

# 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 #133

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/133>

**Amy Porterfield:** Welcome back to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. I'm your host, Amy Porterfield. Tell me this. Have you ever actually hated yet loved doing something at the same time? Maybe you are completely passionate about it, even really good at, yet you feel like you struggle with it every single time.

That's how it sometimes feels when you're creating an online course. That's why I'm dedicating an entire special episode to the mysteries of the product creation process. Specifically, what the heck you do when you get stuck.

I feel the most common reason we get stuck when creating a course is that it's tough to focus. I hear this one all the time from my students. I recently saw a post on Facebook. It said, "Anyone else out there having a hard time nailing down their course content? I feel like I have so many good pieces but I don't know where to start."

That happens all the time.

I want to dive into what you do when you have all of these great ideas circling around in your head and you really want to get them out into the world but you're not really sure what to do about all this content.

We're going to dive into that today but before we do we have a special sponsor for this episode.

If you are a freelancer, coach, or consultant I want to share a tool with you to help you manage the chaos that often happens when you're juggling

multiple clients and multiple projects. FreshBooks just released a new version of their cloud accounting software.

It's been redesigned from the ground up and custom built for exactly the way you work. It's the simplest way to get more productive, organized, and most importantly get you paid.

You can create and send professional-looking invoices in less than 30 seconds, set up online payments with just a couple of clicks, and you can even see when your client has opened your invoice to stop all the guessing games.

FreshBooks is offering a 30-day unrestricted free trial to all of my listeners. To claim it all you need to go is go to [www.FreshBooks.com/amy](http://www.FreshBooks.com/amy) and enter Online Marketing Made Easy in the How Did You Hear About Us section.

Let's get to it. I have a good friend who is having this very challenge right now around focusing on her course content. She's been teaching her content around reinventing yourself for years. The girl is a pro when it comes to her core topic. She knows this content. She can recite it in her sleep.

Maybe some of you can relate. She is really good with what she teaches but she's never put it into an online course. When it came time to actually sit down and get all of her ideas into a really nice outline it was almost like her mind went blank.

I sat down with her and told her there are some questions you need to ask yourself to get started when you're thinking about taking all that you know and putting it into a course.

The #1 question is: What's your outcome for the course? I'm actually talking about your business outcome. How will this course that you want to create support your business? Is it going to be a supplement to your

coaching and consulting services or is it going to eventually be the main thing to leverage your time and effort so that you're not always dealing with coaching clients? Is this going to be something you're going to start with but you're going to build a product suite?

You may not have all the answers to these questions but you need to at least start to think about them. How would a course actually fit into your business model? Are you looking to create a course to totally change your business model?

You guys have probably heard me talk about this so much so I won't get into all the details. But when I first started my online business I started out as a consultant. I would consult for Social Media Management. I had about eight different clients during my first two years of business.

If you have ever heard the story, you know I hated that business model. I wasn't good at juggling a bunch of clients and I was such a "yes" girl at the time I had no boundaries. It just became completely overwhelming.

I didn't manage it well. In looking back I could have done a much better job. But I just knew that wasn't the business model I wanted to have. So I decided to start creating online courses to actually change my business model.

Today creating courses and selling my courses online is my #1 revenue driver; #2 would be some small affiliate partnerships that I have. But other than that the only way I make money is with my online courses. It's become my entire foundation for my online business.

At the time it was always my goal to do that. It just took a while to get there so there was a time when I was still taking clients and I was promoting my courses. I was kind of in that in-between transition into a new business model.

If you're struggling with your business model and you're not sure where you want to go with it or you know where you want to go but are not sure how to get there, I did create a podcast episode called Where Do I Start. It walks you through the different phases of your business ([Episode #105](#)) and it might be a really valuable episode for you.

Getting back to things, what's your outcome for the course as it pertains to your business. The second question you want to ask is: What's the biggest pain point that must be solved right now for your core audience.

That phrase, "right now", is actually really important. There are probably a few different things you can solve for your core audience, especially if you know your content well and you've been teaching on it for a while.

But you need to figure out where they are starting from. I'll get into that a little bit more when we talk about the type of course you're going to create. So hold that thought and I'll come back to it.

Question #3: Which topic would be support those core outcomes and pain points? What is the best possible way I can get my students from Point A to Point B as quickly as possible? A is the problem and B is the result.

That's a really important question to ask. You can't solve every problem they have with one course. That is never, ever the goal.

Right now if you have so much content circling around in your head, I'm going to repeat it one more time, ask the question, "What is the best possible way I can get my students from Point A (their problem right now) to Point B (the results I know I can get them) as quickly as possible?"

Let's be honest, your students want to get there yesterday. They want to get there as soon as possible so that is definitely part of the equation when you're thinking about what you're going to include in your course in terms of content.

These three questions should help you get some momentum to begin narrowing your focus. Tony Robbins always says, “Where focus goes energy flows.”

Once you decide on a topic and commit to it you will feel your creative energy increase.

I know for many of you it can be agonizing to decide which content you keep and which content you not put into your program. It’s almost like you have a bunch of kids and you have to pick out your favorite.

For some of you it’s even more dramatic and it’s a case of Sophie’s Choice. It’s agonizing to you to figure out what you’re going to keep in and what you’re going to take out.

I want to help you with this just a bit and put it into a different perspective. You want to think about where your core audience is in this very moment. If you have been connecting with your audience and have been talking to them online and listening to them you probably already have a good sense as to where they would be starting out if you would introduce your content to them.

When you ask that question, and I’ll give you an example of my friend who did this, you need to decide if it’s better to create an introductory course for your core audience or a signature course.

For those of you who aren’t really familiar with the difference between the two, let me just break them down quickly. If you are creating an introductory course you are basically creating the getting-started point for your core audience.

This course is going to be packed with value but it doesn't unveil every single step or the entire framework of your content from start to finish. It's more of an opportunity to get them started.

With an introductory course you can definitely get into specifics. You can give exercises, recommendations, and you can definitely teach them exactly what they need to know to get from Point A to Point B but Point B, which is the results, might not be the whole shebang.

Let me give you an example. When I created my first program it was FB Influence. FB Influence was a starter guide for Facebook. It was for those that were not familiar with the Facebook platform. This was years ago so there were a lot more people that didn't know how to use Facebook for business.

It helped them get started. It set up their Facebook page, ad images, let them know what to post. There was a little bit with Facebook ads but just getting started. It was enough to get somebody results and momentum but it wasn't going to shape their entire Facebook marketing plan.

If I did give them something to shape their entire Facebook marketing plan, knowing where they were at in the moment, it would have been way too overwhelming and they would have never gotten through my course.

I knew who I wanted to market to and I knew where they were starting. I decided to do an introductory course. With an introductory course it's usually a price point that is very affordable. One of the most popular price points for an introductory course is \$97.

It is something most people can afford and that makes it a little bit easier to sell. If you're brand new at all of this, that might be appealing to you.

A signature course is a little bit different. A signature course is usually the work you are most excited to create for your students. Most people are

more passionate about the signature course content than they are the introductory course.

When it comes to a signature course, it's specific and detailed but it involves multiple layers. Your introductory course can be specific and detailed, for sure. It should be. But it doesn't involve multiple layers.

A signature course usually takes people a lot more time to get through. It takes more effort and more energy. It's not just a jumping off point for your students but is diving deep. That's what a signature course does.

It is truly the entire framework from start to finish that leads to a transformation. It doesn't mean the signature course is every piece of content you've ever created and taught.

It just means it is an entire framework so that with Point A to Point B, the Point B is a very specific and true transformation whether it be in their finances, their relationships, their health, their business, or whatever it might be; at the end they feel totally transformed.

You might be wondering how you decide between an introductory course and a signature course. There are a few different things you want to look at.

First, the level of understanding you have about your students needs and wants plays a huge part. Knowing where they are starting from and what they need right now will help you decide if you should do an introductory course or a signature course.

Let me break it down with one more example. I have a course called Webinars That Convert. Webinars That Convert helps people who already have a course market their course. Or, if you have a really good idea and you want to build a live online workshop you can sell it on the webinar and deliver it live afterwards online.

This would not be a course for someone just starting out wanting to get their feet wet with online marketing. If they're just starting their blog and they want to start trying a little bit of social media marketing and doing some guest blog posting or are maybe thinking about creating a podcast, that is not the audience for Webinars That Convert.

I have another course, List Builders Lab. It is definitely for those just starting out who are not really sure what they are going to sell but they want to start building their email list because they see the value there.

That would be more of an introductory course for someone to get their feet wet, start trying some more online marketing strategies, and start thinking about what they might want to create as a course so they can start the conversation in their head and eventually be ready for my Webinars That Convert program.

I have a mix of introductory and signature courses because I've created a product suite over the years. It took me a while to get there. So you might want to start thinking about what a product suite would look like. It doesn't have to be set in stone.

I believe that starting with an introductory course, if that does speak to the needs of your audience, is one of the easier ways to go for a course creator just starting out.

Another thing you want to think about when deciding between an introductory course and a signature course is your depth of knowledge on your course topic. I've been using an example of somebody that has been teaching their content for years and years. They just haven't yet laid it out into an online course.

Maybe this topic for you is fairly new. When I taught FB Influence, the introductory course for Facebook, I don't think I was ready in my



knowledge or skill set to teach a full-blown Facebook marketing plan course. That's one of the reasons why I started with an introductory course.

Once I had the introductory course and I got into the Facebook group and started talking to my customers, I became more educated in what they needed. I did my research and improved my skill set and knowledge around Facebook.

I did eventually create a Facebook marketing course called Facebook Marketing Profit Lab. That came after my introductory course so it made it easier for me to ease into a bigger course with a lot more layers.

Another thing to think about is your confidence in teaching what you know, your ability to get results. It's one thing if you know a lot about your course topic. But have you gotten results for either yourself or preferably other people?

If you don't have a lot of results for other people under your belt you probably don't want to dive into a full signature course. You never want to create a course until you've gotten results for somebody. That somebody just might be you.

I know a lot of people who have cracked the code to depression in their lives or to the fact they have always been overweight and they finally figured out how to lose the weight and keep it off. They have created courses based on their own personal transformation. That's totally fine.

But you definitely have to have a proven track record before you actually create your course. That is really important because with every course you are promising some level of results. So you need that track record to back it up.

Another thing to think about when you're going for an introductory course versus a signature course is the revenue goals and expectations. Obviously, if you're selling a \$97 course and you want to make a million dollars this year with that course then you're going to be selling a whole heck of a lot of courses and that's not necessarily easy to do.

You have to really set your own expectations. If you're going to create a signature course you have to know how much you can charge for it versus if you create an introductory course. You would then have to sell a whole lot more to get to your goals. That is just something to think about.

One piece of advice that might surprise you is that the number of modules and lessons inside your course should not determine if it's an introductory course or a signature course. This one is really important.

When I created FB Influence I think there were 20 different training videos. When I created Webinars That Convert there were about 20 training videos. They are just at a deeper level inside Webinars That Convert than they would ever be with an introductory course.

The number of modules and lessons and cheat sheets and all that does not determine if it's an introductory course or signature course. I've seen signature courses that have five videos total. That is not a determining factor.

The determining factor is how deep you are going to go and the level of transformation you are going to promise with the results in your course. That is just something to think about. Don't force it. Teach what you know.

To help solidify all of this, let's get back to my friend who is creating her first online course. First, she looked at her business. She knew although she's been teaching this content forever she's never put it into an online course.

Starting simple was going to allow her to do a really good job without getting in over her head. Part of the reason she chose an introductory course was that she knew she didn't want to bite off more than she could chew in the beginning. She wanted to give it a really good focus but not get in over her head.

She also had a really big magazine spread coming up really soon. She wanted to optimize the exposure as quickly as possible. So she decided that starting with an introductory course was a good business decision because she could get it done a whole lot quicker and really optimize the magazine spread that was coming out because she would get a lot of traffic to her website and her course would be done.

When you're making the decision between introductory and signature, one of the things you want to consider is that an introductory course typically takes a lot less time to get done. You're not going as deep. It's not as stressful for the course creator.

She looked at it and thought that time needs to be on her side. She went with something a little more simple.

When she looked at her audience to make the decision between introductory and signature, she had already surveyed her audience recently. She was very active with them inside of a private Facebook group that she had created about six months ago.

She had created a free private Facebook group where she was the leader of the group and anybody could join and she had this great rapport with them. She was very aware of where they were in their process and their knowledge and desire to reinvent themselves.

That's what the whole group was about. She formed a group around the topic of her potential course and I thought that was really smart. Getting out ahead of it is always a good idea.

When it came to her specific topic of reinventing herself she was aware that her audience was in the just-getting-started phase. They loved the idea although they didn't totally understand what it meant.

They wanted to see some changes in their lives but they weren't at the place where they were ready to jump in with both feet and totally immerse themselves and go for it. She knew that's what it takes to get the big, big results but her audience wasn't there yet.

It was her job to lead them to want that total transformation. So, a great thing she could do is just start them out with putting a toe in the water. And that's what her introductory course would do.

Dipping your toe in the water might not sound like a big deal. But it could be a big deal if you do it right. If they start to see some change happen and start to learn a different way of thinking or different way of looking at their problem and start to dabble with some exercises to get them used to the idea that change is possible for them, that's what an introductory course can do.

It gets results, it's just not the total transformation. It is something to consider as you start to decide what kind of course you are going to create.

For those of you who are considering an introductory course versus doing a signature course I know the next question you are thinking. It is likely, "What do I do with all of the content that doesn't fit into my introductory course?"

Remember, because sometimes it feels like Sophie's Choice, it is almost agonizing to let go of some of your really good content. Before you even get started with your course I want you to create a special online document.

Use Google Docs or Evernote, whatever works best for you and whatever is really easy to access at any time of day when you get an idea. I want you to name that document My Next Course.

That is what you are going to do first, before you even start to create the content for your first course. Then as you are creating your outline for your course content and as you get into all of the details of what you want to include and an idea comes to you that is so, so good but doesn't fit into your current program, jump over to your "My Next Course" document and put in your ideas there.

Anything you think about that you think would be so good but can't be included should be put into your Google.doc. That way all of your ideas are safe and you don't have the anxiety of, "What about this? What about that? They need to know this."

Having a safe place to keep all of your content ideas is paramount because it eliminates the thought in your mind that sounds a bit like this, "I must include this piece. It's so good. I have to teach it or I'll be doing my audience a huge disservice. They need this so bad."

I know that voice because my friend has tried it on me a million times. When I talk to her about creating her outline and eliminating some content she would always go down this road of talking about her content almost like she was teaching me the content.

Her eyes would glaze over and she would be rattling off about amazing content here and there and was trying to teach it to me. She would lose herself in her content every single time.

That's when I told her she needed to create the Google.doc. When you have an idea put it in there for your next course but stay true to what this course is all about and what this course is promising.

The truth is that your audience likely does need this content that you feel so passionate about. But they don't need it now. If you pile on all of your content into one course you are totally derailing the progress of your students because you're creating overwhelm and confusion for them.

Holding back on content creation is a very responsible move as a course creator.

One thing I haven't said yet is that when you are creating your course, and we're now going to get into your course outline, your goal is to create a roadmap. It should be very, very clear where your core audience is starting out inside your course, what they are going to do step by step, and what it will take to get to the end result you've promised.

The roadmap should be clear to you and clear to them. And the extra content that doesn't fit but is oh so good is like total obstacles in the roadmap that will fully derail your audience.

I want you to picture it in your head, this beautiful, clean roadmap from Point A to Point B. There might be some squiggly lines and mountains and hills to get over to get from Point A to Point B and that's okay. That's called life and that's going to happen inside your course because they are human.

It's not going to be all smooth sailing. But if you picture this roadmap and then you just dump a bunch of boulders in there anywhere you want, those boulders are actually your extra content that shouldn't be there. It makes it really difficult to get to the finish line.

If you think about it that way, pull back, put the extra content into your My Next Course document and leave it there for now. It will actually allow you to breathe a little easier as well because your mind is not racing with so many ideas.

Now we're moving into the next common reason most people get stuck in their course creation process. It's all about the outline.

Personally, I actually get stuck in the outline too. There are a few reasons. Sometimes it feels the content just isn't flowing correctly. Or, I'm trying to stick too much stuff in. We've talked about that enough. I also get distracted by all of the other content and forget the original outcome.

I get so close to my content, even if it's the right content to put in my course, and I forget what the outcome is. These reasons are why it sometimes makes it tough to create an outline.

The solution for all of these is to go back to your end result. I am creating this course to solve a real and specific problem and that problem is "fill in the blank."

Always come back to what it is that you're solving. Maybe you might even need to put a post-it note in front of you when you're writing your outline. Maybe it is a bright orange post-it so that it really stands out. Write what you're promise is for the course so that you keep coming back to that promise.

Of course I want you to think in terms of that roadmap and about where your customer needs to start, the landmarks they need to hit along the way, and where they ultimately need to end up.

That vision of your roadmap can definitely keep you on track while you're creating your outline.

I always encourage my students to take a solid week to create their course outline. That doesn't mean every waking hour of the day is spent working on your outline. It actually means you need a little white space in between outline creation.

In my Courses That Convert program I actually break this down into four phases. I encourage my students to work on these four phases but after they've worked on Phase I for an hour they get up, walk around, hydrate, get some fresh air, and then come back to it. That's the white space.

You can't just force this or it's going to be a horrible experience. The outline part is hard. This is where it all comes back to "I have so much content and so much to give and I want to vomit it all up in one course." That's the reality of how some of us feel.

This is the time we have to give ourselves some space and remind ourselves we're not going to do that.

I'm going to break up the four phases. The first phase is to brainstorm. This step will take you the most time out of all of the four phases. I suggest you initially take one full hour and brain dump your entire course content into a Google.doc or Evernote file (whatever you want to use).

You will then come back to it the next day and spend another 30 minutes to hour brain dumping some more. Get it all out. Include everything. No ideas are bad ideas or good ideas. There's no judgment. You don't need to know exactly how you will teach the content. You will likely need to research content further.

That's not what we're doing here. We're just getting all the ideas that are in our head and we are getting them onto a Google.doc. Again, we're not refining here. We're not cleaning up. We're not organizing. We're just doing a brain dump.

The goal here is to get everything out of your head and into a document.

Phase 2 is to organize. This is where you will start to shape your content. Sequence and syntax are paramount inside any online training course. Pay close attention to how you plan to unveil the content to your students.



A good starting point in this phase is to start organizing your content into modules and then into lessons. You will likely find yourself moving things around a bunch until everything starts to feel like it's in the perfect sequence.

This is a time where you probably want to have two tabs open. In the brainstorming session you just put everything in your head into that document. I can guarantee you there is a lot of content in there that needs to be copied and then pasted into the My Next Course Google.doc you created and then deleted from the actual brainstorm document you are working on now.

During Phase 2, the organize phase, you will likely want to move some stuff over to your My Next Course document.

In the organizing phase you are looking for your flow like step by step, a process, or a system you can teach inside your course. You want it to be simple to follow and you want it to be complete.

If you are a mind mapper this is a good time to start chunking things out into a mind map. I hate mind maps so that's not my jam. But if it is for you then go for it.

Now you are moving into the streamline phase. As you streamline your outline get into your potential customer's head. Are you leaving any key distinctions out? Does any content seem confusing or out of place? Will they be able to follow along? Are you seeing a roadmap from start to finish?

That's what you're looking for in the streamline phase. Once you do that you can move into the final phase, the enhance phase. In the enhance phase it's all about finding the areas where you could add a little extra support.

Enhancing means adding cheat sheets, checklists, short guides, anything that could be a PDF so that you can enhance your students' experience, give them a little extra support (maybe a document to troubleshoot something they might have trouble with along the way) so that you can enhance your content with extra material.

That's what I do as my last phase of my outlining process. I find the places where I could add cheat sheets, checklists, exercises, and whatever it might be. Using the word "enhance" just enhances the whole experience.

The final thing I want you to do once you have your full outline completed, I would love for you to find somebody to send it to in order to have a second pair of eyes on it. I feel many of us are a little bit too close to our own content and it's always nice to have somebody else take a look at what you've done.

Either choose somebody that knows your content well or you can choose somebody that might be a great potential customer for your course. You want them to look at the entire outline and you want them to let you know if they see a flow from start to finish with the content.

Ask if they see how it could be a roadmap. Are there any areas that are confusing? Do they think you are missing anything? Does it start at the right spot for where your audience is?

You've got to find the right person to review it for you but you also want them to be brutally honest and not afraid to hurt your feelings by saying something's off with it. They need to be able to tell you, "This isn't working for me and here's why." That feedback from one person would be really, really valuable.

Once you have your outline completely finished and somebody has looked at it and you've reengineered it in any way you need to, it's time to then

move all of the content over to scripts that you're going to use to record direct to camera (you may want to be on camera teaching your content) or you can move the content in the outline over to a slide deck series where you actually create a slide deck for each of your lessons in your course.

The outline should show where there is a module and where there are lessons. Each of my courses has a series of modules (let's say five modules), and in each module there might be three to five lessons. The lessons are the actual video recordings where I teach the content.

The module is the big picture and underneath each module are the lessons. For me, I will have multiple slide deck presentations. Each of them represents a different lesson. It takes me a good week to move everything from my outline into my slide decks for each lesson.

Give yourself some time. Don't think that happens really fast. You definitely have to think about what content you're going to include, what images you're going to include, and all that good stuff.

Here's the good news. Once you have all of your slide deck presentations finished, if that's the way you're going to go, then it's time to record. The biggest lesson I've ever learned, because I've created a lot of online courses, is that I never want to start recording any of my lessons until my slide decks are 100% complete.

In the past I would create the slide deck presentation for lesson one and then I would record it, edit it, and be done. I would then go on to lesson two. As I was recording lesson two I would realize, oh holy cow, I totally forgot to mention XYZ in lesson one.

Now my syntax is off and now it's a little bit confusing and now I have to go back and add in the section, reedit it, etc. It's so annoying. So if I could give you any piece of advice as to how to lay it all out into a slide deck and then record it, I want you to do it in just that sequence.

First finish all of your slide decks. Next do the recording/editing, or have someone else edit. That has definitely saved me so much heartache because I was able to refine my course even more as I worked the outline content into my slide decks.

Hopefully that helps you just a bit as well.

There you have it. I hope you found some valuable tips and strategies for getting unstuck with your course creation process. Here's some good news. It definitely gets easier as you have a few courses under your belt.

I remember how incredibly painful my first course creation process was. I never want to go back to that moment. I also didn't have a lot of feedback or insight on how to do it. I was completely winging it and I never suggest that.

However, when I started to create a few more courses over the years I definitely saw that it was getting easier. Here's where it gets easier. Once you've done it a few times and you sit down to create your new outline the roadmap I talked about becomes a little bit more clear right from the get go.

You've done it before. By now you will likely understand your audience more, what they need, and what they want. Your business has grown so you understand the direction you want to go and that roadmap becomes more clear faster.

When that happens you are able to put your content together in a flow and be really confident that this is the way you want to take your audience from the beginning of Point A to Point B.

Everything gets a whole lot more clear. That clarity offers a lot of confidence in what you're doing. You definitely have that to look forward to if you're just starting out.

The moral of the story is that it does get easier. I want to thank you so much for tuning in.

Before we wrap up, a final word about our sponsor. If you're currently a freelancer, coach, or consultant and you're juggling multiple clients, I want to encourage you to check out FreshBooks. They just released a new version of their cloud accounting software.

It's been custom built for exactly the way you work. Plus, it helps you get paid more quickly. You can create and send professional-looking invoices in less than 30 seconds, set up online payments with just a few clicks, and you can even see when somebody looks at your invoice so there's no more guessing games.

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Thanks again for being here. I cannot wait to connect with you again next week. Bye for now.

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