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

You're listening to the Tiny Course Empire Podcast with Cindy Bidar. This is episode number 39, and today I'm going to give you an inside look at my content development system, including how I come up with ideas, how I organize them, and how I continue to create so much content on a consistent basis. This is a skill that every small business owner needs, so I hope you'll stick around.

Welcome to the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, a weekly show dedicated to helping you launch and grow your digital course business. Even if you don't have a big team or a six-figure ads budget, we'll help you design smart systems, take consistent action and achieve massive success on your own terms. Now, here's your host, Cindy Bidar.
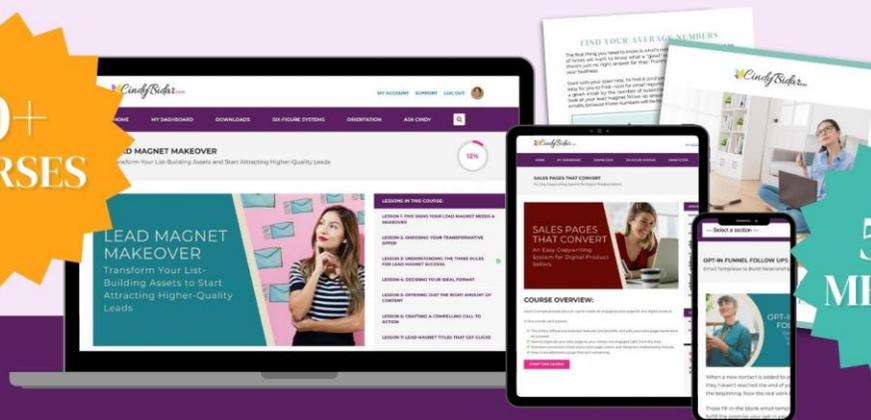
Hey guys, I am really excited for this episode because I hear from so many of you who worry that you're going to run out of things to create content around, that you're going to start a podcast or a YouTube channel or a blog, and you're going to

get a couple of months in. And you're going to run out of steam. Now, don't get me wrong, that does happen. It's happened to me in the past, the Apple Podcast directory is filled with podcasts that have just one or two or four episodes, and YouTube is the same, but it will not happen to you if you listen to this episode and you use the ideas I'm going to share with you today. You'll find the show notes and recommended resources over at TinyCourseEmpire.com/39. And there's a free download there for you, I took all the notes for episode so that you don't have to do it, and I have a content ideas cheat sheet to help you gather track and use those content ideas in your marketing.

Before we get started, I want to tell you that next week, I'm going to be making the case for emailing your list every day. This is something I do, I get some pushback on it from people, and I'm going to tell you why I do it and why I think you should do it as well, but that's next week, this week we're digging into those content ideas, and here's why.

A couple of weeks ago on a Six-Figure Systems, Q and A call, someone asked me about the biggest turning points in my business, those times when I saw a really dramatic shift in the business, and she also wanted to know if there was a big mindset shift that resulted in my business growth. So I thought about that, and here's what I came up with. The number one big turning point for me was emailing my list every day, it created an instant boost in my income, even when my list was really small. But more important than that, it created that content creation habit. I say all the time that consistency is the most important trait you can develop as a business owner, maybe even as a human being. And that's just as true with content and email marketing as it is in all other areas of your business, and creating this habit of emailing every single day helped me to build other habits like regular course creation and this weekly podcast.

Another big turning point for me was this podcast. It's allowing me to reach new audiences, it is increasing my sales, it's increasing my subscriber list size. Now, it's still early days. This is Episode 39, and you might be thinking that's early days, these 39 episodes, 39 weeks. I've been doing this, you guys, but in the podcast world, 39 weeks is kind of early days, I fully expected it to take a year or maybe even two to really start to see some traction with this podcast. And that really hasn't been the case. I am seeing some changes coming about just because I am consistently creating this podcast, and I would not have been able to do that had I not started emailing every day, way back in the day when I was just getting started. So that's how that habit kind of turned into something more.

Then as far as the mindset shift, this was a big one for me, I had to give myself permission to create content, I had to give myself permission to have an opinion

that is not in line with what other people in my niche say or do, like emailing every day. Other people will tell you No, that's too much. Don't email every day. Email every week, whatever. I'm telling you, emailing every day is the way to go, that's why I'm going to do a whole episode on it next week.

Another thing I disagree with in this space is people will tell you that you have to nurture your audience, and I just don't believe that nurturing and selling are mutually exclusive. I talked about that on Episode 15. Stop nurturing your list. I wasn't always willing to go against the grain though. What if somebody disagreed with me, but giving myself permission to go my own way was a huge mindset shift for me, and it made a lot of difference in my business.

Another was giving myself permission to call myself a teacher. For a long time, I thought that I didn't have anything of value to say or that no one would buy from me, or that I didn't have the necessary credentials to create a course. And that's just nonsense. I know my stuff, I'm good at what I do. And so are you. And I excel at turning complex projects into step-by-step plans, I just had to give myself permission to say it when I finally did that, my business really took off. And I want to encourage you to give yourself that same permission. But none of that would matter if I didn't have a good content development system in place, because that's how I always know what I'm creating as well as how and why I'm creating it.

My content development system has three parts. We're going to talk about collection, organization and creation, so let's talk about each one and how they fit together and make content marketing easier and faster for me and how they'll work for you as well.

The first part is collection. This is how you're never going to run out of ideas, this is the big worry that a lot of people have that they're going to run out of things to say. And sometimes people do run out of things to say, but if you follow these steps, you won't.

So the first thing you're going to do is you're going to pay a lot of attention to the questions that you are asked. If you're like me, you get questions in your email every single day, you get questions asked on forums, people contact your help desk asking questions, your clients are asking you questions. All of those questions are potential content pieces that you can create, just answering the question. What you're hired to do is another resource. If you're a service provider or a freelancer, the projects that you are hired to complete, offer loads of ideas. In my early days when I was a freelancer and a virtual assistant, I wrote blog posts about the tools I was using for my clients, and those blog posts brought me more clients. I've talked about this before, about how two of my biggest, most long-term clients

found me through the blog post that I was writing on my blog and guys, I didn't have any keyword, since I wasn't doing SEO. I wasn't doing anything special, I was just writing blog posts, answering questions that my clients were asking me, and those questions were things that these two new clients were searching for and they happened to find my blog and they hired me. So content creation around those questions or those things that you're doing for your clients. Really, really powerful stuff.

Another way to never run out of ideas is to think about the conversations that you have heard or that you've read. So this might be in Facebook groups, it might be blog comments on your blog or on someone else's blog, it might be forum threads. If you are seeing the same questions asked more than once, that's a really good topic to create content around. You can also mine your mastermind or your accountability groups, what are the conversations that you're having there? I so often pull content from conversations that I have with my friend Angela from AngelaWells.com, or conversations that I have with my other mastermind partners. All of that is, makes really good content that you can share with your audience.

Another really, really powerful tool you can use is keyword research. Now, let's talk about this just a minute, because you may not be familiar with this term, but keywords are simply put the things that you are typing into Google or another search engine when you are looking for an answer. So if you want to know how to use Trello and you type how to use Trello into Google, that is your keyword that you're using. And you can actually use tools to find what keywords people are most often typing into search engines that relate to the subject or the topic that you want to talk about. I took a course a couple of years ago called Stupid SEO, I'm going to drop a link in the show notes because this is probably the best keyword research course I have ever taken. I learned just a ton about how to figure out what keywords people are using in their searches, how to figure out what keywords your competitors are using to rank in Google, how you can use those keywords to rank your content in Google. It's absolutely a fantastic course.

But it doesn't have to be complicated, you don't have to take a course to use this method to create content around keywords. Here's what you can do, all you have to do is go to Google and start typing something in that is related to your content or to your subject or to your niche. So for example, if you go to Google and you type in how to use Trello, Google is going to very helpfully start auto-completing that sentence for you, and here's what they're going to say. They're going to say, How to use Trello for project management. How do you Trello as a to-do list? How to use Trello for social media scheduling, how to use Trello as a planner. How to use Trello for real estate. So right there, you've got five ideas for content that you

could create if you are writing about Trello or if you teach Trello to your community.

You can also scroll down to the bottom of the page and look at the related searches, so if you type in how to use Trello and Google and then scroll to the bottom of the page, you're going to see related searches like how to use Trello templates, how to use Trello in teams. How to use Trello to organize your life. Also look at the People Also Ask section, that's where you'll see things like, how do I use Trello for beginners? How does Trello app work? How do I set up Trello? What is Trello and how do I use it? So right there, we've got 12 ideas for content that you could create, that's three months worth of content ideas after spending just two minutes on Google. And I know you're probably thinking, but all of these topics have been done to death already, and we're going to get to that in a minute. So don't worry, but Google is a really powerful way for you to come up with content ideas. Spend just a few minutes there and you will have a nearly endless supply of ideas you can use.

You can also look at questions that other people are asked, and by this, I mean, you can go to your competitor's websites, take a look at their fact pages. What are the most frequently asked questions that they have, you can look at your courses that you've purchased and forums that belong to those courses. I'm in a Facebook group right now about how to start an online business not because I need the information about how to start an online business, I've got that down, but I want to know what questions people are asking. So I joined this Facebook group so I can kind of pay attention and see what people are asking about, what are they struggling with right now, what questions do they have, because those are things that I can answer in this podcast on my blog, in my future YouTube channel, wherever. I have a community of people who need those answers, so pay attention to what is happening in the courses and in the forums and the Facebook groups that you belong to.

You can also take a look at other people's content. I do this all the time. I am on everybody's mailing list. I am paying attention to what they are talking about, I'm paying attention to their podcast, I'm paying attention to their YouTube channels, I'm paying attention to their blogs. And I'm using that information. If they're writing about something, chances are good that there's an audience for it. So if they're answering a question in that blog post or in that YouTube video, then maybe that's a question I need to be answering as well. I want to give it a different take, I want to look at it from a different point of view. I want to share my opinion on it, I'm not copying what they're saying and I'm not encouraging you to ever copy what someone else is saying. What I am saying though is you can use that content as inspiration for your own content development system.

And finally, this is one of my favorite email tactics is to just use content from your own life, from your own day-to-day happenings in your world. If you're on my list, you have no doubt seen this in action. I write about my blog, I write about my husband, I write about my past job, I write about my morning coffee, the weather, the squirrels, pretty much anything is fair game for an email. And as long as you can tie it back to the point of your email and your call to action in some way, don't be afraid to get personal and to talk about what's happening in your own world.

I was listening to an episode of Email Marketing Heroes the other day, I'll put a link in the show notes. It's a really great podcast about email marketing, and they were talking about how they come up with ideas for their emails, and they like to think about what was the least boring thing that happened to me yesterday. And I just find that fascinating, so whenever I'm stuck for something to email about, that's one of the first things that I think about is what's the least boring thing that happened to me yesterday and how can I connect that to what the topic of my email is. So pulling those stories from your own life can be really useful, especially if we're talking about email marketing. Not so great for maybe YouTube, unless you're a lifestyle, YouTuber or your blog, unless you're a lifestyle blogger. But those stories can definitely help keep your readers, your email readers engaged at the very least.

So let's circle back to that content creator mindset for just a minute, because I know that this big list that you're making is not going to do you any good if you're constantly doubting yourself about this like I did in the early days. If you're constantly thinking, everybody already knows this, I don't know enough about this to write about it, what if somebody tells me I'm wrong, somebody already covered this topic, 12,000 people already covered this topic, I'm not a good writer. There's all kinds of things that go through our heads when we're creating content that can really shut us down in, I don't know, all of those things might be true. But here's what I do know.

There are people there who are your people, just like there are people out there, maybe you're one of them, who are my people. Now, these people might already know, or at least to be aware of all of the subjects that you're creating content around. They are aware of Trello, they've used it before, they kind of know their way around it, they may have read or listened or watched hours of content about it, but for your people, for your ideal audience, they need to hear it from you. It will not click for them unless they get it, from you. And if you think about this, you know it's true, because you've probably experienced it yourself. Maybe you watched 12 videos about how to use WordPress and it was confusing and overwhelming until you watched video number 13, and the way that person presented it, the way that

person talked about it suddenly made it click for you. All of those other videos all said the same thing, but it didn't click for you until you watched it from that specific person. And that's going to happen for your audience too, so I don't want you to worry so much about finding new things to talk about. Instead, I want you to focus on presenting them in a way that only you can present them all right now that's enough about that. I want you to give yourself permission to create content, and if you can't do that for yourself, then you have my permission to do it, so go forth and create content.

So we talked about all of the ways that you can come up with content ideas. Hopefully you've got several now in your back pocket, and you are not going to run out of ideas any time soon. But how are you going to keep track of them? This is an important piece because otherwise, you know ideas are fleeting, they're going to come into your head, they're going to go out of your head, you're going to forget about them, and a week from now you're going to sit down to write something and you're going to think I had that really great idea. Where did it go? I don't remember what it was. And that's not a good spot to be.

You need a content organization system, you need some place where you can keep all of those ideas and somewhere you can go when you sit down to write or record. So you'll always have something to write about. That's just waiting there for you. You're never going to face that blank screen. Again, I like to use a digital filing cabinet for this I use or have used in the past. EverNote, I've used Obsidian, which is another note-taking app, I've used Google Keep, I've also used A Simple Paper, a bullet journal will work for this, whatever you use to keep notes in is a really good place. You could also start a Google Doc or any place that you're going to remember to go and look for it is a fine place to keep your ideas stored. Just make sure that you remember to put those ideas in there when you come across them, and that you remember to go look at it when it's time to sit down and create content.

You're also going to want a marketing calendar. A marketing calendar is going to help you organize those ideas and think about when you're going to be creating them. Now, I use a marketing calendar in Air Table, but you don't have to do anything that complicated, you can use Google Calendar, you can use Trello, you can use a calendar on your wall, it doesn't matter. The point is to know what products and things you're going to be promoting are coming up so that you can create content that relates to those promotions. You want to be able to slot those ideas in at the right spot during the month or during the week so that it makes sense for your audience.

And finally, you're going to need to make time in your schedule to actually create

the content. In Episode 37, I talked about time blocking and how I use that method. To make sure that I always have time to be creating content. Creating content is the most important part of my day. So I do it, first thing, so I am recording this podcast just before 9am, I always record in the mornings, I always write in the mornings because that is the commit time of my day. And that's when I am feeling most creative and most productive. It may be different for you. Maybe you want to write in the middle of the night, maybe you want to write mid-afternoon, the point is to know yourself and to block off that time that's going to make sense for you so that you aren't putting aside content creation for the last thing, which is what so often happens, right? We have tons of other things that we are responsible for as business owners, and content creation is not typically urgent, so it can be put off until later.

And that can happen, we put it off today, we put it off tomorrow, we put it off the next day, and pretty soon, it's been three weeks and you haven't emailed to your list and you haven't written a blog post and you haven't reported a podcast in six months. I know it happens, but it's going to be easier and less likely to happen if you set aside time, regular time in your daily schedule to actually create content. And of course, when you have this big list of content ideas that you're going to generate and you have a filing cabinet, a digital filing cabinet or a physical notebook that you keep your ideas in, it's going to be a lot less likely that you're going to skip content creation for long periods of time because you just won't have an excuse for it, right. You're always going to have something to talk about, you're always going to have time to talk about it, and you always have your calendar right there, so you know what you're supposed to be talking about. So your content creation system is going to lead to greater success in your content marketing.

So listen, I wasn't kidding earlier when I said that consistent content creation was a big turning point in my business. Being able to sit down at my desk every single day and write emails and create course content and record this podcast is what has allowed me to grow this business to multiple six figures. And it's what's going to take it past the seven figure mark as well. It will do the same thing for you if you are consistent with it, and if you put these systems in place, you can become a consistent content producer. You will never run out of content ideas. If you are paying attention to what other people are asking about, if you are using Google effectively to find out what people are searching for, if you're following other people in your niche to see what they're talking about, those are all ways that you are always going to have content to create. You're never going to forget a great idea, if you get in the habit of collecting them in Evernote or Google Keep or in a notebook on your desk, you're never going to face a blank screen if you are sliding those ideas into your marketing calendar where they make sense.

And most importantly, you are never going to pod fade or blog fade if you are making time to create content on a regular basis. And if you are keeping that time sacred in your calendar, because as a business owner, it really is one of the most important things you can be doing. And finally, you can get over your content creation anxiety if that's what is holding you back, I promise you do know enough to be talking about that subject. Yes, it's all been said before, but for someone out there, they won't hear it until you say it, your ideal customer might have read 12 other articles about how to use Trello, but it just won't click for her until she reads yours. And that's the real beauty of content marketing, there's a room for every voice and every point of view, even yours. And I would argue that the world needs yours as well.

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

Okay, here's what I want you to do next. I want you to head on over to TinyCourseEmpire.com/39 to find the show notes, the episode transcript, and all of the resources we mentioned, including that downloadable content marketing cheat sheet that I made for you. That's going to help you find and organize your ideas so you're never going to be at a loss for what to say. And while you're there,

would you leave me a comment, tell me what your favorite content idea sources are for your business. Or if you're not yet creating content on a regular basis, maybe you came here for some inspiration to get started. Tell me which strategies you're going to use first. And finally, if you're enjoying the show, would you do me a favor and leave a rating and review over on Apple Podcasts or wherever you're listening. That helps other people find us. And of course, if you have a friend or a colleague who would love to hear this episode, you can go ahead and send them the direct link to TinyCourseEmpire.com/39. Have a terrific day, everyone, and I will talk to you all again next week.

If you like what you hear on the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, you're going to love all of the courses and workshops and support you'll find inside Six-Figure Systems, 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 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, and I'll see you on the inside.