

TRANSCRIPT

On Your Terms



Driven by Goals.
Guided by Strategy.
Powered by Intention.

Episode #: 192

How to Create a Scalable Product

Sam Vander Wielen:

Hey, hey, hey. Welcome to another episode of On Your Terms. I'm so excited to talk with you about creating products or programs, whatever it is that you want to create that you want to sell over and over and over again without having to be on your phone 24/7, without having to be super sales-y - whatever that means - and without having to continuously go back to the drawing board and be like, "Why isn't anybody buying this thing?"

So, in today's episode, I talk with you all about how many products and programs I recommend that you actually sell in your business at any given time, how to stand out from the crowd more than anything else, what the number one thing is that your product needs to do in order to sell. Period. End of story. We go over that a ton in this episode. I also talk about getting straight to the value in your product and how to remove the fluff so that your clients can actually see the results more immediately. And we talk about creating products and pricing products that it actually allows you to scale. Last but not least, I'll round out this episode with talking about beta testing, getting it into the hands of your first paying customers, and then scaling and amplifying your product in the end. So, let's get into today's episode and find out how to create a product that will generate you the moolah.

So, I've talked a lot so far on the show about how I created one business when I first left the law and it wasn't successful at all. And then, how in 2017, I shut down that business and started my legal business, Sam Vander Wielen LLC, and how things just have gone totally differently. And one of the things that I feel like I focused on in a much different way and that has led to so much of the business's success is my product. And when I say product, by the way, I don't mean that you have to sell physical products or digital products even. It could be that you have a coaching program, a course, a membership, just insert that whenever I say product because I

created kind of this hybrid course digital product community membership thing with the Ultimate Bundle, and so it's all encompassing.

So, I really focused on the product in a much different way than I ever did. I don't even think I thought about it at all with my first business. And I think that that has had such a big impact on the fact that, you know, four years ago, I created a product that has now generated millions and millions of dollars in revenue. And obviously, that wasn't even my goal. I didn't think anyone would buy it. But I think that there were certain things I did right along the way that have made it what it is today. So, I'm hoping that this episode today we can get clear on what steps you need to take to create your own product, program, thingy, whatever, that will be the thing that years from now you're talking about and being like, "I can't believe that this thing in and of itself, on its own has generated just millions of dollars on its own in revenue."

So, it's pretty incredible what you can do when you really create something with good intention and a lot of thought behind it and you really put the time and the energy into the actual product itself. So, keep in mind as you're listening to this episode today that when I created this product, I did not create this product or program or whatever with the idea that I was creating it so that I could generate millions of dollars, or so that so many people would buy it, or anything else. I literally started it because I thought it would help people. And a lot of times when I've heard other people talk about this kind of stuff, they've had a similar experience that they've really started from a very good place. So, we'll talk about all of this stuff today. Let's get into I have eight ways that you can create a product that's going to be your bread and butter from years and years from now.

So, first and foremost, number one, I just wanted to say off the bat that one of the things that I think helps to create a great product is to only focus on creating a few core items in your business and that's what you're going to focus on perfecting and selling, obviously, but you're not going to be selling 100 things and then one thing is going to be your bread and butter. I think one of the reasons that something can become your bread and butter is because you're so intensely focused on it.

So, I only for the last four or five years have only ever sold the Ultimate Bundle and then individual templates. That's it. I've never run off and created all these new products and services or anything like that. So, I think that it helped me because it was just like a fine tuned machine, you just keep coming back to it and you're just like, again, again, again, again, and you just keep making it better and better.

I don't really think there's any magic number when it comes to how many products or programs that you should offer in your business. But I do think there's a such a thing as too many. So, for me, I would say one to three programs or products is the max. That's the max that you really should ever have at any given time in your business. And preferably I would love to see you only have one or two. So, I would love to see you maybe have a group program that you run a couple of times a year and you have your private coaching. Or you have your private coaching but you sell your course on evergreen, and then a couple of times a year, you promote that course in a live fashion, like what I do with the Bundle. You find some kind of balance because it's not only the best way, I think, to sell a product and really maximize the juice that you can get out of that product, but it's also the best way to balance your sanity and your life.

And as you know, hopefully by now, what matters most to me more than anything is to live a normal life, live a life on my terms. I want to focus more on my family, and my friends, and my cute little puppy, and reading, and traveling, and giving back, and gardening, and cooking, and doing pretty much everything other than being a business owner. This isn't who I am at my core. So, it's also what allows me to do that. And if that's something that's important to you, then streamlining the amount of things that you offer is one of the best places to start. But I also think that that was one of the reasons why I was able to so successfully maximize the juice out of one product, because it's just been I eat, sleep, and breathe this Ultimate Bundle for the last four plus years, so that really helps that's why I want to start off with that tip.

All right. Tip number two is that as you're thinking about this product, and we're thinking now about only creating a handful of these products, I

want you to think about how you truly want to show up, how you truly want to offer this. For those of you who are concerned about the fact that the space has, like, blown up and that there may or may not be so many people doing already what you do or whatever, then that's all the more reason why you have to lean into this unique value proposition. And so, when you're doing market research and when you're looking around and thinking to yourself everybody's already doing this or somebody already offers a course, what is it naturally and organically that you wish was different about that?

I remember seeing something that I saw years and years and years ago that somebody was doing that was like a group program. So, they were having people meet every week to talk about this very dry and boring subject. And I was like, "I wouldn't want to do that." I would just want little bite-sized information done on video that I could watch on my own or listen on a walk or something like that, and I would implement it in my own time, but I don't want to be required to meet every week for two hours to talk about this. That doesn't sound fun to me, you know. So that's when I was like, "Well, there have to be other people who are interested in the same subject, and they don't want to consume this information that way either, and so why don't I do it a little differently?"

So, you can look at either the way the information is being presented, maybe you even have a unique spin on the content of the information, maybe people are only ever talking about it from one angle. There are all kinds of endless possibilities, but I want to encourage you that as you're creating this project or this program or anything, that you need to think outside the box. Don't just look at what everybody else is doing and think that that is the definition of what's possible for you. That is just what's being done. It has nothing to do with what you're able to go out there and do.

When I created the Ultimate Bundle, there was nothing like it. So, if I would have just created something that was just similar to what everybody else was doing, but a little twist of different, that wouldn't have been good enough. The whole point was that I had to think outside the box. I had to think in a different way. What was not being done? So, I want you to

look at the space and see how people are doing it, what you would want to be different if you were a consumer – you could obviously even do some market research about that as well – and I want you to put your unique spin on it.

Third, and this is probably the most important tip of the entire episode, so pay attention to number three for sure. Number three is all about if you want a product that is going to generate a lot of revenue for you and is going to continue to generate revenue for you for years to come, it has got to work. That product has got to be amazing. The program has to get people results. And people have to love it.

Because you can pour in as much money as you want into Facebook Ads one day until the cows come home. You can scream about your product on Instagram Stories every single day until your exhausted. You could email out to your email list, begging them to buy it. I guarantee you nothing is going to sell this program or this product for you as well as word of mouth. Nothing. It's like a spider web that you can't control. So, when you have customers who buy your product eventually – towards the end, I'm going to talk a little bit about beta testing and selling beta testing if you're new and you might be listening to me right now being like, "But no one's bought it, so how do I do that?"

So, you're going to give them the best experience possible. You're going to make that product and that program the best that it can be so that they get a great result. And you're going to use any little blips in the road or anything that comes back that doesn't quite work to continue to fine tune and improve it. My Ultimate Bundle wasn't perfect from the start, but I kept listening and listening and listening and improving, improving, improving. So, you're going to make sure that you get these people the happiest result that they can get.

Of course, we can't control what other people do, so they have to put in the effort and all that good stuff, but that has more to do with the first episode, number 12, where I talked about finding the customers that really need what you're going to help them solve. So, we want to get the right people into this program, then they're actually going to benefit from it.

And I'm telling you, when you change people's life in that way, when you make people feel better about something, when you make them feel healthier, happier, better in their career or their relationship, their business, whatever it is, they're going to tell other people about it just naturally. Think about what happens when you love something, you go around and you tell other people about it.

So, I saw in my own business after enough people purchased it, after I kept focusing on customer retention, customer happiness, really making the product the best that I could, I saw that all of a sudden the snowball effect started. I started getting tagged in comments online when somebody would post a question in a Facebook Group being like, "Hey, guys. I need a legal contractor. I'm so frustrated about this legal thing. I don't know what to do." Someone would be like, "Hey, you should talk to Sam. I actually bought her Bundle. And here's her information, you should buy it too." And then, it started getting reached out to through email and DMs saying, "My friend told me this."

Then, you know what happened? People started telling other people in big groups, like in schools or certification programs, like, "Hey, I went and worked with this girl. You should too." And my name started to get dropped in like chats and on public boards and schools and all of this big stuff, and it just goes and goes and goes. And once that starts going, there's no stopping it. Really, it is a big, big freight train. You can pour ads in all day long. You can pay for Facebook Ads. But there's just nothing. It is invaluable to focus on this word of mouth effect.

It's something that Tyler McCall, he has a follower to fan society. And I always think about that term follower to fan is that, really, there's a middle step here that we're taking somebody from follower to a purchasing customer because we have to trigger them to become a purchasing customer. But then while they're a customer, I feel like that's really where we make them a fan. Because I don't just want my followers to be fans, I want people who end up coming into my most intimate community, my customer community. I want them to be huge fans because they're the ones that are going to be little foot soldiers and they're going to go out and they're going to tell other people about my stuff. So, that's what we want to focus

on really getting people the results that they want or your thing actually being the best. I do truly believe in putting your best foot forward as best as you can, and that doesn't mean it has to be perfect, but you have to keep trying, keep improving something.

I also want you to imagine having to confidently talk about this product every day. Like imagine you're in my shoes, you're four years down the line. Every day you're getting up and you're opening up the Instagram app, popping open stories, and you are going on and talking about the product that you're thinking about creating right now or that you have created already. And you're popping it open four years from now and you are talking about that same product confidently on Instagram without any worry or concern that somebody is going to be like, "Oh, I wish I wouldn't have bought this" or "This wasn't that helpful" or anything like that. That's the product that you're trying to create.

I have no problem, no qualms about getting onto Instagram, getting on a workshop, getting on somebody else's podcast, writing something and talking about my product, asking for the sale. I have nothing to be ashamed of. It's helping people. People love it. People love it. They tell me every single day. So, there's nothing for me to feel bad about. I'm not doing anything wrong. As I always say, Target doesn't feel bad about running another commercial on T.V. encouraging us all to go spend, you know, more money and go do more Target runs. So, I have nothing to feel bad about because I know that the product stands on its own. It's great. People are going to love it. And if they don't love it, they weren't the right fit, and then I take a step back and I look at what happened in my marketing.

So, think about that. Think about it from that angle. Try to imagine yourself like, Can I talk about this product two, three, four, five, hopefully, ten years from now? That's the kind of product you're striving to create.

So, number four is that I want you to keep in mind as you're creating this product, whatever it is, as you're designing a product, a course, a program, whatever you're thinking of helping people work through can probably be pared back quite a bit. Because we're the experts, we tend to

undervalue and maybe just underappreciate sometimes how much we have to offer other people and probably how little they really need out of what we can actually offer.

So, when I first put the Ultimate Bundle together, it was basically like law school in a nutshell. So, I had put everything in the kitchen sink in there, like you have to learn about this and you have to know about that. And my lessons themselves were super long and super detailed. And I was really obsessed with everybody knowing about the nuances and the details. And as I took feedback in, and as I just observed user behavior – which is another thing I would encourage you to do if you ever go down the course or membership route – I was like, “Oh. People don’t need all of this.” And what it actually ends up doing is backfiring and people don’t end up actually consuming or implementing the information.

So, number four is all about making sure that we have just what they need. We have the core content in your program, in your product that the person needs to get the desired result, but without all of the fluff and the filler. I really want you to think of every lesson, every module, whatever you do as how does this move them closer to the goal. Because if it doesn’t move them closer to the goal, then it’s kind of fluff or filler, which keeps them from getting to the goal faster. And remember, if people don’t have a good outcome or they don’t experience the desired result that you’re trying to get from creating this program or this product, then they’re not going to be super happy. And if they’re not super happy, then they’re not going to tell other people about it. And we need good testimonials and all of that kind of stuff.

So, I really want you to be thinking about this as you’re creating this product, a product that’s going to make you millions or hundreds of thousands, even, is not going to be full of fluff and filler. It doesn’t need to be super long. It needs to be super valuable and it needs to get people to the desired result as fast as possible.

To that point, a little secret bonus tip here, maybe 4.5, is that anytime you can sneak in a couple of little quick wins for clients in a program or a course or something, that’s always a big bonus. So, if you can get them a

quick little win off the bat where they achieve something, they finish something, they do something they've been holding back on, it will create a snowball effect for them as well to feel motivated to dig into the rest of your stuff.

If you want, I could have a whole nother episode so you can tell me, send me a DM, let me know if this would be interesting to you, but I could do a whole nother episode on customer happiness and retention for those of you who have courses and membership programs. I think there are so many things you could be doing in group programs. I think there's so many things you could be doing to keep clients engaged, to keep people happy, to get them on task, get them accomplishing the things that you've laid out in the course. There's just so much. So, let me know if that's something you'd ever want me to chat about.

All right. So, number five, I want to talk with you about pricing this product. Because when it comes to pricing a product, what I see so often is that when people are either creating a new product or they're new to business or maybe they're just feeling still a little uncertain that people will buy this and all of that kind of stuff, they price a product really low.

And so, if that is you or you're struggling with any of those things, make sure you go back and listen to Episode number 12 of On Your Terms because I do talk about finding the right customers and all that kind of stuff. But also now, after listening to this episode, I hope you can see that the more comfortable and confident you get with the results of your program, the more you're going to feel comfortable asking what you're worth. So, you don't need to charge \$47 for a product if you know you're changing someone's life.

So, that's the other thing. I know that my product is not the cheapest on the market. I also know that it really works and that a lot of people do find the value in it. So, I'm not trying to prove the product's value to those who don't see the value in it. I'm trying to get it into the hands of those people who need it most and who truly do see the value and who are

ready to put the stuff to auction and make the changes and get their businesses legally protected and they can make it happen.

And there are all kinds of things we can do, by the way, with payment plans, trying to make it more accessible, having sales, things like that, but you can get paid what your product is worth, especially when you're actually helping people.

So, I want you to remember, too, that when you try to price something at a \$47 value, a \$97, even a \$197, anything probably less than several hundred dollars, you're really putting yourself in a position where you've created a volume business, maybe by accident. So, if we were like Marie Forleo, we had Marie Forleo sized email list and you created a \$47 product, maybe you can make a ton of money on the sale of that product. But when you're starting out and you have a small audience, by creating low price, low ticket offers, you're putting yourself in a position to require yourself to sell a ton of that product in order to make it work.

The thought process is totally backwards. The thought process that you may have at this point is, if I price something cheap enough, then more people will want to buy it. The problem is you don't have enough leads to do that. You have probably a lead generation problem as well as a sale problem. So, we need a lot of consistent and fresh leads coming in who are all on target and the right person and all that, and then the product needs to speak to those leads and that's how we make sales.

There's also I find a psychological problem with pricing as well. So, when I go to look at products sometimes and I see how cheap they are, personally, I tend to think that that means it's a low value. So I see low ticket, I think low value. So, if your product, if you're doing these things that we're talking about so far in this episode and your project is delivering results, changing people's lives, it's going to bring them more money or more time or more something, then your price needs to reflect that because you don't want people thinking, "Oh. This must not be that helpful." So, it can actually have a reverse effect on it.

Tip number six is that you also want to create a product that allows you to scale. So, a lot of times I'll see somebody create a product or you'll see somebody who's struggling a little bit in online business. And then, all of a sudden they're like, "Hey, guys. I'm going to sell mugs" or "I'm going to sell t-shirts" or "I'm going to start a new one-to-one intensive coaching session, like you can have three hours with me," or something like that. That kind of stuff, when you spend your time and your capital really with your audience - like we don't get a lot of time to talk to our audience, we don't get a lot of their attention, so you need to think carefully about how you're using it. And if you're using it to advertise either that low ticket offer or something that's like a one off thing, like a one time 90-minute session, where is that headed? Where are they supposed to go after that? Unless you have a funnel set up where the person gets a one time 90-minute session and then they can upgrade to your program at the end or something.

But it really doesn't make sense in terms of if you are sitting here today and you're like "I want to create the product or program that ends up generating me millions," you need to be thinking about that on the frontend of it being something that is scalable, something that is able to continue to be sold over and over and over again without requiring more of you. Because the more of you that's involved, the more times that you have to be live and present and create content over and over and over again as opposed to creating something once and being able to sell it, the less scalable it's going to be. And, really, only those kinds of products or programs are able to generate those types of revenue returns.

So, it's not that there's anything wrong with creating other kinds of products that do require more of you or if you're someone who loves the coaching aspect or loves the consulting aspect and you love being involved with your clients. That's totally fine. It's just that in this episode, we're just talking about things that are scalable, things that maybe you can sell while you're sleeping, I hope, and generating you a lot of consistent revenue no matter what's going on in your life.

Okay. So, now number seven is all about the beta testing phase. And this is for you if you are kind of conceptualizing the product or you've maybe even

tried selling it but it's not really working yet. I would hope that you would go back and do the things that we've talked about so far in this episode and gone back and listen to Episode 12 so you make sure that you've done kind of the more marketing and research side of it correctly. But if you now are ready but you're not sure if it does get those people the results, you don't have any testimonials yet, you're not sure about the pricing, I want you to start by beta testing it.

So, I can only tell you the way that I've done this. I don't know what the official way or the right way is of doing this, but when I created the Ultimate Bundle, I think I found about, like, 12 to 15 people who were kind of in my community, they were responding to my DMs, they maybe were responding to some emails and things, maybe I'd even had free sessions with them at that point, just like discovery call type things to get to know them. And I reached out to them and I said, "Hey, I'm working on this product. I know that you said you needed some contracts and you needed this or that. This product is going to normally retail for -" I think at that point I thought maybe a \$1,000 or something "- but I'm willing to offer it to you for X -" it was like a couple hundred bucks "- in exchange for a testimonial." And I think at that time I was smart enough to require a video testimonial as well.

So, during this phase, not only will you get a little bit of cash flow which will help to maybe make up for some of the expenses that you've incurred probably in creating this product, but you will also get the opportunity to get some proof of product, proof of concept. So, the fact that you could even get somebody to buy this through a beta testing alone will tell you whether or not this is starting to pick up some traction. If people aren't even interested in the beta stuff, there are several things to go back and to rework. It might be that you haven't properly explained the value of whatever it is that you're offering.

A lot of times that tends to be because people focus on more of the deliverables. Like there are 10 calls, there are 12 workbooks, there are three sessions, blah, blah, blah. We want to talk more about the transformations and the results that would come from it, what things that they'll actually be able to do after they've taken your program or while

they're in it. So, we want to focus on that value. Maybe it's time to look at whether or not the target audience was correct – going back to Episode 12, for sure – talking about whether or not maybe the name is bad or is confusing. I've had people just rework titles and names before. As well as sometimes even the branding. So, sometimes the branding gets too stuck. People get like, "Oh, I can't release this until I get this logo and this thing or website," or whatever. I'm not really talking about that, but I do believe, just like anything, it's not so black and white. Stuff doesn't make or break with your branding, but it can help. And the way that I think it can help is that depending on what you do, I think that you can convey a lot with your branding.

So, I'm very visual, so maybe I overemphasize this for myself, but I thought a lot about with the Ultimate Bundle what the colors would be, what the photography would be. Like, for example, because I'm a lawyer and people tend to think that lawyers are super stuffy and serious and scary or whatever they think about lawyers, I wanted to accurately convey the fact that I'm not like that. Hopefully, you know that by now. So, I was very intentional about the fact that when I did a photo shoot and I knew that I was going to be using those photos for the Ultimate Bundle, I made sure that I was wearing really relaxed clothes. And I also made sure I was wearing the colors of not only my brand, but of the product as well, which are all relaxing. They all kind of have like beach vibes, cozy vibes, relaxing vibes. I wanted people to see my product and instantly feel at ease.

So, I do think that there is something to it. You can have softer fonts. You can have softer colors. You can have more professional looking stuff. I mean, sometimes I see things and I think it just doesn't look that professional. And I understand that when you're starting out, it's so hard because you're on a budget and all this. But with the tools that we have available to us now with things like Canva, having such professional looking templates for free, I think the key is to pick a brand palette, a brand kind of vibe that you go with, and then be consistent so that people's eyes starts to get trained.

Think about back in the day when you used to go on Pinterest and you'd be scrolling through, maybe it was just me because I always look at food stuff, but I would see a food pin and I would instantly know which blogger it was because they each have such a unique style of photography, and the font, and the colors, and the way that they would design their pins.

So, you kind of want that same psychology to apply that. You don't want to be just picking randomly every single day a different Canva template that just looks cool because you think it's trendy. If you have the more '80s pop vibe, you want to go with that. If you have the more desert vibe, bohemian vibe that's on Canva a lot, go with that. But stick with whatever it is. Stick with your brand colors. Create the palette on Canva, for example, and you want to be consistent.

So, if you're just starting up, I would think about your branding, make things look consistent and professional. I would go back to the drawing board if people aren't buying the beta, if they don't like it, if they don't complete it. Sometimes people find that when they sell things in beta, they don't get much feedback from people at all. So, that can be a sign that you maybe need to rework the audience a little bit.

All right. Last but not least, we need to - number eight - sell, sell, sell that product. And we need to sell it and sell it again, and then sell it some more, and then create some evergreen systems that sell it for you.

In the meantime, I would love for you to send me a DM on Instagram, @samvanderwielen, let me know how this episode was for you. What is your number one takeaway? What is the thing that just kind of popped in your mind when you heard me talk about how you could create a product that could make you millions? I'm so curious to know, so let me know. And before you go, if you haven't already, make sure that you follow and subscribe to On Your Terms wherever you listen to podcasts. If you listen on Apple Podcasts, now's your time to rate and review the podcast. It helps us so much to get this podcast into other entrepreneurs hands. With that, I can't wait to chat with you. Until next week.

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