

Teach Online

Make Money Doing What You Love

Learn exactly how I make \$10,000 of passive income
each month, selling online courses.

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About the Author

Being the second of four children raised by John and Lori Ebner in Los Angeles, California, I was blessed with a wealth of experiences. My father is a computer programmer and my mother is an art teacher. So, we had a mixture of smarts and creativity growing up. I was blessed with both my parents' intellect and creativity. This creativity resulted in me dabbling in video production and video editing. My father also taught me the value of dedication and hard work. These values, coupled with my creative intellect, resulted in me excelling in video production throughout high school and university.

I was involved in service clubs and did volunteer work in my community while I was at Damien High School in La Verne, California. One of our service projects took us to Tijuana, Mexico. It was an amazing experience and I got to showcase my videography skills by creating documentaries featuring our work there. After applying to several film schools in the United States, I chose to attend Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles. I viewed this school as one of the best film schools and believed it was somewhere that I could hone my videography skills. The school's philosophy also centers on service, which is what I live for. While at Loyola, I was afforded the opportunity to study in Germany. This experience allowed me to make documentaries in Switzerland, India, Mexico, and South America. I was also able to create short films and attend film festivals across the United States. So, I was truly able to develop my skills and transform them into a lucrative career.

From a tender age I knew I was destined to be an entrepreneur. As a child I would try to sell baseball cards at my parent's yard sales. When eBay became popular, I began searching people's recycling bins and going to thrift stores to find bits of treasure that I could sell on the site. I was always searching for ways to earn an income online. When I graduated from LMU I worked in the film industry for about a year and a half before moving to Orange County. This is where I got a newly created job of lead videographer and photographer for a small college in Irvine. The school envisioned creating an online video presence, which is why the position was created. So, I was in charge of creating the video content for online courses and creating marketing material. Since I was a novice to the concept of online learning, I had to do extensive

research to learn about online learning platforms. This is when I discovered sites such as Udemy, Skillfeed, and Skillshare. These websites afford experts the opportunity to teach online.

Then the light bulb in my head clicked. Why couldn't I create an online course through one of these sites to teach people about video editing? It seemed to be a skill in demand so it was the perfect niche to tap into. So, in October 2012 my first online class was born. In the first month I had 20 students and I thought that was amazing! Through heavy promotion to my family and friends that number gradually increased to over 40,000 students. Seeing such a large number was one of the best feelings I have ever experienced. I began to realize that this could actually work.

People were reviewing my course and loving it. One of my students even mentioned that he got a job because of the skills he learned in my class. All of a sudden I had moved from being a simple videographer to someone who was changing people's lives through teaching online. So, I started to build more content and through that I learned that it would be a good idea to build my own platform. This resulted in the creation of videoschoolonline.com

On this platform I posted a wealth of articles, tutorials, free videos, and podcasts. I've reaped great success from videoschoolonline.com. Some of these successes include: creating my own email list which now has hundreds of people and starting my YouTube channel. On this channel I share all my videos. I have hundreds of subscribers and my videos have received thousands of views. It has been a great way to promote myself and continue building my own brand as an online instructor.

Online teaching has transformed my life. I moved from working a routine job to becoming a freelancer to owning my own business. Teaching online has also allowed me to do freelance work I enjoy. Finally, it provides me with an income to cover my basic necessities so that I can earn more through doing freelance work that I love.

Let me make it clear. I had to learn a lot before teaching online. I was never an Internet guru and I, therefore, didn't know much about building websites or utilizing YouTube. I had no potential clients on my email list. I don't own a smart-phone and I realized that there is no need

to be online all the time posting statuses and tweeting in order to succeed in online teaching. I do my work on my laptop at home when I am at home. So, if your lack of Internet savvy or time is terrifying you, there is no need to fear.

The final point that I must mention is that I didn't have a teaching background. I know my content. The ability to convey it well came over time. So, there is no need for you to be concerned about your lack of a teaching background. You also don't need to fear the difference between online teaching and face-to-face teaching. I have created this book and this course to help you through it all.

Introduction

There is one thing that most people worldwide generally desire. It is not necessarily a big house or a fancy car. Instead, it is the ability to earn a suitable income doing what they love. Sadly, for many people this is not the reality. Many of their plans are thwarted and their greatest efforts tend to yield limited results. Frustration becomes the name of the game.

If you are one such person who has reached the point of frustration, there may be a solution. About 14 months ago I created videoschoolonline.com- a site that offers courses in videography. I had no experience in either online teaching or Internet marketing, but I still decided to pursue my dream. Since then my business has blossomed to over 40,000 amazing students. I have also been able to make this a part-time job allowing me to earn just over \$100,000 over past 24 months.

It's amazing how something so small could burgeon into a thriving business. I have written this book to share my experience with you. If teaching is your passion then considering online teaching may be the right choice for you. This book will teach you how to build your own online teaching career. It is divided into 4 categories: think, create, share, and build. The think section is related to conveying what needs to be done in order to acquire the mindset of an online teacher. The create section discusses how to professionally create online courses. The share section discusses how to effectively market your course to attract the right students. Finally, the build section will discuss how to use both social media and online tools to create an awesome course and flourishing online teaching career.

I hope you will find this book engaging and useful. I have spent several hours putting the material together so that you can succeed. If you have any questions, believe that I could have covered a topic more thoroughly, or believe that I may have neglected a topic please feel free to send me an email at videoschoolonline@gmail.com. I will respond to your message appropriately and may even create a video lesson based on your input. I hope that you will implement what you learn in this course so that you can transform your reality.

Think

“The starting point of all achievement is desire”

~Napoleon Hill

In this section, I will be explaining how to develop the right mindset for online teaching. It makes no sense promoting and creating courses if you don't have the right mindset. You also have to have a strong background in your content area, partake in brainstorming sessions, and develop the right support system. These and other concepts will be covered in this section of the book.

This section will contain the following chapters:

1. Transparency
2. Your Motivation
3. Things to Consider Before You Quit Your Day Job
4. Choosing the Right Content Area to Teach
5. The Steps for Creating Your First Course

Transparency

In order to gain trust, you have to be real and transparent. This business isn't about putting up a front or hiding the secrets to making money. I've learned a lot from people who are completely transparent. One such person is Pat Flynn who taught me most of what I know about building an online business. He has always been completely transparent by showing his monthly income statements. Since I wholeheartedly believe in transparency, I am going to tell you my numbers. I'm not going to pitch you a scam; I am going to be honest with you by explaining exactly how I run my business, and how this turns into monthly passive income.

The first point that I want to make is that I am not a millionaire. What I do earn, however, is adequate for my lifestyle. I am young and about to get married to the love of my life. Who knows, maybe by the time you read this we will be married. Nevertheless, my expenses remain low for now. I live simply and the combination of living simply and working hard has led to a fruitful livelihood. Let's take a look at some of my numbers.

In the first month of my online teaching career on Udemy I earned \$60.20. I wanted to highlight this because online teaching is not a "get rich quick scheme." It takes a lot of time and effort to get to the point of making a full time income through teaching online. This doesn't mean, however, that it's impossible to make a full time income from online teaching. You can earn a full-time income teaching online over time.

In my second month of online teaching my earnings quadrupled. By February 2012 I was earning almost \$800. In April 2012 I reached \$1000 and in May 2012 I was able to earn \$2000. So, as you can see the growth rate quickly rose substantially, and continued to do so over the next year. Recently, I passed the \$10,000 per month threshold. While the income has fluctuated from month-to-month, I can do some basic predictions on how well I will do each month. This has to do with the types of promotions I'm planning and if I'm launching a new course, among other things.

Additionally, all of these earnings came while I was working other jobs. For most of the time, I have held a full-time position. I'm always doing freelance video work. Therefore, I really look at my online income as *extra* money that I am saving for big things like a wedding, house, retirement, and so on. I suggest combining teaching online with doing other work especially in the initial phases.

The beauty of teaching online is that it's flexible. You can do it anywhere and you can take a break when you want to. You are your own boss. This is one reason for my earnings decreasing in July 2012. I went on a vacation to the Philippines with my now fiancée and her family. It was an amazing experience. I had automatically set up my blog to post articles during that month. I wasn't paying attention to the sales I was making. I didn't hold any big promotions that month. Nevertheless, the sales still rolled in and I paid for the entire vacation *passively*.

One of my biggest pieces of advice for online entrepreneurs like you is diversify your income. Even if you are just focused on making money from teaching online, you can still try to sell your courses on multiple platforms. This creates a safeguard against losing all of your income if one of the platforms disappears. As a result, I use a few sites: Udemy, Skillfeed, Skillshare, and my own website VideoSchoolOnline.com. I'm also constantly testing out all of the new online course sites to see what is successful.

I've recently been earning over \$1,000 per month on Skillfeed – *not too shabby!* There were, of course, occasional income dips throughout the year, but income growth was steady. In fact, my income will hopefully continue to grow if I keep promoting my courses, creating content and working hard.

Presently, I am earning about \$60,000/year teaching online. I truly can't believe how much money I am making! It is a blessing. YOU can do the same. For me, it's not about the money. You may be sitting there scratching your head, but seriously it's not about the money for me. It's about the *freedom*. Teaching online has given me the freedom to find jobs that I love, travel, splurge from time to time, save for retirement in my early 20s, and most importantly share myself with the world.

In summary, don't embark on this journey expecting to make quick money. You can, however, earn passive income over time if you put in the hard work. Continue reading to find out exactly how to do so.

Your Motivation

One of the most crucial questions that you need to ask yourself before creating your online course is “Why do I want to teach online?” Online teaching isn’t an easy task. I’ve spent a lot of time building my brand and my courses. Several people are getting caught up in the online teaching frenzy and they make it appear simple. For them, all you have to do is put a course together, put it online, and market it and in no time you’ll be able to earn a lifetime of passive income. I am here to give you a reality check. This idea is a myth.

There are several things that can motivate people to pursue online teaching careers. Some are motivated by the potential income. Others are motivated by the desire to share knowledge with others. Others are looking for ways to occupy their time. I’m motivated to teach online by my desire to share my knowledge with others. I am also motivated by the *freedom* online teaching gives me. I am passionate about online teaching and it’s one of the many things I love to do. When I started out, I would come home from my full-time job and then work until midnight creating online classes, promoting them, building my website, writing blog articles, and scheduling podcasts. I did this just because I loved doing it. If I didn’t enjoy it, I would have burnt out before making any money.

The second question that you need to ask yourself is “What is your end goal?” You should choose something semi-specific. Some examples of possible end goals are: having enough income to leave your full time job; creating a full time job if you don’t have one; making enough money to pay for a vacation; or being able to take your sweetheart on an extra date each month. *You get the idea*. There may be other end goals, but understanding your end goal is important because it will determine how hard you will have to work. For instance, if your goal is to earn \$50,000 a year teaching online then you are going to have to put in a lot more work than someone who only wants to make \$50 to go out to dinner each month. I must point out that it is wise to set realistic and attainable goals. Start low so that when you surpass that threshold you can set a higher bar for yourself.

In fact, that's exactly what I did. I began with no expectations. I wasn't sure if it would work and I was thrilled to have earned \$60 in my first month. After making that \$60, I set my goal to earning \$100 the following month. I surpassed that figure that month. I kept raising the bar and my goal is now to maintain an average of \$10,000 for the next year.

The final question that you need to ask yourself is "Why teaching?" There are a plethora of things that you could do to earn additional income. There are a lot of jobs available in the field that you want to create an online course for. You could be qualified for several of them. So, why would you choose to *teach* rather than to *do*? Teaching is about helping others gain knowledge, usually to better their lives. Do you want to take on this challenge?

For most of the subsequent chapters I am going to give you action items to complete. You will truly benefit from this book by doing them. Only by taking action *now* will you reap the rewards *tomorrow*. Your action item for this chapter is to write down your goal. Post it in a place that you see every day, like your mirror. Look at it until it becomes a part of your psyche. When it becomes a part of your everyday mindset, it will become easy for you to work towards achieving that goal.

Before You Quit Your Day Job

Online teaching has the potential to provide you with the income of a full-time job. However, as stated in the previous chapter, it takes hard work, persistence, and a realistic mindset. With this in mind, there are some important factors to consider before you quit your day job.

Firstly, you have to ensure that you have a back-up plan. The online world is unpredictable. You never know when things are going to change. So, it's good to have an additional source of income that is not based on the Internet. I began my online teaching career in the evenings after I returned home from work at the end of my full-time job. Gradually, I was able to build an online presence and create an online income so that I could transition into freelancing instead of a full-time job. Video production and online teaching are my passions and I doubt that will ever change. So, I don't think I will ever want to solely teach online or solely produce videos. With what I am earning online now I could stop my full-time work, but I don't want to because I love what I do and I like the stability of having an additional income source. Someday down the road, I want to use the earnings from teaching online to *retire* from the 9-5 lifestyle, but today isn't that day. So, before you quit your day job it is important for you to have an additional source of income.

Secondly, if you want teaching online to be your main source of income, you need to completely understand your expenses. How much money will you need to cover your daily expenses? If you need more than your online income can provide, account for that in your evaluation. My expenses include: rent, student loans, food, and semi-frequent entertainment. Your expenses may be different. You may have a car payment, hospital bills, childcare services, and child related expenses. Everyone's situation is different. It is important for you to have a good idea of the money you will need, so that you can know when to transition into making online teaching a full time job.

Thirdly, always have multiple income sources. I have repeated this point because it's critical. Sometimes you may not be able to find a full-time job in the working world easily. So,

you could turn to other online sources of income such as e-book writing, one-on-one consulting, or a suitable part-time job in the working world. Having multiple income sources also applies to using various websites to host your courses. When I just started my online teaching career I only used Udemy. I still think it is the best platform for online teaching and I still make a lot of money from it. However, when I started branching out and hosting my courses on other websites simultaneously, I started to earn more. Although I still make most of my money from Udemy, using the additional websites does help tremendously.

Action Item

Create your budget. Calculate your income and expenditure. Determine how much money you will need to thrive instead of survive. You should be able to save from whatever you earn so that you have money for such things as retirement and emergencies. If you're having trouble simplifying your budget, check out Mr. Money Mustache's blog. He retired at 30, and is a huge role model.

Choosing the Right Content to Teach

There is an overabundance of things that people want to learn. However, not all of these things are guaranteed moneymakers. Similarly, not everything that you will want to teach will provide you with a decent income. I had mentioned earlier that passion should be your motivation for online teaching, not money. However, you're going to be pouring a lot of your time and energy into your courses. So, you want to make sure that what you're teaching is a subject that people will pay for. Obviously teaching a subject that is desirable to a greater number of people can potentially be more fruitful.

Therefore, I have some questions that will help you choose the right course to teach. The first question is, "What do you know?" Before I began online teaching I didn't know what I should teach because I had never taught before. The first thing I thought I could teach was video editing using the Final Cut Pro software. I had been using that software for over 8 years so I knew it well. I also went to university to study video production so I know the theory behind it. Additionally, I studied photography so I believed I could also teach classes related to photography. Over two years, I've created 30 courses mostly related to these subjects. Think about what you know and write it down then break it into several smaller topics. For example, break down a topic like Photoshop into smaller courses: Photoshop for Web Designers, Photoshop for Beginners, Advanced Photoshop, App Design in Photoshop, etc.

The second question that you need to ask yourself is, "Can I teach this?" There are probably many things that you know but would be unable to teach effectively. For instance, I know a lot about fantasy football generally, but I wouldn't be comfortable teaching a fantasy football course. You also have to consider if you are the right person to teach the course. I think I'm a great teacher for teaching video editing courses because I have experience and professional training. You have to be able to prove to your audience that you are the right teacher for them. Even if you haven't worked professionally in the area, if you know more than the next person then chances are that others will want to learn from you.

You can even teach something you don't know if you do some extra work! Some time ago, I realized that there was no online course about designing eBooks. eBooks are big business right now, so I thought that this was a missed audience. I decided to create an eBook cover design class. I think I'm a pretty good designer, but I had no experience actually designing eBook covers. So, I paid a UK teacher to teach me the basics. She actually sent me videos that ended up in the course. I learned a lot from her and from articles and blogs. I used my pre-existing knowledge, as well as the knowledge I had garnered, to put together a course. This example highlights the fact that there is a possibility that you could teach courses you have very little knowledge about. However, you have to teach yourself the content before you teach it to others.

The third question that you have to ask yourself is, "Will people want to learn it?" This is probably the most important question. It all boils down to whether or not you'll have a big enough audience for your course. Teaching video editing has been great for me because a lot of people are making videos and, therefore, want to learn how to edit these videos. A course that may be a bad idea, for example, is "How to Put Batteries into Your Walkie Talkie". Most people would know that already. It's a good idea to either ask your friends and family for ideas or go to social media. These media can probably help you to think about things that you wouldn't have previously considered. You could also search YouTube for ideas. If there are a lot of 'how-to' videos about a certain topic, there will probably be an audience willing to pay for high-quality courses about that topic.

The final question that you have to ask yourself is "Will people buy it?" People may want to learn your topic, but they may not necessarily be willing to spend money doing so. We'll talk more about pricing strategy in another chapter. For now, let's consider a course about repairing bicycles. There is a market for it because cycling is both a hobby and professional sport for many people. Bicycles are expensive and people would, therefore, prefer to learn how to fix their bicycles themselves rather than pay exorbitant fees at a repair shop. However, would these people be willing to pay \$49 for an online class when there are already a lot of free videos on YouTube? It's hard to tell. Just because there is free content online doesn't mean someone

wouldn't pay for it. It boils down to suitably adjusting your price. This could mean the difference between having one student and having hundreds of students.

Think outside the box. Think about courses that will save people time and money (*or make people money*). These are the most successful courses. People want to learn skills that they can use to improve their lives. So, what knowledge do you have that can help others do this?

Action Item

Write down all the skills you know and may want to teach. Write your hobbies, educational background, and your experience. Break these things down into individual topics. Narrow this list down to what you actually want to teach and would have fun teaching. From your top three choices, choose the topic that you feel most passionate about.

If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

The Steps for Creating Your First Course

Before you start recording lessons for your first course, there are three things that you need to do to get started: brainstorm, choose, and outline. Following these three steps will help you create the perfect course that you can teach.

Firstly, you need to brainstorm. Get out a piece of paper and start jotting down all your skills. Put down anything you know how to do – even things that might not seem like a good course. For me, I would put down obvious things like video creation, editing, motion graphics, photography, brand building, selling online course, and so on. I would also put down other skills I have like: baseball knowledge, living frugally, beer brewing, adopting a cat, starting a blog, riding a bicycle, traveling, living in Berkeley, and writing eBooks. Write down everything you know how to do. From there, we'll choose your first course (or your next course, if you've already done one).

Choosing a course to teach is one of the most important steps in the process of course creation. This choice can determine if you'll make a great course, if you'll make a lot of money, and if you'll have fun doing it. I suggest balancing your desire to teach a course with the prospect of selling a topic. *What do I mean by that?* Well, some courses just aren't going to sell. It doesn't mean you shouldn't eventually teach that course. It just means that if you're trying to make money from a course, there are some that just aren't going to sell. For example, teaching a class on *adopting a cat* will not make as much money as teaching a more desirable skill (and one that people would be willing to pay for) like *editing videos*.

Out of all of your skills, which ones are the most marketable? Which one could you actually get paid for? You can do a quick search on Udemy.com to see if there are other courses in that subject. If there are, that's a good thing! If there are other courses that are selling (*so check to see if there are students in those courses*) then that means there is a market for that skill!

Now you have a few skills that can potentially be sold as an online course. *What do you WANT to teach?* Some of your skills might not be fun to teach. If they're not fun, the resulting course won't be engaging. You won't put as much effort into making a high quality course. To start teaching online, pick the subject that is a balance of being marketable and fun to teach.

Once you have that topic, it's time to create a course outline. Break the topic down into 4 to 6 sections. These sections will be your major sub-topics that will each contain 3-5 lessons. Each section should have a mini-intro and a recap. Check out this sample outline for a course I put together on freelancing:

- Introduction to Course
 - Welcome to the Course
 - What does freelancing mean? And why should you do it?
- Freelance Basics: Choose Your Craft
 - INTRO
 - LESSON: What skills do you have?
 - LESSON: Following your passion - good or bad advice?
 - LESSON: How to Have Self-discipline
 - LESSON: Moonlighting - a Great Way to Start
 - LESSON: Define Your Goals
 - CHALLENGES
 - RECAP
 - QUIZ
- Communication: Create a Brand
 - INTRO
 - LESSON: Make Your Own Website
 - LESSON: Building a Portfolio and Getting Testimonials
 - LESSON: Joining Freelance Networks
 - LESSON: Business Cards - How one piece of paper can change your life.

- CHALLENGES
- RECAP
- QUIZ
- Finding Work
 - INTRO
 - LESSON: Where can you find work?
 - LESSON: Crafting the Perfect Project Proposal
 - LESSON: Pricing Strategies that Get You Jobs
 - LESSON: The Importance Having a Workflow
 - CHALLENGES
 - RECAP
 - QUIZ
- Taxes and Money Tips
 - INTRO
 - LESSON: A Bit about Taxes
 - LESSON: Money tips for success
 - CHALLENGES
 - RECAP
 - QUIZ
- Course Wrap Up
 - The Steps to Success
 - Thanks and What's Next?

Action Item

As you can see, the outline is not too in-depth, but it has a lot of structure. Keeping an organized structure to your outline is the first step towards a great course! Do your own brainstorming, choosing, and outlining!

If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Also, if you want a **free eBook** with 10 Action Items for getting more students, subscribe to my email list here: OnlineTeachingCareer.com

Create

“True happiness comes from the joy of deeds well done, the zest of creating things new.”

~Antoine de Saint-Exupery

In this section, I will be guiding you through creating your online course. The fact that you have made it this far into the book means that you're serious about making this work. Your mind is in it, you understand that there is a lot of work ahead, and you've written a basic outline of what you want to teach. I will now guide you through choosing the right web camera and recording equipment, setting up your computer screen, creating a visually appealing course, and structuring your topics effectively.

This section is divided into 16 chapters:

1. Equipment Check
2. Essential Video Skills
3. Essential Audio Skills
4. Essential Screen Recording Skills
5. Essential Design Skills
6. My First Course Experience
7. Basics of Quality Presentations
8. PowerPoint Basics
9. Formatting Text
10. Using Images
11. Using Web Examples in Your Lessons
12. The Pros and Cons of Scripting
13. Screen Recording Tips
14. The Essentials of Audio Recording
15. The Essentials of Video Lighting
16. The Dress Rehearsal
17. Editing Your Lessons
18. The Proper Way to Add Text
19. Keystrokes
20. Watermarking Your Videos
21. Including a Video Introduction
22. Exporting Your Video Lesson in HD Quality
23. The Course Promo Video
24. The Course Image

Equipment Check

The Create section of this book is going to challenge you to work harder and invest more of your time and energy. In this chapter, we will be discussing how to select the right equipment for online teaching. There are four key pieces of equipment that you must pay close attention to: your computer, your camera, your microphone, and the software applications.

Your Computer

Your computer, laptop or tablet is the center of your online teaching career. Without it, you won't be able to effectively create and implement a course. Your computer has to be fast enough to be able to run the latest versions of video editing software or screen recording software. It also has to have a high screen resolution (as much as 1920 x 1080 pixels). Since my courses focus primarily on video creation and design, I invested in a super fast 27-inch iMac. An image of that computer can be seen below.



Although I spent a lot of money on that computer, it has proven to be a worthwhile investment because it is ideal for doing my creative work, and creating online courses.

Your Camera

There are various types of cameras that you could use for your course. You could use an external webcam, a video camera, or a DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex) camera. For most of my courses I've used an external webcam. However, when I just started and I wanted to make high quality promotional videos, I used my DSLR camera. I'll tell you more about video skills in the next lesson. An image of the DSLR camera is shown below.



Your Microphone

Having good audio is crucial for an online course. People won't want to come back to your course if they can barely hear what you're saying. Initially, I didn't have an external microphone. However, as I've progressed I've started using more professional equipment to get a better sound. One relatively inexpensive option is the Blue Snowball. It costs about \$50 on Amazon. An image of this microphone is shown below.



The Blue Yeti is higher quality and is, therefore, a bit more expensive. An image of this microphone is shown below.



Software Applications

Many online courses can be created using basic and easily accessible software such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and QuickTime. However, there may be some applications that you'll need to purchase for more creative courses. Two great applications are ScreenFlow and Camtasia. They allow you to record your screen, your voice, and video simultaneously, automatically syncing everything for easy editing.

Photoshop is a great piece of software for designing course images, presentations, and promotions. Don't let its price get you down. GIMP is a free version that does practically everything that you can do in Photoshop. Don't let your budget be a barrier to your online teaching career. Use what you have until you are able to invest in something better. The first couple hundreds of dollars that you earn can be reinvested into purchasing equipment. Setting this goal will motivate you to work harder to ensure that your course succeeds.

Action Item

Do your research and make a wish list of your ideal online teaching equipment. Remember that what you need depends on your niche. Keep your list available so that you can check off items when you've purchased them. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

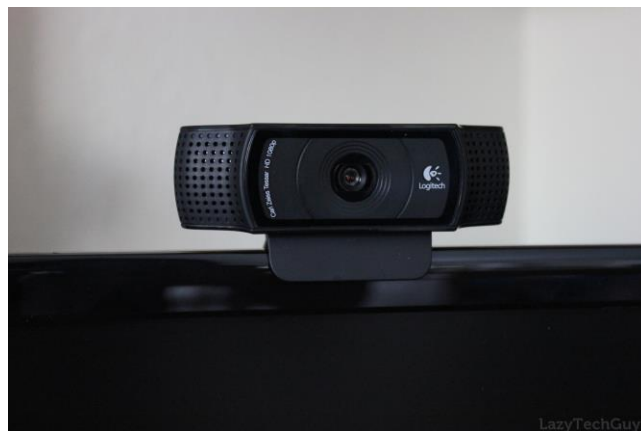
Essential Video Skills

In order to create an online course with a high standard, you have to have quality video. Appearance is key. You won't impress people looking like a riff-raff. You also have to act and be confident in what you're talking about. If you're using video, having a great background is crucial. Color choices, font styles, the quality of the image, and your appearance have a lot to do with how your course is perceived.

Most people say that a nice, clean, white background is the best route to take for online courses. I believe that the background depends on the type of course you're trying to create. I don't mind being in my living room, for instance. In fact, people have given me positive reviews about using my bedroom as a background. It makes me seem more real. *Just make sure to make the bed!* If you have a white background, every video for every course is going to look the same. The monotony can turn people away.

Nevertheless, the most important aspect of video shooting is video quality. High Definition (HD) is necessary. Most new computers have webcams that can shoot at a quality of 1920 x 1080. This is HD quality. You can still shoot your video at 1280 x 720, but this is a lower level of HD. So, it is safer for you to record in the highest possible quality so that if you can use the video across all platforms and devices, including mobile phones and tablets.

You don't need to get a very expensive camera. I have the Logitech C920, which was \$100 when I purchased it, but is now \$60 on Amazon. It is a great camera that has decent audio. I was recording a lot of my lessons without using external microphones after getting this camera. An image of this camera is shown below.



A cheaper option that still does HD quality video is the C310. It sells for \$25 on Amazon. That's quite a steal! So, if you're using an older laptop that doesn't have an HD camera, purchasing one of these cameras will greatly assist you in the initial stages. An image of this camera is shown below.



Another option for higher quality video is something like the Canon T3i DSLR camera. You can purchase a refurbished model for under \$500. This camera does, however, require some extra effort. The point is though that you'll get good quality. An image of this camera is shown below.



My advice is if you're not going to be shooting on location, all you need is a webcam. Shooting on location means creating videos of you actually doing something – playing piano, throwing a baseball, etc.

Let's discuss speaking on camera. I am not a perfect presenter on camera. There are times when I mess up and use filler words. I don't mind the occasional filler words when I'm listening to podcasts or watching videos. In fact, I prefer to hear them rather than someone who sounds like a robot with no personality. So, do you want to sound like a robot or someone people can relate to? Show your personality *even if it means messing up a few times*. A good way to practice is to set up free You Tube tutorials. You can view people's responses to determine how well you're doing. Don't let mean comments discourage you. There are a lot of *trolls* on the Internet.

I had an advantage over the other online teachers because I've been speaking on camera since I was 13 years old. At this young age I started a local cable television show. It was called "Baseball Talk". My friend and I would go to the local cable station once a week and record half-hour episodes. The show focused on discussing current baseball news. It was an awesome experience and we became mini-celebrities in our hometown. When I just started, I was scared to speak on camera. I would have giggle fits and nervous pauses. I've come a far way since then and my friend became a news reporter in San Francisco. I've mentioned this story to highlight the fact that it takes a while to get used to the camera.

Lighting is another critical component for creating high quality video. It doesn't have to be expensive. In fact, it could be as simple as using a window or desk lamp. More light equates to a better image. Ensure your face is well lit. You can either use one key light that's behind the camera or to the side of the camera to get the right lighting for your face. Put diffusion on the light to decrease the brightness on your face. This can be done by putting a cloth in front of the light. However, you have to be vigilant to ensure that the cloth doesn't burst into flames. It is best to go into your local camera store to get first-hand advice and training on professional lighting. I use paper lantern lights because the light emitted is very soft and pleasing in video. You can pick a set up from Ikea for under \$20.

Another point that I must highlight is the importance of you being visible on screen while teaching your course. You don't have to be on the screen all the time, but it's important for your audience to make a connection between you and your course. Companies such as Fizzle understand the importance of this concept. They ensure that their introductory videos are superb and engaging. Check out their website to see an awesome intro video. On the other hand, I don't recommend always using your webcam especially if you're teaching something like programming or another type of computer application. It can be awkward to watch a lesson where the teacher isn't interacting with the camera at all, and is just looking at the computer screen. So, make sure you're on camera only for moments when you are interacting with the audience.

Action Item

Purchasing the equipment mentioned in this chapter doesn't guarantee greater sales or a wider audience. However, taking time to learn how to use whatever equipment you own properly can offer great benefits in the long term. Therefore, your action item for this chapter is to practice using whatever type of camera you currently have. If you don't have a camera at all, purchase a decent webcam that fits your budget. Learn the ins and outs of it and make sure you can record in HD quality.

Essential Audio Skills

Audio quality is just as important as video quality. Actually, it may be even *more important* when it comes to online courses. This is obviously true if your course is going to be primarily audio based. Even for video courses, the audio is how your students will learn most of the content. They will hear you talking about it before they understand whatever is on the screen. Therefore, your audio should be crisp, clear, and loud enough with extremely minimal distortion.

When I had just started online teaching, a few of my tutorials weren't loud enough and had poor quality. This, of course, led to complaints from my students. I had used my built-in computer microphone. So, I knew that I had to do something to improve my audio. I started out by using a Zoom H4N. It's used by professional musicians and documentary filmmakers worldwide. It was a great option for the quality, but the ease-of-use wasn't there. That's why the best option a USB microphone. An image of this microphone is shown below.



The Blue Yeti Microphone is one of the most common USB microphones. It can be purchased on Amazon for around \$100. It plugs straight into the computer for easy recording. What makes

it even more perfect is the fact that it records straight into whatever screen sharing software you're using. Before purchasing a microphone, check out YouTube to hear demonstrations and reviews.

Action Item

Purchase your microphone. Practice using it. Ensure that the quality is good. When you're shooting your video, you wouldn't want the microphone to be visible. So, practice placing it directly under your camera and make sure it sounds great.

Essential Screen Recording Skills

Screen recording is one of the most popular forms of online teaching. When I just began my online teaching career all I had was my Canon 7D camera and a separate microphone, but no good software for screen capturing. I used to record my screen using another device and put everything together in Final Cut Pro. However, several types of screen recording software are readily available and can make the screen recording process much simpler.

If you have a Mac I suggest you use ScreenFlow. This software is sold by Telestream and costs approximately \$97. If you have a PC I suggest you use Camtasia. This software is sold by TechSmith. Feel free to use the free trial versions of these software before purchasing the complete version. They last for 30 days. Maybe you can even record an entire class during your free trial.

QuickTime is a free program that has screen recording abilities. It even allows you to use audio in your recordings. However, it doesn't allow you to record both your screen and webcam simultaneously. Being free doesn't necessarily mean that you'll be able to produce the best quality though. Personally, I prefer ScreenFlow and Camtasia because they offer complete editing software along with the screen recording software.

One screen recording tip that I must share with you is always be aware of what is on your screen. Ensure that your screen looks professional. An example of bad screen recording can be seen in some YouTube videos where the presenters actually show their desktop screens with their cluttered backgrounds and files clearly displayed. I think that it's best for you to prepare a PowerPoint or Photoshop presentation that would become the background for your course.

Action Item

Download a free trial version of one of the aforementioned screen recording software. Test it out. Try recording using both your microphone and camera to record a test video.

Essential Design Skills

Having good design skills is essential for becoming a good course creator. Every platform that you use to promote your course (Facebook, Udemy, your website and so on) must have high quality images. Being an online instructor isn't about creating a PowerPoint with a bunch of words on it and calling that a course. It requires you to pay keen attention to detail. Students will choose courses that look better. The only instance in which design doesn't really matter is if your students are already aware of your reputation and are joining your class on that basis. There are some instructors out there like that who already have large audiences. So in their case, it is their personality that sells the course. However, a new student coming to your course, your course has to look like a high quality course in order to keep them. This takes good design. The key elements to focus on when designing your course are: font styles, color schemes, line spacing, and the quality of the images you're going to use. The tips that I'm going to share with you are things I've learnt by observing other people's websites and blogs. Some of my design experience also comes from my video production work.

The first site that I want to direct you to is Ben Fhala's Udemy page. Below is a screen shot of a portion of his page.

The screenshot shows a portion of a Udemy course grid. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Learning' (highlighted in green) and 'Wishlist'. Below the tabs, there are four course cards displayed in a row. Each card includes a course title, a price, the number of reviews, the number of students, a star rating, and the instructor's name and title.

| Course Title | Price | Reviews | Students | Rating | Instructor |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|--------|---|
| Introduction to Web Development | Free | 54 | 12.6K | ★★★★★ | Mark Lassooff, Founder, LearnToProgram, Inc. |
| Introduction to Web Development: HTML | Free | 42 | 7.4K | ★★★★★ | Brian Gorman, Software Engineer and Computer Scien. |
| Wordpress 101 Course | Free | 167 | 50.8K | ★★★★★ | KK Tse, Freelance Translator, Marketer |
| Introduction to Graphic Design | Free | 228 | 19.2K | ★★★★★ | Sean Berg, Designer, Entrepreneur and Design lov. |

When you look at all of his courses you will notice that the designs are similar. Consistency is key in design. Although my page is slightly different, I still try to maintain a level of consistency. Ben's design is not only consistent, it's also professional. On his Facebook page he also uses the same consistent theme.

Another site that I want you to look at is design-seeds.com. I use this website often because it has some great color schemes. It is a great site to use as a novice to help you choose the right color scheme for your website. The creator of this blog takes photographs and uses colors from the photographs to create color schemes. Having consistent colors that go together can truly transform your courses and branding into something memorable.

Dribbble.com is an inspirational site for graphic designers that can also give you some inspiration. Graphic designers post their images and designs here. So, there is a plethora of ideas to choose from. I fervently believe that gaining inspiration from this and the other sites I've mentioned will be a great way for you to improve your course and attract more students.

You can also get inspiration from the most unlikely of places. The menu at your favorite restaurant, your church's weekly program, movie posters, and the fliers that people hand to you on the streets can all be great sources of inspiration, *even if they are terribly designed. At least you'll know what **not** to do.* Look carefully at the fonts and colors chosen. Do they blend well together? Do they stand out in the right ways? My suggestion for the most professional font is something that falls in the Sans Serif family. Sans Serif fonts include Helvetica, Arial, and Calibri. They aren't *fancy*. However, they work for me and make my course material look good.

Photoshop will need to become your new best friend. So spend some time learning it. It can seem very intimidating to use initially, but after you play around with it for a while you'll realize how quickly you become a pro. You can try it for free for 30 days or purchase the cheaper version called Photoshop Elements. I also offer free Photoshop lessons on VideoSchoolOnline.com that will guide you through the basic tools of Photoshop.

Action Item

Get either the free trial of Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. Use the tutorials on my website to guide you through using it. Start making logos, presentations, and course images. You'll probably go through a few drafts, so get started today!

My First Course Experience

Many of us learn best from the experiences of others. Therefore, I want to share with you the experience I had creating my first course. The first course idea I conceptualized was entitled *Video Editing 101*. I later changed the name to *Final Cut Pro 7 from Scratch: Become a Great Video Editor*. The new title is catchier and draws in the potential customer by really explaining what the course is all about. I planned the entire course using Final Cut Pro 7. My aim was to create a real course experience. So, I included fun facts, trivia questions, and quotes of the week. I spent a lot of time preparing my lessons. Essentially, the lessons would be structured like this:

1. I would state the lesson objectives for that lesson.
2. I would tell the students a fun fact.
3. I would get into the course content.

Many people liked this approach. However, some students complained that I rambled a lot instead of getting straight into the content. I choose not to listen to the naysayers and my approach has worked well for me. To this day, I sometimes ramble a little too much about a particular topic, but it 's my style and I know some students like it.

In my first course I was shooting video and recording audio separately. I was using Quicktime as my screen recording software. At the end of the process I would have to spend hours putting everything together. It took me almost a month to create my first course. As I garnered more experience, I obtained more efficient software and cut the editing time in half.

Promoting the course was the next step. Initially, I was offering the course at a cost of \$19 per student. I had no idea of what the right price point would be. So, I gave some of my co-workers free coupons for the course and asked them to review it for me. This is something that I strongly suggest you do because you will get good feedback. Don't con people into writing what you want them to say. Encourage them to write honest reviews so that you can learn from their constructive criticism.

From there I started getting a few sales each week. It was very slow at first. As I mentioned in the introduction, I made \$60 in the first month. Even though this may seem small to you, I was ecstatic about making money online. Honestly, \$60 *is* a lot of money. I continued to ask my first students to leave reviews after going through the course. As I got more and more reviews, more students started signing up. To this day, it has been one of my most successful courses.

The main point of this story is to show that you can make money from online courses without fancy equipment. Keep it simple. Work with what you have until you can purchase what you need. Even though I keep saying audio, design, video, and so on are super important, if you're a good teacher your courses will sell. You will get better at the rest.

Action Item

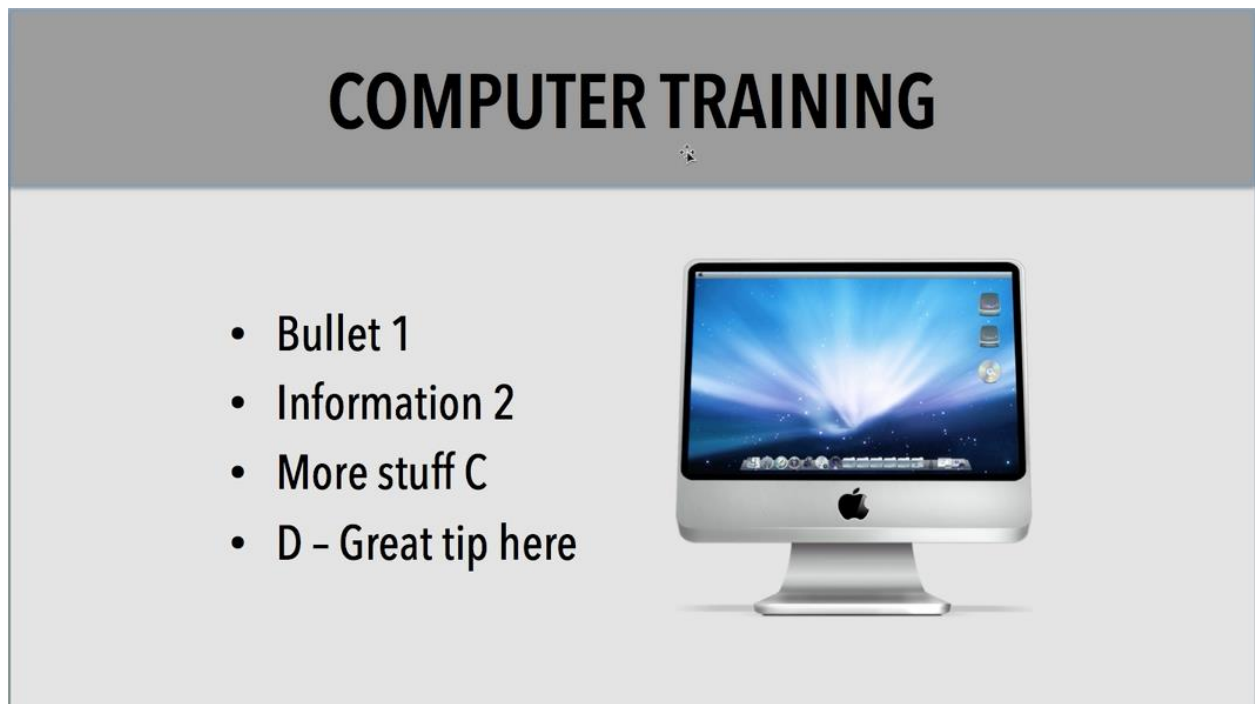
The action item for this chapter is very simple - take a break. Go out with your friends or family. Read a book. It is important to have a balanced life. Clear your mind so that you can be ready to tackle the rest of this section.

The Basics of Quality Presentations

There are four simple things that form the foundation for building quality online teaching presentations: simplicity, uniqueness, and a solid color scheme. We will look at each of these points in more detail.

Simplicity

Your presentations should have a simple title, a few bullet points with no more than 5 words per point, and an image or short video. Each lesson should be consistent with a similar design. Use your voice, video and imagery more than you use text. If you use more text than imagery and audio, your presentation will more than likely become boring and limit your audience. If students want to learn from reading PowerPoint slides they can do that somewhere else. That's not going to sell courses. An example of an ideal presentation is shown in the image below.



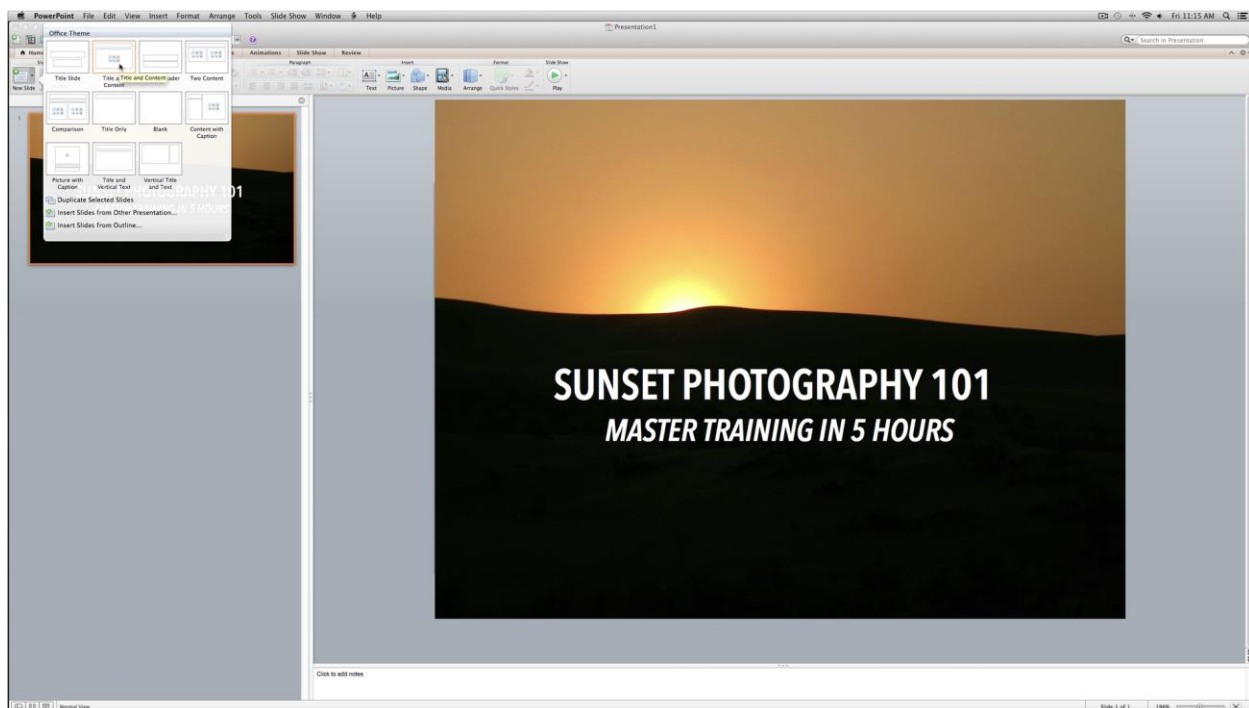
Uniqueness

People don't want to see the same images and ideas repeated across different courses. Use high quality images from websites such as Shutterstock or iStock photo. Ensure that these images relate to your message and truly help you to stand out. An important point to note is that you need to ensure that you have the right to use the images you select. Regardless, give the photo source credit in your material.

Another strategy that you can use to make your presentations unique is more interesting fonts. I have used Sans Serif fonts like League Gothic and Open Sans. You can find other fonts at dafont.com or Google fonts. However, ensure that the font you use is clear so that your students don't have difficulty reading your presentations.

Choosing the Right Colors

In the previous chapter I spoke about choosing the right color scheme for your site. Pick a background color that contrasts with the text color. I suggest using solid colors for backgrounds. Stay away from patterned background. Also, stay away from using a white background with black text – *boring!* Go to Google and type in “bad PowerPoints”. You will see a link that directs you to Seth Godin's presentation. I advise you to read the document because it will give you a clear idea of what bad PowerPoints look like. A sample of a good PowerPoint slide is show below.



Another good resource can be found at designshack.net. The site's founder, Joshua Johnson, goes through the steps for designing a presentation for non-designers. One of the tips he mentions is to not use a built-in theme. Since they are so common, it's quite likely that you'll see a similar presentation in another course. You want to be unique right? I once created a course using a built-in template. Now I see that template used by other teachers, and I wish I spent a little more time to be more unique!

Action Item

Create your first PowerPoint presentation. Find the right images and fonts. Minimize your use of text and choose appropriate colors. You can even take your own photos and edit them. I have an Adobe Lightroom 5 Crash Course that takes you easily through the program so that you can edit amazing images.

PowerPoint Basics

You will be using PowerPoint presentations a lot in your online course. So, in this chapter I will be placing the spotlight on PowerPoint and guiding you through the basics. Follow the tips that I outline here and you'll be able to create awesome presentations.

Stay away from the premade PowerPoint templates. Start instead with a blank template. Change the slide size to 16 x 9 because this is the size of the video player in YouTube, Udemy, and Skillfeed. Even if you're using a Mac and therefore use KeyNote instead of PowerPoint, always ensure that the slide size is 16 x 9.

The first slide is one of your most important slides. It sets the tone for your course. This title slide should have the title of your course, the author, and the subtitle. Ensure that you use a clear font. Select a color for your background that matches your style.

Adding an image is the next step. I had mentioned some sites in the previous chapter where you can find some good images. Another good site is commons.wikimedia.org. It's a great website for stock photography that you can use for free. When you have found your image, place it in the most appropriate location on the slide. Ensure that the background color you've used matches well with the image you've chosen.

Let's say that yoga was a popular topic for online teaching. Where could you find quality images that you could use in your slides? Shutterstock, as I had mentioned earlier, has a plethora of images, illustrations, vectors and videos that you can use. The picture below shows a PowerPoint slide that incorporates Shutterstock images. Notice that I used a Serif font for the bullet-points to show the difference between Sans Serif (the title) and Serif. I believe sans serif fonts are better for videos, and are easier to read.

CORE YOGA

- What is core yoga all about?
- Let's talk about positions
- adsfasdfasdf



If you're having trouble finding images, Getty and iStock photo are two more options for quality photos. If you have the budget, it's better to pay for quality rather than illegally downloading a mediocre picture. Icons are another great way to clarify a topic. iconfinder.com and iconarchive.com are two useful sites with free icons.

Image placement is also critical. I like to leave spaces between images. Also, I recommend that you don't put too many images on one page. Usually, I only put one image per page. If you choose to use more than one picture, ensure that they are aligned correctly. The slide above is a good demonstration of how to balance multiple images on the screen.

Action Item

Take the presentations you've created and jazz them up a bit with a few high quality images. This may require you to search for a while, but don't give up. It may also mean that you'll have to take a few of your own pictures or pay for quality images. Do what you need to do to improve the quality of your presentations.

Using Web Examples in Your Lessons

I think it's a great idea to share examples of content already on the Internet in your course. If someone has a website or blog that teaches some of your content then I think you'll benefit by sharing that information with your students. These people could also be able to impart content in a simpler and clearer way than you'd be able to. So, it would be wiser for you to use what is available to supplement the content you've prepared. I'm sure they wouldn't mind if you send them some web traffic. But make sure you don't just steal information from another website and claim it as your own. Give credit where it is due.

One example of using web examples that I've done is in my eBook Cover Design course. I wanted to show examples of good and bad eBook covers. So, I went to Amazon in one of my lessons to clearly show what I was talking about. Make sure that when you're showing websites that the font is clearly visible. Make the browser full screen by going to the view options and entering full screen mode. This is better than a video lesson with your Internet browser up with a bunch of random tabs.

Action Item

Look at the view options for your web browser so that you can know how to go into full screen mode. Plan to include some web examples in your course if it's relevant to do so.

The Pros and Cons of Scripting

One of the common questions that plagues online instructors is “Should I use a script or not?” There are some benefits and some pitfalls related to using a script. Some of the benefits include:

1. Being able to clearly define what you want to discuss in each lesson.
2. Reducing instances of rambling and discussing irrelevant concepts.
3. Reducing errors.

Some of the pitfalls include:

1. Sounding unnatural.
2. Looking like you’re reading from a script.

Some people have told me that I should script my lessons because I ramble too much. However, I don’t think scripting is my style. I prefer to be more natural. I enjoy learning from people who aren’t scripted. When people are teaching in a face-to-face classroom they aren’t reading from a script. They have their lessons planned and they basically follow their instinct based on class discussions. So that is the style that I picked. If I make any big mistakes, I’ll just continue recording and edit out the mistake afterwards.

While you don’t have to write a script, my suggestion is to outline your lesson using simple bullet points. Use these bullet points to guide you through what you want to discuss instead of writing a detailed script. This will help you to stay on track and cover the salient points. It’s a great reference to have when recording.

There are some instances when scripting is a great idea. For example, I often have used a script for my promotional videos. These videos need to have a very clear message – usually one that I’ve spent a good amount of time on. Using this approach will help you get more sales because no one is going to purchase a course that has a rambling intro with no clear direction.

Action Item

Practice recording a lesson with and without a script. Try not to look like you're reading from a screen when you're reading the script. See which option works best for you. If you choose to go without a script, bear in mind that you may have to do a bit of editing before you upload the final product.

Screen Recording Tips

In this chapter I'll be sharing with you some things I learned about screen recording that helped improve my lessons. Hopefully these tips will help you create great lessons that capture your audience.

Tip #1: Don't Get Lazy

Doing screen recordings is actually really easy. You can just pop open the program and hit record. Don't get lazy. Make every lesson a high quality lesson. Take the time to prepare nice presentations. Create an outline for your course. Do a practice run at least for the first lesson of the day. It'll take more hard work, but it'll be worth it in the end.

Tip #2: Take Breaks

It's important for you to take breaks in between shooting and recording lessons. I've made the mistake of attempting to record 20 lessons in one day and it took a toll on me. My voice sounded increasingly tired in each successive video. The students began to notice and the number of views dropped. Don't let the same thing happen to you. Take breaks. You could use the breaks to edit the video you've just done.

Tip #3: Stand While Recording Your Lessons

Your posture affects the sound of your voice. You want to sound energized. If you're sitting or slouching you can sound tired and uninteresting without realizing it. However, if you stand you're able to use your voice more effectively. You'll sound more excited and be able to connect with your students better.

Tip #4: Be Flexible

Screen recording affords you the option of recording your lessons anywhere. I have even recorded lessons in my car on a lunch break. *The sound was actually quite good!* Regardless of where you record the lesson, always ensure that it's interesting and engaging.

Don't slap together some unoriginal content. You need to be energized and put time into creating a high quality presentation.

Action Item

Search YouTube for some screen recording videos or tutorials. Watch both the good and the bad presentations so that you can learn from both.

The Essentials of Audio Recording

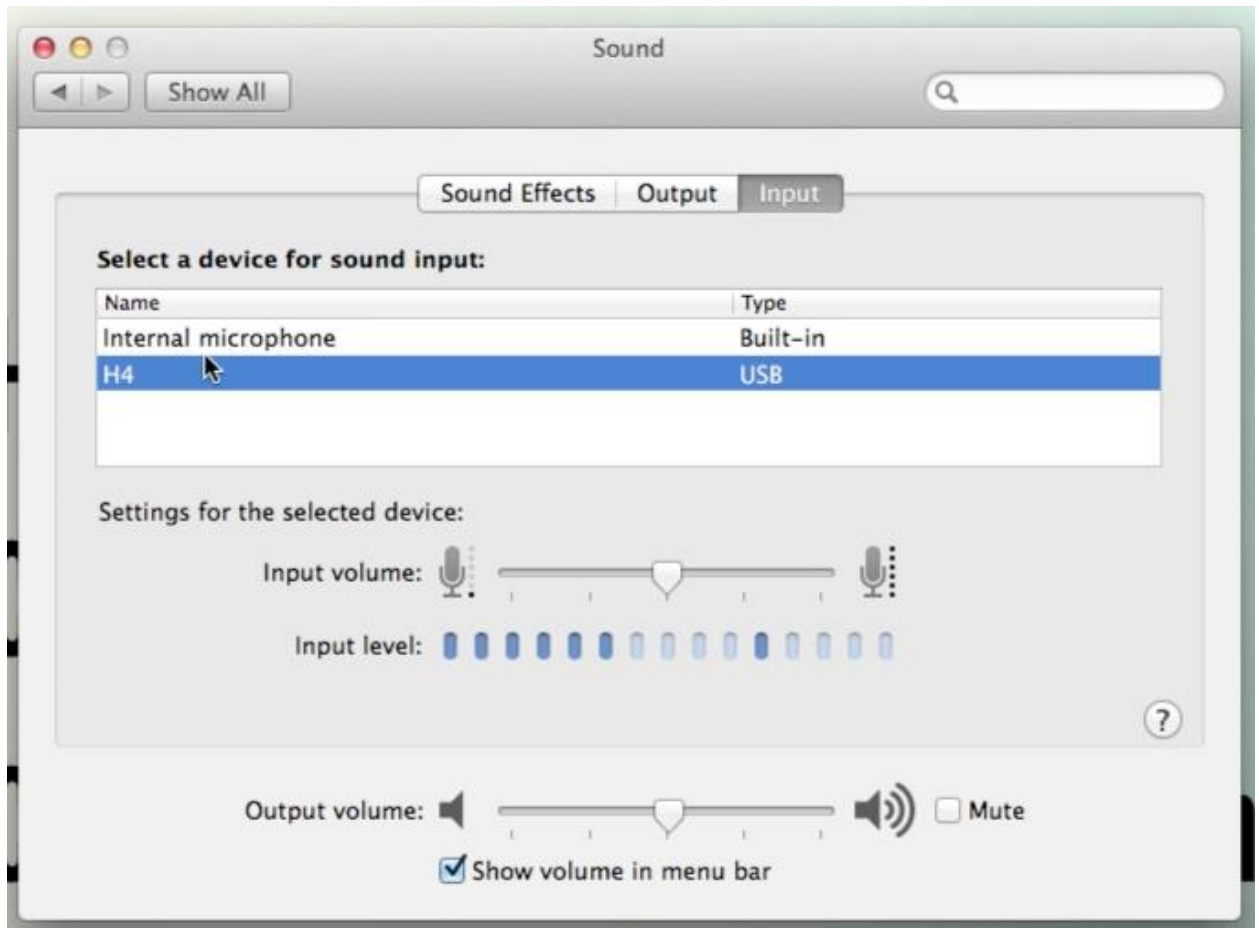
When you purchase your microphone, it's important for you to know how to use it effectively. This chapter will guide you through the correct strategies to use to care for your microphone.

I have two options for high quality microphones – my Zoom H4N and my Blue Snowball. I use my Zoom H4N with a lavalier microphone. I can pin the wireless lavalier to my shirt and get incredible audio. If you're using a lavalier (also known as a lapel mic), place it about eight inches from your mouth. Don't place it too low, or you'll get too much of a bass noise from your chest. Make sure the microphone is facing up towards your mouth to get the best audio. Also, if you change the direction of your head it may affect the audio. So, try to look in one direction while recording. I love the ease of the lavalier and the sound it gives me.

If you have a USB microphone, invest in a pop guard. When you say words with letters such as "p", for instance, there is sometimes a puff of air going directly into the microphone that distorts the sound. The pop guard helps filter out these annoying sounds.

Try to stay the same distance away from the microphone for each lesson. You don't want to sound louder in one lesson and softer in another. This may become very annoying to the viewer.

Additionally, you never want to hit the peak point of your audiometer. The three-quarter mark is the best sign. If you're looking at a decibel meter, record between -12 and -6 db for great audio. On my Zoom H4N, the recording level is on the device itself and not on the computer. So, ensure you check your device if you can't find the meter on your computer.



The final tip that I need to give you is to create your own audio environment. It's really hard to get rid of environmental noises like cars outside or loud neighbors. However, you can minimize it by closing all the windows and doors, turning off the air conditioning, and turning off any electronics that may be creating a buzzing or whirring sound. Try to make the environment as quiet as possible. Even hard floors and walls create a weird echo. You can address this by recording in a room with carpet or even putting a blanket on the floor and pillows or a blanket on the wall. Placing additional furniture in the room will also absorb some of the sound that you don't want recorded on the microphone. You can edit background noise out of your audio using the free application, Audacity. YouTube has lots of great tutorials for getting rid of background noise.

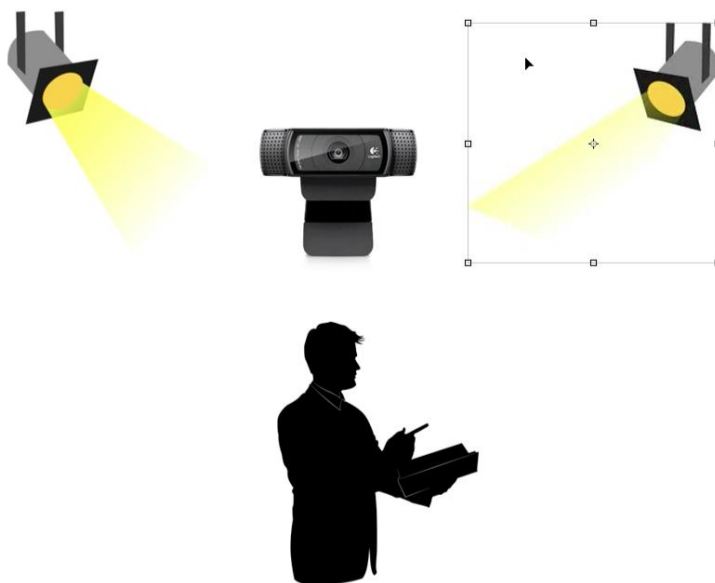
Action Item

Build your own audio studio by placing pillows and blankets around the room. Practice recording audio and listen to it afterwards. Try to find sounds that may be annoying to a listener and get rid of them if you can.

The Essentials of Video Lighting

Lighting is very important for video production, especially if you will be on screen for most of the course. In this chapter I am going to be describing how you can set up the right lighting to achieve a good look.

When I shoot my videos, I have quite a few light sources. Typically, more light is better. Usually I don't use my professional lighting that I use for video productions for my online courses. I have my overhead light, the natural light that comes through my window, and my desk lamp. I also always ensure that my computer is setup directly in front of me. A good rule of thumb for a clean lighting setup is to place one light on each side of you when you're presenting. These lights should be the same size and have the same power. Sometimes, if you have a light bulb with a greater number of watts on one side, that side of your face will be brighter than the other side. This can be a cool effect for a more cinematic look. If you only have one light, put it directly in front of you behind the camera and shine it directly on you. If it is too bright, try to put a white sheet in front of it, or invest in a paper lantern light.



If you want to get really creative, you can do a fancy interview lighting setup. This consists of one key light, your biggest light, on one side of your camera. You would also have a smaller light further (or less powerful) away on the other side, which would be followed by a backlight. However, you have to ensure that these lights are not visible in the shot. You then have a third light behind you. This is sometimes called the rim light and helps you stand out from the background. The rim light is focused on the back of your head and shoulders. A diagram depicting this set up is shown below.



This setup can, however, be cumbersome to put together and take apart. Nevertheless, this is what I did for a few of my courses. If you want to find out more about three point lighting, click on the following link <http://www.videoschoolonline.com/three-point-lighting>. I have an excellent tutorial on setting up three-point lighting using various tools and methods.

The next shooting aspect that you need to focus on is composing your shot and finding a good background. There are times when I like to have a clean white background, but there are also other times when I like to spice up the environment a bit with a plant or a stack of books. I think that doing this gives the presentation a bit more personality. People have commended me for doing this. So, having a bland background may not always be the best thing for you. However, it is a good place to start. Use one solid color. Don't drape a curtain or blanket behind you because that looks tacky and unprofessional. Stand in front of a blank wall or closet door.

For most of my online videos, I sit directly in front of my camera. However, if I want it to look more cinematic, I use the rule of thirds and place myself on one side of the camera leaving open space on the other side.

Always make sure to check what your recording settings are set to. Shoot as high of quality as you can!

Action Item

Set up your spot with good lighting and a good background. Do some test shots and share them with your friends to get feedback.

The Dress Rehearsal

As a novice online teacher, I suggest you practice a few times before you shoot your actual video lessons. After creating over 20 courses and hundreds of hours of video tutorials, I have become very good at presenting in front of the camera. I'm not perfect, but I've improved greatly since my first video. I'm able to speak effortlessly without a script. But when I started, I had to practice a lot. I have had audio and lighting mishaps, but it was all part of the learning experience. Practice makes perfect. So, it's important for you to do several trials before putting out your final product.

Action Item

Take a walk. It's important for you to take a little break here so that you're ready for the next section. Get some physical activity in to keep your body going.

Editing Your Lessons

Post-production is one of the most crucial phases of the course creation process. In this section we'll be discussing what to remove, how to present the video, placement, editing tricks for transitions, and fixing your video. It is important for you to carry out each of the steps highlighted over the next few chapters in order to create an optimal video.

The main point is to actually edit your videos. It's easy to hit record, stop, and post the video. However, usually it will be higher quality and more engaging with some editing. Take out the mistakes. Add graphics. Add images and examples of what you're talking about. Spice it up!

There are a few things that you'll want to put into each lesson that I'll cover in the next few chapters like a bumper, watermark, text on the screen, and perhaps keystrokes. Spending some extra time doing these things will make you seem more professional (*which you are*) and will lead to more sales.

Action Item

Read the next few chapters and implement the techniques outlined in each! If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now.

The Proper Way to Add Text

It's very important for you to add text in certain parts of your video to engage your audience and promote your brand. This chapter will focus on two key principles:

1. Where and when you should add text to your videos
2. Formatting text to improve readability

Throughout your video, it may be a good idea to highlight key points by adding them using text on the screen. A simple fade on and fade off effect can be elegant and professional. Use only white or black text that contrasts with the video background and is easily legible. If it is still not legible on screen, use white text with a drop shadow, or white text with a black bar as a background. As you would in a PowerPoint presentation, limit these key points to only a few words.



Action Item

Add the URL for your website to your video lesson. You can also choose to add the name of the lesson to your video bumper. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic,

enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Keystrokes

This chapter will focus on keystrokes, which show what you're typing on your keyboard. Depending on the type of course you're teaching, keystrokes can be beneficial to students. Keystrokes are a key feature of screen recording software such as Screenflow and Camtasia. In these programs you can choose to either show or hide your keystrokes. I show my keystrokes in my video editing techniques courses because they entail a variety of things, such as keyboard shortcuts.

Keystrokes are simple to edit. If using Screenflow, you can change the text size so that it is easily seen, but not obtrusive. Show keystrokes if you're teaching a course that involves tutorials on the computer that include lots of different keyboard shortcuts.

Action Item

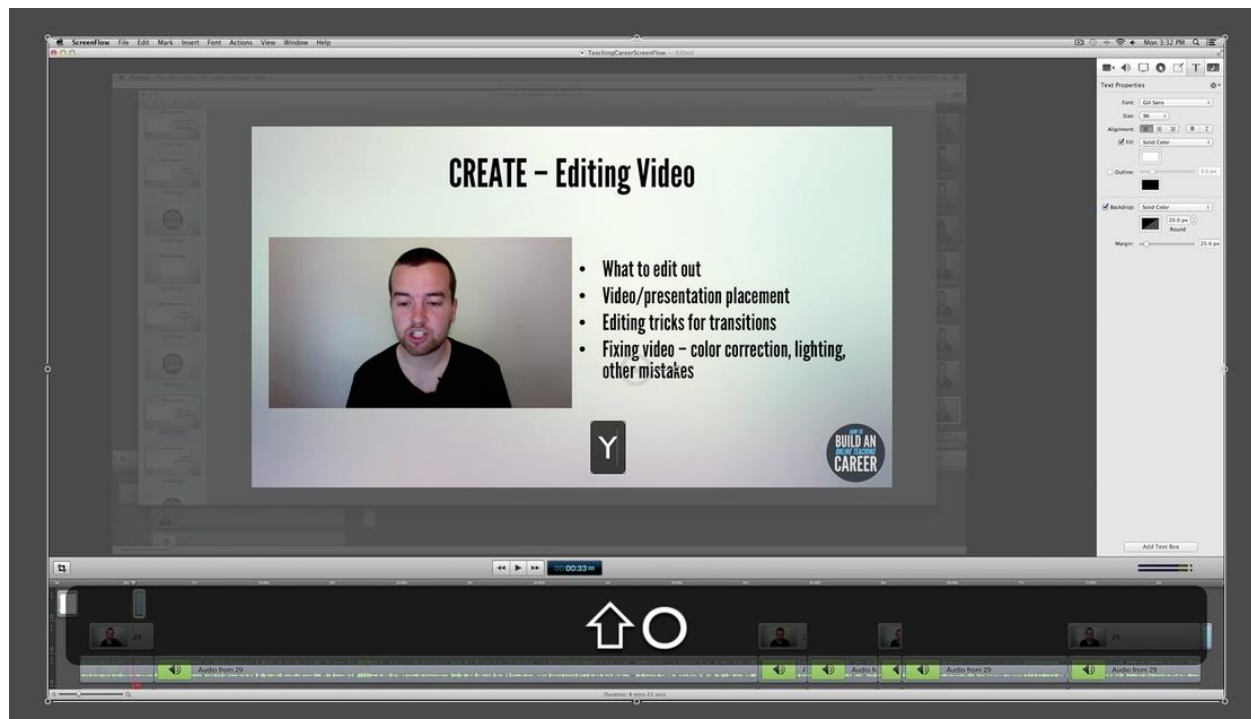
If your course requires keystrokes, add them to your lesson. If you're uncertain about whether or not you should include keystrokes, feel free to contact me at videoschoolonline.com.

Watermarking Your Videos

One of the most common questions asked by people creating online courses is “Should I use a watermark?” Watermarks can take two forms. They can be used as either an anti-piracy tool or a branding tool.

There are some watermarks that are displayed as faded images or text across the entire video. These watermarks are more common in stock images and videos that the creators don’t want to be stolen or reproduced. However, for video lessons I strongly recommend that you don’t use a full watermark that goes across the screen image. This looks tacky, and can be annoying to watch. Piracy may happen whether you have a watermark or not.

I use watermarking as a branding tool. The logo or website URL in the bottom right hand corner of my videos is a watermark, but also a part of branding. I think text has a stronger impact because people can read what is being said. Logos run the risk of being missed because people may not be able to understand or easily identify them. Nevertheless, if you choose to use text or a logo or both, the key is to ensure that what you use is not distracting.



Action Item

Add a watermark to your video. It's an important tool that can be used to build your brand. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Including a Video Introduction

One of my favorite topics in course creation is “Creating a Video Introduction”. Video introductions play a major role in improving our brand. They make you more memorable to the students and help improve the video’s overall quality. A video introduction is a 3 to 7 second clip that displays your brand and is often called a video bumper. My bumper clearly defines my brand - [VideoSchoolOnline](https://www.videoschoolonline.com). As soon as my students hear the bumper music, they know that they’re experiencing one of my courses. Although some students complain about it, the video bumper really does more to help your brand than hinder it.

I have a video bumper at the beginning of my videos. This video bumper has the logo and URL, [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com). I suggest putting your bumper at the beginning of your videos. The problem with putting this video bumper at the end of the lesson is that a lot of people aren’t going to watch the entire lesson. They won’t see this information that will direct them to your website. A good idea that can address this issue is to put an overlay of text either at the beginning or throughout the lesson. This should be done cautiously, however, because you don’t want too much text in your video. Place your website’s URL at the bottom corner of the video. Drop the opacity to 50%. People will eventually see it while watching your lessons, and might visit your website for more.

You want to convey this style in your video introduction. Are you trying to be hip and modern? Or do you want to be elegant and classic? It’s up to you! Check out my How to Create Your Own Video Intro Course Image course at [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com) to see how to create your video introduction.

Before you take the first step towards creating your video, however, I advise you to research video introductions on YouTube. If you look at the popular brands or YouTube channels you’ll find most highly produced channels have a bumper.

Action Item

Conduct some research on video introductions. When you find one that you like, use it as inspiration to create your own video introduction. My course [How to Create Your Own Video Intro Course Image](#) can help you create an engaging video bumper in whatever editing program you're using. Check it out if you're interested. You can also choose to hire someone at [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com) to create one for you for \$5. The issue with fiverr, however, is that there are hundreds of the same videos so your introduction wouldn't be unique.

Exporting Your Video Lesson in High Definition Quality

There are two factors that you need to consider when exporting your video lessons to HD. Firstly, you need to ensure that you are indeed exporting in HD. Secondly, you need to ensure that the video quality is still clear after you've exported the video.

In order to export to HD, your video has to be at a resolution of 1920 x 1080. If this is not possible because you only recorded video at a lower quality, 1280 x 720 is an acceptable resolution.

Always ensure that your screen recording is clear. I've had to redo my lessons on several occasions because the quality of the screen recording wasn't high enough. It may mean that you'll have to zoom into a portion of the screen to adequately display something where your mouse pointer is. I do this a lot in my Adobe After Effects Courses, even though the resolution is HD quality, because I want my students to see particular details. So if you are doing a course that includes doing something on the computer, make sure whatever you are doing is clear.

The type of file you export is also an important consideration. I suggest exporting H264 videos. This will be really high quality with lower file sizes.

Action Item

The action item for this chapter is very simple. Export your video in perfect HD quality. If you have any issues, don't hesitate to contact me at videoschoolonline.com. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now.

The Course Promo Video

The Course Promo Video is your gateway to attracting new students. It's the first impression of you that your potential students will get. If done well, it can result in increased sales. If done poorly, it will result in minimal success for your course.

The first point that should be discussed is the length of your promo video. Your promo video should be under two minutes (ideally around sixty seconds). You have to be able to grab and maintain your audience's attention. The longer the video is, the less likely it is that you'll be able to do this. I've seen a lot of long course videos where the presenter is just sitting in front of the camera explaining the course for a few minutes. This is a bad idea because it will make your course seem uninteresting. You **HAVE** to make your promo video better than the rest of your videos. Look professional!

This leads me to my second point. Your course promo video has to be engaging. So, you need to be energized when discussing the course. The content for your promo video essentially consists of two components: overview and qualifications. Tell your audience what the course is about, your teaching methodology, and course objectives. What will this course do for them? How will it change their life? Then qualify yourself! There are hundreds of online courses. So, people have to buy into your qualifications and credibility in order to choose your course over the numerous options. What make you qualified to teach this course? Showcase your personality.

Action Item

Create the perfect promo video. When I create my promo videos, I use a short script and practice it a few times in front of the camera. Ensure that you have good audio, video and lighting. Edit if you have to. Add some graphics or snippets from your course. Share with others to see what they think before posting.

The Course Image

Your course image is even more important than your promo video. It's the image that represents your course. Therefore, it is the first thing that potential students will see. So, you want to make it awesome!

You have to ensure that you have the right balance of images and text in your course image. The image shouldn't be exclusively text. It should be eye-catching and truly represent your brand. Essentially, your course image should have some sort of imagery that draws in your audience so that they can read more about your course. Udemy suggests creating an image without text. They've said that it leads to increased sales, especially for people using their mobile devices. I agree in part because it's often too hard to read text on a small course image. It's better to have an image or graphic that clearly represents what the course is about.

Action Item

Create your own course image. I highly recommend that you create your image yourself. Doing this will help you garner invaluable skills in such programs as Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator that could help you in other areas of your online teaching career. However, if you don't have any design skills, you can pay someone on Fiverr or another site to do it for you.

If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Also, if you want a **free eBook** with 10 Action Items for getting more students, subscribe to my email list here: OnlineTeachingCareer.com

Share

“Brand is not a product...it’s not one item. It’s an idea, it’s a theory, it’s a meaning, it’s how you carry yourself. It’s aspirational, it’s inspirational.”

~Kevin Plank

The past two sections have laid the foundation for creating your online teaching courses. It’s now time for you to promote your brand and attract your students. In this section, I will be guiding you through some key strategies for selling and promoting your course. I will share my experiences promoting my own course and explain how I got to the point I’m at today.

This section is divided into 16 chapters:

1. Introduction to Promotion
2. Online Platforms to Sell Your Course
3. Selling on Udemy
4. Selling on Skillfeed
5. Selling on Other Sites
6. Self Hosting 101
7. The Importance of a Good Title
8. Writing an Amazing Course Description
9. Using Keywords Properly to Get More Students
10. Choosing the Right Price
11. The Importance of a Promotion Strategy
12. Promoting to Friends and Family
13. The Basics of Promoting on Social Networks
14. Promoting on Facebook
15. Promoting on LinkedIn
16. Promoting on Twitter
17. Promoting on Reddit
18. Promoting on Deal Sites
19. Promoting on Marketing Forums
20. Promoting on Blogs
21. Promoting with Other Instructors
22. Promoting with Affiliates
23. Promoting to Current Students
24. Promoting with Advertisements
25. Promoting through a Blog Post

Introduction to Promotion

This chapter will focus on my experiences with promotion and the value of sharing. It will help pave the path for helping you understand how to create your online presence. Read carefully and complete the action item.

As I said in the introduction to this book, you shouldn't enter online teaching with the goal of *just* earning a lot of money. If this is your goal then it's going to be a lot harder for you to be successful. The right mindset to have is one in which your focus is to share knowledge with others. When I began online teaching, I was amazed that the students wanted to take my courses. My eagerness to share my knowledge was easily shown in the way I presented my online courses, video tutorials, and blog articles. My voice shone through. When students are able to see that genuine passion and relate to that voice, they will easily gravitate towards your course.

My promotion story is very simple. Initially, I had no experience in online marketing and selling. When I began my wedding videography business, I promoted via online posts, posting on other websites, Google ads, and a Facebook group. Now, I primarily obtain videography business via word-of-mouth promotions by satisfied customers. In fact, my greatest success in this business has been through word-of-mouth promotions and not my online promotions. However, for online teaching online promotions are crucial.

So, I was a novice to online promotion for my online teaching course. I began using the options that Udemy provided. I also obtained reviews from friends and family. At work I would tell my coworkers about my course and encourage them to sign up. I even sent individual messages to my closest friends on Facebook asking them to sign up for the course. This worked for my first course "Editing 101" because I was able to obtain 20 students in the first few weeks. I then began to increase my numbers primarily through word-of-mouth. This is the strategy I have used for the first six months of all of my courses. I establish a student base with my friends and family and build from there.

Another strategy I've used is free coupons. These free coupons helped me to get reviews for my courses since people were able to try them out and comment. When other people view my class and see that there are students enrolled and it's getting good reviews, they are more inclined to sign up. Although this is a good strategy for attracting more students, you have to use it wisely. We'll discuss this some more in future chapters.

So, after a few months my classes were growing more quickly. I now had about 4 courses running simultaneously with a total of about 3,000 students due to the combination of asking friends and family to sign up, and then posting free coupons on blogs and other websites. This is when I began to use Reddit for further promotions. Reddit is a large online community of video creators and designers. I allowed people from the Reddit community to sign up for my Adobe After Effects course for free. This allowed me to get over 1,000 new students in less than a week. A lot of these students have purchased other courses from me. So, offering free courses and promotions are great ways to lure students in and encourage them to purchase your other courses. *Since I began teaching online, using Reddit to promote courses has become increasingly difficult and not the best way to get free students into your course.

Now, I have a standard promotion schedule when I launch a course. It begins with sending messages to my current students announcing that I am about to release a new course within a week. If you send this message too far in advance then it is more likely that your students will forget about it, so I've found that a week is perfect. I then have a launch discount for the first week. This discount is usually 50% off the total price of the course. Students on the Udemy platform are accustomed to discounts of 75% so you have to look carefully at your pricing to ensure that you can still earn enough after giving a discount. After I have done this discount week, I continue building my audience using a variety of promotional strategies.

In the proceeding chapters we'll be looking at some of the techniques I've used to promote my courses. We're going to discuss course announcements, social media and many other strategies. Getting your first paying student is going to be difficult, but don't give up. When I got my first paying student I was elated and I am sure you will be too. From there, it will just grow and grow.

Action Item

Take a break because the next few chapters are going to require a lot of work. If you haven't finished creating your course then you need to do that now before moving on. When you have finished creating your course, and you've posted it online, you'll be ready for promotions.

Online Platforms to Sell Your Course

There are two ways to sell your courses. The first is the self-hosting model and the second is the marketplace model. Self-hosting refers to creating and posting to your own website while restricting your courses to paying customers. A course marketplace is a website that allows you to post your courses. These websites already have built-in course templates and tools that you can use to create your own course page. Some examples of course marketplaces are Udemy, Skillfeed and Skillshare. Both the course marketplace and self-hosting platforms allow you to offer downloadable courses, where students pay for a digital download of your course, or a membership site where students have to log in to access the courses on a website. Although self-hosting will initially require a lot of work, it may be a bit more fruitful in the long run because you will own 100% of your work and will be able to get 100% of the revenue. Most course marketplaces allow you to keep the rights to your course, but they take a portion of your revenue.

I chose to start selling courses on marketplaces because of how easy they are to use. They gave me a platform on which I could basically upload the video, input the course information and sell it. There is already a built in audience that I didn't have to find. This was the perfect combination for someone who didn't have any experience promoting and selling online products. If I had chosen the self-hosting option I wouldn't have been able to be at the level I'm at today. It would have been impossible for me as someone with no self-hosting experience to have over 30,000 students in the first year of self-hosting.

There are several benefits associated with the course marketplace. I mentioned one of the benefits earlier- built in course templates and the ability to create your own course page. Another benefit is the fact that you don't have to pay an upfront fee to use the marketplace. The marketplace earns its money from the portion of your revenue that it acquires. You also will get more people to see your courses especially on platforms such as Udemy. If you effectively use keywords related to relevant topics then your course will pop up in the Udemy search engine when students search for those keywords. A self-hosted website wouldn't

necessarily have the same effect because it's really hard to get a high search rank on Google. For instance, if you're creating a class on building websites there are already so many classes and resources available for that course. Your page would land somewhere between the 10th and 30th page of Google search results. So, I think that the course marketplace platform is the best platform for a novice online teacher to begin with. You can then branch out into self-hosting after you've built your reputation.

One of the most important things that you have to consider when choosing a course marketplace is the revenue model. Currently, Udemy takes 50% of each sale that is made on the site with one BIG exception. If you make a sale yourself (using a code or unique url), you keep 97%. This is amazing because it really allows instructors who put in a lot of work to do self-promotions to make money.

Skillfeed uses a subscription model. Students pay a monthly \$19 subscription fee to use the site. They get access to all the courses on the site. Skillfeed then splits the total revenue for that month with all of the instructors depending on how often your courses were viewed. I think it's a good idea to use both the Udemy and Skillfeed platforms. However, before you quickly upload your courses on any site, ensure you fully understand the revenue share conditions. Here are some questions that you should consider:

1. What percentage are you getting paid?
2. How are you getting paid?
3. When are you getting paid?

Action Item

Research all of the online course marketplaces and choose the one that best suits your needs. Some of the most popular sites are: Udemy, Skillfeed, Skillshare, Coursebrew, Easyskillz, and Opensesame. There are many others. All you need to do is perform a simple Google search to find them. However, be wary of some of the newer sites that have been up for a while and have made no sales. I'll often contact a seller on the site to see if they're making any money before I put the work in to upload my own course.

Selling on Udemy

I am going to use this chapter to address a question that may be plaguing your mind- “Why has Udemy worked so well for me?” As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Udemy is hassle free. You can easily post all of your videos to a course. You can then add course details including links to your website and more information. Then you sell! All of their transactions are done through PayPal and I get paid each month. I love knowing that I can look forward to that check at the beginning of a new month.

Udemy has one the largest student bases (approximately 10 million students and counting) on the internet. They are also a major player in offering courses for professional skills. There are other free course platforms such as Coursera, EdX and Khan Academy which are much bigger than Udemy. However, Coursera and EdX offer free courses from established universities while Khan Academy only offers free courses. Udemy is really the biggest player in the peer-to-peer course niche.

Another revenue-generating opportunity is becoming a Udemy affiliate. The affiliate keeps 50% of the revenue, the instructor keeps 25% of the revenue, and Udemy keeps 25% of the revenue. You can sign up to be an affiliate, find courses that your audience might like, post links on your website, and if anyone clicks through that link to purchase the course, you’ll get a cut.

I’ll be honest though, there are some downsides to Udemy. Primarily, the typical student on Udemy only purchases courses when they are discounted. You’ll see courses from \$99 to \$499. I’ll bet you that 95% of their sales were discounted and a majority were for \$10. *You don’t have to sell at this price*, but if you opt to use Udemy’s promotions (which is basically free advertising and promotion of your course including ads of Facebook and Google, being a part of their monthly deals and newsletters, and other types of promotion) they have the right to discount your course. **WOAH! What did you say?** If you opt to use their promotions (which is an option under your instructor profile) they can charge only \$10 for your course. That’s right. But the way I look at these sales is they would have never happened if I weren’t a part of their

promotion strategy. Over 50% of my sales and revenue come from these types of promotions. So I suggest when you're starting out to opt into their promotions.

Action Item

Create your own Udemy account. Create a captivating biography for your instructor page. Add a good and professional picture that depicts who you are and looks inviting to a potential student.

Selling on Skillfeed

[Skillfeed](#) is my second most fruitful hosting platform. It is my second choice after Udemy and uses a subscription model. This subscription model changes how you can get paid and how you can promote your course. Skillfeed members are able to access all courses for a monthly subscription fee of \$19. You may be thinking that if more people knew about this amazing deal on Skillfeed, they wouldn't join Udemy. I would say that assumption is correct especially if people don't need to have access to the course for a prolonged period of time. However, many people like the idea of lifetime access to a course, without any recurring fees, that Udemy offers..

One of the best ways to use Skillfeed is to post single tutorials from your courses as *Skill Snacks* (Skillfeed's under 20 minute courses). On Udemy, each course must be at least 30 minutes long. However, there may be instances where you have less content to teach which make the Skill Snacks on Skillfeed perfect. I have even posted some of my free content that I post to YouTube on Skillfeed because its high quality and I can now get paid if anyone watches it. As for the numbers, after over a year of being on Skillfeed I'm bringing in around \$1,000 per month. That's \$12,000 per year – enough to live like a king or queen in some parts of the world.

One of the differences with Skillfeed is how difficult it is to promote your own courses. On Udemy, you can promote your course with your unique url and see direct return on investment from your promotions. On Skillfeed, there is no way to track if a promotion actually leads to people viewing your courses. So, I haven't been able to do much promotion of my courses on Skillfeed. I just keep updating new tutorials when I create them and sit back and watch the dollars roll in! You can do the same!

Revenue also fluctuates drastically on Skillfeed since you get paid for every minute of course videos watched. Hopefully, students will be so interested in your videos and topics they'll keep coming back. Skillfeed gives a portion of its revenue to all of the instructors. So, the larger the number of subscriptions in a particular month is the more likely you'll be paid more

money. They also don't tell you how much money you've earned until the end of the month. So it's hard to track how much money you'll make.

Another disadvantage of Skillfeed is that there's less interaction. Udemy allows you to message your student and have him or her respond to you with questions or concerns on the course page. There are discussion boards that students can post to as well. Skillfeed, however, doesn't facilitate interaction between students and their instructors. My Skillfeed students can contact me because I make my email address and website URL available in my course description, but it rarely has happened.

Action Item

Sign up for [Skillfeed](#) and create your profile. Use the same profile information as you used for your Udemy profile. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now.

Selling on Other Sites

The preceding chapters have focused on two of the most popular online teaching platforms: Udemy and Skillfeed. This chapter will focus on six other platforms: Skillshare, Lynda, IdealMe, PhotoWhoa, ScoolTV, and OpenSesame. In this chapter I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using these platforms.

Skillshare began with instructors being able to set up meetings or classes for individual students in person. They then branched out into offering full online classes. It's a good site to join because it offers high quality courses and high quality instructors. However, the sign-up process for an instructor on this site is not as easy as for other sites. Sure you can sign up and start posting courses, but you can't start making money until you have at least 300 students and at least 2 courses. I recently surpassed this goal after being on Skillshare for a few weeks. We'll see what comes of it.

Before Udemy and Skillfeed were even around, there was Lynda. They only host high quality instructors so it's a rigorous process to become a member of their site. However, once you get in you can make a lot of money because their audience is involved and very interactive. This allows their subscription model to work well.

OpenSesame is a newer online training website. Nevertheless, they have over 20,000 courses that cater to businesses. The courses are geared towards improving your business and trade skills. However, it isn't as user friendly as Udemy and Skillfeed. The difficulty arises when you attempt to sell multiple lessons in one course. So, this isn't one of the sites that I would recommend.

ScoolTV is another platform that falls very low on my list. When I signed up I ended up spending 10 to 20 hours uploading multiple courses. My courses have been sitting there for months with no activity so I'm not sure if the site is a scam or not. I've attempted to contact them about getting paid, but I have yet to receive a response. So, I recommend that you stay away from this site.

IdealMe was founded by a young woman hoping to create a lifestyle course site. She saw a few of my courses on Udemy and reached out to me because she believed that I could do well on her site. From there, she took complete control of my course. She added more content that I didn't provide and changed my course image. I'm still waiting to see if they're legitimate and worthwhile.

PhotoWhoa is another site that reached out to me because I have an Art of Travel Photography Course on Udemy. They're basically a photography blog. So, they are restricted to that niche. My course has actually been very successful on this site. In one month I earned \$1,363. They took half of that revenue which left me with \$681.50 after 49 orders and 2 refunds. So, if you do photography courses this site may be worth looking into. You may be able to find sites in your niche that also sell courses.

I have mentioned all of these sites to provide an example for how difficult it can be to make money on sites. You really have to be sure that there is potential to make money on a particular site before posting courses there. One of the things that I must caution you against is spreading yourself too thin. As a novice online teacher, I wouldn't recommend that you put your courses on ten platforms, for instance. It'll wear you out. The best strategy is to find the sites that you believe will work best for you and will help you to promote your brand. Also, ensure that you find other instructors who have used the sites you're interested in. Ask them to share their experiences with you.

Take baby steps. Start small. For instance, you can start with 3 courses on one platform and then add those courses to 2 or 3 other platforms. After you are certain that you've put out a quality product and you're able to make sales, you can start joining other platforms. I suggest beginning with Udemy because they have a large audience. Chances are that if people are willing to buy your courses on Udemy, they'll also be willing to buy your courses on other sites.

Action Item

Keep a list of your preferred online platforms for future use. Once you've started to garner some success on your first two sites, you can start branching out to more.

Self Hosting 101

This chapter will focus on the basics of self-hosting your course. In chapter two of this section, I had mentioned that there are two online models that you could use to sell your course: the self-hosting model and the marketplace model. We've discussed the marketplace model extensively in the preceding chapters. What I'm presenting in this chapter is a basic overview of self-hosting. Visit my website at onlineteachingcareer.com for more detailed information.

There are two options for self-hosting. The first is to create a downloadable product and have people pay you via PayPal to download them. There are numerous plugins on Wordpress and other websites that facilitate this option. The biggest issue with this, however, is that the size of the files you upload can sometimes be huge for high quality courses. For instance, my After Effects Course has over 60 lessons. Each has a 1920 x 1080 HD resolution which makes the file size at least 10 GB. Free hosting of files this large is going to be very difficult. So, you can use sites such as Amazon S3, where you can pay a membership fee to host certain file sizes. However, I support doing things at a minimal start up cost. The beauty of it is that I can present you with some possible sites that you can use at a minimal start up cost to upload your large files.

The first site is GumRoad. Essentially, you're given a 4 GB upload limit. It's the largest limit I've seen thus far. You just upload your files and sell them. They have great widgets that you can use so that people don't have to leave your site to actually purchase your product. After you've gotten a download, they only take 5% of the revenue. There is no up-front fee.

E-Junkie is an old-school site that is very popular amongst online marketers and content producers. You pay a monthly subscription fee based on how much you sell. This is another option. However, I prefer GumRoad because it's more modern. Even if you're not self-hosting your entire course to sell, keep GumRoad in mind for selling products like eBooks or other one-off products on your website.

The second option is to create a member site. This is a site where students would have to log into their own personal account to access content. There are a variety of plugins and themes that you can use to create a membership website on a Wordpress platform. There is still the issue of privately hosting your video lessons somewhere else that could then be embedded into your private web pages. One option is Vimeo Plus. This site allows you to upload 5 GB per week and offers unlimited HD uploading. They have advanced player customization that allows you to limit the people who can view your courses to those who have paid to view them. Vimeo Pro requires a yearly subscription fee of \$199. It provides more options than Vimeo Plus. You can keep these videos private to the public on Vimeo.com, but put them on your course pages for people to see.

This option for building a completely new membership site from scratch is **a lot of work**. Luckily, there are more options for you that make it easy to do! UseFedora.com and Patience.io are two websites that take care of all of the back-end work of building a membership site. They also allow you to have your own customized online school. This is great if you want to stay away from the big marketplaces like Udemy or Skillfeed. The reason you would do this is to have more control over your students and the price of your course. The pricing ranges for a number of packages, but on average you will make more money per sale on these types of sites than on somewhere like Udemy.

For the beginning of your online teaching career, I would suggest using the course marketplaces to launch your brand. It will be much easier and you will have a better chance of making more sales because of the built-in audiences. From there, you can start to build your own online school using one of the methods above.

Action Item

I'm going to include a self-help item here that is completely unrelated to this topic. I want you to eat some vegetables. Maintaining your physical wellness is important for you to be successful.

The Importance of a Good Title

Having the right course title is very important. It should be keyword rich, but also catchy. These keywords should be things that people readily search for not only on the course marketplaces, but also on Google. You don't want your title to sound like a sales pitch or make promises that you can't keep. Titles such as "Shave Off 30 Pounds in Two Days" or "Make \$1000 Every Week for the Rest of Your Life" are classic examples of titles that portray unattainable promises. Course titles **should** include a good reason for students purchasing the course. The title of my online teaching course is *Teach Online: Make Money Every Month Doing What You Love*. This title straddles the edge of being too *salesy* and being the straight up truth. I do teach you how to make money every month teaching online and that line will pique a potential students' interest.

I've spent some time looking at course titles on Udemy. One of the observations I've made is that the courses with the strongest course titles tend to have the most students, while the courses with the weakest course titles tend to have few students. I believe this is due to the fact that the more populated courses have keyword rich titles. An example of such a title is "3D Game Development with Unity 3D". Unity 3D and 3D Game Development are two terms that people often search for. A bad example of a title is "The Natural Selling System". I have no idea what that course is about and I doubt that people would be searching for that.

Google AdWords is one of the leading sources for finding keywords. All you have to do is create a Google AdWords account and search for new keyword and ad group ideas. The results will show you how many people have searched for particular keywords related to your topic over the past month. Let's look at the keywords "build an online business". The search results show that there are 110 monthly searches for this particular phrase on Google. Other related phrases and their respective monthly searches are listed below:

1. Online business Ideas – 22,000 monthly searches
2. Online businesses- 3,000 monthly searches
3. Online business opportunities- 8,000 monthly searches

4. Starting an online business- 5,000 searches

So, a possible title that could be used for this course is “Starting an Online Business from Scratch in 30 Days.” It’s the specific keyword that really makes a difference when you’re actually creating your course title. The only change I would make to the above title is to really give the student a reason to purchase. *What will your course do for them?* A better title might be: *Starting an Online Business: How You Can Launch Your Own Business in just 30 Days!* You see what I did there? I still have the keywords of starting an online business, but I included a reason for the student to really want to join so that they can start their own course.

Action Item

Choose the perfect title for your course. Pay attention to keywords and give your students a reason for joining. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Writing an Amazing Course Description

Avid readers always look at a book's description before making a purchase. They have to determine if the storyline is gripping enough to entice them to make the purchase. Similarly, students read course descriptions before they purchase a course. There are a few key components of a course description: the opening sentence, the course objectives, appropriate keyword density, and a convincing reason for taking the course (that is, *what will they get out of the course*). I am not saying that the strategies I use provide a 100% guarantee. I can only tell you what has worked for me. If you have any other suggestions that could be used to enhance course descriptions, feel free to contact me.

The opening sentence for my course descriptions is usually a question related to my course. I choose questions that draw students in. For instance, for the course description for my video intros class I began by asking "Have you ever wanted to create a video intro for your brand?" I believe that questioning is a good strategy to employ to get people's immediate attention. Questions force people to think and make it more likely that they will read more.

After I've lured my students, I delve into the finer details of the course. I include key points that describe the course. Additionally, I list some of the lessons that will be covered in the course. Everything I write in the course description has to be keyword friendly. Whatever I write has to make sense, but it also has to use the right keywords that will make it more likely that people will find my course. You can find the right keywords using Google AdWords. Keywords should be included in your course title, subtitle, tags, description, lessons, and lesson descriptions. The more keywords you're able to use effectively, the more traffic you'll have for your course. Marketers describe this as Search Engine Optimization (SEO) which simply describes how prominent your website is on search engines. If people can't find your course, you won't be able to make many sales.

Another important point that should be included in your course description is the reason they should take your course. Some people won't watch your promotional video, but they will read your course description. You have to qualify yourself. What makes you qualified

to teach this course? What makes your class better than the rest? What will your course do for them? Check out my course descriptions on [VideoSchoolOnline.com](https://www.VideoSchoolOnline.com) by clicking the *courses* tab at the top of the page. This will give you lots of good examples of compelling course descriptions.

Action Item

Create the first draft of your course description. After you've written it, come back to it after a day or two to ensure that it's exactly what you want it to be.

Choosing the Right Price

There is a basic formula that you should remember when considering the price for your course. Quality=Money. No matter what, your courses have to be high quality. People will pay good money for quality. You can always start high and then lower your price if you're not getting enough sales. I always suggest experimenting with pricing until you get what works well for you.

Research is important for choosing the right price. Look for similar courses and see what their price points are. Compare the content in those courses with the content you'll be providing. If you can participate in the courses for free to compare their quality with yours that would be a bonus. If your quality is lower then you wouldn't want to charge more than what your competitors are charging, unless you have a huge audience that you can sell your course to without them seeing the other higher-quality course.

Additionally, you need to consider the amount of money that you actually want to make from the course. If your aim is to have some extra money for a date night then you can set a lower price and do minimal promotion. However, if you actually want to make this a career you have to charge a higher price. Calculate how many courses you have to sell per month in order to earn your target income.

The psyche of a buyer is fairly easy to decipher. When a buyer pays a high sum for a product, he or she is expecting that product to be high quality. I don't believe that you should charge a premium price if your product isn't a premium product. Nevertheless, charging a little more may result in your customers perceiving your product as a higher quality product. On the flip side, a lower price equates to a lower quality buyer. You don't want to be perceived as low quality. You'll see a lot of highly priced courses across Udemy ranging from \$99 to \$499. Sometimes these numbers are just inflated to make the customer *perceive* the course as high quality. I don't really like this approach. My courses are priced at where they are because I truly believe the content in that course is worth that much. If I'm teaching these courses in a college, they would cost a lot more than what I charge teaching online.

The final point about pricing is the magic of the number 9. Adding 99 cents at the end of your price point will actually make consumers more willing to purchase your product. GumRoad, one of the online marketplace platforms I mentioned in a preceding chapter, researched the concept of adding 99 cents to a price point. They found that the conversion rates for the 99 cent priced courses far exceed the conversion rates for the whole number priced courses. On Udemy, however, you can only charge whole number prices. Regardless, I still encourage you to use whole number figures that end in 9. The prices for my courses range from \$19 to \$99.

My final request is to try not to create price wars. What do I mean by that? Try to not charge a lot lower than your competitors. This will result in them having to lower their course prices which will mean that you'll have to further lower your prices to stay competitive and the cycle will continue. We're all in this together and want to get paid fairly for our work. Charge similar to whatever else is out there in your particular subject.

Action Item

Find courses similar to yours and research their price ranges. Use these prices to guide you towards a price that suits your course.

The Importance of a Promotion Strategy

It's very important for you to come up with your own promotion strategy. You can use the one that I will be outlining in this chapter. Hopefully it will work for your niche and topics. My aim is to share what I do and hopefully inspire you to design what works best for you. My promotion strategy gives you step-by-step instructions for the tactics to employ on a daily basis.

One of the key components of my promotion strategy is the power of "my free". I've learned this from Pat Flynn who is a great online marketer. His website is smartpassiveincome.com and he really believes in the power of "free". He believes that one of the best ways to build an audience is to give something away. You could give away an eBook, powerful blogging, or free videos. This allows you to build an audience that will eventually purchase some of your priced courses. So, I believe in providing courses for free to fellow Udemy instructors. I also create free versions of my courses with less content to get people into at least some of my courses. I will then try later to get them to purchase another course.

Although one of the advantages of having a lot of free students is the fact that it boosts your course numbers, it also has one main disadvantage. Some of these students make it a habit to search for free courses and never complete them. We call them *free-course-mongers*. I would want my students to be engaged in my courses. Nevertheless, having a greater number of students also increases the number of reviews you can get for your course. For the Udemy platform, 5 star ratings are important. So encourage all of your students to leave a review for your course.

Another key component of a promotion strategy is being ubiquitous (*everywhere*). I'm not a social media person. I don't tweet and I don't use Instagram. I don't even have a smart phone. So, being ubiquitous can be difficult for me. I don't like the idea of being hooked to technology all the time. I'd rather have the ability to set a time and a space in my home or

office for work. Regardless, I understand the value of social media and I encourage you to use the popular social media platforms to promote your courses. I also encourage you to create your own blog and website. Creating an online presence in as many places as possible will help build your brand.

Action Item

Start to create your promotion strategy and schedule. It's good to know what you'll be doing on a daily basis for your course launch. Promotion is a continuous process so your promotion strategy should extend beyond the first month of your course. Once you have a great promotion strategy, you can replicate this for future courses more easily.

Promoting to Friends and Family

Your friends and family should be your first students. They should be given the opportunity to provide you with constructive criticism about your course. Hopefully, they'll be honest enough to tell you what needs improvement so that you can enhance your course. Ask them to write honest reviews. I started promoting to my friends and family and this helped me to build my brand.

Action Item

Tell your friends and family members what you're doing. Send an e-mail blast to them. You may never know the types of connections they have. I had sent a course via email to one of my friends. Surprisingly, his girlfriend had a blog with over 100,000 readers on a monthly basis. She posted an article about my course on her blog. So, just by sending that e-mail I was able to promote my course to 100,000 people.

The Basics of Promoting on Social Networks

Social networks have become an integral aspect of many people's lives. A study conducted by the Pew Research Council in January 2014 shows that 58% of American adults own a smart phone and 42% of American adults own a tablet. Twenty-nine percent of these cell phone owners indicated that they can't live without their cell phones. The Pew Council research also showed that 74% of adults who use the internet actively use social networking sites. Therefore, social media is a crucial market for you to tap into.

I've connected with people through social media since I began my online teaching career. Some of these connections have led to interviews for podcasts for guest-posts on blogs. They have also led to many sales through promotions on my own social media channels. The true power of social networking is the ability to bring connections together.

An important point to note is the fact that you have to use your social media accounts wisely. People will get annoyed if all you're doing is promoting your brand every hour of the day. You can post something related to your brand on a daily basis. However, ensure that it's relevant and good quality content. For instance, instead of saying "Here's a discount for my course", you can post articles related to content in your course. These articles can help your followers understand your identity and make them more interested in following you. Post things that are educational, as well as promotional.

I use four main social networks: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Google+. I have set up my blog, website, and YouTube channel in such a way that whenever I post anything on any of these media it is automatically posted on my social networks. This helps me to streamline my content, therefore allowing me to avoid wasting time posting the same thing on all of my social media networks.

Use social media wisely. Go beyond status updates and begin to explore your friend's walls and social media groups that are relevant to your course. Don't spam. Chat with some

people and subtly add a few relevant links to your website while engaging in a topic they're discussing.

Action Item

Prepare a social media blast post to share on all of your social networks for your course. After you've prepared the post, post it on the respective platforms. If you're in the United States, I suggest posting at 3:00pm Pacific Time since that's the time that most people get off work on the east coast, and soon on the west coast. You could also post early in the morning since people tend to check their emails and news feeds before they head out for work.

Promoting on Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social media network. It is, therefore, important for you to use it to your advantage. The best way for you to take advantage of Facebook is to create a Facebook page that represents your brand.

A Facebook page is different from a group. You can use your course name as the page's title or your online teaching brand name if you've created one. My online teaching brand is videoschoolonline.com. So, I use that as the name of my Facebook page.

After you've created your Facebook page, you need to get a sufficient number of people to like the page. Invite your friends and current students to like your page. Honestly, I am not very good at getting people to sign up for my Facebook page. So, if you have any advice I'd love to hear it. Presently, I have approximately 400 people who follow my page. They're all high-quality followers who came organically to the page – not through any shady tactics like paying for likes.

As you begin to build the number of followers for your Facebook page, you need to work on making the page fun and interactive. Post your new courses, additional resources, or articles related to your course content. Post free videos that showcase courses you teach. If your page centers on selling then people would be averse to following it. Nothing is wrong with posting a free promotion or the prices of your courses once in a while. However, your page should focus more on relevant content that will enhance the learning experience of your students.

Action Item

Create a Facebook page and build your follower base. Try to get 100 people to like your Facebook page over the next few weeks. Start adding links to your Facebook page in your course descriptions and talking about it in your lessons. This will help you to get more people to like your page.

Promoting on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the premiere professional social network of this generation. It is a marketplace for a host of professionals and it provides each of its members the opportunity to present his or her skills to the LinkedIn community. Therefore, you should create a LinkedIn account to showcase what you offer as an online instructor.

One of the wonderful features of LinkedIn is that you're able to share with and join a variety of groups. Some of these groups have over 50,000 members. So, it's a good idea to join a group related to your course topic and begin sharing your insight there. All of the members who have the e-mail notification option enabled for their LinkedIn accounts will see what you post. This will give you the opportunity to attract a wide audience to your course.

I have joined a lot of groups including Wedding Videography, After Effects, and Video Creation groups. Let's say that you're creating an eBook creation course. There are several eBook groups on LinkedIn. There's even a group with 68,000 members. Let's say you join this group. Most LinkedIn groups are private so you have to request permission to join. If this group isn't a private group then you'll have easy access to post discussions on the group's page. If you post spam you will be removed from the group. Once you're in a group, start a discussion. An ideal discussion for you to create would be something like "Does anyone have any issues with publishing on Kindle?" After you've participated in the discussion for awhile and truly embedded yourself in the group, you can start posting links to your website along with your educational posts.

LinkedIn also gives you the opportunity to have your own personal status updates. It's similar to Facebook and Twitter since people who are your connections on LinkedIn can see what appears on your feed in their feeds.

Creating a LinkedIn group is another way that you can take advantage of what LinkedIn provides. The most prudent option is to create a group for your brand as opposed to a specific

course. This group will become even more useful in the future when you begin to create other courses.

Also, pay attention to what is on your profile page. On my LinkedIn profile I have a well-written summary that includes my video reel and a link to [VideoSchoolOnline.com](https://www.VideoSchoolOnline.com). The summary details my experience and educational background. I also link my YouTube account and blog to my LinkedIn profile so that whenever I post anything on these sites, those posts automatically go to my LinkedIn page.

Action Item

Create a LinkedIn account. Once you've created your personal account, you should join 5 to 10 groups related to your course. Start a discussion in each of those groups. Share tips with them. The results may surprise you.

Promoting on Twitter

Twitter is another important social media platform. Created in 2006, Twitter has become a favorite for teens and young adults simply because it allows them to get straight to the point. It's hard to be circumlocutory when you're only allowed to use 140 characters. You can choose to use your personal Twitter account or create a business account to promote your brand.

One thing that has made it easier for me to use Twitter is adding automation to my Twitter account. You can link your Twitter account to your blog and YouTube channel. So, whenever you post a new YouTube video, a tweet will be sent. When you're uploading videos on YouTube there's a little box that you can use to easily write out a message that will automatically be sent to your Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Action Item

Create your Twitter account and follow me. My Twitter name is @PhilEbiner. ***Shameless plug – I know!*** Also, find 25 other interesting people related to your course to follow. You can get inspiration from them as well as fun tips. Tweet about your new course. This tweet should include the link to your course and the hashtags #deal, #coupon, #discounts. Hashtags are what people use on Twitter to search for specific topics. Using these hashtags will help to get more people enrolled in your course.

Promoting on Reddit

Founded in 2005, Reddit is essentially a message board that allows users to upload and download links. Items of worth are “up voted” while those of limited value are “down voted”. The most popular posts get the most uploads and are, therefore, featured at the top of the Reddit page. There are also groups, called “subreddits”, for specific topics. Subreddits are going to be extremely useful for you in your online teaching career.

I have joined the filmmaking subreddits and the motion graphics subreddits. However, joining these communities doesn’t spare you from the wrath of internet trolls. These trolls never have anything good to say about whatever you post. So, you may receive some negative comments when you post coupons or courses to Reddit. Reddit isn’t really for selling your course.

There has been a lot of discussion in the online teaching community about whether or not Reddit should be used for promoting online courses. I think there’s a place for Reddit. It just has to be used in the right and polite way. In fact, I’ve gotten thousands of students from Reddit. Whenever I post a course, I always give it away for free on Reddit and then give the students the option to pay a heavily discounted price. My most successful course has been my After Effects Course that is \$99. I posted it on Reddit for free, but I also posted a promo code that makes the course \$9. Every month I still get a few \$9 sales from this promotion. After a month, I disbanded the free coupon. However, I continued to allow the \$9 coupon to be used. So, I probably earned \$500 to \$600 from Reddit.

It’s very important for you to join subreddits that are related to your course. Otherwise, people in those unrelated subreddits will report what you post as spam. One of my best Reddit posts was in the filmmaker’s subreddit. It reads as follows:

Hey editors. I’ve started teaching a new course on Udemy about After Effects. Over 7 hours of video are now available. It’s free for you guys. It’s usually \$99. Coupon in the text.

I usually add the coupon in the text and I don’t put a direct link to the course with the coupon. My reason for doing this is forcing them to read the text.

Another post that I placed on Reddit helped me to get over 1,500 students for my After Effects course. Basically, I used a series of posts. Each post was phrased as follows:

As promised, here's the direct link to the course.

You can help me out a little. Pay \$9 for the entire course.

Or you can take the course for free.

Thank you in advance.

Trying to get 2,000 students in the first 48 hours. Almost there! If you could help that would be amazing. Spread the word. Tell your friends. Share your coupons with your friends. Cheers!

Another point that I must highlight is how to search for your niche on Reddit. The best thing for you to do is search for a subreddit. Let's say you're teaching a course on ebook writing. If I search for "ebook" in the general search engine I would see a lot of posts related to ebooks and also subreddits related to the search term. Choose a subreddit to post to. For example, the *self-publish* subreddit would be the ideal subreddit for you to join since most of the other options focus on talking about books. This subreddit would focus on those who want to publish their own books. People in this group would more than likely benefit from what you have to offer.

Action Item

Spend some time on Reddit and find the perfect subreddit for your course. It's a good idea to know your subreddit so that you can easily find it when you want to make a post in the future.

Promoting on Deal Sites and Marketing Forums

Deal sites are prominent on the internet. They are the sites that people who are searching for deals tend to prowl in order to save a few pennies. There are two main things that can be found on deal sites: coupons and promo codes. A lot of these deal sites will allow you to post your own coupons. Some of these sites include Slickdeals, DealNews, Woot!, FatWallet and Offers.

All of these websites are similar and they offer good deals. On each website there is usually a link at the top that says “Submit a New Deal”. You may have to create an account and there is a possibility that that particular site doesn’t promote online courses. However, it’s worth a shot. It’s all about putting more SEO content out there related to your course so that people can easily find it.

Marketing forums are websites that people use to get marketing advice or promote products. Usually, there’s a forum specifically related to promoting yourself or your item. People sign up for these sites either as affiliates who sell products or as customers looking for deals. Black Hat Forum is free to join and has a specific forum thread for people trying to sell content. Warrior Forum requires a monthly subscription, but the deals that members are able to get make the monthly subscription fee worth it.

Action Item

This chapter has two action items. The first is to sign up for the 5 deal sites that I mentioned. Post a coupon for your course on each of those sites. This will help you to not only sell your course, but building your brand. The second is to sign up for a marketing forum. Both options will help you to get traffic to your course.

Promoting on Blogs

Using other people's blogs is an important promotional tool because of its long-term potential. There are three strategies that you can use to utilize blogs to promote your brand. The first is to post a comment on another blog; the second is to develop a relationship with a blog author to perhaps write a guest-post; and the third is to have this blog author write about your course.

In order to employ this strategy, however, you can find blogs related to the main and secondary themes of your course. For instance, if I'm teaching a course entitled "How to Use a Camera to Promote Your Business". I would start by looking for blogs related to video creation. My search could then be further extended to people who own businesses who would need to use cameras, such as yoga instructors.

As I have said in earlier chapters, don't post spam on any website you're using to promote your brand. People hate spam. So, don't make your comment on an article be "Hey, check out this course." Instead, contribute to the discussion and link what you're saying to your course.

Finding the right blog begins with a Google search of your SEO friendly keywords. One of the SEO friendly keywords that I found on Google Adwords for this course was "make money teaching online". This phrase had thousands of people searching for it on Google. Searching for blogs related to this phrase yields several results. A blog that instantly grabbed my attention was Slate because one of the authors wrote an article about Victor Bastos, one of the most successful online teachers. I choose to post a comment at the end of this article. This comment was, "I think it is definitely possible to make money teaching online. I've been doing it for the past year and it has changed my life. It's not for everyone, but for those who want to put in a lot of time and effort, it can be very fulfilling. Visit [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com) where you can find my courses and story." People who are reading the comment thread will, hopefully, see this comment and click on the link to my website.

Action Item

Find 10 blogs that relate to your course. Comment on 3 articles related to your course content if you can find such articles. Some blogs may only have a single post related to your course content. Just post on the relevant articles. Also, try to connect with the author. Ask the author if he or she would be willing to write about your course.

Promoting With Other Instructors

There are two principles to consider when promoting with other instructors: focus on expanding your circles and don't compete. Follow the tips that I'm about to outline and you're sure to reap success with promotions with online instructors.

Expand your circles. The more circles you're in is the more likely you'll build your online teaching career. I started with nothing. However, over the past year I've developed friendships with fellow instructors who teach on Udemy, Skillfeed, and their own platforms. I've become friends with them by messaging them on social media. I've partnered with them for various promotions and promotional tactics.

There is no "I" in team. When promoting with another instructor, you're working as a team. So, your aim shouldn't be to compete with that instructor. You both can benefit from whatever promotions you're using. A good way to collaborate is for each of you to promote the other instructor's courses to your respective students and e-mail lists. Initially, you may not have a large e-mail list or course enrolment number. However, you can offer to review another instructor's course with a YouTube video. It's a win-win since you will be able to get more views on your YouTube channel and the instructor will be able to get his or her brand promoted for free.

It's good to find an instructor who is doing a course related to yours. For instance, if you're doing a course on basket weaving and the other instructor is doing a course on knitting and craft ideas for moms, both of you would be able to forge a nice partnership. If you're both doing the exact same course it may be hard to find a proper promotion for both of you. Partnering with instructors who teach similar courses is best.

Action Item

Collaborate with an instructor on a promotion. If the first instructor says no, don't give up. Try again with another instructor!

Promoting with Affiliates

Affiliates, in the online instructor world, are people who promote courses using their unique affiliate links to make money. Almost every online product has an affiliate option. For example, I have started to sell [Bluehost.com](https://www.bluehost.com) web hosting as an affiliate. I earn \$65 for each person who signs up for [Bluehost](https://www.bluehost.com). So, I created an entire course on how to use [Bluehost](https://www.bluehost.com), posted it on Udemy, and am now making some commissions whenever anyone signs up through my links.

Initially, it's a bit difficult to start a conversation with or find affiliates who would be willing to sell your course. A lot of them have high standards and have specific markets that they sell to. On the flip side, some affiliates try to promote all the Udemy courses so that they can make as much money as possible. Others look for the course that is in their niche. You can find some affiliates for Udemy by searching on Facebook for Udemy affiliates. They even have an online form that you can use to post details about your course and any associated course discounts.

If you're in Udemy, you can join the Udemy faculty lounge or studio group on Facebook. You can use these two groups to post your course and ask for affiliates. I have also reached out to friends and acquaintances and offered them 50% off each sale they make for my course. So, I've transformed some of my friends and associates into affiliates. Whether you choose to use your friends or more experienced affiliates, the key is to make them like your course so that they'll be eager to promote it.

Action Item

Post on your social networks that you're looking for affiliates. Write a blog post that details how people can become affiliates and help you promote your course. Include a page on your website that explains how somebody can become an affiliate.

Promoting to Current Students

It's going to take a lot of time for you to build a student base to which you can successfully promote. When I started my first course, I had roughly 100 students within the first few months. When I got to 1000 students, I posted a free course as a way to increase numbers. This resulted in me getting close to 7,000 students. After more free courses I had over 30,000 students. This is a huge potential audience to sell to. Now, when I send out a promotion to my current students I almost always make decent earnings because so many students are looking for another course to buy.

One of the keys to this success is balancing promotion with benefit. You don't want to always be blasting your students with promotions or sales for your other courses. After a while they'll become annoyed and click the button that says "No, I don't want to receive notification from this course." Every few weeks I'll send an announcement about some beneficial content such as a blog post or podcast that I've just uploaded. The following week I'll send out a promotion that my students will appreciate, such as a discount. I suggest doing the same. Balance your promotions with educational email blasts.

Action Item

Create one beneficial announcement to send to students every two weeks. Also, write short promotional content that you can post the following week. I can't guarantee that this will work for you, but if you do all of the action items I've mentioned in this book consistently I'm sure you'll have more students than you previously had and you'll continue to build your online teaching career.

Promoting With Advertisements

I have to be honest with you, I haven't had much success with promoting using advertisements. However, there are some online instructors who have figured out the best way to use this promotion method. There are different types of ads. Google and Facebook seem to be the most popular ad platforms. Essentially, you purchase ads that would be visible in strategic places on web pages that people will see and hopefully click on.

The only time I have used these advertisements is when I got free ads from [Bluehost](#). I received approximately \$100 worth of free Google AdWords ads. After I created the ad, I directed people to a course page. This was my first mistake because it's difficult to track whether or not a person signed up for the course because of the ad. If you're directing people to your course page on Udemy, you want to make sure that they're using a coupon code so that you can track whether or not that person was directed from your Google ad. You can do this by creating a 0% off coupon and naming it Google ads. Use that link in your ad so that you can direct people to your course page, and track how many people from that ad campaign actually purchased your course.

A better technique would be to create a *splash page*. A splash page is a page on your website dedicated to trying to sell a particular course. Use your promotions to direct people to that page on your site. People may either sign up for the course or your email list. Either would be great! But if you direct them to Udemy through the ad, you'll never get a chance to have them initially sign up for your email list.

Action Item

There are some websites that offer free Google Ads when you sign up. Try to find some of these sites and utilize the free ads.

Promoting Through a Blog Post

Blog articles offer good support for a course launch. There are a few things that you need to keep in mind when creating these course launch blog articles. Use pre-written content. Use your time wisely. You already have your course description on Udemy or whatever platform you're using. You also already have your course image. Reuse what you already have.

Include your promo video for the course in your blog post. You probably created a promo video that you posted on Udemy. Post this onto your YouTube channel and then include it in your blog post as well.

If you're selling courses on Udemy, make sure to include links to your course that have a coupon code so that you make 97% of the sale. *What do I mean by that?* Well, if you link directly to the course without any promo code, Udemy won't track this particular sale as your own. You'll only make 50% of the sale. However, if you include a promo code (even if it is 0% off which makes it full price) the sale will be marked as *yours* and you will receive 97%.

Action Item

Take a break. This is the end of the Share section so you need to take a breather. You've been working hard. So, you deserve a much-needed break.

If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Also, if you want a **free eBook** with 10 Action Items for getting more students, subscribe to my email list here: OnlineTeachingCareer.com

Build

*“In this ever changing society, the most powerful and enduring brands are built from the heart.
They are real and sustainable.”*

~Howard Schultz

In the first three sections of this book we discussed the reality of online teaching, how to create your own online teaching course, and how to effectively promote your course. All of your hard work will be meaningless if you don't create a brand that represents what you do. Of course you can be an online teacher by creating a single course. However, you cannot build an online teaching career without a brand. This section will focus on how I built my brand and will guide you through the steps for creating your own brand. It is divided into 22 chapters:

1. Introduction to Building Your Own Brand and Audience
2. Branding Yourself and Your Courses
3. Creating a Logo
4. The Importance of Your Own Website
5. Domain Name Basics
6. Website Strategy- Pages and Elements that Work
7. Blogging on Your Website
8. Creating Video Content Outside of Your Courses
9. Email List Basics
10. Hosting With Bluehost
11. Using WordPress to Create Unique and Professional Websites
12. Using YouTube to Build Your Audience
13. Writing a Great Description on YouTube
14. Using Annotations to Get More Engagement on YouTube
15. Interviewing and Podcasting to Grow Your Audience
16. Hosting a Webinar
17. Using Google Analytics Correctly
18. Using YouTube's Analytics to Grow Your Tribe
19. The Importance of Tracking Your Earnings
20. Two Important Tips: Transparency and Numbers
21. Teaching Your Next Class-Topics, Style and More

Introduction to Building Your Own Brand and Audience

As in many other professions, online teaching is saturated with several people who are teaching the same content. Therefore, it's important for you to stand out from the competition in order to build your audience and make more money. You have to build your brand around who you are- your personality and teaching style. When you can present yourself as a top notch instructor with a polished course introduction, a nice brand name, and a website that has similar colors, branding and font schemes, students will choose your course over those that are sloppily presented.

Your brand captures the essence of who you are and what you represent through your courses. My brand is Video School Online and I hope that when people see this name they associate it with quality and want to take my courses. I built my brand from scratch. I didn't have a website so I searched GoDaddy for possible website names. I wanted a name that represented teaching how to make videos. So, when I saw that videoschoolonline.com was available, I instantly snatched it up. You may also have to employ this strategy to find your brand name. Ensure the website is available.

It's best that your website have .com in the domain name as opposed to .net, .org, .info (or other) because SEO and Google rankings tend to prefer .com websites. So, ensure that you choose the right domain name for your brand and your website. We'll discuss this further in another chapter later in this section. For now, I want to explain more the importance of branding.

Branding allows you to present a cohesive and consistent product to your customers. When people hear your brand name, they're supposed to know what to expect. My brand is cohesive because my website, blog, Facebook page, and YouTube channel all have a similar look and feel. I have been able to grow a lot faster than the average instructor.

Branding also gives you a choice. You can choose to include your name in your brand or make it general. I could have chosen *Phil Ebiner's Video School* as the name of my brand.

However, I chose [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com) because I believe my presence in my videos and other course material is enough to allow people to associate that brand with me. I also wanted to separate myself in the name in case the brand burgeoned into something greater than me. Additionally, I am a video creator and I like having my own portfolio on video on philebiner.com. So, I didn't want to confuse both websites. If you want to separate yourself from your brand, you cannot include your name in the branding. If you would some day like to grow your company so big that other people can create courses, write articles, post videos, and so on, you need to separate your name from your brand. Pick a generic brand name that *anyone* could technically handle.

Action Item

You have to figure out what your brand name will be. Check GoDaddy for inspiration and also to see if your idea is available. You should also check Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to see if your brand name has already been taken. Once you have a brand name, create accounts for all of the latest social media websites.

Branding Yourself and Your Courses

There are some key principles related to branding yourself and your courses. The first is the “Be Everywhere Theory”, creating a common language, and using a consistent style. The “Be Everywhere Theory” is something I learned from Pat Flynn. He believes that you need to be on all of the online and social media platforms in order to really grow. I support some aspects of this theory. I don’t want you to burn out because you’re constantly checking Facebook and Twitter trying to keep those pages alive. As I had mentioned in section three, linking all of your social media sites with your blog, web page and YouTube channel make the process a lot simpler. This is because once you post on your blog, webpage or YouTube channel, that content would automatically be uploaded to your social media pages. That’s what I believe. So, although you should be on as many areas of the internet sites as possible in order to create an online presence, you shouldn’t let doing this drive you crazy. When people see that you have the same brand on your online teaching platforms, social media platforms, blog, website, and YouTube channel, you will seem professional and legit. Ensure that on all of these sites, you use the same logo and *About page* info.

The next important aspect of branding is having a consistent language. You can’t say one thing on one of your sites and then say something completely different on another site. When you’re promoting, tweeting, writing a Facebook post, or sending out an e-mail blast ensure that you use the same writing style. Don’t change it too much. If you choose to use a laid-back approach then use a laid-back approach all the time. If you’re going to be more rigid and professional then use this style all the time.

Finally, the overall style of each aspect of your online presence should be similar. The colors, fonts and imagery should follow the same theme. If you use icons on one page, don’t use only photography on another, for instance. Nothing is wrong with mixing it up a bit, but don’t do it to the point where your brand becomes inconsistent.

Action Item

Get inspired. Look at other people's branding and websites. Find fonts, color palettes, imagery, logos, and designs that you like. We're going to use these to create your brand.

Creating a Logo

Your logo is the first thing that people are going to notice on your website, social media sites, online teaching platforms, and blog. So, you have to ensure that it's simple, professional and speaks to what you're representing. I must highlight that simplicity is key. Simple logo designs stand the test of time. Think about all of the great new companies like Facebook, Vimeo, YouTube and Udemy. Each of these sites has very simple logos.

I think that you should create your logo yourself. You can take my Photoshop Tools or Adobe Illustrator class to learn more about designing your own logo. You can find these courses on my website [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com). However, if you don't want to do it yourself you can pay someone to do it for you. [99designs.com](https://www.99designs.com) is a great website that allows you to post a job and have people bid with potential designs. For the design you like, you negotiate a price with the designer. Fiverr is another site that you could use, but sometimes those designs don't turn out well.

Regardless of whether or not you choose to design your own logo, ensure that the logo is perfectly square. It should also be a minimum of 1000 x 1000 pixels. Creating a banner is also a good idea because you'll be using a banner on a lot of your profiles. If you use Adobe Illustrator, your logo would be a SVG file. SVG allows you to change the size of the image without it becoming pixelated. So, if someone is creating your logo having him or her send it as a SVG is a good idea because you'll never know what size you'll need.

Action Item

Have a logo created for your brand or create it yourself. Feel free to send me your designs and I'll be happy to provide you with feedback.

The Importance of Your Own Website

Throughout this book I've emphasized the importance of having your own website, especially after you've established a presence on online teaching platforms such as Udemy. You may be wondering why you have to create a website when the online teaching platforms already offer what you need. The main issue that I have with online teaching platforms is that they change their terms. For instance, last November I was able to earn 70% from every sale on Udemy. By December, I was only able to make 42% from every sale. That's almost 30% less income! Now it's back up to around 65% on average. When you have your own website you eliminate these inconsistencies. Your website will also help you to connect with your students on another level because you have complete control. You can determine what goes on the website, how your courses are seen, and control the pricing if you host the website. Additionally, students are more likely to enroll in a course that has a website than one that doesn't.

The type of website you create depends on the content you want to include. You can build a robust website with blog content, video content, and whatever other features you desire. You could, on the other hand, create a simple one-page website that just includes information on a specific course. If you're just selling one course, this would be an ideal option for you. There are a variety of website builders online. WordPress is one of the best free website builders. WordPress began as a site where people could create blogs. Now, it is a site where people can create full websites using a variety of templates. You can also purchase themes from wordpress.org. WordPress gives you a variety of options and plug-ins.

I like to create my websites using either a free blog through WordPress or a combination of a hosting plan with [Bluehost.com](https://bluehost.com) using a WordPress theme purchased on [ThemeForest.net](https://themeforest.net). Themeforest.net has thousands of themes and templates for WordPress and the prices range from \$20 to \$100 depending on how sophisticated you want your website to be. I will describe how to use [Bluehost](https://bluehost.com) in a subsequent chapter, but I want to mention here that it is a great option for website hosting.

Creating a website on Wordpress.com is a simple 5 minute process. First, you need to sign up. You're going to begin with a blog. So, you need to search for an available blog name. I suggest you use your brand name if it hasn't already been taken. You then need to choose an appropriate theme. When you've selected your theme you need to add pages. Creating a contact page with a "fillable" form is a great idea so that people can easily contact you. You will also need a Courses page, Home page and About page. After creating your pages, you need to create an appropriate tag line and choose your front page display. Your front page display is what shows on your home page. I usually make my front page display my blog posts. The final thing you need to do is input the content for your About page. Remember that the content for this page has to be consistent with what is found on all of the other websites you use for your brand.

If you're interested in getting Bluehost for website hosting, visit <http://www.bluehost.com/>. That's my affiliate link **and it's DISCOUNTED!** I would really appreciate it if you get [Bluehost](#) through that link. There's no additional charge to you.

Action Item

Check out some other popular instructor's website. You can check out my website videoschoolonline.com, 02geek.com, caveofprogramming.com, and breakthroughblogging.com. After you have gone through domain names, website strategy, and creating blog posts in the proceeding chapters, I want you to build your own website.

Domain Name Basics

You brand name and domain name should be the same. This will make it easier for people to find your courses on the internet. It should also be keyword friendly (it would be wise for you to reread the keyword chapter in section three for advice on choosing the right keywords). When I used the Google keyword tool to search for “video school online” I discovered that thousands of people were searching for those keywords each month. This was one of the reasons for me choosing videoschoolonline.com for my domain name. When you search for *videoschoolonline* in Google, I show up as the first name on the page. In fact, I’m right above the Online Film School, which is a top-notch film school based in New York. I’m also above Khan Academy and Vimeo Video School. People also search for *video school* and I show up!

My brand is, therefore, a good example of the power of choosing the right domain name. Anyone who searches for either “video school” or “video school online” will easily find my website and YouTube channel. Let me use another example to clearly illustrate how to create a strong domain name. If you were teaching Java or computer programming, use keywords related to computer programming. A good domain name would probably be computerprogramming.com. It has over 33,000 searches per month. The words in this domain name relate to what the site is about. They are also easy to remember, especially because the words aren’t spelled a *funny way* like *comptrprogramming*, or something like that. So, ensure that you bear these key points in mind when choosing your domain name. Don’t make the domain name too long or too short. You only have a maximum of three words so use them wisely.

I strongly suggest that you purchase web hosting and not just a domain name. As I previously mentioned, Bluehost is a great web hosting site. Web hosting allows you to create a professional website that is uniquely yours. It also allows you to have your own e-mail address. For instance, with webhosting I got my domain name videoschoolonline.com, and unlimited email accounts, like: phil@videoschoolonline.com and info@videoschoolonline.com. I have a course that explains in detail how to use Bluehost.com. You can check it out at videoschoolonline.com. If you’re interested in getting Bluehost.com for website hosting, visit

<http://www.bluehost.com/>. That's my *discounted* affiliate link. There's no additional charge to you, if you go through that link.

Action Item

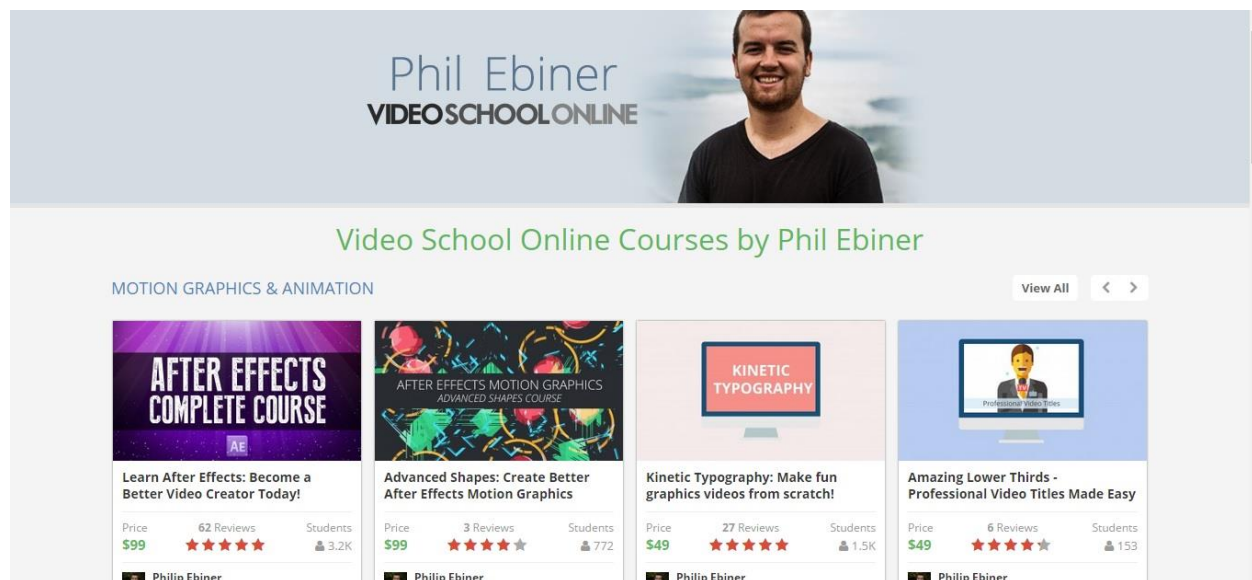
Purchase your domain name through GoDaddy or BlueHost.com. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now.

Website Strategy- Pages and Elements that Work

As previously mentioned in “The Importance of a Website” chapter, there are 4 integral pages that should be included on your website: the About page, the Course page, the Contact page, and any other additional pages you deem necessary. This chapter will discuss in more detail what you should include in each of these pages.

The About page describes who you are and what your brand is about. You, therefore, need to be clear and succinct in your descriptions. Also, remember that the content you use on this page should be the same content that you use for the About pages for your other websites. My About page is one of my most popular pages. Your About page can also become one of your most popular pages if people are really interested in finding out more about you.

The Course page is probably the most critical page on your website. It is the page that you will use to try to sell our courses. The image below shows a portion of the Course page on my website.



The screenshot displays the 'Video School Online' website. At the top, there is a header with the name 'Phil Ebner' and 'VIDEOSCHOOLONLINE' next to a portrait of Phil. Below the header, the main heading reads 'Video School Online Courses by Phil Ebner'. Underneath, there is a sub-section titled 'MOTION GRAPHICS & ANIMATION' with a 'View All' button and navigation arrows. The main content area features a grid of four course cards, each with a thumbnail image, title, description, price, reviews, and student count.

| Course Title | Price | Reviews | Students |
|--|-------|-----------------------|----------|
| After Effects Complete Course | \$99 | 62 Reviews (5 stars) | 3.2K |
| Advanced Shapes: Create Better After Effects Motion Graphics | \$99 | 3 Reviews (4.5 stars) | 772 |
| Kinetic Typography: Make fun graphics videos from scratch! | \$49 | 27 Reviews (5 stars) | 1.5K |
| Amazing Lower Thirds - Professional Video Titles Made Easy | \$49 | 6 Reviews (4.5 stars) | 153 |

I have a library of courses, which I have divided into six broad categories: Motion Graphics and Animation, Photography, Video, Teaching Online, Design, and Hobbies. Notice how each course is neatly organized under the Motion Graphics and Animation category. Under each course is the title, price, rating, and number of students. When a student clicks on one of these courses he or she is taken directly to the course page. I am not saying that you have to make your Course page exactly like mine. However, following this basic structure will help you to present your courses on your website in a clear manner.

Initially, I didn't have a Contact page. However, after awhile people started complaining that they didn't know how to contact me (even though I have my email address at the bottom of my website pages). So, I recently added a Contact page. My Contact page is a part of my About page. It is a form in which people can input their names, contact information, and queries or concerns. However, you may want to create a separate page for this purpose. Just ensure that people can use your website to easily contact you.

If necessary you can include other pages for people such as a resources page, a podcast page, a videos page, and so on. Those pages can be anything that you want them to be. Having a link to your YouTube page is also important. Only include pages for which you have relevant and updated content.

Action Item

Write the content for the About page for your website. This About section should be similar to your profile on your online teaching and social media platforms. It should include information about how you started, why people should take your classes, and how people can sign up for your classes. Also, begin putting together a folder of images and text that you want to include on your website. The more you prepare, the easier it will be to actually build your website.

Blogging on Your Website

Blogging is a nifty strategy that can be used to help you engage with your audience. If done well, you can garner a good following that will boost your course sales. This chapter will discuss the answers to three important questions:

1. Why should you blog?
2. How do you blog?
3. What should you blog about?

There are two main reasons for blogging: making both you and your content easily accessible and proving your expertise. If someone is searching for a topic you teach on Google, they will easily be able to find your website if you have blog articles related to that topic. If students hear about your website, visit it, and see that your content is easily accessible, they'll want to come back and take one of your courses. The free content you deliver in your blogs will reel in some customers and help you build a relationship with them. For me, I post blog articles about basic Adobe Premiere Pro editing tips, for example. I often get visitors to the website searching for those specific tips. Some of them become paying customers.

A lot of people are hesitant about taking a course online. They won't pay unless they know they're getting a good deal and will really learn from the instructor. So, if people are able to see that you're an expert through your content, they'll be more willing to pay you for a course. How frequent you blog depends on your content and audience. If you know that you don't have content that will allow you to post weekly, choose to post on a monthly basis. However, you need to be consistent with your schedule so that your readers' expectations are met. If you post sporadically, your readers are going to give up on following you.

The quality of your content is much more important than the amount of content. You can post 200 word posts to your blog 3 times a week or 500 word posts once every week. In my experience, the 500 word posts are better. Posting once a week has helped me to gain many followers and sales. I also use my blogs to announce promotions when I do them. I like to have one blog post per week that is high quality content and then have another blog post on another day in the same week when I'm having a sale or promoting a new class. Nevertheless, the key is

to be consistent regardless of whether or not you're blogging once per week or once per month.

I recommend that you take out the publishing date for your articles. If you're posting articles religiously once per week or month and you're able to maintain this consistency then hat's off to you. However, most people who blog know how difficult it is to keep up the momentum, especially with hectic schedules. Taking out the publishing date gives you the opportunity to skip a week here and there and not look like a slacker. If you go to my website, videoschoolonline.com, you won't see any dates for any of my blog articles.

What you blog about is also crucial. You can't have a website about computer programming and be blogging about cats, for instance. You have to use keywords wisely. SEO friendly blog articles will help attract more people to your site. For example, people may not necessarily be searching for video school, but they may be searching for tips on making cinematic videos. If I have a blog article that addresses that, people will be able to find me easily and will more than likely want to purchase my course.

Action Item

Write six blog articles related to your course that are real and interesting. Six is a good number because you'll potentially have six months worth of content. You can schedule the dates when you want these articles posted. This saves you time since you're doing all of the articles at once. If I ever think of something more to add, I can post the article on another day. However, all of my articles come out on the same time on Monday each week. My students love that.

Creating Video Content Outside of Your Courses

YouTube is the 2nd most popular search engine on the internet. In fact, more than one billion people use YouTube each month. YouTube is owned by Google. These facts make it even more important to create your own YouTube channel. YouTube is a great place for you to give away free video content, build a student base, begin to learn how to teach online, interact with potential students and eventually become a successful online teacher. Quite a few of the online teachers I know on Udemy began teaching on YouTube. People love to learn from videos. They're usually easy to watch and more entertaining than reading an article. I always try to convert my YouTube subscribers to my mailing list. So, in all my videos, and in the course descriptions on my website, I include annotated links to some of my YouTube videos.

Videos are also easy to share. On YouTube you can just click the share button to share the video on Twitter and Facebook. People love sharing videos. So, just like blogging is a great way to connect with viewers, YouTube has the same effect and also boosts your SEO. The more good content you put out is the more people will find you. I have over 200,000 views for my YouTube videos and over 3,500 subscribers. It's not *Charlie Bit My Finger* numbers, but for an online school that is a couple years old, I'm happy.

Action Item

Create a YouTube profile and post one video per week. If you can't manage one video per week, post one video per month. Be consistent so that you're able to build a good YouTube presence.

Email List Basics

Building an email list is an important component for creating a successful online teaching career. The sooner you begin to create this list, the better off you'll be in the long run. This chapter will focus on defining an email list, helping you understand the clients that you can use to build your email list, and helping you choose the right content for your emails.

Essentially, an email list is a directory of people's e-mail addresses. In the online teaching profession, these e-mail addresses are usually those of students who are already enrolled in your courses or who have signed up for newsletters or promotions. There are a few options for applications that build email lists. Some of these options include: Aweber, MailChimp and MailPoet. Aweber and Mail Chimp will provide you with a variety of opt-in buttons that you can use on your website to capture email addresses when people input them. MailPoet is my favorite application because it is *FREE* and does everything I want. I've been using it for quite awhile.

Emails that you send should be meaningful. It is a requirement by law for each email to have an unsubscribe option. You don't want people to be clicking that button. So, you have to make the content of your emails meaningful. The aim of your e-mail blasts is to give away free, educational content. You don't want to overburden your e-mail list with too many promotional blasts. For instance, for videoschoolonline.com, I have 1 automatic email that is sent each week that includes the previous week's blog post and a promotion about my latest class or course. At the same time each Sunday, each person on my email list receives such an email. I set it up to do so automatically using the MailPoet plugin.

There are three engagement tactics that should be in all of your emails: the unsubscribe button, links to your website, and links to your social media profiles. Always include something that will get the reader to click back to your website or social media profile. The purpose of the email is to keep your audience engaged and bring them back to your website where they can purchase another course.

Getting more email subscribers isn't as daunting a task as it may seem. One strategy that you can use to get more subscribers is using a call to action. A call to action is essentially a

statement that you include in your course that encourages people to subscribe to your email list. Another strategy that you should employ is including free giveaways. You can give away a free ebook, a free course, or a guide that is related to your course. Give something that your audience will value when people subscribe to your email list. Check out [OnlineTeachingCareer.com](https://www.onlineteachingcareer.com) for a good example of this. I give away a free eBook with tips for signing up for my mailing list.

Action Item

Sign up to one of the email list applications and start build an email list. Include a plugin on your website that directs people to your email list. For instance, I allow people to sign up for my newsletter. This allows me to capture their email addresses for my email list. After you've created your email list, ask your students to visit your website and subscribe. Offer something to them. Post a video on YouTube and ask people to subscribe.

Website Hosting With Bluehost.com

All websites are hosted somewhere. Every piece of data (text, photos, videos, audio files) that you place on your website has to be stored somewhere. Even free webhosting sites, such as Wordpress, store data somewhere. These websites that offer free webhosting are able to do so because they make money from advertising and don't give you all the options you need to take your website to the next level. This is where self-hosting is ideal. When you self-host your website, you purchase space for a set monthly fee. [Bluehost.com](https://www.bluehost.com) is a great website for hosting. I host all my websites there. They're always there when I need to call or online chat with them. They also respond to my emails quickly. However, the real thing that sets [Bluehost.com](https://www.bluehost.com) above other hosting sites is that you pay one monthly price and get unlimited uploads, unlimited storage, and unlimited domain hosting. I can host my [onlineteachingcareer.com](https://www.onlineteachingcareer.com), [videoschoolonline.com](https://www.videoschoolonline.com) and personal website ([philebiner.com](https://www.philebiner.com)) for one price. If you're interested in using Bluehost, use my affiliate link to visit their site. The link is [videoschoolonline.com/getbluehost](https://www.videoschoolonline.com/getbluehost). I'll get a little commission on the sale at no cost to you.

So, when you use Bluehost, you have to use a website builder. I use Wordpress because it's a very easy and versatile website. You can download a Wordpress theme or a ThemeForest theme and use it for your site. I can also use an assortment of plug-ins on my website.

It takes a little bit of effort to get started, but once you take the time to learn how it work, everything will be worth it!

Action Item

Purchase web hosting from [Bluehost](https://www.bluehost.com) or another site and start building your own website. Link it to Wordpress and then install a theme.

Using WordPress to Create Unique and Professional Websites

WordPress is one of the most versatile website building sites on the internet. In this chapter, we'll be looking at how to use WordPress.org (not the free Wordpress.com) and a variety of plug-ins to create unique and professional websites.

The WordPress Dashboard is where you edit your website. You can go to it directly by typing the name of your website/wp-admin in your address bar. I use Google Analytics with my WordPress site so that I can see the number of visits to my site. I also use this feature to see the number of times my keywords have been searched for in the past month. WordPress also has its own statistics feature that allows you to see how many posts you've made, how many pages you've created, and how many categories, tags and comments you have. It also allows you to see the number of visitors you've had in the past day, week or month, as well as the number of views per visitor and the pages and articles these visitors have used the most.

Another plug-in that I use is called PrettyLink. It allows me to change the appearance of the links on my site. I can create links that have simple and easy-to-remember text. I have a variety of plug-ins on my website including: the All in One SEO Pack, Google Analyticator, Google XML Sitemaps, and NextScripts. The All in One SEO pack allows you to choose a title and tags for your post that will make it SEO friendly; Google XML Sitemaps allows search engines to quickly index your website; and NextScripts allows you to auto-post your latest posts on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn spam free.

I suggest not hosting your own videos on your website because they will slow down your site. Post them on Youtube or Vimeo and direct your visitors to them via links or embedding. The Appearance tab on the Dashboard allows you to change and edit your theme and add widgets to your sidebar. There are a variety of options with WordPress. So, play around with it for awhile to become familiar with how to use it effectively.

Wordpress has endless possibilities. Watch some tutorials online to learn more about the power of Wordpress.

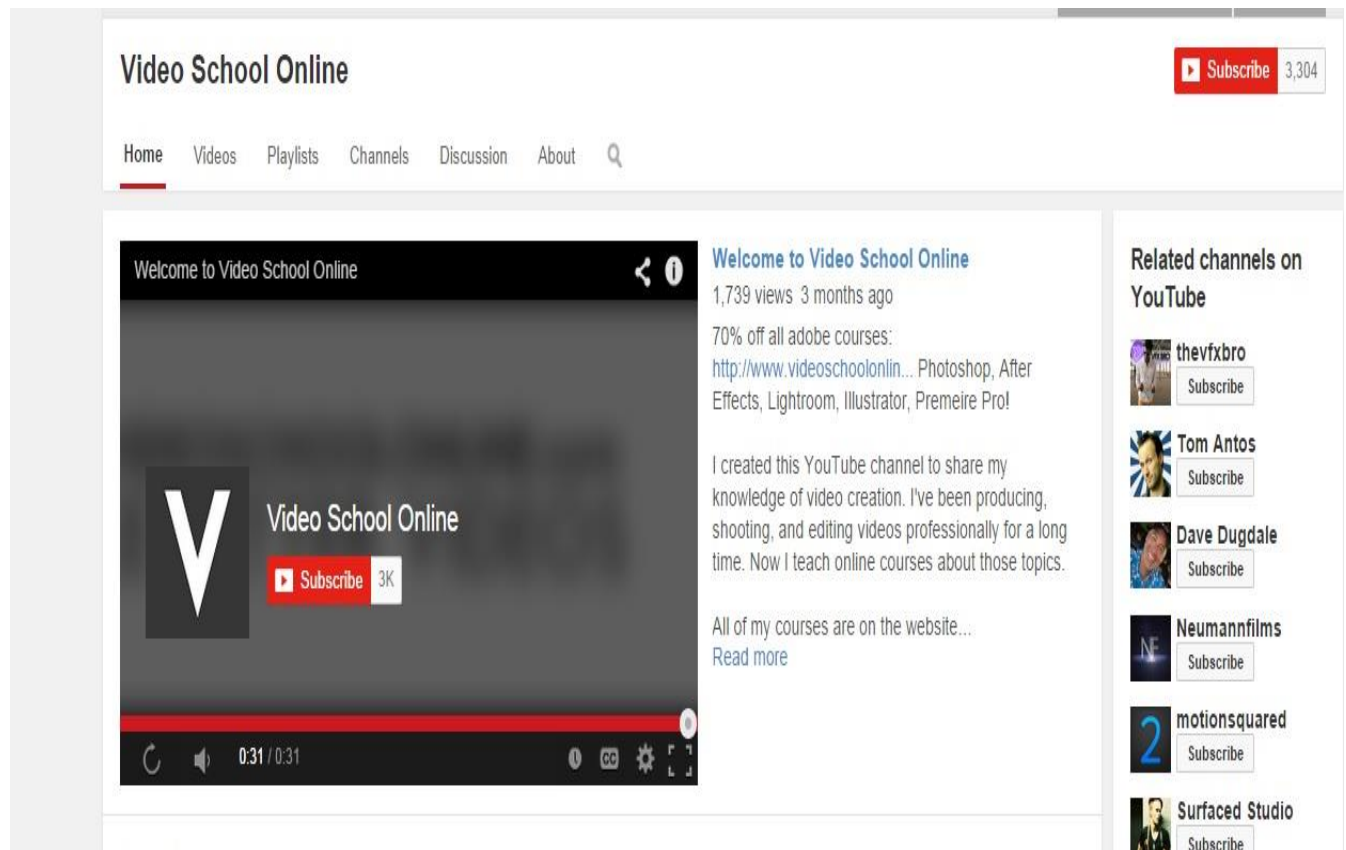
Action Item

Build your own WordPress site. Populate the site with your current content. Post new articles and links to videos each week. Post your blog articles on the schedule that works best for you.

Using YouTube to Build Your Audience

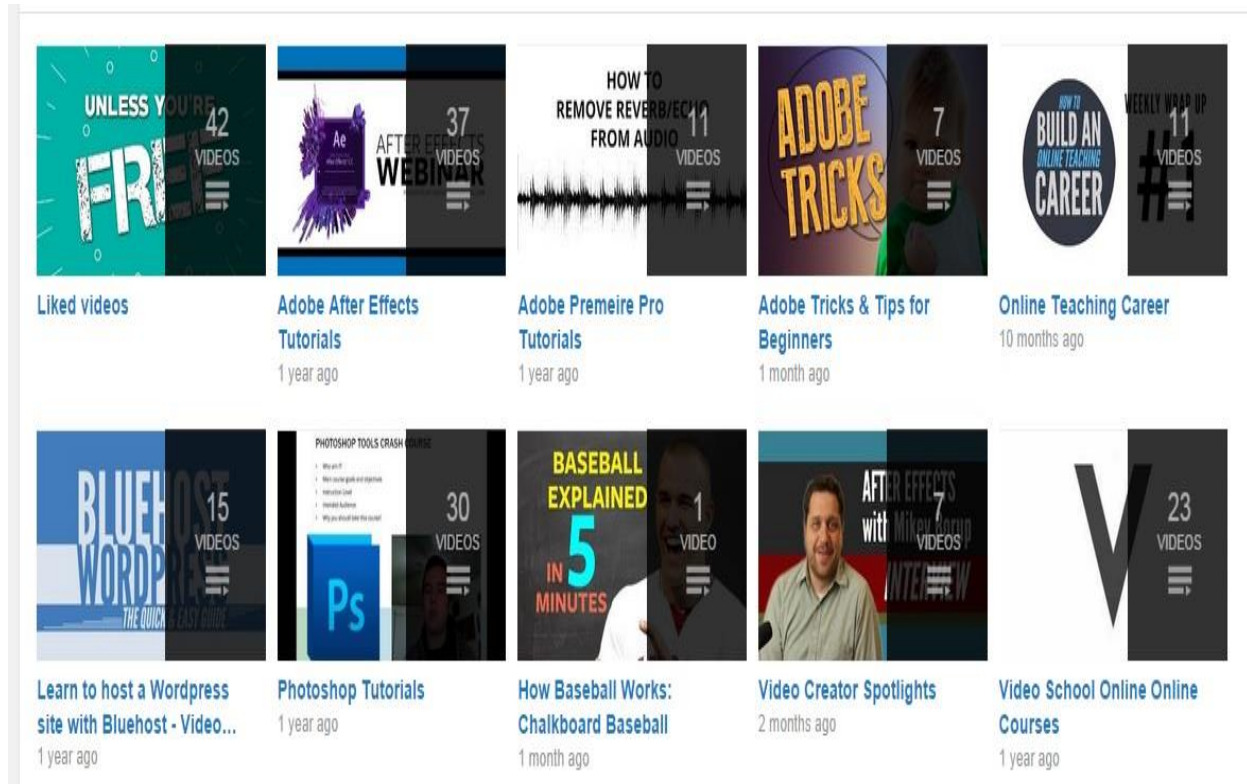
As mentioned in a previous chapter, YouTube is the 2nd most popular search engine. We've already discussed its importance. It's now time to discuss how to use it to build your audience. This chapter will focus on how to design a great YouTube channel, the difference between views, subscribers, and monetizing your YouTube videos for extra cash.

One of the first things that you should add to your YouTube channel is a trailer. The main video on my page is the trailer for my channel. I can change this trailer to any video on my site if I want to. Some people use their trailer to welcome people to the channel. I created a *commercial* for my YouTube channel that welcomes anyone visiting the channel for the first time. This video should grab people's attention and make them want to watch another video and subscribe.



The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for 'Video School Online'. At the top, the channel name 'Video School Online' is displayed on the left, and a red 'Subscribe' button with '3,304' subscribers is on the right. Below the channel name is a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Videos', 'Playlists', 'Channels', 'Discussion', and 'About'. The main content area features a video player with a thumbnail that says 'Welcome to Video School Online' and includes a 'Subscribe 3K' button. To the right of the video player, the video title 'Welcome to Video School Online' is shown, along with '1,739 views 3 months ago'. The video description includes a promotional offer: '70% off all adobe courses: http://www.videoschoolonlin... Photoshop, After Effects, Lightroom, Illustrator, Premeire Pro!'. Below the description, there is a paragraph: 'I created this YouTube channel to share my knowledge of video creation. I've been producing, shooting, and editing videos professionally for a long time. Now I teach online courses about those topics.' and a 'Read more' link. On the right side of the page, there is a 'Related channels on YouTube' section listing several channels with their profile pictures and 'Subscribe' buttons: 'thefxbro', 'Tom Antos', 'Dave Dugdale', 'Neumannfilms', 'motionsquared', and 'Surfaced Studio'.

Once you start posting a lot of videos to your Channel, you can create playlists to organize them. I have a variety of playlists on my channel. Some of these playlists are shown in the screenshot below.



Playlists are great because people will generally want to watch more than one video if it's about the same topic. When watching videos from a playlist, YouTube will automatically start the following video when the first finishes. This is great because it gets you more views, and more potential sales.

I believe that the number of subscribers is more important than the number of views. Subscribers won't subscribe to your channel unless they're really interested in your content. You can get people to become subscribers by using annotations in your videos or adding a link to your subscription page in your descriptions. You can also ask people to subscribe at the end of each of your videos.

Viewer engagement is important in order for you to receive potential students from your videos. I've received a lot of comments and I try to reply to each one. Engaging my viewers in this way could lead to potential sales. So, I always ensure that I make an effort to reply.

Another way to promote your brand is through commenting on other people's YouTube videos. Whenever you create a comment on another person's video, or even your own video, you're actually promoting your YouTube channel since your name and icon appears. Hopefully, if someone sees the comment they might click on my profile. If you really pay attention to the comments that you make on other people's videos and your own videos, you could quickly become viewed as a subject matter expert who people will want to learn more from. Don't post links to your website when you're commenting. That will be seen as spam and will probably be a deterrent to people who may be interested in what you have to say. Just be real and make informative comments.

An important point that I must make is the psychological effect of trolls. Trolls are people who prowl the internet making disparaging comments about people's work. Ignore them. If you get wrapped up in responding or trying to argue with them, you're going to lose the battle and it's not going to be good for your psyche. Mark their comments as spam and YouTube will take them down.

When you sign up for YouTube there is an option in the Settings tab that allows you to become a partner. This allows you to earn some money from your videos and create banners for your site. I strongly suggest you do this. If you want to monetize video you've uploaded, you would go to the "Info and Settings" tab and click the monetize option. Every extra penny I can make from my videos is worth it to me. I have been earning roughly \$70 on my YouTube videos each month. It may not seem a lot compared to the thousands that I make on sites like Udemy and Skillfeed, but \$70 per month is \$840 per year! That's a month of rent and utilities or car insurance! Can't beat that!

Action Item

Continue creating YouTube videos. Create awesome cover art and an engaging channel. Cover art is very important when you want to grow your audience because the more polished it is, the more people will return to your channel, subscribe, and eventually become paying students. Also, spend 15 minutes per week commenting on videos related to your content. The more videos you comment on is the more you'll be promoting your brand. This will ultimately lead to more paying customers.

Writing a Great Description on YouTube

Using your video descriptions wisely is key to getting more traffic to your website. This chapter will focus on where to put website links in your course description, the importance of a call to action, and the default settings of your description.

If you've ever watched a YouTube video you'll see the first few lines of the video's description with an arrow at the side giving you the option to view more. Most people aren't going to click that button to view more of the description. So, you have to ensure that your website link is in the first few lines of your video description. You also need to use keywords effectively. Use words and phrases that people would be searching for. This increases the likelihood of them finding your video. Also, make your video description at least 4 sentences long.

The final sentence of your description should be a call to action. You can say such things as:

"Subscribe here."

"Subscribe to my channel."

"Leave a comment below."

"Check out the course."

Having a sentence that prompts action will more than likely encourage your viewers to carry out that action. You should also include links to your website, related courses, and social media pages here.

One way to easily automate the bulk of your YouTube descriptions is to use Default Descriptions. To do this, go to your channel image in the top right; click on Creator Studio; click on Channel Settings; and then click on Defaults. You will be able to create some default settings that will be time-savers. So, instead of having to retype your web address, social media links,

and call to action you can just put all of that information into your default page. Once this is done, that information will automatically appear in your description. All you'd have to do is add a paragraph of what the video is specifically about each time you upload.

Action Item

Change your default settings so that you don't have to retype your standard information.

Using Annotations to Get More Engagement on YouTube

An annotation is essentially a pop-up bubble or highlighted link box that shows up inside the YouTube video player. It is clickable and a great way to boost viewer engagement. Although a lot of people do click the X button to get rid of these annotations while watching, there are a lot of people who pay attention to them. My YouTube analytics tell me that people are clicking these little boxes. So it isn't something that should be overlooked.

What you put in an annotation depends on what you're trying to achieve. Are you trying to get people to subscribe to the channel? Are you trying to get people to sign up for a class? Are you trying to showcase your website? You may want to do all three things or focus on one. The choice is yours. You need to ensure that the annotation is large enough so that people can see it. I like putting my annotations close to the beginning of the video because a lot of people don't watch the entire video. Change the background color of the annotation to something that contrasts with the video itself.

Adding an annotation is a simple process. Click on your video page and go directly to the Annotations tab. There are 5 options: a switch bubble, a note, a title, a spotlight, or a label. In a label, text pops up when you hover over the icon. A spotlight is the videos that you often see displayed at the end of a video you were watching. A note allows you to put any text anywhere in your video. After you've created your annotation, you can use the timeline below to extend it for however long you want it to last. Regardless of where you put it, always ensure that it links to something.

It's important for you to include a link to your brand's website. This is when you need to set up an Associated Website. You have to enable this feature by going to Video Manager, clicking on Channel settings, clicking on Monetization under the features option and then clicking External Annotation. This Associated Website link allows you to add links to your website and other external sites.

Action Item

Add subscribe annotations to all of your YouTube videos. These annotations prompt people to subscribe to your YouTube channel.

Interviewing and Podcasting to Grow Your Audience

Interviewing and podcasting can be time-consuming. However, there are numerous benefits associated with each that will boost your brand. This chapter will discuss the benefits of both interviewing and podcasting, and will guide you through using both to build your audience.

Podcasts are essentially audio files that can be downloaded or streamed. You can record them using the same software that you use to record your video and then just export as an audio file. You could also choose to use more professional audio recording software like Adobe Audition, or even GarageBand. I use my Blue Snowball microphone to record podcasts. Podcasts have been around for awhile, but people have only just recently fully bought into the idea. Some of the most successful marketers and brands use podcasts. The reason they're so successful is because they provide a direct link with the consumer. There are no visuals, just your voice and your consumer's mind. Your consumer can be listening to your podcast while working out, driving to work, or cooking a meal. Whatever they choose to do, they can connect with you in a way that they wouldn't be able to when watching videos or reading articles.

There are a couple of websites that are great for hosting podcasts for free. Two of these websites are podomatic and podbean. However, they both have limits on the amount of online space you have. Once you've reached that limit, you have to pay to increase the space. So, it can cost money to truly host a great podcast because it takes up a lot of space. In the future, I'll be creating a course on Podcasting on a Budget for Beginners. This will be a great resource for anyone trying to do podcasting to build their audience.

Trying to get interviewed on other people's podcasts is another great idea. Once you start creating a lot of courses, building your student base, and building professional contacts, someone is bound to want to interview you for a podcast. Interviews let people learn more about you and also help you to reach a wider audience. So, just put in the hard work to build your student base and this added benefit will surely follow.

Action Item

Start a monthly podcast by interviewing experts in your field. I think that it's better to use podcasts in this way because listeners are interested in hearing other people's stories. If you reach out to people as a podcaster they will more than likely want to be interviewed because they're getting a chance to promote themselves.

Hosting a Webinar

Webinars are amazing spaces for providing awesome content and promoting any new course or course you already have. You can host webinars using web applications such as GoToMeeting, Citrix, and Google Hangouts on Air. The benefits of hosting a webinar include you providing good, high-quality information for people. They can become acquainted with you, your teaching style, and your topics. You can also try to get them to purchase one of your courses.

Pick a specific topic. Send an email blast to your students telling them the time and date on which you are going to host this webinar. Post an announcement on social media to get people to sign up. Remind them the day before and at least 15 minutes before the webinar begins and rock and roll!

If you use Google Hangouts on Air to do a webinar (it's free!), it can post your webinar video on your YouTube channel automatically. You can download it from YouTube and then take it down from the site so that people aren't able to see it before you want them to. You can then sell this webinar as a course, or use it as a sales-funnel to get more people into one of your courses.

I have an example of a webinar I held on the home page of VideoSchoolOnline.com. It was a webinar for After Effects beginners that I repurposed into a sales funnel.

Action Item

Practice hosting a webinar on Google Hangouts on Air. If you need experts for a particular topic, don't be afraid to reach out to people. Getting more people involved in a webinar can draw a larger audience. If it's something that I can contribute to, I would love to be on your webinar.

Using Google Analytics the Right Way

Knowing the demographics of customers helps online marketers effectively plan their campaigns. Where they're located, what their online patterns are, what sites they're clicking, what pages they go to, and what they're searching for on Google are some of the things that they look at. This data can also help you tailor your content to match what the customer really wants from your brand.

Knowing where your traffic comes from is very important because it helps you to target the right audience. Is your traffic coming from the US or the UK? What types of items are they searching for? Are they searching for Video School Online or are they finding my site by searching for video editing techniques? What do they click on most when they visit your homepage? Google analytics provides you with the power of such knowledge. Learn to use this knowledge well and you'll truly succeed as an online instructor. Use this data to create an effective marketing campaign.

I could write a whole book about using Google Analytics. Just know that you should be checking out who your customer is so that you can market your courses to that audience.

Action Item

Sign up for Google Analytics and start tracking your traffic. The earlier you start the more data you'll have. You'll be able to use this data to improve your brand.

Using YouTube's Analytics to Grow Your Tribe

YouTube Analytics is similar to Google Analytics. What you do with the data you obtain will make the difference between creating a successful brand and creating a brand that falls by the wayside.

On your YouTube analytics you'll see: an overview of performance, minutes watched, estimates of your AdSense, your top videos by views, the gender of people watching your videos, where the people who're watching your videos come from, and your earnings. So, you can use these statistics to see your most popular videos and the demographics of your audience.

Playback locations allow you to see the websites on which your videos are being watched. Some of your videos will be embedded on your website and Facebook page. People may also be sharing your videos on other websites so you'll see that data there as well.

Audience retention is another important feature. It shows you how much of a video people are watching. For instance, 15% of the people who clicked on my After Effects tutorial Basic Motion Graphics video actually watched it to the end. However, for my Export Settings Video 66% of the people watched it.

Engagement reports tell you how engaged your viewers were. Basically, it's about how many subscribers you got from someone watching this video. For instance, for my How to Build an Online teaching Course last October, 15 people clicked on my subscription annotation. Only 7.45% of the viewers closed it.

Basically, by looking at all of this data, you'll know what types of videos people like. You can then create more videos just like that!

Action Item

Regularly look at your YouTube analytics to see where your traffic is coming from and how much time they spend on your videos. Knowing this will help you to create better videos and ultimately garner more students.

The Importance of Tracking Your Earnings

Tracking your earning is crucial, especially because you have to pay taxes. You cannot evade the taxman. You have to pay taxes on everything you earn. It's just how the world works. So, it's important for you to save a percentage of your earnings that you know you're going to have to use for taxes. I try to save 25% of my earnings for taxes – just in case!

You also want to be able to make the most money with your time. By tracking your earnings you can know what courses and promotions did well. If certain courses and promotions aren't doing well it's best to abandon them. You may find that a course on an unpopular topic isn't doing well while another one is selling like hot cakes. It would, therefore, be more prudent for you to create a more advanced class for the latter course.

Whatever you earn, ensure that you invest in yourself. When I started online teaching I had a goal to buy the \$100 HD webcam when I made \$1000. After I accomplished this goal, I create another goal. I used some of my money to pay off my student loans. I used my earnings to start a retirement fund. My earnings will help pay for my wedding and a future house. The point is that you should ensure that you invest some of your money in yourself.

Two Important Tips: Transparency and Numbers

Being Transparent- the Key to Success

Transparency is important for winning the trust of your students. I'm sure you've appreciated how transparent I've been in presenting my earnings. People know when someone is putting up a front and trying not to be transparent. They won't like your courses if you build that barrier.

I've received many positive comments from students thanking me for sharing my monthly income statements. It inspired them because they're in the same position that I was in when I started. So, don't hold anything back. If you hold anything back your course isn't going to be as good as it could be.

Using Your Numbers to Grow Your Audience

When you start to grow into the awesome online instructor I know you can be, your numbers will increase. It's important for you to use those numbers to your advantage. On my website, when I reached 15,000 students I posted a big banner on my homepage that said, "Thank you to the 15,000 students that are taking videoschoolonline.om courses." It was a way of *giving back* and letting my followers know how excited I was to be their teacher. It also qualified me as a great teacher for anyone visiting the site for the first time.

So, every achievement you make, announce it to the world. Be loud and proud on your social media sites and website. Feel good about yourself. Other people will congratulate you and they will help you get even more students because people will start noticing you.

Teaching Your Next Class-Topics, Style and More

So, you've followed my advice and you've created your first class. How do you capitalize on the movement you've created? You want to build on this momentum and truly establish your online teaching career. What can you do?

The first step is choosing a topic that will sell. Did your previous course sell well or not? You will be able to know this information from your analytics. If it is selling then you can build on that by creating more advanced courses about this topic or choose related topics. If it isn't then you need to go back to the drawing board. Selling related topics has worked well for me. I have created multiple series of courses about Video Production, Motion Graphics and Photography.

Ensure that you maintain your style throughout your courses. Keep the same fonts, colors, style of voice, and on screen presence. If there was something wrong with these things in your previous course, however, feel free to change them in your next course. Maintain the same logo and brand or update your branding across all of your platforms, courses, and profiles. You don't want to confuse people. Get your students interested in your new course at least two weeks before its release. Give them discounts on release day. Continue to build your brand this way by creating new courses every few months.

Action Item

Start brainstorming your next course. This is just the beginning of an amazing online teaching career. If you're interested in diving deeper into this topic, enroll in the online course now. Get serious about your online teaching career by visiting VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer for an incredible offer. You will save \$300!

Also, if you want a **free eBook** with 10 Action Items for getting more students, subscribe to my email list here: OnlineTeachingCareer.com

The End is the Beginning + Special Offer

We've come to the end of this intense book!, I hope you've enjoyed it and now are able to start your own online teaching career. I started out just like you. I had *no experience teaching online, no experience marketing online, and no experience making money online*. Now, I have a successful online school, and I am so excited for the future – wherever it takes me.

THANK YOU for reading this book. Please recommend it to a friend. Write a review on Amazon, or wherever you purchased the book. I hope that I've truly inspired and helped you.

If you're interested in going more in-depth with all of these topics, enroll in my *Teach Online: Make Money Doing What You Love* course. As a special offer for reading this book, I want to give you a great deal on the course. Normally the course costs \$499. However, purchasing this book means that you can **enroll for just \$199**. Use the coupon code '[ebookspecialoffer](#)' while checking out or just visit VideoSchoolOnline.com/ebookspecialoffer to go straight to the course page. There's a great community of fellow online teachers in the course starting their own online teaching career. Here's one review that shows how the course is helping these teachers launch their careers:

"I have to say, that this is a very detailed and well thought out course. I just started online teaching and by putting into action the steps he outlines, I have made \$200.00 in just my first two days.

Thanks,

Nancy and Deborah"

I can't wait for you to join the course! Good luck with everything!

Cheers!

Phil Ebiner

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