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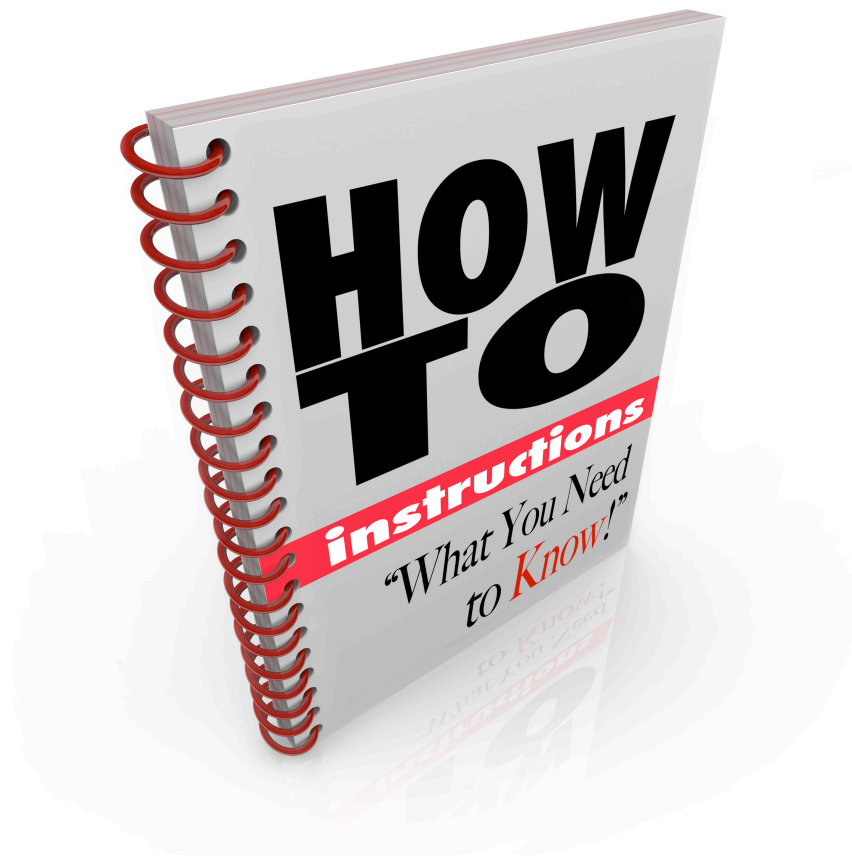
Presents:

Podcast Episode 087:
What I Learned From Doing Two Successful Product Launches

By: Leslie Samuel

Introductions

[Intro by Guy Kawasaki, Gideon Shalwick, and Farnoosh Brock]

Hello, hello, hello and welcome to another episode of Learning with Leslie, the podcast where you learn, I learn, we all learn about how to build an online business with a blog. No, I'm not talking about one of those blogs that will fall by the wayside when Google has a mood swing. I am talking about one that will thrive no matter what gets thrown at it.

I'm your host, Leslie Samuel from BecomeaBlogger.com, and as usual, I have another exciting episode for you today. In today's episode, I'm going to be talking about what I learned from doing two successful product launches. If you don't know, we launched Become a Blogger Premium, the 2.0 version back in March of this year but, we re-opened the program with a brand new set of videos teaching people how to start blogging and build businesses on their blogs, and we closed it, and then, we re-opened it again in August and allowed affiliates to promote.

In the process, I've had a lot of experiences. I've learned a lot and of course, whenever I learn something, I want to come back here and share it with you, so that you can apply it in your blog and in your online business. That's what we're going to talk about today.

Alright, exciting stuff to talk about -- product launches and there's so much that can be said about launching products and how to go about doing it in a way that's going to have the biggest impact and the biggest effect, and reach the largest number of people so that, you can make some money with your product when you do do a launch.

Now, before I get into the episode, I want to let you know that this podcast is brought to you by the free blogging videos that we've set up at freebloggingvideos.com. If you're thinking about starting a blog, you want to build something significant online that can impact the world, and

even make you some money building a business. You're going to love them so, head on over to freebloggingvideos.com and sign up for the ten free videos.

And, if you're not connected with me on Facebook, what's wrong? What are you doing? Come on over to Facebook. Come on over to LeslieonFacebook.com and you'll be able to connect with me there. I post the topic of each upcoming episode in advance so that, you can ask questions, or you can call in, and you can get your question answered. You can call in to the hotline and just in case, for some strange reason, you don't know what the number of the hotline is, the number is 888-835-2414. That's my beautiful wife letting you know what that number is. So, connect with me on Facebook. If you have a question that's related to one of the topics that are coming up, you can ask it on Facebook, or you can call the hotline.

What is a Product Launch?

Alright, so let's get into the topic for today, "What I've learned from doing two successful product launches." I would consider them to be successful because they went very well. It's just great to see, you have a product. You spend a lot of time creating the product, and you go and you actually launch the product and you're able to make a significant amount of income which is always a beautiful thing.

So, I want to go into it, but I want to give a balanced perspective. You hear about launches and people talk about all these huge launches where they make millions of dollars or whatever the case or a six-figure launch, or whatever the case might be. Sometimes, it just seems unreal and sometimes, it is unreal unfortunately. I want to give a balanced perspective.

Now, what do I mean by doing a **product launch**?

When I say a product launch, I'm talking about having a specific date where you're saying, "You know what? I am making my product available for people to purchase," whatever that product is. So, you might say, "On September the 15th, I am going to launch this product and people are going to be able to purchase the product."

Why Do a Product Launch?

There are a number of different ways that you can do a launch, but one of the great things about doing a launch is that it's a great way to get the word out there in a relatively short period of time especially if you're doing a timed launch, a time-sensitive launch. So, when we did the

launches, like I mentioned in the intro, we opened the doors, people were able to purchase and then, we closed the doors and people were no longer able to purchase, and we did it for a few reasons. I'm going to get into that in a little bit.

Spreads the Word in a Short Period of Time

But, one of the things that we were able to accomplish is to get a lot of people in in a relatively short period of time. That's one of the benefits of doing a product launch in terms of making a big deal out of it and saying, "You know what? We're opening on this date. You prepare, people, in advanced for the opening," and maybe you close, maybe you don't close.

But, the main thing is that you have this specific date that you're working towards, and that's when you're hoping that the flood gates are going to open and people are going to sign up and purchase your product.

It Forces You to Take Action

Now, another reason why doing a launch is a really good idea is because you're setting deadlines and you're making those deadlines public. Now, I don't know about you, but there's something about deadlines that really gets me going especially when the deadline is approaching. I think I am somewhat of a procrastinator by nature. And, if I don't set deadlines, I will probably not get anything done.

By putting it out there and saying, "You know, on August 9th, we are going to have the re-launch of Become a Blogger Premium, and you'll be able to sign up, and these are the different things that we're going to be doing."

By doing it that way, you're setting a deadline so it almost forces you to take action, which is one of the things that I really love. The amount of deadlines I have set for myself in the last few months have really increased but, my productivity has also increased.

So, product launches can be great because number one, it helps you to get the word out there in a relatively short period of time. And, number two, by setting the deadlines, it almost forces you to take action. Now, there are a bunch of other reasons why product launches are good, but I just want to touch on those two as some really basic and simple reasons why it's a good idea to do a product launch.

What I Honestly Felt…

But, on the other end, on the other side, I want to give you my honest feeling about the launch process that I just went through and all the experiences that I had in doing it.

At the end of the launch, I was a little tired, and I was a little mentally tired. I'm not a big fan of hard selling. That's not me.

I like to provide a lot of value and just keep providing value on an ongoing basis and have products that you can purchase, and if you're interested in the products and you see these things that I have to offer and you see the value, you purchase it. It's on your own time. It's not the typical setting the deadlines and doing this big launch type of a thing. And, I found that after promoting a few times during the launch, I got tired of listening to myself sell.

And, I don't know if that's a personal problem or whatever the case might be. But, I really did get tired of just selling and selling, and it seemed as if my entire focus during that short period of time is just to sell.

There's something about that that didn't fit very well with me. That's just me being honest. I've decided to do things a little differently as I move into the future. But, it definitely was a very valuable experience and I learned a lot from doing it.

The Lessons Learned

Now, in the future, I'm going to talk about how I've decided to go about selling and promoting and so on. But, for this episode, I want to focus on the launch because there were some valuable lessons that I learned, and I want to share that with you.

Okay, so let's get into it.

Lesson #1: Don't Assume. Test Everything.

Number one, the first thing that I learned from the launch was actually quite interesting. And, it is that it is extremely important to test everything. Now, as we were going into the launch or preparing for the launch, I spent a lot of time, we spent a lot of time working on the Squeeze Page for the Opt-in. The Squeeze Pages that you set up to get people to opt in and we spent a significant amount of time.

I'm not exactly sure how many but, it was hours coming up with a copy, coming up with the pictures, coming up with all the different aspects of it, and getting a testimonial then, endorsements and working on all these different things, and we came up with a version of a Squeeze Page.

We were satisfied with it. It had a number of the elements that we thought would work very well. But, at the last minute, we decided to just throw something together to just test a different version and see which one does better.

Okay, so the first version had a picture of a video, and when you go to click on the play button on the video, the picture changes and it invites you to opt in to get access to the videos.

Then, we had the bullet points of what you would get in the videos and all these kind of other stuff. We had a testimonial and endorsement on the bottom, and in my opinion, it looked very good. And, I was very satisfied with the headline, with the copy. The information was on a page and all that stuff.

But then, we decided to just test a picture, which was pretty interesting, we decided to test a picture and the picture was a picture of a beach with two lounge chairs and then, it just had an opt in box right at the center inviting people to sign up. Very simple. It didn't take a lot of time to do. It took half an hour at the max. It was really simple and thrown together.

And then, what we did was set up a test to see which ones would be more effective. So, in the past, this would have been done with **Google Website Optimizer**. But, Google has taken Website Optimizer and built it into **Google Analytics**, which is really great because just in your Google Analytics account, you can run all of these experiments which is what they consider it.

So, we set up the first page, and we set up the second page, and we said in the experiments that we want 50% of the people, half of the people that come to the website to see the first version and half of the people that come to the website to see the second version, and it was just random.

So, the first option was the one that we spent a ton of time on. The second option was the one that we just kind of threw together at the last minute. To get to the experiment feature in Google Analytics, just for your information, you go into Google Analytics and then, you click on content, and then, you go to experiments. Then, you can specify the pages, and you can specify the thank you page, and all these types of things, and it will automatically rotate the

pages for you once you put in the code, it will automatically calculate the conversions and see how many people signed up.

When we did that, here were the results: 36.9% of the people that went to the first one that we spent so much time on signed up, they opted in to get the videos. But, 52.36% that went to the version that we just kind of threw together, 52.36%, more than half signed up. So, that's a huge difference in conversion. That's, let's say about 15% different. That means for every 100 people that come to that second page, 15 more people would sign up. Now, is that significant to you? That's significant to me.

So, it showed me how important it was to test. If we just went with the first version that we spent so much time on, we would have lost out on a lot of sign ups. But, by just coming up with a different version and testing it, we were able to increase the conversion and we eventually got rid of the first version, and just use the second version because it was more effective.

As I move on into the future, I'm going to be testing different versions to try to increase the conversion even more. So, the first lesson was, "Don't assume. Test everything." In Google Analytics, you can set up experiments. It's a little technical but, you can figure it out. That's the first thing that I learned.

Lesson #2: Affiliates – All about Relationships.

The second thing that I learned has to do with recruiting affiliates. What I saw was that getting affiliates is all about relationships. It's all about the connections that you've been able to make beforehand, not just, now you have a product so, you're going to go out there and send a bunch of emails to a bunch of people and say, "Hey, promote my product." No.

If you have good relationships beforehand, you'll be able to get affiliates to promote, or it will be much easier for you to get affiliates to promote. So, if you don't have a product, you should still be thinking about relationships, and nurturing the relationships with people that can be potential partners, not just people that subscribe, but people that can be potential partners -- other bloggers in your niche, other people that are doing things that are similar to what you're doing.

It's not about competition. It's about **working together** and getting to know each other, building the relationship so that, when it is time to promote, it's easy to get, easier to get people to promote. So, the second lesson, getting affiliates? All about relationships.

Lesson #3: Do Launch Phases.

Third lesson is that it's a very good idea, and this is what I've seen. It's a very good idea to do your launches in phases so that, you can test the different elements. As I mentioned, we did the first re-launch, the initial re-launch in March. Really, what that was about was testing the system. We had new videos. We had a totally new system using [Optimize Press](#) and [Digital Access Pass](#) and combining the two, and building the website and dealing with the technology behind it. We wanted to make sure that the system itself was working well and it was doing what it needs to do, and that people were getting the stuff that they needed to get from the training and people were learning the things that they needed to learn. They were getting the best benefit for the money that they were spending.

So, we did an initial launch, and it was an internal launch. We didn't invite affiliates to promote. We just mailed to our own list. And, we were able to get a significant amount of people to sign up, which is great. But, in the process, I saw some flaws. I got feedback and I made improvements.

There were certain aspects to the technology that just wasn't working perfectly. And, of course, it's still not working perfectly, but it's working much better. Now, could you imagine if I had also brought on affiliates and I had to deal with the affiliate part of the system and also I had to deal with the membership part, I mean, it's possible but, by doing it in phases, first doing the membership and making sure that's working for the people that are signing up, and making improvements, and then, later on bringing on affiliates to promote, I was able to manage it better, and I think we were able to have a better effect.

The second launch that was when we actually brought on affiliates, now that we know that the system is working, I ironed out some of the kinks and made sure some of the things that were giving some issues before are working much better. Now, I can bring on affiliates and make sure that the affiliate system is working well, that the affiliates are being well taken care of because I know that the members are definitely going to be taken care of.

By launching in phases, I was able to test different elements and make improvements that will continue to make the membership site better. And, once again, there's going to be a next phase. The next time we launch Become a Blogger Premium, it's going to be an evergreen model where you can promote at any time, you can sign up at any time. But, before we did that, I wanted to make sure that the affiliate system was working and before doing that, I wanted to make sure that the membership site and the membership aspect and the members are well taken care of.

Launching in phases, definitely a good idea.

Lesson #4: Things Don't Always Turn Out as Expected.

The fourth thing that I learned is that when you do a launch, things don't always turn out the way you expect it. And, that's just being honest. That's just being straight up honest.

When we did the internal launch in March, it went very well. We got a lot of members in there, and we made a significant amount of money, which is great! Awesome stuff! And, that was just from us doing an internal promotion.

When we decided we're going to do the re-launch and we brought on affiliates, we expected it to do significantly better because we had over a hundred people signed up as affiliates, which is great!

The thought is if three people promoted before in the internal launch and it did X number of dollars, if you have a hundred and something people promoting, you're going to do so much more.

What ended up happening is yes, the second launch went very well. Absolutely no complaints in terms of how it went. But, it didn't go as well as I expected based on what we did in the first launch.

Alright so, once again, not complaining at all, the second launch did very well, much better than I've ever done on any job. So, it's a great thing, but it didn't go exactly the way I expected it to go.

What you'll notice is when you do launches sometimes things don't turn out the way you expect. But, what you do is you make the best out of it, you move on and you continue to make it better.

Lesson #5: Have a System in Place to Reduce Stress.

The next thing and the final lesson, lesson number five that I want to share with you is that if you set systems in place it will eliminate or reduce your stress significantly. If you set systems in place, the right systems in place in the right way, it will reduce your stress significantly.

Now going in to the first launch, there was a lot of stress, not a ridiculous amount of stress because I did have systems in place, but there was a fair amount of stress. This is the first time doing a launch of this magnitude. You want to make sure everything is great. You want to make sure your T's are crossed and your I's are dotted, and in doing all of that, there's just a lot that's going through your mind.

Now, with the second launch, we had already done the first launch, and that went well, I expected it to be significantly more stressful. However, I had set up systems in place. I had my assistants that were working with me, the technology was taken care of and I actually found myself at times just twiddling my thumbs trying to figure out what I should be doing?

It's a beautiful thing once you've built systems and this comes with time, and it comes with experience, and it comes with a lot of hard work. But, once you've built systems in place, it's great to just kind of sit back and see them work.

My assistants did an awesome jobs of filling in the gaps because they knew exactly what needed to do and of course, that's me outsourcing and outsourcing played a significant part in every aspect of the re-launch of Become a Blogger, and today, in every aspect of what I do online.

So, outsourcing is essential but also having systems, having guidelines. What are you going to do when someone requests a refund? What are the steps that you're going to take and what are the things that are going to happen in that situation?

What are you going to do when someone sends in an email? When are you going to be checking email? Who is going to be checking emails? What are the systems that are going deal with the membership? Are they doing it in an automated way? Or, do you have to send emails to each person individually when they sign up?

Having systems in place really eliminates or reduces the stress significantly. That is one of the most amazing things to me about doing business online.

So, number one, it is important to test everything. We tested our landing pages and were able to increase our conversions, our number of sign-ups by 15%. Number two, getting affiliates is all about relationships. Number three, it's a very good idea, in my opinion, when you're doing a launch to do it in phases. Don't try to do everything at once. Just come out with what you need to test the main elements and then, continue to improve and launching in phases helps you to do that.

Number four, it doesn't always turn out the way you expect it but, you learn from it and then, you continue to make it better. Number five, if you set the right systems in place, it can eliminate the stress.

Now, I want to let you know that I've created courses on a number of these topics when it comes to outsourcing, product creation, product launch, and affiliate marketing and list building. But, that's not what I'm talking about in this.

If you're interested in checking out any of those courses, go to BecomeaBlogger.com/courses, and you'll be able to find out more about those courses because there are a lot of technical details in between. There are a lot of things that you need to take in consideration when it comes to launching a product, when it comes to creating a product, and lunching a product. So, check that out, becomeablogger.com/courses. Or, just come to becomeablogger.com and you'll see the link to go to the courses.

A Question about Affiliates

So, we did have a question that came in from Facebook, and I want to read that question. Part of that question is already answered. But, Mary Kathan (I'm not exactly sure how to say the last name) on Facebook asked:

> *"Did you use affiliates, and if you did, how did you attract them to team up with you?"*

Now, from listening to this episode, you already know that I used affiliates and I spoke about the importance of relationships. A **relationship** is important because when you actually reach out to those individuals, they already know who you are. They already have an idea of what you do and hopefully, they already trust you, they know you, like you and trust you, and would be willing to promote.

So, what I did, what we did is we just sent an email to our list of contacts and let them know, "Hey, we're launching Become a Blogger Premium. Here are the details, and we'd be happy to have you as an affiliate. These are the launch dates. This is the information about the commissions and so on. We like you to promote."

And, a number of them said, "Yes." Some of them said, "No, because they had other things going on at that time but, we had a significant amount that actually did say, "Yes," and that

were willing to come on and promote Become a Blogger.

By having those relationships, and then, once you have those relationships, you've nurtured them over time , just sending an email, just sending the information and asking them if they're willing to be an affiliate.

Another thing that we did was we sent an email to all of the people that have signed up for Become a Blogger in the past, and let them know we are re-launching, and if they're interested in promoting, they can go ahead and sign up.

In that process, we set up an affiliate page, I set up an affiliate page, and people can go there, sign up, get the information that they needed and then, be able to promote.

So, I hope that answers your question, Mary. That's basically all I did when it came to recruiting affiliates and getting people to promote. That's something that's going to continue, and we're going to continue working on it because affiliates can be very powerful.

Think about it. If you have $100 product, to make $10,000, you need to sell 100 copies. However, if you can get ten affiliates to sell ten copies, that's the same and you'll be making that $10,000. Of course, you have commissions involved there, and you have to pay them out commissions. But, it gives you an idea.

Recruiting affiliates and having affiliates especially good affiliates can be very powerful to get exposure to your products, to get exposure to your brand and to build what you're trying to build online.

A Little Homework Assignment

Thank you, Mary for your question. As usual, if you have questions, you can call the hotline. I also want to give you a homework assignment. This homework assignment is going to be probably the most involved homework assignment I've given to date. But it can be the most rewarding one for you.

You ready for this? This is going to be a challenge. I'm going to challenge you on this one. Your homework assignment is to create a product. Yes, I said create a product.

It doesn't here to be something very complex. It doesn't have to be very complicated. You can

just write a short report, an 8-page report, or an eBook, or put together some things, a list of resources that you can give out. Create a PDF or a video, or an audio recording teaching someone how to do something whatever your niche is about, create a product that you can either give away for free, or you can sell.

We've had a number of people go through Become a Blogger, and have started creating their own products and have even launched their products, and have made sales and are making money from their product and are very excited. I want you to do the exact same thing. So, I'm going to push you. I'm going to push you to actually create a product.

Content for you blog is great, but we need to start taking things to the next level. So, that is your homework assignment for today. Create a product, but also, I want you to come back to the blog. This is going to be Episode number 087. So, come here at becomeablogger.com/episode87. Leave a comment letting me know what that product is that you're going to create and make sure to connect with me on Facebook, leslieonfacebook.com.

That's pretty much it for this episode. I hope you got a lot of value from that. Once again, if you enjoy what we're doing here, and you think, "Man, I want to build something online. I want to reach the world, I want to build an online business, and I want to use a blog to do that. "I want to invite you to go and check our ten free videos at freebloggingvideos.com.

In those videos, just to give you a little more detail, I'm going to talk to you about why you should use Wordpress, how do you get a domain name? How do you get hosting? And, how do install Wordpress? How do you start adding content and have a nice design on your blog? Step-by-step, you get to watch me as I walk you through the process, as I actually set up a blog watching on my screen, kind of just looking over my shoulder and checking out how to set up a blog, and you can follow along in that process.

So, check it out -- freebloggingvideos.com. We have a lot of members in there, just enjoying the stuff and a lot of blogs that have started as a result.

So, that's pretty much it for this video. If you're enjoying this podcast, make sure to rate us on iTune, rate me on iTune, leslieonitunes.com. That will help get the word out there, and help more people to see how they can start blogs that can change the world.

So, that's it for this video. This is Leslie Samuel. Until next time, take care and God bless.