

E16 - 5 strategies to launch and sell your online course or group program

Welcome to the Empowered Edupreneur Podcast. My name is Michelle Smit, and I am an ex-teacher turned online business coach for Edupreneurs the owner of Digiteach and a six-figure entrepreneur. I am in love with empowering educators just like you to create freedom filled online businesses and lives they love. If you are looking to up-level your skills, your finances, your mindset, and change the trajectory of your life as an educator and business, then you are in the right place.

Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of business and mindset development to help unlock the infinite potential within you. To play bigger with your life and go after your dreams. We are going to have so much fun together. So thank you so much for pushing play today. Now let's dive in.

Hello, hello fabulous one. I hope you are having a wonderful day. I am super stoked. I'm just feeling so grateful and excited because I opened the doors to the Educators Income Booster Bootcamp a couple of days ago, and we've already got a bunch of educators in, and especially in my VIP because we also have the VIP option.

Lots of people are doing the VIP and every single time someone joins my Bootcamp, I literally do like a little dance, and if you upgrade to VIP, I like get so excited. So that's what's happening now. Every day we've got a bunch of humans joining and it's just so exciting for me. I'm so excited to connect more deeply with you in this bootcamp.

We start on the 26th of January and the doors will close on the 26th of January. So if you're listening to this now, that's going to be in a couple of days. Yeah, and I'm not doing this bootcamp for a good couple of months. I typically only do it live because it's just really, really fabulous doing it live.

The energy is amazing as opposed to like pre-recorded. So that's how I've decided to do it. And yeah, if you're wondering what this is about, this is the Educators Income Booster Bootcamp is a 10-day live training experience with me whereby I help you take your knowledge, your life experience, whatever is inside of you, your passions, whatever it is.

And I help you map out an offer, a digital course, a group program, some sort of offer that you can then sell for years to come. And we go through everything. We will look at your niche, we'll look at your ideal student avatar. We'll look at your messaging, your modules, so what you include your roadmap for, how you guide your students to results in your program. Your pricing, just pretty much everything.

The key ingredients needed to go into an offer to make it desirable and also position it in a way that it can sell. So if you just create a course or a program online, it doesn't necessarily mean it's going to sell.

Positioning is really important. The way you position your offer, the way you say things, your messaging is very, very important. And that's what we'll go into a lot in the bootcamp. So by the end of this bootcamp you'll have an entire offer mapped out on paper. And you'll have me every day to ask all your questions, pick my brain for literally \$37.

So it's definitely the most affordable way to get started working with me, and it's probably the most affordable way to kickstart your business journey if you haven't yet started it. Or if you do have a business maybe you're teaching one-on-one, you have freelance teaching, or you've got a tutoring business.

If you have a desire to scale up with courses or group programs, then this really is the place to be. So if you want to join us, you've got a couple of days left. By this link under this episode, you join there. Or you can go to my Instagram and join there, or my website.

It's all over the show so you can't miss it. Yeah, and I'm so excited to those of you who have joined, we're going to have an amazing time together. The pre-party on the 26th and yeah, I just cannot freaking wait. Alrighty, so today's episode, what do I have for you? I thought today I would share, I think it's five strategies to launch and sell your online course or group program.

So I'm going to run through five strategies that you could use to sell your course or your group program, right? And each one has pros and cons. Each one, they have their own way of doing it. They've got little things that you do in each one strategy wise that are different. I'll run through each one briefly and I'll speak about some pros and cons for each one. So you can get an overview idea of how it's possible to launch. Because there are like so many different ways. But today I'll just share five.

The first strategy, the first way to sell your offers online is through a video series or a training week launch. So this is essentially a week of training where you deliver videos on certain days. It's like a week event. You deliver videos on certain days and you, you guide people like that. So for a video series launch your list building time, meaning the time you spend building your audience for it, like getting people signed up for your training can be up to four weeks in advance.

But bear in mind, the longer you spend in this list building phase, the. The chance of low show up rates. So if you are sending people to sign up your event and your event is only in six weeks, you're going to have a low show up rate. So typically you want to really list build ahead of the event, like two weeks in advance because you're going to have a better show up rate.

But I have done four weeks with a video series. I have even pushed it to six weeks. But if you're doing that, then you really need to make sure that when someone signs up for this event, every single week. You are reminding them about this event, reminding them their benefits of how it's going to change their life, and also delivering value and keeping them engaged, okay?

So that's key, but really, I would say four weeks is probably the better option. Now typically the strategy involves four pre-built or even live training videos of around 15 minutes each. The shorter the video and the shorter, the sweeter more engaging the video the better because people have very low attention spans.

You don't want long videos. People can't focus for that long anymore. And yeah, so you have four videos and typically what it looks like is you'll send video one out on a Monday video, two out on a Tuesday, I mean, sorry, on a Wednesday video three out on a Friday, and then video four is on the following Monday.

And normally you would create an accompanying Facebook group where those who sign up for your training would then join your Facebook group, and that's where you'll create hype connection, engagement with people. That's where you can deliver your training. That's where you can go live and answer questions.

So having a Facebook group alongside this kind of launch can be very powerful if done well. It can be damaging if it's not done well. So essentially

you want this group to be engaged and people connecting and all of that. The more of that the better. So yeah, it can work really well. You would deliver your videos.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and then the following Monday, that fourth video is a sales video. So video one, two and three are like trainings. And then video three has got a bit of a pitch where you pitch your program. And then video four is like a sales video. And after you do your sales video, you would then have a five-to-seven-day open cart period, which is where you sell your offer.

Some people do 14 days open carts, but that feels too long for me because you have to keep your energy up for 14 days and that's quite a long time, so I typically do five to seven days. And with this type of launch, you are sort of looking at a sales conversion of around 2%, meaning 2% of your email list hopefully buys 1% is like, okay, we're validating the product.

It works 2% is like a great goal. So yeah. The pro of this strategy is that you can pre-record the videos, you can make them really great, and then you can release them each day. And this is a pro if you are afraid of going live or you're not strong enough, going live in like a webinar style. The other pro is you can do it over a week.

So it's like a week event. And so there are many touchpoints you can have with your leads over that week. It's quite a long time to be with people and you can really connect and engage with them for a long period of time, and this is really effective in, you know, having them build trust around you in order to purchase your next thing.

A con is that it can be a lot of work to create a video series ahead of time. Although the videos shouldn't be very long, like 10 minutes should be, you know, 10 to 13 minutes is a great timeframe. But some people do find it challenging to create a video series. The other con is that keeping people's attention.

Is a little bit of a challenge, especially if it's pre-recorded. So you really need to make sure that your videos are concise, captivating, and they lead onto each other. You almost want like a cliff hanger at the end of your video to guide people and get them amped to watch the next video. So you have, you know, some people, if it's a, if the video isn't done well, people aren't going to watch the next video, right?

So you really want to keep attention and deliver. A good experience in each video. Right. That is a skill in itself. And some people, you know, it's challenging, right? Okay. So that is a video series launch. This is how I teach my students in the Digiteachers Biz Academy on how to launch. This is the strategy I teach in DBA.

The reason I've chosen the strategy is it's probably the easier one to do as a beginner because you can pre-record the content. and it, it, it can be incredibly effective. Like you can do exceptionally well with video series launch for many reasons, if it's done well. And I just find that doing a webinar and other types of launches, they can be a bit more challenging for beginners.

Typically, people who come into dba, they haven't launched before, and so I give them the, in my opinion, one of the easier. Ways of launching, which I think is a video series. But yeah, I guess it depends, depends on the person and what their skills are and what they find easy as well.

All right, so the next one is a webinar launch. This is where you are going to deliver a live webinar. And basically, you're going to get people signed up for that webinar. So your list building time before a webinar is typically around two weeks. This is like a sweet spot for a webinar. You promote a webinar of some sort. You actively get people registered for it in this list building phase.

And as soon as someone registers, they have then emails reminding them to join the webinar and show up just to increase the show up rates. You then deliver the webinar and the webinars back in the day used to be like 90 minutes, but since Covid hit, 90 minutes is too long for people, they don't have that attention span anymore.

So now webinars are more like 40 minutes. The sweet spot I would say is 40 minutes. And this is where you deliver value. Paint yourself as an authority. You know, introduce them to the opportunity for transformation. Show the results that you have in whatever topic or niche you're in.

You know, you want to break down some beliefs, you want to rebuild some beliefs, inspire them for change. You know, there's a lot of things that go into a very good webinar and in the last 15 minutes or so, you will be pitching your offer. Typically with a webinar, you have a fast action bonus for those who join your offer on the call.

And then after the webinar you have a series of sales emails sending each day, from three to five to seven days. So it just depends how long your open cart period is. Some people do three days, some people do five, some people do seven. You decide that. But in that open car period, you want to be showing up every day.

So bear in mind that you need to. You know, show up in each one of those days. So if seven days is too long, then maybe five days is a sweet spot, and the sales conversions can be pretty high on a, a very effective webinar, especially a live webinar, not an evergreen one. Typically you can hit a 10% sales conversion, meaning 10% of the people on your webinar purchase your program, which is very good.

But you know, it does take skill to get that. And if you're doing like evergreen webinars where you, it's a recorded webinar, then that sales conversion is normally around 5%. Sometimes it's a bit lower.

The pros: the pros is that you can do it live. And I must say there's a lot more electric energy in live stuff than pre-recorded people can feel the energy with live. It's just a vibe. So that's a pro.

The other pro is, it's a shorter strategy to do. So typically it's like one webinar and then you sell on the back of that as opposed to doing a challenge or a bootcamp or a video series where you're doing a couple of more things. You've got a longer time with them, you've got like a week with them, or you know, 5 days, 14 days, where you actually have to show up for longer and do more with them.

So a webinar is a little bit simpler and quicker I would say. Cons is the webinars in general have been reducing in their effectiveness since Covid because of all the competition. So I think everyone just decided to do a webinar and it just got, everyone got over it. So if you do want to do a webinar, you need to be good at going live.

You want to make it highly engaging, very interesting, captivating. You want to captivate people's attention. And you want to make sure that you get them to show up. That's going to be the other challenge. So another con is the sharp rates to webinars have been really tricky. So you build these leads for the webinar and then sometimes only 10% of them actually.

Show up to your webinar, and this is, I guess this is a challenge with all types of launches, especially free launches currently, is the show up rate. So people signing up your event and actually watching or showing up to your event. That is a challenge. So you just need to really focus on setting reminders, building hype, reminding people all the time.

You can even go as far as to creating like a calendar schedule that they can add to their Google calendar. So it's in their calendar and you can send out reminders and stuff like that. So there are ways around that, but it is a con.

Now the third strategy is a free challenge launch. This is where you would typically build your list for this challenge like three weeks in advance. And for challenges, you typically have a five-day, 14-day, or 28-day challenge, and you just decide which one you want to go for. You normally have an accompanying Facebook group that people join, so as soon as they join their challenge, they then join a Facebook group.

And typically, you would host your challenge within that group and each day you would do some sort of training and live experience. And then you would, in a challenge, you really getting people to take action and do some sort of homework and doing something right. So at the end of the challenge, you would then pitch your offer with some sort of fast action bonuses and stuff, and then after that you would have like a five to seven-to-10-day open car period.

The length period again, I would say the shorter the better. Remember, you've done a whole challenge for like five days. To now have a 10-day open car period might be too exhausting. So yeah, a challenge typically focuses around taking action. So there is some sort of result or concrete thing that you want your people to be doing in that challenge.

It's a challenge for a reason. They are being challenged to do something. So for example, it could be like a public speaking or a going live challenge where every day you give training on how to speak effectively on video, how to go live, how to be better on video. And then every day their challenge is to go live for like five to 10 minutes a day in their community and take that sort of action so that by the end of the challenge, they have taken action on something and typically they've achieved some sort of result.

Even if it's a tiny little result, they've achieved something. And that gives a sense of momentum and accomplishment, which is powerful. And then they

feel more compelled and motivated to take the next step. And that next step is typically your next offer, right? So the pros of this is challenges are focused on engagement and taking action.

So that is very effective. So it's not like a passive launch process where in a webinar, typically it can be a situation where you are just giving training and that's it. You're giving a training and then you're pitching. There isn't like there's no action taking happening. Whereas in a challenge, people are taking action and doing stuff.

And that's very, very effective because people get results and it's very engaging and then that leads to higher sales conversions if done well. So the other pro is sales conversions with a challenge can be pretty high. I mean, I think a challenge can be almost like 10%. Yeah, it can be very high with a challenge. Just by nature of being such an engaging kind of launch.

And the cons, right? So a challenge is long-winded and there's a lot of moving parts to a challenge. So there's a lot more things you want to be doing and thinking about. And yeah, so a five-day challenge is manageable, but sometimes the longer ones can be quite taxing to maintain energy for that long.

I have never done 14-day, 28-day challenge simply because I just do not have that kind of energy levels. For me, a week is the sweet spot. So I will deliver a training event for a week, and then I'll open cart for a week or five days.

The fourth strategy is a paid bootcamp launch. So this is pretty new way of launching these days. It's something that's been showing up since, I would say last year or just before last year. Maybe it was 2021. So this paid bootcamp strategy was developed by Jill and Josh from the wealthy course creator, and they were actually my mentors in 2022, it was last year. Sometimes I get a bit confused.

Yeah, it was last year. I invested with them into their accelerator program, and they helped me pivot into paid launches. So the first paid launch I ever did was last year, January, and now I am actually coaching for them in their accelerator program. So that is freaking amazing. It's like my dream to be able to do that.

It's such an amazing opportunity to upskill as a coach and just help people with their launches, which is what I do normally. But the entire goal of this accelerator is focused on helping people launch with a paid bootcamp. So it's a paid launch. Now this is an amazing program. If you ever want to learn the strategy, this is the program to learn the strategy.

They developed it. They've done it a lot. They've helped people create like \$2 million worth of profit from this launch. And it's pretty amazing. You get so much support, you get your own coach. You could get me as a coach, which is always a vibe. But yeah, just a heads up that this is the place to go for this strategy. Anyways, this is a great strategy, but I would say it's a little bit more advanced and intricate.

So the difference with a free launch and a paid launch, is that a free launch, it's a free event. Essentially, you're just building a list of leads who are signing up to your free event. In a paid launch, your event is paid, so typically it's like 17 to \$47 and instead of building free leads, you are now building a list of customers because people buy your event, they buy a ticket to your event.

It is a lot harder to build a list of customers than it is to build a list of free leads. Because obviously you've got to convince them to take out their credit card and buy, and that's a lot more friction than just signing up to a free webinar. It takes a lot more skill for you to get someone to buy something from you, even if it's just \$17, even if it's just \$7, because the effort to take out a credit card and purchase something online is a lot higher.

Then just signing up for free, giving an email address for free. There's a lot less friction to that. So if you do the strategy, you want to ensure that your funnel building skills are top notch, and your copywriting messaging is spot on. So when you build out your funnel to drive traffic to. That you actually get sales conversions.

A paid bootcamp is normally around three to five days. You charge for it. It's almost like a mini program. And it's similar to a free challenge, except you actually want to go and give more value and go a little bit harder on the support and the training because people are now paying for it. It's not free.

And so because it's paid, it does need to be like more valuable in my opinion. And that makes you show up and just deliver a much better experience, in my opinion. And then at the end of the three to five days, you would then pitch your signature offer, and then you would sell that for about

three to five days, so you would have an open car period of three to five days.

Now, the pros of a bootcamp, because people pay to be in this event, the show up rate is much higher, which is amazing now because people pay to be in the event, they pay more attention, they take action more, and they engage more. So the results at the end of it are better. The other pro is that because it's a paid event, you can actually liquidate your ad spend, meaning you can run ads and you can make the money back immediately because it's a paid product.

It's a paid event. As soon as someone purchases, you get money for it. So you can liquidate your ad spend, which is amazing. You're launching, and you can basically not spend any money on ads. If you've got a really good funnel that is able to liquidate your ad spend, so unlike a free launch, you would say you run ads, you're just running ads to build leads, and you pay money for those leads and then you have to convert at a certain amount in your webinar or whatever launch you're doing to then make profit, right?

So that is cool. And because people pay to be there, you tend to just have a much higher sales conversion with the paid bootcamp. So even more so than a free challenge or free anything, I think the paid bootcamp has the potential to have the higher sales conversion out of every strategy. And you know, this is pretty exciting.

If you run a paid bootcamp, you're looking at about 15% to 20% sales conversion. So even though you have less people in your event, because it's now with webinars or with free launches, you build all these leads and only like 2% of them convert. With the paid bootcamp you have less people coming into that event.

But you're converting at like 20% or 16% or 15% and that is very, very cool. So it's more intimate, it's more valuable and things like that, which I like. The cons. Alright, so it is challenging to build a list of customers because it's a lot easier to build a list of leads that are free leads. It's a lot more challenging to build a list of customers.

Even if it's like a \$7 event to convert someone into purchasing something online, especially if they are cold and they do not know you, that requires a high level of skill, and that skill needs to go into your funnel, your messaging,

your copywriting, your offer. All of those things need to link up. And for example, if you run ads, it needs to all fit together.

So there's a lot of moving parts to actually get someone to buy something online in that way. And the other con is that if you run ads for this, it does cost more to run ads to a paid event than a free event. Your cost per acquisition is higher for a paid event typically than a free event.

But this isn't all the time. This is just generally. But also with free events, the, the cost per acquisition for a lead is getting much higher as well. So either way, the ad costs are going higher and stuff. And then how do you combat this? You go organic, you go hard on organic, and you really work on your organic marketing.

That's really key, I think. I think moving forward organic is going to be absolutely essential because the ads are becoming too expensive for people and those who have like strong organic foundations are going to. They're going to survive. Alrighty. So that's it.

And then the final one. So the fifth launch style or strategy is a low-cost list launch. Now this is something you can do if you have a warm email list, and you have a relatively low-priced offer. Instead of doing a big whole event of some sort, like the previous launches, they've all been event based.

You can just do an email launch to your list. Now this is comprised of some build-up and hype, maybe a wait list for the offer, and then you send a series of emails delivering some sort of training video in the email. You know, doing all the similar things that you would do in like a normal launch.

You know, painting yourself as an authority, showcasing the opportunity for transformation, showing the results that you've had with people, showing them how your product can help them, or that jazz. You give them training and stuff, and then essentially you just sell with emails and you add an early bird or a fast action bonus.

And then you have a clear, open and closed date when people can purchase your product for that price. And yeah, it's really good for like workshops or mini courses, mini classes, things that aren't like very high priced. So you build hype, you build anticipation, you give value, and then you sell, and you all do it by email.

So the pros of this, of course, it is quick and easy. It sounds like a dream because it's so simple, really. It's just a simple way to sell something to your email list. And then the cons is. Well you can't really do it easily with a higher priced offer, it depends. It depends.

Like if you've got an email list that fricking love you, they buy everything you put out because the energy is there and you know, that happens, right? If you've got a very warm email list, you can actually put out an offer and people can buy and it can be a higher priced offer, that is possible.

I've seen it happen. People do it, if your list isn't super like hot and ready to buy, then it's going to be harder to sell something that's higher price to them. So then it's a bit more of a low-cost offer strategy. A bit more of a simple, oh I just want to sell this workshop, you know, kind of thing. So yeah, that is it.

Those are the five ways. There's obviously more, but these are five ways to launch and sell your online course or your group program. I have done all of them except for free challenges, so I did video series launches for like the first two years. They are very effective, especially if you do them a few times and you get good at them, they can be really effective.

I then did webinars for the next two years. I did like live webinars, evergreen webinars. I did all of that. Very effective as well. But that was pre Covid. So I haven't done webinars post covid. So I think the strategy is definitely different. I've also done some email launches with just some low-cost things, and now I do paid boot camps.

Now, I would say all of these launch strategies, they have their challenges, they've got their pros, they've got their cons, and you really should just go for the one that I would say you have most fun with. If you don't know which one you have most fun with, you should just try out one and give it a go a few times and then try it another.

Give it a go a few times. Don't change strategy after the first time. You need to give yourself some time to get good at the strategy and each strategy is different. So yeah, the way I help DBA students is with a video series launch and yeah, I feel like that's a good starting point if you are new to launching and things like that, and the video series launch is developed by Jeff Walker.

He created the product launch formula, and that is his strategy that he developed like 20 years ago, I feel like, and still people are still doing it, it's

still very effective. But yeah, with strategy, you just need to go with one, stick to one for a long enough time for you to get good at it.

And then as long as it's converting and you're enjoying it, then stick to it. If it's not converting anymore, change to a new strategy. Try something new. That is the nature of running a business. Everything is changing all the time. Something that works for you now might not work for you in a year or two years' time.

For now, my favourite launch strategy are paid Bootcamps, so that's why I only do them now, because I just feel the connection that I get with people is super fulfilling, like in my Bootcamp they are just the most fulfilling things ever because there's just so much energy. Everyone is there.

They've paid to be there, they're super excited. And I just make so many meaningful, like connections in my bootcamps with so many people. And there's always such big transformations in the bootcamp because people have paid to be there. They're really taking action. They're really showing up, and that leads to better results for them.

So at the end of the bootcamp, people have. They've got so much more clarity. They've got so much more energy, so much more momentum. They've like made these big internal shifts as well. And for me there is nothing more fulfilling than seeing that. And that is why I am rocking paid bootcamps and that's the vibe for now.

I don't do free events for now. That might change. There's so much magic and you know, pros to that and I'm pretty sure I'll do some free things this year as well. So that is it guys. I hope this was super helpful and useful to you if you are wanting to join my bootcamp.

Just a reminder that the doors are closing, quite soon. And we'll start the pre-party on the 26th. Every day we've got training. It's going to be amazing. If you cannot be there live for the training, you will get six-months access to this entire product. So there's no like, excuse if you can't make it live, as soon as we finish the live. We upload it to a training portal.

You get login details, and you have six-month access to it. So there's time for you to absorb that training, implement it, do all the bonuses and everything. You can join us with a link under this episode. If you have any questions,

please message me. I'm always open to answering. Seeing if this is for you. Otherwise, I hope you have an amazing day and I will chat to you next week.

Thank you so much for listening to today's episode. I am beyond excited to announce that doors to my Educators Income Booster Bootcamp are officially open. If you are looking to escape the time for money teaching treadmill as a teacher or Edupreneur. And you want to create a course or group program that can scale your income and impact, then this bootcamp is for you.

You can grab your ticket for just \$37 on my website [@digiteach.biz](https://digiteach.biz) Doors close soon, and I won't be running this live for a good few months, so don't wait.

I appreciate you so much, and I cannot wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go create a business and life you love.