

**#1 RATED, LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND
GLOBAL CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN GUIDE**

HOW TO START YOUR OWN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN CONSULTING BUSINESS

**Step-by-step Guide designed to help you start your own highly
successful Crowdfunding Campaign Consulting Business...
made simple. Millions around the globe need your help Now!!**



IKE E. LEMUWA

**Author/Angel Investor/Strategic Fundraising Coach/
Crowdfunding Expert**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

You need capital to start a business. How do you get the funds to buy inventory, launch a marketing campaign, and set up shop?

In the last few centuries, businesses have nearly always relied on their immediate networks. Funders may include an uncle, a noble, or a local bank. There are few alternatives for those without a big pile of cash.

Things started to change a few years ago. Entrepreneurs and artists started to receive funding in small amounts from a great number of people often outside of their network. Instead of getting one large loan from a bank officer, entrepreneurs solicit the funding directly from the public, in large part from people whom they do not know. As a result, you may see something like 1000 people giving \$30 each instead of a \$30,000 loan from a single bank officer.

This is called crowdfunding. Think of it as a “Pennies from Many” model.

Projects are typically funded on crowdfunding platforms. The most popular two are Kickstarter and Indiegogo; smaller platforms include RocketHub, GoFundMe, and Crowdfunder.

Each platform operates sets different rules. Some allow you to keep all the money you raise, while others will only give you the money if your project is fully funded; some are pre-dominantly focused on creative projects and business ideas, while others are more suited for personal ventures.

In short, digestible chapters, this guide helps you to plan out which platform to launch on, create the best campaign page you can, and plan the transition to an enduring business.

Our Guide to Crowdfunding

Our guide begins with an introduction to crowdfunding, which includes a guide on how to build the foundations for an enduring business. Then it gives an overview of the different platforms, featuring especially Kickstarter and Indiegogo, and compares different platforms in a table. Each of these platforms each have different fees, funding models, and audiences; each platform makes more sense for certain projects more than others.

How to Optimize Your Campaign

Crowdfunding is hard, and certainly a great deal requires luck. But there is a science and a method behind most successful projects. We take a purely empirical approach to show you how to optimize your video, landing page, rewards, and the optimal length of time for your campaign. Instead of citing other resources to tell you how to optimize, say, your video, we offer advice directly from Kickstarter and Indiegogo, and present raw data on videos of the most-funded projects from both Kickstarter and Indiegogo.

What is Crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is a way for businesses, organizations and individuals to interact with other individuals, communities and organizations to raise a fixed amount of money as a loan, donation or investment. Some companies may turn to crowdfunding to obtain the necessary support for a new project or

idea. Most often, crowdfunding requires that funding be raised during a set timeframe via a digital social network.

Participants, or “backers” as they’re often called, pledge a minimum amount to the fund and may receive a reward for their contribution. These rewards oftentimes scale based on the size of a donation to incentivize higher donations. While what a backer does could be considered buying ownership of a company, crowdfunding does not give away ownership or equity from the project’s owner.

The challenges of crowdfunding

Many individuals associate crowdfunding as an easy or free way of making money. It requires a lot of effort to establish a project that backers will perceive as a valuable service. Success isn’t always guaranteed, and as crowdfunding becomes more and more common, backers have become shrewder with what projects they choose to support.

Crowdfunding backers don’t always know when a crowdfunding activity is trustworthy or legitimate. Many crowdfunded projects have disappeared either because it was a scam or the entity behind bringing the project to fruition ran out of money and the project failed. Regulations do not fully protect backers from being scammed or protect against projects that end up failing, which means crowdfunding must remain transparent and informative to the community.

Examples of crowdfunding

Not all projects are able to succeed, and few of them really obtain any significant levels of funding.

The prospect of pursuing crowdfunding as a fundraising opportunity originates with a business or individual who has an idea or product that needs money to become available to consumers. Many projects with excellent ideas end up failing, whereas others with simple premises flourish beyond all expectations. Crowdfunding projects tend to follow more of a viral method of growth, and as such are quite unpredictable without the proper marketing.

One instance of a successful crowdfunder revolves around the success of the Ouya, a gaming console based on the Android mobile operating system. Created by a team of individuals who formerly worked for the companies behind the XBox 360 and PlayStation 3, they sought to break the monopoly of console gaming by introducing a new machine to the market. Their target goal was a modest \$950,000 needed to fund research and development of the console and distribution. When the project concluded after a period of 31 days, the crowdfund netted more than \$8.5 million from 63,000 interested backers.

After a video of a bus monitor being bullied by students went viral, a man who had never met the monitor decided to launch a crowdfund with the goal of sending her on a well-deserved vacation. The resulting support from the media and public at large helped generate more than \$700,000, which not only succeeded in giving her enough for a vacation, but also a good retirement.

Concluding a crowdfunding

Upon the conclusion of a crowdfunding fundraiser, one of three things happens. If the fundraiser was unsuccessful in reaching its target goal amount, funds are returned to backers. If the fundraiser was unsuccessful, some crowdfunding websites still allow companies to collect all money raised despite the failure of reaching the goal—oftentimes available for an additional expense.

If the fundraiser was successful, the company, organization or individual receives the total amount of money raised, minus any processing fees. For example, a popular crowdfunding source called Kickstarter charges a 5 percent fee for hosting the fundraiser in addition to a 3- to 5-percent fee through Amazon for payment processing. These payments are only required for successful crowdfunding projects and will not be charged to any that do not reach their target goal amount.

Examples of crowdfunding websites

Many websites exist that enable crowdfunding. Of these numerous resources, only a few stand out in popularity and in terms of success levels. Kickstarter is the most noteworthy crowdfunding resource with a proven history of raising more than half a billion dollars since 2009 on projects of varying sizes. Other popular crowdfunding platforms include StartSomeGood, Indiegogo and RocketHub.

Crowdfunding succeeds in integrating the traditional funding model with a more modern way of driving business and welfare. While crowdfunding does not necessarily guarantee the longevity of a company, project or idea, it helps

many individuals gain experience, mobilize communities and create relationships for other opportunities.

CHAPTER 2

THE BENEFITS

The benefits of Crowdfunding

By now all of us have heard of something cool about crowdfunding. Perhaps you know that since 2010 crowdfunding has contributed more funds to artists than the National Endowment for the Arts did. Or you may know instead the projects funded on various platforms: the Nikola Tesla Museum, for example, or the Pebble Watch. Perhaps you've contributed to help a personal cause, like the bus monitor who was bullied, or for the recovery after Hurricane Sandy. Maybe you've heard of the most ambitious crowdfunding project ever: the Ubuntu Edge phone, which aimed to raise \$32 million on Indiegogo, and which ultimately reached \$19 million in funding. There's a good chance that you've seen a movie, listened to an album, or played a game that was made possible by crowdfunding.

Crowdfunding can be used to great success to bring to life artistic projects, products for sale, and personal ventures like fixing up a restaurant or hosting a special party.

There are especially interesting possibilities for entrepreneurs to launch products with crowdfunding.

Why Crowdfund?

The benefits of crowdfunding a product are many. The most important include:

1. Getting a following

Done properly, crowdfunding gives you not only the capital you need to start your business on a sound footing, but also an already-committed audience who have stuck through thick-and-thin with you from the very beginning. You're also likely to get followers on social media as well as online coverage. Few other businesses can claim to have a dedicated following before they sell their first product.

2. Getting funding without going into debt

Don't forget of course the fact that you're going to get funding from your fans who may be anywhere in the world. Got a great product idea or artistic project for people with similar interests? You need not go to your local Chase branch, hat in hand, asking whether you could possibly receive a loan to start selling online. Instead, you'd be connecting to people like you in places like Norway and New Zealand.

And even if your project fails to sufficiently take off, you still may benefit in another way.

3. Getting market research

We don't mean only the experience you'll get running a campaign or engaging on social media, though both are useful skills. Crowdfunding is a relatively cheap way to conduct market research.

Crowdfunding is very useful as a way to reduce business risks. Say you have come up with a product that you think is going to sell. When would you like to know that you're wrong: After you've built the buzz, contracted out the manufacturing, and started taking orders; or after you've built a page on Indiegogo and found that people just aren't that interested?

Crowdfunding is a great way to test the market, to figure out whether the product you want to sell really has potential. You're going out directly to your fans and customers to see if anyone is willing to pay for a great idea.

What Can I Crowdfund?

The Pennies from Many model doesn't imply that you'll get a lot of pennies. While crowdfunding is a terrific way to fund a product, you shouldn't believe that strangers will be throwing lots of money at you just for having a campaign.

And even when you're fully funded, you can still fail by not developing the product with the funds you have. If you're persistently late or don't deliver, then your community can turn; at that point you'll have not fans but haters. Certain founders have faced threats and harassment after they kept missing their own deadlines for delivering rewards.

Finally, you can't forget that crowdfunding is only the first step. You're trying to build a business, and crowdfunding is supposed to be a substitute for a loan. Running a successful campaign is a means to the end of creating an enduring business.

Crowdfunding is no cakewalk. It's not just uncertain not just on Kickstarter; no other platform is quite as transparent as Kickstarter, and it is by most accounts the platform with the highest rates of success.

But don't be afraid. It's not all a matter of luck. The skill of running a campaign can be mastered. You've just got to pick the right product.

What kinds of products work best for crowdfunding?

Picking the right product to crowdfund is the most important part of the crowdfunding campaign. And the most important part of picking the right product is finding something that deeply appeals to a particular audience.

First of all, you should be crowdfunding for a specific product, not to start a store selling many products.

There's a reason that you only find products, not stores launched on the biggest crowdfunding platforms. People want to back tangible products, not a cool idea for a company.

If you want to get your business started with crowdfunding, then you have to campaign with your best product, be it a toy, an electronic, or a craft. You may try to build a store for related products later, but you should only branch out after your product has really taken off.

You should also be targeting your product towards a particular community.

Think about it. A great deal of the appeal of crowdfunding is being connected directly by the users who will eventually become your customers. You're bypassing the local bank to reach users directly because the bank doesn't understand the product and the number of people who want the product.

But in order for there to be fans in the first place, your product has to be something that they can't pick up at Walmart, and not easily found online. There has to be a community that craves your product for a problem that's not being solved right now. If there's no dedicated community for a product, then there's no deep reservoir of revenue to really tap into.

There are lots of communities that you can target. Think in terms of niches: perhaps there's an annoyance plaguing anyone who knits; maybe squash players have a persistent unmet need; air travel is still pretty uncomfortable.

Ideally, it helps if you're dying to get a product yourself. Chances are, there are people just like you who need exactly the same thing. Go out there to develop the prototype and tap into that need.

Advice to those planning to launch with Kickstarter

If you choose to launch on Kickstarter, be aware that its rules are more strict. In order to host a campaign on Kickstarter, you have to already get a prototype set up; it does not allow you to feature product simulations or renderings of your product. So if you want to launch on Kickstarter, prototype first.

CHAPTER 3

CROWDFUNDING: AN EMERGING OPPORTUNITY FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Crowdfunding is one of the hottest business topics of 2013. In 2012 all forms of crowdfunding raised \$2.7b – an 80% increase from the \$1.5b raised in 2011. Massolutions, a consultancy, estimates the global market will increase another 81% in 2013 to \$5.1b. A big component of this growth will come from the crowdfunding activities of startup companies. It is important for exempt market dealers to understand the application of the various models of crowdfunding to the funding lifecycle of startups in order to identify and capture emerging business opportunities.

Social Media Makes Crowdfunding Work

A major component of crowdfunding is the use of social media technologies such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Pinterest, etc. to help find and engage a crowd of supporters for the project. This usually involves telling the project's 'story' by creating a 'campaign' for a project on one of the crowdfunding sites such as Kickstarter, FundRazr, Indiegogo, RocketHub, etc. Friends of the company/project are initially asked to make contributions and, most importantly, to share the campaign page and therefore the story with their social networks. As the campaign spreads through social media, potential supporters are exposed to the story and can also make contributions. After they make their contribution, they are encouraged to share the story with

their social networks distributing the campaign to an ever expanding network of potential supporters.

Major Funding Models

The two major funding models are:

1. **Keep It All (KIA)** – all contributions to a project are available to the company regardless of whether or not the campaign goal (targeted amount of funding) is reached.
2. **All Or Nothing (AON)** – contributions to a project are treated as pledges and are only available to the company if the goal is reached. If the campaign does not reach its goal, all pledged contributions are cancelled and no money changes hands.

Projects determine which of these two models to use based on their financial requirements. If a project can benefit from even a portion of the target funds of a campaign, it is a good candidate for a KIA model. If a project requires at least a set amount of funding to proceed, it is best to use an AON model. The major benefit of the AON model is contributors will not pay anything if the project does not cross its minimum funding threshold. This flexibility removes the financial risk of running the campaign when it is not clear that adequate funds can be achieved.

Categories of Crowdfunding

The three major categories of crowdfunding are:

1. Donations / gifts
2. Rewards / presumer
3. Regulated / securities

The first category is essentially the traditional charity model where a donor makes a contribution to a project with little or no expectation of return. A recent innovation in this model means it is possible for an individual or a business to accept gifts in a similar fashion to what traditional nonprofits and charities have been able to do. This model has been used very effectively for individuals suffering tragic circumstances such as critical illness, accidents, losses from fire, etc. but sometimes even by entrepreneurs launching their business.

In the second model, a contributor to a project can select one or more rewards or perks for their contribution. When this reward or perk is the product or service offered by the company and the product or service is not yet available but will be developed with funds from the campaign, it is known as a “presumer” model (from blending the words “prelaunch consumer”). The most well-known company offering a crowdfunding system in this category is Kickstarter.

In the third or regulated model, the project offers some form of regulated securities: debt, equity or royalty agreement. Contributors (actually investors) execute simple securities purchase transactions through the crowdfunding system and are subject to much more strenuous identity and financial checks. A major feature of crowdfunding in this model is that prospective investors frequently contribute industry and financial expertise and will share due

diligence information with 'the crowd' both before and after making their investment.

Company Funding Lifecycle

Startup companies typically move through a funding lifecycle and may benefit from all three categories of crowdfunding along the way.

In the very early startup stage, the entrepreneurs creating the company may use the Donations model to acquire enough 'love money' from friends and family to launch the formative stage of the company. Funds raised in this stage using this model are usually quite low: around \$10,000.

In some cases, the company may have a strong enough brand or brand potential to use the Rewards model to raise funds. In this scenario, the company can provide a variety of tangible and intangible rewards to contributors. For example, it is common for companies to use crowdfunding to sell swag (company branded t-shirts, mugs, lunch with associated celebrities, etc.) to raise additional funds. Funds raised in this manner may reach as high as \$50,000.

Presumer Model

Crowdfunding SeedUpsAs the company reaches the stage where it has a working prototype and now requires funds to finalize the design and produce a commercially acceptable product; it is a good candidate to use the Presumer model. In this scenario, the company offers one or more configurations of its product or service to consumers who pledge to pay if the company meets or

exceeds its funding target. If the company pre-sells enough to cross the threshold, the pledges are collected and the company receives the money to begin production.

At some point in the future, the company (hopefully) ships the product or service. Funds raised using this model average around \$250,000 but some noteworthy examples such as the Pebble Watch have raised millions. The presumer model is the ideal way for many companies to bootstrap themselves because they are essentially taking revenue early and not diluting company ownership via an initial equity offering. This preserves securities sale options and increases the value of the company for later funding rounds.

Presumer Not For Everyone

Some companies are not well suited to a Presumer model because of their business model, their business (as opposed to consumer) customer focus, the amount of research and development time it will take to perfect their product and many other factors. For these companies and for companies that have passed through the early stages of their development and need to raise larger amounts of money, the securities crowdfunding model may be appropriate.

The promise of securities crowdfunding is that companies will be able to cost-effectively raise smaller amounts of money by tapping into community support they create from effectively promoting their offering via social media. In order for this to work well, companies offering securities need to attract both accredited and unaccredited investors and build them into an active, engaged community.

Funding Continuum

It is helpful to think of crowdfunding as providing a continuum of funding options for companies as they move through their development lifecycle and potentially onwards to a more traditional IPO. A key component of any successful crowdfunding campaign is the creation of an active, engaged community of supporters. Companies that build this community early in their lifecycle will be much more effective at raising capital at later stages if they take their community along with them.

CHAPTER 4

STEPS

Follow these steps to be your own crowdfunding consultant.

Helping people with crowdfunding is a good business and you can be successful as possible raising money from the crowd.

Think like a Crowdfunding Consultant

Crowdfunding is about the connections you make, through your campaign message and through your pre-launching activities. This is what a crowdfunding consultant is going to look at when recommending ways to improve your campaign and raise more money.

Since we all have busy lives and limited time, a crowdfunding consultant looks at a campaign and try to find the easiest things to fix that will result in the most money. Depending on how much time you have to work on your project, she may recommend a list of things you can do.

Keeping these two ideas in mind, look through the crowdfunding consultant checklist below. The checklist shows what to look for when analyzing a crowdfunding campaign page. Most of the easiest and most important ideas are at the top. Check these off first and work your way down the list.

Crowdfunding Consultant Campaign Page Checklist

Does the campaign have a title that gets your attention and is informative? Test your title with a few friends to see which is more likely to get clicks.

Do you have a video and are you in it? Spend a little money on making a professional-quality video and make it more than just a faceless voiceover. Crowdfunding is personal and you need to be in your video.

Have you linked your website to the campaign?

How many updates have you made? It's extremely important to keep backers updated and to show visitors that you keep your door open.

Are the best points in the first two paragraphs? People spend, on average, less than 20 seconds on a webpage. You need to grab their attention quick with bulleted ideas as quickly as possible.

Does the campaign have any images? Are they interesting or evoke emotions? People will scroll down and check out your images before they will read the content. Make your graphics count.

Does the campaign content have bulleted points and a quick-read layout? Like with images, people will scan down and look at bullet point ideas before they will read. Get your most important ideas through this way.

How many reward levels do you have and what are the levels? You should have at least 10 reward levels. I would recommend starting at \$5 instead of a

buck. You may get a few more \$1 backers but you will raise more money with a minimum \$5 reward. You should have at least a few very high-price rewards also, things that really bring some value and would fund a big chunk of the project. Do your rewards let people get involved in the project? Crowdfunding is about helping people develop their dreams. Rewards that engage people as a part of the project are much more effective. Do your rewards boost someone's ego? Offering naming rights or a very special thank you may cost next to nothing but could bring in big money.

Does the campaign have any stretch funding goals? I have seen campaigns beat their funding goal by 5- and 10-times because they included exciting stretch goals that kept people motivated. Does the campaign have a team behind it? Teams raise more money, period! You get more help and your project looks like it is a legitimate idea instead of a quick scheme to make money.

Do you detail your budget? Crowdfunding backers like to see how their money is going to be spent. Be honest and open.

Do you detail a realistic timeline? One of the biggest challenges in crowdfunding right now is campaigns that fail to really plan for after crowdfunding. Show your backers that you have a workable timeline that will accomplish what you promise.

Did you do more than just pay lip-service to your FAQ section? Do some work before you launch and get real people's questions about the campaign. Listing an inclusive FAQ let's people know that you've put some time into developing the idea and know the most frequent questions.

5 Steps to Starting your Successful Crowdfunding Campaign

Today's post begins a series on what it takes to plan and execute a successful crowdfunding campaign. All the media attention to crowdfunding success stories neglects the hard work and preparation that actually goes into a campaign, usually upwards of 20 hours a week and months of pre-launch planning.

It's a huge contributor to the fact that two-thirds of campaigns fail to reach their funding goal and 12% never raise a dime.

Plan out and build a community around your campaign though and you could join a growing list of people that have raised thousands, even millions through crowdfunding. While the majority (61%) of projects on Kickstarter raise between \$1,000 and \$10k, there are those that have cracked the crowdfunding code and come back constantly to raise money for their small business.

The first post in our series, putting your crowdfunding idea together, may not be as sexy as reaching out to the masses and marketing your campaign but is no less important. Putting together the right pieces in pre-launch will make all the difference during that limited window you've got when your crowdfunding campaign is live.

1) Crowdfunding a product, service or social cause

Most likely, you already have an idea of what you want to crowdfund but you may not have an idea of how it will affect your crowdfunding

decision. There are literally hundreds of crowdfunding platforms out there, each with a slightly different audience and focus.

Though Kickstarter and Indiegogo are the standouts in terms of visitors, they might not be appropriate for your campaign. Kickstarter does not accept social causes on its site and the all-or-nothing crowdfunding model can leave you with nothing.

2) It all starts with your own crowd

The ‘crowd’ in crowdfunding is actually a little misleading. Your project has the potential to go viral and reach the masses but it will all need to start with your own personal network of friends and family.

Vetting your crowdfunding idea with friends and family serves multiple purposes. While you’ll need to establish a relationship with those on your outreach list to get feedback on your campaign, your personal network will be ready immediately to give you their opinion.

Approaching your personal network carries an added benefit of trust when you’re trying to get started. There are two hurdles to crowdfunding, trust and passion. Your personal network may not share your passion for the campaign, but they will know you well enough to share a level of trust. Work off that and build passion for your campaign from this initial network.

3) Building your crowdfunding team

The ease of launching a crowdfunding campaign is also its biggest drawback. People mistakenly assume that they can throw an idea up on

Kickstarter and handle everything themselves. When they see that a campaign can easily require 20 hours or more each week, they rush to service providers offering snake oil solutions at expensive prices.

Even if you do not want to bring someone else on as a full partner in your crowdfunding campaign, you need to put together a team that can help take some of the burden off your shoulders. Being a team member doesn't have to be a big commitment. If you can share your passion for the campaign, you should have no problem recruiting people to help out with a few hours each week. The key is to be specific with tasks so people know exactly what will be expected and how their contribution will make a difference for the campaign.

4) How much will your crowdfunding campaign cost?

Creating a realistic budget for a crowdfunding campaign is a major stumbling point. If your budget does not go beyond a back-of-the-envelope estimate then you are likely going to miss some major expenses that will have you digging into your own pockets.

Marketing expenses need to include campaign marketing as well as post-campaign marketing of your product or service. You can run a crowdfunding campaign on next to nothing but that doesn't mean you should.

Unless you plan on running your small business out of the garage indefinitely, you are going to need staff and other administrative resources. Make sure you build supplies, rent, utilities and manpower into your budget.

If you are rewarding crowdfunding supporters with some kind of perk, make sure you include the cost of manufacturing and shipping into your budget. This can be tricky because you don't know how many rewards from each level will need to be produced. Calculate a few different scenarios to see how different reward selections will affect your budget.

Not only does your budget give you an idea of how much you'll need to raise but it also gives your potential backers the confidence that you've thought the campaign through to every detail. Taking the time to list out all expenses on your crowdfunding campaign page will show people that you know what it will take to see it through successfully.

5) Setting a timeline for your crowdfunding campaign

After figuring out how much it will cost to crowdfund your project, you will need to figure out how long it might take. While crowdfunding campaigns are generally live on the internet for only a couple of months, a successful campaign can be in pre-launch for many months before it starts actively raising money.

In fact, pre-launch crowdfunding may be the most important stage of the process. Campaigns that raise no money through pre-launch activities have an average success rate of just 15% while those that raise 5% of their goal before the live campaign see their odds jump to 50 percent.

The time required to build your crowd will depend on how large and active a social network you already possess. Most campaigns should plan on between three and six months of preparation ahead of their

campaign. That means the entire crowdfunding process, including pre-launch, campaign and post-campaign fulfillment could easily take from six to eight months.

Planning your crowdfunding campaign can be a long process and you'll be tempted to put it aside and launch the campaign quickly. Resist this urge or join the 60% of campaigns that fail to reach their funding goal. Take your time and follow what is actually a relatively simple process for raising money through the crowd.

CHAPTER 5

PRE-LAUNCH CROWDFUNDING CHECKLIST

Follow the series of ideas below to make sure you hit the really important points in your pre-launch crowdfunding. The list is meant to be completed in order though there are some points that you can do as you can. Try not to neglect the more difficult points in the pre-launch crowdfunding checklist, each is an important step to raising more money and getting the exposure you need.

Checklist for Shaping your Crowdfunding Idea

Understand your customer and the person most likely to buy or pledge to your crowdfunding campaign. These may be two distinct types of people, especially if you are planning a social cause campaign. You'll need to understand your market's needs and where they hang out to find them in outreach.

After you've developed your idea, check over your plans with friends and family. If you can't build enthusiasm from at least a few from your closest network, you need to work on the pitch before you put it in front of strangers.

Get at least two team members from your existing network. Having a team that is passionate about the project is an absolute must and will give credibility to the project.

Crowdfunding Campaign Research Checklist

Find at least three prior campaigns that were similar to your planned crowdfunding campaign in product or topic. You can't know what to expect unless you look at a few examples.

Compare how much campaigns were trying to raise, how much they raised and from how many people. Compare their video, message and each part of the campaign page that's listed on the Crowdfunding Campaign Checklist.

Contact the owners of prior campaigns. What were the major challenges they faced? In what forums and online groups did they find potential backers? Did any particular marketing strategy work well?

Crowdfunding Checklist Goals

Crowdfunding Campaign Goals Checklist

How much can you raise from your network before the campaign launches? Compare this to your budget. I suggest you choose a crowdfunding campaign goal that is no more than four or five times your pre-launch pledges. This will make it achievable and help get you over 20% funded in the first few days.

Detail your budget and timeline for your crowdfunding campaign. Review and revise them with the team.

Crowdfunding Checklist: Rewards

Do you have any rewards that appeal to the ego of backers? Offer naming rights, special recognition or development roles. Do you have any rewards

that get your backers involved in the product or campaign? Engaging backers through rewards is a great way to make them feel a part of the project and get them to go the extra mile. Do you have any “swing for the fences” rewards? You should have at least one or two rewards that you may not get but really offer the moon for a large chunk of your funding needs.

You should have about 10 reward levels with the minimum at \$5

Have at least three stretch funding goals and three stretch rewards. These are special reward levels that will be applied to other rewards if you meet your stretch funding goals. This goes a long way to motivating the community to keep contributing even after that first pledge.

The right rewards

Rewards are a big thing. Nothing excites backers like cheap stretch goals and free add-ons. Under promise and over deliver. Remain focused on realizing your main goal. Don't promise any/many add-ons and stretch goals to backers which aren't directly related to your product.

This is a mistake we made during our KS campaign. We promised many add-ons during the campaign like iPhone covers, Patachitra paintings etc. Some of them didn't attract enough backers to be feasible. Even if you attract enough backers for the add-ons, shipping becomes a nightmare when you have to source stuff from several different vendors like tee shirts, iphone covers etc. Can lead to delays in fulfillment.

The most important mantra here is that always offer a good deal to your crowd-funders. They are the first ones to come and help you in your journey. Give them a good deal. Period.

How much is too much?

A critical component to any successful campaign is the funding goal. Keep it too high and backers stay away as they like to fund successful projects. Keep it low and don't account for the costs of the campaign & production effectively and your project is doomed for failure. You will be named and shamed in public. It has happened to well-meaning creators. It could be you, if you aren't careful/prudent.

Always remember, to keep a little something extra aside for the shipping. If you are shipping physical products like we did, you will pay a little extra for shipping. We roughly paid out ~30% of our gross receipts on shipping the game. There will be a few returns, losses in transit etc. Account for 5% of orders to be damaged/lost/returned.

Crowdfunding Outreach Checklist

Email or phone contact for at least 50 bloggers, journalist or social media influencers that have talked or written about your campaign's topic or product-type.

Process for building a relationship with the outreach list above. You will need to work them into the community through email contacts, social media

sharing, questioning and other contact points over a minimum of a month before the crowdfunding campaign.

Enlist one or two more people from your friends and family network. You will want a minimum of three to five people on the team before the campaign starts.

Develop a relationship with at least two organizations that can be involved in the project, whether through a related topic or related customers. Organizations already have their community established and will help tremendously in building yours. Contact previous campaign owners again to recruit them to the campaign or ask if they have contacts that would like to be involved.

Actively engage the community on at least two online forums or affinity groups. Become a part of their community then invite members to your campaign's community.

Crowdfunding Checklist: Don't forget the Power of the Phone Call Crowdfunding Checklist: Marketing

Throw a launch party with at least ten of the most active in your community. Talk to two or three team members ahead of time to cover talking points, how to work the crowd and how to ask for the pledge. Carry around pledge cards during the event and get a commitment for at least 10% to 15% of your funding goal. Ask at least two team members to update their social profiles

with information on the upcoming campaign. Add email signatures that link to a webpage or blog those talks about the campaign.

Create profiles and pages for your campaign. Devise a social media sharing strategy between yourself and two team members that will actively market the campaign through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and potentially Pinterest.

Produce at least three videos, one of which you will use as your campaign page feature, to share on YouTube and across social media.

CHAPTER 6

PLANNING

The importance of planning

A successful crowdfunding campaign gives your business a remarkable head start. You know for sure that your product has a market; you've already got a loyal base of supporters who have trusted you enough to put money before a product is rolled out; you've got tremendous experience running marketing; and you've obtained funds without compromising on your idea or going into debt. Don't squander these advantages. Plan ahead properly.

The Campaign

As you'll read in later chapters, the campaign is not something that you can put up overnight. Every successful campaign requires a good video. In a sample of the most successful design and technology projects on Kickstarter and Indiegogo, Shopify has found that the average page has 3500 words of text and 20 high-quality visuals. And don't forget that you should have a prototype of your page prepared. None of the project creator took less than a month working full-time on their campaign before they launched.

Spend time creating your video, your visual assets, and your page. Don't forget also to spend time deliberating your rewards and your timeline. Luckily, this guide provides guidance on optimizing each of these. We want to make one more addition to something to prepare for before you launch:

Getting press. Successful project creators are nearly unanimous when they tell people that press is important. And you shouldn't wait until you launch before you start contacting reporters.

Instead, you should line up press coverage so that you have articles about you on the day of launch. That's a strategy that maximizes momentum.

Don't Be (Too) Late

Your supporters aren't going to be happy if you're late or never deliver. While Kickstarter discourages funders to think of the platform as a marketplace, most people are still disappointed to see months of delay or a total failure to ship. Some of these reactions can be extreme. One project creator has seen former supporters show up at his home because they've been frustrated by persistent delays.

Once you have a revolt on your hands, then you've squandered your fan base. These former supporters won't be silently disappointed; they'll be quite vocal about it. You'll soon start hearing public complaints.

Luckily, funders are often quite forgiving. So you have to do your best to avoid mass disappointment. One way to do so is to make a good plan.

Planning for the Product

There are so many things that can go wrong. The most important include not locking down a manufacturing process; underestimating the difficulty of scaling from a prototype; running out of money because of you've mis-

calculated the costs; and underestimating the success of a campaign, which increases the level of complexity.

Every project will be different. It's impossible for us to give you concrete advice on choosing manufacturers and setting up timeframes, but there are common themes and questions for everyone to consider.

Manufacturer: You need to be communicating with your manufacturer, especially since a great deal of project creators go overseas for manufacturing. A majority of shipping delays are caused by manufacturing delays. There are so many things that can go wrong. A prototype may not be scalable; your design is actually more complicated than the manufacturer thought he could handle; certain materials are actually more difficult to find than you thought; and manufacturers tend towards optimism, just as creators do; language and time differences may be significant obstacles when you're shipping overseas. And are you sure that your design has been perfected? A frequent piece of advice given by crowdfunding veterans is to create a reasonable timeline, and then double it to get your shipping date.

Costs: Building 1 unit of your product is different from building 100 units, which is still different from building 10,000 units. A rough rule of thumb offered by Noah Dentzel of NOMAD is to add up all the units you're offering as rewards and ask for 5X that for your business; that should approximately be enough to start you off on a firm footing. Asking for a comfortable amount of money improves a great deal your chance of shipping on time.

Shipping: There are two aspects of shipping to consider. First, make sure your manufacturer is able to ship to where you are; if this is his first time shipping your country, you should to make sure arrangements are sound before making promises to your supporters. Second, make sure that you yourself are able to ship products en masse to your supporters. Have you selected the right carrier? Have you got a labeling system? Are you sure that everyone is accounted for? There are tools around like BackerKit to help manage fulfillment, but do keep these issues in mind while you make reward levels.

There's almost no such thing as too much planning in a crowdfunding campaign. Before you launch, figure all these things out. Make the disappointment of fans your own, and avoid it by setting more than generous expectations. But if you find yourself running into strong headwinds and must delay, don't forget one important thing:

Be Transparent About Your Delays

Your supporters understand if unexpected things happen. You can't plan everything. The Apple Lightning Charger was an iPhone charger that was first rendered obsolete by an Apple design change and then forbidden by Apple to be a licensed accessory.

Things happen beyond your control. You need to update your supporters. When you're honest and transparent about what's happening with the production process, your supporters are much more likely to remain

supporters. The worst is when you blow a deadline amidst long periods of silence. That's when people start getting suspicious

Crowdfunding Pre-Launch Guide

Researching Failed and Successful Projects – I love this idea and haven't seen it in many other lists. Even if yours is a one-of-a-kind tech gadget, you can still look to other technology crowdfunding campaigns to see what works. Get in touch with a few of the failed campaigns to see what they did wrong.

Here are links to Case Studies that could give you ideas from 7 continents:

#1 Crowdfunding Campaign Case Studies:

Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint for Asia Business Start-Up and Related Projects

http://www.amazon.com/Crowdfunding-Blueprint-Asian-Business-Start-up-ebook/dp/B011KGZEE4/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-1&keywords=Ike+Lemuwa

#2 Crowdfunding Campaign Case Studies

Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint for Africa Business Start-UP and Related Projects

http://www.amazon.com/Crowdfunding-Campaign-Africa-Blueprint-ebook/dp/B011KCDDM8/ref=sr_1_3?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-3&keywords=Ike+Lemuwa

#3: Crowdfunding Campaign Case Studies

Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint for Latin-America Business Start-up and Related Projects

http://www.amazon.com/Crowdfunding-Campaign-Latin-American-Business-Start-Ups-ebook/dp/B011KCDHJ2/ref=sr_1_4?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-4&keywords=Ike+Lemuwa

#4: Crowdfunding Campaign Case Studies

Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint for European Union Business Start-Up and Related Projects

http://www.amazon.com/European-Guide-Crowdfunding-Campaign-Lemuwa-ebook/dp/B011LGC9PK/ref=sr_1_6?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-6&keywords=Ike+LemuwaCa

e Studies

#5: Crowdfunding Campaign Case Studies

Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint for Scientific Related Projects

http://www.amazon.com/Crowdfunding-Campaign-Scientific-Related-Projects-ebook/dp/B012BKI3KK/ref=sr_1_9?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-9&keywords=Ike+Lemuwa

#6 Crowdfunding Campaign Payment Gateway:

Top 50 Payment Gateway Suitable for Crowdfunding Campaign in over 198 to 200 nations

http://www.amazon.com/Crowdfunding-Campaign-Scientific-Related-Projects-ebook/dp/B012BKI3KK/ref=sr_1_9?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1438184787&sr=1-9&keywords=Ike+Lemuwa

Researching Target Audiences – Depending on your stages as a business, you may already have an idea of who you want to reach. If you already have customers then talk to them about what they like to do and their interests. If you do not have customers, seek out other similar businesses or connect with previous crowdfunding projects. Ultimately, you want to understand three things:

1. What do they look for on the internet – Do they read certain blogs or visit particular websites
2. What do they need – Don't overlook emotional needs that you can solve
3. What does your cause or business do for them

Establishing an Online Presence – Assuming that the 13 million monthly visitors on Kickstarter will just happen by your campaign is a big mistake. You need to draw people to your crowdfunding campaign and unless you get featured on the crowdfunding platform's homepage, you need to do it with a strong online presence.

Build a Website and a blog – It's incredibly easy and very cheap to put together a small website with a blog. A blog is just a page on your website that you post articles to on a regular basis. These regular articles are key to building community with people that care about your cause or business and will help you get found when people search the internet. I would recommend you write something and post it to your blog at least once per week.

Set up Social Media profiles – At minimum, you need social media profiles on Facebook and Twitter. I would also add LinkedIn if your product is targeted to businesses. You don't have to be active on all of these everyday but try to check in once or twice a week to ask and answer questions. You will also want to post the articles from your blog. It will take time but you should have a good network by the end of three months.

Setting a Budget and Funding Target – I have covered budgeting and setting realistic crowdfunding goals in detail and there isn't much new here. Understand that your budget and funding target may be different. Even if your budget is \$100,000 for the first year, it is unlikely that you'll be able to raise this much money crowdfunding. Set a realistic crowdfunding target and use later campaigns for other budget needs.

Building Marketing Collateral – Your campaign page must have a video and you should be in it. Campaigns with videos have a better than 60% chance at meeting their funding goal whereas those without have less than a 35% chance. You don't have to describe your project in detail, just put together a professional-looking two- or three-minute video that hits on key emotional points.

Focus on what your cause or business does for others! Unless it's your close family or friends, people are not backing the project for you. They want to know how it will benefit them or a group they care about.

You should post your budget, in as much detail as possible, in a separate handout or spreadsheet. Putting together a detailed budget helps people see that you are serious about the project and have dedicated the time to think it through.

Put together a flyer and a brochure that people can print off and use. Actively ask people to print your materials or email them to others. You can use all these marketing resources in the future so the upfront cost will be spread out.

Crowdfunding Pre-Launch Tips

Building community around your crowdfunding campaign means getting people involved and making them feel a part of the project. Throughout your pre-launch activities, involve others in the idea generation and design of the campaign. Give people a vested interest, through their time spent helping, and a reason to make the campaign a success.

You really need to reach out to every possible contact and use existing social networks. It's said that everyone on earth is connected to everyone else by six people or less. Use your network to increase your online exposure.

- **Story** – I like the use of the word Story here because you really need to draw people in with an emotional and compelling narrative. Running a cause or business is no easy task and you must have a

passion to do it. Relate your story in a way that readers catch that passion and want to become part of it.

- **Fans** – Put together a list of all your professional, personal, family and friends contacts. Nathaniel recommends you cut your list by the people that you think might be annoyed or put off but I say **Call them ALL!** You aren't necessarily asking them for full support (yet) but just asking for input on the idea. If they aren't willing to give you 15 minutes of their time then reassess whether they should be on the list at all.
- **Evangelists** – You'll also see the term Influencers used online. The idea is that some people have a seemingly natural ability to connect and influence others. These people are crowdfunding gold! They have huge social networks and are active contributors in projects for which they have an interest. Now, you just have to get them interested.
- **Write, Write and Write** – I would add Talk, Talk, and Talk to this as well. Crowdfunding is all about building community and a network through communication. You absolutely must be reaching out to five or more people a day and sharing your passion.
- **Blog, Tweet, Facebook and Repeat** – This goes back to the communication and earlier tips. Nearly three billion people are online and there's sure to be more than a few that want to be a part of your story.

- **Research** – A lot of crowdfunding campaigns do not take the time to understand their market, and pay the price by not reaching their funding goal.

Know who are the top bloggers, social networkers and media people that talk about your cause or product. These are going to be the most likely to pass your campaign around through an interview or an article.

You also need to research at least one or two internet forums about your cause or business. Actively engaging these groups is a great way to find people that are just as passionate about the project as you are.

10 Social Media Tips for a Successful Crowdfunding Campaign

Crowdfunding campaigns, when run well, can seem effortless, almost magical, if you're watching from afar. Seeing the money and backers pile up, especially in the last phase of a campaign, can be breathtaking, when everyone is hugging and high-fiving.

However, crowdfunding is not a walk in the park. Unless that park is covered with broken glass. And a lion ate your shoes at the entrance gate. And he is now chasing you.

There is anxiety, especially during that famous mid-campaign plateau. There are sleepless nights, when instead of counting fluffy sheep you're counting all of your Facebook friends who haven't contributed yet. And don't forget about the obsessive-compulsive "refreshing" of your campaign page to see if there are any new backers. Yes, crowdfunding can be stressful, but if you do the

proper prep work — and create the right relationships on social media — crowdfunding can be full of great joy and excitement.

Below are some hard lessons I've learned after helping run many crowdfunding campaigns.

1. Crowdfunding starts before the campaign launches.

The day you launch your crowdfunding campaign is not the day you should start considering whether or not to use Twitter or Facebook. Or Instagram. Or Tumblr.

You need to at least be on Twitter and/or Facebook to have a decent shot at crowdfunding, and you need to have been using them for a while. If you're reading this and want to crowdfund but are not on these platforms, don't fret; start social media-ing today, and postpone your plans for crowdfunding until you've established a solid social media presence.

Why do you need to be on social media in order to crowdfund well? Because if a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it...you get the picture. You can have the best campaign in the world, meant to support the best project in the world, but if you don't have a way to spread the word, it won't matter. You won't raise the money you need. (One exception to this rule is if you have a tremendously large email list of fans or potential donors, or have built up fans on another social platform. What happens if you start a campaign without laying down the social media groundwork and without that kind of list?

This Kickstarter campaign for a documentary about people really into sneakers ended nowhere close to its \$100k goal. If you're not into sneakers,

you should know something: People immersed in sneaker culture spend a lot of money on their kicks, so this is a potentially very lucrative niche audience to hook.

Unfortunately, it doesn't seem as though the team behind the documentary connected with their intended audience prior to the campaign. Instead, according to this article, one of the directors thought Kickstarter would find the backers for them. This was not the case.

2. You can't rely solely on your Facebook friends.

Facebook is a great way to get started with social media, but you have to move past your personal Facebook page for crowdfunding success. If you only post your crowdfunding campaign to your personal Facebook page, you will place the burden of the success of your campaign on the shoulders of your friends and family. Don't do this, unless you want to get uninvited from Thanksgiving.

Of course you will promote your project on your personal Facebook page sometimes, because your real life friends want to know what you're up to and want to support you. But you should also have a Facebook fan page for either your project or a larger entity under which your project will fall.

Filmmakers often have a page for their production company so that they can showcase all of their individual movies there, alerting fans of their previous work to their new work. Authors often opt for fan pages for themselves so that fans of previous books can find out about new ones, and so on. Chances are that the project you want to crowdfund for is not the last thing you're going to do. Make your social media presence a significant and lasting one.

3. The crowd is not looking for you.

No matter how amazing your film or book or custom leather bracelet or designer ice cream cone idea is, no one is sitting around flipping through projects on (insert your crowdfunding platform of choice) looking for your project. Yes, all crowdfunding platforms create a hub for your campaign, but no, it's not their job to drive traffic to your hub. That's your job.

4. Pick the perfect platforms.

You don't have to be on all of the social media platforms that exist. That would be exhausting. Instead, pick the right platforms for you according to:

1. Where your audience is;
2. What you can reasonably handle in your daily life.

For example, if you are a filmmaker, you're likely posting videos and commenting on the videos of others on YouTube and/or Vimeo. If you have a fashion-themed project, make sure you're on Instagram. If your project is attractive to foodies, find people who love pictures of food on Pinterest. There is no cookie-cutter plan for social media; you have to find what appeals most to your specific audience.

5. Social media is fast; get pithy and quippy.

Yes, your dream project is important and deserves much discussion, but the key to effective social media is hooking people quickly. Tweets need to be short, awesome punches that people cannot resist clicking on and re-tweeting. On Facebook, you can write longer messages, but don't go into multiple

paragraphs; you'll have plenty of copy to dive into on your campaign home page. And never underestimate the power of a good picture on Facebook.

6. Forget about going viral; focus on being vibrant.

Anyone who gives you advice on how to make a “viral” video or “viral” crowdfunding campaign is not trying to help you; they are taking advantage of you. There is no guaranteed way to get millions of people to see your crowdfunding pitch video, so focus on what you can control: giving your crowd consistent (and consistently engaging) messages that remind them that you're still working hard and that they are still a part of the team.

7. Give it. Give another little piece of your heart.

Understand what your audience wants, then give it to them. In some cases, a crowd connects with a creator on a personal level, but how do you do this without too much information.

8. “Hey, brother, can you spare a re-tweet?”

Recently at a Doc U event on crowdfunding by the International Documentary Association, Adam Chapnick of the crowdfunding platform Indiegogo said, “If you're asking for money, you're doing it wrong.” This couldn't be more true. No one likes the guy who says, “Come on! Give \$10 to my campaign.” Instead, try these:

These are very basic, and you should put your own shine on them, but you get the drift. You get people on your side without putting your hand in their pockets and, in the course of it, they become invested in your success. A

handful of re-tweets (or spreading the word about your project at their office) is way more useful than one \$10 donation.

9. Eat your Wheaties; crowdfunding is a workout.

These crowdfunding campaigns are grueling, masochistic marathons (30 to 60 days, generally), so you have to pace yourself. Hydrate. Take your vitamins. Take a walk. Take a shower. Eat a vegetable or two. Take breaks from checking for backers. Shut off your computer. Turn the reins over to a trusted collaborator for a day while you take a technology sabbath. Use tools like Twuffer, Hootsuite, or TweetDeck to schedule tweets ahead of time. (Hootsuite can do Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+, too.)

Overall, give yourself breaks from the grind so that you can return to your tasks with vigor.

10. After the campaign: Don't love them and leave them.

Once you've met your crowdfunding goal (and even if you didn't), show respect to those who tried to help your dreams come true. These people are now a part of your project, so keep them up-to-date. Invite them to share milestones with you. Let them know when you send out perks. Let them know when your project gets reviewed. Send them an update when you win your Oscar or Pulitzer.

The other side of this is also letting your backers know when things don't go as planned. If you're late sending your perks out, notify them. If your book is going to take longer to complete than you anticipated, be honest about it. They're not going to be mad when you hit a snag; they'll appreciate that you

respected them enough to keep them in the loop. The crowd might, however, start to worry that they've been fooled if you fall off the face of the Earth

CHAPTER 7

CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN MARKETING ON A BUDGET

For small business, spending on marketing is a given and built into budgets from day one. In fact, marketing is one of the largest expenses for most new businesses.

Building marketing and other expenses into your campaign budget will go a long way to establishing credibility with supporters. No one expects you to do everything for free and it wouldn't be realistic to think you could. Working through how much everything will cost will show supporters that you have taken the time and are serious about the cause.

Budgeting crowdfunding campaign marketing does not mean you have to blow thousands to convert people into backers. Most crowdfunding campaign marketing can be done for free and you can build a huge community if you give it a few months. If you don't have a few months to build your crowdfunding community, use some of the resources below to get the best bang for your buck.

Crowdfunding Marketing Decisions

Crowdfunding Marketing Resources for your Campaign

The marketing resources and sites below do not include project fees or fulfillment costs for your campaign. Those mandatory costs need to come out

of your budget before deciding how much you can spend on marketing services or applications. Services can be hired to manage all the resources below or you can manage them yourself. There are a few important things to remember here.

Building a true community will take at least a couple of months and trying to rush it through expensive third-party providers will not necessarily pay off in more backers.

Your time is valuable. It may be more cost effective to hire out an expert to manage one or more resources than having to learn and do everything yourself.

We all have our favorite web hangouts and sites so it's best to spread your advertising budget around to several areas rather than focus on one specific website or resource. The starter package for advertising through most resources includes most of the benefit you'll need and will reach your most targeted audience. Resist the urge to buy into larger and more complicated offers even if they only cost a few dollars more.

Part of deciding which crowdfunding marketing resources you need depends on which platform you post your campaign.

Social Media and Crowdfunding Marketing

Facebook is the Holy Grail of social media. With more than a billion users globally, the site is seemingly universal in some social circles. Unfortunately, you won't be the first to push your campaign through the site and people have grown immune to many requests for support.

Rather than run your crowdfunding campaign through your personal profile, set up a separate page to focus and build community. You'll still want to share all the updates through your personal network but your campaign page will help you target your community building around the campaign.

Social Media Crowdfunding Marketing

Facebook offers advertising to promote your page and specific posts and the ability to target your advertising to specific groups and geographic areas like the United States. Be warned though that there is a whole industry built up around clicking on advertisements to collect commissions and the 'likes' you receive through these campaigns may not actually translate to real action. In fact, these fake likes may actually hurt your outreach on Facebook. The site only sends out your updates to a sample of your followers. If those followers click on your update, Facebook figures the update is newsworthy and sends it out to more of your network. Those artificially generated likes are less likely to click on updates which may stop those updates from being sent out to more of your network.

Through your campaign's page, you can schedule posts for different times of the day. Take advantage of this feature to constantly connect with followers

Like all social media networks, real community starts with a personal plea. Spamming out a request to all your 'friends' to join your Facebook page will usually be met with disappointing results. Reach out at least with a personal email or preferably with a phone call to your contacts asking them to join your page and regularly share posts.

If you're crowdfunding campaign or product is business-related, **LinkedIn** may be just as important to your efforts as Facebook. There are more than 300 million users on the business networking site and I've found the groups much easier to use than those on Facebook. The site offers subscription services that allow you greater access to search and messaging. Use the free month offer to try out the site but the free membership is all I have ever really needed.

Make sure to reach out to colleagues for a testimonial on your profile to build social proof in your abilities

Detail your profile with as much information as is relevant and include a professional picture Even if your crowdfunding campaign is not business related, LinkedIn can help to connect with influencers in different industries

Twitter is probably the most recognized social media tool after Facebook and an easy one to use for your crowdfunding campaign marketing. The site is limited because your tweets can only be up to 140 characters but you'll be surprised at how much traction you can get from each post.

Download the **Buffer** app to schedule up to 10 tweets throughout the day.

Research the number of searches for different hashtags relevant to your campaign through sites like hashtags.org and include one hashtag in each tweet.

Create a list of influencers in your industry and their Twitter @ name. Calling out to influencers or news retweeting users within your tweets will help increase your reach.

Don't just tweet out your own posts. Keep a regular schedule of your own updates and relevant or interesting tweets from others to help build community.

Crowdfunding Video Production and Editing

Your crowdfunding campaign marketing video is one of the few places I would say you will definitely want to spend a little money. Unless you have the video equipment and experience, it is usually cheaper to hire out some for these services than to do it all yourself. That doesn't mean you have to spend thousands on a series of quality videos but a budget of a few hundred will go a long way.

Produce a series of short videos at once instead of having to hire services for multiple shoots. You will use your intro video for your main campaign page but the other videos can be uploaded to YouTube for super-charged viral marketing.

Put just as much thought into pre-production writing and rehearsal as you can to save time and money during the video shoot.

If your campaign is focused on the local market, include local backdrops and influencers in your videos.

Crowdfunding Campaign Marketing

Crowdfunding Online Advertising

Online advertising includes a range of resources but can get really expensive. I have found the best success in Google Adwords and press releases. Before you blanket the internet with ads, spend some time thinking about who you really want to come to your website or crowdfunding campaign. Resist the urge to buy keyword advertising for high-volume traffic that may not really be interested in your cause.

Focus on a couple of keywords and set a really small budget first to see how well the advertising leads to traffic and support on your campaign. Make use of the geographic targeting available on the advertising platforms

Press releases can be cost effective and go out to a wide audience but you need to be more strategic than simply spamming out your release. Develop a rapport with key journalists by reading their articles and responding before your release. If they know you by name, they are more likely to recognize your press release when it comes out.

Content is king and can be the most effective online advertising but can also take months to build an audience. If you have the time, i.e. several months before your campaign launch, set up a blog and start writing about the cause around your campaign. This will help set you up as an expert in the field and build your community.

Online Crowdfunding Forums

Forums on websites related to your cause or company may actually fit under social media but the idea is so important and often overlooked that I wanted to call it out separately. Find two or three forums that relate to your campaign and spend a couple of months contributing and getting to know the most active contributors.

Active forum contributors will be your most enthusiastic supporters because they are already interested in the cause

Spending time on forums will help learn the biggest issues and questions people have in your cause or industry

Offline advertising may be the most cost-effective resource if your cause or business is local in nature. Online social networks have grown so crowded and impersonal in some ways that it is getting increasingly easy to ignore the advertising. Reaching out to people on a face-to-face level may be harder than a few mouse clicks but you'll build community for your campaign much faster

The biggest shock for most campaigns is the amount of time it takes to build community and support the **ongoing interactions with backers**. Regular interactions, online and on a personal-level, are the most important facets of a campaign. Taking more than a day to respond to an email or not reaching out regularly risks losing any momentum you've built in other marketing resources.

This is another one of the areas where I recommend spending a little money but you need to find someone that is just as passionate about the cause.

Instead of hiring out a part-time worker, you might try reaching out to current supporters with a small weekly stipend to help out.

Build your community through a couple of your most enthusiastic supporters, preferably pre-launch, to get them onboard with a few hours of outreach support each week. In the first week, each of you should focus on a few of the more enthusiastic supporters that will also commit a little time. With this team of outreach specialists, you can start focusing on reaching out for financial support.

Fundraising Ideas and Crowd Campaigns Brand Strategy

The Best Bang for Your Crowdfunding Marketing Buck

A lot of crowdfunding success comes down to the time you are willing and able to spend on the campaign. Planning your resources and campaign at least two- to three-months ahead of the official launch can save you a ton of money because it allows you time to build community within the free resources instead of having to speed up your marketing through paid services.

Within my own experience with marketing resources, I've found pretty good results through conservative budgets on the social networks and Google Adwords. If you start a blog or website for your campaign, something to definitely consider if it's going to be an ongoing business or cause, then you'll usually get a few hundred dollars' worth of free advertising credits when you pay for your website.

The idea is not to build a huge following through advertising but to just draw a few targeted people to the website or campaign. It is through this first group of supporters that you will work through to reach others but you'll be able to do it with your community than with advertising dollars.

Breaking your crowdfunding campaign into several smaller campaigns will help you test crowdfunding marketing resources on a smaller scale first. Plan on raising seed funding for your cause or idea first and budget a small amount to the most essential marketing resources. You are more likely to be able to hit your target for smaller campaigns and you can use the marketing information in your subsequent campaigns.

CHAPTER 8

POST-CROWDFUNDING

Campaign checklist: keeping the community alive

The community you build during crowdfunding is one of the most sought-after ideas in business. Few other marketing or sales campaigns can build the kind of interaction and sense of buy-in you'll get from your crowdfunding supporters.

Crowdfunding Campaign Checklist Community

Don't thank your crowdfunding community after the campaign, congratulate them for a job well done. Your backers and the people that championed the crowdfunding campaign are a part of the team and you need to treat them as such. Keeping them feeling like they are appreciated team members will get automatic support for anything in the future.

Make sure you respond to comments on the crowdfunding page quickly and be honest about your answers.

Frequently provide updates to the campaign page and to your backers, both publicly and privately. Without the constant social sharing that goes on during the campaign, your community will have no idea what is going on. Providing updates shows them and other visitors that you are present and working hard to get the project fulfilled.

Use a blog or website to keep content fresh and engaging. Your crowdfunding community wants to be more than just the silent financial partner. They want to be part of the team and need to know what's happening. Use an online presence to keep the interaction going.

Post-Crowdfunding Campaign Checklist: Keeping your Promises

Crowdfunding Campaign Checklist Rewards

Now that you know exactly how many and what types of rewards need fulfilled, make out a new action plan. You may be able to fulfil and deliver some rewards early, which could ease any buyer's remorse within the community.

Update your community with the timeline for rewards fulfillment and be honest. One of the biggest problems with crowdfunding recently is unfilled rewards and the wait for many backers can be irritating. Be honest, even if you are going to be late and you'll find that most backers are ok with delays.

When the Ministry of Supply closed its Kickstarter project having beaten its initial \$30,000 goal by more than \$350,000 and needing to fulfill 10-times the amount of rewards, they ran into production problems. The sourced producers just couldn't handle the order. When they were honest with their backers about the problem and delays in fulfillment, they found that the community was fine with it. The project's success was their success and they understood the dilemma.

Post-Crowdfunding Campaign Checklist: Keeping you Momentum Going

Your successful crowdfunding campaign will give you a ton of credibility. Not only have you successfully raised money for a business or personal project but you've done it in a medium where more than two-thirds of campaigns are unsuccessful. Use this credibility to start thinking about the future and where you want to go from here.

Have a post-campaign party for your most active supporters. You don't have to break the budget but you should get people together to congratulate them and let them know how much their support meant. Your most active supporters are going to be the first you will call when you launch another campaign or try to take the idea to the next level. Keep them involved.

Get to know each of your supporters and their abilities/careers. Many of them you will have met during the campaign but get to know the rest now that you have more time. There might be some that can set up distribution or other services for your new, successfully-funded project.

It's never too early to start thinking about where you want the company or project to go next. Your crowdfunding community will still be active enough that you can even bounce some ideas off of them. Are there extra features you wanted to add? Could you expand the reach of the program geographically or to other customers?

Equity crowdfunding might even be a logical next step. You have proven that you can leverage the power of the crowd. Take that knowledge to the big-time

to raise hundreds of thousands and even millions of dollars selling an equity share in your company.

CHAPTER 9

FROM CAMPAIGN TO BUSINESS

Remember, the point of a crowdfunding campaign for products is to get the capital that you'd not otherwise get as from your existing network. Don't keep your eyes off the goal, which is to build an enduring business. Think of the crowdfunding campaign as a wedding: you'd like for it to be spectacular, but what's important is what happens in the long term.

Recall from the previous chapter that you have a host of advantages when you've run a successful crowdfunding campaign: you've proven market demand, you've connected with active supporters, and you have the funds to start a real business.

The following few pieces of advice are offered by merchants who have already experienced success.

Build your site before your campaign closes

One of the best things for you to do is to build a site before your campaign closes. It's so important that we've decided to make it its own chapter.

Keep in touch with your funders

Crowdfunding are useful for a great deal of reasons. One of the most important is the aspects of marketing: First, you get attention in the

crowdfunding community; second, your funders can turn into an early community of customers and supporters.

You have to be very grateful to your funders. And that means trying to fulfill on time and being transparent with delays. If you have the time, try to thank backers individually.

Most businesses don't have a community of supporters who have already proved that they're behind your product. Make sure to engage with them. Give them frequent updates; make them be the first to know about your new products; surprise them with special notes or maybe even something more extravagant, like a commemorative t-shirt if you have money left over.

Figure out cash flow early on

Say you reach your goal of \$50,000 in funding, which you've calculated to be sufficient initial capital investment to manufacture your product, obtain the supplies, and fulfill all orders.

You should also consider how to keep up a source of cash flow. Remember, your product doesn't end at the campaign. Once you receive a big lump of cash to build the product, you have to be thinking ahead to how to perpetuate a source of income.

In fact, cash flow is so important that both Catan Boards and NOMAD had to rely on early sales to manufacture their product. Even though they surpassed their fundraising goals by respectively \$336,000 and \$111,000, both businesses had so underestimated their costs of production that they had to

rely on cash flow to actually manufacture their products. If it wasn't for early sales, they would have had a lot more difficulty manufacturing their products.

Shipping and fulfillment

Even though many of your funders are genuinely supportive of giving money to help an idea, most would be disappointed or angry if nothing ever came out of it. Delivering the product they pledged for is an important part of keeping them happy. Shipping and fulfillment is difficult, and a lot of creators fail to properly think about this area.

Make sure to budget for shipping in your rewards, and then figure out whether your funding request still makes sense.

Also, make sure that you have a system for fulfilling your pledges. It's not hard to run into a thousand orders that you have to fill. Either figure out a good way to do everything well yourself, or use a service like Ship wire to ship your goods to funders.

Get an accountant

Don't underestimate the importance of figuring out how to manage your income and expenses. This is especially true if you're not familiar with financial concepts. A good accountant knows the tricks of deferring certain taxes and expenses given your situation. Most people won't ever come into a great deal of money all at once. Don't make unnecessary expenditures because you're not familiar with the rules of finance.

Seek help from a consultant

Not everyone has the time or resources to handle all of their own PR needs, and Fultz gets that. But it's important you do, too.

Sometimes it's important to recognize that you may be a great engineer, but not the best writer," he told Business Insider. "When it makes sense for companies to outsource their PR, we're there to take on those needs, and our specialization means we can do it efficiently and effectively.

While crowdfunding campaigns certainly benefit from having a team of people dedicated to the project, there are still plenty of solo consultants that can help, too.

Having a third-party consultant takes the pressure from handling too much yourself, along with offering an important guiding role in crafting the narrative. Doing this you would be able to see where the focus needs to shift and when bigger moves should be made. Lastly you can often provide ideas and contacts to allies of the project that tap into a wider network of support.

Pay consultants before and after the campaign, not all at once

It's hard for crowdfunding consultants to find a pricing model that suits their needs as a business and their clients' needs.

The model for consulting that has been established to be most successful is a combination of percentage up front, followed by the rest at the end of the campaign. This incentivizes both the consultant and the campaigner to succeed.

It also ensures that you don't spend too much money at once. You may need to employ consultants or others at various points in your crowdfunding campaign, so it's important to keep your helpers motivated by paying them multiple times throughout the project's duration, as opposed to all at the beginning or all at the end.

Figure out budgeting

When you're running a campaign, always keep the long term in mind. If adding a piece of capital equipment makes you a more durable business, revise your funding goals and ask for it. It's better to do it then than to not ask for it at all and risk failure on delivering your goods. While you can't expect to raise exorbitant sums, you shouldn't be timid about asking for all the expenses you might need around the product. Budget carefully, and tell your supporters what you'll do with their money. It's better to fail at not hitting your goal than to take everyone's money and not deliver a product

CHAPTER 10

CROWDFUNDING TOOLS

Listed are 13 do it yourself tools that will boost the effect of your Crowdfunding

Let's go make your crowdfunding campaign a success.

1. BackerKit

BackerKit is a dashboard that helps you manage fulfillment and communication with funders after your campaign so that you don't need to coordinate everything by email and spreadsheet.

2. Buffer

Social media engagement is critical to the success of a crowdfunding campaign. But it's a lot more work to be reactive than it is to be proactive. That's why we recommend that you schedule out tweets in advance, before your campaign launches. For example, schedule a tweet a week before your campaign closes to let your Twitter followers know that they have only seven more days to contribute. One way to do that is with Buffer, which lets you schedule tweets and Facebook updates well ahead of time while giving you advanced analytics to track the metrics of each tweet.

3. Microphone

Your video is the single most important part of your campaign's landing page. You have to make it good and compelling. Though you don't

necessarily need professional help to create a good video, you should at least make sure that you have appropriate lighting and are shooting with a good camera. Just as importantly, you should have a good microphone; your video is of a much higher quality if there's no mumbling or extraneous noise. We've selected this lapel microphone by Sony for its quality and very affordable price.

4. iMovie

Every video needs to be edited to add new effects, to take away certain parts, and to string together difference scenes. If you have a Mac, use iMovie, which offers a great deal of functionalities. If you're looking for a slightly more premium editor, consider using the Adobe Premiere Pro CC.

5. ShipStation

If your products are small then you're probably going to deal a lot with shipping. Shipstation makes it easier to ship products yourself. It integrates with major carriers, including USPS, FedEx, and UPS, so that you can easily create shipping labels and packing slips in bulk. It offers a great deal of other tools for shipping management as well.

6. Printful

Need a low-tier reward to offer funders? T-shirts are a great and easy way to raise funds. Check out Printful, which offers cheap prices on custom-printed, comfortable shirts.

7. Shipwire

If you'd like to totally outsource fulfillment, check out Shipwire. Send your inventory to one of its many fulfillment warehouses and it can handle your shipping automatically as orders come in. It will save you the major hassle of fulfillment.

8. Kickstand by Shopify

One of the best things that you can do to build an enduring business after the campaign is to make sure that you have a website before the campaign. Having a website gives you three important benefits: more interest on a platform that you control, better SEO as a result from links and traffic from Kickstarter and Indiegogo, and the ability to generate cash flow from pre-sales. So check out Kickstand, a theme developed by Shopify that closely mimics your campaign page. Best of all, this theme is free.

9. Digital Tutors

Digital Tutors is the largest creative and tech training library on the web. Take some of the lessons to make sure that you have the fundamentals for good design and for making your product work.

10. Cision

Press outreach is important. If you want to do hardcore reach out, then check out Cision. It's a media database you can use to get the information of reporters. You can determine a reporter's location, email, phone numbers, social media profiles, areas of focus. Of course you can always build a free list by searching through Google and Twitter for the people you can reach out to.

11. Eyeshot

KeyShot is an easy-to-use and powerful way to create renderings of your products. Make it 3D, create an animation, or turn your pictures photorealistic.

12. Arqspin

If your campaign is on Kickstarter then you know that you have to prototype your product before you launch your campaign. One good way to display your prototype? Using Arqspin to create a 360-degree view to display every aspect of the product. After you buy a spin table, it's about as simple as taking a video on a camera that you own.

13. GIMP

Again, your product shots need to be great. GIMP is a photo-editing piece of software that doesn't have all the functionalities of Photoshop, but it's free. And if you're running a crowdfunding campaign, then you'll need every penny you can get.

For additional information Contact:

198TILG Publishing Support Team, USA, a Ike Lemuwa Company
Alexandria, VA. 22309
Toll Free: 888 642 8433

Direct Contact with Mr. Ike E. Lemuwa
USA/Africa/Antartica/Asia/Australia/EU/Latin-America/North-America

Email: Attention. Ike Lemuwa

The Ike Lemuwa Group, LLC
The Ike Lemuwa CEO Networks
The Ike Lemuwa Mastermind Platinum Group
Toll Free: 1 888 642 8433
Email: info@ikelemuwagroup.com

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198TILG Crowdfunding Support Team, USA

Free Crowdfunding Support Blueprint Assistant

Survey Assists Us to help you Free

Free: Crowdfunding Campaign Blueprint Research Assistants

Top 10 Survey will help us gather the right information for your Campaign

Free: Consultation for CEO/Celebrities/Professional Branding Assistance

Customize Surveys Designed to gather the right information to help you.