

teachable

IT'S TEACHABLE

# CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR ONLINE COURSE



## WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

1. How to structure your online course to boost student happiness & engagement
2. How to create beautiful slides, simply (and with links to freebies!)
3. Learn how to create videos at home WITHOUT equipment costs
4. Step-by-step instructions for recording screencasts
5. Tested tips for setting up and executing powerful interviews



## WANT MORE?

Learn how to easily create your own online school (and start teaching THIS WEEK) with our FREE live trainings. They include a live Q&A at the end for any question you may have and special *deals you won't find on our website.*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



*Hi Friends!*

We're Ashley and Allison - the content team here at [Teachable](#). Together we've created over 40 blog posts, resources, guides, checklists and workbooks for course creators. With access to Teachable data helping us analyze successful courses and personal relationships with many of our top instructors, we've learned what it takes to create a successful course and have created this guide to help you along the way. Our goal is to make the course creation process as simple as possible. Heck - it might even be fun!

We're thrilled you took the time to download *It's Teachable: Create Content For Your Online Course* and can assure you that the advice given here has been tested by yours truly. If you have any questions, email us at [blog@teachable.com](mailto:blog@teachable.com) and we'll be in touch.

*xoxo.*

*Ashley & Allison*



CHAPTER

# Structure Your Online Course

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## How to structure, outline and tweak your online course to keep students engaged and raving about your course.

Ashley here! It only makes sense to start this book the same way every course creator begins - by outlining their online course. Whether you think you know exactly what you're doing, or have absolutely no idea where to start, this is where to start.

I'm going to share our tried and true process that makes it incredibly easy to outline your course and shares all of our insider tips to make sure your course is not only impactful, but thoroughly delightful for your students.

Ok, here's the deal. When you sign up for Teachable, you're also creating your own "school", a school is where all of your courses will live.

For example, we created [academy.teachable.com](https://academy.teachable.com) and built multiple courses within it such as Course Marketing Playbook and Create Your Online Course.

This is similar to the way something like WordPress works. When you create your first blog, you're also setting up a dashboard that remains the same if you create multiple blogs.

Within your course you will set a "curriculum", this is the outline of your content. A course is composed of sections that have lectures.

## Sell Your Course Before All Your Content Is Created

Before we start breaking down our course idea into sections and lectures within those section, know that you should **never create all of your content before you sell your course**.

Surprised? So are most of our teachers (and so was I!). The idea is this: when you sell your course you will start to get feedback from students about your content. This can be things like if you speak too quickly in videos, if your lighting is off, if your microphone is too soft. You'll also hear good things, like areas where students want to hear more information, or things they love within your course.

You want to take these suggestions and tailor your remaining content to student wants and needs. By doing this, you customize your course to your audience, which can be the difference between providing unparalleled value that students are willing to pay for and a totally bland mediocre review.

Ok, so what if you're afraid to sell your course before it's finished? What happens if you never finish? By creating and selling the first section, you will have more confidence in knowing you can deliver,

you'll know what you need to add and you'll know about how long and how much effort it will take to finish it.

## Get Students to a Transformation

Remember why people take courses in the first place - they want to change something about their life. They believe that if they take your course, they're going to get a solution to a problem aka they'll experience a change or transformation in what they know. Maybe they don't know Java and their job requires them to learn - you teach them. Maybe they don't know how to paint with watercolors - you teach them. Maybe they don't know how to market their Etsy store - you teach them.

**The key to a good course is that there is a transformation and by the end of the course your students knows something they didn't before.**

Breathe a sigh of relief, a successful course is a short and sweet shortcut to an outcome. You don't have to worry about how long your content is or how beautiful your slides are as long as someone learns from your course. You simply have to get them to the transformation, and preferably in the fastest time possible. With this said, whenever you have questions while you are creating your course simply ask yourself, "Will this affect whether my students make it to the transformation or not?" If it is a yes, do it. If it is a no, then don't worry about it.

If you want your students to stay with you in your course and maximize completion rates you want to keep them excited throughout the course. So how do you do that? Read on...

## Get Your Students Results Early

It's common for teachers to drown their students in theory and advanced concepts early on. Don't be this teacher. Instead, when you plan your course out, which we'll do soon, make sure to get them on a journey of consistent little wins.

For example:

- **A course on meditation:** Have your students sit down and meditate for 5 minutes no matter how often they trail off (they'll feel like they're doing something)
- **A course on vegetarian cooking:** Have students cook something so easy they can't mess it up and is delicious. Maybe a grilled cheese? Or show them different chopping styles and have them cut something up in those different styles. They'll see progress in front of them.

- **A course on language learning:** Help students learn the 50 most used words in that language (usually comprises roughly 50% of that language's spoken content) so they can quickly put their new skill to use.
- **A course on coding:** Have students create "Hello World" - the most basic coding program you can create and run for any language. It feels like progress, because it is.

## Highlight Student Progress

Make sure to point out the progress your students are making. If your course is on building a blog, remind them of how far they've come e.g. set up their layout, set up their design, created a number of posts. Set up your course so students can't fail. The best way to do this is start with small achievable tasks, doing competence checks and moving on to more difficult things. Be sure to point on the progress they are making. If you're on a lesson in the middle of your course, you could point out how what they learned in lessons 1 has become second nature.

Be encouraging and positive whenever possible. Leave students coming out of your course feeling like they can do it versus they have homework.

## Set Reasonable Expectations

Don't overpromise to your students. Let them know they won't be a pro the first time they try something new and communicate how much progress they should be making at each point. If you don't - your students may turn to you as an example, which might be too far advanced for the course, or they'll feel confused about if they're succeeding or not. No brainer, you want them to feel like they're succeeding.

For instance, our head of VIP instructors, Ryan, says this:

*"When I am teaching my course and am going over complex ideas that students might not understand the first time, I tell them that. I literally say "Hey guys I'm going over some complex stuff right now so if you're a little lost that is fine. Watch the video again and I promise you as you go through the next few lessons it will start to clear up. Also at points in my teachings when I'm reviewing stuff they've learned before and should know I tell them that as well. I simply say "Hey you should remember how to do this from [some point earlier]. If you do then awesome! See how you are learning this without even noticing it."*

Vocal cues like this will go a long way for keeping morale (and engagement) up.

## Keep the students involved

Keep students involved in your course by giving them small achievable tasks after each lecture. You can even directly ask students to comment or paste their projects so they can discuss with others.

This does a number of things. First it makes students feel invested and thus attached to the course if they've been producing things along the way. When you engage students with you, the course and other students, it makes them feel like a part of something - and to be honest, they are. Teachable has native comments within our platform, so it's no extra work for you to enable a conversation like this.

## Outline Your Course The Right Way

When you sit down to break up your course into sections and lectures remember that your end goal is to take students to a transformation. Every section should be a big step to the goal and you can create small lectures within each section.

To get them to that transformation make a checklist of skills they need to have and then place them in order of achievement/learning - this is your outline. Your outline will most definitely evolve as you make the course and you'll add lectures that you forgot about to connect the others.

## Shorten Your Lecture Lengths

It's very rare that people's lectures are too short. It is much more common for lectures to be too long and drawn out. BUT a course is supposed to be a SHORTcut to an outcome.

People take your course to quickly learn something rather than trying to aggregate data online. You'll win no bonus points for making the course

longer than it should be. Quite frankly, you'd be wasting people's time.

While there are variations on what's right and always exceptions, we generally keep lectures under 15 minutes and 4-8 minutes gives enough time to talk through something without losing student attention spans. **All the time, we have people say "but my video has to be longer." Ask yourself - can you break it up?**

Pretend you're a student, you're probably learning late at night or on the weekends, you are tired and you get to the next lecture. "Dang, this lecture is 40 minutes?!" Even at 20 minutes they're asking themselves if they can make that time investment and wondering if they need to push until the next day. If they come into your course and each lecture is just five minutes - well, that's quick. There is minimal time investment on their part and next thing they know they have finished four lessons back to back because they are easily digestible.  
#munchablecontent

Try to keep each lesson to 1-2 key concepts. Break up longer video recordings into smaller segments. Don't be overwhelming.

## Title Your Lectures So Students Want to Complete Them

Your lecture titles matter. First off, your lecture titles help sell your course. When potential students land on your course landing page - they want to know what they'll learn and Teachable previews the names of your sections and lectures.

Additionally, think of what you do when you open a new purchase - you poke around. When someone buys your course, they're going to navigate around and see what the course looks like. Clear and value-forward titles enhance the idea you're providing value. I tend to write them like sales copy: "Create mouthwatering content that leaves your students wanting more" for a lecture on creating content.



CHAPTER



# Content Creation Basics

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## *A quick content overview to help you decide what kind of content is best for your course*

Once you have an outline in place, you'll actually start creating content. Teachable allows you to upload everything from photos to slides, video content or audio files. There are infinite type of content being produced, however, what most people use is a combination of slides + video + screencasts that may or may not include video of themselves.

Remember that when creating your content, you should keep your audience wants and needs first. What we mean is choose the best content medium to convey your point. Each content medium has strengths and weaknesses...

**Video content** - is extremely engaging, conveys emotions and helps you connect with your audience. By comparison, it can be quick to produce pretty good videos and time intensive to create "perfect" videos (a goal we do NOT endorse, but more on that...)

**Screencasts** - are technology based recordings of what's happening on your computer screen. They are ideal for (surprise) explaining technical concepts and tutorials on your computer. They're detail oriented, visual and explanatory.

**Text** - My favorite, if you couldn't tell by this ebook, but text is stagnant content that works well for

explaining detail concepts in a way that may need to be referenced multiple times. Within a course, it's great for giving additional explanation, details or critical information to review. It's also extremely easy to share #copypaste yo

**Slides** - Slides are visual content that helps showcase the the most important information you're explaining. By literally spelling it out for students, you're helping organize complex concepts into an easily organized system of slides, bullets and sub bullets.

In addition, slides are a HUGE help to you. As you record your course content, you can use slides as speaking cues OR you can hide your scripts within presenter notes.

Your course will likely be a mix of a few (if not all) of these. If you're running a photoshop tutorial, screencasts are probably your best option. If you're trying to get your students motivated in the first section, video may be the best option. If you're simply talking through key points, slides are ideal.

*At this point, we suggest chekcing out our resource toolkit at the end of this book. Page 3 includes an editable PDF to help you outline your online course.*

CHAPTER



# Create Slides + Design Tips

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## *Use for slides, layout, color, font tips and easy image tweaks. These tips can be used for any other visual content that you need to create.*

Before creating content, outline your sections, lectures and decide which type of content to include in each. From here, we suggest creating slides.

Why? We use slides as the backbone of our course. They force us to outline talking points and leave space for full scripts.

The first thing you'll need before creating slides is copy. There are two schools of thought. One, that you script every detail of your course so you know exactly what to say in all of your videos. Two, that you outline key points and present off-the-cuff. What you choose ultimately comes down to personality. Everyone here at Teachable does it differently.

I'm naturally an extrovert who loves talking with people and public speaking, I go off the cuff. Our designer, Allison, is extremely detail oriented and likes to be precise and shies away from videos - she scripts out her presentations.

The important thing to remember here is that no matter your personality, you can create a course!

No, this is the point where you've got to sit down, outline your content and start bullet out talking points and writing scripts. *If you want to check out how we did it, we've released a few of our drafts that we made while created The Profitable Teacher. They're on page 4 of the resource guide.*

Hey! It's Allison. I'm going to share with you some of my best design secrets to help you create killer visuals, in particularly slides. I'm going to walk you through what slides are great for, layout tips, using colors and fonts, and easy image tweaks. This advice isn't exclusive to slides, **these tips can be used for any other visual content that you might need to create** like ads, worksheets, other resources and even your sales page. And the best part about it is that you don't have to be a designer to implement these tips!

Slides are great as stand alone content. Meaning, if you're trying to get content out quickly without having to make any videos, slides are great for that! Most of you have probably used Powerpoint or Keynote at some point in your life and that's all you need to create slides. Slides are also extremely visual. You can use text and images to create lessons for your students that can be easily flipped through.

Take the website SlideShare for instance. Most decks on there are just written content that tells a story or lesson from the beginning of the deck to the end. And that is exactly what you can do with slides for your course as well.

If you haven't before, I'd check out SlideShare for some inspiration. You can [check out our account here](#) to see all of the decks I have created.

Now, your decks don't have to be the most fancy things you've ever seen. The most important thing about slides is that they need to clearly convey the information you are trying to tell your students.

These tips I'm giving you are to help you convey your information clearly while just adding a little bit of pizzazz. But before I get into them I want to explain how you can use slides with videos in your course.

## Use Slides and Videos in Your Course

You have a couple of options when combining slides and videos.

**Slides and audio.** This is where you flip through your slides while talking over them with screenflow. With screenflow you have the option of having a video of you show up in the bottom right hand corner of the slides.

**MY HACK:** If you decide to do it this way, make sure you don't add content in this area of your slides, otherwise it'll be completely covered by the video.

Now, if you're advanced with videos & editing, you can **shoot a video of yourself speaking and edit in clips of the slides** - which is what we've done with many of our own Teachable courses.

## Slide Design Tips

### Layout tips

Before you start designing anything, make sure your slides are in the video format you will be shooting in. For example, we shoot in a 16:9 aspect ratio, so in Keynote I designed the slides in wide-screen format. Using slides that are in the same format as your video ensures that no information is cut off and makes editing wayyyyy easier.

**Keep your slides to the point!** Do not put paragraphs of information on your slides - it's too much to take in, and not to mention, your audience will become distracted by trying to read what's on the slides and will stop listening to you. Instead, use bullets or VERY short sentences. Use multiple slides for a point, if needed. Your audience will thank you, and it makes everything look better.

### Color tips

Now let's dive into choosing colors for your slides. If you already have a brand - pick colors that go

with it. The reason is that your course is a direct extension of you and your brand. It needs to have the same look and feel as the rest of your content. That way, when your audience sees your course, they know it's from you because they recognize the brand.

If you don't have a brand or color palette already, that's ok! Picking colors for your slides is an easy place to start.

Choose 2-3 colors to use throughout your slides.

Pick one dark and one light color because they stand out the best when used together. Then choose one as an accent color for shapes or other design elements, like calling out important points.

As you can see below, the colors in the right hand column look great together. The light blue pops on the charcoal grey background and so does the



dark green text on the pale green background. They're also easy to read, which is definitely another factor when you're choosing your colors.

As you can see in the top left corner, the magenta on the purple background is nearly impossible to read. While underneath the orange and green combo is just plain ugly and makes me think too much of halloween.

So keep in mind ease of legibility & how the colors look together when picking yours.

**To help you choose colors that work well together, here are three great sites to use:**

#### 1. COLOUR LOVERS ([colourlovers.com](http://colourlovers.com))

This is a search engine palette generator. You can search for colors by keyword, hex code (that six-digit number that starts with a hashtag), and even search by most recent creations.

A quick warning about using color lovers. All of these palettes have been generated by people just like us. Some of the palettes are amazing, others... not so much. So just be aware of that when you're looking through them.

## 2. COOLORS ([coolors.co](http://coolors.co))

This is my new favorite generator! It's super easy to use. All you need is the space bar... that's it! Just go to the site, click generate palettes, press the spacebar and a new palette will come up.

To have more control, type in the hex code and lock it so it doesn't change and then... you guessed it! Press the spacebar and it'll generate palettes that go with that color.

## 3. ADOBE ([color.adobe.com](http://color.adobe.com))

Adobe has a great color picker. You can either start with a specific color you want to use and then generate hues that look good with it or you can just play with the wheel and see what comes up.

Every color has certain characteristics associated with it. Pink, for example is often associated as a feminine and romantic color, green is associated with wealth and balance, while blue is cool and trustworthy. Think about it. most of the banks you see, like

something you like, try to replicate it. Obviously don't copy exactly everything they do - but say they have a nice red & orange combo - try finding similar hues that work well for you & your brand or intended brand.

The colors that you choose for your slides can be used as a solid background colors, in shapes or other design elements on the slide.

For text, use one color for the header text or when you want to emphasize an important word. And use another color for the body text.

Once again, I'm going to direct you back to Slide-Share to pull inspiration from if you're stuck. I do this all the time if I'm stuck on a design. It's nice to look at what other people do to get some inspiration. Don't reinvent the wheel, if someone does something nice visually, replicate it! Tweek it to fit your colors or look and voila!

## Type tips

Choose a serif or sans serif font. They are the easiest to read. A serif font has the tails on the edges of the letters, while the sans serif does not. I prefer sans serif fonts because they seem more friendly and casual, plus I find them easier to read AND on mobile devices, they are actually easier to read.

Avoid using decorative or script fonts for your slides because they're harder to read, especially when small. They are great to call out an important word or phrase (especially if its the only word on the slide). Yes, these fonts add pizazz to your slides, but to get a lot of information across, go with a serif or sans serif.

Here is a great list of the most commonly used fonts. If you're unsure of what to use, pick something from this list.

### Sans serif

- Arial
- Geneva
- Helvetica
- Lucida Grande
- Tahoma
- Trebuchet MS
- Verdana

### Serif

- Georgia
- Palatino
- Times
- Times New Roman

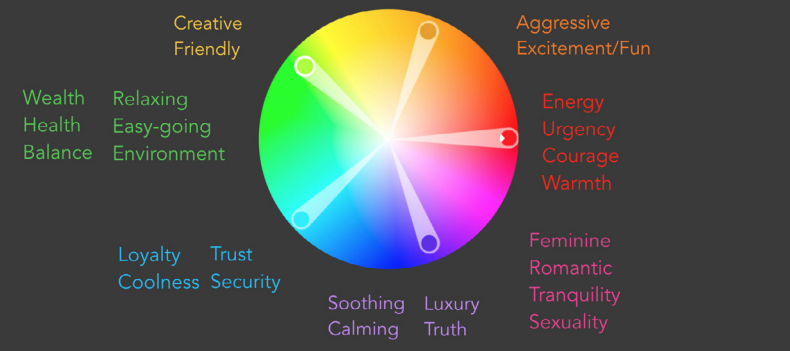
### Monospace

- Courier
- Courier New
- Monaco

Now, although this list is great to get started with, you can have a bit more fun with fonts. Start by exploring [fontsqurrel.com](http://fontsqurrel.com). It's filled with commercially free fonts that can really give your content something extra.

Some of my favorite sans serif fonts are lato, rale-

# Psychological implications of color



Chase, have blue in their logos. Why? because they want you to trust them that they will take care of your money.

So, when you're choosing colors for your course, business or brand, think about how you want to be perceived by your audience. If you're feeling stuck with this, draw inspiration from others.

What are the colors used by your favorite brands or businesses? What about those that influence you? Pay attention to what they do and if there is

way (the Teachable website font), and open sans. Just like the color sites, you can search by keywords and font styles (hand lettered, serif, script, etc.)

All you have to do is download them and install them on your computer.

One last thing to remember is to make sure the fonts you choose are large enough to read! Don't go for a size 20 font. Start at least with 60 points for the body text and 112 for the headlines. - Bigger is always easier to read.

### Image tips

These are a few of my favorite stock image sites, that I literally use daily (I'm not joking)! I love these sites because they aren't your typical stock photo sites. Nothing super cheesy or posed here.

Here is a list of my favorite sites:

- [StockSnap](#)
- [Pexels](#)
- [Unsplash](#)
- [Gratisography](#)
- [Finda.Photo](#)
- [9 other sites I love](#)

All of these sites are commercially free, which means that you can use these images for anything and does not require attribution.

Now that you have found your images, it's time to talk about using text with them.



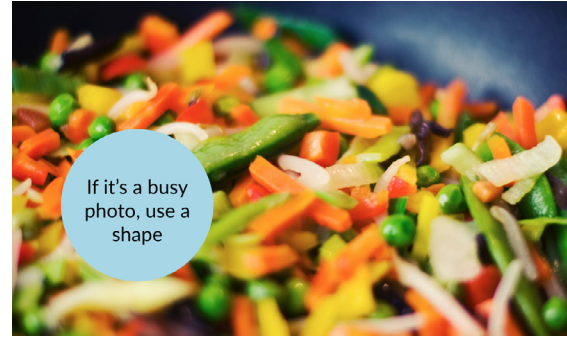
**Tip #1:** if the image is a darker image, use white as your text color.

I've found that white stands out the best on images versus some other lighter color. Obviously, every image is different, but using white is a great starting point. Test out other light colors if white doesn't look great. Just

make sure you can read it :)

**Tip #2:** if the image is light, use dark colored text.

**Tip #3:** if the photo has a lot of colors or a lot of different stuff going on, add a shape over it. It can be anything - circle, square, rectangle, maybe even a star, and then add the text on top. When



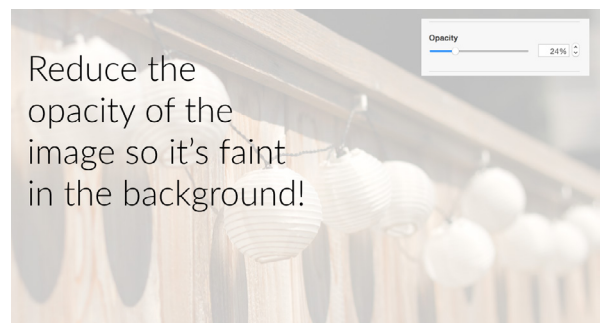
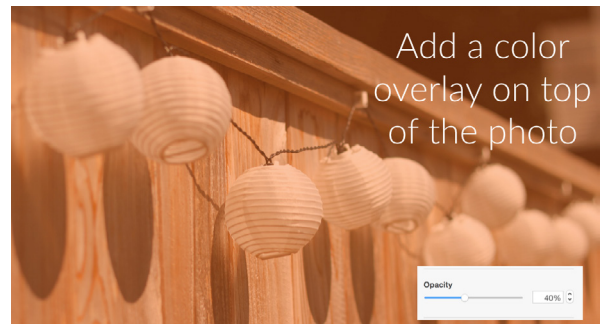
doing this, make sure to add the text in its own text box. This way you have more control over the formatting versus if you added the text directly into the shape.

**Tip #4:** Another way to make text readable on busy photos is to add a solid color rectangle over the image and reduce the opacity. Just make a rectangle the size of the slide, place it over the photo and then reduce the opacity till you reach your desired image to color ratio.

*Just make sure to keep your text on top of the image and the rectangle.*

Plus, this is another way to bring your brand colors into your slides. Yay!

**Tip #5:** You can also reverse that process. Instead of putting a color on top of the image, just reduce the opacity of the image itself so you can see it faintly in the background.



CHAPTER



# DIY Video

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## *Everything you need for simple DIY video production including editing tips, studio setup guides and our equipment suggestions (with links to buy)*

Let's be blunt. People love video content.

To quote [The Guardian](#), "Nielsen claims that 64% of marketers expect video to dominate their strategies in the near future." To quote [Forbes.com](#), "People prefer video over white papers, case studies, even live demos with reps." To quote your 15-year-old niece, "SNAPCHAT!"

From Snapchat to Periscope to Instagram video, GIFs and YouTube, it's clear that content is trending toward videos and visual content. Reasons for this are rooted in the psychology of the brain and consumer behavior.

According to [The Next Web](#), studies show our brains not only process visuals faster, but they retain and transmit much more information when it's delivered visually - all the things content marketers try to do.

With this in mind, it might be time to start adding some videos to your course. Video is one of the quickest ways to create content and it's incredibly engaging. For this reason, you'd be hard pressed to find a single Teachable course that doesn't include at least one video.

### **Let's break this down into 12 simple steps.**

During the Teachable Summit, our CEO, Ankur

Nagpal, had a "small" fireside chat with thousands of people to talk about [DIY video production](#) with Caleb Wojcik.

Caleb is the man. His online Teachable course DIY Video Production is perfect for course creators since it teaches you exactly how to create videos yourself. We were lucky then that Caleb agreed to share so many of his tips & tricks with us for free...and now we're sharing them.

## **1. Embrace DIY**

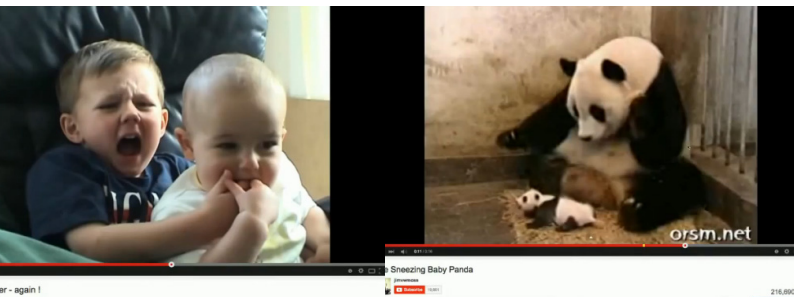
Embrace using what you already have. This is a huge lesson that we're always trying to communicate at Teachable. Before you spend tens of thousands of dollars on fancy video equipment, think about what you have and what you actually need.

What's a nice to have and what's a need to have? Honestly, you've probably got most of what you need in your lap right now: a laptop, phone, window and work ethic.

It's fun and can be tempting to invest in shiny new equipment, but especially if this is your first course, consider DIY options and with the money you make you can invest in nicer equipment.

Start with a point-and-shoot camera, cell phone, whatever you've got. Start getting used to making videos.

Take a look at these viral YouTube videos.



They might look familiar, right? But notice how poor the quality of the videos is.

Shooting high quality videos can boost the perceived value of your course, sure, but good information and comedy will spread either way.

We saw this first hand when first-time course creators John Azzi and Eliot Arntz filmed their content for Bitfountain. They made over 2MM dollars shooting with an iPhone and recording with another smartphone hanging from their ceiling with fishing line.

## 2. Study Other Examples

Before you start creating video content, look at what other people are doing, and not just in courses.

Check out cooking videos, software tutorials, watch people that are teaching baseball online. Look to YouTube or anywhere where someone is teaching, especially in a topic you're not interested in.

Being apathetic about a topic lets you hone in on the video techniques since you're not interested in what's being taught.

If you want to check out free courses, you can find a few here:

There are free courses in our own [Teachable academy](#)

[Caleb has free courses](#)

You can find [free courses on Udemy](#), analyze them, do better, make more money

## 3. Tell A Story

I love this tip from Caleb and rarely see it get the attention it deserves. While your course absolutely needs to provide value to your students and take them to a measurable transformation (i.e. I learned how to knit!). It's also important to make your course enjoyable.

Tell a story. Have an overarching theme throughout your course. Push people through your last lecture.

You can do this by thinking in threes. Is there a beginning, middle and end to what you teach? If you're a lifestyle course, could you structure your course around the morning, middle and evening of a day?

Ryan, aka The Man who runs our 7-Step Webinars, has built successful courses on his own. He emphasizes creating short lectures (less than 20 mins) that get students to wins early on in your course. While you want your students to learn, you also want them to have fun and enjoy themselves.

## 4. Equipment

Alright, let's get into equipment. We're going to give you the DIY solutions before ever asking you to spend money. We want you making money off your courses, not incurring sunk costs.

HOWEVER, if you're looking to start investing, we've created a shopping list on page 8 of our resource guide with link to our favorite equipment.

### *Lighting and Environment*

#### **DIY**

Start with natural light. In Caleb's current video, he's using natural light. It's easy and SUNSHINE IS FREE.



This is what Caleb advocates starting with and we're 100% behind him.

Put the window in front of you NOT behind you. Behind you, you're going to show up a dark silhouette unless the lights in front of you match the power of the sun's rays. Not likely.

#### **FIRST UPGRADE**

Add [a small light](#) to your camera.

## SECOND UPGRADE

Get a [ring light](#). Your camera goes in the middle. It's pretty pricey at \$250. If you've ever watched make-up tutorials on YouTube, the host is probably sitting very close to this.

BUT if you wear glasses, you're going to get a pretty terrible glare.

## THIRD UPGRADE

The [cowboy studio set](#). This was Caleb's first set that he used for 3 years before upgrading. The lights take time to set up, but you can throw them into a closet, so it's pretty effective for getting that three light setup.

Below, you can check out Wistia's video setup. You can see that they've got the three lights, one on the right and left in front of you and one on the wall behind you to give texture.



## Positioning

Now, when it comes to filming and position, think about framing. Try to position yourself to one side. This gets helpful when you're putting text on screen.

Caleb agrees that in courses, having text on screen is crucial. More so than in other videos, having written words on screen help people remember information and organize it in their head the way you organize it on screen.

## 5. BOKEH aka Blurred Background

Bokeh is another word for having a background blurred out. Why are we talking about it? Because people want it. The aesthetic is pleasing, but it's not always simple to do.

Here are two tricks to making that happen:

1. Increase the distance between you and your background (when the camera focuses on your face, it will focus less on things farther away).



2. Adjust your lens. Changing the aperture changes how much of a scene your camera catches. The lower the number on your aperture the smaller part of the scene that's in focus.

So, if you want a blurry background, add distance and shoot in a lower aperture.

## 6. Cameras

Let me quote Caleb, "First of all, I really do advocate smartphones." Why spend money on a specialty camera if you don't have to?

### DIY

With a smartphone, your main concern is stability.

Get something to hold your phone. On a tripod, [Gifl by Studio Neat](#) is Caleb's favorite. You can also use a tripod like the [Joby Gorillapod](#), which I've personally used myself and love. This doubles as an awesome tool for vacations and family photos and is way classier than a selfie stick.

Speaking of, selfie sticks also have similar clamps that lock a phone in place, which could be set on a table to stabilize your videos. Just sayin'.

If you want to upgrade your video on your phone, you can download [Filmic Pro](#) for \$5, which is a pretty cheap way to upgrade your smartphone videos.

If you're doing webinars, screencasts, seminars, it might be time to think about upgrading your videos.

But! Before you jump into buying new equipment, which can seem fun and exciting, do consider what value it will bring to your course and if it's worth it.

Remember, using a smartphone for version 1 of your course can work just fine and it's always a safe bet to wait until you've made money to start investing in equipment.

If you've decided it's time for nicer equipment, here's are our suggestions...

## FIRST UPGRADE

[The Logitech C920](#). "This camera always gets me compliments and it's only \$75 dollars," Caleb told us. It's actually the camera Caleb is using in the webinar replay.

The video you see of Caleb in the webinar replay has been shot through the camera, compressed through google hangouts, uploaded to video and then being streamed by YOU, so it's the quality isn't as good as it could be.

But if you're using the Logitech and going into Screenflow or into Quicktime, the quality can be great.

Now, there are a few expensive upgrades that we've vetted for you, but because we really emphasize DIY, if you want to hear Caleb's advice, you should watch the [webinar replay](#).

## 7. Microphone

Here at Teachable, we think that the most impactful place you can put your money is in a microphone. That's why we suggest your first upgrade be a nice mic before you start upgrading lighting, backdrop, etc.

Our go-to is the [Blue Yeti](#), which we've recommended time and time again. It runs about \$100, but if you make one upgrade this should be it. It's what Caleb is using in the webinar and what he started podcasting and teaching with.

Caleb also recommends things like a small microphone for you iPhone, [theZoom iQ6](#), which works well for interviews (on my wishlist!), but you can also use the [Rode Smartlab Plus](#) which also plugs into a phone.

What this means is that with two phones, one in your pocket recording and one shooting video, you can quickly create 6KB videos. Woah.

If you want to connect a microphone to someone, the [Audio Technica AT 899](#) works well and is particularly great for breezy feminine blouses.

Check out the webinar for more of Caleb's suggestions.

## 8. Audio Recorders

Audio recorders are separate microphones that record audio only. If you jump into this step, it means

that you've decided to not record videos with your laptop and sound at once and you're committing to editing video and sound together, or maybe running sound over slides.

Here are some suggestions:

- [Tascam DR-05](#) - \$99
- [Tascam DR-40 \(XLR\)](#) - \$140
- [Tascam DR-100 MKII \(XLR\)](#) - \$225

## 9. Teleprompters

If you have a really detailed course, scripting it out can be beneficial. To stick to your script, you may want a teleprompter. Using a teleprompter is an easy fix, but you can also hold the script just off screen or memorize and deliver your script.

Memorizing and delivering is the method most of us at Teachable use, but that's also because teaching courses are our job so we've internalized a lot of that data we present. We do suggest trying this first. It's simply the cheapest and most often fastest way to present your content.

However, when speaking about something very detailed or slightly foreign to you, having a teleprompter can be a big help.

But the cheapest viable option is the [iPad Teleprompter](#), but this all takes into account that you have an Ipad and download an app.

## 10. Editing

So. many. questions. Here's the top 3:

### Q: How do I edit together sound and video if they're recorded separately?

To line up your audio and visual, you've got to line up the waveforms, and in most free movie editors, this has to be done manually.

The easiest way to facilitate this is to clap, snap or make a distinctive noise at the start of your videos to produce a large waveform or a repetition of three waveforms that can be easily visually identified.

With [FinalCut Pro](#) you can also try to trust your software to do it for you. This works when you have good mics and equipment, but if you don't can be problematic.

### Q: What will make video editing faster?

Caleb has two big personal tips.

1. Give your future self notes. While you're recording say, "I really like the 4th take, but the 3rd take could be good too" in the video.

2. Anytime you make a mistake that you plan to cut out, make an audible sound that will appear in the waveforms. Clap, or snap, stomp so there is a clear place to cut, which we just discussed you should look for when editing your videos.

Here at Teachable, we historically loudly clapped hands or dropped books, but the 3 snaps are nice because it's even more visually apparent on the waveforms than just 1 loud form and less noisy for neighbors. (Sorry 1B!)

Trust me, this is super simple. I've personally learned these easy video editing tips in the past few months. While video seems daunting and technical with all those green scribbles lookin' like math problems (SOH CAH TOA), it's very easy to cut video.

With the newer versions of iMovie APPLE+B cuts your videos, you can quickly edit out errors, delete unwanted segment and easily merge video segments and there are automatic transitions you can add to fade in and out.

I learned most of my tips from someone you may know from our Customer Success team, Mike Poage. He sat down and detailed his favorite tips, which I turned into a blog post [here](#).

**Q: Do you have any tips for course videos in particular?**

Caleb emphasizes putting text on screen when it's important, technical or a quote. Personally, I'm a visual, not auditory, learner, so I love to see text screen that enhances what a speaker might say (and I might easily tune out).

Here's a tip though. If you've got paragraph text on screen, don't show it and then start talking about something else. Either read the text, or pause to let readers internalize the info.

## 11. Software

For video editing, there are two industry standards.

### DIY

For Windows, MovieMaker is a free option. If you're on Mac, iMovie is free. Both of these are pretty decent options, but you'll have to manually combine your audio and visual content.

You can also find video editing apps all on your

smartphone.

### FIRST UPGRADE

If you're going into record yourself in combination with slides, check out...

*For Windows:* [Camtasia](#) is about your only option. It's a bit pricey but comes with a few more features than the Mac programs.

*For Mac:* [Screenflow](#). It's just \$100 and makes inserting videos of yourself speaking into slides incredibly easy.

### SECOND UPGRADE

For professional level videos...

Caleb uses [Adobe Premier Pro](#) or [FinalCutPro 10](#).

## 12. Hosting Videos

Caleb, having tons of experience with videos, sat down to compare YouTube to Vimeo to Wista as hosting platforms.

YouTube is hard to customize and wants to make your videos public. Vimeo is decent, but not free and not made for course content.

Wistia, on the other hand, gives you statistics on video consumption, customization, embedded transcripts and checklists AND it's what you get for free on Teachable. We host videos for you, but it's run through Wistia on the back end. This is why you can track student progress and video completion. So yes, out of all the options you could use Wistia is the best and Teachable covers the fees for you!

Pretty cool, eh?

## Practice Makes Perfect

After all of these tips, you can sit down and create some pretty stellar videos at a very small cost, if any. BUT you've still got to get in front of the camera and film the videos. Cringe.

I feel your pain and this not normally my preferred content medium, I much prefer writing and hiding behind impactful punctuation. However, I forced myself to get into video content and it gets easier.

The more you do it, the less you're distracted by the fact you're speaking to a screen and by re-viewing your videos you'll pick up on nervous ticks and speaking flaws. There are tons of outlets for practicing your speaking, especially considering the social media landscape. Use [Periscope](#), run webinars, practice on [Meerkat](#) or [Blab](#). You'll get more comfortable and with an audience, you'll get

feedback.

After working through this struggle myself, I have to say, I love video content. It's so fast and incredibly engaging. In the time it takes me to write this blog post, I could have created a video, edited and uploaded it and gone to lunch and back.

## MAKE VIDEO EDITING EASY

After creating video, you've got to edit it. While this seems like something they'd only teach you in film school, it's pretty simple. Here are a few tips to make it easier on yourself with a few tips you can implement while you film and after.

### 1. Record Room Tone

To start, no matter what kind of video content you're creating (be it a screencast, how-to video or falling-in-love montage for your bridezilla best friend), you want to record in a quiet and noise controlled environment.

When you sit down to do the thang, capture around 30-60 seconds of "room tone", or the base sound of the room. Simply turn on your mic and let it record. This sound will be used in the editing process to fill audio gaps and smooth out transitions from one scene to the next. It's much quicker than trying to edit out every time gap or inserting filler noise you've pulled from elsewhere.

### 2. Give yourself enough lead-time between takes

Knowing that you're going to edit your videos, make life easy on yourself and create silent lead time between your takes and after you make a mistake.

This is especially important with screencasts. If you make a mistake while recording, it's NBD to stop and keep going AS LONG AS you take the time to stop. You can cut out your fumbles and filler time and use room tone to smooth the transition. You're going to sound like a pro.

In contrast, if you hurry on to your next point and don't pause, you're going to wind up in editing madness. Cutting just a few frames and trying to keep the audio crisp is harder than getting someone in San Francisco to shut-up about their startup.

### 3. Keep Your Mouse Still

If you're filming a screencast, it's incredibly important to keep the mouse/cursor still between various

steps in your video. This makes it easy to cut and edit around dead periods since the mouse stays in the same place on the screen.

Imagine, if you're moving the mouse during dead time when you attempt to join two scenes, the mouse is going to jump across the screen in a non-sensical manner.

### 4. Easy Transitions with Cross-Fading

Sometimes, there's a transition in a video that doesn't need room tone, just a little smooth-over. Use crossfading.

A majority of non-linear video editing programs will let you do this in one of two ways:

1. Drag the beginning/end of one clip over the end/beginning of another
2. Line up the two clips next to each other and then apply a cross dissolve/fade.

Remember, less is more. Yes, you can add in shooting stars as a transition. Yes, you can burn it up with some orange flames. But WHY?! Intricate transitions are more likely to distract from your content than add to it. Present your facts clearly and efficiently.

### 5. Save your content on an external hard drive

Big screens aren't the only thing big about movies, they're massive files.

Some programs, including Screenflow, capture your whole project as one file (in this case a .screenflow file). Other programs create a series of source files, project files and even rendering files. All are massive.

In addition, it's extremely important to be saving multiple versions of these goliaths. To save time while transferring huge files to and from your computer, use a quality external hard drive. It makes it easy to go back and edit all previous projects, speeds up rendering and makes passing the work to someone else a breeze. Not to mention, you might not have space on your computer for more than a few large video files.

What to buy: When buying a great external hard drive, it might be a good idea to look for quality. Working with movies you need AT LEAST 500GB of space, but we prefer 1TB+.

Also, check out transfer rates (how long it take to stream data to and from your computer). If you're saving and transporting big files, it's important to know that a 1.8GB movie transferring at .05MB/sec will take hours but at 25MB/sec only a few minutes.

Weigh your pros and cons. We trust you to do you.

## 6. Compress your videos after exporting them in HD

I love nothing more than grainy, low-resolution videos that create a pixelized version of my family and friends that I can pitch to museums as modern art...NOT.

Nobody starts off wanting to produce low-quality images. Much the opposite, everyone wants 4K quality streamed to everyone across the world and including the top of Everest.

The issue with this should be obvious; the better the resolution, the bigger the file, the better the connection needs to be in order to watch, stream, or download it in a reasonable amount of time.

We can't control the internet speeds of our viewers, but we can do our best with what we can control. Export your videos in the highest quality possible, then compress them. This provides the highest quality from your end at the fastest speed.

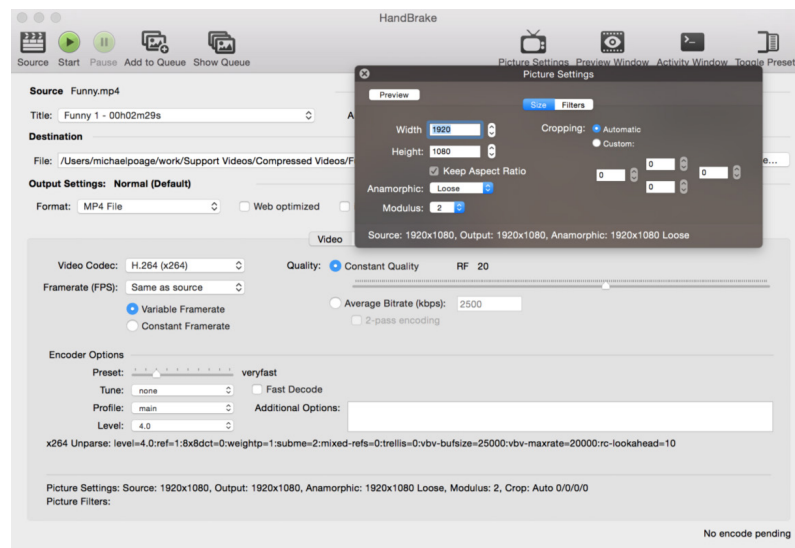
At Teachable, we've compressed a 54GB video to just 25MB! This download works lightyears faster, and when compared the quality side-by-side, it

was hardly noticeable in our ScreenFlow.

We use Handbrake because it is free and we've never had issues with it, but feel free to use another program if you have a preference. For a guide on Handbrake, check out their wiki.

### Notes on using Handbrake

1. Remove cropping that may have been applied in the picture settings



2. Set the output format to mp4

With these 6 tips in mind, you can dramatically increase the quality of your work and decrease the time it takes to create it without spending more money or changing it's look and feel. #winning

CHAPTER



# Screencasts

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## A quick & dirty walk through of the essential things you need to know to create screencasts

Screencasts are a staple of online course creation. As mentioned, they record what's happening on your screen, which is essential for some type of courses.

To record screencasts, we suggest using ScreenFlow for Mac and Camtasia for PC. These aren't free, but they are what we use and one of the first things you'll want to invest in. Also, we know there are tons of other options. If you're already using something, feel free to stick with it or use another program. These are simply our suggestions.

With Screenflow, you can simply record what's happening on screen, or you can also engage the camera lense on your laptop that will film you talking about what's happening. This is one of our favorite content types. It blends the benefits of engaging talking head videos with those of slides, which help students learn.

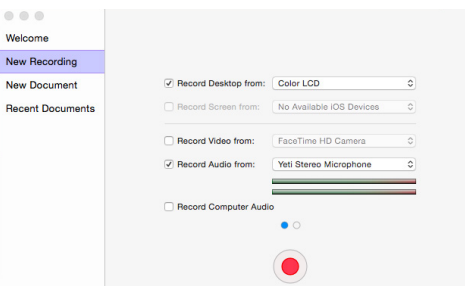
Using Screenflow is easy. Once you've downloaded the application (and you'll get multiple licensing codes so it's possible to share the program with other

course creators or partners) simply open the program and set your preferences. When everything is set, hit the red button to start recording. The countdown timer will pop up. You can simplify your life by starting your PowerPoint or Keynote presentation at this time - it just means less editing on the backend.

In fact, I've seen people like our CEO start their presentation at the exact time of recording and give one perfect take and stop the recording (use apple + shift +2) and have a perfect video ready to upload into a course. #goals

For me, I generally redo my intro 2-3 times and then finally feel a flow and create a video where I only have to clip the intro BUT you can totally mess up, pause, and start again and edit it out later using our video editing tips from above.

Once your video ends, it will pop up in the video editing software you selected, this was iMovie for me. From here, you can proceed to edit your videos and export them into files and upload them into your course. Don't miss the batch export option which can save you time if you're uploading a bunch of videos at once aka all the video lectures for a section.



CHAPTER



# Interviews

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## *Create killer interviews that promote themselves that you can go on to repurpose into multiple pieces of content.*

Interviews are incredible. A one hour interview can fuel multiple blog posts, social shares and case studies, and work as an entire lecture in your course. They also provide an opportunity for natural co-promotion. Plus, they can be pretty fun.

Fun?? Maybe the idea of sitting down with someone you don't know to talk for an hour sounds terrible. That's perfectly normal too.

Which is why, I'm going to give you all of the steps you need to conduct your first or fiftieth interview complete with a list of downloadable resources to reliably record your conversations...most of them free. I'll also give you a list of ways you can repurpose your interview into multiple pieces of content and a few ideas for promotion. #win

### **1. Find the Right Influential Interviewee**

When trying to decide who to interview, find someone who is insightful, influential and attainable.

**INSIGHTFUL:** When brainstorming possible people to contact, have an end goal in mind. Do you want to show how the average person uses your product? Do you want to speak with a someone who has expertise and is interesting to your Twitter followers. Choose the according people. Try to select someone who is going to add to the

existing conversation. Who is inspiring others? Who's a mover and shaker that can share something you and your audience don't already know?

**INFLUENTIAL:** Consider your interviewee's audience size. Since you're taking the time to interview someone and going to use their words on your own online properties, think about how this person can help promote your resulting content. Consider their social following and check out the numbers on their press kit. While these are most likely inflated, they'll at least put you in the ballpark of what's accurate.

**ATTAINABLE:** Also think about who is an attainable interview. When do you need content out by? Who is going to get back to you in time to meet that deadline? It's awesome to have stretch goals and that one ideal person that might do an interview with you next November, but in the meantime, you need content NOW. Find someone who is willing to work with you in the short term.

### **2. Pitch an Influencer on Doing an Interview with you**

So you've got your dream someone in mind and you've got to get them to agree to speak with you. As soon as you've narrowed down your interviewee, email them to set up conversation. You might be best friends with someone, but it's always

possible that they're out of town for a week or slammed at work and won't be able to accommodate your request. You need to know this ASAP, especially if you need to put out content by a certain date and/or time.

Your pitch for a potential interview will, obviously, vary by how well you know someone.

Jon Haws (NRSNG.com) includes data of how often his podcast is downloaded (40K/per month) in his cold pitches. Keep things short, simple and to-the-point. If you have data that proves how an interview could benefit your interviewee's audience, it can be helpful to include. Just don't get too pitchy.

Check out the Resource Toolkit for a few examples of our own pitches.

### 3. Essential Research to Prep for the Interview

Ever seen an old friend, asked them how their girlfriend/wife is only to find out they've split up? It's awkward. Avoid this by doing research on your interviewee prior to your conversation. The research I do has three parts.

#### 1. Research the topic and the person's role in the field so you can ask relevant questions

- Check out their LinkedIn
- Read through their personal website
- Google search their name & company

#### 2. Research the industry news around what they're doing

- Google their topic
- Search the "news" tab in Google
- Check out links within their personal website

#### 3. Research a bit of personal information

- Read what you can on their Facebook
- Talk to mutual friends if it's a high leverage interview
- Check out what they're Tweeting
- Find a picture of them so you don't walk into a cafe and walk past them (done that, and it does NOT go well)

Having something personal to show that you care. Consider this, it makes a much better impression to jump on a call and ask someone about the heat streak running through Dallas than just: How's the weather where you are?

It also shows you're smart and did your research if you can ask specific and unique questions about their product and company.

## 4. Create Great Questions to Improve Your Interview Flow

Doing research will also help you prepare your questions. You want to ask both general and specific questions about what your person does in relation to the topic as well as logical and emotional questions so that your story incorporates feelings and facts. You'll also want the questions to flow in a logical order.

### *Let's break it down.*

You don't have to write it down, but you do want to start with a bit of small talk that relates to your interviewee's life. That's why you did the research on them in the first place. It will make both of you less nervous and give you a chance to turn up volume on microphones or fix bugs in the recording. Simple things, like "I see you're a UK basketball fan" or "How's the weather in Florida" are going to get both of you warmed up.

Continue to a broad question that relates to the start of their journey before getting into specifics. For example, when I interview course creators, the first thing I ask is "How did you get into teaching?" Also try, "How did you think of the idea that led you to starting the company?"

Then move into specifics and be prepared to generate questions on the spot to get to the unique aspects of the story. For instance, if you're asking someone how they create homebrew, they might tell you how they produce higher and lower ABVS (alcohol by volume aka strength). But hopefully, you've done a bit of research and know how it's calculated in the UK versus US and can ask which standard they use and why. These are the juicy details that your general audience won't know but will want to!

I always end with something light and broad leaving an interviewee room to answer from the heart about an otherwise detailed topic. For example, if you had one piece of advice to give to someone like you, what would it be?

Below you can see an example of the questions I use when interviewing our Teachable instructors.

My goal for this particular interview was to dig into how a successful instructor created a course. I wanted to discover something unique they might have done that would work well for an informational blog post. I wanted to ask why they used our product so that I could create a case study, produce marketable testimonials and figure out if there are any pain points that I should bring up in internal discussion.

## Lead In

- Small talk (I did a bit of research on Jon's background and asked about it)
- Say thanks (I thanked Jon for doing the interview)
- How I will use it (People like to know what you are going to do with their words. Tell them and keep your promises)
- Say, "we're starting" (People also like to know when they go "on record." Be respectful and acknowledge when the official interview is starting)

## Actual Interview

- Warm up questions**
1. What's your background in relation to nursing and the NCLEX (broad general question)
  2. Why did you decide to create NRSNG.com (not too intimidating to answer)
- Product questions**  
(Pinpoint issues/ competitive advantage)
3. Did you look at other platforms besides Fedora? (super beneficial to know)
  4. What made you choose us?
  5. First steps in creating your course (getting into technical details)
    - EXPAND
  6. Did you feel like an authority in your industry? (asking about common barrier to entry to help focus our marketing efforts)
  7. Did you presell?
  8. Do you use content giveaway?
  9. Did you use an email launch?
  10. How did you price?
  11. How did you drive conversion?
  12. How did you build community?
  13. Your course is beautiful - what importance do you place on visuals? (came from doing research on Jon)
  14. Any marketing tips/tactics?
  15. Are you growing and how do you plan to continue?
  16. What results have you seen?
    - Profits
    - Qualitative
  17. Going to continue to teach online?
- Meat of the interview to create a blog post from**
- Industry questions/ Potential second blog post**
18. Let's talk about standardized testing as a whole... do you think it's important? (getting bigger than a specific topic to see if there's anything interesting to ask about)
  19. How do you hope to change for those in nursing? Why?
  20. Do you think you're doing that?
- Closing questions**  
(Leave on a good note)
21. Something you wish you did differently in your course?
  22. Any problems with Fedora?
  23. 1 piece of advice for other online teachers (end on something fluffy)

While this seems like a lot of questions, the full interview lasted just over 45 minutes. Keep things moving and don't take up too much of someone else's time. Respect.

### Pro tip:

When writing your questions, make sure they're not phrased to be answered with a "yes" or a "no", or that's all people will say.

### Example:

Q: Do you use marketing techniques? A: Yes.  
Q: What kind of marketing techniques do you use?  
A: Well, I use x, y, z because...

One elicits a much more detailed response than the other. Add these to any detailed question and/or response: So what? Why? What's your opinion on this?

**Also, there are two killer questions you should use if you are conducting a case study focused on why someone chose your product:**

1. How did using [our product] help you achieve your mission?
2. What was that "ah-ha" moment that made you chose [our product]?

Trust me, you're going to get a stand-out pull quote and testimonial from both of these.

## 5. Don't Mess Up the Interview... Find A Quiet Location

This sounds very simple, but many people forget how important a good location is. Don't pick a cafe that's loud and you'll never get a seat at. Don't pick an environment that's too sterile. You want a loca-

tion that is warm enough to invite conversation, but quiet enough to conduct an interview.

This might give you a good excuse to read a few blogs on nice cafes in your neighborhood! If my interview is over the phone or Skype and I'm doing it in office, I book a phone booth or conference room immediately after the time is confirmed. We're business people, we know how weird people get about conference rooms. It's like a modern episode of Seinfeld every time a meeting goes over 5 minutes or when someone nabs your conference room and refuses to leave. George would be fuming.

## 6. Come Prepared to Conduct the Interview With These Tools

As important as asking the right questions, you've got to bring the right tools to record your interview, otherwise it was pretty much an embarrassing waste of time for you and the person you're interviewing. Apologies for the bluntness, but I want to be honest with you.

Imagine an hour long interview with a huge influencer that gave great quotes that you just... lost. This kind of conversation cannot be replicated and it's going to end up making a lot more work for you and everyone else involved while burning an important contact.

So, prepare yourself. PREPARE PREPARE PREPARE. Call me a Girlscout, because I'm coming to an interview ready.

### ***My checklist includes:***

- Technology set up to record the conversation
- A backup plan in case that fails
- My questions pulled up on screen
- Pen and paper for notes to self
- A laptop charger
- Headphones
- A phone in case everything falls apart and I need to call my interviewee or have a co-worker help with something

I'm also getting to the location AT LEAST ten minutes before the interview so I'm set up.

Now, maybe you're wondering what the best way to record a conversation is. I've done quite a bit of research on the best tools out there (and they're mostly FREE!), and am happy to share to save you time. Download my sheet of resources for a face-to-face, audio and video interview below from our resource guide.

## 7. What to Focus on During the Interview

While I had a clearly organized and chronological set of questions, the actual interview varied quite drastically from the flow I imagined. This is expected. You have to find the line between pushing the interview in the right direction and letting conversation flow.

A good way to make this happen is to set expectations at the start of the interview. Communicate why you are conducting the interview so your interviewee is aware of your goal. They may completely disregard it, but at least it's out there.

I have one great trick for making sure I ask everything necessary. I start out by highlighting all the questions on my WordDoc in yellow and switching them to plain text as they are answered. This helps me easily see what I still have left to ask and what has already been answered.

I also live in the silence. Ok, that's not as creepy as it sounds. Psychologically speaking, people feel uncomfortable with silence, so if you let a pause go, your subject will try to fill it. That's where the good stuff is. I come from a journalism background where I sometimes I knew people were lying to me in my interviews and this was a small tactic I used to help uncover inconsistencies. While this tactic probably isn't necessary in marketing interviews, it's a good thing to know and do regardless.

People are much more genuine and honest when speaking off the cuff and rapidly instead of in prepared answers to your listed questions. Try it and you'll be surprised by what you learn. NEVER EVER cut your subject off.

## 8. Grow Your Relationship by Following Up

A good interview isn't complete without a follow up that's going to build a relationship with your interviewee. Within 12 hours of the interview, send an email saying thanks. If possible, give a timeline of when related content might go live.

Also be sure to plant the seed for cross promotion by asking if they have any online properties they would like linked in an article. You don't have to do this, but I think it's good form if someone is going out of their way to speak with you. This also generates a feeling of reciprocity that encourages your subject to promote your work on their own properties. More on that in Step 10.

## 9. Create Multiple Pieces of Killer Content From a Single Interview

Now comes the fun part and the point of all of this...create some great content. You've got a juicy interview with direct quotes and hopefully a few new insights. One tip I've learned is to pick a very small segment of the interview to build a post around. Think about it, if you're trying to encompass and explain everything discussed in an hour long interview, your post is going to be huge, scattered and trying to cover so many topics that it's not going to be good.

Instead, pick a small topic that makes the interviewee unique and build a blog post out of the special thing they did. For instance, when our Teachable CEO, Ankur Nagpal interviewed Nat Eliason about how he built his course earning 48K in one month, the interview was over an hour long. It discussed the course creation from start to finish...exhaustively.

However, the blog post I wrote from it was how Nat used Slack to build his online community. I only included a 7-minute clip of the interview. That post is our best performing post and over 200 people have listened to the audio clip.

Remember, one interview DOES NOT mean one blog post. You can repurpose the interview into multiple pieces of content. For instance:

### ***One interview should be able to generate:***

- 1-2 blog posts
  - 5-8 Tweets/post = 10-16 Tweets total (pulled from the post headline, lead, key points, etc.)
  - 3-4 Facebook posts = 6-8 posts total
2. Case study on why to use your product
3. Homepage worthy testimonials
4. Content upgrade
  - If you've noticed at Fedora, we try to include a beneficial resource in all of our blog posts that gives actionable resources to those who read our stuff. An audio interview can be sent as a content upgrade
5. Auditory/visual content that can work in a short stand alone piece
  - The live interview can work as it's own blog post, or as a very strong piece of visual content within a longer form beefy piece
6. Evidence/Research in other posts

Think about it. With Jon Haws and NRSNG.com, our **one 47-minute interview generated:**

1. First Blog Post: Podcasts (chosen from one small unique thing that Jon did in his course creation process)
2. Second Blog Post: A general how-to post/transcription
  - Information for an infographic
3. Case study
4. Numerous Tweets
5. 6 Facebook Posts
6. Content upgrade from audio content
7. Testimonial for homepage
8. Research for this post
9. Information for an infographic

YES! This is a great way to make your content work for you rather than you working for content. While I'd love to take credit for this mentality, this mindset was brought to my attention by Ann Handley and C.C. Chapman in their book *Content Rules*. As they say:

"View all of the pieces of content you plan to create as expression of a single bigger idea. Or, alternatively—if you are starting with something larger like a white paper or e-book—thing about how you can create smaller chunks of sharable content from that single content asset."

I love this. It's efficient while being in depth, good for an audience and yourself.

One thing I'd like to discuss is timing. Try to space out the dates on which you publish posts resulting from the same interview... if possible. It's a bit weird to have a huge customer base and only talk about one for a few weeks straight.

Do what you can. Some content is better than no content.

## 10. Co-Promote Your New Content

One of the biggest reasons why you should conduct interviews is how naturally they lend themselves to cross-promotion.

Our online teachers are trying to avoid being seen as "salesy" at all costs. I love hearing this from our customers, because we feel the same way at Teachable. We run from internet marketing hacks and cheap ways to make money that aren't sustainable or ethical.

As such, cross promotion should feel like a natural meeting of minds. That's what an interview is. You and another influencer exchanging ideas about an industry, talking about the things that matter.

When the interview is done, hopefully you will mention your interviewees online properties and you might possibly email your list about a blog post based on the interview. Hopefully, this doesn't come just as a favor, but rather because you believe in their content.

The benefit to you is that hopefully they feel the same and are willing to help promote your work. This can be a huge benefit to you. If you're interviewing the right people, they might mention your product, link to you, or even help promote a deal you're giving to their email list/Twitter followers/blog readers. This can spur hundred, maybe even thousands, of new views and clicks on your own website/product.

As a tip, if you have a good relationship with the person you've interviewed, ask for those mentions very clearly. Also, ask what they might say so you can prepare your site. You wouldn't want to be mentioned on a huge mailing list on the same day

you decide to revamp your website, right?

Be aware and prepare.

There are hundreds of various partnerships and cross promotion methods, but a few of the simplest are:

1. Have the person you interviewed send the post to their email list with links (and maybe even a CTA) to your website/product
2. Offer a discount to your interviewees audience on your own product
3. Make social media work! Tweet at them when a post goes live and hopefully they will retweet and tweet on their own as well

*You can find a few examples where I ask for help promoting a recent piece of content in the resource guide.*

## CONCLUSION

As we close the door on this final chapter and you go off into the world to create content, I want to remind you of one thing and one thing only: done is better than perfect.

While I more than anyone crave high quality content, I've seen far too many people get bogged down in small details on a small piece of content within a big course and fail to move forward. Daily, I get emails asking what color background should be used in video, what font on a slide or what question to ask in an interview. While I just answered all of these questions for you, I urge you to move forward. Take your best guess and go.

At the end of the day, your audience wants a transformation in their life, they want the knowledge you have to share and delaying that information because of a typo on slide 3 in an already uploaded video is only hurting your students and yourself.

You have at your fingertips, this ebook, weekly posts from the [Teachable blog](#), resources, webinars and a support site of technical help. You can do this. You will do this!

*Happy creating!*



teachable

# FREE WORKSHOP

## 7 Steps to Launch Your Own Profitable Online Course



### WANT MORE?

Learn how to easily create your own online school (and start teaching THIS WEEK) with our FREE live trainings. They include a live Q&A at the end for any question you may have and special *deals you won't find on our website.*

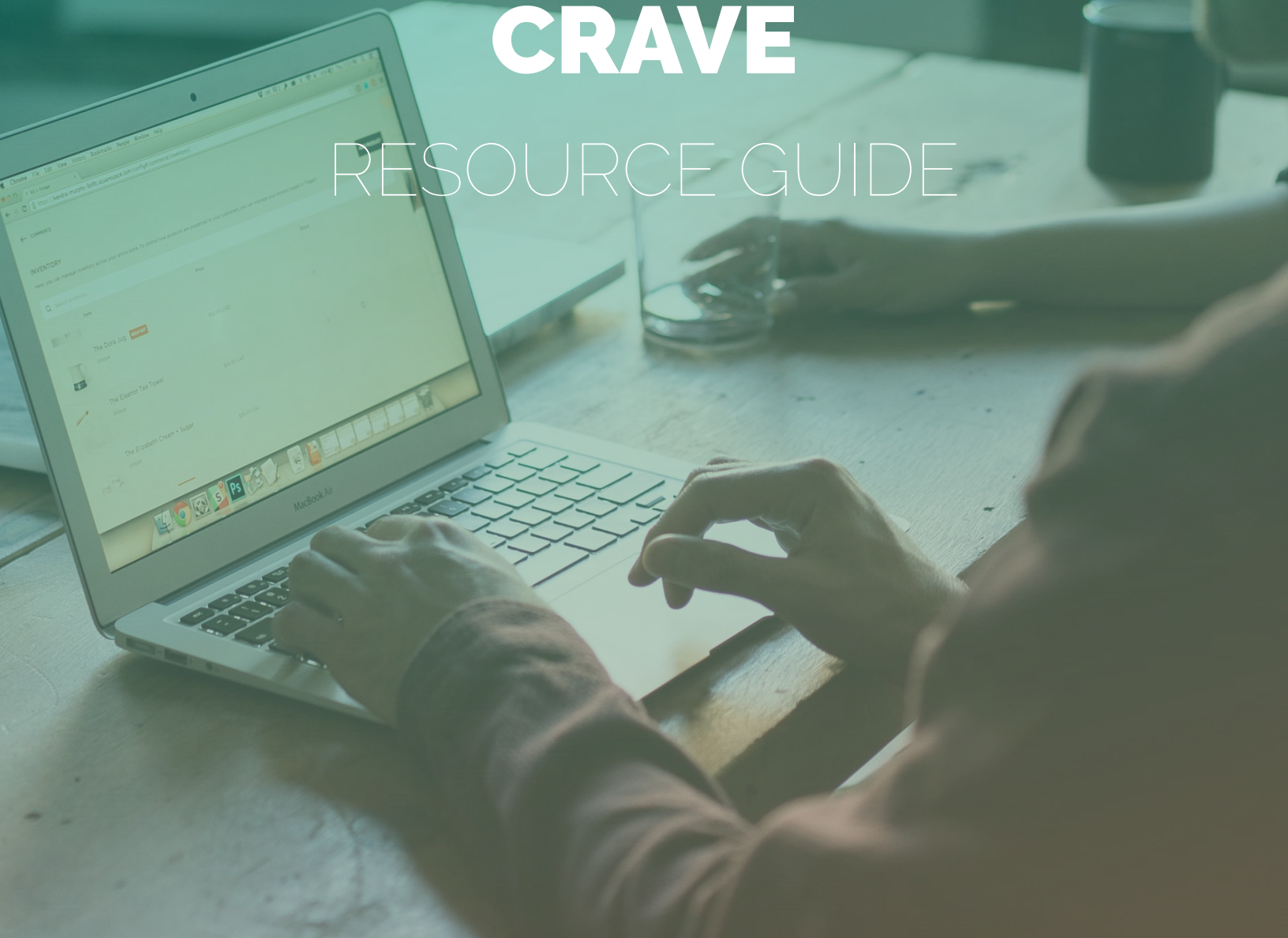
**SIGN UP HERE**

teachable

IT'S TEACHABLE

# CREATE COURSE CONTENT STUDENTS CRAVE

RESOURCE GUIDE



## WHAT YOU GET

1. How to structure your online course
2. Example course outlines
3. Stock photo websites
4. Free downloadable slide templates link
5. Video shopping list
6. DIY video setup infographic
7. Pitch email swipe copy
8. Interview questions
9. Interview resources

# 1. HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR ONLINE COURSE

## Creating your course outline

Write down a step by step outline of everything that someone would need to do in order to get their desired outcome. It's a HOW TO to get your students to their desired outcome.

Break into 6-12 steps

**EACH STEP BECOMES YOUR MODULES!** To create a module...

Module 1 = First Step from Above

Module 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Video lecture

*(Use Keynote/PowerPoint to create slides and Camtasia (PC) or ScreenFlow (Mac) to record your content. There are other options available, these are just our favorite.)*

Additional resources? *(Choose the resource that you want to use for the module)*

- 1.) Interviews      2.) Case studies      3.) Tools list      4.) Worksheet/Cheat sheets

## 2. EXAMPLE COURSE OUTLINES

### Example snippet of outline layout

2. Course topic **(Ashley)**
  - a. X Myths to course creation
    - i. Expert myth
    - ii. **Profitable topics** (hard and soft)
    - iii. Don't focus on what's trending
      1. It's about connecting your skills with the market
    - iv. Competition
      1. Means it's good
  - b. What is a course?
    - i. Outcome based
    - ii. Shortcut to an outcome
    - iii. Transformation
  - c. Topic brainstorm
    - i. General: passions, know about, done
    - ii. Shortlist - 1-2 topic ideas
    - iii. **Pain WS - to validate idea**
      1. keyword, google trends
      2. Reddit, online discussion boards
      3. ADV: Mariah and using old blog posts
    - iv. If you can't find an audience, change your course
    - v. Come up with your **specific topic and transformation: TYPE IT**
      1. **This your offer**
    - vi. **Don't worry about specific titling yet (discussing in module 5!)**
    - vii. **ACTION STEPS!**
      1. come up with specific topic & transformation
      2. share
3. Create your **mini offer (Andrew, Assisting: Conrad)**
  - a. How courses make money
    - i. Traffic
      1. We'll discuss this next - how to get and grow your list
    - ii. Funnel
    - iii. Product
      1. create a mini offer
  - b. What is a mini offer / lead magnet
    - i. should relate to course // line up with idea you want to pursue
    - ii. Overview of types of different offers
      1. You can reuse for your actual course
      2. Worksheet
        - a. Tools, cheat sheet, done for you calendar, checklist
        - b. give examples
          - i. what mariah used/melyssa g, jon haws other ppl
        - c. **template on how to create one (how to create a worksheet - done for you)**

## 2. EXAMPLE COURSE OUTLINES

### When writing your content, include:

- Intro each section with a video that lists outcomes & goals from the section
- Script for each module & lecture
- Type of video each lecture will be
- Slide content for each lecture bulleted out slide by slide (google doc format ok)
- Worksheet content
- Other cheatsheets/calendars/spreadsheets, etc
- Links to other resources that can help them (blog posts, other sites, etc.)
- Any extra tech tutorials that come up that we missed

### Example titling document layout

TITLE NOW	FINAL TITLE	Person doing this lecture	Length of lecture (mins)	Production (screenflow, vid. w/slides, etc)
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>			
1. Boom! Introduction to the Profitable Teacher	Boom! Introduction To The Profitable Teacher	Conrad (Plus Teachable)	5	
2. Story behind Teachable	Story Behind Teachable	Conrad, Ankur	5	Talking head
3. Who this course is for:	Who This Course Is For	Conrad	5	Talking head w/ slides
4. Benefits of creating your own online course business	Benefits Of Creating Your Own Online Course Business	Conrad	5	Talking head w/ slides
6. Why you should charge more	Why You Should Charge More	Conrad	10	Talking head w/ slides
7. The Profitable Teacher Method to Launching Courses	The Profitable Teacher Method To Launching Courses	Conrad	5	Talking head w/ slides
8. Legal and ethical considerations for creating online courses	Legal & Ethical Considerations	Conrad	3	Talking head w/ slides
9. Create a support system so you follow through	Create Your Support System	Conrad	5	Talking head w/ slides
<b>TECH TUTORIALS</b>	<b>TECH TUTORIALS</b>			
Tools and our set up to make the technology side much easier [?]	Tech Tutorial: Course Tools & Technology			Screenflow or text based
<b>MODULE 1: Find Your Profitable Topic</b>	<b>MODULE 1: Find Your Profitable Topic</b>			
1. Introduction	Introduction	Ashley	2	Talking head w/ slides
2. What is A Course?	Course Theory	Ashley	3	Talking head w/ slides
3. Expert Myth	The Expert Myth	Ashley	3	Talking head w/ slides
4. Trend Myth & Competition Myth	The Trend & Competition Myth	Ashley	3	Talking head w/ slides
5. Profitable Topics Myth	The Profitable Topics Myth	Ashley	3	Talking head w/ slides
6. BRAINSTORMING POSSIBLE IDEAS TO TEACH	Let's Brainstorm Possible Ideas For You To Teach	Ryan	5	Talking head w/ slides
7. VALIDATING YOUR INITIAL PROFITABLE COURSE IDEA	How To Validate Your Initial Idea	Ryan	6	Talking head w/ slides
8. WHAT TO DO IF YOU CAN'T FIND YOUR AUDIENCE	What To Do If You Can't Find Your Audience	Ryan	2	Talking head w/ slides
<b>TECH TUTORIALS</b>	<b>TECH TUTORIALS</b>			
ad words	How to Use Adwords to Research Demand For Your Topic	Conrad		
Bonus Lesson: USING PERFECT INFORMATION MARKETPLACES TO BEST YOUR COMPETITION	Using Perfect Marketplaces To Best Your Competition	Ryan	5	Screenflow
<b>MODULE 2: Develop Your Lead Magnet</b>	<b>MODULE 2</b>			
Introduction	Introduction	Andrew	3	Talking Head
1. Intro: How Courses Actually Make Money	How Online Courses Actually Make Money	Andrew	7	Talking head w/ slides
2. The "Foolproof" Lead Magnet Checklist	The "Perfect Lead Magnet" Checklist	Andrew	5	Talking head w/ slides
3. Lead Magnet #1: Checklists!	Lead Magnet #1: The "Checklist"	Andrew	10	Talking head w/ slides
4. Lead Magnet #2: Done for you (cheatsheets, handouts, workbooks)	Lead Magnet #2: Done-For-You Giveaways (Handouts, Workbooks & Cheatsheets)	Andrew	10	Talking head w/ slides
5. Lead Magnet #3: The "Toolkit" or "Resource Guide"	Lead Magnet #3: The "Toolkit" or "Resource Guide"	Andrew	10	Talking head w/ slides

### 3. STOCK PHOTO WEBSITES



unsplash.com



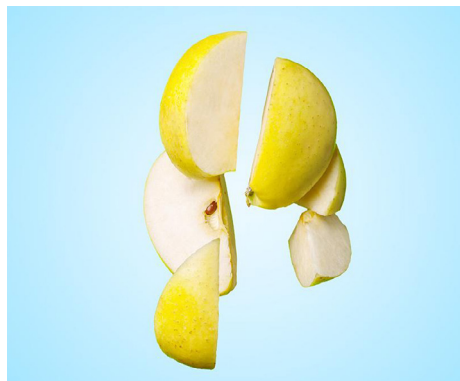
gratisography.com



deathtothestockphoto.com



negativespace.co



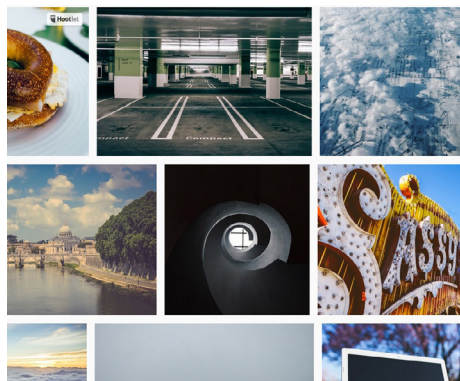
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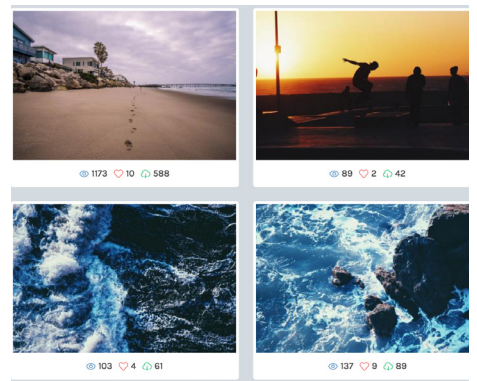
lifeofpix.com



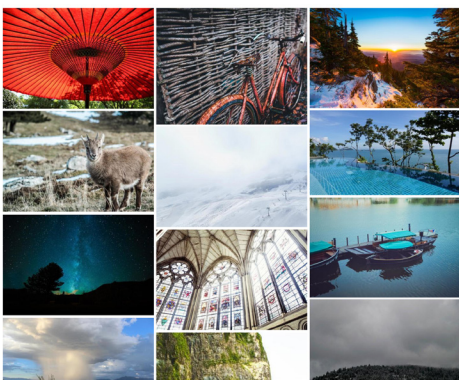
startupstockphotos.com



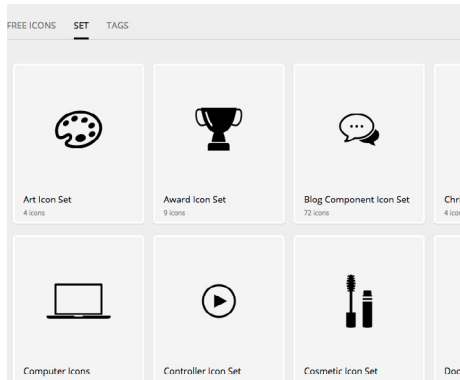
pexels.com



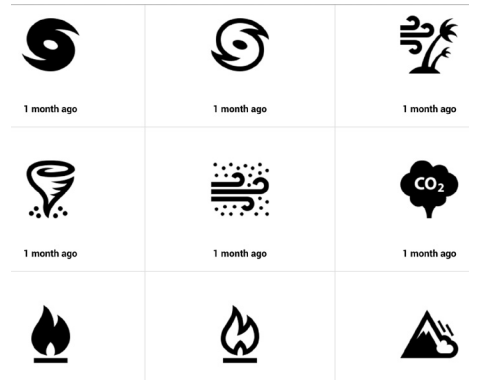
stocksnap.io



finda.photo



endlessicons.com



iconmonstr.com

## 4. FREE DOWNLOADABLE SLIDE TEMPLATES



**GET THEM NOW**



## 5. VIDEO PRODUCTION SETUPS & SHOPPING LIST

### Choose your video studio set up






See next pages for details & links

Any of these products can be mixed and matched to create your own perfect in home studio.

	<b>\$56 Studio</b> (\$56)	<b>"Profitable Teacher"</b> (\$2013)	<b>Full Studio</b> (\$2060)
 Camera	iPhone with Filmic Pro app (\$7)	Nikon D610 Body Only (\$1500) Nikon D610 (\$550)	Canon L1 (\$550)
 Sound Kit	Second iPhone with Voice Memos app (\$0, any blankets, pillows or cushions (\$0)	Blue Yeti Microphone with included USB cable (\$129)	Advanced sound kit (\$740)
 Tripod	Mini-tripod (\$20) and Joby Grip Tight Mount (\$20)	Tripod (\$20)	Tripod (\$20)
 Backdrop Kit	Dark bed sheet (\$0) and Duct Tape (\$6)	CowboyStudio Black Backdrop (\$54) and Duct Tape (\$6)	Backdrop kit (\$154)
 Light Kit	Natural light (\$0)	Amazon Lighting kit (\$100 - \$150)	3-Point Lighting kit (\$600)


## 5. VIDEO PRODUCTION SETUPS & SHOPPING LIST

### \$56 Studio Set Up

	Equipment	Price	Link (All sites below are linked)
 Camera	Filmic Pro app	\$7.99	<a href="#">iTunes</a>
 Sound Kit	Second iPhone with Voice Memos app	\$0	PRO TIP: Use blankets, pillows or futon cushions to pad the room to help with echo
 Tripod	Manfrotto MTPIXI-B PIXI Mini Tripod, Black	\$24.88	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Joby GripTight Mount	\$16.92	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Backdrop Kit	Dark bed sheet	\$0	
	Scotch Duct Tape, Quatrefoil, 1.88-Inch x 10-Yard	\$6.22	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Light Kit	Natural light	\$0	PRO TIP: Face a window while filming to get the best result
TOTAL PACKAGE COST: \$56.01			






## 5. VIDEO PRODUCTION SETUPS & SHOPPING LIST

### “The Profitable Teacher” Studio Set Up

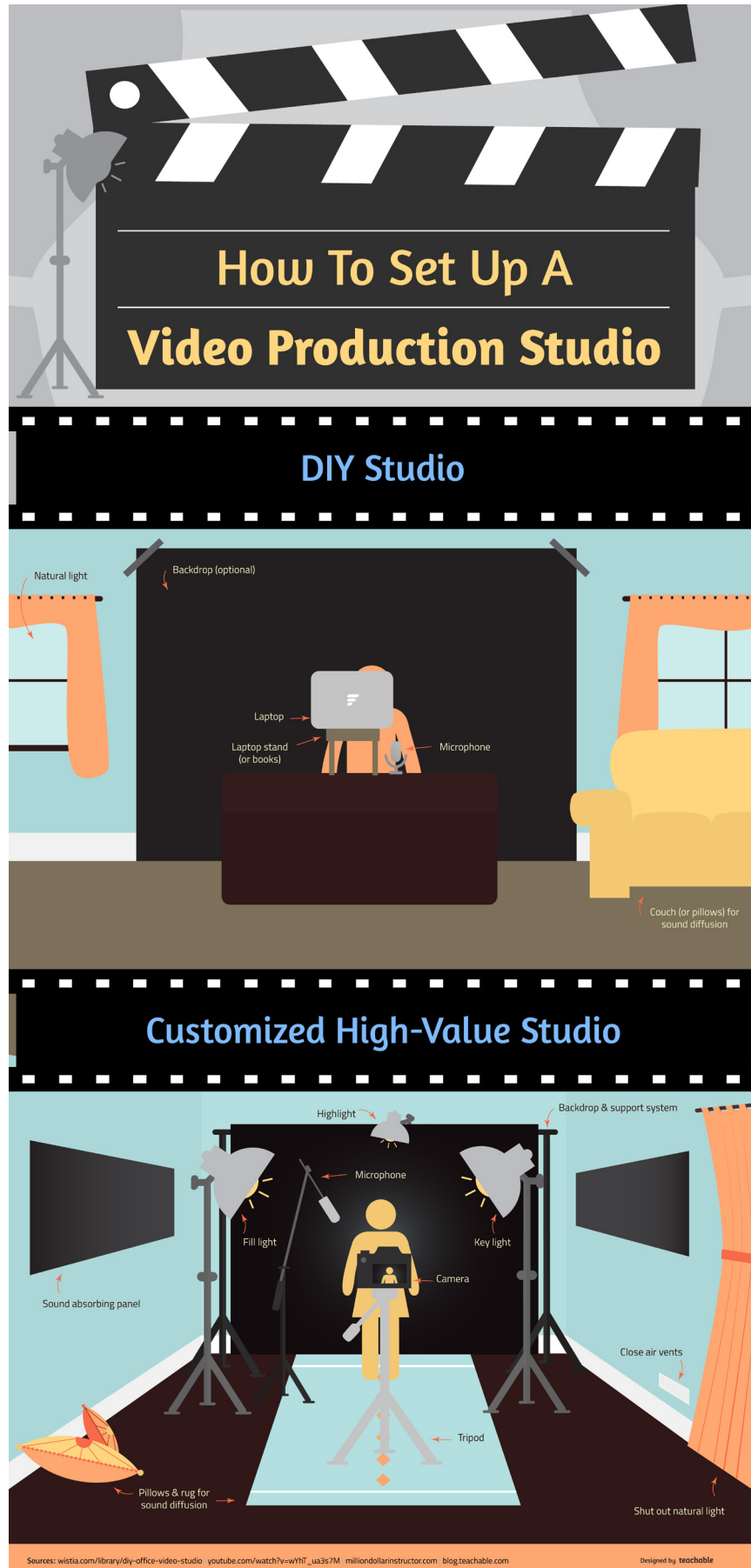
	Equipment	Price	Link (All sites below are linked)
 Camera	Nikon D610 24.3 MP CMOS FX-Format Digital SLR Camera (Body Only)	\$1496.95	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Nikon 50mm f/1.8G Auto Focus-S NIKKOR FX Lens	\$216.95	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Sound Kit	Blue Microphones Yeti USB Microphone - Silver	\$129	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Tripod	Ravelli Tripod	\$21.96	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Backdrop Kit	Backdrop & support included in light kit below		
 Light Kit	LimoStudio Photo Video Studio Light Kit	\$149	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
TOTAL PACKAGE COST: \$2,013.86			

## 5. VIDEO PRODUCTION SETUPS & SHOPPING LIST

### Full Studio Set Up

	Equipment	Price	Link (All sites below are linked)
 Camera	Canon SL1 Camera 18-55mm STM + 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III Lens Bundle (Black)	\$549	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Zoom H4N Handy Portable Digital Recorder	\$199.99	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Sound Kit	Eggsnow Camera Universal Microphone Shockmount Holder Clip	\$10.99	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	RODE WSVM Pop Filter/Wind Shield	\$11.99	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Rode NTG2 Condenser Shotgun Microphone	\$220.99	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Cavision 3 Section 1.5m Mixed Fiber Boom Pole	\$94.95	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Goliton Microphone boom pole holder	\$21.95	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Impact Air Cushioned Light Stand, Black-10' (3m)	\$54.32	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	XLR Audio Cable - M to F (25')	\$14.99	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Acoustimac Sound Absorbing Acoustic Panel DMD 4' x 2' x 2" WHITE (x2)	\$109.98	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Tripod	Ravelli Tripod	\$21.96	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
 Backdrop Kit	CowboyStudio Black Backdrop 10 x 12 FT	\$53.75	<a href="#">Amazon</a>
	Impact Background Support System - 12' Wide	\$99.99	<a href="#">B&amp;H</a>
 Light Kit	Flolight KIT-FL-110HM3 3-Point Lighting Kit	\$599	<a href="#">B&amp;H</a>
<b>TOTAL PACKAGE COST: \$2,063.85</b>			

# 6. DIY VIDEO SETUP INFOGRAPHIC



## 7. PITCH EMAIL SWIPE COPY

### To Neil Patel:

Hi Neil,

I love the way you format your newsletters. It's repeatable, quick, to the point and always links to valuable content. I've actually featured some of your content here.

I run the blog over at Teachable (we help people teach online) and want to include a screenshot of 1 of your newsletters as an example for our course creators. Do you mind? Of course I'll be linking to your properties and citing you.

Let me know!

Thanks,  
Ashley

### To Nathalie Lussier:

Hi Nathalie,

I wanted to reach out because I recently included your post 38 Things No One Talks About When Launching An Online Course.

I work at Teachable where we help people create online courses (go figure!). We recently launched a weekly roundup newsletter curating the best of the best pieces of content to help people escape the 9-5 - and yours was one of them!

Because our audience is so interested in courses, your post should have seen close to a hundred extra views (and counting).

You can check out the mention here: <http://makechangeweekly.com/> Since we're new, a tweet or backlink would go a long way, but no pressure.

Thanks for the awesome article, it was truly spot on!

Cheers!  
Ashley

### To Elle at Wonderfelle World

Hi Elle,

We met just before the holidays at the Teachable Happy Hour with Mariah Coz and you told me about your course and website. Well, here I am 2 months later launching Make Change Weekly (Teachable's new weekly roundup newsletter) and I thought of you!

I featured your article on pitching bloggers in our first newsletter as one of our favorite and highest quality pieces of content.

You can check it out here: <http://makechangeweekly.com/>! Since we're new, a tweet or backlink would go a long way - but most of all, what do you think?!

Hope you and Mochi are well!

Best,  
Ashley

### To Courtney at Buffer:

Hi Courtney,

I wanted to send a quick note because I read your article on Buffer: The Psychology of Selfies. I found it fresh and insightful and used your stats in a recent article.

I know you're extremely busy, but would you mind if I sent you over a link? I paired your research with stats from Jeff Bullas to make a hypothesis about faces and welcome emails and would love your POV.

No pressure, I know you're busy. At Fedora, we're reading Buffer pretty much every day and wouldn't want to slow that down. :-)

Cheers!  
Ashley

# 8. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Lead in

- Small talk (I did a bit of research on Jon's background and asked about it)
- Say thanks (I thanked Jon for doing the interview)
- How I will use it (People like to know what you are going to do with their words. Tell them and keep your promises)
- Say, "we're starting" (People also like to know when they go "on record." Be respectful and acknowledge when the official interview is starting)

## Actual interview

### Warm up questions

- 1. What's your background in relation to nursing and the NCLEX (broad general question)
- 2. Why did you decide to create NRSNG.com (not too intimidating to answer)

### Product questions (Pinpoint issues/ competitive advantage)

- 3. Did you look at other platforms besides Teachable? (super beneficial to know)
- 4. What made you choose us?
- 5. First steps in creating your course (getting into technical details)
  - EXPAND
- 6. Did you feel like an authority in your industry? (asking about common barrier to entry to help focus our marketing efforts)
- 7. Did you presell?
- 8. Do you use content giveaway?
- 9. Did you use an email launch?
- 10. How did you price?
- 11. How did you drive conversion?
- 12. How did you build community?
- 13. Your course is beautiful - what importance do you place on visuals? (came from doing research on Jon)
- 14. Any marketing tips/tactics?
- 15. Are you growing and how do you plan to continue?
- 16. What results have you seen?
  - Profits
  - Qualitative
- 17. Going to continue to teach online?

### Meat of the interview to create a blog post from

### Industry questions/ Potential second blog post

- 18. Let's talk about standardized testing as a whole... do you think it's important? (getting bigger than a specific topic to see if there's anything interesting to ask about)
- 19. How do you hope to change for those in nursing? Why?
- 20. Do you think you're doing that?

### Closing questions (Leave on a good note)

- 21. Something you wish you did differently in your course?
- 22. Any problems with Teachable?
- 23. 1 piece of advice for other online teachers (end on something fluffy)

## 9. INTERVIEW RESOURCES

*Whether you're doing an interview in person or from thousands of miles away over Skype, you need a simple and reliable way to record it without inconveniencing your interviewee. At Teachable, we've conducted hundreds of interviews, so we put together a list of our favorites...and we have a free option for each type of interview.*

Enjoy!

### Face-to-Face Interview

#### [Voice Recorder \(Free\)](#)

Download the following app on your phone and set it on the table as you talk. Be sure there isn't too much background noise. Other than this, this app works perfectly and is totally free.

#### Voice Recorder (FREE)

By TapMedia Ltd

Open iTunes to buy and download apps.



[View in iTunes](#)

ⓘ This app is designed for both iPhone and iPad

#### Description

Voice Recorder for the iPhone and iPad - 100% FREE.

#### FEATURES

[TapMedia Ltd Web Site](#) • [Voice Recorder \(FREE\) Support](#)

#### What's New in Version 1.5

- Now compatible with iOS8 and new screen sizes  
Bug fixes

### Audio Interview Only

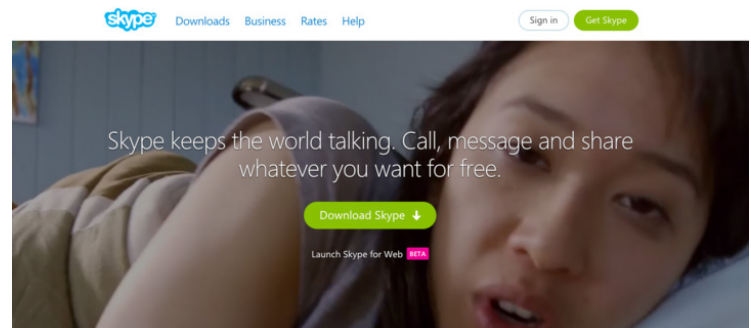
Audio interviews work well for the camera shy. While you can download an app to record a phone call, I prefer conducting the call through my laptop. It's easier to have my notes up and visible why I'm talking to my interview and I'm hands free to take notes.

One Person:

[Skype](#) + [CallNote](#)

SKYPE: There is hardly an app more widely known and used than Skype. That's because it's the clear industry leader in what it does. Just be sure to get everyone's skype usernames before the interview so you're not wasting the first 10 minutes of precious time trying to find each other.

CALL NOTE: I found it strangely difficult to find a bug-free and FREE app to record my Skype calls. After searching the web and testing a few, call note seemed to be the most reliable.

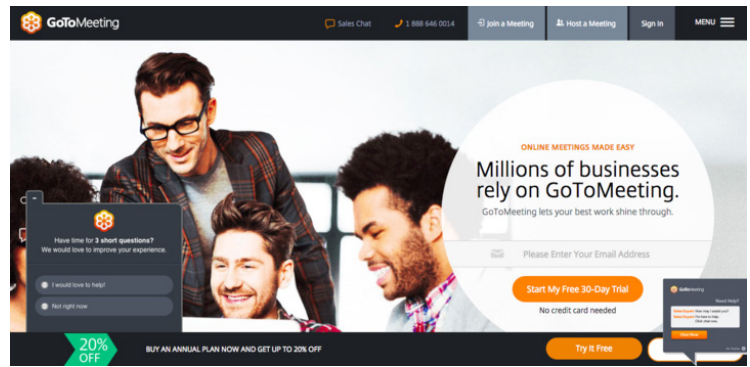




## 9. INTERVIEW RESOURCES

### Multiple People: [GoTo Meeting](#)

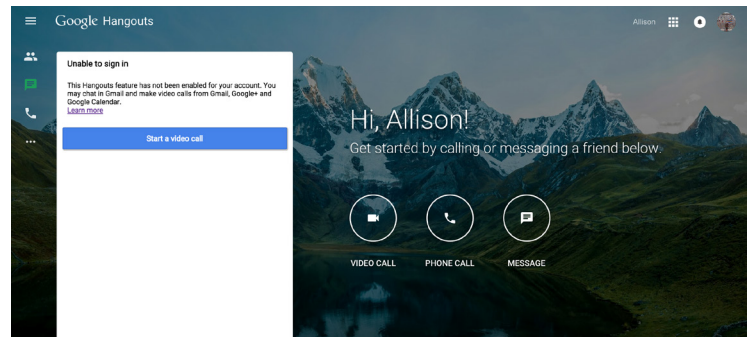
GOTOMEETING: The free trial is enough to convince you that this program rocks. Able to talk, type, mute and save your conversation simply, this program is hard to beat when it comes to conducting remote conference calls.



### Video Call

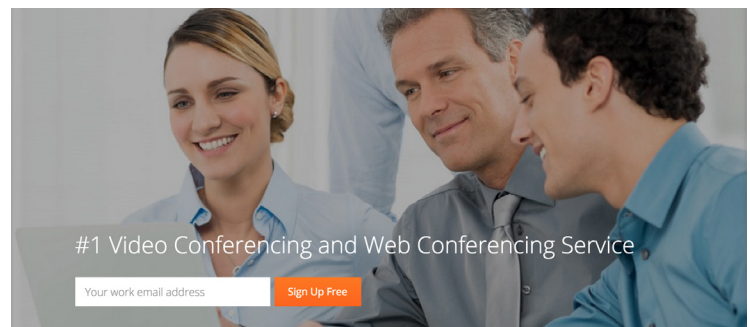
#### Free Option: [Google Hangouts on Air](#)

Use Google Hangouts On Air to easily record a video interview with both parties being seen. Note that On Air makes it easy for other people to tune in but if you don't advertise this fact, it essentially works like a video call. It's a simple way to hack your way into a video recording without having to purchase any kind of tool.



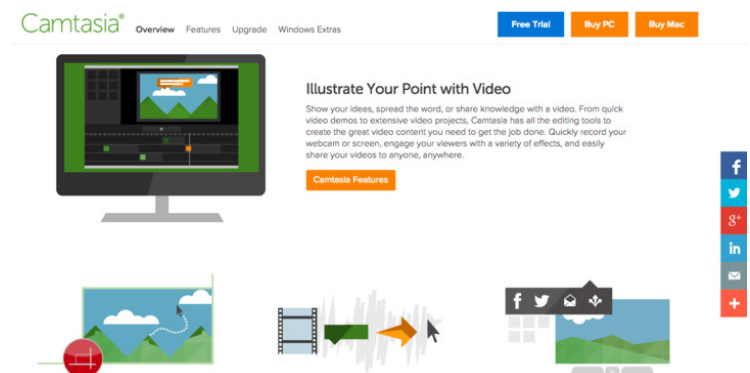
#### Affordable Option: [Zoom.us](#)

Zoom.us handles all video recording for you automatically. At the end of your session, they send you link to download your video.



#### High ROI Option: [Skype](#) + [Camtasia](#)

You can also record a screen flow of your conversation be it on Skype or Facetime. Camtasia has a free trial, but if you're going to invest in technology, this one is certainly worth it. It works great for recording screencasts as well, which is a great way to create content for online courses.



### Additional Resource

For a great YouTube video on recording Skype Calls, [check out this video by Caleb Wojcik](#). Note that Caleb doesn't use free technology, but it will produce great results.