



Note: Every product launch is different. Use these steps as a guideline to your own. Often by adding one or two steps you would otherwise leave out, you'll get a significant increase in sales.

THE BIG PICTURE

1. Ensure that your product or service has a clear value proposition.* What do customers receive when exchanging money for your offer?

**This is super important! USP means "unique selling proposition" and refers to the one thing that distinguishes your offering from all others. Why should people pay attention to what you are selling? You must answer this question well.*

2. Decide on bonuses, incentives, or rewards for early buyers. How will they be rewarded for taking action?

3. Have you made the launch fun somehow? (Remember to think about non-buyers as well as buyers. If people don't want to buy, will they still enjoy hearing or reading about the launch?)

4. If your launch is online, have you recorded a video or audio message to complement the written copy?

5. Have you built anticipation into the launch? Are prospects excited?

6. Have you built urgency—not the false kind but a real reason for timeliness—into the launch?

7. Publish the time and date of the launch in advance (if it's online, some people will be camped out on the site an hour before, hitting the refresh button every few minutes).

8. Proofread all sales materials multiple times . . . and get someone else to review them as well.

9. Check all Web links in your shopping cart or payment processor, and then double-check them from a different computer with a different browser.

NEXT STEPS

10. If this is an online product, is it properly set up in your shopping cart or with PayPal?

11. Test every step of the order process repeatedly. Whenever you change any variable (price, order components, text, etc.), test it again.

12. Have you registered all the domains associated with your product? (Domains are cheap; you might as well get the .com, .net, .org, and any very similar name if available.)

13. Are all files uploaded and in the right place?

14. Review the order page carefully for errors or easy-to-make improvements. Print it out and share it with several friends for review, including a couple of people who don't know anything about your business.

15. Read important communications (launch message, order page, sales page) out loud. You'll probably notice a mistake or a poorly phrased sentence you missed while reading it in your head.

16. Have you or your designer created any custom graphics for the offer, including any needed ads for affiliates or partners?



MONEY MATTERS

17. Set a clear monetary goal for the launch. How many sales do you want to see, and how much net income? (In other words, what will success look like?)

18. Advise the merchant account or bank of incoming funds.*

**Merchant accounts are paranoid about large sums of money arriving in a short period of time. If you don't give them a heads-up, you might run into problems.*

19. Create a backup plan for incoming funds if necessary (get an additional merchant account, plan to switch all payments to PayPal, etc.).

20. Can you add another payment option for anyone who has trouble placing an order?

21. For a high-priced product, can you offer a payment plan? (Note: It's common to offer a slight discount for customers paying in full. This serves as an incentive for customers who prefer to pay all at once while providing an alternative for those who need to pay over time.)

THE NIGHT BEFORE

22. Clear as much email as possible in addition to any other online tasks so you can focus on the big day tomorrow.

23. Write a strong launch message to your lists of readers, customers, and/or affiliates.

24. Prepare a blog post and any needed social media posts (if applicable).

25. Set two alarm clocks to ensure that you're wide awake and available at least one hour before the scheduled launch.

THE BIG MORNING

26. Schedule your launch time to suit your audience, not you. All things being equal, it's usually best to launch early in the morning, East Coast time.

27. Soft launch at least ten minutes early to make sure everything is working. It's better for you to find the problems than to have your customers find them!

28. Write the first three to five buyers to say thanks and ask, "Did everything go OK in the order process?" (Side benefit: These buyers are probably your biggest fans anyway, so they'll appreciate the personal check-in.)

29. As long as it's possible, send a quick personal note to every buyer in addition to the automated thank-you that goes out. (If it's not possible every time, do it as often as you can.)

PROMOTION (CAN BE DONE ON THE DAY OF LAUNCH OR BEFORE)

30. Most important: Ask for help spreading the word. Many readers, prospects, and acquaintances will help by telling their friends and followers, but you have to ask them.

31. Write to affiliates with a reminder about the new offering.

32. Write to journalists or media contacts, if appropriate.

33. Post on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and any other social networks you already participate in. (It's not usually a good idea to join a new network just to promote something.)



FOLLOW-UP (DO THIS IN ADVANCE)

34. Write the general thank-you message that all buyers will receive when purchasing.

35. If applicable, write the first message for your email follow-up series that buyers will receive.

36. Outline additional content for future communication and plan to schedule it after you recover from the launch.

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

37. How can you overdeliver and surprise your customers with this product? Can you include additional deliverables or some kind of unadvertised benefit?

38. Is there anything special you can do to thank your customers? (For a high-price launch, send postcards to each buyer; for something extra, call a few of your customers on the phone.)

THE SECOND TO LAST STEP

39. Don't forget to celebrate. It's a big day that you've worked up to for a long time. Go out to your favorite restaurant, have a glass of wine, buy something you've had your eye on for a while, or otherwise do something as a personal reward. You've earned it.

THE VERY LAST STEP

40. Start thinking about the next launch. What can you build on from this one? What did you learn that can help you create something even better next time?

Remember, many customers will support you for life as long as you keep providing them with great value. It's much easier to sell to an existing customer than to a new one, so work hard to overdeliver and plan ahead for the next project. (For example, when promising a thirty-nine-step checklist, throw in an extra step.)