Become A Blogger

Presents:
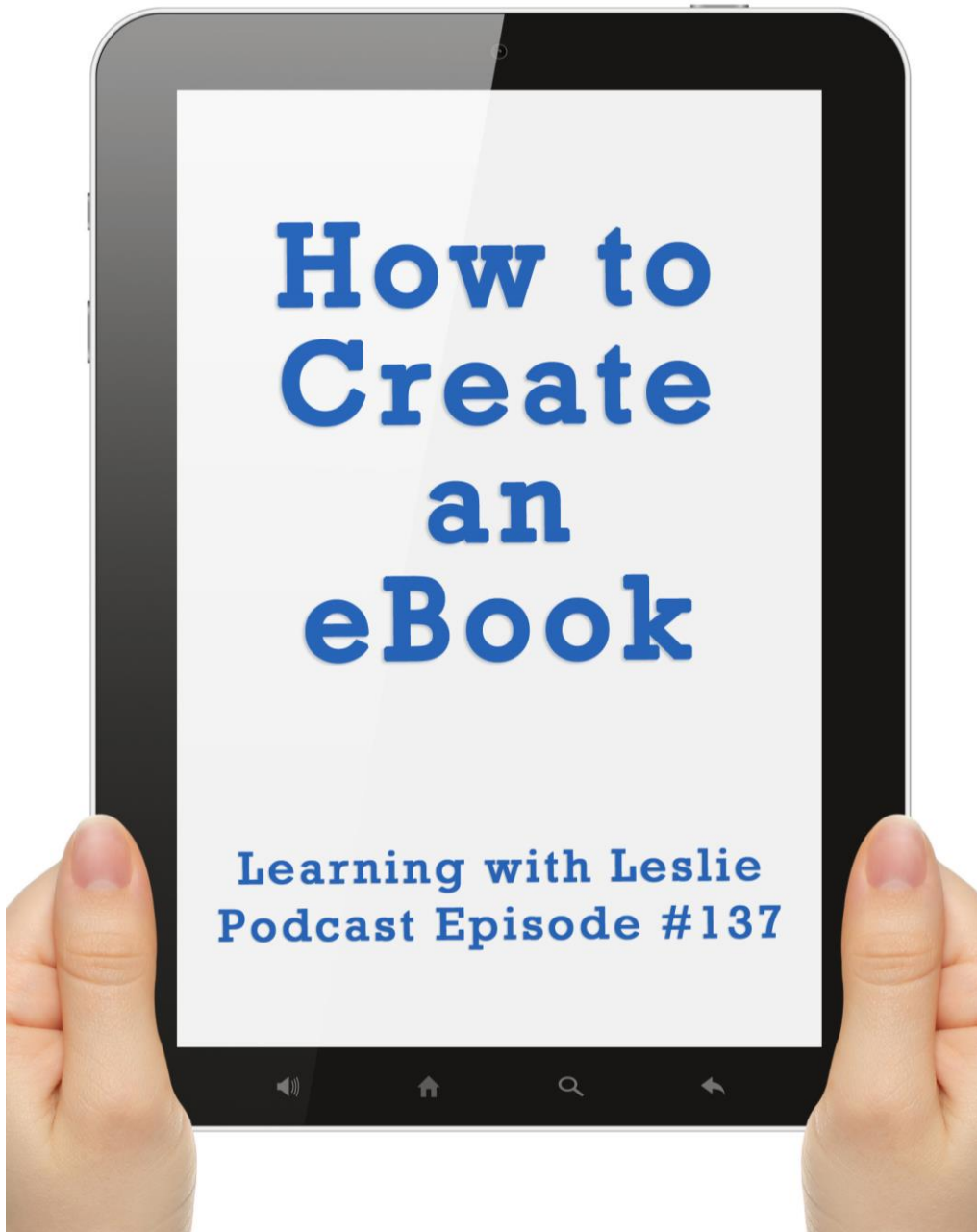
How to Create an eBook

Learning with Leslie
Podcast Episode #137

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 where we're changing the world one blog at a time and as usual, I have another exciting episode for you today.

In today's episode, I'm going to be talking about a topic that I can't believe I have not addressed yet here on Learning with Leslie. I'm going to be talking about how to create an eBook.

An eBook is a great resource that's relatively easy to create that can be used to get leads or to make some money. However, when a lot of people think about creating an eBook, they often think that it is something extremely difficult that only professional bloggers can create.

Well, first of all, you are or are becoming a professional blogger and second of all, it is not as difficult as you may think. What programs should you use? How should you store it? How do you deliver it? How do you sell it? How do you promote it? Well, that's what we're going to be talking about today.

First, the Announcements

All right, all right, all right! So, we're going to be talking about how to create an eBook, lots to talk about that. It's something that I think more bloggers need to do. I know there are tons of eBooks out there but, if you don't have an eBook at all, it's something you may want to consider doing and I'll talk about the benefits of having an eBook. I'll talk about how to go about setting it up, how to go about creating it and how to go about delivering it. So, lots to talk about.

But, before I cover that, I want to talk, I want to give a few announcements, two announcements. Announcement number one, I am going to be in Milwaukee! That's going to be on November 17 and I'm thinking about doing a meet-up, not 100% sure as to where it's going to be as yet but, it's going to be in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The reason I'm going to be there is I'm going to be at a conference called, [Blogging Concentrated](#). I'm going to be talking at that conference. It's more of a workshop actually. It's about 35 people getting together in a coffee shop and we're going to be discussing all types of things when it comes to online business.

I spoke about that two episodes ago. And, if it's something that you're interested in attending, you want to go and check out **Becomeablogger.com/bloggingconcentrated**. I am excited about it because I know that I'm going to learn a lot there.

The people that are there with me, doing that workshop, they are great people. A lot of knowledge to share and I'm excited to just kind of brainstorm with all of the attendees and to share some tips that we can all use to build better blogs.

So, if you want to check it out, becomeablogger.com/bloggingconcentrated. But, if you want to do the meetup, if you want to do a meetup, you want to be there and just hang out whether you're coming to the workshop or not, check the show notes for this episode. This is Episode 137 so, becomeablogger.com/episode137 and hopefully, by the time this goes live, I'll have some of those details for you and you can check that out. Hopefully, I'll see you in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

If not, I'll meet you some time in the future somewhere else. I'm going to be all over the world over the next lifetime so, who knows, we might get to connect at some other point.

So, that's the first announcement.

Announcement number two, man if you missed last podcast episode, [Episode 136](#) with Tony Stubblebine from the Lift App. He was one of the guys that helped to build Twitter but, he moved on since then a number of times and now, his most recent project is the Lift App, a program for helping you to get things done.

I created a coaching plan on there. The coaching plan is [Become a Better Blogger in 30 Days](#), or something like that, Build a Better Blog in 30 days, something like that. It is something that a number of people have been going through. I have been going through it myself and doing the activities just to be a part of the process and I am getting so much out of it.

Become a better blogger in 30 days   [Sign Up]

Plan created by
Leslie Samuel

Over the next 30 days, we're going on a journey to become a better blogger. This plan goes in one week increments. Week 1 is preparation week, and then in the following weeks, you will be creating content, connecting with influences and nurturing relationships with your audience.

Before you start this plan, I would highly recommend for you to listen to my interview with the Tony Stubblebine, co-founder of the lift app on how to reach your blogging goals. You can find the interview here - http://www.becomeablogger.com/tonystubblebine

Instructions

If you have not checked out the episode, check it out. BecomeaBlogger.com/Episode 137. If you have not joined the coaching plan that I set up, it's basically where every day for 30 days, you get an assignment to do. I've been having such great feedback on it, some great discussion over there.

This is a comment that Holly left a few days ago. She said, "Phew! Three pages of writing later and I have a very detailed idea of what my avatar looks like. Thank you, Leslie! I've been meaning to do this for a long time."

And, I'm there. I'm seeing some of the stuff that people are coming up with in terms of why are they building their blog and who their ideal target person is and now, we're in the process of creating specific types of content and it is so valuable.

If you haven't checked it out, go to Becomeablogger.com/Lift. Of course, you can check out that podcast episode for more details.

Your Calls

Along those lines, I also had a call that came in from Warren Gibbons from Saltwater Aquariums Explained and saltwateraquariumsecrets.com and this is what Warren had to say:

Hi Leslie! It's Warren Gibbons with Saltwater Aquariums Explained and Saltwateraquariumsecrets.com. I want to thank you for a phenomenal awesome episode today on Lift, on the app and especially the coaching plan you put together.

Oh my God, that's just… That's going to be so helpful to me and probably some many, many others. Thank you for putting it out there. That's something you break loose from being stuck and being more productive. Very, very helpful. Keep going, Leslie. Thanks!

Hey, thanks for that feedback and you are very much welcome.

Guys, if you have not checked out that coaching plan, here's the thing, it's 100% free. It's nothing that I'm trying to sell to you or anything of that sort. It's just a way for us to just, you know, take action over the next thirty days to build better blogs.

So, go ahead and check it out, becomeablogger.com/Lift. That was the first call called into the hotline and of course, I have another one that I want to play from Shannon Gunn MyPianoSmiles.com. I love the name, "My Piano Smiles." I'm a pianist myself and that just got me excited when I saw her blog.

So, take it away, Shannon.

Hi! This is Shannon Gunn and I have a blog at MyPianoSmiles.com. I just listened to your episode on back linking and I wanted to ask you two quick questions about that.

The first question is, is it okay to put a bunch of these links at once or do you have to space them out at a time like can I put up five backlinks from all my social media… Or, should I do one per day maybe? I don't know If Google didn't like that.

Then, the second question was, do you have any suggestions for… Is there anything you can do if spammy websites are linking to you? I have realtor websites in Poland linking to a site about Piano music. It doesn't make sense.

Any advice is much appreciated. Thank you for all you do. I really enjoy your podcast. I listen to everything and your advice has really helped me with my website.

All right, thank you so much! Have a nice night. Bye!

Thank you so much for calling that in, Shannon. Those are two great questions. This has to do with my backlinking episode. That was Episode 135, if I remember correctly.

To your question, is it okay to do a bunch of these links at once?

Here is the thing, when you were saying "at once," you were talking about maybe five or six different profiles that you want to link to your blog, that is absolutely not a problem. Numbers like five, six, ten, fifteen, that's not really a big deal to Google.

If I go and do a podcast episode or, I get interviewed on a very popular blog and then, all of a sudden, a bunch of bloggers link to me, that's not a bad thing. That's actually a good thing and if someone comes to my site, or I post an article and a lot of people love that article and so, they share it on Social Media, that is not a bad thing.

The thing you want to avoid is doing anything that is spammy! That's really what it's about. Yes, okay. So, you have spammy websites linking to your blog according to what you said but, what I would encourage you to do is not to focus on the spammy things that other people are doing.

Focus on what you have control of. You have control of creating awesome content. You have control of networking with great people, other individuals in your niche, other bloggers and potentially getting them to link to you. You have control of the quality of content that you are producing and the networking and the relationships that you are building.

You're building those relationships one at a time and that is all good. So, hey! If you get good advice as the things that you can do to get backlinks, hey, go ahead and do them. Don't do those things where you are getting hundreds or thousands of backlinks for a paid price or anything of that sort. Just be real with what you are doing.

Honestly, I don't concern myself with all that spammy stuff at all whatsoever. I get a bunch of spammy sites linking to the stuff that I'm doing and I know that because I get alerts. A lot of people, what they do is they get these stupid plugins that it automatically generate links in their blog posts and it sends pings to those blog posts. A ping is basically a notification so, you see that they are linking to you. You go and you check out their site and…

There's a bunch of spammy tactics out there. Don't concern yourself with that whatsoever. That is none of your business or, at least make it none of your business. I used to take those things and try to figure things out with them and they started happening at such a high rate that I just decided, you know what, I don't have time to focus on this foolishness. I'm just going to focus on the things that I do that provide value and that's what I want to encourage you to do.

All right, so those are the questions.

The Early Freebie Trading Years

Now, I want to get in to today's content. When I first got into blogging, I used to teach something that was called "Freebie trading." I don't know if you know anything about freebie trading. It doesn't matter but, just to give you a little bit of a history lesson in terms of the history of Leslie's online business, I used to be involved in a thing that's called Freebie

Trading. You have these websites out there that say, "Hey, if you sign up and complete an offer, you can get a free iPad, a free TV and all these types of things."

I always used to wonder if they work. Well, to a certain extent, they do work. And, they used to work much better back in the days and you could also get paid money for referring people to those sites.

I figured out a system where I could use those sites and make money. I made a significant amount of money so, I started to teach people how to do what I was doing.

It's not something that I recommend for anyone to do these days. The terms have changed significantly. The advertisers are not paying the way that they used to pay. I'm not going to get into all those details but, the take home message was, when I was doing that, I put together a free eBook, and that eBook was called, "The Freebie Report." I don't even know if I still have that. It would be kind of interesting to see if I can find that file. I'll check and if I could find that file, I'll put it in the show notes for this podcast episode just for you to have a good laugh or something of that sort.

Anyhow, I put together this eBook called, "The Freebie Report." The reason why I put it together was because I wanted to give individuals a reason to sign up to my email list. That went very well. It was extremely powerful because it grew my list. That list became the foundation of my online business. It allowed me to do a significant amount of different things. It allowed me to do affiliate promotions. It allowed me to sell products. It allowed me to do so much. Your list is extremely valuable and this was my first time creating a resource and giving it away in exchange for someone signing up to my email list.

Then, later on, when I started my [Biology blog](#), I have been doing it for a while. I was thinking, how in the world can I make some money with this blog?

One of the things that I decided to do is to create a study guide in the form of an eBook and sell that on my site for $34.95 That's exactly what I did.

The study guide was basically the same notes that I use to create the videos that I had for free. I created a Study guide from that content and I have been selling it for the last few years. I have sold a few thousand dollars' worth of it. Every month, it sells a few hundred dollars and you know, I am glad to have that additional income stream.

What is an eBook?

Ebooks can be great for getting people to opt in to your list and eBooks can be great for having a resource that you can sell so that, you can make some money. But, the question is how do you create an eBook? Or, maybe we should start with what is an eBook?

An eBook is simple. It's a book that's e! [*laughs*] Okay, that was dumb. That was corny. Anyhow, an eBook is a digital book that someone can read on some type of a device. That's my definition. It's not an official definition but, I can read it on my computer. I can read it on my mobile device. I can read it in different formats. It's usually available, for the type of eBook that I'm talking about, it's usually available as a PDF.

Of course now, you have the Kindle and all of these e-readers that you can also use to have different versions of eBooks but, for me, and what I'm addressing here, it would simply be PDF eBooks that someone can download to their computer and then, consume whenever they feel the need to consume it. All right, and by "consume" I don't mean "eat it," I mean, "read it." Man, I'm just so corny today. What's going on with me?

Anyhow, I feel like those moments like I have in my classes, when my students look at me like, "Oh my word! That was so cheesy."
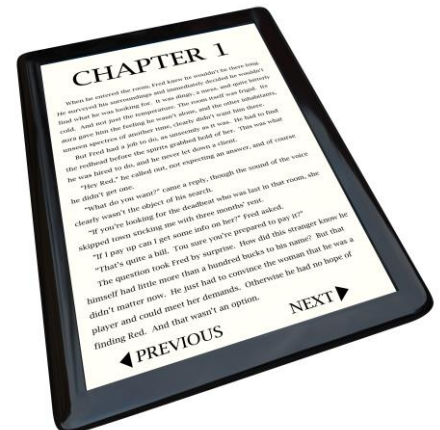
How to Create an eBook

Anywho, let's talk about how to go about creating this eBook. Now, if you've decided you want to create an eBook, the first questions that you want to answer have to do with the word, "Why?" Number one:

#1: Why do you want to create that eBook?

Are you wanting to create it because you want to grow your list? And, if you don't have any eBooks, or you don't have some type of resource that people can opt in for to get access to some resource and then, get on your list, I would definitely recommend for you to start with this.

Start with creating a free eBook just to get people to sign up and opt in to your list. That's one way that you can do it. Of course, you can create a video course or an audio course or something else but, an eBook is a good way to start.

So, it could be for that or, it could be because you want to make some money. With me, that's the route that I went for my Biology blog. I wanted to create some type of a study guide that people could purchase, and when they purchase it, I make some money and they get some value. The value is they get to learn about, in my case, human physiology.

The name of my study guide is called, "Human Physiology for Regular People." So, I put it together and now, I'm selling it.

So, the first why is, why are you creating that eBook? You need to be very clear on that because depending on your answer, that's going to determine, the type of eBook you're going to be creating.

All right? That's the first why.

The second "why" you want to answer is why should someone get the book? Why should they purchase that book? What is the value that they are going to get? Why should they say, "you know what? I'm going to give you my email address," or, "you know what? I'm going to give you my $34.95 or $17.00 or $47.00," whatever the price is, why should they purchase or opt in to get that eBook?

Now, for me, I put together my free eBook for the freebie industry because I wanted to have one resource that people can go to that explains to them exactly how to do what I had been doing so that, they can make money online.

With my Biology blog, I created a Physiology Study Guide because I wanted to help students pass their Physiology class. That was the benefit for them. That was my, "why." You need to answer that question. Why should someone get that book because that is going to determine the next thing which is:

#2: What are you going to cover in your eBook?

Now, let's talk about that. What to cover in that eBook. If it's a free eBook, it does not have to be something extremely substantial. It doesn't have to be something very long. It doesn't have to be a 50-page or 60-page or 90-page eBook. It can be but, it does not have to be. It can be something as simple and this is not really an eBook but, it can be something as simple as a one-page list of resources.

The top five freebie trading forums, that could have been a resource that I gave away back then, or the top five study tools for Biology. That could be a free resource that I give away at my Biology blog. So, if it's free, it doesn't have to be as involved. It can be if you choose to but, you don't have to feel the need to invest that much in it. You just want to make sure that it is something of value, something that your target audience can use.

If it's paid, it needs to be more substantial. It needs to have more content, more meat, something that if I part with my hard-earned dollars, I know that I'm going to get value from this eBook.

Now, for me when I am creating an eBook, the first thing I do is I start with an outline. This is something that I would recommend for you to do. You can start with an outline on a sheet of paper. You can start with an outline in something like Evernote, which is what I would use. I love Evernote because I can type in to Evernote from any of my devices and it syncs within all of those devices.

But by starting with an outline, you have a better idea of what you're going to cover, you have a better idea of the flow that you're trying to create and then, you can start typing.

So, in terms of what you're going to cover, start with an outline and then, just start typing. You know why you're creating it, you know what value you're trying to offer so, you need to deliver that value in the pages of that eBook.

If you're teaching someone how to use freebie trading then, you want to give them all the details that they need in terms of what freebie trading is, how to get started, how to use the freebie trading forums, how to make money, how to get people, all these different types of things.

If it's about physiology, you want to take the different systems of the body and break it down one step at a time. Main thing is, you want to be able to answer that why, why should someone get the book with the what?

Does that make sense? The what that you're putting into your eBook, that needs to answer that why for those individuals, your target audience. So, just start with an outline and then, just start typing.

#3: How do you create it?

You can use [Microsoft Word](#). If you're on a PC, definitely I recommend 100% Microsoft Word. If you're on a Mac, you could also use Microsoft Word or you can use the [Pages](#) program for Mac. This is the one that I prefer because it really does a better job in terms of formatting, in terms of making things look all nice and pretty and allowing you to do a lot of little tiny features like adding shadows and reflections and all these types of things that help your eBook to look much more professional. Pages does a great job.

But honestly, you can use any Word processor. You can use OpenOffice. That's available at [OpenOffice.org](#) and you can download that for free and it will do the exact same thing. It might not look as pretty as Pages but, it will be exactly what you need. You'll be able to create that eBook. So, just start typing.

Use one of those programs to get your content out there and we're ready for the next step. That next step is:

#4 Use call-outs.

You want to use call outs strategically to emphasize the important points and to break up the flow a little. Now, what is a call out?

I went to Wikipedia and did a search for call outs. This is what it says,

> *In publishing, a call out is a short string of text connected by a line, arrow, or similar graphic to feature of an illustration or technical drawing and giving information about that feature.*

It continues,

> *… The term is also used to describe a short piece of text set in larger type than the rest of the page and intended to attract attention.*

Here's the thing. When I'm reading through this page, if it's just a bunch of text on a page, no formatting and all that kind of stuff, it will look like a long string of text that is hard for me to go through. At least, generally speaking, that's what you think when you look at an eBook that's just a bunch of text.
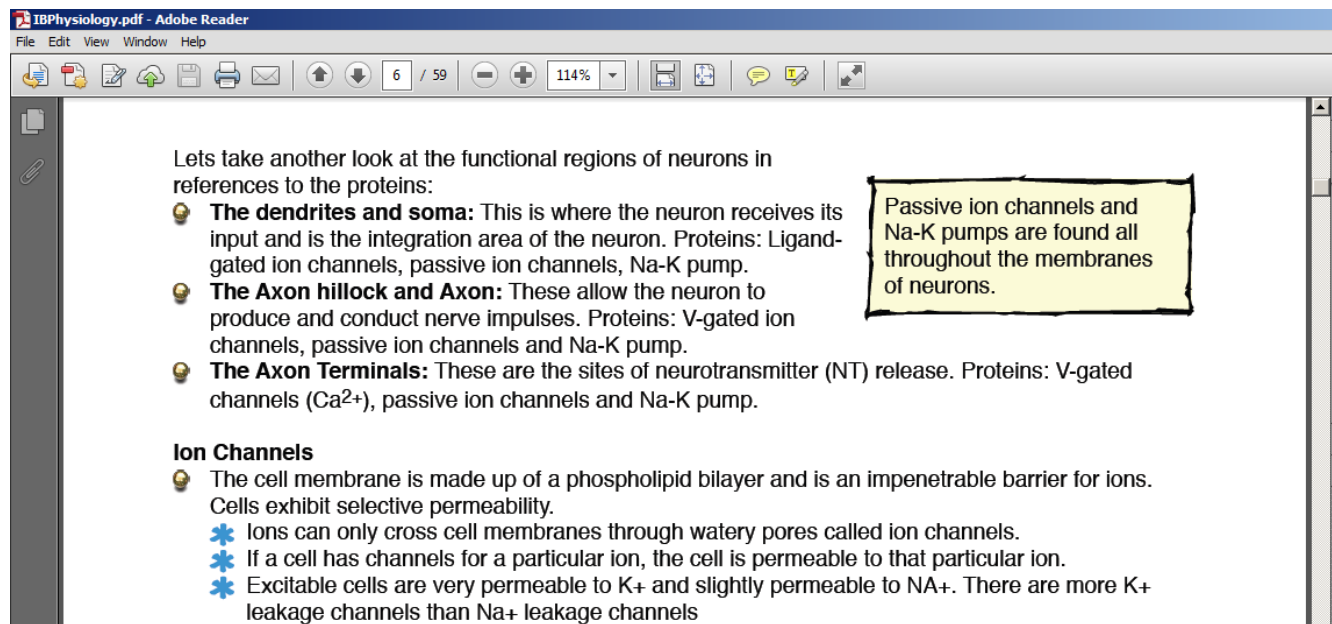

But, if you can make certain sections bold, if you can pull out key points and put them in little call out boxes, if you can put a border around a certain section to make it look different from all of the others and draw someone's attention to it, if you can take some of the text and make them larger in specific sections to make it look more important if that text is more important, that will make it easier to consume.

So, you want to use call outs strategically to emphasize those important points. Next thing: Images.

#5: Use Images.

You want to use nice images to enhance the look and feel of that eBook. It makes it look much more professional. It also breaks up the page a little bit so, it's easier to consume. It just makes you look like you know what you are doing, much better than just having a bunch of words on a text. And, there are a bunch of different places that you can find images, you can find stock images for example at sites like iStockphoto. That one gets pretty pricey. I use Canstockphoto.com for most of my stock photography then, there are free image sources like Wikimedia Commons which you can find at commons.wikimedia.org and of course, the links to everything I mentioned in here is going to be in the show notes, Becomeablogger.com/episode137.
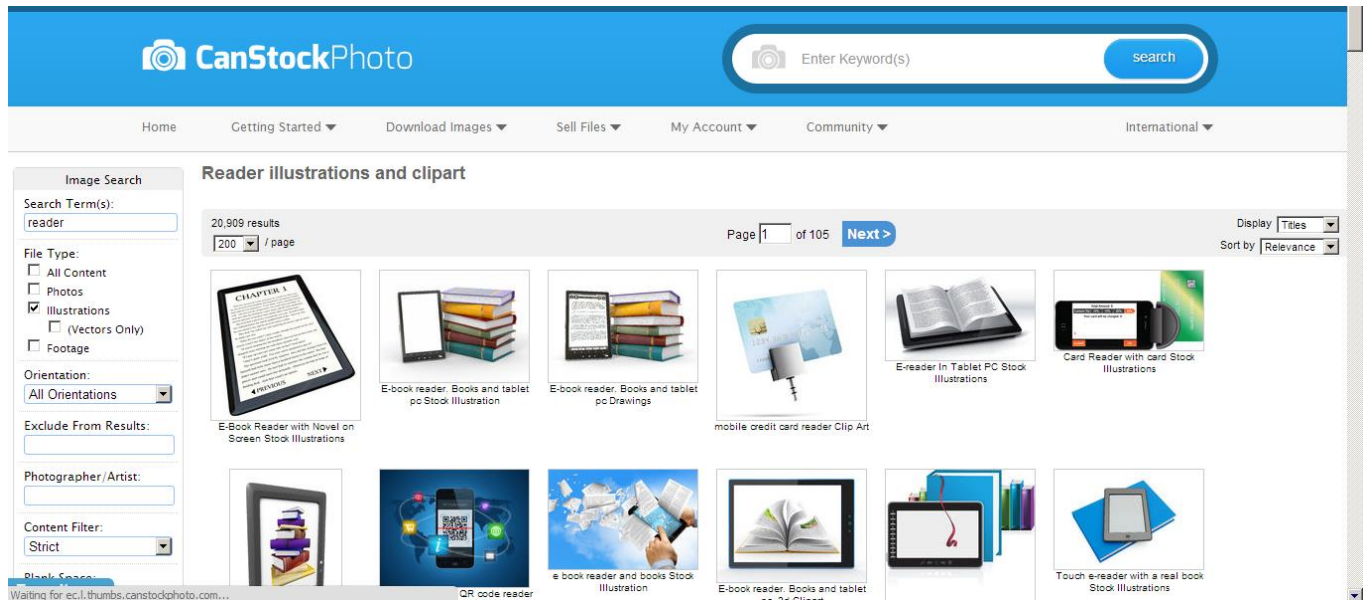
There is also a post that Carey Green did on Become a Blogger with free image sources, high-quality image sources that you can have access to. I'll include a link to that post in the show notes for this episode. So, you can go to check that out.

Okay, so you've typed out your eBook in Microsoft Word or Pages, or Open Office. You have some strategically placed call outs. You have nice images that enhances the look and feel of your eBook.

#6: Export it as a PDF.

The next thing you want to do once that's all said and done is you want to export it as a PDF. It's a very simple process. You go to File, and then Export. Depending on which program

you're using, it might be a little different but, if you're not sure how to do that, you can just do a Google Search for, "how to export as a PDF in OpenOffice," for example.

And then, you'll get a tutorial that shows you exactly how to do it. That is the format you want to save this eBook in. You want to save it as a PDF. That way, people can download it. Most people have Adobe Reader on their computer and they'll be able to easily access that eBook.

Now, let's talk about how do you deliver that eBook?

#7: Deliver your eBook.

Now, if your eBook is free, I like to keep things very simple. What I do is I just simply take it, put it on a page on my site but, I don't make that page publicly available. So, I don't put it in my menu bar or anything of that sort. I just have the page. No one knows the pages there unless they sign up to get access to that free report.

Now, I also use a plugin called **download manager**." It's a Wordpress plugin.The reason I use it is because I want to be able to track how many time that eBook gets downloaded. So, if you just were to have a link, you could never really tell how many times it gets downloaded but, if you use a download manager" plugin, it will tell you the exact number of times. That gives you an idea of how well your campaign is working.

So, what I do then is I put it on the page for someone to download. When they opt in and they confirm their email address, it redirects them to that page so that, they can download it right there.

I usually include a text that says something like, "Right click to save as PDF" so that they can right click on the image or the text and download it to their computer.

Also, when they sign up and they get that welcome email, I include a link to that page in that email. So, if for example, they go through the process, they come to the page but, they don't download it, right then and there, they have to run to work or something of that sort, they can always come back later to that page and download it.

I don't worry about people sharing it. I don't try to keep track of any of those things. I want to make it as easy as possible for someone to sign up to my list and by having that freely available, it makes it really easy for them to do that and it entices them to sign up.

All right now, if someone is paying for your eBook then, the service that I recommend for you to use is called, "e-Junkie." It's at e-junkie.com. I love it because it's simple and it deals with everything.

You upload your eBook to the service and then, it gives you a code that you put on your site and then, people can purchase that and once they purchase it, it will send them the email with the download link that's going to expire in a certain number of days, usually that's five and they have a certain number of attempts that they can use to download it and it just takes care of everything.

You can connect it to Paypal so that, your money gets directly deposited into Paypal. It does cost to use e-Junkie. I think it costs $5 per digital file that you're delivering. You can use e-Junkie for eBooks. You can use it for videos or whatever. I prefer to just use it for eBooks and that's how I sell my Study Guide at my Biology site. Works very well. I hardly ever have a problem with it and if I have a problem with it, it is extremely easy to fix.
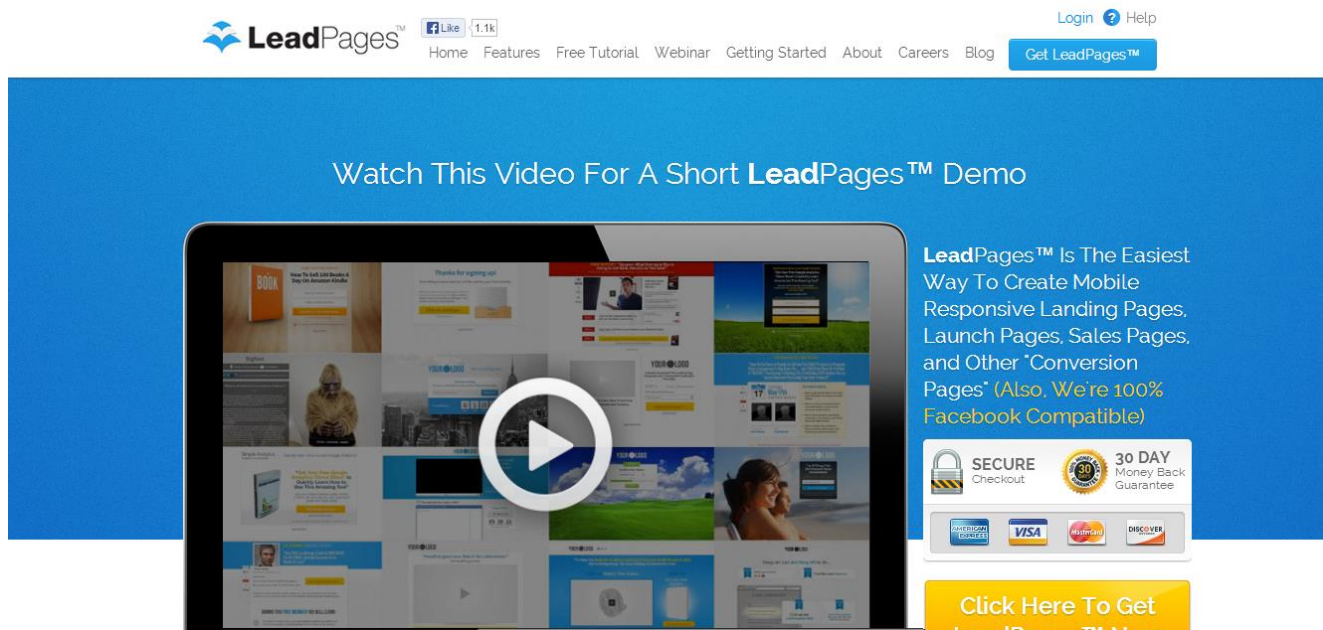
I figure, I rather use a service that does it all for me than trying to put something together myself that has multiple components that can break and all that stuff. Eliminate the headache. Use a service like e-Junkie. That's what I have done and I love it.

So, you have your eBook created. You have it there ready to give it to the world and the next thing you need to do is,

#8: Tell the world about it.

Tell the world about it in as many ways as you possibly can. You can write a blog post about it. Make a video about it. Do a podcast episode about it, depending on what kind of content you create.

If it's a free eBook, I definitely recommend for you to create a Squeeze Page so that, people can come to that Squeeze Page and opt in to get access to that eBook. If you don't know how to create a Squeeze Page, I recommend a service like LeadPages.

LeadPages is really good for squeeze pages. I just started using it based on a recommendation from Patt Flynn over at Smart Passive Income and I love it. It is simple. It is easy to use and it does everything that you need to do.

Of course, I'll have a link to that in the show notes.

If it's a paid eBook, if people are paying to download that eBook then, you want to have a Sales page, not a squeeze page. Lead pages does that, too. You can use services like Optimize Press 2 or, you can just have a page on your blog that you format in a specific way to make it look good.

Lead Pages I think is the best right now for that. Optimize Press is a close second. I put them almost at the same level depending on what you are trying to accomplish. But, that is something for another podcast episode or another blog post.

Anyhow, so set up your Squeeze Page, set up your Sales page. If you can get banners designed, get those banners designed. That's what I do on my Biology website, on my Biology blog. When you go there, you see a banner on every page advertising the Study Guide and that's the main way I sell it.

If you're sending out emails in your signature, you want to have a link to that resource. Why not? If it's something that's relevant to those individuals, let them know about it anyway that's humanly possible and then, of course, you can share it all over Social Media. Do not be spammy.

Once again, **do not be spammy** because spammy is not just call but, yes. Tell the world about it. That's pretty much it. So, just to recap on those points…

Recap…

First, you want to ask yourself, why do you want to create the eBook? Then, why should someone get that eBook? What are you going to cover in that book? Make an outline and start just typing away and creating that awesome content.

I spoke about how to create it using Microsoft Word, Pages, or any other word processor. I spoke about using call outs. I spoke about getting nice images to make it look much better, exporting it as a PDF, how do you deliver it in terms of whether you're doing it for free or paid.

For paid, I recommend e-junkie and then, you want to tell the world about it.

I hope you got a lot of value from that. If you don't have an eBook or you're thinking about ways to get people to sign up to your list, if you're thinking about a way to make some money from your blog, this is one way that you can get started with creating an eBook.

Hey, thank you so much for listening. Thank you for those of you that called in your questions and your comments. I always love getting feedback on that voicemail hotline. So, if you have a question that you want me to cover on the show, you know what to do.

You can just call the hotline. I will place the number at the end. It's the last thing you're going to hear and you can leave your question or comment there.

If you're enjoying this podcast, you want to get your blog started. You're not sure how, you want to create content, inspire others and change the world, head on over to freebloggingvideos.com. You get to follow me as I show you exactly how I've built my blogs into successful online businesses and how so many others have done the same. Freebloggingvideos.com – it's free, actionable and awesome.

If you're enjoying the podcast, I said that already but, if you are, if you really and truly are, leave me some feedback. Leave me a review in iTunes. Becomeablogger.com/iTunes, that really helps me.

Over the last few weeks, I've been rising in iTunes and it's great to see it's because of those feedbacks. Keep them coming those reviews. Love you guys. Until next time, take care and God bless!

888-835-2414

That was the number that I was talking about that you can call and leave your question. All right, peace!