easyship

Crowdfunding 101

A Guide To Creating Successful Campaigns

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Introduction

Crowdfunding 101

Every business, product and project needs funding to become a reality. Crowdfunding is the link between an ambitious idea and a community that wants to see it realized.

What is [crowdfunding](#)?

It's a method of raising small amounts of money from a large group of people for a project, product or business through the internet.

Annually around **[17.2 billion dollars are generated through crowdfunding](#)** and that's expected to rise to 300 billion by 2030. Crowdfunding is used by inventors, artists, established brands and entrepreneurs to raise initial funds for their products, projects and businesses. While crowdfunding offers new opportunities for funding, it is not easy, and it takes significant time and effort to plan and manage a successful campaign.

In this guide, we collaborated with our partners from **[Launchboom](#)**, **[Indiegogo](#)** and **[BigCommerce](#)** to share current best practices and insights for launching and managing a successful crowdfunding campaign.

Chapter 1
Planning Your Campaign

Your crowdfunding campaign's make-or-break moment actually comes the second you click the button to launch. Whether you smash through your original goal and are met with wild success or watch the clock tick down without getting near your funding goal depends largely on the work you do before your campaign is ever launched. If you don't plan out how to crowdfund, your campaign is doomed to fail.

So what's involved in planning your crowdfunding campaign?

• Calculate Your Fundraising Goal

• Choose Your Crowdfunding Platform

• Establish a Timeline

• Develop a Marketing Strategy

Identify Your Crowdfunding Goal & Perk Pricing

One of the most important things you need to do before you launch is to decide on what your crowdfunding goal should be. You want to know what your break-even number is, and then you need to decide your goal based on that.

How to set your fundraising goal?

1. **Calculate your fixed costs:** These are things like molds & tooling, package design, and travel & trade shows. They're costs that you will have to pay once, rather than things associated with the production of each unit.

2. **Calculate your variable costs:** These are the components of your product that will have to be paid for each unit that you produce. Think about things like the battery, casing, buttons, gears, packaging, shipping and assembly for each unit. You can use a **crowdfunding calculator** to estimate your shipping costs.

3. **Figure out your average order value:** Most likely, you'll plan to offer different prices on your product at different points during the campaign (think about Early Bird specials and VIP pricing, for instance). Your average order value will generally be about 1.25x your most discounted price.

4. **Calculate your break-even item count and fundraising target.**

We now know that our funding goal for our sample project here should be **$15,100** if we want to break even on the campaign. If we want to make a **profit**, we can make that goal higher.

Your Campaign Costs

Fixed Costs	$13,500	
Variable Costs	$10.40 p/unit	
Identify Your AOV	$100	
Break Even Point	**151 Units**	**Fixed Costs / (AOV - Variable Costs)**
Funding Goal	**$15,100**	**Break Even Point * AOV**

Choose the Right Crowdfunding Platform

Kickstarter or Indiegogo? Each platform has pros and cons, and creators need to consider a lot of different factors before making the decision. While there are few hard and fast rules, we can provide some guidelines that will help you make your decision.

Crowdfunding Models

The two funding models for crowdfunding campaigns are fixed and flexible funding.

• Fixed funding campaigns will only be successful if you reach your set goal; if you don't reach that number, the money will be returned to the backers and neither you nor the platform will get any of it.

• Flexible funding campaigns will collect the money whether you reach your goal or not, and the platform will collect a fee before sending the money to you.

Crowdfunding Platforms

	INDIEGOGO	KICKSTARTER
Product Type	Ideal for tech and innovation projects.	Ideal for games and art projects
Funding Model	Fixed and Flexible Funding	Fixed Funding
Geos Served	21 Countries	25 Countries
Fees	5% platform fee on all funds raised for your campaign.	5% fee on funds raised, plus payment processing fees (between 3%-5%) once campaign goals are met.

Crowdfunding Campaign Timeline

A crowdfunding campaign has a lot of moving parts, and you need to keep track of everything in meticulous detail.

Pre-launch

- Plan your start and end dates

- Create your campaign page, images, and video

- Reach out to your platform to develop a relationship and ask for feedback

- Advertise your campaign (and test along the way)

- Build your email list and cultivate your community

- Talk to manufacturing and shipping partners to get a timeline from them. Make sure you know your shipping and manufacturing costs before pricing your perks. You can use a **crowdfunding shipping calculator** get your estimates.

During Your Campaign

- Keep advertising!

- Update your backers when you hit certain milestones, unlock or announce new stretch goals, or have something interesting to tell them

Post-Launch

- Launch your post-campaign sales strategy

- Get started with your manufacturing partner on the timeline you established before you launched

- Update your backers often to keep them engaged and informed

Develop A Marketing Strategy

Once you have developed your product or idea, it's time to sit down and develop your marketing plan. This should be done anywhere from 3-6 months before you launch your campaign.

Here are a few key considerations for your marketing strategy:

- **Budget:** How much are you able to spend on marketing? This will determine which platforms and tactics you can employ to engage your audience, and convert backers.

- **Channels and platforms:** Which marketing channels and social media platforms will you focus on? Choose which you think will be most effective.

- **Talent and collaborators:** Find collaborators with the tacticall skills you need to execute your strategy.

- **Time and management:** You will need to make sure you properly budget for your time and management requirements to avoid disruptions, and mistakes.

Chapter 2
Launching & Marketing Your Crowdfunding Campaign

It's showtime. After months of planning and hardwork, it's now time to share your idea with the world and achieve your crowdfunding goals. Marketing and promoting your campaign will be a challenging, exciting and hopefully a joyous experience.

How to Use Storytelling In Your Crowdfunding Campaign

Your story is the centerpiece of your crowdfunding campaign. Without a compelling story and narrative, it'll be tough to connect with an audience of backers.

The core part of your story answers a few basic questions:

• What is your product?

• Why is it important or necessary for the audience?

• Where can they learn about it and follow the story?

• When will the product launch?

• How much will it cost to support the project?

• Who's behind the campaign and the product?

Build Your Campaign Page

Your campaign page sits at the center of your marketing strategy. The goal is to drive traffic and attention to your page so you can convert backers and achieve your financial goal.
Here are the key components you need for your page:

- **Campaign card:** Create a catchy campaign card for your campaign. You can use tools like **Canva** or **Adobe Spark**, or hire a freelance designer to create one along with your other marketing collateral.

- **Campaign Title:** Work with a copywriter to create a great title and tagline for your campaign.

- **Video and Images:** A great video is central to your campaign. You will also need high quality, compelling product photographs to help tell your story. Do not take shortcuts when it comes to creating these visuals.

- **How to connect with you:** Your followers and backers are most likely active on various social media channels. Make sure it's easy for them to follow you on the channels you deem necessary and subscribe to your campaign and email updates.

Create A Compelling Campaign Video

Your campaign video can make or break your campaign. This is your chance to bring all the elements of your story and idea together. **Here are a few general guidelines:**

- **Video length:** You're not making a feature film! Keep your video short. Around 2-4 minutes is ideal. In some cases, they might be a little longer if there's a compelling need integral to the story.

- **Format:** Every video should include an introduction, the campaign goals, a showcase of the product or idea and then a clear call to action. Within these boundaries there is plenty of room for creativity.

- **Talent:** You should appear in your video. Your potential backers want to hear from you and most likely it'll be your passion for the project that will help convince them to back it. Nobody expects an Academy Award performance, but sharing your authentic voice will go a long way.

Choose The Right Marketing Channels

In many cases, campaigns are born from an already established connection an entrepreneur or artist has with their audience. Most importantly, you need to be where your potential backers are active and engaging. **These are the channels you'll want to want to consider. Focus on the ones that you believe you can be the most effective with your target audience.**

- **Email:** The personal nature of email makes it critical for your campaign. A compelling email campaign early on can help build buzz and excite your audience.

- **Facebook Ads:** You should create a budget for paid ads on Facebook and Instagram to promote your crowdfunding campaign.

- **Social Media:** While it would be nice to promote your campaign across social media channels, realistically you'll probably need to focus on one or two.

    - **Instagram:** One of the dominant social media channels today, Instagram has a large community and plenty of content formats from Stories, Reels, IGTV and feed posts to promote your campaign.

    - **Twitter:** If your product has newsy buzz to it, Twitter could be a platform to build a conversation around your campaign. The ability to break through will depend on the power of your existing network, and a lucky RT or two from influential users.

    - **Facebook:** You should have a page for your campaign, especially to run ads across the network. In most cases, you'll need to put some money behind your posts to get any traction.

    - **TikTok:** The rising video platform can provide an opportunity to reach a new audience if you have the resources and creative chops to entertain an audience.

    - **Forums:** Consider promoting your campaign in niche forums dedicated to topics around your product.

Build A Community

Building a dedicated community that's excited to back your product on day 1 is the most important thing you can do before you launch. These are people who sign up for an email list, follow you on your social media platforms, and talk about your product to others.

- This community is built through interaction.
- You'll find them through your advertising, which will lead them to your email list and your social media presences.
- You'll nurture them by sending updates, hosting live events on your Facebook page, and interacting with them in every way you can.

Marketing and promoting your campaign is a full time job. It starts with your strategy and defining the right tools for your campaign.

Identify Your Backer Funnel

Every part of your campaign is focused on finding potential backers and persuading them to say yes to your project.

Build a Layered Strategy

It's helpful to think about your backers as a layered network.

First Layer: These are going to be the 10-50 people in your network that most trust in your project. They're probably going to be friends, family and business acquaintances. The people that know and believe in you. They are critical for building the initial momentum.

Second Layer: This layer will be your social media following and network that you've built over the years.
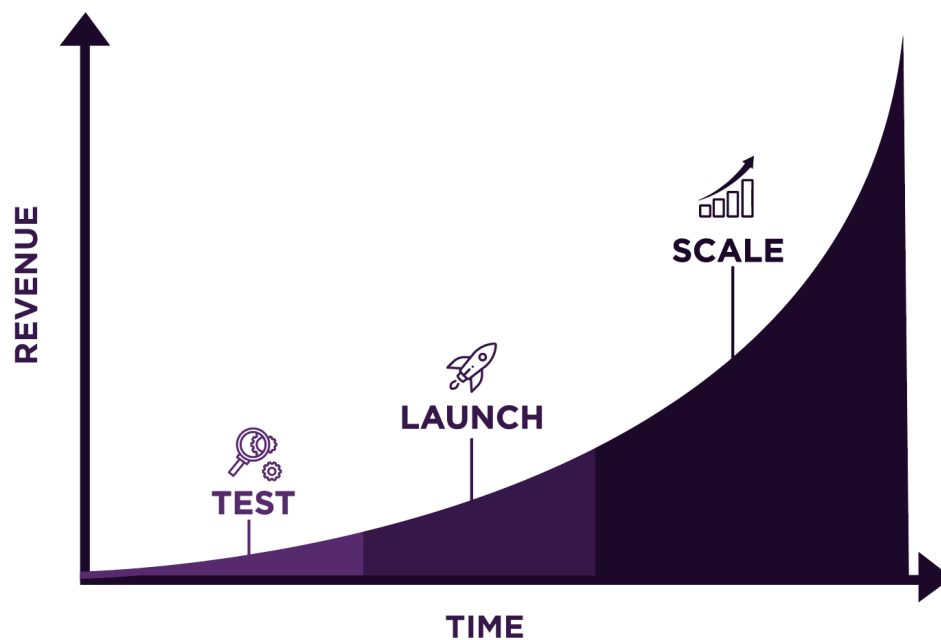
Third Layer: These are the unknown potential backers that will discover your project through the buzz it generates or from following crowdfunding campaigns.
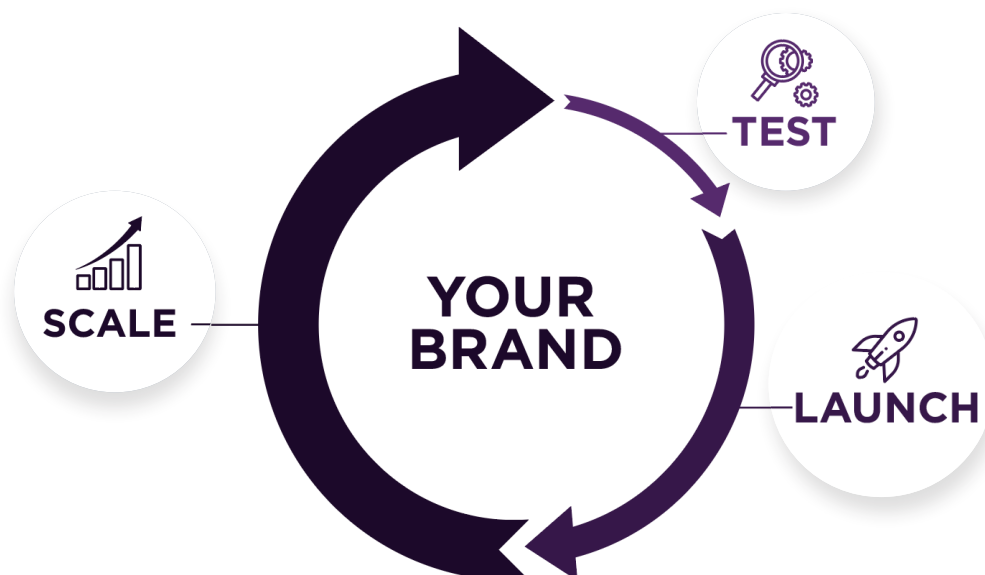
Test Your Marketing Channels

When creating a strategy it's wise to look at what has worked for other campaigns. The "Test. Launch. Scale." framework built by Launchboom is a proven, scalable model for campaigns. It's a core strategy in building a long-term, successful business.

Most people will visualize the model from left to right as shown below.

But I like to visualize it in a circle, because the framework feeds on itself.

The main goal of the Test Phase is to validate product demand during pre-launch. You'll do this by testing product positioning and audience targeting in the market before you go to crowdfunding.

It's important to research competitive positioning and consumer profiles in this phase. For example, if you're launching a new board game, you need to understand what your competitors are doing, and the type of engagement they generate on digital platforms.

Set Up Your Infastructure and Consider Consultants

Crowdfunding consultants and agencies are experts in executing crowdfunding campaigns and they come in many different specialties and disciplines. Before you go down the path to hiring a consultant or agency, ask a few questions first.

• What areas do I need the most help with?

• Is it more economical to outsource than to try to execute yourself?

• Do I have the budget to hire a consultant without impacting my margins?

Backer Affiliated Services

Backer affiliated services can help you gain access to networks that have backed previous campaigns. A few of the services to think about are **BackerLand**, **Backerkit**, **Krowdster**, and **Kickbooster** among others.

Build A Customer Support Team

It's important to make sure you can answer questions from your potential backers and are attentive to any concerns. Building a small customer support team to address any questions or concerns can help you mitigate any potential problems.

Launch Your Campaign

The secret to a successful "Launch Phase" is a successful pre-sale!

You'll do this through a combination of tactics:

1. Build a community of people that want to buy your product **BEFORE** you launch.

2. Hit your crowdfunding goal quickly within the first 24 hours of the campaign.

3. Rise to the top of the crowdfunding platform rankings and get free traffic.

4. Continue momentum with qualified traffic from ads, email lists, and PR.

5. Continue to pre-sell and upsell products to your backers once the campaign is over.

Use a Reservation Funnel to Build a More Qualified Community

Building a highly qualified pre-launch email list is a key part of your launch strategy.
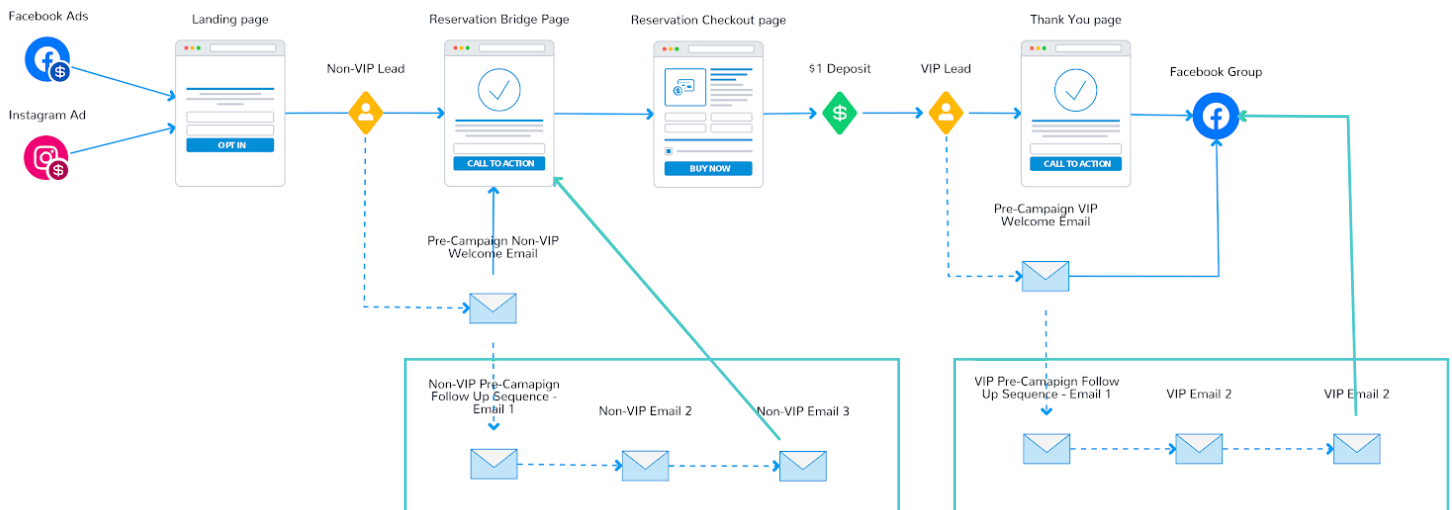
Simply put, the reservation funnel allows you to:

• Optimize your advertisements for purchase intent vs. lead intent.

• Allocate ad budget more effectively and get a higher return on ad spend (ROAS).

• Build a community of people that is 30x more likely to buy your product when you launch.

How The Reservation Funnel Works

Even though our reservation funnel is quite simple to understand, getting all the pieces to work well together has taken a long time and a lot of testing.

Step 1: Facebook Ad

User clicks on a Facebook/Instagram ad and is taken to a landing page.

Step 2: Landing Page Signup

We send them to a landing page where the main call-to-action is to give us their email address so they can get notified when we launch.

Step 3: Reservation Bridge

After they've given their email, we thank them and also make an offer. They can put down a $1 deposit to become a "VIP" and reserve the product at the best discount when we launch. There is no checkout on this page, which is why we call it a "bridge."

Step 4: Reservation Checkout

If they click on the button to reserve the product, they are then taken to a checkout page to complete their $1 reservation.
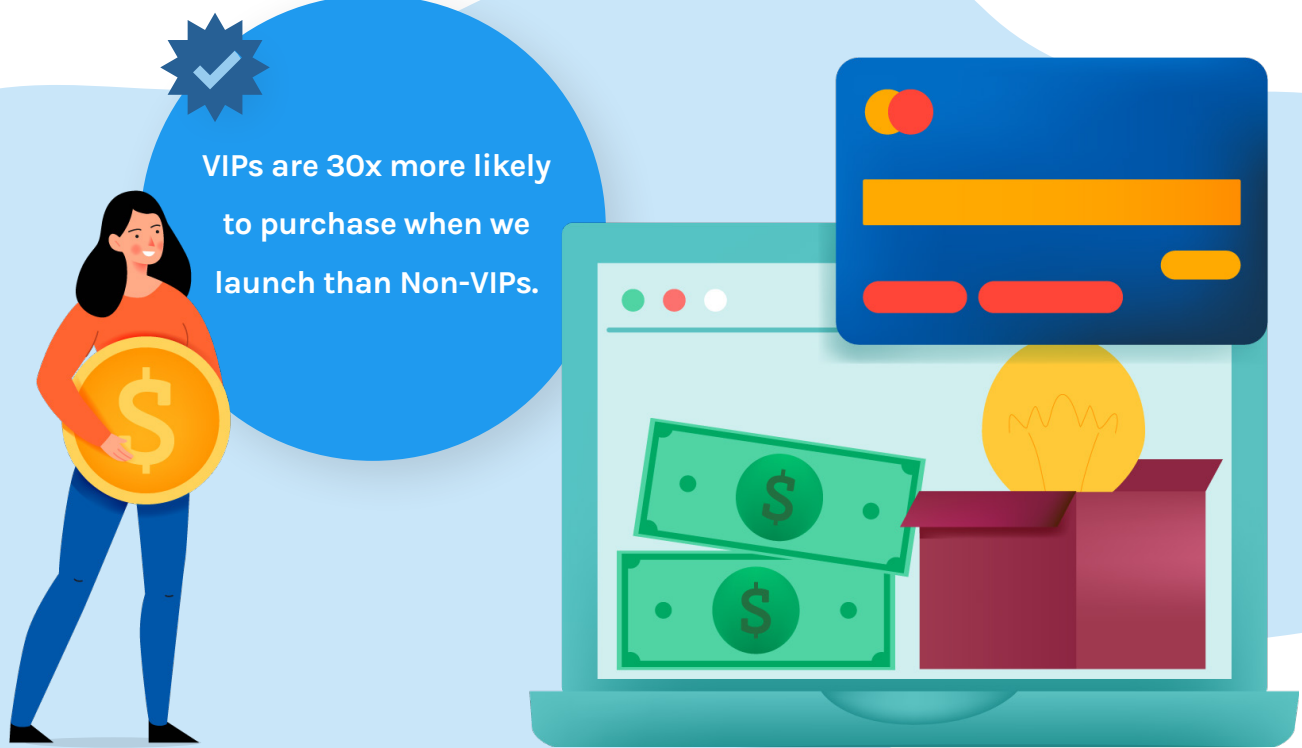
The Difference Between VIPs And Non-VIPs

In the Reservation Funnel, you will be collecting leads. Your leads will be broken out into two separate segments we call…

1. VIPs - those who put down a $1 deposit to reserve your product.

2. Non-VIPs - those who do not put down a $1 deposit to reserve your product.

Understanding the differences between these two different segments is extremely important to the success of your campaign.

VIPs are 30x more likely to purchase when we launch than Non-VIPs.

Scale Your Campaign and Go Omnichannel

Once you have launched a successful campaign and manufactured your product, it's time to transition to the Scale Phase. As you'll read in Chapter 5, in this phase you'll move from crowdfunding into an ecommerce model, where you'll have to determine the long term goals for your brand and set up your presence on the ecommerce platforms of your choice.

INDIEGOGO Crowdfunding Toolkit

Your goal is to raise money for your product or idea. These are the strategies you can use that give you a better chance at raising money and hitting your funding goals.

1. Build your email list

The majority of successful campaigns hit their campaign goal in the first three days. Building an email list is how to run a successful crowdfunding campaign, since emails convert 34% more than other forms of outreach. You can build a **Pre-Launch Page** on Indiegogo to collect email addresses.

2. Keep momentum and spread excitement

It's easier to keep your audience engaged if you've **built a community** around your project: it's one of the best ways to promote a crowdfunding campaign. Send out frequent updates and make backers feel like they are part of your project.

3. Use crowdfunding tools

Perks are a great way to incentivize people to fund your idea, and there are a number of tools you can use to enhance your perk strategy. You can use **secret perks** to reward early backers and run promotions, upsell to your backers with **add-on perks**, give your backers choices with **perk item options**, provide answers by building a **custom FAQ**, and encourage conversations by enabling **open comments**.

4. Stretching out your goal

You can recapture the attention of backers with **stretch goals**. Try using an "unlock" strategy—using higher and higher fundraising milestones to make new perks or features available. Announce to your audience that if they collectively help you reach your new goal, they will all benefit from access to an exciting new perk.

5. What to do if your campaign is not successful?

When campaigns fail, it's often because the campaign owners didn't build a big enough audience prior to launch. Keep in mind that only 5-10% of your email list will convert to backers, so it's important to think big.

Chapter 3
The Manufacturing Process: Where Should You Start

In this chapter, we'll cover creating a design for your product, building a prototype, developing a manufacturing plan and finding the right manufacturer for your product.

Designing Your Product

The design process often starts with a simple sketch. You do not need to know how to draw to sketch out your idea. What's important is that you get the key ingredients down on paper in a way that's clear for others.

While you're designing, you need to keep the function of your product top of mind.

• How is it going to be used by the end user?

• What materials will it be made out of?

• How much will it cost to manufacture the product?

• Will it require a battery or warranty?

Create A 3D Visualization

Once you have a drawing the next step is to create a 3D visualization of the product. You'll need to create a Computer Aided Design (or CAD) to build a virtual model of your product. You can either attempt this yourself or hire a freelancer or design firm.

Tips For Hiring A Designer

• Find a freelancer or design firm that has worked on similar type projects, and crowdfunding campaigns.

• When you meet with them, communicate your idea and share your sketches with them.

• When negotiating the cost and price, it's best to get a fixed price quote for the design of your project.

Getting Your First Prototype

Once you have finalized the design of your product, you're going to want to produce a prototype for a couple reasons:
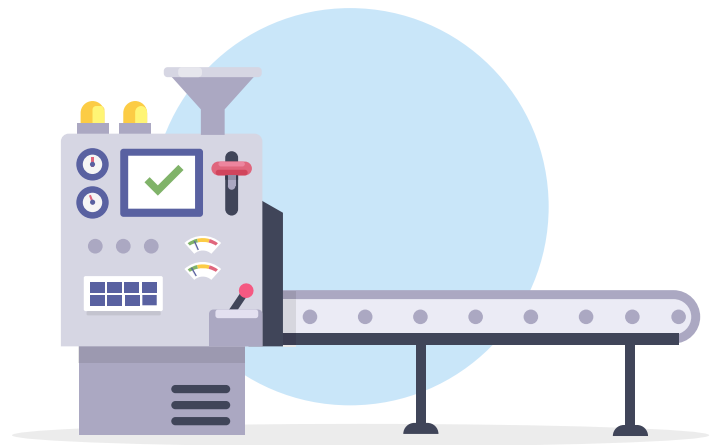
- This proof of concept will add credibility to your crowdfunding campaign and demonstrate to your potential backers that you are legitimate and dedicated to producing the product. This also helps with marketing and PR efforts as it gives you a physical product for collateral, helping you build buzz.
- Producing a prototype allows you to test the product and refine it before the production stage. You don't want to mass produce a product that could potentially be defective or not work as you imagined.

Kickstarter and **Indiegogo** each have their own set of unique rules for prototypes, so be sure to review them thoroughly before you decide on a platform.

Determine How To Make Your Prototype

There are a few different paths you can take in creating your prototype:

- Take the DIY method and build it yourself.
- Work with prototyping companies such as Fictiv, Protolabs, and Shapeways. Kickstarter's **Hardware Studio** is a great resource for everything you need to know about the manufacturing process.
- Have your prototype made by a manufacturer. Going down this path is the most complex, and we'll cover how to find a manufacturer in the next section.

How To Find The Right Manufacturer

Perhaps the most challenging part of the process is choosing the right manufacturer for your product. It's a complex process that requires thorough research and understanding before you make a choice.

Develop A Manufacturing Plan

With so much at stake, it's important that you develop a plan that you can follow during the manufacturing process.

Here are some important factors you need to consider before you start:

- **Timelines:** The manufacturing timeline should align with your crowdfunding timeline to assure you can deliver your product to your backers when you promised.

- **Costs:** This is obviously central to your planning. By this stage, you should have set a crowdfunding budget and know how much you need to spend on manufacturing.

- **Domestic or Overseas:** These days, a large portion of manufacturing is done in China, India and SE Asia, but depending on the product, you may choose to manufacture it domestically, so you'll need to budget accordingly.

- **Minimum order quantities:** Understand how many pieces of your product you need to produce. This will be a big factor in choosing a manufacturer as many will have a minimum requirement.

- **Logistics and Shipping:** Once your product is manufactured, you need to deliver it. A company like Easyship can help you develop a cost-effective shipping and logistics plan to make sure you stay within your budget and deliver your product on time.

Where To Search For Manufacturer

Before you start your search, you'll want to weigh the **pros and cons of domestic vs overseas sourcing.**

Manufacturing In North America

Pros	Cons
+ Made in America appeal	- Higher manufacturing costs due to labor costs
+ Higher labor standards	
+ No language barrier	- Fewer product choices because many parts are now solely manufactured overseas.
+ Better payment security	

Manufacturing Overseas

Pros	Cons
+ Lower manufacturing costs	- Lower manufacturing and labor standards
+ Higher number of manufacturers	- Less intellectual property protection
	- Language barriers
	- Importation and customs clearance.

Chapter 4
Establishing A Shipping And Fulfillment Strategy

It's time to ship! Afterall, getting your product in the hands of your passionate backers is the entire reason for going on this journey. As with every other aspect of your campaign, successful shipping comes down to planning and preparation.

Setting Up A Budget

Shipping may not be the most glamorous part of the crowdfunding process but it's critically important. If left on the backburner, it can become one of your biggest woes, eating into your cash reserves. It doesn't have to be that way, though.

Setting a budget — and sticking to it makes a big difference. Creating a shipping plan rather than sending orders ad hoc can cut spending so that shipping costs only account for about 10-15% of your funds raised, 20% max, according to our best calculations here at Easyship.

Where Are You Shipping

Know your target market — that will determine where you're shipping.

• Keep in mind that 38% of backers are likely outside the US.

• If you're shipping internationally, keep in mind that some countries are easier — and cheaper — to ship to than others. Some countries require strict documentation to make it through customs.

To get a better understanding of how rates depend on destinations, consider using Easyship's **crowdfunding calculator** to get an estimate for your campaign.

Packaging

The name of the game here is leveraging package size for a cheaper price or else your shipping costs will balloon. In shipping, packages are measured by the two kinds of weight: deadweight and dimensional (or volumetric) weight.

Dimensional weight is calculated by multiplying the length, width, and height of a package and dividing it by a cubic divisor. The charge is determined by the heavier of the two weights. With that in mind, efforts to make packages smaller by even the slightest bit can save you big time cash in the long run.

Speed

When it comes to shipping and speed, it's a pay to play kind of deal. Meaning that the faster your packages ship,the more it costs to ship them and vice versa.

- Consider your actual business needs versus wants in terms of what you can afford when it comes to speed.
- While different courier companies offer various time-sensitive delivery options to cater to your preferred delivery timeframe, overnight delivery can cost five times more than ground delivery.

Taxes And Duties

Duties and taxes are an unavoidable part of international shipping. The charges will fall on either the shipper (you) or the receiver (your backers). However, they vary by country, which complicates determining your shipping budget.

Start your research early to avoid any surprises down the road. Whether you play around with our calculator or visit our **countries page**, where you'll find detailed duty, tax, and customs information for any country you plan to ship to.

How To Package Your Product For Shipping

Efficient packaging is customer service. Think about it: Strong branding and safeguarding your items against possible damage come together to leave a positive impression on your backers.

- **Package Type:** Are you going flat-rate or first-class? Box or envelope? What you ship depends on what's inside — and it's certainly not one-size-fits-all when your budget is at stake.
- **Size:** Even the smallest in packaging can save thousands of dollars over time.
- **Cost:** Unless you plan to ship flat-rate boxes, a package's cost is determined by the size and weight. It's important to be precise — don't use a bigger box than you need to.

Do You Need A 3PL To Handle Your Crowdfunding Orders?

When all is said and done and you're ready to ship, you have to decide if you'll go in-house or outsource the efforts to a team of experts. The latter route is what's known in the biz as working with a third party logistics provider (3PL). But is a 3PL right for your campaign? Let's explore.

Using a 3PL

Advantages

Disadvantages

+ **Leave it to the pros:** Working with a 3PL means that you'll have a dedicated, full-time staff devoted to packing your orders.

+ **Focus on the big picture:** Learning warehouse and shipping procedures takes time and effort. Working with a 3PL allows you to focus on the big picture and ideate freely.

+ **A global strategy:** Avoid issues with taxes and duties by having overseas warehouses, allowing you to serve your international backers with ease. Fulfilling orders in the same country where they're placed removes the barrier of customs.

+ **Speedy deliveries:** Choose from warehouses in multiple strategic international and domestic locations to cut down on delivery times and shipping costs.

- **Loss of control:** In the early stages of your campaign, your brand is everything. Outsourcing shipping to a 3PL can make it difficult to maintain a highly curated brand image.

- **Customer service:** Two's company, three's a crowd. Customer service is further complicated with the addition of a third party — especially if things go south.

- **Lack of infrastructure skills:** Some founders like to have their hands in everything. Outsourcing to a 3PL means you won't have the chance to engage in logistics in a meaningful way.

Working with a partner, like Easyship, can help you navigate the 3PL and fulfillment process.

Read More:
Guide To Shipping For Crowdfunding

Chapter 5

What Should You Do After A Successful Crowdfunding Campaign?

You spent months optimizing your pre-sale strategy, ran ads for weeks in advance of your launch date, and monitored results for the better part of a season. And you know what? You pulled it off. Forget crowdfunding 101, it's time for your next course: crowdfunding 201.

Key Steps to Complete After a Crowdfunding Campaign

Crowdfunding campaigns are a lot of work. At this stage, you need to analyze results, evaluate metrics, and stay in touch with your fans.

1. Review Your Campaign Results.

You can review your crowdfunding steps by taking into account the following metrics:

Conversion Rates

Crowdfunding tools like Kickstarter and GoFundMe support Google Analytics, which can help you evaluate your campaign. You can use Google Analytics to monitor traffic, conversion rate, consumer location, and other data.

Traffic Source

You can learn a lot by looking at your campaign traffic sources. If you know where your core supporters come from, you can target them with ads in the future.

Take an extra close look at social media links.

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2. Nurture Your backer

Top of the to-do list: Make sure your backers stay loyal.

Let's look at two of the most efficient ways to stay in touch with followers:

Be Active On Social Media

One of the most convenient ways to communicate with backers is social media. Hopefully you already have Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts for your startup because you **used social media as part of your original crowdfunding campaign.**

Send Emails With Updates

Update donors via email whenever you have exciting news about your project. Let customers know when you have new stock, expand your rewards program, or have a new funding milestone to share. One more thing: Don't forget to thank repeat backers whenever they make a new donation.

Why Transition From Crowdfunding To Ecommerce?

Sustained growth isn't driven by one crowdfunding campaign after another. Instead, it's driven by long-term vision, robust business planning, and a solid appraisal of your marketplace. There are lots of reasons to convert to a full ecommerce model, including:

1. Keep The Momentum Going

A full-fledged ecommerce site can help you maintain momentum. A sleek ecommerce site can help you take control of traffic after your crowdfunding campaign ends.

2. Have A Place To Take Preorders And Sell Future Products.

An ecommerce site acts as a central nexus for all your traffic: Consumers enter your sales funnel via social media ads, affiliate blog links, advertorials, and pay per click (PPC) marketing campaigns. All orders — including preorders — flow through your ecommerce site.

Using Your Crowdfund Campaign To Build An Online Store

You know how to crowdfund, and you have the capital you need to produce your products. Now you need to create an online store to show them off. If you already have a web presence, now's the time to see if you can transform it into an ecommerce site. If you can't, you'll need to switch to an ecommerce platform.

1. Choose An eCommerce Platform.

First things first: Which ecommerce platform will you choose? There are plenty of providers on the market, and some of them are better than others.

Let's look at a few:

- **BigCommerce:** BigCommerce is a scalable **software as a service (SaaS) platform**, so it's ideal for small and medium-size businesses (SMBs) as well as enterprise-level companies. BigCommerce has excellent 24/7 customer support and a broad range of built-in features.
- **Shopify:** Another SaaS solution, Shopify is fully hosted and is known for its quick, easy setup process. Plugins make the platform easy to customize.
- **Magento:** Magento is self-hosted and based on open-source code. You get total creative freedom, but you do need coding knowledge (or an IT department) to take full advantage of all the platform has to offer.
- **WooCommerce:** WooCommerce is an open-source WordPress plugin, so it's free and it works with existing WordPress sites. If you already have a WordPress site and you don't plan to expand your product range, WooCommerce might suit you well.

2. Select A Theme That Represents Your Brand.

You've signed up with an **ecommerce platform** — good going. Now you need to pick out a theme. Great ecommerce themes are intuitive, easy to navigate, and go with your existing branding. Some are free, while others cost tens or hundreds of dollars.

If you're stuck, take a look at competitors' websites to get an idea of what your consumer base responds to.

3. Set Up Payment Methods.

Payment gateway setup might sound daunting, but don't fret — it's actually really easy. Most SaaS ecommerce providers have robust security in place and maintain PCI compliance on behalf of their clients, leaving you with one less thing to do.

If you don't want to use your ecommerce platform's integrated **point of sale (POS) system**, you can choose from a laundry list of alternative options. Make sure you get an SSL certificate for your site then research gateway options.

4. Sort Out Your Shipping Settings.

Great shipping is super important. Sites like Amazon drive consumer shipping expectations, so you need to make your postage options swift, transparent, and consistently reliable. You can do that with a great third-party solution like **Easyship**.

Determine Your Shipping Policy

Create an all-inclusive shipping and handling policy and make it easy to understand. Unexpected shipping fees during checkout really put people off. Your shipping rates have to take into account packaging costs and carrier fees.

Select eCommerce Shipping Solutions

Integrated shipping software can really help streamline your workflow. Easyship connects with a **wide range of platforms**, including BigCommerce, Amazon, and Etsy. If you automate that side of your business, you'll have more time to develop brand new products, chat with customers, and tinker with your business plan.

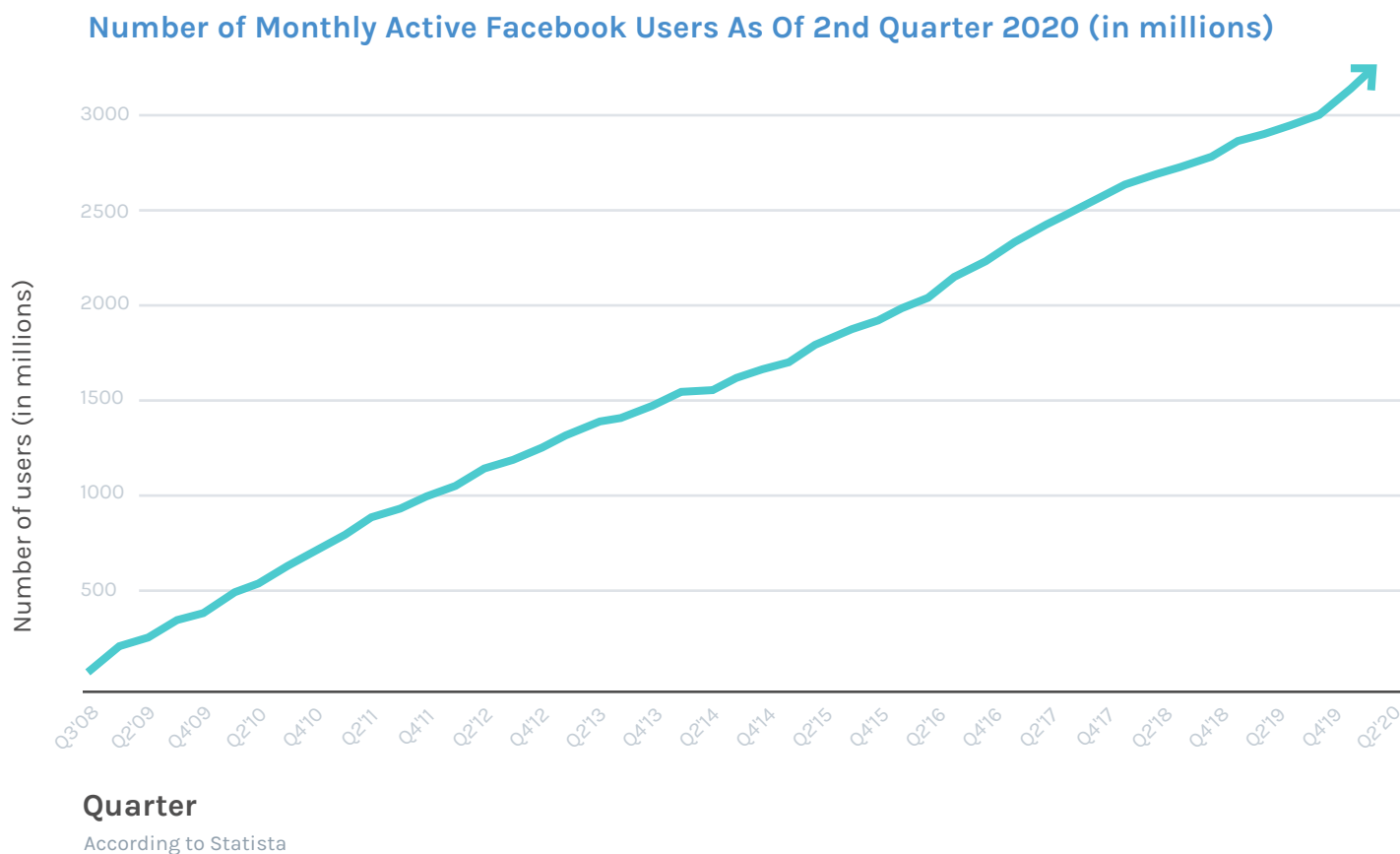### 5. Preview, Test, And Publish Your Online Store.

Before you launch your store, test, test, and test again. Run through every scenario you can think of to ensure your site works seamlessly. Load your site on smartphones, desktop computers, and tablets to make sure it looks great on different devices.

6. Mass Market.

You're live and kicking, and everything's working. Now you need to keep your backers involved and vacuum new recruits into your sales funnel. Here's how:

- **Email marketing:** Undoubtedly one of the best customer acquisition tactics out there, email marketing has an average $42 return on investment (ROI) for every dollar spent. In short, you don't have to spend much money to see results.

- **Social media:** Billions of people have social media accounts. Facebook, for example, had **2.7 billion monthly users** in the second quarter of 2020 — more than the total population of China and India combined. You can leverage that power to your advantage with cleverly targeted Facebook ads, sponsored posts, and company page promotion.

Number of Monthly Active Facebook Users As Of 2nd Quarter 2020 (in millions)

Quarter
According to Statista

- **Content marketing:** Great content helps build rock solid brand awareness, and it can also boost your website's Google ranking. Solid SEO-centric articles can get you listed above longtime competitors, so make sure you publish well-researched editorials, optimized advertorials, and blog posts on a range of platforms.

Summary
Crowdfunding 101

You're a crowdfunding maven, and now it's time to turn your brand into a 21st century powerhouse with a sleek, sophisticated online store. You can set yourself up for success with a robust ecommerce platform, a great theme, a **reliable payment provider**, reliable shipping options, and a range of great marketing tactics. The world is yours; go for gold.

Additional Resources

- [Crowdfunding 101: A Guide to Creating Successful Campaigns](#)
- [Crowdfunding Calculator](#)
- [How to Plan Your Crowdfunding Shipping Strategy](#)
- [Crowdsourcing and Crowdfunding: Do You Know the Difference?](#)
- [10 Tips to Create a Great Crowdfunding Video](#)
- [How to Relaunch a Failed Crowdfunding Project](#)
- [Debunking 10 Myths About Crowdfunding](#)
- [How to Set Realistic Crowdfunding Goals for Your Campaign](#)
- [Is Influencer Marketing Right for Crowdfunding?](#)

Contributors

LAUNCHBOOM

Author: Mark Pecota

LaunchBoom is the most effective product launch system and full service marketing agency that manages the entire crowdfunding process from start to finish. We partner with companies looking to launch new innovative products on Indiegogo or Kickstarter and we always deliver successful campaigns.

Join our **Crowdfunded Community on Facebook** to learn from other project creators just like you as well as get your questions answered.

If you're ready to start working on your campaign, **book a call** with us to find out how we can help!

INDIEGOGO

Author: Brittany Nelson

Our mission is to empower people to unite around ideas that matter to them and together make those ideas come to life. **Indiegogo** is headquartered in San Francisco.

BIGCOMMERCE

Author: Leigh-Anne Truitt

The world's leading cloud ecommerce platform for established and rapidly-growing businesses. Combining enterprise functionality, an open architecture and app ecosystem, and market-leading performance, **BigCommerce** enables businesses to grow online sales with 80% less cost, time and complexity than on-premise software.

easyship

Author: Bryan Formhals

Easyship is the world's leading cloud-based shipping platform empowering eCommerce merchants to optimize their logistics, drive down shipping costs and scale their reach, globally. Through Easyship's platform, merchants gain instant access to over 250+ shipping solutions, label generation, dynamic rates at checkout, full tax and duty visibility and unlimited integrations with leading ecommerce platforms for a truly omnichannel solution.