57

SECRETS
OF CROWDFUNDING

BY NAREK VARDANYAN

Hey There,

When I first heard of crowdfunding, I thought "Oh! This is great!".

I will make my dreams a reality and share my great idea with people from all over the world, they're bound to fund me!
So, how much did I raise that time, I hear you ask? $15. Yep, all of $15!! :)

In fact, it was a friend of mine who donated, and he later asked me to stop spamming him!. What a beginner I was!.

"The real value of crowdfunding is the relationships it builds."

Paulo Cohelio

(: Joking, I don't remember who said that, but it's true)

And in the meantime, I was watching others raising six or seven figures...
As I was managing a professional research company, I ended up interviewing 206 successful crowdfunders and discovered that, they all took the same route to greatness.

I tested out my theory and ... boom! I managed to raise $22,600. Not enough for Forbes, but a huge success for me. Afterwards, we teamed with a friend and raised more than $160,000.

I started to help people to raise money themselves and that was how *The Winners' Program* and this practical guide were born.
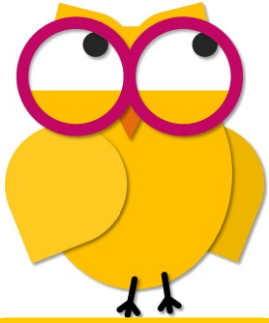
Let's make it happen,
Narek Vardanyan

What You Will Get

In this guide we included **the 57 of the most effective tips from our experience and from 206 campaigns**, some of which even crossed seven digits in their funding. These 57 tips are clear actions, tested by the most successful campaigns.

They are practical, easy to implement, and highly effective.

In here, you will find more than 35 websites that you probably haven't heard of, but which will bring you the most success.

You will learn techniques on how to squeeze the most out of social media and create your loyal network through implementing simple steps.

Intro

Launching a project on a crowdfunding platform is far from a guaranteed success. In order to succeed in crowdfunding everything is important.

A successful project is:
- relevant idea,
- proper preparation,
- beautiful description,
- attractive rewards, and
- effective PR.

You will be able to collect the entire amount if you are able to convince the potential backers that your idea is really worthy to be realized.

Let's get it started!

Less than half of the Kickstarter projects reach their funding goal, and around 12% don't receive a single pledge!

Evaluating Your Best Idea

Crowdfunding is not suitable for just any type of project.

List all your ideas in a spreadsheet. Here is how to evaluate which idea is good for crowdfunding with this formula.

- Have mass market *(3 points)*
- Contain innovation *(1 point)*
- Unique *(1 point)*
- Solve problems *(1 point)*

Ideas which have 4 points or more are best for CF. Ideas which have 3 points or less are not suitable for CF.

In case you produce hardware, wait until you have a solid prototype and a clear understanding of how to produce the product and how much it will cost.

Evaluating Your Best Idea

Research Similar Crowdfunding Campaigns

Well, you already have your best idea and want to start crowdfunding... Awesome!

Tip 1

Start by researching campaigns similar to yours.

List all the campaigns (both successful and not successful ones). Contact the manager and ask about activities that worked best/worst.
Open Kicktraq.com, paste the URLs and watch out their funding curves.
If most of the funding occured in the beginning, it means most came most from their own network. More stable curve means there are interested backers from the platform. When you see a sharp increase in funding, ask authors what was the cause of it.

Evaluating Your Best Idea

Tip 2

Define Your Target Audience

Conduct a survey with wufoo.com and share it on social media. Ask about the problem you are trying to solve. You will gather invaluable info about your audience and ... their emails.

Estimate what are the key problems of your audience. Define your audience according to age, gender and interests.

Sign up in Reddit and dedicated forums and start participating in discussions.

Try to engage with people and give as much value as you can. In couple of months you will have a strong community of targeted people who will help you get your early seeding.

Evaluating Your Best Idea

Tip 3

Leverage Your Team Power

Imagine you are a trainer of Barcelona football club and need to somehow inspire 50,000 people to attend your game. Right, you need the best players!

Start building your team.

When you have 10 people who know 10 more, who then know 10 more, suddenly you have 1,000 hot prospects. If you start with just yourself or a friend, it can still be done, but you will struggle more.

Organize a party and make a motivating pitch about your dream. Build your team. Assign their own responsibilities and include only the ones on whom you can rely!

# Evaluating Your Best Idea

Tip 4

Estimate the Costs

The "Coolest Cooler" raised $13 mln. and was not able to deliver the rewards after two years, explaining the angry backers that they miscalculated their costs.

Carefully estimate all the costs.

Kickstarter, Gofundme and Indiegogo require a 5% fee. Plus you will be charged about 3% for payment processor fees. In addition, take into your calculation about 5-8% dropped backers (for Kickstarter), meaning backers whose credit cards are denied when the campaign ends. Before promising something to backers, calculate how much it costs to ship worldwide.

Don't forget about your love to the Government. Your money is considered taxable income for the calendar year in which your project is funded, so contact a tax adviser.

Evaluating Your Best Idea
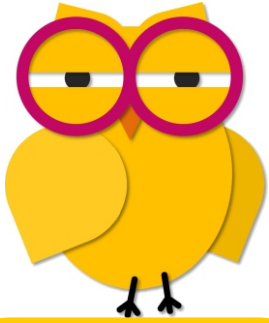
Tip 5

Crowdfunding Canvas

We have developed a new canvas, which assesses all the elements needed for preparing a crowdfunding campaign. It assesses the main elements you will need in your project when preparing for crowdfunding (next page).

Create a visual metrics of all the key elements you need for success:

- What are the key problems your customers face?
- How will you solve them?
- What is your unique value proposition?
- Who else delivers similar products?
- What channels will you use to deliver products to customers?
- What benefits will the backers have?
- What is the cost structure?

Crowdfunding Canvas

PROBLEM

SOLUTION

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

COMPETITION

CHANNELS

TARGET CUSTOMERS

BACKER BENEFITS

COST STRUCTURE

Crowdfunding Canvas

CAFÉ TASTY MOZART

PROBLEM

Musicians have no place to hangout;
No good music in local cafes;
Local cafes are not entertaining;

SOLUTION

A place which could become
a community place for musicians

Where music will be chosen
by the votes of customers

Customers may play and sing and
if people like it, they don't pay for order

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

A place which would accomplish the
needs of musicians and people who
love music

COMPETITION

Other local cafes
Karaoke

CHANNELS

Nice and comfortable atmosphere
Quality instruments
Good food and service
Located in City-Center

TARGET CUSTOMERS

Musicians
People who love good music
Local inhabitants
Tourists visiting the city

BACKER BENEFITS

Post cards
T-shirts
Free Lunch
Free Album Distribution
Advertising

COST STRUCTURE

Buy a place (in case you buy)
Renovation
Instruments
Equipment etc.
Salaries, Rent, Taxes, COGS etc

Preparing for the Show

Tip 6

Pick Your Launch Day
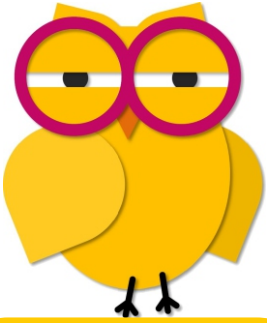
Pick your launch day to be in at least 2-3 months - you need time to be prepared. Pick a memorable day (holiday, your birthday).

Check all the events in your launch week.

If Apple plans to introduce a new iPhone during your launch day, you will hardly find any interested people and most importantly journalists.

Crowdfunding isn't seasonal, and there is no 'best time' to launch your campaign, unless your campaign is about a seasonal product. That said, there is a rumor that the worst months for crowdfunding are July, August and December.

Preparing for the Show

Set Your Goal Amount

When setting the goal amount, set the least possible amount with which you will be able to produce your product. It will allow you to benefit from *'Green Bar'* effect.

Tip 7

Set your fundraising goal reasonably low, taking into account all the costs.

When people see a lot of projects on a crowdfunding platform, they veer towards the one that has the green bar already filled in, because they're curious projects that get fully funded.

Success creates momentum, and momentum creates a 'snowball effect'.

Preparing for the Show

Create a Landing Page

Email will be your main form of communication, so you need to build an email database of subscribers. Remember, most of your results will be derived from your emails, so you need to start collecting those addresses right now.

Tip 8

One of the best ways to collect email database is to create a landing page

– a simple page where you should offer something in return for an email, e.g. enter your email to download this ebook for free or to subscribe to updates. The ebook doesn't have to be yours, you can find something related in internet.

If you're not a programmer or coding wizard, then go to Launchrock.com and create a landing page for free.

Preparing for the Show

Tip 8

Create a Landing Page

Consider these important tips when making a landing page:

- Use friendly colors.
- Include images of real people (it's a sad fact, but pictures of women will still convert more than those of men).
- Feature yourself and include a personal message.
- Use customer testimonials i.e., 2-3 satisfied users' message about the product.
- Say thank you with share: include a share button to Facebook and Twitter.

In [this video] I show how to create a landing page for free.

Preparing for the Show

**Create a Facebook page and group**

Social media is very important nowadays.

Tip 9

Create a Facebook page and a group to drive traffic to your landing page.

All your social media activities should have two main goals: awareness raising and driving visitors to your landing page (building an email database).

Use the URL of your landing page in the description of the Facebook posts to drive more traffic.

Preparing for the Show
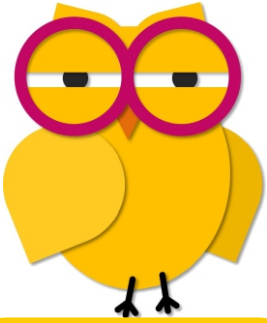
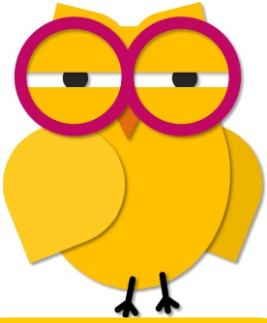**Tip 10**

Mobilize Your Personal Network

If you manage to raise 20-30% in the first 48 hours, your chances of being fully funded are quite high. According to Kickstarter statistics, 78% of projects that raised more than 20% of their goal in the first two days were successfully funded.

If you totally rely on platform's traffic – nobody will pledge you!

Mobilize your own network to raise about 20-30% quickly. It will create momentum and place you high in platform's homepage.

You will benefit from their high traffic and successfully raise the remaining amount.

Preparing for the Show

Tip 10

Mobilize Your Personal Network

Divide your contacts into three categories:

Hot – your friends and family
Warm – communicate at least once every couple of months
Cold – communicate with a couple of times a year.

Create different email templates for these three category of contacts. When sending emails to your hot group of people, ask them both to back your project and to share it with their networks. Ask your warm contacts to either back or share your project and your cold contacts mainly to share your project with their networks.

This way you will get the maximum likely benefit from your personal contacts.

Preparing for the Show

Tip 11

Install These Chrome Extensions

These extensions will help you use your Gmail like a pro:

- Boomeranggmail.com – email scheduling and reminder
- Streak.com – notifies you who opened your email
- Rapportive.com – shows the LinkedIn profiles of contacts
- Findbigemail.com – simple tool to find attachements

Streak will notify you if the receiver opened the email or not.

If not – change the subject. If opened but not replied – change the content.

Don't Spam. Try to be personal and tell your story. Underline how important it is for you to have them join your incredible idea and realize it together.

Raising Awareness

Raising Awareness

Find a Celebrity

It is always very helpful to

Tip 12

involve some famous people: bloggers, musicians, artists etc.

Your friends definitely will know someone who is familiar with the driver of some celebrity. It is said that between each two unacquainted people there is at most a 6-person link.

Try to find that link via LinkedIn or Facebook. Then, ask him/her to say some good words about you in her blog, Twitter or Facebook. But keep in mind to confirm with them your action plan.

When you collect about 15% of your set amount, it will be a perfect moment for your secret weapon to engage in the game. Be patient, use your joker card wisely!

Raising Awareness

Participate in Events and Exhibitions

Crowdfunding is built on relationships; hence, you should start building your social capital earlier. The best way to do it is to

Tip 13

participate in exhibitions of your field and start to make relationships with visitors, companies and most importantly with media.

You might grab their attention – they always search for interesting and newsworthy stories.

Raising Awareness

Tip 14

Create a Facebook Event

Nowadays it is hard to get onto your friends' newsfeed as you are competing with tons of other information. It is far easier to get your friends' attention by creating a virtual Facebook event and inviting all your friends to it.

Create a Facebook event 4 weeks before your launch.

To ease your job, use the "Invite all" extension for chrome, to invite all of your friends with a single click.

Don't forget to include links that direct to your landing page. In your text description put at least 4 of the same links (those are your 4 chances that somebody will click on them).

Raising Awareness

Create a Facebook Event

Event Notification to All:

Change the time of your event periodically.

Does this surprise you? Well, when you change the time, everybody who joined your event receives a notification. This way, you don't allow them to forget about you. Do you think it will make them nervous? Well for some, maybe, but for most of them it will be a perfect reminder.

Change the time of your event once every couple of days in the first three weeks and per day in the last week.

I show exactly how to do it in this video.

Tip 14

Raising Awareness

Tip 15

Use Facebook Ads Professionaly

If you pushed the 'Boost' button on Facebook, it doesn't mean you know how to benefit most from Facebook Ads. Squeeze the most from your ads with this [Strategy.](#)

You can place a pixel on your page and create re-targeted ads on Facebook and its display network.

Re-targeting is displaying your ads to people who already visited your pages. It is usually 300-500% more effective.

Raising Awareness

Raise Awareness Everywhere

Tip 16

List your product in the following websites to generate a huge amount of traffic (hardware, gadgets):

- alltopstartups.com
- www.startuptabs.com
- thegadgetflow.com
- thestartuppitch.com
- giftsandcoupons.com
- producthunt.com
- fancy.com
- ohgizmo.com

Raising Awareness

Tip 17

Launch Headtalker or Thunderclap Campaign

Use [Thunderclap] or [Headtalker] (I like it more) to make a coordinated social media effort.

These tools allow a single message to be mass-shared (flash mob-style).

Launch a Thunderclap/Headtalker campaign a week in advance of your crowdfunding campaign. This will allow you to send out a social media message about your campaign on your launch day to over 100,000 people.

If you can sign up enough people, these tools can help you to amplify your reach even further.

Raising Awareness

Tip 18

Find the Right Blog

Start looking for those crowdfunding projects which are similar to yours. Then, copy the images and drag and drop the image file into the search bar at images.google.com. You'll be shown every website that has ever posted that image. Filter out blogs listed on the results page to see which might be relevant to your project.

The key is to genuinely form friendships with bloggers.

You probably know someone, who knows someone, who knows the owner of that blog. Without introduction your chances to be heard could be quite low.

They get pitched every day by strangers who don't care about them and only want publicity. Find out ways to be helpful to them and make relationships.

Raising Awareness

Find Right Blogs with These Tools

Most of the tools below are paid ones, but here's a tip on how to use them: negotiate a free trial with the tool manager. In most of the cases somebody will contact you and ask whether you are interested in paid plans.

Tip 18

Say yes and get a free 14 days, which is more than enough to extract all the interesting database from there.
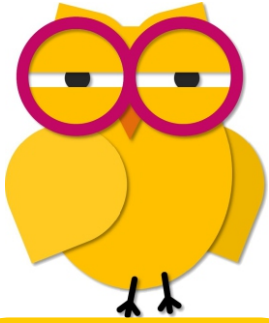
- Omgili.com
- Buzzsumo.com
- Muckrack.com
- Buzzstream.com
- Grouphigh.com

Attacking the Press

Attacking the Press

Don't send your materials to press whose major audience is technology if your project is film making.

It is important for you to find a journalist who is interested in your field and have some tangible angles to your project.

You should try to be heard by everyone, but if you are mentioned by a famous journal, then it will have a viral effect.

Don't send your materials to press whose major audience is technology if your project is film making. It definitely will not work.

Attacking the Press

Tip 19

Find Articles of Needed Authors

Write down the topics that are somehow associated to your product. Categorize them according to their importance. Define the Keywords that are relevant to your topic from various angles.

Find articles from your field to find the list of reporters.

To do it in an organized way, go to this website: press.customerdevlabs.com

Search for a keyword and download all the articles in a CSV file.

I show how to find articles in this video.

Attacking the Press

Tip 20

Build Journalists' Contact List

Open Google docs and categorize journalists in it according their specialty, liked topics, interests etc. Sort them according to their name, journal, fields of interests, means of contact.

To find Journalists' contacts, search Google for the author's personal website.

Hint for a search:
Try searching the following ways on Google:
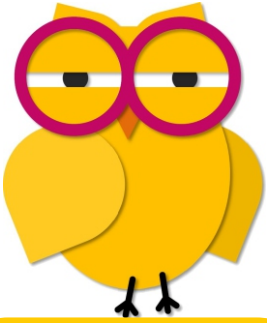- "[first name]@[website they write for].com"

e.g. "john@mashable.com"
- "[first initial][last name]@[domain].com"

e.g. "jsmith@mashable.com"
- "[first name].[last name]@[domain].com"

e.g. "john.smith@mashable.com"

Google Like a Pro

Target your search with quotation marks. They require words to be searched as a phrase, in the exact order you type them, and if you want to include other words in your search, like *"successful"* you should put the word AND.

So *"Film Crowdfunding" AND "Successful"* will bring you all the results that do contain these two words.

Tip 21

Use quotation marks and intitle search

If you want to search for articles or blogs with this in the title, then search *intitle:"film crowdfunding", article (or blog)*

Attacking the Press

Tip 22

Find Journalists in Twitter

These three tools will allow you to find needed authors and influencers in Twitter, form relationshisp with them and get in touch successfully:

anewstip.com - great tool to find tweets and journalists
audiense.com - great tool to connect with target people
followerwonk.com - great tool to analyze twitter profiles

Engage with journalists in Twitter and form a relationship.

Attacking the Press

Prepare a Press Kit

Press Kit is a list of materials for the press.

Tip 23

Your press kit should include visual materials of your product as well as your press release,

particularly:
· Description of the Problem,
· Why you want to solve it (benefits for consumers, not for you!),
· How you solve it (what is your product)
· Who does it (bio of the team),
· Why it is different from others,
· Statistical data of your company (only when the statistics are on your side). Infographics/Photo/Video (include only high quality materials)

Place them all in Google drive and include a link in your email to the journalist or use Dropbox.

Attacking the Press
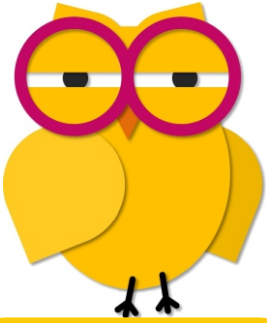
Tip 24

Don't Tell about Yourself, Make a News!

Before contacting the press, clearly answer to the following questions:
- *What problem does your product solve?*
- *Why do people use it?*
- *What value does it brings to the customer?*

You should answer all these questions from the point of view of the customer, not yours! Try to speak to some of your customers, to understand their motives, and write a story about your product.

Make your story newsworthy.

The fact that you decided to raise money through crowdfunding is not news. Most stories have several angles that may make them newsworthy. Most of the time it can be an angle that centers around either the founders, the technology, user benefits, or current trends.

Attacking the Press

Tip 25

Don't Spam

Try to contact each of the journalist in your list from his/her favorite angle. Research authors' interests and make your story based on that. Don't forget the local media: some of their journalists might appear to have patriotic views.

Write to each of the journalists individually, from the point of view that might be interesting for him.

Be patient, a quality article will open a number of doors to you.

Collect a list of at minimum 300 writers who might be interested in your product and send personal emails to them.

Attacking the Press

Tip 26

Avoid the Mistakes when Dealing with Journalists

Everybody loves news, including the journalists. It is easier to make them interested if you just appeared one week ago, rather than write that you have been working for years and a lot of journalists have written about you.

Remember, if there is no "News Factor" — there is no news.

Do not:
- Write somebody whom you don't know,
- Mass Messages (CC or BCC),
- Send emails with improper grammar,
- Write info for investors (market size, attractiveness of the market)
- Exclude the news factor.

Attacking the Press

Tip 27

Submit your Press Release

Submit your press release in PR Log: www.prlog.org

PR Log is an online press release distribution and press release submission service.

Use www.prlog.org for your press release distribution.

Most of the services are free.

Before you Start

Be Personal. People fund people — not ideas...

Before you Start

Brand Your Project and Yourself

Branding of the project is very important but branding yourself is equally important. You will definitely need a designer, which you will need throughout every stage of your campaign.

Tip 28

Create a project logo and a corporate identity.

You will need it when registering your campaign on the platform and creating materials to send out to audiences, whether they are photos, videos or little letters.

Before you Start
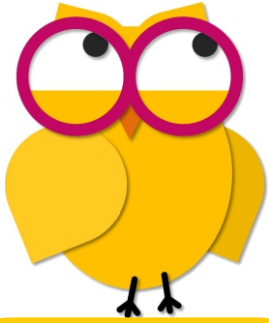
Tip 29

Position Your Campaign

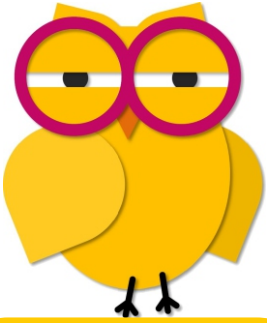The overall idea of the positioning is controlling how your audience and your customers perceive your product.

If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough

To construct a consize and simple Positioning Message, just answer to the following questions:

- *What does your target market want?*
- *What's the main problem that you solve?*
- *What's your method for solving that problem?*

Then, try to combine the sentences and you will get your positioning message!

Before you Start

Estimate the Right Platform

Kickstarter, Indiegogo and Gofundme have certainly risen to the top of the pile. These three are streets ahead of the thousands of other active crowdfunding platforms currently littering the web.

Tip 30

examine you project's category, marketing strategy, costs, appropriate funding schemes and goals.

This article will help you clearly understand the differences of these platforms and which one suits you the best.

Before you Start
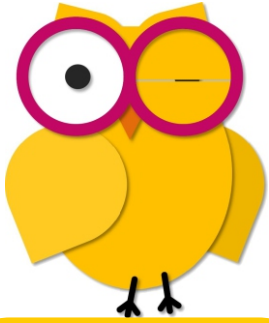
Keep it 31 Days

The most successful projects run from 30-40 days. People are not fond of waiting.

Tip 31

Longer campaigns do not mean more money.

If you collect 15-20% of your funding in the first 5 days, your chances will be quite high.

If you decide to make it within 30 days, write 31 days, as the registration day is not counted and the system will show 29 days.

Before you Start

Tip 32

Support Somebody Yourself

As it was said before, backers are curious and will look at your profile. They should know whom they are supporting. Many of them will click on your profile and see who you are. And when an author has not supported anybody himself, it is shown in his profile and creates hesitations for sponsors.

Try to support some projects yourself and have your input in the development of crowdfunding society.

It will create trust and reliability in the eyes of backerss. It is also possible that backers will contact you for a personal financing offer or cooperation.

Structuring the Page

The main points of your campaign structure that will make backers decide to support you or not are your Video, Perks and Text. In this section we will show you how to make them awesome.

Structuring the Page
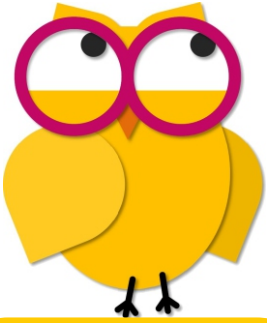
Tip 33

Make 'Sexy' Title

People should notice it when they're scrolling through name after name on Indiegogo or Kickstarter.

Top, Monster, Mega, Smash – words that let people know this is an opportunity not to be missed.

In short, it should compel a reader to click on it. Message. It should be short — 6 to 8 words — and easy to remember. It should include keywords that catch people's attention. Usually, the best titles are composed of two main parts: the name itself and the message, e.g.

"Nebia Shower – Better experience, 70% less water."

Structuring the Page

Tip 34

Video shouldn't be less than awesome!

You don't need to be a crowdfunding genius to work out that video is an important element of your campaign. In fact, it's probably the most important.

People fund people – not products, so tell your story.

Showing is always far more effective than telling — and a film is much easier to click on than a lengthy paragraph is to read — so if you can afford to, hire a professional.

Show your story behind who you are as a creator and why you started this mission is what enables people to fall in love with your story. Keep it short, around 2 minutes.

Structuring the Page

Tip 34

There are many rules on how your video should be, but taking into account the success rates, we offer the following:

- **Introduction**: Just a few words,
- **Problem**: Why the problem is important, Why other analogues cannot solve it,
- **Solution**: Why you decided to solve it, What will it affect to, What is the solution,
- **Team**: Who are your team members, are they capable to do that, are they willing to do that,
- **Technology**: How are you gonna solve the problem, what technology will be utilized,
- **Outcomes**: What will be the final result, what it will look like,
- **Call to Action**: Join us to make it a reality, Try to make backers part of your team.

Do not ask for "help" with "donations". Rather ask your community to join your team and be part of what you are doing. You're contributing and they're contributing and together you will make something spectacular.

Structuring the Page

Tip 35

Video Music should Inspire

It is highly recommended that you

use background music in your video — it will give your video a spirit and will make it impressive.

Search for inspirational background music at these websites;

marmosetmusic.com
royaltyfreemusic.com
audiojungle.net
audiolibrary of youtube

Get inspiration from the best Kickstarter Videos

Structuring the Page

Tip 36

Keep the Text Simple and Clear

You only have a few seconds to grab people's attention, so your campaign text has to be designed appropriately.

The average visitor reads about 28%, so

underline only the main aspects, as it is described on the next page.

Don't display the stretch goals on the page from the start. Leave some other goals for later updates, it excites backers and media.
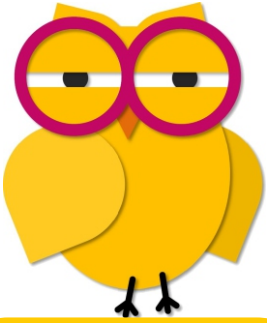
Structuring the Page

Tip 36

Keep the Text Simple and Clear

• **Introduction:** Why you are doing this, What you do, How you do it (keep the order),

• **Features:** show the outcome and key benefits consumers get with our product,

• **Validation:** Logos and testimonials of what people are saying about you,

• **Uniqueness:** the story behind the engineering and design that go into your project,

• **Team:** making it personal and listing the key members involved in the project,

• **Money:** How the money will be used,

• **Rewards:** Include them in the text as well,

• **Timeline:** a simple schedule when backers will receive the perks.

Clear Call to Action!

Structuring the Page

Tip 37

Do not Put Links in your Description

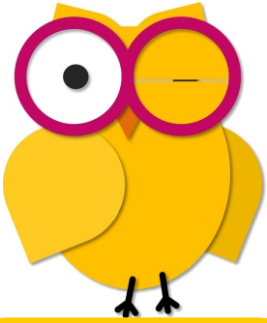It is very, very important not to make your visitors go away from your page and be lost forever.

Authors make a huge mistake when putting many links in their project description pages

for the backers to see how awesome they are.

Do not do that!
They will drive them away and they will not come back. It is better to embed all the images and videos within your project page, using the available tools!

Structuring the Page

Tip 38

Use Testimonials

Testimonials are your ambassadors that prove what you've said. Whether you know their names or not, when people put pictures, faces, or even videos to their testimonials in support of a product it becomes much more real and impactful upon potential visitors.

Ask 5-6 friends or acquaintances to make comments on your products and put that info with their photos right into your campaign.

Structuring the Page

Show Your Magic Team

Don't forget the rule: People fund people, not projects!

Tip 39

Make it personal, show your staff, showcase the team and the tremendous people behind your products and creations.

Backers and individuals (and even investors) in general believe in and trust people, not companies. That is the essence of business, relationships, and life.

The smaller the company, the more important each and every individual is to the organization.

Structuring the Page
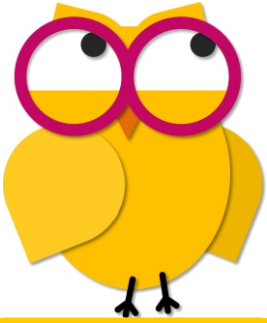
Tip 40

Call to Action

If you have managed to hold a backer's attention this long something is surely going right. Whoever is on your page is clearly intrigued by your campaign. But sometimes people need that extra little nudge to push them over the edge and become a backer of your startup.

Close the description of your campaign with a clear and prompt Call to Action!

Structuring the Page

Tip 41

Test Before Launching

Fill in the content of your campaign slowly. Make a draft version. Show it to your colleagues and/or friends. Reveal what they like and what they did not like, then prepare the second version of the campaign. Show it again, get feedback, then prepare the third version etc.

This type of testing will provide you with an opportunity to come close to a very attractive campaign page design.

Planning the Rewards

Tip 42

Target your Rewards/Perks

Split your audience into different segments based on a common feature or interest (age, location, industry, family, etc.) and

Target a reward to each segment in your audience.

For example; your core reward is smart wallet (because who wants anything that isn't smart?:), and your audience is composed of your family, business people, tech enthusiasts, people looking for a unique gift and those who like your idea and want to see it become reality.

These are the groups you need to target.

Planning the Rewards

Tip 43

Keep It Simple

If your product comes in five variations — five seasons of your film or five levels of your game — don't offer all five options at once. Instead, start with one or two varieties and introduce other options as stretch goals.

Follow the rule of 7-8 core backer tiers

This approach will ensure you don't overwhelm your backers with tons of information, create incentives for stretch goals and reduce the cost of your campaign.

Remember, your goal in the first few days is to create momentum and secure 25-30% of your total funding.

Planning the Rewards

Impose Reward Quotas

Limiting the number of rewards you offer at some levels creates a buzz. Backers can see a reward is selling out quick and are motivated to act. But

Tip 44

don't make the difference between the tiers too extreme. No one is going to pay $100 for a product if they could have bought it for $2 yesterday.

- $78 (retail price is $150) Super Early Bird – 100 items left
- $99 (retail price is $150) Early Bird – 250 items left
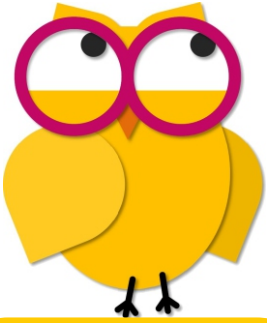- $117 (retail price is $150) Special Price – 350 items left etc.

Planning the Rewards

Add Campaign Exclusive Perks

To enhance the attractiveness of your Perks, you should make them campaign exclusive, meaning that a backer will not find it anywhere else.

Tip 45

Put some stuff that's exclusive only to the campaign. Also, add exclusive rewards throughout the campaign.

Check our Crazy Perk Ideas at the end of this guide.

Planning the Rewards

Tip 46

Visualize Rewards Your Campaign Page

The descriptions of the rewards on the right-hand side of the campaign page are not easily visible and comparable. Put clear photos and description of your perks right inside your project description page.

Try to make it clear, simple and attractive.

Use GIF animated photos where you can — they're engaging and a great way to explain the functionality of your product.

Planning the Rewards

Up-Sell with Add-ons and Accessories

Order a Big Mac and you'll inevitably hear that well-worn phrase, "Would you like fries with that?" This is called up-selling, when you turn one purchase into two.

Try selling complementary rewards to those who opted for your main perk.

Many people use updates just to say thank you to backers, but you can introduce new rewards in your updates as well. Be professional, use updates to up-sell (and say thank you, of course).

On Indiegogo, the most successful campaigns add as many as 12 new perks after their launch.

Launching the Campaign

Launching the Campaign

If you had one shot, one opportunity...

Consider it the biggest event of your life: since you are trying to isolate your efforts and hit your fundraising goal starting from Day 1, it is paramount that people know what day the crowdfunding campaign goes live.

Tip 48

Set as many different alarms as possible to make people remember you.

Here is a [Facebook Hack](#) that will save you $300.

Launching the Campaign

Ensure Your Early Seeding

Nobody wants to be the first person at the party; you want to go to a party that's already in full swing.

Tip 49

Mobilize your network to be sure they will contribute in the first minutes your campaign goes live.

The email lists that you built are your party-starters. When you have the first backers (and credibility) it's time to send out the party invitations to press. Most of the platforms categorize their popular sections based on backers per day, percent funded and total raised factors.

Hence, If you want to be included in the most popular section on e.g. Kickstarter (which you definitely do), you need to blow up your project on day one.
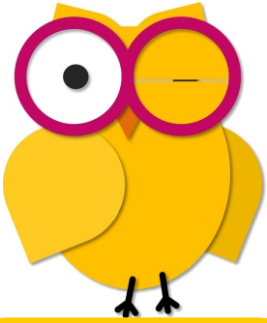
Started, What's next...

Started, What's next...

Shorten your Campaign URL

Shorten your URL by using bit.ly or bit.do website shorteners, as you don't need these long, long, links of your URL to copy and paste all the time:

bit.do/awesome

Bit.ly and bit.do are link shortening services used by millions of people and crowdfunders. With bit.do you can personalize your URL for free.

Tip 50

Started, What's next...

Make Original Updates

Don't just think of updates as a chance to say thanks to your donors (which you should) — but also think of it as an opportunity to stimulate more interest and activity in your campaign.

Tip 51

With each update you should provide a mixture of news, project updates, inspiring content, and other projects we liked.

Many effective campaigns post a new "thank you" video with each update. If your update is a standard, boring "call to action", it'll feel a lot like spam. Be a good host.

Entertain with tasty appetizers.

Started, What's next...
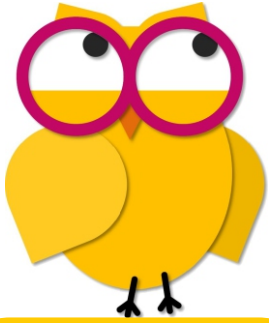
Share your Updates

When asking backers to help you spread the word, the most valuable tool is hrefshare.com

Tip 52

A tool that enables you to pre-load a Facebook or Twitter with personal message to share.

So in your updates you can give backers with your personal message and even a photo.

Started, What's next...

Use Referral Program

Creating a contest for your crowdfunding campaign is a great way to incentivize potential backers to become involved with your project early on.

Tip 53

Kickbooster allows you to offer a reward to people for helping you spread the word, giving them a reason to actually promote your campaign.

Kickbooster allows campaign creators to run a referral program during their crowdfunding campaign and provides incentive for Boosters (backers or affiliates) to share and promote your campaign.
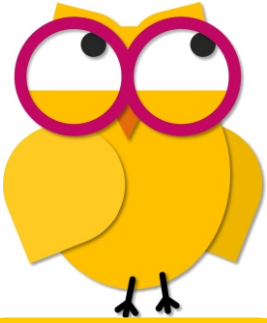
Say Thanks… just thanks

When writing direct emails to your backers (of course prepare the template before) do not ask anything else in return except saying just "thank you".

Tip 54

That makes backers angry, when they back your project and you personally ask them for another favor.

Make sharing requests more general.

Started, What's next...

Say "Thank You" with Tags ;-)

However, we need benefits everywhere. Hence, when you are saying thanks to someone who has contributed to your campaign (do it especially for big backers), don't forget to Tag him/her on Facebook and mention the URL of your campaign page.

Tip 55

It is a great way to generate some traffic by notifying the friends of backers and directing them to your page.

Tip 56

Stretch Goals

Think of your stretch goals in advance and make these very visible. Make a graphic. Upload every time you pass one to keep people motivated. Likewise, make sure you set your initial goal high enough — that's the one most people care about.

Don't be afraid to ask big if you have the following to back it up.

Started, What's next...

Pin Your Message Everywhere

How much it would cost you to advertise on Forbes, Mashable or Enterpreneur.com? Don't worry, we don't want you to sell your house. Just when sharing content, use Sniply or Startafire to attach a message to every page you share.

Tip 57

Attach a call-to-action to every link you share

Snip.ly or Startafire will allow you to share great articles from famous magazines like Forbes, Mashable, New York Times etc. with your personal message and button with a link - that will drive visitors wherever you wish to.

It's free and will provide you with an opportunity to have customized advertisement on whatever you share.

Finally

Money gets spent, but a strong community will last forever

Yancey Strickler,
Kickstarter co-founder

Crazy Reward Ideas

1. Pick a Prank –$1 buys backers the chance to vote on the which type of 'torture' to inflict on your organization's manager if you reach your funding goal. Personally, I like funny costumes, shaved eyebrows or blue hair, but I'm sure you can think of a few more.

2. Buy a Meal –This is one for local campaigns and sees volunteers making homemade meals for backers.

3. Cook Off – Got a local celebrity on speed dial? Challenge them to a cook off (you both follow the same recipe) and see who wins.

4. Gift Baskets – Collect new and nearly new items from your volunteers and resell them as gift baskets. Encourage your friends to give away some cool stuff that costs nothing to them (something valuable they don't use).

5. Backer Names – Send a picture from volunteers with a name of the backer: "We Love you, John". For higher level backers you might want to order a cake.

6. Backer Trees – They say each man should build a house, raise a child, and plant a tree. In this case, the best (and cheapest) way you can help are trees. Plant trees: ask a nursery for trees and then get people to sponsor a tree.

Crazy Reward Ideas

7. Crowdfunding Lottery – Give a couple of your main products to random backers who would donate $5.

8. Ambassador program – This is my favorite fun reward. Most of the participants in my Winners' Program love it and already saw how viral this strategy can be. Here is how it works:

AMBASSADOR

When sharing or backing your campaign, people become your ambassadors. Design an ambassador badge and put it on your website with the names of people who backed you or shared your campaign. You can make this program available to bloggers or journalists to share your project, or use it to thank them for writing an article about you.
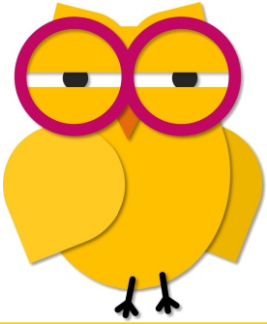
Congrats

You already know more than 60% of crowdfunders

Want More?

Sign up for **The Winners' Program** to successfully raise funds

Share the Love

Share _57 Secrets of Crowdfunding_