SAMPLE

The Online Course Business

Package What You Know and Sell It as a Self-Paced Course

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Free sample: Introduction & Chapter 1

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This free sample contains the Introduction and Chapter 1. The complete book contains the full contents above.

Introduction

Online courses are one of the most scalable digital products you can create. You record the material once, and it can be sold to hundreds or thousands of students with no additional production cost. A course that sells for $197 and enrolls 200 students generates $39,400 — from work you did one time.

This is the promise of the online course business: creating educational content that people pay for, and delivering it through platforms that automate enrollment, access, and payment. You do not need a teaching degree, a classroom, or even a video camera to start — many successful courses are text-based, slide-based, or created with simple screen recording tools.

This book covers the complete online course business model: choosing a profitable course topic, validating demand before you build, creating the course content, choosing the right platform, pricing your course, launching it, marketing it, and scaling from one course to a full course business.

- How to identify course topics that people will pay for - How to validate demand before spending weeks building a course - How to create professional course content on any budget - How to choose between course platforms (Teachable, Kajabi, Gumroad, and others) - How to price your course for maximum revenue - How to launch your course and get your first 50 students - How to scale to a multi-course business generating $10,000+/month

This book is for anyone who has knowledge that others want to learn. You might be a professional with skills colleagues ask you about. You might be a freelancer who has mastered a tool or technique. You might be a hobbyist who has gone deep on a topic. If people ask you "how do you do that?" — you have the foundation for an online course.

You do not need to be the world's leading expert. You need to be one step ahead of your students. A beginner who has learned the basics of a topic can teach those basics to complete novices. The key is understanding what your students want to achieve and breaking down the path to that achievement into clear, actionable lessons.

Book 26 in this series covers online teaching — delivering knowledge as a service, typically one-on-one or in live group sessions. This book covers course creation — building a product that delivers knowledge automatically, without your live involvement.

Teaching is a service: you trade time for money. Course creation is a product business: you invest time upfront to create an asset that generates revenue

repeatedly. A teacher earns $50/hour for each hour they teach. A course creator earns $197 per enrollment, whether 1 student or 100 students enroll. The course creator's income is not limited by their time — it is limited only by how many people they can reach and convince to buy.

This distinction matters because the business model is fundamentally different. Teaching businesses scale by adding more hours or hiring more teachers. Course businesses scale by reaching more students with the same product. The course business has higher upfront effort but infinitely better leverage once the course is built.

The global e-learning market is projected to reach $400 billion by 2026. Millions of people buy online courses every year to learn new skills, advance their careers, start businesses, or pursue hobbies. The demand for well-structured, practical courses is enormous and growing.

But the market is also competitive. Thousands of new courses are published every week. The courses that succeed are not the ones with the highest production value — they are the ones that solve a specific problem for a specific audience and are marketed effectively. A $97 course that solves a real problem and reaches the right audience will out-earn a $500 course with Hollywood production that no one knows about.

This book focuses on the fundamentals that make courses succeed: the right topic, the right audience, the right price, and the right marketing. These fundamentals matter more than production quality, platform choice, or any other technical consideration.

By the end of this book, you will have a framework for creating and launching your first online course. You will know how to validate your topic, build the content, choose a platform, set a price, and get your first students. The practical project is outlining your first course and creating a validation plan to test demand before you build.

The online course industry's graveyard has a single, consistent epitaph: courses completed, launched, and heard by no one.

The build-before-audience sequence is the deepest cause: months spent producing a polished curriculum for a student body that does not yet exist — a proof-of-concept run backwards, in which the market's only chance to reject the idea comes after the full investment instead of before it. The expertise-as-demand confusion follows: subjects chosen because the author knows them deeply, rather than because a definable buyer is actively searching for the transformation they enable — knowledge looking for a market, rather than a market looking for knowledge. And the perfecting habit completes the silence:

another module, another edit, another production upgrade, each one postponing the only information that matters, which is what real students will pay real money for and why.

The courses that launch to an audience invert every step: validation before production, presales before modules, and a launch list built from the very conversations that shaped the curriculum. This book rebuilds the sequence in that order, because a course is not a product that finds students. It is a product students found first.

Chapter 1: Why Online Courses Matter Now

Three trends make online courses a better opportunity than ever before.

People used to learn new skills through college courses, books, or apprenticeships. Today, they learn through online courses. The shift is driven by three factors: cost, speed, and specificity.

Cost: A college course costs $1,000-$5,000. An online course costs $50-$500. For most practical skills — coding, marketing, design, business — the online course delivers comparable or better outcomes at a fraction of the cost. Students are voting with their wallets.

Speed: A college semester takes 15 weeks. An online course takes 2-20 hours, completed at the student's own pace. When someone wants to learn a skill to advance their career or start a business, they do not want to wait 15 weeks. They want to learn this weekend.

Specificity: College courses are broad and theoretical. Online courses are specific and practical. "Learn to build a WordPress website in a weekend" is more compelling than "Introduction to Web Development 101." Students want specific outcomes, not general education. Online courses deliver specificity.

Five years ago, creating and selling an online course required technical skills: web development, payment processing, video hosting, access management. Today, platforms handle all of this. Teachable, Kajabi, Thinkific, Gumroad, and Udemy let you upload your content, set a price, and start selling in an afternoon.

This platform revolution removed the technical barrier to course creation. Anyone who can record a video or write a lesson can create and sell a course. The barrier is no longer technical — it is content quality and marketing. This is a much better barrier for creators, because content and marketing are skills you can develop, not infrastructure you have to build.

The creator economy has produced millions of content creators who have built audiences. These audiences are the perfect market for courses. An audience that follows a YouTuber for finance tips will buy a finance course from that YouTuber. The audience-builder-courses pipeline is the most efficient course sales channel in existence.

Even without an audience, courses can succeed through cold marketing (ads, SEO, affiliate partnerships). But with an audience, courses succeed faster and more profitably because the trust is already established. This book covers both paths — building courses with an existing audience and building courses

without one.

Online courses generate income through three models:

One-time sales: The student pays once ($50-$500) for lifetime access. Simple and effective. Each sale is pure profit after platform fees (typically 5-10%).

Subscription access: The student pays monthly ($20-$100/month) for access to a library of courses. Creates recurring revenue but requires constant content creation to justify the subscription.

Cohort-based courses: The student pays a premium ($500-$5,000) for a live, time-limited course with direct access to the instructor. Highest revenue per enrollment but requires active time investment. Not truly passive.

This book focuses on one-time sales — the most accessible model for beginners. Cohort-based and subscription models are discussed as scaling options for later.

End of free sample. The full book is available at putrabooks.github.io