



building an information product empire

Professionally packaged information products are essential to move you from being branded as a one on one Personal Trainer, or as I like to call it 'fitness boy or fitness girl' to being seen as a leading health and fitness business person. Info products are also a great way to leverage your time and get you earning a lot more money in a lot less time. Earning money by the hour is finite, there are only so many hours in the day. But earning money from info products is infinite and is not limited by time, boundaries, or even industries.

How do I know this?

Because I learnt the hard way. For years and years I resisted the urge to package information products as I thought the best way to get ahead was to roll up the sleeves and charge on working hour after hour after hour. While this gave me great experience in the industry, for years I scraped by making ends meet, working my backside off. Then one day I had an epiphany, or more of a break down to be exact. I was burn out, tired out and my backside was hanging out - always chasing money, always making ends meet from one payment to the next. Sound familiar?

So my epiphany was to have 3 months out overseas, partying to excess and then finally remembering I had to come home, this time determined to get it right, determined to get the balance between working hard and earning great money. And I have to say ever since then things have been totally different. I earn great money and continue to love what I do. And one of the major differences apart from investing time to improve my speaking skills, has been learning about and putting together loads and loads of information products. My information product mentor Gihan Perera provided me with the content for the remainder of this article.

Benefits of Information Products

1. New Income Streams

The first and most obvious benefit is that it creates new income streams for you. Bundling a group of products together to create a premium package is a great way to boost your business. Rather than trying to create products and sell them independently, sell them as part of your programs.

2. Message, Not Method

Your expertise is what matters, not the way that you get it out into the world. Your products are just another way of getting your message out into the world. Some people learn from watching others live, some learn from listening to audio programs, some learn from reading and others learn from trying things themselves. Having a range of products enables you to capture a multitude of different learning styles.

3. Multiple Formats

A friend of Gihan's is an excellent tennis player and a good coach. Gihan was taking some tennis lessons with Neil and they were talking about serving, "Neil, what is the most important thing you have to think about with serving?" And he replied, "You're only as good as your second serve."



So, as a Fitness Professional, you focus on your main mode of delivery - your first serve. That might be PT training sessions, or coaching, or group fitness. But what about the second serve? What about the people who don't come to your PT sessions or workshops? How are they going to get your message? When you go to a networking function, you might wow someone by talking to them for five minutes but what do you do afterwards? Do you send them a business card or do you send them your book? If you're about to go into a sales meeting to sell your first serve, what do you have as backup that you can offer them as collateral material? So by all means focus on your strengths, but make sure you have backup as well, in the form of products.

4. Positioning

Finally, remember that products don't always have to be sold. I get a lot of leverage from complimentary products:

- I give my books away as gifts to key clients
- I publish a monthly eNewsletter free of charge which now goes to thousands of people
- I send eBooks to corporate clients as bonuses and for supporting the growth of our business

So just remember the products you're creating don't have to be only for selling. You can get leverage from them in lots of other ways.

How to take one idea and “spin” it into many different products

If you've ever flown a plane, you know that you can control it in three dimensions: Spin (yaw), roll and pitch. Use that as an analogy for your own product creation:

- You spin your ideas;
- You roll them out; and
- You pitch them to the right market.

Broadly, when you have a single product - whether it's as simple as an article or as complex as a multimedia homestudy course - there are three ways to spin it:

1. Change the packaging - by “flipping the format” or “switching the channel”
2. Choose different delivery methods - by “shifting time” or “managing stages”
3. Expand or shrink the content - by “filling depth” or “magnifying scale”

Example: Time Management article into multiple formats

Let's work through this quickly with a simple example. Every Monday I do a regular segment on the TODAY show. I first of all write an information article the topic. Last week I did a segment on time management.

- **Flip Format:** A printed article is a physical product. This also goes on the Channel Nine website as a digital product that viewers can download
- **Switch Channel:** The article is initially a “read” product. We make it a “see” product by putting a copy of the segment recording on our corporate intranet www.pluggedinresource.com and our key corporate clients can then watch this in their own time. I also do regular work for 2UE and emailed the producer the article on time management. I then did a 7 minute interview with George and Paul on their Saturday morning show on the same topic. I put together an additional time management quiz and it became a “do” product as well.



- **Shift Time:** The article is already “replay” because I’ve written it. The live version of that is me standing up and talking about it.
- **Manage Stages:** It’s one-off because it’s one article. Publish a series of articles in a newsletter, and it becomes a “calendar” product. If I take the article and make it into an e-course, it’s a “rolling” product. “On demand” is similar except I set it up as a mentoring program.
- **Fill Depth:** An article is usually an “overview”. As a detail version of that, I can write a mini book or an eBook on this topic.
- **Magnify Scale:** One-off is me doing a one-on-one coaching session with somebody on this topic. Group is me running a workshop, and crowd is if I can take that and turn it into a keynote presentation.

Choose wisely

If you considered every possible combination described above, you could have over 500 products from just one idea! So how do you choose and prioritise? Let me give you seven criteria:

4. **Demand:** Do you know there’s a real demand for it out in the market? If not - or even if you’re not sure - it could be a risk to create the product.
5. **Reach:** Even if you know there’s a demand, can you reach that market easily and cost-effectively?
6. **Profitability:** How much profit is there in the product? A \$25 book published through a publisher might only make you a couple of dollars on each sale; while a \$50 CD pack you create yourself can make you \$40 plus profit each time.
7. **Leverage:** Does the product have leverage value apart from just its sales? For instance, a book can build high credibility for you, even if it doesn’t make much money in its own right.
8. **Skill:** Do you have the skills to create the products (or can you pay others who do have those skills)? For instance, it can be a real stretch to magnify the scale of a one-on-one product to a group presentation.
9. **Ease:** Do you already have material sitting on your computer, just waiting to be converted into a product? A half finished book could easily become an e-mail newsletter, a blog, a number of eBooks, a special report, or a series of articles.
10. **Interest:** Finally, is it something that interests you? If you’re not excited about creating this product, it probably won’t happen.

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Main Source: Gihan Perera, First Step Communications, www.gihanperera.com

