THE ULTIMATE TOOLBOX FOR CREATING & SELLING ONLINE COURSES
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Intro

After years of creating and selling online courses and helping hundreds of people to create and sell profitable online courses, I’ve realized one of the biggest obstacles for people to share their knowledge online is to know what tools to use.

In this comprehensive guide I’m giving you a list of all the tools that you can use to quickly and efficiently share your knowledge with the world.

I’m not a fan of spending a ton of money on super professional tools. Most of the tools below are easy to use by a non-techie and won’t you break the bank.

As a rule of thumb, remember that there are always more expensive and better tools to invest in, but a more professional and higher priced tool doesn’t always mean it’s “better” for you and your needs.

If you are like me, you are looking for tools that make your courses look amazing but at the same time don’t need a professional person to spend hours and hours to set up.

I like to be able to setup my studio in 5 minutes, get in front of the camera and record my video. And right away upload the video to my streaming site like YouTube or Vimeo and have it available for the world to use in just a few minutes.

I’ll also share with you some sites where you can find professional help for a very reasonable price. On these sites you can find any service from a virtual assistant who works 40 hours/week to a graphic designer to design your logo and blueprints to a video editor or music composer to an animation creator to make you a nice explainer video and more.

Also I’ll share with you some membership and landing page building platforms. Since I’m not a techie, the tools that I and my students use are simple to use and easy to setup.
About The Author
Hi, my name is Iman Aghay and I’m the creator of Ultimate Course Formula training series and the founder of one of the largest information marketing academies in the world, Success Road Academy.

For the past 10 years, I’ve been teaching entrepreneurs how to use their knowledge and expertise to help people live a better life while they are building a successful business for themselves.

At this point, after being on the stage for more than 800 times, writing a best-selling book, hosting one of the most popular podcasts on Blog Talk Radio and having more than 4000 hours of coaching experience, I can tell you that I wholeheartedly believe that there are no better strategies in the world than educating others to live a better life while you are building a successful business for yourself by creating and selling online courses.

Now don’t get me wrong, I love being on the stage and presenting live and doing webinars, and I’m constantly invited to podcasts, radio shows and TV programs, but if I didn’t have my online courses to help thousands of people without being personally involved, I would not be able to build one of the largest information marketing academies in the world with over 15,000 trainees in the past 3 years alone.

I know I’m not alone in this. Many of you have a message in your heart that can help others live much better lives, and I believe it’s our responsibility and life purpose to bring that message out and share it with as many people as possible.

Both you and those people deserve this. You deserve it because you should enjoy financial, location and time freedom that many people who share their knowledge online do. You also deserve it because there is almost no higher satisfaction than seeing peoples’ life quality improve because of the fact that you went out there and shared your message.

On the other hand, the people that need your message deserve it because you know how dramatically the things they are doing could be improved if they had the knowledge that you do or knew the tips and tricks that come to you as second nature.
So let’s get started and make this happen.

Let’s be heard by thousands of people.

Let’s share our knowledge and message online and change lives.

In this guide I’m simply sharing the best tools that most people can use fairly comfortably.

Also as a side note, I want you to know that some of the links in this report are my affiliate links. However, I am not recommending these tools because of their partnership programs, but because I use them on a daily basis and many of my students have had amazing success using them.

There are also a lot of other tools that I’m not listing here.

This report has been updated in early 2016. Prices, packages and features of some of the tools I’m recommending here may change.
Camera
One of the most common types of media to deliver content via online courses is video.

I always recommend using a camera with web-friendly quality. Higher-end cameras usually come with the hassle of having to modify the quality for the web.

In fact, I try to avoid anything that needs extensive editing. It’s better to create your courses with ease. That being said, I also, from time to time, hire a professional videographer with the best equipment to record and edit the videos with the highest quality possible for my courses. But generally, I use them for my live events.

But when I’m sitting in my home studio and want to quickly record a training session, I can’t afford to wait until my professional videographer is available. I just want to record my training and hit ‘upload’, not wait days or even weeks for the work to be ready.

And my small home studio with less than $1,000 investment helps me do just that.

Remember, I’m not tech-savvy either, so the tools I use have to be very simple.

Logitech C920
This camera revolutionized the online course industry. It records with HD quality and has a very good microphone.

If the room where you record is echo-proof, this camera and its built-in microphone are almost all you need to get started with creating your online courses.

Otherwise (i.e. sound bouncing off walls), you’ll need a better microphone than that of this camera.

Check the list of suggested microphones below.

When you use this microphone with a Windows computer, it automatically installs an application that is very easy to use. With a Mac, you’ll have to use “Photobooth”
which is also very user-friendly. For the audio settings on Mac, you should check the system’s audio settings since the camera doesn’t install its software on your computer.

You can get more information about this camera here

Logitech C930
Logitech C930 is the new generation of C920 and has better image quality.

However, at the time of writing this report, some Mac users have reported issues with getting this camera to work properly. It needs a third party software as Logitech doesn’t come with its own in the box, which is weird.

You can get more information about this camera here.

DSLR Cameras
You can also use DSLR cameras. They are far more professional than regular webcams but by using such cameras as Nikon D7000 or Canon 7D, you open the door to too many new features and unnecessary technical difficulties.

Also, keep in mind that DSLR cameras have only so much memory, and you need different apps to keep the camera rolling for more than 10-20 minutes of recording.

So, although they are great professional cameras, you don’t really want the headache unless you know a thing or two about handling them.
Lighting

3 things make a video look professional. High quality video, great lighting and very good audio.

When it comes to online videos, if you have HD 720 or 1080, you have as high quality a video as you possibly need, which you can easily achieve with a Logitech C920.

In the next section, we will also give more details about how to record the audio properly.

But if there is one thing that makes the whole difference in how your video looks, it is the “Lighting”.

The good news is that by simply using three soft light boxes you can get very good lighting at a very affordable price.

I use Chromakey Green Screen Soft Box Lighting and I usually get something over 3,000 watts.

Personally, I’m not a fan of Green Screens just because I don’t like to edit videos.

So I usually use a white screen.

There are so many lighting options out there and they regularly change, but Fancierstudio (see photo) can get the job done at a reasonable price. You can also find other options easily on e-Bay, Amazon or any other platform or store that you like shopping from.

The way I set them up is as follows:

Light 1 – to light up the right side of my face

Light 2 (overhead stand) – to light up my head and the left side of my face

Light 3 - to eliminate the shadows on the wall/screen behind me
Microphone
Audio quality is very important when recording content for your online courses. You need to make sure that you have great audio, otherwise your files won’t sound/look professional.

Yeti Blue
One of my favorite Microphones of all time. The combination of Logitech C920 and Yeti Blue has never let me down in producing video and audio of superb quality.

What I like about Yeti Blue is its versatility. You can take it with you (it’s big but it’s worth it) to record seminars, put it in the middle of round table and record everyone’s conversation, or simply use it to record an interview or a one-man show.

And it works with both Mac and Windows.
Audio Recording Devices

**Zoom H4N**

*Zoom H4N* can be used both as a microphone and as an audio recorder.

It records very professional quality sound and it’s used by many professional videographers as the backup sound system.

If you wish to have a great microphone that can also record and store high quality audio, *Zoom H4N* is the one tool you’ll need in your toolbox.

**Sony ICD PX 333**

This is a simple but efficient voice recorder.

If you want to record group conversations or dictate your book to a portable sound recorder and transcribe the files later, *Sony ICD PX 333* is an inexpensive and great device to have.

I have probably used mine for well over 500 hours of recording my thoughts as well as seminars and round tables.
Video Editing Tool
From time to time, I need to use a video editing tool though I try to avoid the task as much as I can. Oftentimes, we need to use video editing tools just to remove the beginning and end of our videos, when we walk in front of and away from the camera to hit the start/stop button.

If you are planning to use YouTube as your video delivery platform, then I highly recommend using YouTube video editor to. It’s much faster and it’s free.

However, if you wish to edit the videos further or upload them to other platforms like Vimeo or Wistia, then you will need to use other tools.

Always see what tool comes with your device in the box.

In Windows you usually have access to Windows Movie Maker Live. It’s a great simple tool to use to edit your videos and it’s free.

Mac comes with iMovie which pretty much covers all the basic editing needs you have.

But if you are looking for more professional tools use one of the following.

Camtasia
To record your screen or PowerPoint presentations, and for slightly more advanced and multilayered video editing, Camtasia is one of the most affordable and practical tools on the market.

I’ve been using Camtasia for many years, and it’s helped increase our speed of implementation dramatically.

Camtasia is compatible with both Mac and Windows.

Audio Editing Application
When it comes to recording audio training programs such as audio books or simply audio training series or podcasts, you will need to use an audio-editing application.
The good news is that one of the best tools for editing audio files is open source and free.

**Audacity**
This is simply one of the best audio editing tools out there and it’s absolutely free.

**Audacity** allows you to improve the quality of your audio recording, add music, edit, and so much more.

It’s compatible with both Mac and Windows.
Webinar Tools
If you wish to build your business on sharing knowledge and information, doing webinars is the ultimate way.

You can use webinars as part of your sales funnel or to train your students live. They have certainly helped my students and me to create online courses.

They allow us to get our content prepared between the live sessions. Especially when running beta versions of your courses, webinar tools help put together the course very quickly.

Also, I use this model for training classes where students need more support and want real-time answers to their questions. For example our Ultimate Course Formula training, includes 8 weekly live classes. During each class I ask our students what their challenges are with building their online course and help them to overcome them.

Another great way of using webinars is to do Webinar Conferences. These are intensive live webinar series in a short period of time. Think of them as multi-speaker conferences with, for example 12-speaker events over 3 days.

A webinar conference is the same; you will do 12 live webinars with different speakers over a 3-day period. All speakers help to promote the event and that’s how you build your mailing list and position yourself as the go-to expert in your field.

Webinar Jam
Webinar Jam is an amazing tool to use to do live webinars. I’m most probably one of the first users of Webinar Jam. I’ve done hundreds of live webinars with this service and barely experienced any technical issues. Just make sure to follow every step as advised.

One other thing is that if you want to run high quality webinars, you should have high speed internet and a good computer as well. Especially if, like me, you are planning to do Live Full HD Broadcasts.

What I particularly like about Webinar Jam is that it is built based on the work of two very successful online marketers, Andy Jenkins and Mike Filsaime. It has been
designed, from day one, with a marketing mindset. Though you can use it for educating your students, you’ll experience its real advantage when you put it in work for marketing purposes.

**Ever Webinar**
Ever Webinar is Webinar Jam’s sister product and is designed to replicate live webinars on an automatic basis.

So, if you want to build an evergreen sales funnel that has an automated webinar tool option, then Every Webinar is your best bet.

But I would do a few live webinars on Webinar Jam to master my content and conversion rate before automating my webinars using Ever Webinar.

**Google Hangout On Air**
Hangout On Air is a free tool offered by Google. It’s a great tool to educate others and share your knowledge and expertise, but it’s not designed for marketing purposes.

It uses the same technology as Webinar Jam minus the marketing advantage.

However, if you just want to experiment with a tool, then use Hangouts on Air. All you need is a Google+ account. To start a Hangout on Air, go to [https://plus.google.com/hangouts/onair](https://plus.google.com/hangouts/onair) and click on Create A Hangout On Air and follow the messages on the screen.
**Other webinar tools**
There are many more webinar tools that I’ve used.

I’ve been happy with many tools and unhappy with some. But after testing probably over 20 webinar tools, I’ve made my peace with Webinar Jam.

Many other tools have problems with recording the webinar properly or completely. Some have issues with mobile compatibility. And personally, I try to avoid any webinar tool that requires the attendees to install an app or an application on their devices.

Simply put, many of those tools are not designed to serve the purposes we need them for. Some are corporate presentation tools which are great for those environments, but for us, as online course creators, the recoding of our sessions and our students’ convenience are of the highest priorities. Also, the fact that many other tools are not specifically designed for marketing purposes makes them less appealing to me.
Teleseminar/Teleconference

One of the best ways to build your mailing list is doing telesummits. Also they are one of the best ways to create a course where you need other experts’ knowledge.

Let’s say I want to create a course on nutrition, something that I don’t have a lot of information on but am very passionate about. The strategy I’d go with is to do a telesummit. I invite 20-30 nutrition experts and interview them each for 30 to 90 minutes. This builds one of the best courses in nutrition, and I don’t even need to be an expert in the area. You don’t even need to pay the experts. They are more than willing to be on your show for publicity. All you need to do is choose a name for the course that entices the experts to take part.

Obviously, you can use the same strategy in an area that you have expertise as well, and add a lot of value to your subscribers.

And finally, you can use Teleseminar tools to do group coaching calls.

Maestro Conference

Maestro Conference is without a doubt my favorite among all Teleconference tools.

Maestro Conference gives you access to some unique features on top of all the regular ones other teleconference tools offer.

One of those features is the ability to do break-out sessions.

Let’s say you are holding a call with 10 students and you want to give them an exercise that they need to do in groups of 2. You can easily create 5 groups with the Maestro Conference while you are live on the session and allow students to talk in pairs privately, and after a few minutes bring them all back to the group call.

You can also go inside each private group and have a conversation with members, give them feedback and then move to the next group.

So think about this functionality as if you were holding a live in-person event with roundtables where you could allow people to do some exercises with the other
members at the same table and you could walk between the groups and give them feedback.

You can also have assistants and use their help during your session.

I have personally used Maestro Conference to run several mastermind groups. The format that I used to follow was to teach my students for a few minutes and then put them in smaller groups to report on their progress and set goals for the next week.

**Instant Teleseminar**

The other teleseminar tool that I really like is Instant Teleseminar.

It allows you to present your PowerPoint and also have up to 50,000 people on your calls. This is very important as you do more telesummits.
Transcription Service
Writing is a challenge to many people. If you’re one of them, one way to bypass the challenge is to have your recordings transcribed using transcription services.

You can also get a virtual assistant to help you make a handout of your training, which you can then compile into a course together with the audio/video.

One of my favorite ways of creating courses is what I call “Combination Production”.

In this model, I do a live webinar using Webinar Jam. The video file (recording of the webinar) gets automatically uploaded to my YouTube channel. Then we separate the audio file and video file and end up with the audio training which is sent to a transcriber.

I usually speak about 150 words per minute. So, a one-hour webinar is about 9,000 words. After editing and removing the non-educational parts, we usually end up with about 6,000 words of content. An average blog post is about 500 words. So, usually an hour of audio gives us about 12 blog posts. And a 120 page book or ebook is about 30,000 words. So, by doing 5 one-hour webinars, I can actually write a book.

In other words, by doing live webinars I can:

- Build my list through the webinar registration.
- Create content for my YouTube channel.
- Have audio training that can be uploaded as podcasts.
- Create blog posts and books using the transcription.

And all I’m personally involved with is the one hour live talk that I give. The rest is done by my assistants and through automated systems.

Fiverr
A great place to find virtual assistants to do almost any technical and non-technical admin job for your business is Fiverr.com.
Usually after a while working with Fiverr, you build a reliable team and keep going back to the same people for the service.

You can easily find a good transcriber for about $5 per 10-15 minutes. So transcribing a one hour file would probably cost you about 20 to 30 dollars.

If your speak at a rate close to mine, each hour of audio/video you produce contains about 6,000 words worth of educational content, which you can have transcribed at a bargain cost of $30.

On Fiverr you can also find graphic designers, voice over artists, animation creators, copywriters and many more service providers.

**Internet Transcribers**
Another transcribing service is Internet Transcribers.

They are relatively inexpensive and usually do a good job of transcribing.

If you are in rush and need your file in one or two days, they might be a great place to go to.
**Royalty Free Image Service**

Images are an important part of how people feel about your course and content.

When using images though, you must always make sure that you have the right to use the artwork.

The sites below provide you with free or inexpensive royalty free artwork and images that you can use for your designs.

Make sure to purchase the right licenses for the image you are planning to use.

**Pixabay**

Pixabay is a great site for accessing high quality photos for free.

What I like about Pixabay is that most of the artwork on the site doesn’t require you to give an attribution to the creator.

There are many other sites that you can get a free photo from but you have to link back to their site and give attribution to the artist, which is generally fine, but when you are designing a PowerPoint or on a video sales letter those links and attributions distract your audience.

**Fototlia Damn Deposit Photos**

Fotolia and DepositPhotos.com are two of my favorite paying photo sites.

They have a great collection of high-quality, inexpensive photos.

So, if worse comes to worst, and you can’t find what you’re looking for on Pixabay, make sure to check out these two sources.
Digital Products and Book Cover Creator
When it comes to ebooks and other digital products, you always want to show people a picture of the product.

A great free website that helps you design a cover for your product is Adazing.

When you have designed the basic cover, go to this site and it will help you to put it on your book or digital product.
Outsourcing Sites
Building a business online involves a lot of technical and admin work that simply distracts you from doing what you do best, creating value.

The following websites can help you outsource such tasks by offering inexpensive virtual assistants and experts.

Fiverr
As mentioned previously, you can use Fiverr for many purposes.

Personally, I find Fiverr very effective for transcriptions and graphic design work.

Also, just by going through the gigs that service providers post on Fiverr, you get a lot of ideas about different things that you can add to your business at a very low cost.

Online Jobs
OnlineJobs.ph is probably the main site that I go to when I want to hire a part time or full time virtual assistant.

This site allows you to connect with Filipino workers. The exchange rate and low living costs in the Philippines in comparison to North America make working with Filipino workers very affordable for us. Also, many Filipinos speak English very well with easy-to-understand accents.

You can find a very good employee on this site for about $400/month which by the way is a lot of money in the Philippines and most likely more than they could make if they were to get a similar job locally.
**Freelancer**
If you have an hourly project or contract type work to build a website for example, one of the sites that you can look into is Freelancer.com
I used Freelancer for many years before I hired full-time employees.
You can find experts in Graphic Design, Web Design, Search Engine Optimization, Video Editing, Transcription and more on Freelancer.com
Make sure to check out the service providers rating and communicate well with them before you do any hiring.
Start with a smaller project and when you are satisfied with their work and how well they communicate, give them more work.

**Upwork (Odesk and Elance)**
Upwork is the result of the merger of two leading freelance websites, Odesk and Elance.
It provides more or less the same services as Freelancer, and you can switch between the two.
Autoresponders/mailing list tools
You have probably heard that “money is in your list” or “your list is your retirement”. If you want to build an online business, the first and most important thing you need to build is your mailing list. You probably hear this from all the experts.

And when it comes to building your list, you want to build it based on a reliable, user-friendly platform.

You also want to make sure that your platform offers some more advanced automation capabilities as your business grows.

Aweber
I’ve worked with many different email marketing platforms. But hands down, I can't think of a more user-friendly system than Aweber with high deliverability rate and the ability to add automation tools in the future as your business expands.

What I like the most about Aweber is the fact that you can add another tool to it called AW Pro Tools.

AW Pro Tools
By adding AW Pro Tools to your Aweber account, you suddenly turn your regular autoresponder tool to a powerhouse online marketing machine.

AW Pro Tools give you the power to add tags to your links and move people automatically from one campaign to another.

Let’s say for example a person joins your mailing list for a free gift, and through one of the emails you send to them, they decided to sign up for a webinar. With the regular email marketing tools, under such circumstances, the subscriber starts receiving two sets of emails, one for the regular list they signed up for and one for webinar reminders.
With **AW Pro Tools**, you can easily move the subscriber to the webinar list so they continue receiving the webinar reminder emails, and after attending the webinar, they will automatically be moved to another marketing campaign that suits them based on their action on the webinar.

Now, these advanced online marketing functions may not be your priority as you are starting out, but if you start with a wrong tool, you won’t be able to expand your business when you need to due to the limitation of your tools.

That’s why I highly recommend you start with **Aweber** from the get go, so you can grow later on with the least hassle.
Affiliate Tracking/Shopping Cart and Membership Platform
Choosing the right membership platform/shopping cart and affiliate tracking system is what makes all the difference in the speed of implementation when you are growing your business.

Thinkific
If there is one tool out there I’ve been blown away with, it is Thinkific.

I couldn’t believe my eyes when I went to their office to see a personal demo of the tool.

Greg from Thinkific team went to their public site, and within 3 minutes he put together a full membership platform including video, audio, PDF and PowerPoint Training, and then he moved on the put together the sales page. The entire thing was ready in less than 10 minutes including the sales page and affiliate tracking module.

Without a doubt, Thinkific is one of the fastest and most efficient tools that any person who wants to create and sell online courses should use.

The best news is that you can use Thinkific for free to build your course and put your membership platform together.

When you are ready to sell your training based on what you need, you can choose the plan that suits you the most.

Digital Access Pass
Digital Access Pass (DAP) is a rather advanced and feature-rich version of Membership platforms that are out there.

DAP can work with or without WordPress but most people use DAP with their WordPress site.

A combination that I really like to use is a self-hosted WordPress site with Optimize Press theme, which is a great theme to design landing pages as well as membership
areas, and Digital Access Pass as the shopping cart, affiliate tracking tool and membership management tool.

In the past, we used to use WishList and S2member as membership tools. Both are great tools to use for building membership areas. However, we got to a point in our business where affiliates became a big part of how we were attracting clients.

And in search of a tool that had the membership area functionalities but could at the same time track 2 tiers of affiliates and manage our sales, and after testing well over 10 tools, we were satisfied entirely only with Digital Access Pass.

One thing that I really like about Digital Access Pass is their support. They are quick and easy to work with.

Installing and setting up DAP can take longer than your regular tools, the main reason being that with DAP, you are using one tool to do 3 major things.

If you want to set your tool fairly quickly, consider getting the MSIAB license of Digital Access Pass, in which case their team works with you one on one to help set up your site in less than couple of hours.

Infusionsoft

No online marketing guide can be complete without talking about Infusionsoft.

Infusionsoft is a great and complete automation tool that can be integrated with many other tools.

Earlier in this guide, I referred to Aweber and AW Pro Tools. I also talked about Digital Access Pass affiliate tracking tool and shopping cart. Infusionsoft is simply all those great tools in one.

So many people just get Infusionsoft or similar tools to manage their email marketing, shopping cart and affiliate tracking system all in one place.

The downside of this tool, though, is the high initial investment and steep learning curve to get Infusionsoft up and running for your business. In a way, this is an investment on a better tool, but I’ve seen many people who get Infusionsoft hoping
to use the tools someday, and pay for it for a year or two and end up not using them at all.

So, my suggestion is if you are planning to use such tools, make sure to get them with the initial coaching package that the company offers, and set a good chunk of time aside to get the system up and running.

Learn more about all these platforms by watching the training video that accompanies this guide.
Landing Page Design Tools
Last but not least, we should cover some landing page design tools.

I’ve previously referred to Optimize Press which is a WordPress theme designed for marketing purposes and building membership pages. Although this is a great tool, the downside of it is that you can’t directly check your landing page conversion rate.

So you will need to invest in analytic tools such as VWO or HotJar. That’s why I like to use one of the following tools as they help you to design the landing pages and will give you the ability to do A/B testing and conversion tracking.

Click Funnels
Among all landing page creation tools, Click Funnels is my most favorite.

What I like the most about Click Funnels is that it allows you to actually design a funnel. With other tools, you can design pages separately but you don’t see them all under one funnel, which makes it harder to track and get all the data simultaneously.

The other thing that I really like about Click Funnels is its very powerful page builder. You can quickly create any page you like, the way you like. The tool has a very intuitive design and within a few minutes, you will be able to get your landing pages up and running.

You can sign up for a 14 day free trial with Click Funnels here.

LeadPages
The other tool that I like for building landing pages is Leadpages.

The page builder editor in LeadPages is not as powerful as the one in Click Funnels though, and the pages aren’t shown in a funnel format.

However, what I like about LeadPages is the variety of templates that it comes with and the fact that the pages already have suggested content guidelines. This can help
you follow what an online marketer has done and simply change the words to match your work, creating the content of your page fairly quickly.

But you won’t have as much flexibility as Click Funnels provides you.
Conclusion
There are many tools that I didn’t get the chance to write about in this report.

There may be tools that I’ve used and enjoyed at some point and then found a replacement for. And thus didn’t include them here.

What matters the most is to remember that tools are NOT the most important part of building your online courses.

When you are building an online course, you should remember that the way you add value to your students’ lives is what you are going to be remembered for.

The key to having successful online courses is having the ability to communicate your message properly with your students and potential clients.

If you haven’t yet signed up for our free training on how to share your knowledge and message by creating and selling profitable online courses make sure to register for FREE at http://www.ultimatecourseformula.com

To your success

Iman Aghay

Founder of Success Road Academy

Creator of Ultimate Course Formula
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