

# Online Marketing Made Easy <sup>w/</sup> Amy Porterfield



Social Media | List Building | Content Marketing

## The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast with Amy Porterfield Session #95

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/95>

**Amy Porterfield:** Hey there, Amy Porterfield here. Welcome to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. Thanks, so much, for tuning in.

Have you ever had an idea and thought it was a good one so you put it all together for your online marketing business. You spend time, effort, and money putting it together. You put it out into the world and you hear crickets. Nothing ever comes of it.

You think it's going to sell really well but your audience has other ideas. Or, have you ever had an idea and asked your audience if they would invest in something like "this" or "that" and they raise their hand and say they will and that they love the idea, I should do it. Then you do it and you hear crickets. Where did all the people go that raised their hand and said they would actually want to buy "this" or "that" that you have created? I know, it's frustrating. But it happens to the best of us.

I have a solution for you. What if you could take your idea through a process to make sure that idea is a good fit for you, your business, and for your audience. That way you never again have to spend a ton of money or time or blood, sweat, and tears creating something that's not going to sell. Sounds pretty good, right?

That is why I've invited my good friend, [Pat Flynn](#), on the show today to talk about that very specific topic, how to know if your idea will really work. He has just written a book called [Will It Fly?](#) We'll talk about that book. But, specifically, because Pat and I are very similar and like to get to the specifics, details, and action items, this is a mini training session.

We are going to walk you through some ideas, insights, and tips to help you get started in terms of understanding whether your idea will really work for you and your audience. This is a priceless episode because it's filled with so many good, valuable tips that you can take action on right away.

Before we get there, I've got a few quick words about our sponsor. I want to thank our sponsor today, 99Designs. I am such a huge fan of this company because they can take care of all of your graphic needs. We are talking logos, social media cover images, website graphics, and so much more. So visit [www.99Designs.com/amy](http://www.99Designs.com/amy) and get a \$99 upgrade for free.

Okay, I won't make you wait any longer. Let's go ahead and jump in to my special interview with Pat Flynn.

**Amy:** Pat Flynn, thank you so much for being on the show. I really appreciate it!

**Pat:** I'm so happy to be here, Amy. Thank you. And I have to apologize to everybody out there who is listening to me who has heard me before because my voice is a little bit different. I'm a little under the weather today. I caught something from my son which he caught from somebody at school.

Ever since my son has been going to school it's like every two months I get really sick. It's unbelievable.

**Amy:** It's totally normal.

**Pat:** Is it? Okay.

**Amy:** But I need to tell you, I think you sound really manly.

**Pat:** Really? Okay. Maybe I should just permanently change my voice to this.

**Amy:** This is working for me.

**Pat:** Yeah. I love this. It is perfect timing, actually.

**Amy:** Perfect. So, let's get right to it. I already did a proper intro for you. But, I have to say your bio is kind of amazing. You are very well known for going from a dream job layoff to founding your own business and doing some amazing things.

I want you to take me back there a little bit before we get into all of the goodness around this amazing book you have recently written. I want to talk to you about filling in the blanks of your journey to get to where you are today. I want you to kind of take us back to the time where you got laid off.

I am sure there were crazy emotions, but you moved into starting your own thing and having amazing success with that. Where were you when you got laid off? Where was your head in all of this and how did you go from that situation to making the decision to do your own thing?

**Pat:** I had spent all of this time in school doing everything I was supposed to. Even when I got my job as an architect I was doing everything I was supposed to do there. I was climbing the corporate ladder and to have it all taken away from me even though I was doing everything the way I was supposed to was just bone crushing to me.

I thought I was doing everything to secure my job but obviously I wasn't. The only way to take control would be to take control and do my own thing. When I got laid off I had about two to three months between the time I was told I got laid off to when I was actually going to be officially let go. That sucked even more because I had counted the days of that termination date.

During that time I obviously didn't do any work. I was depressed. I actually moved back with my parents and so did my fiancé so we could save money for a wedding. I had just proposed to my wife before I got laid off. It was the worst timing ever. But on the train ride from San Diego to Irvine, about a two-hour train ride, I started listening to music.

I got bored with my play list and discovered podcasts. To make a long story short, I discovered a podcast that interviewed a guy making six figures a year helping people pass an exam called the Project Management Exam. I took an exam that was really difficult in the architecture space and thought I could take that information and turn it into a business.

I did that and in October of 2008, a few months afterwards, I had taken that information I had about the exam and turned it into a business. I wrote a study guide to help people pass that exam too and it just took off. That was actually the same month I officially got let go. It was an amazing, perfectly-timed transition period.

I tell a lot of people this story and they think I am lucky. In a sense I am. But, I also know these opportunities to do my own thing have always existed. I just finally realized they were there because I was conditioned to grow up in the way that I was supposed to and not even realize I could go out and venture and do something on my own.

It wasn't until I got laid off that I grew, for lack of better terms, the balls that I needed to put myself out there and actually make it happen. If I hadn't gotten laid off, I guarantee you I would still be an architect today.

Maybe I would be happy and maybe not, but I definitely wouldn't have the freedom that I have now that I have my own business. Because I got laid off and didn't have a Plan B I just did whatever I needed to do. I wouldn't do that if I hadn't gotten laid off so it was a blessing in disguise.

From there I was so tremendously for everything that happened. That is when I started SmartPassiveIncome.com, which is where most people know me from now. I just share everything. If I was starting out back in the day this is the site I would want because I just want somebody who is honest and authentic and who shares everything (all the wins and all the failures) and I just want to follow that person's example.

I am trying to be that example. That's why I call myself the crash test dummy of online business. I try new things and experiment and see what works and what doesn't. Whatever happens, it's always a lesson for everybody and as a result I've been building an amazing platform and now I speak and write books and I'm getting paid for it. It's ridiculous. I couldn't have dreamt anything like this. I'm super thankful for how things turned out.

**Amy:** Isn't it kind of crazy/ridiculous if you look back and see everything you've created and how quickly that's all happened?

**Pat:** Yeah. It's insane.

**Amy:** Crazy, it is. And I know it doesn't happen that quickly for everybody, although, let's talk about that. How many years have you been growing your business?

**Pat:** This is seven, going on eight, so it's a long time.

**Amy:** So it's not overnight.

**Pat:** Definitely not, and definitely not easy.

**Amy:** It's not easy at all. It just feels like you have had amazing success so quickly. But then that's a great ah-ha moment for me right now. No, it wasn't overnight, definitely. And you've been working really hard at it. I know you're one of the hardest-working guys in the internet marketing space, for sure. I've seen you in action. I know what's going on behind the scenes.

Let's talk real quickly about your website, [www.smartpassiveincome.com](http://www.smartpassiveincome.com). You really do share it all. I share a lot of stuff inside my business, but I don't go to the extreme that you do where you are publishing your monthly revenue reports. We know how much you made, how much you spent, where you spent it every single month. We know everything that's going on in your business. Is there ever a moment that you think, "This is weird, am I sharing too much? Could it hurt my business?"

Are there those thoughts that ever cross your mind?

**Pat:** Of course they cross my mind. But I think the benefits definitely outweigh the cons here. When I am trying to help people, they want to know exactly what's going on and in order to do that I need to share all of that stuff. I know that's not in everybody's cup of tea, but in order for me to really be the person that people look up to I need to share all bits of it.

That income doesn't always go up. It goes down. But, like I said, there is always a lesson involved. There is always a reason for that and I share it. I sort of see it like, you know how companies in the stock market reveal their quarterly reports to their investors or potential investors, they share all of the numbers. Every company that is public shares those same kinds of numbers.

They do that because they want to show how the company is doing. I'm doing sort of the same thing. Even though people aren't investing their income directly with me like you would in stock, people are investing their time with me. That is an even more important asset so I want to make sure people know exactly what's going on so they can comfortably choose to spend their time with me if they want to learn from me.

**Amy:** I'm going to link to those [reports](#) in my show notes because I think it's really important for people to see exactly what you've created and what you are doing in your business. I think it's one of the biggest contributions you make to the online marketing world, showing all of those details. So I will definitely link to them in the show notes.

But I want to ask you about transitioning from your very first online marketing endeavor, the certification program, and then moving into so many other areas of your business. When did you figure out that if you could do "this" with the certification program then you could do it in more ways and take it in a totally new direction? How did that evolve?

**Pat:** It is interesting. The LEED Exam program is still going very well. The next thing I did after that actually wasn't Smart Passive Income, it was a joint venture between my fiancé and I.

**Amy:** I didn't know that!

**Pat:** I haven't really shared this very much because it's kind of embarrassing, but I'm happy to share it here because I'm an open book.

**Amy:** This is good stuff.

**Pat:** April and I saw that the LEED site was doing really well and decided to create a website together. We wondered what we should talk about. Since we were going to get married we decided to have a personal blog between couples where we talk about things. Then I had an idea of having a topic every week that both of us discuss in a very separate way. We would have the male point of view and the female point of view.

**Amy:** I like it.

**Pat:** It sounded like a good idea. So I actually spent a couple of thousand dollars, some of the earnings I had from my other business, building a website platform. There were no themes out there that could have a side-by-side setup so I spent a couple thousand dollars to do that. Everything was set up and we were going to write it. It was actually called ACoupleofThoughts.com.

**Amy:** Cute. I get it.

**Pat:** We thought it was going to go big and we would get to go on Oprah to talk about it. We had huge ideas. Then we started to write and it was just the worst process in the world. We couldn't write in this way. It was difficult. We didn't know how to make it comical and funny but also educational. We were actually getting into fights and decided it was stupid. We scrapped the whole thing and let the domain name expire.

That was actually my first example of truly failing in the online space and actually rushing into things. The LEED exam stuff kind of just happened naturally through my own experiences. When I started listening to what other people needed I served them in that way. This one was like, "Okay, I've got this idea. Let's build it, put it out there, and see what happens."

Obviously, it didn't work out. But, if we had flipped the order and actually just started writing first we would have easily seen immediately that this was not going to work out. We would have saved time. We would have saved money. That kind of relates to the book that I have coming out now, which is all about validating those ideas before hand.

**Amy:** That's a perfect segue. I didn't even set it up that way but we are so good together, Pat. It just made it's way in there. Let's talk about this. You just wrote a book. Congratulations! I can only imagine how much blood, sweat, and tears you put into this book.

**Pat:** Thank you. I think part of the reason my voice is the way it is is because of this book.

**Amy:** I'm sure. There's no doubt. It's called Will It Fly? Talk to me about the inspiration of why you wrote this book and the passion around it. I think it's such a brilliant idea. I'll just say up front that this area that you are going to explore with the book is something that comes up with my students over and over again. I love that I can give them a guidebook to say, "This is the path you need to take to figure this out." Talk to me about this book and then we are going to dive into some specifics so people can walk away with some action items today.



**Pat:** Totally, I'm happy to share the different exercises and litmus tests in the book that you can take away with you whether you get the book or not. I am definitely happy to do that. Thank you, again, Amy.

The book is called Will It Fly? How to Test Your Next Business Idea So You Don't Waste Your Time and Money. The subtitle kind of tells it all. It's about testing your idea before you actually build it to see if it's going to work. I like the title, Will It Fly? It's the idea that we always launch stuff. Launching is a big part of it but what happens after you launch? Is it actually going to take off? Is it going to fly? Is it going to keep going or is it going to crash?

That's one part of it. I also like it in the slang sense, fly, as in cool. Is this cool with you? Is this fly? I could have mentioned that because there are actually two kinds of validation that I talk about in this book. There is the product or idea to market validation. How do you know if your idea is actually going to work in that market you are getting into? That is actually the second part of the book.

The first part of the book, which is more important, is how do you know if the idea, the business, you are creating actually fits with you? Does this line up with you and does it compliment your strength? Does it fit into your lifeline? Does it fit into your goals? That's a really important part that I know a lot of people skip over because sometimes we see exciting things.

It's like low-hanging fruit. You get it and it may not be the thing you should have gone into. I know a lot of entrepreneurs who are very successful entrepreneurs but they are not successful parents or are not successful spouses. They have climbed up and are at the top of a ladder but it is the wrong ladder. I want to get them before hand and actually capture them and make sure their ideas are actually ones that fit into their life. Then, if it is they can move forward and see if it validates into the market they are getting into.

This book is so important, and it aligns with what you said about what your students are saying, I actually have another podcast beyond the Smart Passive Income podcast called Ask Pat. It comes out five days a week and I collect voice mail questions from my audience and answer one five days a week. It is really cool. But, a cool byproduct of having this platform is that I get questions coming in every single day. I literally get dozens of questions from my audience.



It is cool because I can hear their voice and all that stuff. They tell me a little bit about who they are. A lot of the questions are just that, "How do I know this thing I'm working on is actually going to work?" Let's face it, we don't have all of the time in the world. We are so busy. We want to make sure the time we spend doing something, like building a business, is time well spent.

We are giving ourselves a chance to have it work out instead of what a lot of people do, like I did with that ACoupleofThoughts thing, traditionally you build something and then you shout it from the rooftops, "Buy my thing."

Then, nobody buys it or nobody goes there and you're just left wondering why. When you go through the validation process it's actually an iterative process where you can see, step by step, what parts are working. You keep going and if you get to a point where you are stuck that's where you know you need to fix something where things didn't work out.

The goal behind the book is that I want people to read it and have one of two things happen: 1) They read it and there is a red flag as soon as possible and the idea doesn't stick with them and it just doesn't make sense for them so they throw it out and move on to another idea and to be comfortable with that.

A lot of us have a hard time letting go of ideas and this will help you both through data and certain thought experiments do that much quicker. Or, 2) They get through it and it essentially validates all of their ideas. You can actually get paid for those ideas up front. That is actually the best and truest form of validation, having somebody not say, "Oh yeah, that's a great idea. I would totally buy that if you had it for sale," it is, "I'm going to pay you right now so that when this comes out I am going to be one of the first customers."

That's what the process of this book leads to. I want people to, if their idea sticks, to go through it and the book essentially gives them permission to move forward and build that thing. I know you have a lot of students. I have students too. One of the interesting things is that a lot of people have great ideas and they know what they are supposed to do. They just want permission to do it.

**Amy:** That's so true!

**Pat:** I guess you could say this book is going to be that permission giver.

**Amy:** I love that. So take me through the sections of the book. What does it look like to get the validation or get really clear that there is no validation here?

**Pat:** The first part, like I said, is called Mission Design. It is all about how this idea fits into you, your life, and your strengths. There are actually three different tests and thought experiments that you can do. They are really fun.

They are a way to put context to thinking about the future or who you are. The first one is called The Airport Test. I love this. It is actually part of the hiring process that Keller Williams International Realty uses in their hiring process when they try to get new employees. The cool thing about this is that when they do this it is actually a way to validate that the person is actually qualified for their business. It is also a way for them to say, "We are qualified to serve you as the employer."

If the person says, "I want to do this in my life" and Keller Williams says they can't support that then they know up front it will not be a good marriage so they can split ways. Everybody will be happy knowing they didn't have to go through years of employment to only have it backfire down the road.

The way The Airport test works, let's say that for whatever reason you and I don't talk for a long time and five years down the road we see each other at the airport and are crossing paths. That would be really exciting for me, actually, to see you again. I would be just like, "Oh my gosh, Amy, how are you?"

If you said, "Life is awesome, life couldn't get any better," I would be so happy for you and would ask you to tell me more and tell me why life is perfect right now for you. That's what we have to think about. What would make you say that life is perfect five years from now? We don't often think about it like that. We are often asked, "What's your five-year plan?"

This puts context to it. What you do is take a sheet of paper or a worksheet that you can download in the companion course that comes along free with the book, and there are four different sections in the piece of paper. You divide it into four sections. You name each of the four quadrants the top four categories of your life that are the most important to you.

For me, the most important categories are family, professional, finance, and health. Then you just list what would make you say life is awesome at those points in life. When you fill out the sheet it becomes everything you are working for and it becomes an easy way for you to make decisions.

A lot of times, when I have done this exercise with people, they see a sheet in front of them that is what they are shooting for five years from now and they say, "Oh my gosh, what I'm doing right now does not support any of this." It is a huge immediate realization for them. Or, they see that the business idea would not fit into this.

The other one that I want to share is called, The History Test. On The Airport Test we take the DeLorean into the future. For The History test we go into the DeLorean and go into the past. We actually analyze three or four of the different jobs we have had in the past; things you were involved with.

You actually discover what it is that you liked about the jobs and what it is that you didn't like about them and even extract a favorite memory from those things to make sure this thing you are going to work on fits into that trajectory or incorporates the things you like and not the things you didn't like.

When I looked into my past and all of the things that I enjoyed or didn't enjoy, I found out I needed to be around people. I needed to talk to people. I am also very motivated by getting compliments in terms of helping people. Getting thank yous for the work I do is something I didn't get in my architecture job. I make sure now that I set myself up in a way that I have those things incorporated in what I do.

It is interesting because a lot of us live life going through the motions without realizing what we do and don't like until we look back and analyze. This way you can go back; a lot of people ask why we take history classes because they are stupid. We go to history class so that we know what not to do or that we can incorporate the things that we do like into the future. That's why that exists.

I incorporate those things into Part 1, which is about how an idea fits into you. That's the first part and probably one of my favorite parts. It is a lot of fun and every time I have run those experiments it has been really cool.

**Amy:** Two observations. I think it is so refreshing that that is where you start in the book. I actually wasn't expecting that until I got to review all of your materials and I thought it was perfect. I know your lifestyle and the time you spend with your family and the environment you create for yourself is so very important in terms of the whole scheme of this business that you've created. You've taken those values that you already have and started there and said, "Let's not create business we don't love."

I think it's so easy to create a business that you don't love when you leave corporate and you are so determined to make your business work. For me, I took on clients in the beginning and had all of these clients doing social media and two years into my business I looked back and realized I had created a business that I absolutely hated.

It was successful and, like you said, I was doing really good on the business side but I was freaking miserable in my personal life because it wasn't a business I loved. I know first hand how powerful it can be to really reevaluate. For some people, you are going to be reevaluating what you already created.

I have a question for you. A lot of people come to me and say, "Amy, can you help me with my business ideas?" They don't know what to create or where to start. I feel I know that's not necessarily why you wrote the book. But I think it can help people if they just go through Section 1 they will get a good idea of what they want to do. Am I right or am I on the wrong track?

**Pat:** You are absolutely right. People are going to go into this book with an idea and some are going to go into this book without an idea. By the end of Part 1 they are definitely going to have something on their mind because they are going to have a little bit more direction in terms of where they want to go, who they are, and actually the third experiment, I will share it with you, is the Shark Bait test.

The test is actually a thought experiment where you put yourself into the shark tank, the show Shark Tank. You are literally there in front of the investors and you pitch your idea. Kevin O'Leary, in the middle, says, "What is stopping me from hiring somebody to do exactly what you are doing?"

Essentially you are asking yourself why you are special. That is the question. If you are in that situation it is very intimidating to get that question. It is a very harsh question but is

one that we need to answer now before we move on. What are your super powers? What makes you special? What makes you unique to where Kevin would be stupid not to work with you?

**Amy:** I love this.

**Pat:** It gets into more detail and there are actually steps in that particular chapter. But that is the third test and it is actually one of my favorites too. Getting into the actual product, you have validated the idea, then it gets into a little bit of market research.

Market research can be a really scary for a lot of people.

**Amy:** Really scary and overwhelming and a little bit stressful.

**Pat:** Right. But I break it down. That is my super power. I take really complicated things and break them down. Because I knew I was writing this book and I wanted to pull on example, I asked my Facebook Page peeps what they thought my super power was. Most people say, "Taking incredibly complex things and making them easy to consume."

**Amy:** That is such a huge compliment. You should really stay in the moment with that one. That's really cool.

**Pat:** I am very thankful they validated that because that is what I know is my super power. I have an uncanny ability to not have that curse of knowledge as Chip and Dan Heath call it. Once you know something, it's hard to know what it's like not to know it anymore. But, I am good at putting myself in the customer's/reader's shoes. I feel I do a good job of that in the book.

Market research, I break it down into two phases before you actually go and start talking to people and actually potentially getting paid for it. The first one is what I like to call the Market Map. This is where you discover the three P's of your audience.

The three P's of your market are:

- 1) Places - Discovering the places where they are. There are a lot of exercises and steps in the book to help you find out where your audience exists.
- 2) People – Who are the influencers in that space?
- 3) Products.

Once you have all of those and actually create a spreadsheet of all of those things and where they are you actually have an amazing bird's eye perspective on everything that's going on in that target market in terms of where people are at, who we are serving (that person or audience), and what they are buying or what's being offered to them already.

Again, you can already see how this can help you position yourself in the space you are about to enter. A lot of times you will learn more about that particular space than people who are in it already serving that audience. A lot of people feel when they get late into a market they are almost behind. But, actually, you should flip that around.

You actually have an advantage coming in late. You can see what's missing. You can go on Amazon and read the reviews for everything. Here's a tip, read the three-star reviews for products that are being offered to your target customer.

**Amy:** That's a good one.

**Pat:** The three-star reviews are the honest ones. The five-star reviews might just be fans and sometimes people buy those (which is crazy). The one-star reviews are just haters. But with the three-star reviews you will sometimes actually see people literally list out the pros of the thing and the cons of the thing. That will give you amazing insight on what it is that's missing and what it is that your target audience wants. And it's in their own words. You don't have to guess anymore at that point.

This Market Map that you create with the three P's, if you move forward with this idea and validate it, it will become one of the most useful tools in your arsenal. You now have all of the places where they are, all the places you can go to potentially guest post, all the places you can go to even advertise and all of those sorts of things.

You have a list of all of the people that you can potentially partner with that you can joint venture with that you can get on their show and create a product with. You then have a list of all of the products that are already there so you can create something that's better. You can also get a gauge on how much people are paying and what the pricing is like. And you can become an affiliate for those products too. That's the first part of Market Research.

But then it gets into the customer's head. We talked about the market in general. Let's get into the customer's head. I know you've heard this before and I don't know if you teach it, but the whole idea about finding a customer avatar. Is that something you...

**Amy:** Oh yeah, that's a big one for my audience.

**Pat:** I love the idea of the avatar. It's so important to know who that audience member is. But I have always struggled with that.

**Amy:** All the time!

**Pat:** The reason I struggle with it is because I feel it is fake. I'm making up an imaginary person and I have to give them a name. It's a little weird to me. I never fully connect. The purpose of the avatar is so you know who you are speaking to and I agree with that 100%. But, if you are really trying to feel your audience, feeling an imaginary person and what they are going through isn't going to work.

**Amy:** If you have a better solution you had better bring it on. This is something my students struggle with.

**Pat:** Okay, cool. Let me just give it to you. I'm going to give it to you.

**Amy:** Okay, I'm so excited.

**Pat:** This is what I call the Customer PLAN. That's an acronym, the PLAN. You want to discover through conversations, through research, through surveys and whatnot (I give you all of that in the book) the problems your audience is going through. That's the P, the Problems.

You actually start to build a separate spreadsheet with all of these things listed out. There is a purpose for all of this. But the first one is the Problems. There are a lot of questions you can ask. There are a lot of things you can do in those conversations or surveys like: What is the #1 struggle you have? That is obviously one that gets thrown around a lot because it's very useful.



What is something you do everyday that you just absolutely hate? What is something you use to help you that you think could be done in a better way? If you had a magic wand what is something you would change about what it is that you do right now? All of those questions are really good for discovering the true problems and pains your audience is going through.

Next you start to list out the L, the Language that your audience uses. I know you know this is important because you do advertising. You need to know how your audience describes things. You need to know what language they use. No just the key words, but the questions they ask, the complaints they have. Again, Amazon is a great place to discover the language your target audience uses.

The A, my favorite part, is where you start to get the feels with your audience that is different than what you get with just a made-up avatar. The A is Anecdotes, stories, that your target audience is telling online.

**Amy:** Oh, okay.

**Pat:** You can discover this in a really easy way. Here is a cool trick: You know when you put quotations around something in Google it finds that exact phrase? But if you put quotations around something and then space site: and a website URL it looks for that exact phrase everywhere in that particular URL.

**Amy:** Okay, so give me an example of how you would use this.

**Pat:** So, if I typed (in Google) "Amy Porterfield" site: smartpassiveincome.com then Google would spit out every mention of Amy Porterfield that was on smartpassiveincome.com.

That's the trick. This is actually very useful for a lot of things. But, if you are looking for stories, here's what you do, you do that same thing but in the quotations you put "great story", "awesome story", "cool story", and then you put in a forum URL where your people hang out, which you already have a list of because it is in the Market Map that I just taught you.

If you do that you will see amazing real-life accounts of your target audience going through life, telling about their struggles, talking about what they are going through. Those are

people you can reach out to and talk to even further. That way you aren't just talking to somebody that is made up. You are getting to know people.

Forums are great too. There is a lot of content on there, obviously, if there are popular ones in your niche. Also, forums are where people who have like interests hang out. A lot of times people open up on forums more than they do to their families because they feel they can connect with those people.

That's the trick for getting really into the feels of your audience.

**Amy:** When you say "feels" you are talking about f-e-e-l?

**Pat:** Emotions.

**Amy:** Gotcha!

**Pat:** Sorry.

**Amy:** That's a new word for me. I like it.

**Pat:** Feels. That's what April and I say when there is a Netflix series we are seeing and we are starting to tear up. We always go, "The feels."

**Amy:** I've never heard that before. I'm going to totally start using it.

**Pat:** Oh the feels. Okay. We did Problems, Language, Anecdotes, and the N is what you believe the Needs are. That becomes your hypothesis. It becomes the test that you run in your validation process. I love this because I talk about this in the book how it is sort of like MythBusters. I don't know if you have seen MythBusters but it is one of my favorite shows.

They put myths, things people say are true or not, to a test. They use a particular method, science. They use the scientific method to bust or confirm those myths to say, "Yes this is actually true," or "No, this is not true."

They know for sure. They take things that are hypothesis and put them to the test. That's exactly what we are going to be doing in the validation formula, the final part of the book.

You have gone through all of the research and have discovered all of this stuff about your audience. A lot of times, people who have ideas going into the book have their idea morph into something completely different at this point.

**Amy:** Oh really?

**Pat:** Yeah, because now you are actually putting data behind what it is that you are going to be providing. That idea you have is just an idea. There is no proven research behind it. But now you have gone through the research and have found out what it is that's going on in the market already. You've gotten into the heads of your audience. You are now creating products that actually matter to them.

A lot of times, when people go through this process they actually throw away their original idea but now they have a brand new one that is, at this point, validated in terms of research. Now we are going to go validate it with them.

**Amy:** What I'm already loving about this book is that I feel it is a really good hand-holding book. You are going to take people through this entire process with a do this, then do that, do this. I feel like this has never been created out there yet. This is brand new.

**Pat:** A couple of things, I'm not the first person to talk about validation.

**Amy:** Right.

**Pat:** [Tim Ferriss](#) talked about it in 2007 in a chapter in the [Four-Hour Work Week](#). He called it Testing the Muse. He validated French sailor shirts as a business. He did that by running paid advertisements to a landing page with a buy-now button. He just kept track of how many clicks he had and it essentially confirmed that people would or would not buy that thing.

The other thing about that is that I love reading books. I know you do too and I know a lot of people out there love reading. But one of my pet peeves with books is the ones that tell you all of this awesome stuff but they don't show you how to do it.

I feel like I am not like everybody else. I wanted to figure out how to make this book different and more useful. I actually walk you through the process. I hold your hand. The other cool thing is I actually do these exercises with you.

I do the Airport Test. I share line by line what is under my family quadrant, my professional quadrant, and all of those things. With the History Test I go into the past and show you my jobs too, especially the first part, opening up about who you are in your past. That's an uncomfortable thing to do sometimes. A lot of times we just avoid that because sometimes we don't want to know.

Hopefully by opening up and sharing my part of the story you can come on and do it with me. You are getting led by example.

**Amy:** I was going to say, that's your style. It's always like you are the guy that says you will go first, "I'll do it." I really like that.

**Pat:** Thank you.

**Amy:** You make it so real. So, when you use your own examples and when you go first, you are going to make us all really understand what it's going to look like and what it's going to do for our business. I am so excited. But I know we're not done. So keep going.

**Pat:** On the examples, I pulled out examples from the past. I pulled out examples of my existing businesses. But, in the part where I talk about the customer plan, I actually say that I'm just going to pick something random and we're going to run through it together with something completely random to show that it works for everything.

I actually use fly fishing as the niche and we discover problems that fly fishermen have and the language they use and certain stories.

**Amy:** It is so funny that you chose that because, I could be wrong, but was the first time you ever went fly fishing when I was with you?

**Pat:** Yeah, we were in Colorado Springs for Platform Conference.

**Amy:** And you went fly fishing...all by himself! I have to tell you, this was so funny. We were at Michael Hyatt's event. We were both speaking and I asked him what he was doing tomorrow. I think we had the day off or something. He was like, "Oh, I've already booked my fly fishing. I'm going alone and I have a guide. I'm going to do it."

I asked, "By yourself?" Pat does anything by himself. He always takes these advantages when we are out and about to take in the scenery and do something he wouldn't normally do. I remember you really enjoyed it.

**Pat:** It was the time of my life, being out in nature, standing in water. I caught a couple of brown trout. I had done every other kind of fishing except ice fishing and fly fishing so I wanted to check it off my bucket list. I do use that as an example because, interestingly enough, for whatever reason, since back in 2009 when I started talking about business, that was the example I always use.

You know how some people always use scrapbooking or knitting as their funny example? Fly fishing was always my funny example. Then I ended up doing it last year and now it's in the book which is kind of fun.

**Amy:** It's so perfect.

**Pat:** So, to finish off, the book is a couple of hundred pages long and it does walk you through the process. Again, I'm not afraid to share as much as I can to help you guys out. But the validation formula works like this: There are certain steps that need to happen because you could even build something at this point with all of the research you've done and it is likely something that could potentially be helpful.

You don't know if that is something your customers would want because you haven't really talked to them yet. You don't know. You need to get them to not just validate with their words. You need to validate with their payment.

**Amy:** This is big. I don't want to keep interrupting you, but one thing I have to say is that so many people say, "I don't know why it didn't work because I asked my audience. They said they would totally buy this." I am always thinking, "But they haven't bought it."

**Pat:** Right. There are actually some devices in the book to help you, if it doesn't work out, to really discover what went wrong. The first part is that you need to get in front of an audience. You have a hypothetical business idea that you feel would work. You need to get in front of that target audience.

This is where a lot of people struggle when they teach validation because they automatically assume people already have an audience to get in front of or they already have a blog. That may or may not be the case for a lot of your listeners. A lot of people who run through this process and want to validate don't have an audience so they get stuck in Step 1.

In the book, I give you seven different ways you can get in front of somebody else's audience to continue this validation formula. It's going to be really helpful for you whether you have a business or not and whether you have an audience already or not. There are ways to get in front of somebody else's audience. You just have to get in front of an audience.

The example I use in the book is, let's say we are a photographer and we came up with an amazing software specifically for wedding photographers. Maybe we land a guest post on a photography blog but in Step 2 we need to hyper target. That means we need to find out who the audience we are speaking to are wedding photographers. Those are the people who would potentially use our solution.

Get in front of that audience. But then you need to hyper target. You need to get the people who your thing would actually be useful to to raise their hand in that audience and say, "Yes, I have that problem."

You will then go and interact with them. That's Step 3. You interact with them, you share your solution, you kind of gauge the interest from there. Then the final step is that you actually ask for the transaction. You literally say, "You know what, I want to build this and I need to know that you are in and if you are I need you to preorder it or pay for it."

I actually gives you a whole number of examples of different kinds of people in all different kinds of niches who have done this. I actually break down the way they have done it in the exact same steps. They have done it in different ways. Some people get in front of an audience by paying for ads and doing webinars. That's how they target.

Some people have done it through Facebook groups. Other people have done it in person at events. There are all of these different ways to do it. But the interesting thing is you are honest about this the whole time. Tim Ferriss was doing it in a way that was not bad but he was pretending the thing actually existed and then keeping track of the clicks and gauging from there.

When people clicked, "Yes, I want to buy it," it said it was out of stock. That's not what you are doing here. You are honest about the fact that you haven't created this thing yet. You are saying you want to gauge the interest and you want to make sure it is something people want.

You would tell this to the people you are talking to, "If I get 20 people who say and pay up front then I will build it. The cool thing about this is that you will get it at a discounted price because you are going to be an early adopter. You are also going to be able to influence what this product becomes." It incorporates a lot of the lean start-up method here. Again, not everyone is going to want to preorder but there is a certain percentage of people who will want to if it is something in that particular audience that they would find useful. There is an early adopter phase and they would chomp to the bit at wanting to get involved with this if it is something that is actually helpful.

That's where this goes. Again, it's a lot easier to explain this through the examples I have shared with other people. For example, [Noah Kagan](#), within 24 hours validated a beef jerky subscription box company. I don't know if you know this, it's called [Sumo Jerky](#).

**Amy:** I didn't know that.

**Pat:** Oh yeah, totally. There is actually a bonus interview because I was in Austin for an event and I interviewed him and that comes along with the companion course. I'll talk about that in a second. He validated a Sumo Jerky subscription box service and got paid \$1,000 in 24 hours for this idea that wasn't even built yet.

**Amy:** I was going to ask you, we're talking about products that are online, physical products, and services.

**Pat:** All kinds.



**Amy:** Okay, good. So it totally runs the gamut. I want to jump in because leading up to this, Pat, I have been talking so much on my podcast about webinars. One of the things I teach inside my webinar program is that if you don't already have an online training course you can sell a live workshop. You sell it first on your webinar and then you deliver it afterwards. That is basically the first thing I did before I had an online training program.

But if somebody were to go through your entire book, got really clear on what they wanted to sell, and then used the webinar system I teach to actually sell (let's say they are doing a live workshop) a live online workshop then that's exactly like a good fit between the two. I wanted to point that out because I know some people are listening and are thinking that I kind of talk about this.

I do. But, what I don't do in my program is help you validate the idea. So your book and my idea of selling the live workshop go hand in hand.

**Pat:** Oh, I think so, for sure.

**Amy:** That's really cool. So I have a question for you. Inside your book, in the very beginning, you say the words, "It's not you who is being tested, it's your ideas." After listening to you go through all of the steps here, I want to know why you thought that was really important to start things out with.

**Pat:** A lot of people are going to go through this book and their ideas aren't going to pass the test. A lot of times when our ideas don't pass the test we feel like we are failures. We just get upset because we didn't choose the right one or it didn't go the way we expected and we just give up. That's not what you should do.

No matter what happens when you go through this book, it is a win. You have discovered this now instead of waiting two years down the road to finally realize this isn't a thing that is going to work out. This isn't about testing you, it's about testing your idea. That's kind of what the litmus tests are for.

I wanted to make sure that was clear moving forward because a lot of people are going to feel they are just not on the right path when they discover something wasn't going the way it was supposed to. That's why I mention that.

That kind of goes along with the story I tell at the beginning, and I know you read this part where I talk about it, it is the story I start out with and it kind of goes along with the title, Will It Fly?. Do you remember the story of my son's third birthday when I was talking about being so excited. I wanted to show him a paper airplane. Paper airplanes were a thing my dad and I did all of the time so when he turned three I knew he could understand them.

I actually built a paper airplane and threw it and he was mesmerized. It was like magic. I had folded a piece of paper and made magic happen. Of course, being a three-year-old boy, he was so excited that he wanted to do the same thing himself. But before I could even instruct him how to fold the wings, because there is a certain way to do it, he started crumpling paper and would pretend to fold it.

He didn't know what he was doing. It is obviously very easy to imagine a kid doing that. Then he came up with something that looked more like a boat. It obviously wasn't going to fly but I told him to throw it. He threw it and it didn't go anywhere. He threw it again and it didn't go anywhere. But then he said, "I hate paper airplanes."

**Amy:** Ohhhh.

**Pat:** He just tried two times and I didn't teach him. But that's how a lot of people build their businesses.

**Amy:** It's true.

**Pat:** They see somebody doing something and they go through similar motions, I guess you could say, and then they see what happens. It doesn't work and they just think they suck and it isn't for them. But nobody was there to help them engineer their wings. I just couldn't end his paper airplane career like this. We had to fix it.

I told him to watch me and follow what I did. I told him to fold this, fold that. It is a really simple dart design. He ended up folding one that was pretty close and he threw it and it flew...a little bit...but it flew. And he was so excited because he took a thing that was just paper and that is sort of like your idea. You are taking this idea and you have to fold it in a certain way and test it to see if it's actually going to fly.

Now he is a paper airplane machine because everyday in the morning I go downstairs and there are paper airplanes strewn on the floor. I'm not even kidding. It's so fun. It's cool because now he is trying new designs and trying different ways. He's not afraid to fail anymore. He knows that failure at the beginning was just part of the process. The more iterations he goes through the more likely he is to find something that works.

**Amy:** Imagine the confidence you will have when you actually do take yourself through the entire validation process and feel really good that you did the homework, learned more about your audience, you know why you are doing it and who you are doing it for. When you start putting everything in motion by spending the time, money, and energy on it you have something to back it up.

So many people, like you said, don't do the work up front so they are kind of flying blind. That is a really scary feeling in the online marketing world, for sure.

**Pat:** Totally.

**Amy:** That is most of my audience. So tell us where you can get the book and also tell us about the bonuses and extras.

**Pat:** There are bonuses that are available. The book can be found at <http://www.willitflybook.com>. A lot of people give bonuses with their books and a lot of people have things so that you can download worksheets and whatnot. I wanted to see if there was a different way I could do it.

**Amy:** That is so you to just take it to a different level.

**Pat:** I created a free online course. This course is laid out in the exact same way the book is laid out chapter by chapter.

**Amy:** Love it!

**Pat:** As you are reading the book you can go into the chapters in what I call the companion course and you can download the worksheets that are there for that particular part of the book you are reading. You can see videos of me walking you through some of the more

difficult parts or the parts I felt people needed a little bit more motivation for. You can go and get the links for all of the things mentioned in that particular chapter.

I thought that would be a fun way to enhance the experience of the book. I don't know if you watched Walking Dead, Amy...

**Amy:** Oh yea.

**Pat:** Every time before a new episode comes out they say to go to a website to get your story sync so that you can get an enhanced experience. You go on the website and it kind of plays as you are watching Walking Dead. You get behind the scenes. I wanted to see if I could do this with the book.

It is a really cool and fun way to get people to get involved in the book. Quite honestly, it's a way for me to collect email addresses too. I'm not going to lie and pretend that's not part of the process.

**Amy:** I think it's a genius strategy overall. It's a win-win. If they go to <http://www.willitflybook.com>, are you going to tell them how they can get access to the course?

**Pat:** Absolutely. It's in the first few pages of the book and it will be really fun and exciting for people.

**Amy:** I think this book is going to be a smashing hit. I have no doubt. I know how much love and all of your energy that you put into it. Everything you do, you do with purpose. This is going to be no exception. What would be your last parting words for someone that is thinking they might ought to pick up the book?

**Pat:** Pick it up. Thank you for being interested in it. If you have any questions about it, feel free to tweet me @patflynn. I don't want to force people to get it the moment it comes out because I know a lot of people will want to see how other people react to it too. But I would love for you to take part in the exercises. I think it will be very helpful. I know it has because I've not just created it from scratch. I have created it through validation of these exercises with other people too.

I'm walking the walk as much as I'm talking the talk.

**Amy:** You truly are. And congratulations for finally completing this book. I cannot wait for so many people to get their hands on it.

**Pat:** It's so scary. I'm so nervous.

**Amy:** I know. But it is so exciting though. You should be so excited and proud of yourself. Pat, thank you so much for being with us. I truly appreciate it. I want to encourage everyone to grab the book. I'll make sure to put a link to it in my show notes as well.

**Pat:** Thank you Amy. I appreciate you.

**Amy:** Alright. Take care everyone. I can't wait to connect with you again next week. Bye for now.

There you have it. I hope you enjoyed this interview with Pat. I know I always love talking to him. He has such great insights, tips, and tricks to help validate your big idea. Make sure to grab your copy at <http://www.willitflybook.com>. And I cannot wait to connect with you again next week.

Until then, make it a great week. Bye for now.

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/95>