**SPI Podcast Session #136 -
How to Build an Online Course that Sells —
with David Siteman Garland**

Show notes: www.smartpassiveincome.com/session136

This is the Smart Passive Income podcast with Pat Flynn, session #136.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income podcast, where it's all about working hard now, so you can sit back and reap the benefits later.

And now your host, he has a backpack with his name on it, Pat Flynn!

Pat Flynn: What's up everybody? Pat Flynn here and that you for joining me in episode 136 of the Smart Passive Income podcast. I'm so excited because we have a great guest on the show, but really quick I just want to mention something about that backpack that the voice over guy John Melley was talking about. I feel like my backpack has gotten a little famous lately because when I go to conferences a lot of people are like "Where's your backpack?" if I'm not wearing it or they even want to take pictures with it if they see it, which is really interesting.

It's a red backpack, it says "Hello, my name is Pat" similar to what you see in the sidebar of smartpassiveincome.com, which was the purpose of me getting it and it's worked out really well because I tell people "Hey, if you're going to a conference and I happen to be there, just look out for the red backpack" and a lot of people came up to me and say "Hey, I knew it was you because I saw the backpack".

Anyway, I just thought I'd throw that out there. So if you're ever at a conference and you see a red backpack that says 'Pat' on it, it's probably me so feel free to come up and say hi, I'd love to say hi back.

Anyway, going back to today's content, we have an amazing guest, David Siteman Garland from therisetothetop.com is with us. What's interesting about David and his journey - and he'll talk a little bit about it in the beginning of this episode before we get into the meat of the show, which is going to be extremely valuable to you, a lot of you, anybody who wants to create a digital or online course, because that's exactly what he's an expert in right now.

He's helping teach thousands of people do this, and not just like little rinky-dinky $97 courses. This is courses that you could charge quite a bit of money for ad we talk exactly about how to create those products and courses, what it's like to sell it and market it and also pricing is a big topic that we talk about today as well.

This is going to be followed up by an episode with Amy Porterfield in episode 137 where we can take your digital product or any other product that you might have, a membership site, whatever but it sort goes along with this particular episode today. Amy in the next episode is going to talk about how to create a three part video series to help launch that with a bang.

We'll get to that in the next episode, but with this episode I'm really excited because David is one of the nicest guys I know. He used to have a podcast actually with his brand, The Rise to the Top. He was one of the originals to interview successful entrepreneurs. I feel like it was him and Andrew Warner over at Mixergy.com. Two completely different styles. I love them both but David is just super friendly. I was on his show and it was one of the easiest interviews to do because he just makes you feel so comfortable when he's interviewing you and I feel like I got a lot of inspiration from David and his podcast from back in the day.

But he sort of dropped the podcast, which was a big deal and I miss the show but he's gone on to focus on teaching people how to create these online courses and he's done an amazing job. Actually a lot of the questions I ask are extremely selfish in this episode because I myself am looking for the best ways to create an online course. So you're going to hear this conversation, you're going to get a lot out of it. Without further ado, let's welcome David Siteman Garland from therisetothetop.com who is going to teach us all about how to build online courses that sell.

What's up everybody, I'm so happy to welcome my good friend David Siteman Garland to the podcast with us. I've been on his show a couple of times and now he's on with us. He's going to drop some knowledge bombs. David, what's up? Welcome to the show?

David Siteman Garland: Hey Pat, what's up man? Yeah, bringing my bombs full of knowledge here. Thanks for having me, it's going to be great!

Pat Flynn: This is so cool. I first just want to congratulate you on the upcoming new addition to your family. I'm so happy for you. How's all that going in the household and stuff?

David Siteman Garland: I am super stoked. I have a little girl, for those that don't know, that's due on Valentine's Day so very excited. Very quickly, as soon we found out that it was a girl, it was just a flood of pink that has come into my house. All of a sudden, seriously within 25 minutes there's a pink bunny. I don't even know where it came from. Stuff just comes out of nowhere. So very excited about it, I'll have my hands full because I'll have my wife and then a mini version of her. I can't be more excited. I know you go down that path of dad-dom yourself. I'm super stoked.

Pat Flynn: I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. I'm so happy for you.

You have done a lot and a lot of people know you from your podcast but you're not doing that anymore, you're doing some other stuff. Can you talk about the journey you've had since you've started to where you're at now?

David Siteman Garland: Sure, I'll give the Cliffs Notes version of it for sure. I started my business The Rise to the Top in 2008 online. I believe, Pat that was a similar time to when you started. I remember there was some kind of magical - it was like October 2008, there was a whole group of people that started around then.

Pat Flynn: That's when I got laid off, I don't know if that was the case for you.

David Siteman Garland: What I did was, I was working in the in-line hockey industry a couple of years before that, a really random story. I came up with this idea to do an online show and podcast. Really how it started, it was all about entrepreneurship. It was very broad, it was very early on. Remember it was 2008, the podcasting landscape and online shows was very different than it is now. Very different.

For five years, what I spent most of my time doing - about four years into five, I would interview entrepreneurs all around the world, ranging from Tony Hsieh from Zapos to Seth Godin to this and that, Daymond John, anyone that I could get my grubby hands on, I interviewed.

The business model that I had at the time has evolved big time and what I did early on was, it was all about sponsorships and trying to build an audience and figure out what to do. Again, I had no experience so everything I was doing was complete trial and

error. Where the big shift came in - and this I think it pretty interesting, is that because I interviewed so many diverse people (you being one of them, right Pat?), there's all these different industries that I talk to people in - and not just industries but models of entrepreneurship, right?

You kind of had the tech people and the mom-and-pop people and the start-up people. As I interviewed people, I started realizing that I resonated the most with the sort of secret online world of content creators and people that created their own products and programs and sold them online. Some people call them the expert industry. I came up with the term called Mediapreneur to describe those folks.

What was interesting, and I know Pat, you'll resonate with this and so will Smart Passive Income nation over there, is that the lifestyle and the way that they described their businesses was different than anything else. You were talking to people that were working from anywhere, you were talking to people that controlled their own destiny, they could be at home with their kids or travelling around. Whatever they wanted to do, they seemed to have smaller teams, their stress levels seemed to be lower, and they seemed genuinely happy and also making a lot of money and helping people.

I thought that was pretty darn cool and this is where I started discovering these sort of online course creators, ranging in the early days from Marie Forleo and Ali Brown, Derek Halpern and Ryan Lee and people like that in this world. I just became obsessed with it and I started interviewing just those types of people, soaking everything up like a sponge and then I started launching my own products and programs several years ago and that's where the business took off.

Pat Flynn: Anyone who was following you (and I was one of them), we definitely saw that shift. You came out with some videos and was very honest about where you were going and I appreciated that.

I'm a little sad that your podcast isn't live anymore because it was such a good podcast. I feel like you were one of the original people who started interviewing other entrepreneurs. You and Andrew Warner. You in particular were such a good interviewer. It was one of my favorite shows to be on, you asked the best questions and you're always just friendly and you made me feel comfortable. You could tell when guests come on your show that that's the case. Thank you for the inspiration for how to run interviews.

David Siteman Garland: I appreciate that. That's great to hear. Honestly, the reason I stopped doing the podcast - my last episode was published right at the end of 2013 - was a couple of reasons:

1) I was just kind of burned out. To be 100% honest. After doing five years of shows I was kind of going through the motions the last few months and I don't want to be in a business where I'm just going through the motions.

2) Where we've evolved now - just to complete that story, and you know the story, I launched my own program about doing interviews online and that program took off and I became very obsessed with creating and selling digital products and programs and did that for a couple of years. The question started being 'How do I create my own online course and sell it online?' and that's when our business really took off.

That's now what our entire focus is, it's helping people create and sell their own online course. What was interesting was that as business took off, it took up most of my "business time." I am putting "business time" in quotes, not like that weird song where business time is a metaphor for sexy time.

Pat Flynn: [Laughs]

David Siteman Garland: We're talking in the time that I was spending. I might bring back the podcast. I've thought about it. It might happen. I've teased that before. I just want to make sure that we're doing it for good reasons, you know?

Pat Flynn: Right. Again, we're talking to David from therisetothetop.com and if you go to that home page, you'll see great pictures and he says "I help people create and sell digital products and programs online," very clear. I think I need your help because I've been doing this for quite a while and I just don't have my own online product yet and there are so many which ways to go, so many different programs to use, so many types of courses to create. How does one get started? How do I get started trying to figure out what to do first or what course to create?

David Siteman Garland: It's a great question, Pat. Let me tell you, I was like this several years ago. I had people coming up to me left and right, saying "David, you need to create your own products and programs" and I had written a book and I'd done some other stuff, I just hadn't got grasped around it. My program that I have right now didn't exist, otherwise I would buy it! I had to do it really by trial and error. I think the first thing to think about - and this is key before we get into topic and all that

kind of jazz, online courses is a great tool to use to generate revenue and help people, especially if you don't want to be on that type of treadmill. When there's a treadmill out there of membership sites and other things like that - and I'm not knocking membership sites or anything, I'm just saying for my personality and maybe for yours too Pat, I think it's great when you can create something once and sell it over and over again.

Pat Flynn: Right, so this is actually different than a membership site, because I think some people combine online programs with membership sites. Can you define what each of those are really quick for us?

David Siteman Garland: Here's some of the key ways you can generate revenue from something that you know.

You've got the obvious ones that are out there, like one on one coaching, group coaching, speaking, all of those types of things fall into the category of what I would call "dollars for hours." Personally, I'm all about lifestyle. I don't necessarily love doing those dollars for hours things. A lot of my customers want to get out of that race as well.

Then you have the more leverage programs and those have subcategories. Here's some examples of some programs:

Online events and summits. We've done some of those Pat, actually you participated in one of those a few years ago.

You've got online courses and you've got membership sites. They'd be the three major categories of those.

Then you also have smaller things like eBooks, stuff like that. But I'm talking about more on the premium side.

The difference in my opinion between an online course and a membership site is that a membership site requires you to put up fresh content every single month, maybe it's bi-weekly, it depends on how you set it up. People come in and they can go out, they pay a fee. They can come in and go out and all that kind of jazz. You have kind of an ongoing treadmill.

There's ways of getting around that and doing it where it's more automated and stuff like that, but for me, what I love about online courses is that you can have a premium price on something. Online courses sell for premium price when you position them correctly and you have authority behind them. We'll talk about that more.

You create it once and then you sell it. It's that simple. For example, with my main online course, you can pay in full or you can pay with a 12-month payment plan, which is I know a massive payment plan. It's a massive payment plan but it's basically doing a membership site without the membership, meaning that there's no new content to create every month, it's just all up there for them. There's a difference between the methods and I have just found that online courses and e-learning is something that's taken off and will continue to grow in the future as well.

Pat Flynn: Right. Perhaps just calling it a standalone product?

David Siteman Garland: Yes. A standalone product that again, I think the big appeal is that it's like if you are the type of person that just likes to hammer down, get something done and then you get to focus on the marketing and the promoting and helping your customers and stuff like that, as opposed to the ongoing content on top of whatever other type of content you're doing as well.

Pat Flynn: A lot of people, I feel if they have solutions to provide to their audience, they're going to immediately go to something like an eBook because it's a lot faster to create, it's simple to think about and you sell it on your site or on Amazon. But why should people think about doing an online course? What makes an online course that valuable and allows you to charge premium prices for it?

David Siteman Garland: First of all, there's a value associated with something that's multimedia vs an eBook. When you see an online course, immediately on the value chain, people are like "There's videos, downloads, stuff like that", it's much more of a premium positioning than say an eBook, which could be easily given away or it's two dollars or something like that.

Then, this is what I love about online courses, you don't need a huge amount of buyers to be massively successful with it.

Let me give an example, compared to eBooks - let's say you do a $497 course - and I actually have a cheat thing in front of me, so when I'm about to throw out this math, you're going to think I'm a wizard and I'm not at all. Trust me.

If you get one buyer a day for a $497 course, one buyer a day - that's $181,405 a year. That's just giving you a scope of where it could be. You do half of that, one every other day - you're looking at about $90,000. My point is, it's very hard to make that kind of money with an eBook and I think also, and this is important too, online courses set people up for success (meaning your customers) more than an eBook.

I know eBooks are great, I consume eBooks all the time, I think they're fantastic, but if you really want to help get people results - and that's what this is all about is helping people get results, whatever that result might be, whether it's losing 10lbs or how to build a teddy bear, I don't know, whatever. That was random, I saw a teddy bear to my right...

Pat Flynn: Yeah, you are definitely in father-mode already.

David Siteman Garland: Yeah I know, there's a little bear over here.

You're in the results industry at the end of the day, getting people results and it's been proven that online courses are amazing ways to get people results by having a step-by-step system for them to follow and I think that's also where the appeal is.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, absolutely. I'm so glad you said that. A lot of people have said this to me because I give most of my information away for free and I want people to consume it and share it and things like that, but then I've had a few people, people that we both know actually say "Dude, you need a course and you're actually doing your audience a disservice by not creating a course and allowing them to more easily and more professionally go through that content".

David Siteman Garland: I agree. Here's the thing, let's think about it this way Pat, here's another great way of thinking about it, have you ever gotten something where it's free? Maybe it arrived in the mail? Maybe you saw it online? You set it aside because it's free. Maybe it's valuable and amazing but it's free.

Now think of something that has had a little bit of an impact in your wallet, that you purchased. There's that term "get your money's worth." You're doing your customers a service by doing that. People always say "Why do you charge premium prices?" and all these different things. Besides the revenue, which is amazing and also getting better customers because you're getting these premium people, it's amazing stuff that you can do at premium prices, you're also telling people "Hey, listen, let's get the pedal

to the metal here" because they're thinking "Oh my God, I've spent $1000 on this, $2000 on this, $500 on this, I'm going to get my money's worth and I'm going to show that Pat Flynn that I'm going to do his darn course and get it done and get that result.

Pat Flynn: I'm thinking about one time when my buddy offered me a disc, it was a disc for P90X and he offered it to me for free and I knew that if I were to take that I probably wouldn't complete the 90 days of training and this is sort of a home fitness training program, so I actually bought it on Amazon. I completed the training because of that.

David Siteman Garland: And that's where the transactional thing comes in here, there's a big difference again and you create some of the best content out there online, on the internet in this space, maybe anywhere and there's just a lot of room here for you to make a premium course that would absolutely crush it and not only crush it for you obviously, but also your customers and people coming in that want to get that result, whatever it may be.

Pat Flynn: Love it. So we know we want to do a course. Where do we start? Obviously, topic. Every niche has a number of different things they could create a course for. Do you go a completely narrow solution? Do you go wide? How do you even begin to think about this?

David Siteman Garland: Great. I've definitely got some steps to think about this, for sure. Here's something very important, the biggest mistake I see is people going too broad with their topic. Too broad with the topic, meaning they come up with something, it's How to Dominate on Social Media or something like that. What I encourage people to do is you either have to get very specific by audience or by topic or by both.

Let me give you an example. One of my most successful students, her name is Nikki Brown. Nikki launched her first online course this year using my program, did $60k on her first launch and now has done well over $100k on top of that.

This is one of the reasons she was successful. Here's what she did. Here is the breakdown:

She started an online business, then moved towards online marketing and then realized her sweet spot was copywriting and that's what her course is about. It's called A Course About Copy. It's just on copyrighting. See how that gets specific?

Pat Flynn: Yeah, that's very specific actually, it reminds me of episode 128 with Manu Kalia, who is a physical therapist and he created an online course that was specifically for getting better knees and it was perfectly niched even for runners. Even the copy on that particular page was just for runners. That's another great example because he did really well too and it actually helps I would imagine with your targeting, if you're doing ads, your copy and things like that.

David Siteman Garland: You're exactly right on. For example, you can also go very specific on your audience, which I also encourage. There's a guy called Christopher Stafford who has another successful course that we've done and he started with service professionals, selling for service professionals. He's got all the way down to selling for realtors. That's why his was successful, did $30k on his first launch. That's where I see one of the key things, I've been talking with a friend of mine who's working on re-branding a fitness course that he's doing and he wants to do it specifically for guys over 40.

Once you have that demographic, then think about your marketing in the back of your head, now it's easier to target on different things, exactly like you said. It's easy to target on ads. It's easy to target on places you want to be interviewed online. It's easy to target when you want to do guest blog posts and stuff like that, because you already know specifically where you want to go.

Taking a step back from that, Pat, and I think this is one of the key things to think about, is I call this the "pay attention principle" but really the idea here is, what are the most common questions that you're asked? This is the challenge for you to think about and also your entire audience. What are the most common questions that you're asked all the time? When you're on social media, when you're at a conference, after speaking at a conference, when you're in the bathroom and someone comes up to you and gives you a hug and says "Pat Flynn, you're at the toilet, I'm going to give you a hug," whatever weird stuff happens...

Pat Flynn: That's happened...

David Siteman Garland: What are the most common questions that you're asked or emailed?

Also, are there any how-to posts that you've done that went through the roof in terms of people resonating with it?

Just to give a scope, this is how I came up with my first product Create Awesome Interviews, as I started realizing people were asking me all the time "David, how did you get interviews for your show?", "How did you market your show?", "How did you get an audience?", "How did you get a sponsorship?", all these different questions all related to interviews and that's really where Create Awesome Interviews came from. Simple questions coming from people.

What I would encourage is to think about that, Pat. Then if you have an idea what it might be, that's a great time to survey your audience. I have a one question survey that you can send out, how about this one - one question.

Pat Flynn: What is it?

David Siteman Garland: All you say is 'What do you want to know more about?'

You don't tell people you're creating a course. You could if you wanted to but you say "I get questions all the time about X. What do you want to know more about?"

Do you know why you ask that question?

Pat Flynn: Tell me.

The suspense builds.

David Siteman Garland: Here's the reason:

1) You get instant feedback. It's not about the size of your audience. You could get five replies and if those five people are pretty passionate, you're going to have an idea that you have a topic that's pretty cool.

Here's a couple of things that are going to happen, and I know this because it's not my first rodeo:

1) You get to pick up some of the language and terms used that might surprise you. They're going to start writing your course for you here, when they ask their questions. They're basically creating your modules for you.

2) You'll be surprised, and this is just a case for everyone that's listening to this, if you send this out about your topic, you'll be surprised about how simplistic to you the questions are, even though they're not that simplistic. They're going to sound simplistic, like I remember I was like "What do you mean, you don't know how to get Pat Flynn on an interview? Are you kidding me? Everyone knows how to do that, right?"

Pat Flynn: Send them the rat video.

David Siteman Garland: Everyone knows how to do that.

You're going to start to pick up this terminology and the different things that people use. That's a great stand point to start to kick off the idea for your course.

Pat Flynn: Nice. So after you get those ideas, you get some information from your audience, I think surveys are an obvious thing to do, and there's different tools for managing that, right. Would you say Survey Monkey, or would just a one-liner email be OK?

David Siteman Garland: What I would prefer is something where someone has to fill out an actual thing and enter their name and email. Survey Monkey is perfect, WuFoo is another one, another survey tool.

What's cool is if I look back at that very first survey I did, the people that answered that survey have the highest conversion rate. Not surprising, right?

Pat Flynn: No, not at all, actually.

David Siteman Garland: You're going to get the most passionate people so make sure they enter their name and email so even if you put it up on social media or something like that, you're still going to have a little list of pre-buyers here, a very hot list of people, which I think is important as well.

Pat Flynn: At this point, I know a lot of people focus on validation of this idea, really making sure that this is something that will be sell-able before they actually even create it sometimes. Is that something that you recommend doing? What are your next steps after you get the survey answers back?

David Siteman Garland: I do and I don't. How do I tightrope walk this? There's two ways to look at this. First of all, if you obsess for six months over validation, you're going to be in trouble. It can be something that can be done very quickly. Money loves speed, you know.

What I would recommend doing, and this can happen before or after your survey, maybe even before if you have this topic idea, go out there and find other courses on that topic. I'm telling you, if you can't find any, start looking for other types of products and programs that are on that topic. Are there eBooks people are buying? Is there other stuff out there? Are there associations that people pay to be a part of? Are there other things out there?

The key is people spending money on this topic or not. If they're not, you don't want to waste your time trying to create an industry from thin air.

Pat Flynn: Were there people who were creating products about interviews before you created yours?

David Siteman Garland: Yes. The key is, there's many ways to stick out and we'll talk about that for sure. Here's the key. I went in there and I said "What's out there on interviews?" and then you might even have to go a step broader than your topic, so I wanted to know what's out there about interviews and what's out there about creating web shows and podcasting. This was years ago before there were a million products on this.

First of all, I noticed that Andrew Warner had something but it was just like a small $97 one hour thing on interviewing.

I saw several other people had some on how to start a show, type stuff. What realized with that, and this is an important thing to think about is that you can always go more specific as long as there's a market for it. I knew that there were people buying products on how to create an online TV show, but then I figured I could go even more specific and talk about basically how to do an online interview show.

There's always ways that you can associate with it, but if no one was spending money on how to create a show or do interviews online, that to me would be a massive red flag. It's just like going into a book store, if you go into a book store, is there one cookbook or like 10,000 of them?

Don't be scared if you see that there's other products and programs out there on your topic. That's a good thing. That's a fantastic thing. You should be kissing and hugging those people that are doing it because at the end of the day, you're going to bring your own unique teaching style, your own ways of sticking out, your own stories, and you're going to resonate with your audience more than anyone else would, which is why it's going to work. It's such a critical thing, I hate when people are like "I went out there and I saw that there's already courses on snowboarding," well not done by you, so, let's get going on that.

Pat Flynn: Thank you for mentioning that because that's something even I have personally struggled with and I know a lot of people who are out there and they're doing the research and they see these other courses, other people are doing the same things. Even before they start blogging, they're like "Oh, there's a blog about that already" and "There's an online course about that already." I totally agree with you, that actually is good because there's a market for it. How did the Segway do when they tried to re-invent walking? I only see them on the boardwalk in San Diego in little tour groups.

David Siteman Garland: Didn't the guy who started Segway die on a Segway?

We're going to quote that as unofficial facts on the Smart Passive Income podcast.

Pat Flynn: But it's true, don't be afraid if those products already exist because you're not going to copy them and create the same product, you are just getting inspired and validation from those products.

David Siteman Garland: That's right.

Pat Flynn: OK.

We have a product idea, it's validated perhaps, there are other courses out there, we have even maybe talked to a few of our audience members specifically about what we want to do and they're getting excited about it. Where do we go from there? There's a bunch of ideas in my head on what to put in this particular product. How do I organize that and how do I best share it on a platform?

David Siteman Garland: This is the moment where you panic - no I'm just kidding! No panic at all. By the way, another pro-tip here, Pat, someone like you, and I'm sure there's a lot of mini Pats in your audience as well that have maybe a wide variety of

topics and things that they can do. At the end of the day, for your first course you've got to choose one.

I've seen people try to launch three courses at once, work on four at the same time, work on two at the same time. You know what, later on you might move on to another topic, but you've got to laser focus on one. That is a huge tip, for sure.

Pat Flynn: Thank you for that. I needed that.

David Siteman Garland: By the way, this is another one before I even go through the question you asked, you also have to realize with someone like yourself, Pat and also the mini Pats that are out there, your topic is not going to be for 100% of your audience so don't worry about that.

There's no topic that you're going to come up with that's going to be 100% of your audience. So you can't worry about that either. Some people are going to like it, it's not going to be for others and it's totally fine.

Pat Flynn: A follow-up question based on that, what if I am just starting out and I hardly have any audience at all? Can I still do a course and be successful with it?

David Siteman Garland: Step 1, build your audience. The key here is that you've got to put a flag in the sand. We've had people that have started with a list of zero people and have built it up. I don't specifically teach list building per-se, but we've had people with anywhere from 400 to 1000 people on an email list launch successful courses. We had one last week actually that was one of our highest first launches ever. They started their business this summer. Then they built their list to about 1300 people that are interested in online brand building, great with design, launched a course last week, I think it did $62k in sales.

Pat Flynn: Wow.

David Siteman Garland: So it's not necessary the size, even though that does matter (wink wink), it's about the quality of the audience that you bring in. Yes, you can get started from scratch, but here's the big tip for getting started from scratch, when you're starting a platform, you have to invest in quality design. I know that sounds like "What? Where did that come from?" but when you're starting out and people come to your site and you're putting your flag in the sand as the skateboarding expert and you're Mr. or Mrs. Tricks of skateboarding, it's got to look good. Even if you're just

getting started and this is your first website and you're just getting started yesterday, investing in that design and looking like a pro is going to put you light-years ahead of the other people that are throwing up the sort of crap template when you get going.

You do want to start with list building. I think people, to create an online course, if I were to rank them in who's in the best position to do it - because I'm not going to get out here and BS and say everyone should be doing this, because it's not true is:

1 and 1a) Either someone that is making money now dollars for hours in some form or fashion with their expertise. One-on-one coaching, group coaching, something else, and they want to productize that knowledge. That's obviously someone that is well positioned to create a course, right?

2) Content creators online. You've got a podcast, you've got a blog, you've got funny cat drawings, I don't know what it is. Whatever you're doing online and you've built some kind of audience, it might be 500 people, but you've built some kind of audience. It doesn't matter if you haven't sold to them anything ever, you're still extremely well positioned to create a course if you've got people that know, like and trust you, even if it's 27 people.

3) Starting from scratch. That's where you need to really be strategic and really focus on your list building and if you know what your topic is, you're going to have a head start on the rest of us and not just build a random list. Important distinctions there for sure.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thanks David. Before we get to that answer that everybody's been waiting for after I asked that question, these things keep coming up and this is a mental one again and something that even I've struggled with in the past as well that I think we should definitely cover, at least just for a minute here.

I've been pumping content out, I've been building a relationship with my audience, everything has been free so far and now I'm going to start selling something. I'm worried I'm going to get backlash. I've sold a product already, so I'm over that hump, I've ripped the band aid off in terms of that on my site personally, but I know that there's a lot of people out there who are afraid to start selling after they've given things away for free for so long.

David Siteman Garland: Great question and it's definitely one of those key myths of what happens with online courses. First of all, let's talk about this. Will you get some backlash?

Pat Flynn: Yes.

David Siteman Garland: Probably. Yeah. You probably will. And guess what, you just have to deal with it. It's one of those cases. At the end of the day, I'm not going to let a couple of rotten apples that are in there and let's be honest are freeloady or a little douchy be the types of people that are not going to allow me to help a bunch of people by selling a product.

At the end of the day, this is what I think you have to get over - get your selfish motives out of your head and think to yourself "Oh my God, I'm going to be helping people with this product and program". If you don't believe in it, you're going to crumble when the backlash comes. If the backlash comes. Right?

Pat Flynn: Right.

David Siteman Garland: The thing is, you have to remember, you are helping people and yes, you're going to make money from it and that's a good thing, that's an amazing thing. I have to be honest too, a lot of times, that thought process of "I'm going to get a bunch of backlash" is actually way overblown than what actually happens.

We always think like 10,000 people are going to come out of the woodwork with pitchforks and have protests. I say that right now because I'm in St. Louis where I live, where we're in the midst of protests here right now over a bunch of stuff.

They're worried that the helicopters are going to be going and there's going to be flags out waving that "Pat Flynn wants money." It's just not the reality of it. You might get one or two comments, you delete them, you move on with your day and it should not affect you when it comes down to it.

Pat Flynn: It's funny how the math in terms of comments and responses is whacked out where one negative comment trumps 1000 positive comments.

David Siteman Garland: That's absolutely true. We're all human. You're going to see and you're not going to like it. If I see it, I still don't like it. But you learn to deal with it and you learn to realize that this is someone that's not your peep. You have to

realize that when you put your flag out, that you're going to be selling products and programs, your audience might adjust over time. I know mine has as well.

You're kind of saying "This is where we're going to go for now". I'm not saying that it has to be the topic of your program for the rest of your life but there's going to be some people that maybe fall off and you have to be totally cool with that because you're also going to be bringing in more people that are like "Oh my God, this is totally what I'm coming here for."

Pat Flynn: Love it.

OK, let's shift from mindset to technically how to put all of this together, kind of going back to that original question. We have this product idea, how do we get this information in our heads, our expertise onto a platform to best serve people?

David Siteman Garland: Right, so kind of 2, 3 and 4 when it comes to it. Step 1 was coming up with your topic.

I'll breeze through 2 and 3 and then we'll get to 4, which is really what you're asking about. But you kind of have to go in order.

You want to name your course, you want to price your course and then you want to record your course.

Name, price, record baby, just like that. By the way, on a note on this, I love doing this stuff up front. You are welcome to go out and do it live. You can sell and say "Hey, we're going to do a 6 module course and the first module is going to be next week," right - you can do it live.

I actually am not a fan of that. I'm not saying you can't do it. I've had customers do it and they've had success with it. But here's the thing; I would much rather have people record it all beforehand and get it all up. Here's why: you're going to be out there busting your butt, marketing and promoting this and creating marketing funnels and all the good stuff that has the right people buy. If you're also worrying about the PowerPoint for next week and you've got it going live and do the things, it's going to be a lot of overwhelm.

Pat Flynn: This is true. I've done this in the past even when I started with the Niche Site Duel back in 2010, I did an online coaching thing that I was going to turn into a

membership site or course and I took six weeks. Every week we met on a webinar and essentially I was creating the course as I was going, getting feedback from people who were there, what's missing, giving homework and things like that. I thought that was a perfect solution but it was completely overwhelming to think about how I'm going to help this beta group of students and also create a product at the end of this.

David Siteman Garland: This is just an opinion, and I've had customers do both because at the end of the day you can choose which way you want to go, I can just offer what my experience has been. I've seen people that have done it well, do it live and they just package up then they have the recordings that they can sell.

The other challenge of that too is that there's some people, and by "some people" I mean a lot of people out there who kind of want it all. They want to go at their own pace, they want to devour, they want to rock out 6 modules in a night because they're hyped up on coffee and God knows what, or you have some people that want to go through the pace thing on a weekly basis and the thing is, if you give it all to them then they can choose their own path, which way they want to go.

Pat Flynn: So you don't recommend, and I've seen courses do this in the past where you sign in and you pay and you get you login information and module 1 comes out in week 1. Even though it's already there, you're sort of drip feeding...

David Siteman Garland: Yeah, you know, I'm going on my experience and my opinion from three ways.

1) My own consumption of products.

2) Creating them and watching my students.

3) Hearing from my students about their products and programs.

I've kind of got the trifecta of everything covered here. I really do believe we're shifting towards the more on demand, binge watching, Netflix like model where you give it all to them.

Pat Flynn: That's the perfect way to put it. I watch the whole season of Orange is the New Black in like a day.

David Siteman Garland: Exactly. I think, let's give you a scope, Amy Porterfield, you know Amy...

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

David Siteman Garland: We've had many discussions about this. Amy and I are in a very high level Mastermind group that we do together, there's 6 or 7 of us and we get together once a quarter. We've got to sneak you into one of those by the way. We were talking about her main product called FB Profit Lab and she launched it twice this year. The first time she launched it, it was a drip. So here's Module 1 this week, next week is Module 2, whatever, right? And then, decided this time on her most recent launch of it after our discussions to give it all to people at once, and it definitely worked better.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome. That's good to hear. We're going to have Amy on the show. I'm actually interviewing her tomorrow and we're going to be talking about her three-video launch sequence, which she did really well with. I have you talking about how to create the course and what it's going to be like and then we're going to have her help put it all together with the marketing and launch of it.

David Siteman Garland: I don't want to toot my own horn that she learned that launch sequence from me....

That's part of the VIP launch strategy is the three-part videos and stuff. She just made it prettier than everyone else and made them awesome so that's why Amy rocks.

That's kind of my thought process on that and again, you're welcome to go and do your own experiments.

A couple of things:

1) Very briefly on the name of your course. At the end of the day, the name does not matter. It does not matter. It matters very, very little compared to the hook. The hook is the promise of what your course does for people or what you're going to be teaching them.

A hook is something like "The step-by-step system to do blank" or "Pat's blueprint to blank," the promise of what it is and who it's for is the hook.

Pat Flynn: Kind of what they're going to get out of it.

David Siteman Garland: Exactly. So for example mine, "Create awesome online courses, a proven step-by-step system to create, promote and profit from your own online course."

Pat Flynn: Nice.

David Siteman Garland: Simple.

We've had that across the board. The hook is what matters, it's your spicy nugget that you give people there.

The only thing that really matters with the name is that you want to make sure that the URL, the '.com' is available because I'm a big believer that when you're creating premium courses, you want to have it on its own .com.

Pat Flynn: Thank you, I was about to ask about that because a lot of people have their own courses, but they have the home URL and then 'slash' the name of the course. You prefer it to be on its own site. Why?

David Siteman Garland: A few reasons:

1) Branding. Each course is almost like a little sub brand of you.

2) Ease of repeating things like when you're in an interview, on social media, anything like that. I don't want to be like "Hey Pat, if you want to check out my course now, go to therisetothetop.com/file/blog/courses/createawesomeonlinecourses/monkey/patflynn

Pat Flynn: /spicynuggets

David Siteman Garland: /spicynuggets//

Instead it's like createawesomeonlinecourses.com.

It's just for a simplicity stand point when it comes for naming.

The next thing is pricing. Really fast on pricing. This is so important and it's something I learned and thank God I learned it by accident. I was going to originally price my first

course way too low. I was thinking I was going to do $97, something like that. I had two conversations with two people that changed the game for me and I want to share a quick nugget from that, if that's cool Pat.

Pat Flynn: Please.

David Siteman Garland: I spoke with Marie Forleo and I spoke with Ryan Lee. They gave two very good perspectives. Ryan was saying that the same effort is required to promote and be successful with a low-end vs high-end pricing. I was like "Huh, that's super interesting" and I found that to be very true.

Pat Flynn: So from a marketing perspective, whether it's a $97 product or a $497, you're going to put in the same amount of effort...

David Siteman Garland: Yep, the same amount of effort, so why not go for the gusto there?

The other tips that came in here and this was Marie's, repeating what I said before - you're doing people a dis-service by pricing too low just like you're potentially doing people a disservice by having it free.

Pat Flynn: I imagine some people in the audience right now saying "That's a bunch of baloney, you're just making an excuse to charge more."

David Siteman Garland: I strongly believe it because I'm telling you right now, if you look at something that's two courses next to each other, let's just say the courses are on how to publish an Amazon eBook, there's the $97 course and there's the $997 course that are sitting right there. I'm telling you right now that there's people that are getting more value, let's just say all things being equal - from the $997 course. The reason for that is that exact thing about hitting people where, if you really care about the results of the customers, you have to make sure that you're weeding out all the crappy people. Does that make sense?

Pat Flynn: Yeah, it does.

David Siteman Garland: At the end of the day, we can call it fluffy or whatever, then go ahead and bust your butt and make a $9 course and see how it goes because I'm telling you right now higher priced courses bring in more premium and more awesome people. It's just a fact. You're going to get rid of the bottom feeders by doing that.

Pat Flynn: People are more likely to take action, too.

David Siteman Garland: That's absolutely correct.

For example, I've talked to a lot of people that have products and programs and a variety of price ranges. It's the 90/10 rule. 90% of the problems, complaints, issues, lack of results come from the bottom percentage of the lowest cost item.

Pat Flynn: Here's a counter to that. I want to help as many people as possible.

David Siteman Garland: Well then go start a charity. Go start a non-profit, you know what I mean?

Pat Flynn: Some people I'm sure when you price that high will think that's way out of their price range, they'd love to take the course but they can't afford it.

David Siteman Garland: I've had someone offer me $19 and a book for my $1000 course. You're going to get people come in and say they can't afford it, you're going to hear every sob story under the sun. It's just reality, I might sound harsh, I don't meant to be. You have to stick with your laurels about what you're doing and who you're helping. You say you hope they can come back at some point, you don't compromise on anything, ever. I tell my students do the same, because at the end of the day, this is the difference between a Sacks vs Walmart. It's an old analogy but it's very true.

If you want the discerning customers, you have to be in that price and brand range of doing that, and that's why I encourage my students and people learning from me to price themselves in the top 10% of their market.

Pat Flynn: We've talked about pricing before with Ramit and we'll put links to those interviews. We've talked specifically about pricing strategies and he even talked about how when he sold his first product, he sold it for like...

David Siteman Garland: $4.95.

Pat Flynn: Yes. Now his courses are much higher but he's doing much better. He's helping a lot of people too.

David Siteman Garland: By the way, back to my harsh statement before about starting a charity or non-profit, you can also point people that can't afford it right now to free content. Part of this is, remember you mentioned that free video series about talking about that with Amy, we have a free video series, we have free cheat sheets, we have free this, free that, you point people to that. You say "Hey, here's some great content to help you" so it's not like you're saying "Go screw yourself," I would not encourage doing that. At the end of the day, you're going to say "Hey, here's my great free stuff but if you want to take your game to the next level and you're ready for it, here's my premium stuff." If they don't want that or they're not ready for it, they're not the right customer.

Pat Flynn: Pointing people to those free videos is great actually. Michael Port just did a launch for his public speaking course and I'm going to be taking that. Those videos leading up to that launch were amazing. I would have paid money just for those. Now I'm in his course. I think Amy said on one of her latest podcasts about the video series, she wants to people to - no matter if they buy her course or not, to come away with something amazing from those videos.

David Siteman Garland: Right, because you're actually teaching stuff in the videos and that's what's critical. It's a good question and shift in mindset. As you get into this, you're going to start realizing that it is very true, you're going to get the discerning customer and you're going to have some people that maybe aren't a great fit and that's OK as well.

Back to what we were talking about in terms of recording the course and getting it up, there's a lot of different options here. There's a big myth here that the technology is going to be insanely difficult and confusing. As an entrepreneur who is doing this, it really comes down to getting in the trenches and learning how to do it. Doing support, contacting these companies (I will mention a few of them in a minute), getting in there. No one comes out of the womb understanding how to work GoToWebinar. Do they?

Pat Flynn: I don't know. Is your daughter going to know when she comes out?

David Siteman Garland: My daughter is obviously going to be a superhero. She's going to be different, right!

You don't come out figuring out how to do Skype.

Your option 1) is to get into the trenches and learn it. Whenever I see something that's going to be valuable for my business, I want to get in there and learn how to do it.

2) You outsource it to that techy cousin Ray Ray or whatever or whoever it may be that you can hire. I don't know how to code anything. I think you know how to code.

Pat Flynn: I know how to code a little because when I started my blog I was in the trenches and I tried to learn CSS and HTML because I didn't trust anybody else with my stuff. Now I'm trying to outsource as much as I can.

David Siteman Garland: Let's just put it this way, having technical prowess has very little to do with a success of an online course. Let me give you the scope, I mentioned the mastermind I'm in with Amy and a few other people, these are all people that are making at the very least almost 7 figures. Most people making seven figures or more. It takes us 30 minutes to figure out the WiFi when we get together. If people were video taping it, they'd be like "Seriously?"

Pat Flynn: I want to see that video.

David Siteman Garland: When it comes to recording your course and getting it up, I always offer a set of tools and resources. I'm always testing new stuff as it comes out. To record your course, it comes down to a microphone, a computer and then if you want to do PowerPoint or Keynote, if it's something like that, or recording videos if you're teaching something very visual, i.e. Tennis or something. You might want to be on camera, showing people how to hit the ball vs a PowerPoint, which is probably not going to work for that.

Pat Flynn: If you're going to use PowerPoint or Keynote and record that, you can use a tool like Screenflow. With a camera, there's a bunch of different cameras and we don't have to get into the technicals of which ones are best but it doesn't have to be super fancy, right?

David Siteman Garland: No, not at all. I think if you're going to be on video really teaching something and doing a premium course, it's probably worth investing a little bit to be in quality HD. As we know, camera prices continue to go down. It might even be worth getting a little bit of a camera crew to do that if you're going to be actually on camera.

I'm telling you right now, Pat, for my courses, and we're talking courses that have generated now millions in revenue, it's literally me sitting right here, right now just like this on this microphone that I'm talking to you on with my computer in Keynote with Screenflow simply recording my screen. That's it.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome.

David Siteman Garland: Then you can always offer other goodies in your course. For example, you could offer maybe if you want to show people how to do something, you can create a screencast on your computer. Let's say I wanted to show people how to use an email autoresponder, I want to show people how to create an ad on Facebook, I could just obviously not use PowerPoint, I could be on there and just record my screen. That's another thing you can do is Screencast, which is another great tool for your course.

Then, what I always recommend is having, a great way to think about this Pat is that your job as a course creator is to get people to their result as quickly and safely as possible. You're the short cut to doing this.

So, what are some things that could be shortcut-y that you can put in your course? Maybe you've got some cheat sheets you can create or some maps or an equipment guide, anything that helps take time away from people, because that's really what they're paying you for is to learn how to do it and do it quickly - are great things to include in your course.

Here's a big myth, Pat and this is important. Just because you're charging higher prices doesn't mean you need to put in more content in your course.

This is something to think about. People think that if they charge higher prices, that means they have to throw in everything and the kitchen sink and the history of mankind into their course to justify the value of the price.

Pat Flynn: Which could sort of defeat the purpose of the shortcut part of it.

David Siteman Garland: Exactly. Now you've gone the longcut, which is just the way.

The problem with that is that you end up in a situation, you're exactly right. People are like "Oh my God, are you serious? 196 modules and 300 downloads, that's never going

to happen. You want to have people that sit there and say "OK, I can do this," not like "Oh my God, it's going to take the rest my life to do this," right?

Pat Flynn: Right.

David Siteman Garland: That's why when it comes to the amount of modules and things like that, I don't believe you really want to go over 12. If you can do it in 8, do it in 8. If you can do it in 6, do it in 6. At the end of the day, once you start getting over 12, even if they're shorter, it starts to creep into people's minds "I don't know if I can do this, I don't think I'm going to buy it."

Pat Flynn: So modules being like chapters and within those chapters, there's lessons.

David Siteman Garland: Yeah, you break it down. This is the best way to look at it, you can get out a piece of paper if you want to, what I like to do is get out a piece of paper or open a Word document and say:

Where's the person at right now?
Where do you want to get them to at the end of it?
What are the steps that you're going to take to get there?

You literally write out the steps.

For me, it might be:

Pay attention in a survey
Naming your course
Pricing your course
Recording your course
Generating opt-ins and potential buyers for your course
Doing a VIP launch of your course
Over delivering your course
Ongoing sales and support

That might be the steps and it's not a "might," those are actually the steps.

But I'm saying that lay that out. For example, if I was teaching how to drive longer in golf, it might just be step one is club selection, step two might be grip, step three might be - I don't play golf so this is going to go downhill really quick - step three is how to

put the tee in properly, I don't know! All the way down to the point where you're hitting the longer drive.

Breaking that down into the amount of steps - and feel free to go crazy with it at first if you want to, write down as many as you want to and then you want to condense that down into basically modules of your course, which is a great way of organizing it.

Pat Flynn: Got it. OK, so we're creating videos, they're short and sweet, lots of modules, not too many, some lessons within those modules, again to help people with that shortcut to get to that goal that you want them to get to.

Videos. Hosted. Where?

David Siteman Garland: By the way, length of videos people ask all the time too, doesn't really matter. I've seen courses that have 10 minute videos, I've seen courses that have 45 minute to one hour videos. The length doesn't matter. That's very topical. It really depends on your topic. Just make sure, keep in the back of your mind are you doing this as quickly and as safely as I can or am I just adding in a bunch of filler? If your answer is you are doing this as quick as possible, then that's the best length for your video.

Pat Flynn: Got it.

David Siteman Garland: I prefer to host with Wistia. I just like Wistia.

Pat Flynn: I love Wistia too.

David Siteman Garland: That's where I like to put it up.

Pat Flynn: I think a question based on that is why not YouTube?

David Siteman Garland: You definitely don't want to do YouTube for sure. This is going to be private, paid content behind a pay wall. Even if you put it unlisted and private on YouTube, not only that but I think it kind of cheapens the brand a little bit when it's on YouTube. It doesn't look like a premium course, it just looks like you put something on YouTube. Also, lack of control because it's on YouTube vs your own account on something.

Pat Flynn: Right. Plus, I love Wistia. Not only are they a great company and they're always forward thinking, but the analytics that go along with it are so important. I've had a course in the past that used Wistia to host and just to see where people drop off in the videos and what I could do to improve them. You can even get to a point where you can then show your audience in that membership site (this is sort of advanced), have them understand what videos are left to watch or which ones they've seen already.

David Siteman Garland: You can geek out for days with all the analytics on Wistia, which I love.

What you can also do too, and this is totally up to you, if you want to have downloads of your course, maybe you want to allow people to download the video or MP3s or stuff like that, I use Amazon S3 for that. It's very inexpensive, you pay per download, based on the file size. I think my bills are like $3.

Pat Flynn: It's like $0.0001 per GB or something.

David Siteman Garland: I think my big bill was $3. Anyway, that's what I would recommend for video hosting.

Pat Flynn: OK, sweet. We have these videos, we have our content we want to share, we want to have people download it, perhaps we have worksheets and other things that go along with those different lessons. How do we get that up on our site? We have our own URL for this domain or product or course. There's a ton of different kinds of sites out there that can help you deliver this content in a fashion that's easy for your audience to go through it. What do you recommend? What are the tools out there that you use?

David Siteman Garland: I'll share what I do. This landscape by the way is changing a lot lately, which is great. It's getting easier and easier. Anything that gets easier and easier is great for us. First of all, let's break it down, there's two options at the end of the day in terms of categories.

Category 1 is you host it, which I'll explain what that means in a second, meaning that you're going to get a little site created for you with WordPress most likely (and I'll talk about that in a second) or you can create it yourself with WordPress. Your costs are essentially the upfront fee to get that created. Then that's really it. Maybe there's a little hosting fee, that's about it.

Or you host it with someone else that offers a course hosting service where you're paying a monthly fee that can range from a couple of hundred dollars on up.

Does that make sense?

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

David Siteman Garland: You create it and put it up. It doesn't have to literally be you, or you host it with someone else.

All my courses right now are self hosted. That means it's on WordPress. In my course, I've got recommendations for people to, they have access to my developer. I've got another guy that's creating courses, he's like a course machine for people. For like $1000 he creates you a custom course theme on WordPress with all your plugins and all that good stuff. That's where your course will live, on there.

I love doing custom ones on WordPress. There's other systems out there, Kajabi is coming out with a new thing that I'm kind of excited about; I'm going to be testing that soon. Some of the other self-hosting course options, I encourage you to go and explore if you want to, but that being said, most courses, all of my courses and a lot of my students courses are on WordPress with their own little theme that's created for them to do the course.

Pat Flynn: Is that using a plugin like Wishlist to deliver them? Kajabi, Wishlist, there's WP Courseware, Member Mouse, there's a ton of them.

David Siteman Garland: Here's what you do. Great question Pat.

You get on your course. What does a course site really need? Obviously it needs your course on there, so you need to upload your videos, have your modules, have your downloads, if you've got a link to support, anything like that. Then there needs to be a gateway where you have to login with a username and password that you purchase. The system recognizes you.

A couple of ways to do that, Wishlist Member is kind of the gold standard for doing that with WordPress.

I am in a slightly tricky spot because I use Ontraport/Office Autopilot for my email marketing and stuff and my payment... Everything is handled through them basically. They have their own little WordPress plugin called Pilot Press, which is essentially Wishlist.

Pat Flynn: Similar to Infusionsoft, which is a CRM email management system but they even have their own course software that goes along with that.

David Siteman Garland: Exactly right. You plug that in and it goes together.

That's really all you need. None of this stuff is - it can be outsourced for pennies on the dollar too, if you don't want to do it yourself. Essentially you need a place to put the course, a place to protect it with a username and password and then have that username and password system integrate with your autoresponder and you're off to the races.

It might sound a little tricky, at the end of the day it isn't.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. And then our course is up and we can start selling it.

David Siteman Garland: Then your course is up and you can go fly to Bermuda, relax. No, the work begins then. The key to selling a course is you want to create valuable free content that leads up to that sale. That valuable free content is behind an email wall.

My great tool for this is [LeadPages](#). And you Pat, we're both great affiliates and users of [LeadPages](#). It's the easiest way for creating opt-in pages and also these types of pages that I'm going to mention. At the end of the day, a big mistake that people make with courses, they do all the things I just told you and they create a sales page one way or another, they send out a link to everyone and say "Go buy!"

They hear crickets. That's because the launch is a process. Jeff Walker made this famous. A launch is a process that takes people from a free piece of opt-in content to more opt-in content then to a timed launch that has set start period and end period where the cart is open. At the end of the day, that's what you're going to do.

For example, that's why I recommend a three part video series for doing this. People can opt-in for the three part video series, you go through three videos - essentially I'm giving you the very Cliff Notes version of this - they go through the video series, then at

the end of the video series they get a pitch for the course during a certain period of time. I can't emphasize that enough, scarcity and having an actual period where your course opens and closes is critical to sales.

Pat Flynn: So you would recommend that vs creating a course and just having it there on your products page?

David Siteman Garland: That's right. I've tested them both. I will tell you what we do.

First of all, I would recommend anyone with their first course that they do their own personal VIP launch first. I teach this in Create Awesome Online Courses, you do your own personal VIP launch where you're launching just to your own people and you walk them through this - it's sort of like a test, it's sort of like a real beta test, but it's the actual launch - to your own list, no affiliates, nothing like that because it's going to be very hard for a lot of people to get affiliates and partners and things like that if they're just getting started or this is your first course, because you've got to prove it yourself.

At the end of the day, you do a three part video series, you do a 5-10 day launch period where now they're getting the sales emails, the cart opens on date X at a certain time and it closes on date X at a certain time. Now the question is - and this is what people say, now what do I do?

The mistake that I see people do, and I know this mistake because I've done this mistake as well, is that you then just put it up there. You just put it up there and maybe it's just a sales page. You said "Hey, now it's available for sale". You might get a trickle. It's like walking up to - I was going to give a horrible analogy, I'll just save it for next time - you might get the occasional home run, where someone comes and they buy it. But let's take it two steps further.

Step 2, instead of having it up, just a sales page, you actually have it set up as an opt-in page where people get your free video series.

Pat Flynn: The ones that you've already done for the first launch?

David Siteman Garland: The one you've already done for the launch. You get a free video series, go to this page, opt-in, watch your free videos and at the end of the free videos you take people through their own little mini launch where you tell them about the product. It's based on a timer, not an actual date on the calendar.

Pat Flynn: OK, so you have 48 hours to whatever…

David Siteman Garland: Here's the thing, this is where I told you we're going to go three deep here, right. I'm going for the hat trick here.

You just said you went to your first hockey game so we have to use the hockey reference. We said that before we got on here today.

When I was figuring this out for trial and error for my first course, at first I would send people to a sales page and it was like the tiniest trickle of all time. You'd occasionally get one, one or two here, blah, blah, blah. Then I said, OK, I'm going to have them opt-in for my free video series and then I'm going to give them a little open at the end and say "Hey, here's the link to buy" and then a few reminder emails.

That got more of a trickle, maybe double, but the difference was I didn't have people, I didn't tell them it was closing, there wasn't any real close, it was more like "Hey, it's opening" and then at some point it was "Hey, this is the last time I tell you about it," because I didn't figure that out yet, what to do.

Pat Flynn: But the second example, the one you just mentioned, you sort of warmed them up a little bit, you gave them some free content and that helped.

David Siteman Garland: You never go for the sale right away. You walk them through this free content and then they go through a few salesy emails. That worked much better. People were saying, "You've got to have scarcity in there" and I said "Well, I've got to try and figure this out" so what we ended up doing and just this funnel has generated about $10-12 grand a week for us right now on this funnel, which takes 5 minutes of work a week from a VA.

Here's what it is.

It's the exact thing I mentioned to you where they go through a free video series but at the end of the video series there's an actual personal time launch for that person.

Pat Flynn: Interesting. Elaborate.

David Siteman Garland: Here's how it works. It might go over a couple of heads here but I'm going to try to keep it as simple as possible. Here's how it works.

It's a three week process from start to finish when someone opts-in.

On week one, they opt-in and they get a free cheat sheet from me. People can check this out, you'll have a link for this Pat, I'm sure.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, it's smartpassiveincome.com/cheatsheet

David Siteman Garland: So you will be able to see this in action if I want to reveal behind the wizard here. On the first week, no matter when you opt-in, you get a free cheat sheet, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday Sunday, right. On week one you get a free cheat sheet.

On week two, I come back and say "Hey, I hope you enjoyed that free cheat sheet, here's a free video. It's the first of a three part video series." Those videos always go out the same days just to the people that opted-in for the cheat sheet the week before. Does that make sense?

Pat Flynn: Got it.

David Siteman Garland: So, then they're going to get a couple of other emails, I've got a couple of interactive emails, I've got all kinds of cool stuff, but they're actually on a timer with the group of people that opted-in on that first week that then go through the free videos in the second week and the last video in the third week and then the cart opens for those people on let's say Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock and it closes that Friday at 11:59. We've got special links that we create using a system called Timerlay, which is one of the coolest, little easiest tools I've ever seen. What Timerlay does, it allows you without any coding to create little timer buttons on any page you want on your website or actually any page on anyone else's website if you wanted to as well.

Basically you tell Timerlay "Hey, put this timer at the top of the page, and when it hits 11:59, change to a new page that says you missed it," so you're actually taking it away. Then what happens is Timerlay will give you a link like timerlay.com/pat/november or something and you can use that link that you send to people so it actually expires on a certain date and time, which now allows you to add scarcity in your launch. What scarcity at the end of the day does is it gets people off their butts to make a decision yes or no.

When we started doing this, we started going from a random sale or two a week to now like I said consistently $10-12 grand at least on a weekly basis just on that Evergreen launch.

Pat Flynn: So you are closing down for just a short period of time in between these weekly lunches, is that correct?

David Siteman Garland: Just for that group of people.

So in any given week, let's just say this week I've got people at all of the stages. I've got people that are opting-in right now so they're on week 1, I've got people on week 2, I've got people that are on week 3 and I've got people that maybe went through launch and didn't buy.

Every week, three weeks in of course, every week you're opening it up for a certain set of people during a certain period of time.

Mixing in these Evergreen launches plus live launches is where the real magic happens. You can host your own webinars, host joint webinars with people, all that kind of stuff and then you really have something going from there.

Pat Flynn: For the people who end up not purchasing, what happens to them? Do they miss out for good or do they...

David Siteman Garland: First of all they're going to get more free content from us. They're kind of on my newsletter list, they're going to get periodic free content but then what I do is about once a quarter I do a public launch, meaning that I will go back to everyone on my list plus people on social media and stuff like that and host a webinar or two where you're basically saying to the people that missed out last time "Hey, here's another chance."

There's always going to be a percentage of people on your list that are ready to purchase but it might not be right now.

Pat Flynn: But the people who didn't buy, they won't have another opportunity until that public launch, right?

David Siteman Garland: That's right.

Pat Flynn: It is a true closing of that cart.

David Siteman Garland: Oh, it's totally real and by the way, we're always straight up with people, so if someone comes in and says "I missed it" or whatever, we just say "We're sorry you missed it but keep an eye out for the next webinar that we do and there will be another opportunity again at that point." The easy, lazy thing to do there is give them a secret link and say "Hey, you actually can still register" but you're going to lose that whole trust. You made a promise to those people. You said, "Hey, it's going to open on Tuesday and close Friday for you."

Pat Flynn: This is fantastic.

David Siteman Garland: That's how we've been able to generate... First it was baby steps. My first course did $19,800 in its first launch to 400 people back in the day.

Fast forward a couple of years, we're able to do seven figures in 24 months, which I thought was great. Now it's well over seven figures in 12 months. It keeps growing. You keep learning these things over time but it all starts with these little baby steps. I know some of the last probably 10 minutes we talked about here were some more advanced steps, but I think giving everyone the full scope of this, you included Pat, it's good to see what's possible over time.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, I love that.

Dude, we've kind of done, we've just provided a ton of free content just now and I would love for people to check out that process that you have and also get hold of that cheat sheet, which of course gets you on to David's list. That link that I'm about to give you that I gave you earlier, it is an affiliate link for David's course.

If you end up wanting to know more about courses and getting help from David and his training, I do earn a commission if you go down this road and finally end up purchasing. I just wanted to be honest about that. If you want that [cheat sheet](#) that David was talking about, what is the cheat sheet? What's on that?

David Siteman Garland: Actually, we discussed a fair amount of it today, which is good, so there's going to be a lot of reminders and even more stuff that we didn't talk about toady. So here's what you'll get if you go to that link, it's a one page quick reminders of the seven steps to create, promote and profit from online courses. So it's

going to be like my little timeline for you of the seven steps and some kind of bullet points on each step.

As Pat mentioned, after that, I'm going to have more free stuff for you. Just like Pat mentioned earlier too, my free videos - and I would encouraged you to do this when you eventually decide if you're going to do your own course and do your own videos, they're real teaching videos, it's not like some weird hypy "I'm going to tell you the secret, but I'm never going to tell you the secret" type thing. It's actually me walking you through how to come up with a course that sells, we've got other cool stuff in there too, so you'll get all that over the next few weeks, for sure.

Pat Flynn: That's great. David is a great example for everybody out there listening to this now, how to do this right. That cheat sheet is just like you said, one page. You don't need to create a super long eBook to give away. It's preferable if it's easily consumed. Are you giving your audience something like that?

If you want to check out that cheat sheet, go to smartpassiveincome.com/cheatsheet.

David, you rock man. Thank you so much for coming on, we went over an hour and I appreciate you spending that time with us today. I didn't want it to end.

David Siteman Garland: We could of have a joke there too, but Pat, it's been great. It's always, always a pleasure talking to you my man, you're doing amazing stuff here with your peeps and Smart Passive Income. It was an honor to talk to your audience and you. Keep it up my man.

Pat Flynn: Thank you. For everybody out there, David was a huge inspiration when I got started. Just put personality into your brand and be honest. That's something I learned from you and I'm happy to pass that forward.

I'm so honored to have you on the show. Thanks again. Get that cheat sheet at smartpassiveincome.com/cheatsheet and we'll hang up and I'll have some final thoughts for you guys.

Thanks David.

David Siteman Garland: Thanks.

Pat Flynn: Alright, I hope you enjoyed that interview with David Siteman Garland from therisetothetop.com. Actually, if you'd like to get his cheat sheet, it's completely free, seven proven steps to creating, promoting and profiting from online courses, you can head on over to smartpassiveincome.com/cheatsheet.

When you go through there, you're going to get that free cheat sheet, it is very valuable but remember, like David and I talked about, he's going to take you through that sequence and I want you to pay attention when you go through that, what emails you get, what is in those emails and kind of the experience. Whether you watch those videos or not, just see what it's like because this is a proven strategy that has helped him go from zero to over $1 million in online courses in less than 24 months, which is awesome.

So check it out. Of course if you want a little bit of hand holding from David and joining his course, you can definitely do that from there too. That's how you would get started with that anyway.

I also want to thank today's sponsor for this episode, which is Lynda.com. One of my favorite sites lately because it is the easiest to use and a very affordable place to learn with one low monthly price. They give you unlimited access to over 100,000 videos tutorials ranging from topics like business skills, communication leadership, management productivity, online marketing and even specific tutorials on how to use different types of software, ranging from Final Cut Pro all the way to email management software and even Photoshop, which is really cool.

I'm using the platform myself because there are new courses added daily, you can actually learn on the go with their mobile apps too. These videos, they're not just little YouTube homemade videos, these are like really high-quality, studio production quality, easy to follow video tutorials. They all come with a lot of tools to help you and your journey with whatever you're trying to learn.

You've got to check it out and you have to try the free trial. It's unbelievable once you get on it. If you go to Lynda.com/spi you can try for 7 days for free and get access to all of the courses they have to offer.

Thank you again so much for listening to this episode. The show notes and the resources and all the links mentioned, including today's sponsor Lynda.com/spi will be available at smartpassiveincome.com/session136. That's your shortcut for all those resources.

Lastly as a reminder, if you want to get that cheat sheet that David talked about to go through that process, but also to get access to that cheat sheet because it's awesome, you can go to smartpassiveincome.com/cheatsheet.

Cheers, take care and I'll see you in the next episode of the Smart Passive Income podcast.

Thanks. Peace.

Announcer: Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income podcast at www.smartpassiveincome.com.

LINKS AND RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THIS EPISODE:

- The Rise to the Top
- 7 Proven Steps to Creating, Promoting and Profiting from Online Courses (free cheat sheet)
- Smart Passive Income Episode 128
- Survey Monkey
- WuFoo
- Wistia
- LeadPages
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