

Tiny Course Empire Podcast Episode 123: How long does it take to create a digital course?

*PLEASE NOTE: This is a machine transcription. Some punctuation and spelling weirdness are to be expected.*

Two years. That's how long one of my clients told me she'd been working on her digital course. 2 years, you guys. I hope that's not you, but if it is, don't worry, I've got some help for you today. This is episode 123 of the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, and today we are talking about how long it should take you to create a digital course. I'll give you a hint, it's not two years. This episode was actually inspired by a different client this week who asked me to help her put together a timeline for her course creation. She wanted to know when she could plan on launching her course and how long it was going to take her to create it so we sat down together and we put together a timeline and that's what I'm going to be sharing with you in this episode.

So if you are the kind of person who spends years on a course, believe me, you are not alone. Or if you're brand new and you don't know what to expect at all, then you are in the right place. We're going to figure it out together. Let's dive in.

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO START, GROW, AND SCALE YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS**

**50+ COURSES**

**600+ MEMBERS**

**START YOUR \$7 TRIAL**

Hey, it's Cindy, and thanks for spending a few minutes of your day with me. You'll find the show notes and recommended resources for this episode at [Tiny CourseEmpire.com/123](https://TinyCourseEmpire.com/123). While you're there, be sure to download My Clear Framework. This is the blueprint that will take you from no business to six or even 7 figures as a digital course creator, do not let the simplicity of this framework fool you. This is a powerful action guide. All you have to do is follow the steps. If you're new to the show, be sure to hit the subscribe button. New episodes drop every Monday morning.

And next week we're talking about how to make your course more engaging with a special guest expert i can't wait for you to meet her. This week, though, is all about making time to create a course and how long that's actually going to take you. So let's get into it. What I'm going to share with you in this episode is my personal timeline. This is the timeline that I created for myself when I was creating 2 courses every single month for a year and a half as I started and launched my 6 Figure Systems program was creating a lot of courses and I had to figure out a way to do it really efficiently and really effectively so I developed this system for making sure that things were moving along as they needed to be moving in order to get things done.

This is suitable for what I would consider a tiny course you've heard me talk about that before. A tiny course is maybe 7 to 10 video lessons. It has a workbook or two or maybe a worksheet with every single lesson. It has transcripts, it has slide decks, and it is video based. So that is my definition of a tiny course it's what I'm talking about in this episode.

However, I'm also going to give you some tips at the end to figure out how you can adjust this timeline to meet your specific needs maybe you're not creating tiny courses. Maybe you're creating a signature course how can you adjust this timeline to fit with what you're creating i'll give you those strategies at the end of the video. And I'm also going to tell you about some pitfalls that you need to watch out for as you are creating your tiny course.

So this framework is a four week schedule, and each week has specific milestones so let's lay those out first. All right, so Week 1 is all about finalizing your course topic idea, making sure that it has legs, and getting the rough outline figured out and

when I say rough outline, I mean super rough we're not getting into details in Week 1 at all. We are just creating the rough container that your course is going to fit into. That's your milestone for week 1. Week two, we get a little more detail oriented this is where you're going to be creating your course outline this is where you're going to be creating your slide decks, those sorts of things.

Week 3 is all about recording and editing and Week 4 is all about getting your course uploaded to your course platform and getting it ready to promote. So when you lay it out like that, it seems pretty simple, right? Well, there's a little bit more to it so let's dig into each week on a day by day basis and talk about what you're going to be doing every single day as you create your course. So as I said, week 1 is all about getting kind of that rough outline done this is where you're going to know this is the course that I'm creating.

This is what it's going to look like when it's done. And this, This is why people want to purchase it this is why my people need it so that's what week 1 is all about South the first thing you're going to do the first day, I recommend that you do your topic research and your validation figure out if your course idea has legs now, I've talked before on the podcast about how to validate your course idea. I'll link to that episode in the show notes. But basically what you're doing here is making sure that people are going to want to buy the course that you want to create.

And this is a problem for some people a lot of people, myself included, sometimes have created courses that we want to create, that we think are exciting, that we think are interesting, and they totally flop because no one else thinks they're interesting. You can avoid that by validating your course so that's what you're going to do on the first day. The next day you're going to do the outline and structure and again, this is just a really rough outline this is I want to create or I need to create 7 lessons or 8 lessons or 9 lessons or, you know, however many lessons, however many pieces need to go into that course that's what you're figuring out on day 2.

And I should stop here and say, when I say you're going to do this on day 2 don't mean that you're going to spend all of day 2 doing this it might only take you an hour it might take you 3 hours it's going to depend on how well you know your subject matter and how comfortable you are with creating courses, how experienced you are with it. If you are super experienced, you might be able to whip

out the outline in the structure in 30 minutes.

And if it's the first time that you've done it, it might take you a few hours so don't sweat over how exactly how long it's going to take but when I say one day, I mean that by the end of the day it should be done. Maybe you will take just the morning to do it maybe you will take just the afternoon, maybe you will work on it throughout the day.

But by the end of the day, hopefully you will have the outline and the structure of your course done. Then on day three, you're going to think about what additional resources do I need to provide to my students? Do I need to create worksheets do I need to give them templates do I need to give them tools that they can use, calculators or you know, decision matrix matrixes that they need to work through the course to get the results that they need from your course what other resources are they going to need? Day three is all about that and again, you're just deciding on them you're not creating them you're brainstorming ideas.

You're thinking about what those tools will look like, what lessons they go with, how they fit together, not actually creating them we're going to do those in a different day. Another thing I like to do in Week 1, you can take this or leave it it's entirely up to you totally optional, but I like to write the sales page at least a rough outline of the sales page. And I'll tell you why I do that because it gives me something to aim for as I'm creating my course if I already have my sales page written, then I know that my course lives up to how I am promoting it.

So if you take the time to go through and write out, for example, all of the features and benefits of each of the lessons in your course, then you can just go through that sales page, Use it as like a checklist to say, Yep, I covered this, I covered this, I covered this and you will know when your course is complete that it is in fact complete and that it meets the expectations set by your sales page. So consider writing your sales page first.

Again, totally optional. I do it, but you don't have to. Then we move into week two. Week 2 is all about scripting and detailed outlines so you may choose to completely script your course this is something that I used to do i used to write out my course

content word for word, and I did this because it made me more confident about what I was teaching because I had a tendency to kind of wander off track, go down rabbit trails as I was talking. If you you've listened to the podcast for a while, you've probably noticed I still do that sometimes, but scripting out my courses prevented me from doing that it prevented me from getting lost out in the weeds it prevented me from becoming distracted and maybe speaking sooner than I needed to about a particular topic or including a topic that didn't necessarily need to be there and confusing my students.

Oi liked in the beginning to script out my courses completely word for word an I talked about this in my course Quick and Easy Course Creation about how I scripted my lessons. I don't do that anymore. Now I work from a detailed outline, and that's largely because I have created so many courses that I don't feel that I need to script them out completely anymore. You do what's comfortable for you, but you're going to spend a couple of days on this. And when I say a couple of days here, it's probably going to be a couple of full days if you are completely scripting out your courses, the next thing you're going to do in Week 2 is work on your slide decks.

Now again, slide decks are slide decks are optional. You don't have to have slides in your courses it could just be you on camera talking about the subject it could just be you, you know, teaching on camera on a face, face to face video. What do they call that talking head video that's what it's called. If you are comfortable with that a lot of new course creators are not comfortable with that and slides make it much easier to do.

It's a faceless teaching it doesn't require you to do your hair or make sure that your background is neat and tidy or figure out lighting or anything like that o slides make it really easy if you are using a slide deck, if you are using some sort of screen recording, then you're going to want to take a couple of days to make sure that you have those all ready to go. The last thing you're going to do in Week 2 is create any other resources so we talked about mapping these out in week 1.

These are things like worksheets and templates and calculators and anything else that your students might need to make the best use of the course that you are creating to give them the best chance at getting results. O Whatever those additional resources are, you're going to work on those in Week 2 as well. Then we

come into week 3 this is where you're actually going to sit down and record your course o you're going to fire U your camera, your recording equipment, an you are going to sit down and either speak the script over your slides or you're going to, you know, get get in front of a camera like I am on YouTube and talk through the lessons.

However you've set it up, this is what you are working on primarily in week 3 i like to budget three days at least for recording a new course that gives me time to screw up because I do screw up all the time. I screw up my recordings and I have to start over again. So three days gives me enough time to kind of mess up a lot so that I can re record i'm going to spend one day getting the transcripts ready. Transcripts are really important for a digital course.

A lot of people like to read through the transcript rather than watching the video because they find it quicker. Or even people who have watched the video might want to go back and review the transcripts maybe they're looking for something specific that you mentioned and they don't want to have to watch a whole video just to find that one little snippet of information. So having the transcript makes it easy for them to review the content later so plan to spend a day getting the transcripts ready, getting those put together and in PDF format for your students, and then you're going to spend one day kind of finalizing all of the resources that you created the previous week so you might want to go back and take a look at those templates, take a look at the checklist, the worksheets, whatever.

Make sure they match up with what you were teaching in the lessons just make sure that everything is a good fit and finalize those. Then finally, in week 4, you are going to upload all of your course content to your course platform whether you're using Teachable or Podia or Kajabi or Thrive Cart, learn whatever platform you're using now is the time in week four, you're going to spend part of a day just uploading all of that content. From there, you're going to spend a couple of days creating your promotional content.

O this is things like emails, any content that you are creating, any blog posts, podcasts, any social media posts that you are creating to promote your course. You're going to spend a couple of days creating that stuff ahead of time. So for me, that means I am writing a bunch of emails that's the primary way that I promote

my courses is through emails. So I write a bunch of emails i write swipe emails for my affiliates to use i send an email to my affiliates letting them know that the course is coming up. So all of those materials, you're going to spend a couple of days in Week 4 putting those together.

And then finally, you're going to revisit your sales page and make sure that that matches what your course ultimately ended up being so if you wrote it in week one, you're going to go back and Polish it if you did not write it in week 1, then now is the time that you're actually going to sit down and write your sales page so that's week 4. Now, there are a couple of common pitfalls that people fall into as they are creating courses, and I want to help you avoid those so the first one is creating the course and building the platform at the same time.

Now, this is the pitfall that tripped me up so much, so much i would get so excited about creating a course and I would get really excited, equally excited about playing with the course platform. And I would be creating videos and uploading them and then I would create content and I would upload it and then I would create something else and I would go to upload it and I wouldn't know where to put it and then I would have to start all over again because then I would decide that the course platform maybe wasn't the right one, or maybe I should, you know, it had a spot to put templates in and I didn't have any templates and maybe I should make templates.

And it was just a mess. Don't do that to yourself. Instead, finish the course first, get it done. Get all of your videos recorded, get all of your videos edited, get all of your resources created and edited and in PDF format, get all of your transcripts done. And then when you have this big stack of things that is your course, then go over and upload them to your course platform. Don't mix and match the tasks that you're working on it will just create a mess trust me, I know this from experience.

Another thing that can trip you up as you are creating a course is starting to create the course materials before you have finished planning and outlining the course and here's why that can make a mess. Because if you start creating your course materials, say you have completely outlined lessons, one and two and, you're kind of bored with outlining and you're kind of bored with scripting, and you just want to get on with it already, you might be tempted to fire up your video camera and start

recording. And that seems like a good idea it seems like, well, I'm just being flexible and I can, you know, I can do this other thing and then I won't get bored with my course creation.

The problem is when you go back to create lesson 3 and you discover that you should have added something else in lesson one that now has messed up your course curriculum. And now you have to go back and rerecord lesson 1 and 2 to accommodate the thing that you discovered in lesson 3 as you were writing that. So I highly recommend that you write all of your course scripts ahead of time, either your scripts or your outlines. Plan the entire thing out first before you start recording your content. Otherwise you're just going to end up frustrated when you have to go back and rerecord the same lesson over and over and over again because it doesn't fit with the lesson that follows it.

So create your course outline. Script your course if that's what you're doing, but do it from start to finish before you begin recording. And the last thing that trips people up, and the reason that my client had spent two years working on her course is scope creep. If you have ever been a freelancer, if you've ever done, for example, website design or research for people or any kind of freelancing project, you are familiar with the term scope creep. Scope creep is what happens when you define a project and then as the project goes along, you keep adding a little bit here and adding a little bit there, and what if we do this instead and maybe we should include that too.

That is scope creep. And the way you avoid that is you clearly define in week one, way back in week 1 clearly define what your course is about, What is the outcome what is the result that your student is going to have once they complete the course, and how are you going to get them from where they are right now to where they are going? Once you have that very clearly defined, that will help you eliminate scope creep, because you will know that when you are creating that course that you promised to teach someone, for example, how to declutter their kitchen.

So when you are tempted to talk about kids toys, you can remind yourself this course is about decluttering a kitchen. Kids toys are scope creep and it is not included in this course. So clearly define what your course is about, what the result is that your student is going to achieve. And then keep an eye out for that scope



creep because that's what will turn a four week project into a years long project if you are not careful. So I promised that I would talk about how to adjust this timeline because maybe you're not creating a tiny course, right maybe you are creating a signature course maybe this is your thing maybe this is the one thing that you were going to teach so how can you adjust this timeline to create a signature or a much larger course? What I would do is I would expand on weeks two and three.

You will need more time to write and record your course materials if you are creating a much longer course. So in other words, you can still do all of the preliminary work in a single week. You can do probably most of the promotional work in a single week, but weeks two and three where you're actually writing the course and actually creating the materials is going to expand so maybe instead of two weeks, you spend 4 weeks or maybe six weeks. You definitely don't spend 2 years, but maybe you spend, like I said, maybe six weeks in that writing and creation process if you are creating a signature course, maybe though you are creating a mini course, so something really tiny maybe it's just a couple of lessons in that case, you can condense weeks two and three because you're going to need less time to do that.

You're still going to spend that initial week creating the the general outline you're still, you're still going to validate your course, You're still going to make sure that you have good keywords, good research on your ideas so that's still going to take a few days. You're still going to spend a few days writing and creating the promotional materials, but the actual creation time is going to shrink significantly. Or maybe you're creating something like a live workshop. Maybe you are launching just a single live workshop, in which case your time create, your creation time is going to shrink dramatically.

So you're not going to spend weeks creating promotional material you're not going to spend a week creating or validating or, you know, planning out the format of your course. Instead, you can condense the entire thing, in this case down to a single week. So you can see that this framework, this four week framework is super flexible depending on what it is you are doing. Now, I don't ever want to say that you should spend 2 years creating a course let's not do that. I think the most amount of time that you should spend creating a course is maybe three, maybe

four months if you are creating a signature course, if you are creating something really, really big and impactful that you're going to sell for multiple thousands of dollars, then I could see spending three to four months to create that if you are working on it more or less full time.

But no more than that, Definitely no more than that. And I happen to think that a better idea than creating a signature course is to create multiple tiny courses. I talk about this in my course, Tiny Course Empire. I will link to that in the show notes below the video or on page or on tiny course empire dot com forward slash one two three if you're listening to the podcast. That is the plan that I followed that's the plan that I recommend for people that allows you to create lots of smaller courses and then bundle them together as a signature course when it makes sense.

So here's the bottom line. Plan ahead for your time. Make sure that you know how long you intend to spend to create your course, what your milestones are from week to week. Aim for a month or less and give yourself some grace if it takes you a little bit longer because you're new. But if it takes you a really long time, if you find that you've been working on your course for months and months and months, I want you to sit down and be honest with yourself and ask yourself why.

Why is this taking so long to do? Maybe it's because you are trying to mix and match your tasks. Maybe you're trying to create your course while you are uploading it to your platform while you are still in the process of writing it that can significantly stretch out your timeline. Or maybe it's something more maybe it's something like a perfectionist issue maybe you are feeling a little bit like an imposter because it's not as good, or you perceive it to be not as good as you want it to be. In which case, get real honest with yourself about that and ask yourself, how can I get past this roadblock that is keeping me stuck, that is keeping me creating this course for months and months and months when it really should have been done long ago now i would love to hear from you click over to tiny course empire dot com forward slash one two three and leave me a comment.

Tell me about your course creation experience. Does it take you longer than you like, or do you have a system in place that makes creating smooth and easy for you? Tell me about it in the comments, I'd love to hear. And could you do me a favor, if you have a friend or a colleague who could use online business building

Tiny Course Empire Podcast Episode 123: How long does it take to create a digital course?

advice, would you share the link with them? It's a great way to grow our audience and I'd appreciate your support.

All the episodes can be found at [Tiny Course Empire.com](https://TinyCourseEmpire.com) That's it for me this week i will be back next week with a special guest whose expertise in instructional design is going to help you create an engaging course that gets results for your students. You're not going to want to miss it, so if you haven't done so already, hit the subscribe button and that episode will appear like magic in your podcast app. Have a terrific rest of your day and I will talk to you next week.

**TAKE THE NEXT STEP**

**I'll teach you the simple  
systems that lead to  
**BIG RESULTS**  
even if you're brand new  
to online business.**

**START TODAY**

If you like what you hear on the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, you're going love all of the courses and workshops and support you'll find inside [Six-Figure Systems](https://SixFigureSystems.com). That's my monthly program where we dig into online marketing for regular people like you and me. We don't do big launches. We don't have the big headaches and we don't have the big expenses that come with them. Instead, we focus on creating repeatable, sustainable systems that continue to grow over time, and that don't

Tiny Course Empire Podcast Episode 123: How long does it take to create a digital course?

suck up all of our energy or require a 10 person team to manage. You can come see what we're all about at [sixfiguresystems.com](https://sixfiguresystems.com) and I'll see you on the inside