



Episode 15: All About Earning Passive Income Online and My Facebook Experiment Update

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Hey everybody, what's up? Today I'm going to be talking about earning online. This is going to be a hodgepodge podcast of a lot of different things that I think a lot of you will be interested in.

I'm going to update you on my Facebook experiments. I'm going to talk about the number 1 way that I have been making money online since maybe 2003 or 2004, and why most of you can also make money doing this but maybe in a different way and approach it a little differently, and I'll explain what I mean. Then finally I'm going to talk about earning with courses and update you guys on Udemy, and if I have any regrets with choosing them, and what my plans are for the future. So let's get started.

For those who didn't listen to episode number 14, I don't even think I said this is episode 15 in the beginning. If I didn't, this is episode 15. In episode 14, I talked about a Facebook experiment that I ran which if you think about it, is so unlike what Lisa Irby normally does. I'm always the slow, conservative build content up gradually and then you'll earn over time, take it slow, that kind of thing. But

what's interesting is not only did I earn money quickly, but I did it without a website and I did it with paid traffic. This is what I love about the internet. There are so many ways to make money online, it's crazy, and if you just get creative and if you just think about things you enjoy ... For me, it's coming up with the ideas for the shirts and look for ways to monetize that, then the opportunities are endless out here.

Anyway let me just explain what I was doing, for those who didn't listen to the last podcast. I bought likes to brand new pages on Facebook. I chose a niche and the idea is I was going to build up likes to these pages, in order to sell shirts to these people. For example, I would target nurses and build up likes from people who are nurses, and then sell nursing shirts to these people. That's just an example, that's not my niche.

For the first page that I talked about, I ended up spending a little over \$100 for 2400 likes. When I did the last podcast, I think the page was up to 3600-3700 likes. A month later, I now have 6000 likes on that page.

Let me explain to you what happened. About a week or so after that last podcast, one of the funny memes that I posted went viral. When I say viral, I mean viral. The reach was nearly 1 million ... crazy, for one post. As a result, I ended up getting about 1400 new likes that week. During that same week, one of my posts for the t-shirts went viral. People thought it was hilarious, so they started sharing it and in a 24-36 hour period, I made about \$350 in commissions for shirt sales. That may sound inspiring to you, but you can look at this two ways. Number 1, it's great, I'm profiting from this page after just a couple of months. But if you think about the numbers, that shows you how many likes you have to have in order to profit from a page like this.

Obviously it's going to be different because every niche is different. There's a lot of different variables that come into play, so you can't just say "Oh if it took Lisa x amount of likes, then that's what it's going to take me" as you'll hear in a second. You'll see why you can't compare like that, but in general if you're going to monetize

particularly a fun website like this or a fun page like this, it generally takes a lot of traffic to make money. That's exactly why I wanted to tell you guys about the stats. You might hear 6000 likes and getting reaches near a million and think "Wow, you must be making thousands of dollars per month with this page." No, I'm not. I've only profited about \$400-500 so far. I'm not complaining about that. I'm at the profit level now and it is completely hands-off, with the exception of creating the shirt. Maybe once a week I'll post a new shirt to show it to everybody but other than that, everything is on autopilot. I have content scheduled out through 2016, so I upload one funny meme every day. Once again, I'm using someecards.com. Some of them I'm creating myself, but the majority of them have already been created by other people, and that's it.

Once a week, I'll go in and promote one of the shirts. One thing I've learned about selling on Facebook, particularly if you're selling from Teespring or Spreadshirt or whatever, always create your own images. Don't use those little tiny thumbnails that come up with Teespring or Spreadshirt. What I do is I find stock images of someone wearing a blank shirt, and I put the design on the stock image. So it looks like there's a woman or man wearing the shirt, and psychologically that's also good because it makes people think someone has already bought it and they're wearing it too, and that seems to go over well.

Let's talk about numbers again. For that shirt that made all those sales, the number of shares on that shirt was something like 2900, and I only made a few hundred bucks. Again, it shows you the kind of traffic that you need to make this work. This is not some get rich quick thing where if you just have 500 likes, you can start making money. As I just said, the niche matters and there are different variables that come into play.

Let's talk about the other page I created -- completely different results. I haven't monetized that page yet. If you remember from the last podcast, I paid for about 380 likes or so. I didn't buy nearly as many likes for that page as I did the first page, because the cost was more expensive. I was averaging about 12 cents per like, so I didn't want to spend too much. I spent about 40 bucks I believe.

Since that time, I had roughly 400 likes I think when I did the last podcast. Now it's up to only 530 likes, so it's growing a lot slower than the other page. It's like the results are night and day, and I haven't monetized that page yet just because I know I'm going to need a lot of traffic, in order to profit from that. But I'm just happy that the likes are now finally starting to grow because for a while, I wasn't getting any new likes on that page at all. Now they're coming in at about 20-25 likes per week, so that one is going to take a lot longer to profit from. Overall, I am extremely ecstatic about the results that I've gotten from this, and not so much for the money but I've never personally been able to turn around a profit with paid advertising like that. Usually with Facebook ads, I end up just throwing the money away.

I have no plans to buy any more likes to these pages. If I were to buy likes, I would do it for a new page, but I'm not going to buy any more likes for these pages. It just doesn't make sense at this point. If you follow me on Facebook, you may have seen the screenshot I posted of the orders coming in from one of the pages. I was feeling really good at that moment. I have heard from so many people after that last podcast. A lot of you sent me emails and warned me that I was making a mistake by advertising with Facebook and how I was just getting fake likes and I shouldn't be telling people to do this. To see the success from this is very rewarding and I'm one of those people, if you tell me I can't do something, I'm going to try to turn around and prove you wrong. I guess that's a personality flaw, but it challenges me when people say "This doesn't work" or "You can't do this."

But as I've already explained, you can't just say it's going to work the same for every niche. This is exactly why I probably would not do a course on this, because I really do think the reason that first page did so well is simply because I got lucky. It's a combination of choosing a good niche, these people are on Facebook a lot, the shirts have to be funny, they have to hit home. I also think using the comedy approach works well. I don't know if I'd have the same engagement if I was doing this with a more serious topic. As I talked about in the last podcast, people go on Facebook to laugh, to have

fun. The reason the engagement for these pages is really good is, it's a funny page, it's a fun page and that's why people are on social media to begin with. As far as engagement goes for both pages, it's excellent. Even the page that only has 530 likes, the engagement averages about 80% right now, so the reach is somewhere between 400, sometimes it goes over the number of likes. For the most successful page, the reach is off the chain. It's off the chain. Almost everything I post has a reach above 100%, which means the reach is higher than the number of likes on the page. Again I think it's using that comedy approach, that's what's working. I just wanted to update you guys on what was going on with those pages. I will no doubt keep working on these throughout next year and obviously through the end of this year.

T-shirt season is in slow season right now, so I'm not going to be making too much in October, November, December but I'm really looking forward to next year with the largest page, because I'm looking forward to some good things happening. What I may try for the Christmas holidays is to create some ugly Christmas sweaters, since that was a big thing last year. I don't know how big that's going to be this year, but I'm going to experiment with monetizing the page with that, come December.

Some of you may remember me talking about hiring a web designer. What's funny is the shirts that are selling are the ones that I designed, so maybe I need to find another designer because my stuff is selling better than the stuff that he's creating, so I thought that was interesting. But yeah, I won't be doing a course on this anytime soon. The only reason I would do a course is if I could replicate this again and again, and if I feel like a lot of people could replicate this. As I said, I think the niche I chose was just spot on and that's the reason that I've had this kind of success. I can't imagine taking people's money going, "I don't know if this is going to work. Good luck finding a niche." I really want to narrow down a success formula before creating a course on something like this.

Also if I were to do a course, I would definitely reveal the pages. I would not put out a course and say, "I'm not going to show you what the pages are" because I think that looks a little shady. If I am

going to reveal the pages, I have to be prepared for people copying what I'm doing and have that potentially impacting my income. As soon as I release or show what the site is or the Facebook page is, my customers would just copy it because what would happen is, maybe they couldn't find a niche that works as well as mine, so they would just try to do my niche. The course income would have to be worth what I'm going to be losing, when I reveal what I'm doing. At this point from a business perspective, it just makes sense to keep it hidden and keep doing my thing. But rest assured, if I ever do a course on this I would totally reveal the pages. That's another reason I would want to have more success with this so the pages that I reveal, I won't be as concerned about because I'll have other pages that are also making money. That's my thought process behind that.

Now what I might do a course on is Facebook advertising and how to get cheaper likes because I've mastered that and done that with now 4 different pages. So I've definitely learned a lot about that. So I may do a course on that, but not necessarily the monetization piece 'cause I'm just not ready for that yet.

Now let's talk about how I'm making the most money online, and this is a program some of you already know. My new subscribers or followers may not know this. It's funny because I got a comment on YouTube a couple of weeks ago when someone asked me if I was still making a living with AdSense. It's funny with YouTube, because I would estimate maybe 60% of my YouTube subscribers have come from the AdSense video that I did back in 2009. A lot of my subscribers thought that that's how I was making a living. Let me just say this: if I were making a living or if I was depending on AdSense income like that, I'd be back in a 9 to 5 job. My number one earner has been almost since I started in 2002, the GoDaddy reseller program. I used to have a YouTube video that ranked really, really well for some website creation keywords, and the video literally got a million and something views. That one video for a long time was generating a ton of new customers to my reseller business, and I've retained a lot of those customers today so I'm earning residual money from those customers.

This is how the reseller program works. You may have heard me promoting Website Palace. That's my rebranded Godaddy reseller store. When someone buys a domain name, when they sign up for hosting or any product on that site, I get a recurring commission and it's about 30%. A lot of people will say, why don't you just become an affiliate with HostGator or Bluehost and get \$100 or something like that, and you'll make more. Back in the day, I would have probably made more but I'm really, really glad I chose to resell, because when Google started to make all their changes and my traffic dropped for some important keywords, I wasn't bringing in as many new customers. It's nice to still have that residual income, so my income did not drop proportionately with the traffic. Because I chose to resell, I am now earning a very, very comfortable living with just the residual money.

That may sound all well and good, but let me explain why most of you guys should not spend your money on this. First of all, reselling does cost money. If you are a super reseller like I am which means you get the highest commissions, it costs about \$200 a year. Even though I make more than that in a day, I have an advantage because I've been out here so long. Most of you do not have a large audience that's looking to go to website, so it's not worth referring 3 people a month and then have a third of them drop off in a couple of months when they cancel their sites, because you will get some drop off because not everybody is going to keep their websites. You'll make more as a GoDaddy affiliate or a HostGator affiliate, Bluehost or whatever, because they pay about \$100 per signup.

I was at a meet-up recently. You guys will hear me talk about meet-ups a lot. I love meetup.com and I can't say enough great things about them. I think it's a wonderful place for people who have websites or who are making money online, particularly if you're an entrepreneur because you can meet other entrepreneurs and get ideas, but anyway there was a guy who makes about \$800 a month give or take as an affiliate for HostGator, because he sets up WordPress sites for people. Think about it. How many of you guys know someone who needs a website? Everybody needs a website now.

What you could do is set up their site for them, but just make sure that they buy the HostGator product or whatever hosting company they're going to choose. Make sure they sign up through your affiliate link, so you can get the commission for the hosting and you can also get any fee that you charge for setting up the site. I also do some consulting on the side just for people that I know. I don't do it outside of that; that would drive me nuts ... talking about burnout! People always ask me if I do sites for people. No, I do not want to ever extend that beyond people locally because I just think that would be too much.

What I do is I have people sign up for hosting under my reseller plan or Website Palace. I have customers that have been paying me for years now, because they've had their site for 4-5 years because I'm getting a commission for every time they pay their hosting bill or their domain bill. It's a really good way to make some side money, because so many people now need websites. Some people ask me about GoDaddy versus HostGator's reseller program. I honestly cannot speak for HostGator. I've never used them. In 2002, GoDaddy was the only respectable company out there that had a reseller program, so that's why I went with them but there are people out there that don't like GoDaddy, so if you want to look somewhere else just type in domain and hosting reseller program, and there are tons of them.

I just want to emphasize, you don't have to deal with any of the customer support at all. All you have to do is get the signups, very similar to affiliate links. Once people sign up, GoDaddy has their own support team that handles all the customer questions, any technical issues or anything like that. I actually was invited out to Arizona a few years back by the GoDaddy reseller company; Wild West Domain was actually the parent company but they are now just branded under GoDaddy, I think. Anyway, I got to meet the customer support staff for the resellers, so it was really cool to get to see and meet the people that actually help my customers. But I wanted to clarify that it is completely hands-off. You don't have to deal with the support from your customers. GoDaddy handles all of that.

I wanted to bring this up because those of you who have a lot of people looking to build websites, if you have a lot of potential clients, you might want to think about reselling, especially if you know you will retain those clients. But if you can only refer maybe 1-3 people a month, you'll make more as an affiliate with Bluehost or HostGator or something like that, because most of those affiliate programs pay at least \$100 per sale.

The other reason I wanted to bring this up is because I've got questions over the years about why I don't talk much about my earnings with the GoDaddy reseller program, because a lot of people don't even know that I'm doing so well with the program. The reason I don't bring it up that often is because a lot of those earnings are because of when I started, so that would be very misleading if I show these ginormous checks and have people thinking that I am earning this now, when in reality a lot of those earnings are from 13 years worth of earnings, so I really downplay that.

It's very important for me when I show earnings, that I show current earnings. You may have seen the Amazon affiliate program video I did on YouTube recently, where I was showing my \$400 earnings. That was from the previous month. I showed my Spreadshirt check for almost 900 bucks. That was a current check, because I want people to see what I'm doing now. I don't want to just put up checks and have people thinking, "Oh, I can easily make that money now with reselling" because I think that's shady. That's why I don't mention it too much, but I did want to do this podcast on this because I know a lot of you are curious about the reseller program, especially because I talked a little bit about that in my first podcast but I didn't go into a lot of detail. I did want to provide some clarification on that.

Now let's talk about Udemy. I have now been selling courses on Udemy since October 2014, so it's been a year now. Let me just say overall I'm very, very satisfied with Udemy. I had a record number of paid student enrollments last month and that's with almost no promotion. If you're on my email list, you guys know I don't send out a lot of promotional stuff. This is primarily from links I put in

the description of some of my YouTube videos, as well as links that are embedded within my site. Udemy does an amazing job of promoting your courses for you. The trick to that though is you have to have a good amount of paid five star reviews.

Let me explain because that didn't sound right ... Not paying people to leave a review. What I mean is, what a lot of people do with Udemy is they will get their friends and family to sign up for their courses, and then leave them a five star review in hopes of that helping their course earn more organically, meaning Udemy will then promote their course for them. But people were abusing that like crazy, they were giving away free coupons in order to bump up their enrollment numbers to get those reviews. So what they do now is they value the paid customer reviews more so than the free reviews, which is great because I was watching a lot of people game the system. What happened is, they would get these five star reviews from their friends but when other people started buying the course, they were like "What is this?" so they would leave them a bad review. It was clear that those five star reviews were friends, and Udemy really reigned that in so it's a lot harder to game the system now. But once your courses get a handful of good reviews from paid customers, they will promote your courses for you. They have a ginormous email list.

The biggest criticism that people have of Udemy is that they take 50% when they refer a sale for your course. I have no problem with that. They generated the customer, so they should get 50%. If I refer the sale from my site or my email list, I get 97%. That's almost a full commission. If you don't like Udemy's discounts and you don't want them discounting your courses, you can opt out. You can completely opt out of that. The one thing I wish they would allow though is to choose which courses you want them to enroll into the discount program, because you might not want to discount all of your courses, so that is definitely a downside.

And of course, anytime you're hosting your content on another company, you never really own that customer, so there are limitations to how often you can send out announcements and what you can send. There's a downside there as well, but because Udemy

has done such a great job of promoting my courses, again I have no regrets about choosing to go with Udemy first. I really don't, because now what I can do is I can still sell my courses on my own site. Maybe I can bundle them and give a nice discount, and of course I won't have to share any of the commissions with anybody and then, I can leave my courses on Udemy and continually have them earn passively from people who find my courses through Udemy and they know nothing about me. Basically I can develop two streams of passive income now, and that's exactly why I wanted to start with Udemy because I wanted to build up that passive income with them, and then also sell the courses on my site.

That's going to get a little tricky with pricing. I haven't figured out how I'm going to do this yet, but down the line I will probably also sell the courses on my site for people who find me through my own channels like YouTube, my blog, the website, all that. I haven't decided what plugin I want to use to host the courses yet. Right now, I'm looking at Rainmaker, which is StudioPress' platform. You can't go wrong with a StudioPress product. I'm a big fan of theirs. I own all of their themes. I purchased their All Pro theme package so I get access to all of their existing themes, and any new themes they come out with. They have amazing support with all their products, so I have no doubt it's a great program. It's just kind of pricey but it may be worth it in the long run.

The other one I'm looking at is Zippy courses by Derek Halpern. Derek Halpern is that in your face psychological marketer who talks about how the psychology impacts people's purchases and all that, and he's a very, very great speaker. He recently came out with Zippy courses, which is a plug-in for you to sell your courses on your website. I'm contemplating those two at the moment, but at some point I will be hosting my courses on my site, but I will definitely keep them on Udemy too. The other hesitation I have about hosting them on my site is I realize I'm going to be responsible for any technical issues, customer support, billing issues that may come up and the nice thing about Udemy is that they deal with all of that.

I'm a person that travels a lot and when I travel, I don't like to take my laptop so I will definitely will have to make sure that my virtual assistant is in place to handle any issues, if anything goes wrong with the sign up process or accessing the courses, so that's another reason I've been a little hesitant with selling them on my site. But I also realize it's worth it in the long run. I'm really, really happy with the course stuff. My goal for 2016 is to make a living with just the course income, and I'm already more than halfway there.

I should clarify a comfortable living. You could argue that I'm making a small, modest living now with them, but I want a comfortable living with just the courses and everything else will just be gravy. I have 4 paid courses now. My goal for next year this time is to double that, so I want to try to have 8 courses.

If any of you are looking to make money online and you want to sell courses, I think Udemy is a great starting point, particularly if you don't have a large audience because if you can get some early paid reviews, and I need to stop saying paid reviews because it sounds like I'm saying you have to pay people to leave you a review, but I mean paid students, then you will start to get some organic sales meaning Udemy will then promote your courses to their email list.

One thing I like about Udemy and I believe I've mentioned this in another podcast, they will give your course a chance. If you just launch your course, they will promote it heavily and try to get you a few sales in the beginning, just to test to see if people are actually going through your course and taking it and if you have great engagement, meaning if people watch the majority of the course and if they leave a good review, then they will promote it more. If you have no audience at all, it's a great platform to sort of give you a jump start.

For example, my Photoshop course was out on the Udemy marketplace for about a month before I announced it to my email list, and I got about 4-5 sales, so I highly recommend you look into them. As I said, there's always a downside to hosting your content on somebody else's platform. You do give up some control so that is a downside. Udemy is not just for courses about making money

online. There's a girl in the Udemy Facebook group who has a singing lessons course that's doing very, very well, so you don't just have to do courses about making money online. Obviously those do better than some other topics, but there are tons of people on Udemy with non internet marketing type courses and they're doing great, and that's largely because more and more people are preferring to learn via the online video way. It's just convenient. People can take the course at their leisure. They can access it from their phones or their iPad anytime they want. It's just a very convenient way to learn now.

Also, Udemy has an affiliate program. You can join up through LinkShare, which is now I think Rakuten or something like that. What's funny is I got an email from the people in the Udemy affiliate department last week and this woman goes "Hey by the way, congratulations on a great job with our affiliate program." I thought, what are you talking about? I'm not promoting anything, I'm promoting my own courses. I forgot I put a couple of links out on my website to some web design courses, like really technical courses, HTML, PHP, and they were converting, so I got a \$240 check from Udemy's affiliate program and I didn't even realize I was earning. If you don't have courses yourself, you can promote other people's courses, so you would join Rakuten, get accepted and then you would log in and search for courses that you want to promote. They give you the affiliate links and then you can earn by referring other people's courses.

That's it you guys. I'm coming up on about 30 minutes, I'm actually a little past 30 minutes now, I think. That's long enough, I don't want to bore you too much. Thanks so much for listening. Check out my courses at 2createawebsite.com/courses.

If you want to leave me a question or comment for this podcast, you can go to [2createawebsite.com/podcast 15](http://2createawebsite.com/podcast15). I'm also back on YouTube so you can find me there. I've got a few new videos out since my last podcast. Thank you guys, I really do appreciate you listening and I'll talk to you later.