

How to reduce the anxiety of a brand launch?

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My biggest creative fear

As product people, we don't want to create something that's just *good*. We want it to *resonate* with people.

When I launch something new, my biggest fear is that people **won't like it, won't care, or won't show up.**

Additionally, a lot of people I know also struggle to *promote* the things they've made.

These two pain points are related. If you're not confident that people will like what you've made, it's hard to promote it.

No one wants to send out party invitations, and have zero people show up on a Friday night.

How can you get over this fear?

You don't.

You never *truly* get over the fear of launching something no one wants.

But you can *reduce* it. There's a feedback loop you can go through that will give you the confidence you need. It's a system for discovering products people *want*.

It looks like this:

1. Research your audience. Embed yourself in their community. Hang out every day.

Listen.

2. Observe the topics, pain points, and desires that come up over and over again. Make a list.
3. Prioritize the list. Which topics do you think are most important to this group?
4. Create something **small** that solves your audience's #1 issue.
5. Launch it. Observe the reaction. Gather feedback.
6. Iterate by making something a bit **bigger**. Try charging a bit of money for it. How do people respond? How hard is it to find customers?
7. Keep repeating this cycle until you're sure you've found a **problem** that people *really* care about and a **solution** that they'll pay for.

I realize that this might seem simplistic. But when you show up every day, you'll find opportunities to help people in meaningful ways.

For example, my friend Jarrod is a **designer** and hangs out with other **designers**. His friends were having a hard time communicating their value to clients. So Jarrod decided to write [The Tiny Designer](#).

Learning to promote your projects

"Self-promotion just feels so icky. I hate doing it. It's my biggest challenge."

Once you've created a solution that people need, you won't feel like a huckster. You're helping folks solve their problems (and that's worth doing).

Now you can focus on your *communication technique*.

And technique matters. Making something people *want* is no good if they never hear about it.

<https://twitter.com/mijustin/status/528907890346962944>

A lot of **marketing** is experimentation. It's knowing about the different approaches, tactics and channels to try. And it's about having a system for implementing and evaluating your experiments.

The starting point

To find out what works for you, you need a list of things to test. From the beginning, you'll want a framework for collecting and evaluating **marketing** data. This strategy should fit the stage you're at right now (pre-launch, launching, post-launch).

These are the topics I cover in [Marketing for Product People](#). It's the equivalent of my other book **Marketing** for Developers, but for folks who aren't engineers. It's for product people, like you.

It's launching on February 10th. If you'd like a sample chapter, [click here](#) and I'll send you one!

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