Daniel Hall Presents

Episode 55

How to Create a Really Simple Product to Get Started Selling Online Fast

With Bruce Jones

Welcome to the Real Fast Results podcast! This episode features Bruce Jones, who is a #1 bestselling author, graphic designer, and product developer. Bruce actually writes, speaks, and consults on publishing, social media, blogging, video, and general marketing. He's also the creator of WorldofMaps.com. One of the things that's interesting about this site is that it is partially built upon the use of public domain materials.

Essentially, he created editable PowerPoint maps and now sells them worldwide to individuals, corporations, educational institutions, and even the federal government. He's also an illustrator of maps, and his maps have been used for business and sales presentations worldwide. Bruce is the author and/or creator of 40 books on geography, music, business, children's and coloring. He also practices Tai Chi. With the release of Seven Steps to Publishing Your Book, Bruce has been able to bring forth his experience and knowledge to the world.

Discover How to Make and Sell Simple Products

The promise today is that you'll learn how to make and sell a simple product to get started making money online. **This is going to be a very simple way that people can just introduce themselves to:**

- how to make a product
- where to put it
- how to get it up online in order to make their first dollar

If you can learn the first step to doing something very simple. A lot of people present on the topic of making a product. **This is a very common topic online, but it's daunting for a lot of people.** For those of us who are familiar with graphic design things, PDFs, Photoshop, and stuff, it's a fairly easy process. But, for many people, this is tough. So if you can learn how to do, basically, a single page, and often I teach this. It's just one page, the techniques could then be two pages, three pages, or more, and you can expand it out to a wider range. But, just getting that first page up online, so that somebody else can download it and maybe pay for it, teaches you pretty much all of the skills that you need to know. Then you can take it from there. That's my goal, and that's what I want to show people, just how easily you can do that.

Put Up a Tips Page

What I'll tell people is to put up a tips page. Ten basic tips. **The way I'll start this is to say to somebody, "What is the #1 question that you are asked?"** Just the #1 question, and don't think about it. You know what it is. Just say what that question is, and then just give me one sentence for that. Then, okay, you've got that down. Now, what is the second question that people ask you and the third question? Then, come up with 10 questions. That's a tip sheet. That's a single piece of paper, or a PDF, or the start of a chapter of a book which can get you going.

That single piece of paper can be just a nice thing like, "Here are my basic tips on how to fly fish," or "Here are my basic tips on how to publish a book." It's just that essential, quick thing. It's not the "end-all"; it just gets you over that hump, and it gives you the foundation to take your product and do something more with it. That's what I mean by a single page. It's not a web page. **It's basically a PDF that you can download, and it has these basic tips on it.**

Step 1 - Top Ten Questions

So, the first exercise that I usually tell people to do is just to make a list of these top 10 tips. **You just take your first question, your second question, and your third**

question, and so on, and you type them out in Microsoft Word. Within the top header of the page, put your name and, maybe, just the title of what these tips are. So, "10 Tips for Being a Better Fly Fisherman," for instance, and at the bottom, put your contact information. Put your name, your email address, and if you don't have a website, don't worry about it. Maybe a phone number. Now, you have a complete product. It's a single piece of paper, all on one page.

Step 2 - Print

If you go on to the second step, you'll go to the "Print" menu on your computer. Pretty much, every computer now, every program, has the ability to make a PDF. So, instead of printing the file, just look for that little PDF button and make a PDF. PDFs are great because you can send them all over the Web. They get emailed really easily, they travel easily, and everybody can print them out. If you really wanted to, you could put live links in them. You've now just created your first electronic product.

Step 3 - Sell It

So now, "Where do I go with this, and how do I sell it?" I often use a site called Gumroad.com. You can think of this like an electronic bucket. **It is a place that you can put any kind of file, whether that's a PDF file, a video file, and audio file.** Anything that you want can be uploaded to that, and you can make a little sales page. One of the things that's so daunting for people when it comes to eCommerce or selling things online is the whole eCommerce part. How do I have people take my credit card? Where do I go for that? How do I set up all of the technical parts for this?

Okay, sites like Gumroad take all of that away from you. They are generally free or very low-cost. **You can upload your PDFs to them. Make a little graphic, and if you don't have the graphics tools, Canva.com is a great place to make a little thumbnail, a little graphic, and you upload it.** Then, set things up so that your bank connects to it all, and now you have a site online where you can sell, or host, a little product. You can change the pricing, and it's very, very flexible. Gumroad is a very flexible site that allows you to put things up.

If you want to go a little further with it, maybe you just read those points into a video. Take your phone, open up the video app, read them, save that video, and you can upload the video. Now you have two pieces. You have a PDF and a video. People like to have different ways to review the information. So, very quickly, you have taken away all of the technical stuff like setting up an eCommerce site, and landing pages, and shopping carts. You just take that all away by using a site like Gumroad.

Now, "What do I do with it? How do I sell this thing?" Most of us are connected on Facebook, many of us have a blog or a website, and many of us have some kind of presence online. Now, what you're going to do is to connect those two things together. On Gumroad you get a little link, and now you can talk about that link and

drop it into a post on Facebook, saying something like, "Hey, I just put up a new tip sheet on the best ways to fly fish in Montana." You can send that link so that people can click on it, go to Gumroad, put in their credit card, and you can sell that for $1. That's a great place to start. It could be $1, or $2, or something like that.

If you have a little blog, you can make a post on that blog. If you have a website, you might put a little link on your site. If you don't have any of that stuff, you probably have a business card. **Take the address that Gumroad has provided you and put it on the back of that business card.** Just say, "Hey, I have a little tip sheet... a little 2-page document. Here's the link." When people say, "Hey, where can I get that information," they can just manually type it in. You just need some way to connect places where people know you to some place online where you can sell it. That can be [Gumroad](#) connected to a blog that you have, or you can do this just by talking to people.

Selling on Gumroad

[Gumroad](#) has a variety of different payment options, but one of the neat features it has is a "Pay What You Want," option. I've used that, and it's a great way to test a product. You have a little box that you put your price in, and if you put a little "+" after that, then that price becomes the floor, and then it's "Pay What You Want". You might think, "This is kind of weird," but I've tested little clip art products, where I've bundled a bunch of stuff together and priced it at $4 with the "Pay What You Want," feature. I've had people pay $5, $7, $10, or even $20 for that $4 object. It just doesn't seem to make sense. Like, if you went into a grocery store and say, "You know, these grapes are only $3.95 a pound, but I think they are great, so I want to pay $8.95 a pound." But, people do that, and it's a great way to figure out where your pricing should be.

A product that I was selling for $2, I eventually took account of these prices and settled it around $5. I figured that was around the average. **They also have affiliate programs that you can do, where people can sell your product for you**. For instance, you may have made a product, but your friends have websites, and they would like to sell your fishing tips, or auto-mechanic tips, or whatever it is you have made. You can give them the link, and everyone can get a little piece of it. They really tried to make this the easiest affiliate program and provide the best payment options possible. It's cool because it allows you to experiment, and they encourage you a lot.

Another thing that I want to mention is, if you're a little more ambitious, they allow for, what I call, "stacking prices". So, you start out with the first product, which would be the tip sheet, for $5. Maybe your second product is the same tip sheet, except that there's longer descriptions. That one might be $8, and then you might add videos to it, and you can sell that for $29. What you'll find is that you have increased the value of the product, and since people can see that, very often they will buy the most expensive one. It's kind of like the bottle of wine in the wine cellar in that

no one buys the most expensive or the cheapest one, they buy in the middle. You sort of move people so that they can pick the amount of content and value that they want.

They really want to encourage you to do that kind of stuff. They have a fantastic blog where they talk about all of the different kinds of things you can do. Now, this is one of many. [Gumroad](#) is my favorite. I think they were one of the first to start this. There are other competitors, but I've been really pleased with them.

Creating the Steps

On your computer, you have memos, reports, white papers, documents, questions and answers, and things that you've done, which you can pull together into publications and products. So, you can sort of mine your own stuff. **A lot of people get stuck on, "What do I do? What do I do?" I think you should just open up your own computer and start there.**

You can also just sort of build your product out. **The "10 Tips," technique that I teach people involves simply creating one sentence per tip.** Then, you can come back, after those 10 are made, and you can write one paragraph. Not three, four, or five. Just write one paragraph for each of those, and once those 10 paragraphs are done, you can come back and write three, four, or five paragraphs for each of them. At that point, you'll have a book, basically, so you can add your bio and your resources, maybe an intro at the front and other things at the end too. You then have a book, and you can take each of those little sections and turn them into videos one at a time.

With your phone, it's so easy, and with your Mac. I'm on a Mac right now, and each of my Mac devices has QuickTime in it. You can just turn QuickTime on and start talking. After you've added video, and you may have just read the exact same content, but now you're offering video. One thing that I have learned from Real Fast Info Products is to keep your videos short. That's key. But, it's so easy to just start gradually building out.

Marketing Your Product

One of the ways that I market is by re-releasing my content back out to the world. A [Google blog](#) is a great way to do that. I use that a lot because it's free, and you can do it as much as you want. Plus, it's low-tech. WordPress is a little harder, and I know that all of the WordPress people are going, "I hate Google Blogger," but I think that I really love it because you can experiment, and try, and put stuff up quickly. Take each one of those posts that you did, each one of those little chapters, and republish them as a blog post. At the bottom of that say, "Hey, this is part of a bigger product. We have a whole PDF book and some videos."

Google loves this kind of content, and it finds that content. So you'll see a whole string of 10 or 20 posts, and it's really just copying and pasting links into

your [Gumroad](#) page. Gumroad works really well with [Blogger](#). A little-known feature of Gumroad's is that the video that you've done, where you might have just read your copy, if you put that on YouTube, Gumroad has a merchant relationship with YouTube, and since YouTube has an annotation section, there's an area where you can link eCommerce sites to your YouTube video. [Gumroad](#) is one of those companies. Most of them are ticket companies, entertainment companies, and things like that, but they also have a relationship with Gumroad. This will allow you to tie straight into your products and spread that content out.

One question I'm always asked is, "Why would you release content that you're trying to get people to pay for?" You want your stuff to spread. Think about when you walk into a bookstore and pick a book up to look at it. You have to get people to see, read, and feel your stuff if you want it to spread. Plus, you might have a whole bunch of it, but you don't know which one is going to work, so you want to spread that out to people. The last thing that I do, in terms of marketing, is look at my stats.

Paying Attention to Stats

Stats, to me, are really, really important, and whether you're using Google Analytics or Blogger's stats, you can see which posts people are interested in. Unless you are doing this, you really have no clue, but if you can spread your content out, Google will like it because it's good content, and as it brings people, you can look at your analytics and see what's working best. Then, when you see the one that works, that's the topic that you can make another product about because now you know that's where everyone is going and that's what they're interested in. They don't care about Chapter 4 or Chapter 2, but they love Chapter 7. Once you know those kinds of things, then you'll know how to move on to your next product.

Start with your basic tips, and maybe you expand it a little bit. You put them in a place where people can reach them, and you release that content in small chunks around the Web, in places you can see stats and what's going on. Get some feedback so that you know what's going on, then go into that particular topic and expand that out, and that becomes your next topic, and you just kind of keep growing them out from there.

By paying attention to your stats, you will know what to do next. **Google and social media, as a theory, is connecting back and forth, and interactivity, between you and your customer.** So, one of the things that I really encourage, which has been so successful to me, is I set up a Facebook group around publishing. As you know, I've published 40 books, and people come to me and ask, "How do you do this?" So, I set up a Facebook open group called, "How to Publish Your Book," and you can find that online. It's an open group. There are open groups and closed groups, and with an open group, people can come and see it. When they want to join, they ask, and you can let them in.

My group has now increased to over 1,300 people, and it's an amazing research tool because people are asking you questions. I keep track of some of those questions, and it tells me, like, what I need to react to, and I can mention my products in there. I'm the administrator. **It's not a page about Bruce Jones. It's a page about publishing, and I'm just the administrator of that group.** It's still about me. It's my page, but people know that they can come and ask questions, and if someones doing things and promoting stuff people don't like, then I manage it. I keep it clean, and people really appreciate that. They'll come to me and go, "Can you get rid of this persona and do something here?"

So, that's a note about managing it, but I interact every day, constantly, with this group. It just builds, and people know that they can come and ask questions, and they learn from other people who volunteer. You know, most people aren't going to be active on it. Out of the 1,300, there are probably 25 who are active, but that becomes a constantly shifting thing. But, this gives you an outlet to the world, and you get to really see what's going on. So you have your stats that tell you what's going on, you have this Facebook group. You know, a lot of people put up a Facebook group around their course, and they never come back. Then they wonder why it doesn't do anything, and it's like, "Well, if you just talk to the people…"

Does it Really Help My Business for Me to Spend Time Interacting with People?

I would say that it does. **I think that it does build trust, and it gives you exposures into communities.** I'm based in the Boston area, so my world went from the Boston area to being global. It's a global audience that I now have. Most of it is in the United States, but I have people in Australia and other places. Just this morning I was doing a Facebook live, and what's really cool about the new technology is that you can do this on your phone and it will feed right into your group. So, instead of going to your personal page, you can have it broadcast right to your group and answer your group's questions.

A guy this morning said, "This is the guy who has all of the answers," and when you see those kinds of comments, you know that, for one, you're going to get people reacting really quickly if you're going in the wrong direction. They are going to challenge you, but also, you get to become "the guy" about that topic. **Whatever your topic is, whether you're doing ceramics, knitting, or sales management, just go into Facebook and search on those topics for groups.** You'll see a wide range of them, and you can quickly build your own. And, just because there's competition, that doesn't mean anything. It's going to be about you and your viewpoint.

I repost articles, I repost videos, and now that I have enough of an audience, I really don't have to do that, but in the beginning, I had to do that

a lot. I set up a couple of alerts for what's kind of new on publishing, and when I saw a great article, I would just repost it. You don't have to create all of this stuff yourself. You can just kind of share what you find. You're the navigator of your topic, and you bring people along.

If you see something you think your group will like, then share it, and sometimes you'll run across things on your topic that you think are interesting. Those are the articles that you want to share with other people. That's the flag. As the information runs by you, and something catches your attention, that's the one you should share. You use content to get things going, and as people become interested, it just kind of builds from there. And, once people see that you're answering questions and are interactive, people respond to that.

I can't do it any more because there are too many people, but in the beginning, I thanked every single person who came in. I did this until it got to around 800 people. I thanked everybody. Now, there are four or five people a day joining the group, so I just can't deal with it anymore, but I got comments like, "No one ever thanks anyone for joining a group. Wow." It just stops people, and they are like, "Hey, thank you for letting me join." Then, when you do have a product, like when I released my book, *The Book Marketing Checklist for Self Publishing*, that went on to be an internationally bestselling book, that was primarily because of Facebook and because of my own group and a number of other groups that I was a part of. Once you establish a platform and people know who you are, you can start to take advantage of that, and it becomes much easier to sell your content.

In your Facebook Group, I think it's really important that you add a little bit to it. I use Google Alerts, and I also use websites. I had found other people that I really admired and that had really good content, so I would subscribe to them. **If I saw something come in, then I would re-share that.** Very often, people will give you a list of things, and I will go down into that list. I'll go down into that list and say something like, "Hey, #7 is really good. I like this one," or, "This is the point I'm trying to make, but here's the whole article." You don't want to just blindly build a big pile of stuff.

It doesn't take a huge amount of time. You can just skim it, find what you like, and then just make a comment about that point. You'll want to go at least halfway down. Don't just take the first point you come across. Find something that's deep in there, so that people don't think you're just copying and pasting. Really, you are just copying and pasting, but with some curation. Occasionally, I will go in and have really analyzed an article, and sometimes I'll even disagree and say, "This is good, but I have this view…" Then I'll just go at it, point by point.

But yeah, you're curating, and you're looking for things that are going to help people. You're educating people. I often tell people, especially when they are first joining the group and posting stuff, that, "This is a learning group, and while I love people announcing their new stuff, I want you to share something that you learned while you were making that thing. Tell us about that." That's the approach that I take with it.

Final Tip

I always tell people to carry a piece of paper, or a little notebook, in your pocket. That way, when someone asks you a question, you can write it down. That's important, I think, because it goes out of your head so quickly. But, that's how that person sees you, as the person who knows the answer to that question. Those are your key questions. So, as you're working at your job, or just over the next month, people are going to ask you questions, and you're going to find a pattern in those questions. Write them down. Just write them on a piece of paper or in a notebook. If you do this, and you just accept it, your tip list will generate itself. Listen to what people ask you, and that's your tip list, right there.

Connecting with Bruce

There are two ways. One, come over and join the [Facebook group](#). Just search on ["How to Publish Your Book"](#). It's on Facebook, and it's in Groups. Just search up at the top, and you'll see it. Come and join. We'd love to have you in the community. The second is, I have [BrucetheBookGuy.com](#). It's the blog website that goes along with all of the publishing things that I'm doing. You can find out about the courses, and the articles, and all of the content that I've released in all of my products there. Everything is there. So, those are the two ways, but I guess, the Facebook is probably the easiest and the best, and you can get right to me directly through Facebook.

Links

Bruce's Mini Course:
[How to Make and Sell a Product for Your Website](#)

Book By Bruce:
[The Book Marketing Checklist for Self Publishing](#)

[Gumroad](#)

[Blogger](#)

[Canva](#)

Real Fast Results Community

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