



# How to Create and Coordinate a Virtual Product Launch

If you work with authors, you might be creating Virtual Book Tours to launch new books. When you work with a speaker, coach, entrepreneur or other professional, you might be helping them sell their books, but just as likely, many other types of products as well, such as DVDs, ebooks, audio CDs and downloads, membership and community sites, training webinars and train-the-training programs.

## The VSA's Role in Managing the Process

Here is what the VSA does to coordinate the virtual product launch itself:

1. Set up and/or maintain the web pages for the initial launch and then the product pages that will remain long after the launch.
2. Find and coordinate bonus providers, such as thought leaders that the speaker might interview and from which would come a downloadable bonus or premium to entice potential customers to buy.
3. Find the right promotional venues to let as many people as possible know about the new product, such as bloggers, podcasters, Internet and broadcast radio producers and hosts and others.
4. Keep the speaker informed about the progress of the launch preparation.
5. Follow up so the speaker doesn't miss any opportunities for larger collaborations with people met during the launch.

## Web Page

It used to be that a web designer would create a long squeeze page that starts with lots of info and have someone scroll all the way down with lots of "buy buttons" along the way down. The page would have many type fonts and make over-the-top claims like "100% guaranteed", "savings are potentially unlimited." They might also have ads or sell multiple products from one page.

A newer style for these web pages is intended to create an experience that draws the audience in and doesn't overwhelm them with information. You want them to get a feel for the product and imagine themselves using and having success with the product.

You want the user to have the experience that they will have access to something others won't and that it will give them a specific competitive advantage when they use the product or the information they will learn from the product. For instance, when you use "Apple" products, Apple wants you to be seen as a bit more discerning and sophisticated because you can see what's different and are willing to pay for the value.

We hope the speaker, entrepreneur, coach or author got good advice to both determine what types of products would best suit his or her clientele and that a lot of thought went into naming the products and pricing them correctly. Any of these things poorly done will have a detrimental effect on all other aspects of the campaign. Product development is all about understanding the current needs of the buyer and solving a problem, and not just a simple problem, but a high-value problem like how to increase income or do a better job marketing.

Web pages should have tremendous visual appeal and images of the products should be visible, both the outside packaging and a layout of any inside pieces. It is well worth having professional packaging as well as professionally done photos of all products.

Ever find yourself getting on a web page not to be able to find the price, what's included, and even how to buy?! Create a buy button that is very easy to find and don't neglect to give all the contact information. Most people want to know who you are and where they are buying from. Whatever you do, make sure it is easy to buy on the product page.

## Bonuses

The thought used to be that you wanted to partner with collaborators who could give you downloads and other

things that might attract your same audience so you could create attractive bonuses or premiums. If a buyer was purchasing a \$39.95 product from the speaker, then the bonuses might (at least on paper) add hundreds of dollars to that product offering. Because so many people pursued this way of thinking, consumers rarely pay attention now to the quantity of bonuses and are not finding as much value in them.

While this is not your job as a VSA, to develop products or set up the content, it probably is your job to make sure the web pages stay current, so understanding the intent of the pages is important.

For the purposes of the virtual product launch, it is much more important to create one or two very high value audio interviews or checklists or something that the buyer just doesn't want to pass up that are unique to this topic and to helping them solve problems. When the speaker interviews thought leaders, maybe people with new books, it is much more compelling than old downloads that have made the rounds. While it might seem hard to get the attention of thought leaders, if you provide them with 10 compelling questions they may allow you to use written responses that you can translate to a special report.

## **Test It Out Webinars**

Another way to create a virtual product launch is to create a free webinar that allows the speaker to take the potential buyer through all the aspects of the product. This is particularly important for products that aren't a one-time buy, such as membership sites and train the trainer products. While it is relatively simple for a buyer to part with \$39.95, \$199.95 or even \$299.95 for a single product, when it comes to what could be a year-long commitment of time and thousands of dollars, the sales cycle is much, much longer. Go to Meeting is a great way to share the screen with the participants.

When you have someone sign up for the free webinar, use a series of three autoresponders – the first to thank the responder for signing up and giving the info to get into the webinar. The second, the day before the webinar as a reminder, and the final autoresponder as a thank you for attending, where to find the info if you missed the webinar (should all be recorded on the site), and of course, how to order the product. Again, so many people are tired of the every-week autoresponder that autoreponders should be limited. Instead, use newsletters and other ways that bring information to the user that he or she can use as an alternative.

## **Affiliates**

Beyond launching the product on the speaker's own site, you would like the speaker to have many other places to sell the product. As the VSA, you can do the research to find logical places where the product can also be sold, usually in online or other catalogs.

Especially for products that are high-value and targeted to just the right audience, many people will be interested in affiliating (selling the products of others) as a source of income. The rule of thumb is that if you can give at least a 20% affiliate commission or a minimum of \$50, it probably won't be worth it to the other affiliate seller. When numbers are under that then it isn't worth setting up pages, unless you can sell in quantity or bundle with other products and services you already offer.

## **Follow Up After the Launch**

One of the big benefits of doing a product launch is all the connections you and the speaker will make and how those can turn into some really significant large sales with cross promotional opportunities.

VSA's are the front line of defense for any kind of logistical questions and when there's a promotion going on for a product or seminar series lots of people have a time-sensitive reason to communicate - something they may have meant to do for some time.

For bonus providers, send personal specific thank yous (emails are fine, regular mail is better). Also send thank yous to everyone who interviewed the speaker or linked to your site. Offer to help them as they have helped you.

Take the time to evaluate what happened at the launch. We hope there will be different launches in the future and everything you learned should be documented so you can do it even better next time.

## **SAMPLE BONUS REQUEST LETTER (from the speaker)**

Dear

I am a big fan of your work and want to let you know how much I appreciate how you help women speakers get started, something very important to me as well.

Smart Women Speak! Is my brand new audio product and I'm very excited about launching it in July. I'd like to help promote your work as well as the work of others who provide professional products and services to aspiring speakers through a joint publicity venture marking my product launch.

On Tuesday, July 15, I will be launching the marketing campaign for the audio series and letting my database know if they buy on Amazon.com that day, together we will be giving them hundreds of dollars in free bonuses as a premium.

This audio is the result of my last year working with women who are successful speakers and their advice for those who are newer to the industry.

To further this cause, I want to offer some really valuable bonuses of audio downloads, ebooks, discounts on services, teleseminars and free newsletters and memberships that I think will help them further their speaking careers.

I would appreciate it if you would be willing to donate a product or service for this effort. In exchange, I will publicize your product or service (or website) on our campaign web page.

If you are open to helping and have a valuable product or service you are willing to give away, I will need a download link for the product (or send the actual file to us and we will handle the download requests). We will also need a web-ready photo of both you and the product and a short description of the product or service.

I truly appreciate your support in this area and would be happy to reciprocate with any of your marketing efforts. I'm glad to send you a copy of the audio series as well.

Sincerely,

Susan Jones  
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## **SAMPLE LETTER TO BLOGGER (from the speaker)**

Dear

I am a big fan of your “Create Your Best Life” blog and I especially enjoyed your recent post on why New Years’ resolutions don’t work. I am just launching a new audio series that I think you would enjoy. It might add some fuel to the fire of the message you send out to your audience about having confidence in yourself and practical ways to do that.

The 2-CD audio is called Being Fabulous Every Day and connects with the audience around 5 strategies to thrive. I am introducing it with a virtual product launch and would love to be interviewed on your radio show or have the series mentioned on your blog sometime during the month of April, if that is possible, to coordinate with the many other activities to celebrate the launch that month. I would love to offer your listeners/readers a free teleclass for 5 weeks that cover the 5 strategies.

I would be happy to send you an MP3 of the product and talk to you about this by phone. My website currently has a link to your blog since I think it is one of the best out there in terms of quality content to women who need your message.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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