

MILLION DOLLAR WEEKEND

**THE
SURPRISINGLY
SIMPLE WAY
TO LAUNCH**



**A 7-FIGURE
BUSINESS IN
48 HOURS**

FOUNDER AND CEO OF APPSUMO

NOAH KAGAN

WITH TAHL RAZ

Million Dollar Weekend

**The Surprisingly
Simple Way to
Launch a
7-Figure Business
in 48 Hours**

NOAH KAGAN

with Tahl Raz

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Dedicated to everyone willing to take a chance on themselves

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Acknowledgments

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Frequently Made Excuses

Welcome to a book that will help you start a million-dollar business in a weekend. We tend to think that we are never ready . . . but you are. The fact is, *ordinary people start profitable businesses every single day*. You don't have to be rich, brilliant, or super experienced.

But you do have excuses that have held you back in the past. Never again. Here are the ten most common and the exact chapters where we demolish them:

1. “I don’t have any good ideas.”

But you do have problems, and so do your friends and every other person in this world. That's all you need to generate million-dollar business ideas. After you learn the Customer First Approach in chapter 3, you'll have more business ideas than you'll know what to do with.

2. “I have too many ideas.”

Choose the three you think will be the most fun to work with. In chapter 4, you’ll learn how to use market research and a One-Minute Business Model to determine which of your three ideas has the most potential.

3. “Starting a business is risky. I’m nervous about quitting my job.”

Risky is spending your life at a job you hate, with people you don’t like, working on problems you don’t care about. Don’t quit your day job. Leverage the Million Dollar Weekend process (chapter 5) in the early mornings, evenings, and weekends. Once you’ve validated an idea, and you’re pulling in enough to cover your minimum monthly expenses—aka the Freedom Number—then you can quit. I’ve done that twice.

4. “I’ve started a few different businesses. They do okay and then I lose interest.”

D’oh. Any one of those businesses could have been what you wanted. Not starting and not finishing both come from a similar set of fears (covered in chapter 1). You will also learn the Law of 100 to help you push past resistance when you feel like quitting.

5. “But how will it scale?”

This phrase stops you from getting your first customer. Keep it simple and easy for yourself. Don’t think about scaling, focus on starting. Then we’ll

discuss scaling your business in the chapters in Part 3: Grow It.

6. “I don’t have enough time to create a business.”

Look for the processes you can automate, or document parts of the business so you can hire someone to help. My productivity system (chapter 9) allows me to run an eight-figure business, a YouTube channel, and a blog, while working out daily, traveling, and so on. If it’s a priority, we can make the time.

7. “I need to read more books, do more research, and be totally prepared before I can really start.”

You will never feel 100 percent ready to start. You just need to start. Don’t buy another book or watch another video until you’ve worked through THIS process and started your million-dollar business. I got you. Action time (chapter 1)!

8. “I’m broke as @#!*. I’ve spent so much money and have made zero dollars in profit.”

Don’t spend another dime until you’ve made your first dollar. The Million Dollar Weekend process (chapter 5) requires no up-front spending.

9. “I’m not good at marketing.”

Marketing is easy when you have a product people want. Chapter 3 shows you step by step how to find ideas people are excited to give you money for. Then chapters 6, 7, and 8 give you the same marketing methods that I used to help Mint reach 1 million users in six months and TidyCal.com to reach 10,000 paying customers in six months.

10. “I need a technical cofounder to implement AI/VR/AR/the latest technology.”

No, you need to make money first. Your customers don’t want more software, they just want solutions (chapter 3). Focus on that. There are affordable ways of validating a biz without any code.

Start Here

After starting eight million-dollar businesses myself (Kickflip, Gambit, KingSumo, SendFox, Sumo, Tidycal, Monthly1K, AppSumo), I wanted to PROVE I could teach others to do the same.

In trying to share the process I realized that it consists of just a few core steps. I call these three steps the **Million Dollar Weekend process**:

1. Find a problem people are having that you can solve.
2. Craft an irresistible solution whose million-dollar-plus potential is backed by simple market research.
3. Spend NO MONEY to quickly validate whether your idea is the real deal (or not) by preselling it before you build it.

I knew I was onto something, because early on everyone who followed the process eventually launched a profitable side hustle or business.

People like Michael Osborn, who used the three steps to turn his interest in real estate into an \$83,000-a-month consulting business.

Or Jennifer Jones, who launched a \$20,000-a-year side-hustle cookie business (chocolate chip for me!).

Or Daniel Reifenberger, who turned working at the Apple store into a \$250,000-a-year business tutoring people in how to use technology.

The problem was, for every Michael, Jennifer, and Daniel, there were a thousand wantrepreneurs in my social media feeds who could never get started. It was a big mystery to me: If all the information you need to start a business is freely available, if the Million Dollar Weekend process works if you just commit to it, why is it SO HARD TO DO for SO MANY PEOPLE?

In 2013, I set out to solve that mystery and launched a course called “How to Make a \$1000-a-Month Business.” I started with a group of five beta testers—a programmer, a horse trainer, and three people with ordinary day jobs—all of whom had everything they needed to start their own business.

Two weeks after we started, I was shocked to discover the entire group practically made ZERO progress. To understand what had happened, I got everyone in a room together and did some entrepreneurial group therapy, breaking down what was holding them back.

It turns out, it wasn't a lack of skill, desire, or intelligence.

The whole group was derailed by the same two fears:

1. **FEAR OF STARTING.** At some point people are told entrepreneurship is a huge risk, and you believed it. You figured more preparation, more planning, and more talking to friends would help you overcome your insecurities. But that inaction only breeds more doubt and fear. In actuality, the best way to learn what we need to know—and become who we want to be—is by just getting started. **Small EXPERIMENTS, repeated over time, are the recipe for transformation in business, and life.**

2. **FEAR OF ASKING.** Soon after starting, the fear of rejection emerges. You have some impressive skills, an amazing product, every advantage in the world, and you'll never sell a thing *if you can't face another person and ask for what you want*. Whether you want them to buy what you're selling or help in another way, you have to be able to ask in

order to get. **Once you reframe rejection as something desirable, the act of asking becomes a power all its own.**

I helped that early group and thousands since then to overcome these blocks, and if you stick with me through this book, I will help you overcome these fears and start your million dollar business.

From now on, everything you do in this book, and after, should be viewed as an experiment. This has been a profound shift for people who worry that “starting a business” is this big daunting thing. Experiments are supposed to fail. And should they fail, you just take what you’ve learned and try again a little bit differently.

Take me and any of the super-successful entrepreneurs and side-hustle champions I’ve met over the years. It’s uncanny, but the one commonality nearly all of us share **is the crazy number of seemingly random things we’ve tried to launch**—stretching back to our childhoods. Online courses, self-published books, consulting, Airbnbs, affiliate marketing, YouTube channels, a college dating site, and many more . . .

And for all of us, almost all of these projects failed!

So what’s the connection between all these random failures and the success we ultimately achieved? It’s clearly not our expertise. No, it’s because of our willingness to run small experiments.

That we eventually succeeded is a byproduct of the fact that we just try more things, period. That’s what I call **Creator’s Courage**. I believe everyone is born with this courage, and for those who have lost it, this book will help you rediscover the **ability to come up with ideas (starting) and have the courage to try them out (asking)**.

Looking back on the early years of your life, it’s easy to think of “scary” things that became not so scary as soon as you tried them. Remember the first time you tried to ride a bike? Hold your breath underwater? Climb a tree? Walk? The messiness of such trial and error may seem uncomfortable now, but the days when we weren’t afraid to leap into the mud and dirty up our hands were when we learned the fastest (and had the most fun!).

Leaping is all that matters. The most courageous creators just leap more—in spite of their fear—and successful creation eventually follows. If you trace back every big company to its beginning, it all started with a leap into the unknown and a tiny little experiment:

Apple: Started as two guys who tried to build a computer kit that you can carry

Facebook: Started as a weekend project similar to Hot or Not for college students

Tesla: Started as a prototype of an electric car to convince car companies to go electric

Google: Started off as a research project

Airbnb: Started off in a weekend as a place to crash in someone's living room during conferences

Khan Academy: Started off as a set of ten-minute videos Sal Khan created for his cousins

AppSumo: Started as a way to get a deal on software I liked

Most people never pick up the phone, most people never ask. And that's what separates, sometimes, the people that do things from the people that just dream about them. You gotta act. And you gotta be willing to fail.

—Steve Jobs

Business is just a never-ending cycle of starting and trying new things, asking whether people will pay for those things, and then trying it again

based on what you've learned. If you're afraid to start or ask, you can't experiment. And if you can't experiment, you can't do business.

This isn't about willpower or self-discipline. No one is going to nag, scold, or intimidate you into starting a business. My personal favorite way to approach starting a business is to have fun!

People do all kinds of scary things in the name of fun. Entrepreneurship is no exception. Make it fun and you'll overcome the fear.

So let's have some fun! Business is an amazing opportunity to learn about yourself, play with ideas, solve your own problems, help other people, and get paid all the while. Approaching it this way will free up your imagination, make you less judgmental and critical of yourself, and allow you to open yourself up to the kind of playful experimentation I want you to practice.

This will be the most fun, most productive weekend you've had in years!

Why just a weekend? No time to chicken out!

I've found from thousands of students that limiting time to a weekend (which everyone has) forces you to become inventive, focuses your attention only on the things that matter, and shows you how much more you can do with limitations. You have only forty-eight hours.

Each chapter contains tried-and-tested challenges I've developed to get entrepreneurs out of their comfort zones and into the end zone. As you follow my instructions, tackle these challenges, and overcome your fears, you'll also be growing your million-dollar business, step by step.

Here's how your Million Dollar Weekend journey is structured:

PART 1. START IT

You'll work your way through part 1 in the three to four days leading up to the weekend. These chapters will rekindle your Creator's Courage, preparing you to hit the ground running at the weekend.

In chapter 1, I'll show you how to apply the NOW, Not How mindset that's critical to experimentation. And then calculate your Freedom Number, so it's clear what you are working toward.

In chapter 2, you'll learn about Rejection Goals to help develop your Ask muscle. You'll do the life-changing Coffee Challenge that will show how fearless you are and practice the skill of asking that will empower you to build a million-dollar business.

PART 2. BUILD IT

This is it—your Million Dollar Weekend! Here, I'll walk you step by step through the Million Dollar Weekend process, where you will design, verify, and launch your MDW business.

In chapters 3, 4, and 5 (aka Friday, Saturday, and Sunday), you'll go from **Zero to \$1** and land your first three customers. To get there, you will learn techniques to generate profitable business ideas, determine which ideas have million-dollar opportunities, and then take the 48-hour challenge to get your first paying customers.

I want you to work fast and stay laser-focused on going from idea to first customer. Can't get any real customers to give you money? Awesome! We'll celebrate your victorious failure (that cost little time and no money) and look to quickly validate your next idea. Remember, a weekend is all you need!

PART 3. GROW IT

What gets you to your first \$1 will get you to your first \$1,000. It's the leap to \$100,000 and then to \$1 million that requires you to create a growth machine. The most powerful growth tool today for solopreneurs is a system of content creation, audience building, and email marketing. We'll set up this system in chapters 6 and 7.

At the heart of each chapter is a challenge that delivers a concrete asset for your business. In chapter 8, that asset is the Experiment-Based Marketing approach that helped me grow Mint.com from zero to 1 million users in just *six months*. It worked so well for Mint, I now use Experiment-Based Marketing for EVERY new product, service, or company I launch.

Chapter 9 shifts the attention from the business back to your own personal development. Now that you're an entrepreneur, you're responsible for your productivity, your training, your growth, and your time. You'll need a different approach and different system to organize your days—one that optimizes for your overall happiness above all else. (Or why do any of it, right?) This, the final chapter, is about building not just a business, but a *life* that you'll love.

CHALLENGE

Million Dollar Weekend contract.

Those people who've found success from this material do one thing: they commit to the process and they follow it exactly. I want you to be successful and create a contract, promising yourself to do the steps listed out in the book. This is your time to create your dream life. This

contract will get you excited for the future and provide the necessary motivation in times of need.

Contract with Yourself

I, _____ (your name), commit to working toward my dream, having fun throughout the experience, facing my fears, and following every challenge in this book.

My dream outcome after reading *Million Dollar Weekend* is:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

FREE MDW JOURNAL, SCRIPTS, TEMPLATES, AND MORE

If you want your very own journal to document your Million Dollar Weekend, go to MillionDollarWeekend.com and download the journal template.

One scribble in these notes could potentially be your million-dollar business. The most successful students use their journals to write down their progress to stay focused and absorb the ideas.

I also included templates, scripts, and video tutorials of everything in this book. You can also scan the QR Code if you don't like typing. It's absolutely free. Enjoy.