who has done it before).

The 2-step system involves finding people online who need the kind of solution I provide, getting them to join an email list so I can communication with them (step 1), and then communicating with them via email, giving them informative content that both educates them on the topic of their interest and builds a level of credibility in their mind for me (step 2).

I have a few particular traffic sources I like for finding people online who have the kinds of needs I can help with, but again, you can choose the sources that work best for

you over time. And I use primarily email to communicate with subscribers, but you can incorporate other methods of communication if you choose.

The final step in the process is that of building long term coaching-level relationships with people who have bought your initial product or products. What happens is that some of the people who buy your initial products and study them, want to work more closely with you so that they can get personalized guidance in implementing what you teach. You see, most people don't implement what you teach when they just listen to or read it once. This book is a perfect example. Most people who read this book will conclude that it is good information, and it would work if they tried it. But for some reason, most people will end up not taking action on what is in this book, deciding instead to buy another book (or audio) written or recorded by someone else (or even me) to learn more about the topic before taking action. And the same thing will likely happen with that product - they will think it is useful information, but instead of taking action, they will likely go out and buy still another product.

Perhaps you have found yourself in that trap. Perhaps over the last few years you have bought many products from many people trying to teach you how to build some form of an information business, but you have never taken real action on what you have read or learned. Or maybe you have taken incomplete action, for example, maybe you started what you learned, or you did what you learned for one week or one month without making a real commitment to succeeding, and then you quit because you didn't get results fast enough. That is a normal scenario that happens in life, and very few people actually follow through on what they start, and likewise very few people are truly successful in their endeavors.

However, going back to the example of someone who buys one of my books, and instead of deciding it is good information, but he just needs more information to do it, or tries to do it all on his own, decides instead to contact me and begin working personally with me to take himself to the next level with my guidance and direction. By working personally with me, he can get much faster results by working personally with me instead of just reading my books.

And the same thing is true with your prospects. Some people who read your books and listen to your audio trainings will want more personalized help from you.

And this is where a coaching program comes in. You create a simple coaching program where you meet with your clients personally, one on one, or in small groups, once a week or once a month, and work with them on implementing what you teach in your books, audios or videos.

And that rounds out your business.

Notice how simple this model is:

1) Finding people who need what you have
2) Writing books or recording audios or videos to teach them your concepts

3) Communicating with them via email
4) Offering coaching to people who want more than just another ebook or audio.

That's it. Notice how simple it is. It is simple for a reason. The biggest reason is that when I first started this business, I did it all in a very complex way. I write 13 ebooks my first 12 months online. I write a new email each day to send to my subscribers. I had a complicated coaching program that people would join. Then I began creating many long-series audio programs. And multiple coaching programs. I tried multiple ways of communicating with people.

And what I found worked best was a simple system of a single product that people could buy to get to know me, simple email communication, and a simple coaching program where people could get personalize guidance and instruction.

I've plugged in additional traffic sources, but kept them simple as well. Because I have created multiple products, I have several I use as front-end products for people to use to get to know me initially, like this book.

But it is all very simple. Think of it as a customizable car you might buy. Imagine you get tired of your wheels, you can go to the dealer and swap them out. You can swap out your seats, seat covers, repaint a different color, etc. Of course these aren't things we normally do with our vehicles, but think about the plug-in, plug-out simplicity. Think of your living room. From time to time you change the color of the room, you buy new couches and chairs, you get new carpet. Perhaps you buy new bookshelves, new books for the books shelves, or buy new throw rugs or throw pillows. None of this changes the fact that your living room is your . . . living room. It doesn't change the purpose of the room. But it changes the look and feel of the room.

It is the same way with your business. Once you have the basic structure in place, you can "plug-n-play" and swap elements in and out, adding items as you wish, taking things out if you don't like them anymore, but your core business stays in place.

And the nice thing is, whether it takes you 3 weeks or 9 months to put it all in place, once you have a basic product or 2 to sell, and a coaching program to help people who want personalized help, and maybe a basic web site where people can read about you, your products, and your coaching program, your core business is in place. You can add products if you wish, change the nature of your products, even change the look and feel of your website, but your business itself is still . . . there. You don't have to reinvent or re-build your business repeatedly over time.

And once that core business is in place, you can choose to change the way you introduce people to it. For example, maybe you start out with simple article marketing like I did, but over time you can add pay-per-click advertising, mass media advertising, or email marketing. But your core business is in place, and if you don't like one form of traffic, you just swap it out and put in another. It's easy. It's simple.

Same thing with how you communicate with your subscribers. I personally like using email. Because I have email hours. I turn my computer on at a certain time during the day, and answer emails and communicate with people. But when I want to end my work day and go skiing or to the pool, I simply close the computer and my work is over, much as if I worked a 9-5 job 10 years ago and clients knew that after hours, they simply have to wait until tomorrow to get an answer.

But perhaps you don't want to work a block of hours, instead you would rather just let people text you or use Facebook or twitter to communicate with you (or use email on your smartphone and take it with you), and you would rather talk with each person as they need help, than to have a block of working hours. I don't personally like this, nor do I recommend it (I personally believe that being "always on" is not good for your body, your family, or your lifestyle), but the fact remains—it is YOUR business so you can run it any way that you want. And that of course is the beauty of this model.

Since your core business is in place, you can communicate with your prospects and clients any way that you want, and if you decide you want to change the way that you communicate—you can, and it won't affect your core business itself. Because your products and coaching are there, and you can change your traffic sources or your communication sources over time, and totally customize your business any way that you want.

This always frees you to focus on growth and scalability. Because your core business—your products and coaching program—is solid and in place (although you can still add to it and change it as well), you can focus your time and energy on finding more and better ways of finding the people who need your help, and improving your communication with those people, which is the next step to exponential growth in your business.

Hopefully by now, you are getting a feel for how flexible this model is, and how easy it is to customize.

One of the real keys to the flexibility is that once you have a product and a coaching program in place, you can swap in and out various traffic methods and you can swap in and out various communications methods, but your products and coaching programs are static and enduring. And of course, with the products and the coaching, you can always change those over time, but once you have the first ones in place, you free your business to grow because you can focus on traffic and communication, not products and delivery methods.

So now let's go through the steps to creating a business the way I have just described.

Here are the steps:

1) Create an initial product for prospects to buy.

2) Create a coaching program from prospects to enroll in

3) Find prospects online and introduce them to you and your initial product

4) Communicate with your prospects and clients through email

Remembering the concept I have consistently shared with you in this book so far, any of these components can be done any way that works. And there are many ways to do each step. In fact, there may be as many as 100 different ways to do each step. And to write about 100 different ways for each of 4 different steps would be 400 different sets of steps—and quite an unwieldy manual, not to mention the confusion it would create. So to make all of this easy, I am going to teach you in this book the way I recommend doing each of these steps. But that doesn't mean you have to do it the way I teach.

Perhaps you want to do it my way for steps 1 and 3, for example, but for steps 2 and 4 you have seen it done a different way and want to do it that way instead. That's okay. The only thing I suggest, though, is this: don't try to wing it, to figure it out for yourself. Learn how to do that step the way you want to do it from someone who has done it. Not someone who has never done it but has written a book about how other people do it. Someone who has personally done it, and preferably is still doing it, since techniques and methods change over time, and sometimes even when someone has done something before, if he is no longer doing it, his old methods may no longer work.

Okay, enough philosophizing from me! All of that to make the concept very clear, but it is time for the to-do steps.

Notice: I am going to make this very simple, and if you are willing to follow every step exactly, you will have success with each step.

1) Create an initial product for prospects to buy.

The way I recommend to do this the first time is by recording an audio. You can also write a book or record a video, but those methods take longer. And since one of the key points to this book is the idea that you want to take action quickly and get things rolling, so I have chosen the easiest way to teach you this step. And incidentally, this is the same way I create most of my core products.

Here's how to do it:

First, create an outline of your core expertise and knowledge. I have written an easy tutorial and posted it online, you can access it by logging in here: (link)

Once your outline is created, simply record based on your outline.

If you have mp3 recording software on your computer already, you can use that. Or you can download software for your computer. Or you can use an online service like mizesean.audioacrobat.com or instantteleseminar.com (those are the 2 services I personally use).

The reason I personally use a service instead of software on my computer is for simplicity. With the services, you can not only record on your computer, you can record by using your telephone or your cell phone, you can record a 3 way call, or with instantteleseminar.com, you can hold a conference call with prospects or clients and record your conference call and turn that recording into a product. And both of those services will keep a copy of your recording, in case you lose or corrupt the one your download onto your computer.

Here's how to do the recording:

If you have created the outline the way I taught in the document I recommended, you will have 100 points to teach on. I recommend taking the first 10 points, and recording for one hour those points.

So imagine a 60 minute hour (aren't they all?) and divide that into 10 points. That means each point would be 6 minutes of recording, for a total of 60 minutes. Of course, if one point takes longer or shorter, that's ok. It's okay if your first product is 55 minutes or 65 minutes or 75 minutes, or whatever. There is no perfect number of minutes, the only thing that matters is that you teach what you say you are going to teach.

So take the outline and begin to record. Introduce yourself and your topic, and tell why you are going to teach on this topic. Then read aloud the first topic you are going to teach on, then simply record your knowledge about that topic. Then read aloud the next topic, and record your knowledge on that topic.

Once you have recorded the training, simply upload the mp3s to your web server (follow the directions that you received when you subscribed to web hosting or use the customer service accessibility with your service).

Once the mp3s are on your server, you need a way to send them to your buyers.

The simplest way is to simply link to them in an email and send the email to your buyers.

The final step is that you need to write a sales letter to sell your first product. And because I find that this is a huge roadblock for most people that have never written a sales letter, I recommend that you use a sales letter software service that basically writes the sales letter for you, based on input you give the software (its easy to do). I have listed the one I recommend here: (link)

2) Create a coaching program from prospects to enroll in.

Now that you have created your first product, you need a coaching program. It doesn't need to be fancy, and it doesn't need to be complicated, it just needs to exist. And when you get your first client, you can choose how you want to deliver the coaching to that client, based on his needs and your skills. You can coach him or her by writing

emails back and forth, by getting on the phone and talking, or by whatever other communication method you and him both agree on. It's that simple. Since it is just one client, it doesn't matter how you communicate, as long as the communication method works for both of you.

Over time, as you gain more clients, you will likely want to go to a system of group coaching, where you coach multiple clients simultaneously, likely through group telephone calls.

Here's how to start your coaching program:

First, there is one choice to be made upfront: do you want to pre-create the lessons, or do you want to create them based on your first clients' needs.

The advantage to pre-creating them based on your first clients' needs is that you don't have to create the lessons ahead of time. In fact, you don't actually have to create lessons at all. Instead, you can simply get on the phone with your first client and teach him what he wants to learn. That's right—you can just get on the phone and teach him what he needs, no lesson required. And if you get his agreement, you can record the time you spend together as you are teaching him, and if in the future, you have a future client who needs to learn the same thing you taught the first client, you can just give the future client the recording of the lesson of you teaching the first client, and then if the future client needs more personalized instruction, he can get on the phone with you to ask questions.

This makes it really simple to get started without preparing lessons up front. And over time, as you teach more and more clients on more and more topics, as long as you are recording all the lessons, over time, you will be able to carve out new coaching programs for new clients almost exclusively from the lessons you have pre-recorded of you teaching each concept to a prior client.

Can you see how easy this can be? You really can, very easily, launch a coaching program, start with one client, and over time, enroll many, many clients who get some of the same training you have used with prior clients.

And over time, as you gain more and more clients and you are using pre-recorded lessons for most of your teaching, it will make it easier to take on multiple clients—more clients than you could if you were talking to all the clients personally one on one—and they get the training material through the recorded lessons, and if they have questions, you can use a group conference call each week where any client can ask any questions about anything they are studying or have questions about.

This allows you to have a coaching program long run that has lessons that are recorded, with one weekly group phone call where you can answer all your clients' questions in one time block each week.

Are you beginning to see the simplicity of this model? Over time, once the lessons are created, you don't have to spend time creating lessons, and since you are coaching all your clients on a group phone call for 1-2 hours per week, your actual coaching time—no matter how many clients you have—is 1-2 hours per week.

So your first step is to enroll your first client. Once you have that first client, you can easily "do" the process I just shared with you.

3) Find prospects online and introduce them to you and your initial product

There are many ways to find prospects online, including article marketing, content marketing, blog marketing, search engine marketing, pay-per-click marketing, advertising, media buys, email marketing, video marketing, YouTube marketing, just to name a few.

The primary method I currently use is what I call advanced article marketing, which is a hybrid of old-school article marketing (highly effective when I was cutting my teeth on internet marketing), guest blogging, and content marketing, so that is what I will teach you to do.

Keep in mind, you can choose any of the other methods of traffic, but the main recommendation is to learn how to do it from someone who is currently successful using that source of traffic.

Here's how to do advanced article marketing:

Find the places that people who need your solution spend time online. The easiest way to find these places is to go to Google and Google your prospects' problems. The reason to do this is that normally one of the first places people go to to find some solutions to the their problems is the search engine in Google. And Google is directing them to the places that are listed as the first 10-20 websites that come up in Google for that keyword search. This means that your prospects are hanging out in these places.

They may also be hanging out in niche forums or blogs, and to find those, Google keyword phrases like this: "your niche problem + blogs" or "your niche problem + forums", for example, your niche is self improvement, one of the problems in your niche might be "how to improve myself" so you would Google: "how to improve myself + blogs."

Once you find the places where people who need your solution spend time online, you want to find ways to meet them there.

Go through each site asking yourself, how could I meet people at this site? Each site will have a potentially different way.

For example, perhaps one site has many authors that write blog posts, perhaps you could become a blog poster on that site. Write the editor or owner and ask how to become a guest author on his site.

Another site might have some advertising on it. Perhaps you could advertise on that site. Write the owner of the site and ask how to advertise on her site.

Another site might be a question and answer forum. Join the forum and begin answering questions for people. Note: don't try to sell on the forums, instead just build relationships and trust by answering questions; if someone wants to learn more from you, they will contact you and ask you how.

Another site might allow you to submit articles, or post videos, or be a guest poster or writer, or any number of various ways you can get engaged on the site.

Each site is different, so once again, you'll have to look at each one and decide how you can best engage on that website.

4) Communicate with your prospects and clients through email

Now that you are reaching people through the various websites where they congregate, how do you take them to the next level—personally interacting with you?

The way I do it is I create something called a squeeze page - this is a webpage that makes some offer, usually a free ebook, mp3, or short video, that the visitor can receive in exchange for joining my email list. The email list allows me to communicate with that visitor over time and build a relationship with him, and give him the chance to get to know me better, buy my product, and enroll in coaching with me, if he so chooses.

Once you have a squeeze page, simply direct all the people who visit you through all the websites you have identified in step 3, to go to your squeeze page and download your free guide, either an ebook, and mp3, or a video.

Once they have opted in to your email list through the squeeze page, you can then begin to build a relationship with them via email.

This is what I recommend:

Develop an email campaign that progressively over time introduces your new subscriber to:

- you
- your methods
- what makes you different
- your product(s)
- your coaching program

Although there are a limitless number of ways you could write and configure and email campaign, I'll give you a sample email campaign here:

Email 1: Introduction to you, indicate that you will be sending informative emails over time.

Email 2: Email giving a strong tip that will help people in your niche.

Email 3: Another email with strong content, concluding with a recommendation to purchase one of your products (look at the recommendations in this book to see how I word recommendations to buy my products).

Email 4: Email with strong content, again recommending a product at the end (or somewhere in the email).

Email 5: Interaction email, perhaps something that asks "is there anything I can help with?", "is there something you are struggling with?", or so on. Be sure to respond personally to anyone who replies to the is email.

Email 6: An email introducing your coaching program.

Email 7: An email telling more about your coaching program.

Email 8: An email asking if someone has any questions about your coaching program.

Email 9: A content email.

Email 10: An interactive email.

You can continue writing emails like this over time, perhaps spreading out the timing of the emails over time. For example, perhaps an email per day the first 10 days, then an email every second day from 11-30 days, then maybe 2 emails per week through 90 days, then maybe an email each 10 days thereafter.

Now you have my entire system for easily creating an information business. Perhaps right now you are thinking, this doesn't really seem so simple, and that's okay. Just take each component one by one and create each component the way I teach. If you can only work a couple hours per night, just know that it will take longer than if a friend of yours decides to work fulltime online from the beginning. And if you are better at managing your time and staying focused, you will get more accomplished faster.

But my advice to you is this: just get started. Do something. Get the training you need to take things to the next level.