

## WELCOME TO YOUR NEW TOYBOX

Exclusive extract from  
John's new book



**We all know just what a difference the Internet has made to the world, so what does it really mean for those of us trying to play our way to success?**

There's a proliferation of free or cheap online services that allow us to go from idea to real-world project in a tiny fraction of the time that it used to take. You can publish a book, launch a radio show or open your own shop in just one afternoon. If you've got an idea, you can launch it today, and you don't need tonnes of cash. And of course you now have the possibility of a global audience.

And yet... we are still prone to sitting around waiting and hoping for our lucky break. We

still send our manuscripts off to 57 publishers and get rejected by every one. It's not that having a publisher isn't a useful thing; it is. But trying to win a book deal is like playing the lottery – the odds are stacked against you and you have very little control over the process. I recommend that you attract a book deal, or radio show, or newspaper column, or corporate event schedule. And you do that by doing something you care about, something good. I got my book deal because someone heard about my event, Scanners Night. A

colleague of mine got her book deal from someone who reads her blog. A friend got her book deal because an agent heard about her workshops. We didn't pitch, we didn't wait.

So how do you start your thing? How can you create something that's fun and rewarding to do, and that might get you noticed? Here's a very brief overview of some of the new toys - these are online services that you can use to make your idea happen. Don't rule anything out.



## ➤ Your toolbox

### Books

Lulu.com - Since their founding in 2002, print-on-demand self-publishing service Lulu has published over 1.1 million titles by creators in over 200 countries. Upload your manuscript of any length as a PDF, choose your format, and hit 'publish.' Books are printed one at a time - you can also buy your own book. You retain the copyright and you can and put it on sale for others. For photo books, try blurb.com.

### EBooks

Kindle Direct Publishing (kdp.amazon.com) allows self-publishing to the popular Kindle e-readers. Either 35% or 70% royalties are available, depending on the sale price of the book.

### Broadcast

Want your own talk show? Start a weekly, monthly or daily radio show on blogtalkradio.com for free. You can talk, interview interesting people and experts, and take questions from callers. People can listen in live online and listen to recordings afterwards. You can start with the free service. You can even launch an entire TV station using livestream.com or ustream.com.

### Music

Started in 2007, Soundcloud.com was created by two Swedish musicians who were frustrated that there was no equivalent of Flickr for sound on the web. So they built it. You can upload your music, sounds, samples and storytelling. People can play and comment within the track with the nifty waveform display. Now people like Radiohead use it to prerelease material. There's a free entry-level service, then enhanced annual subscription for more storage and stats. Also check out cdbaby.com and iTunes. Bandcamp.com allows musicians to sell music and merchandise directly to their fans.

### Products

At cafepress.co.uk and zazzle.co.uk, you can create T-shirts, baseball caps, mugs, magnets, greeting cards and other items with your own designs, buy for yourself, and place them on sale for others to buy. Also see Kunaki.com for CD and DVD publishing, and alibaba.com for getting products manufactured in China.

### Arts and crafts

Create your own shop front in etsy.com - it costs 20 cents to list an item for four months, and when your item sells, you'll pay a 3.5% transaction fee. Top tip - make sure that your photography is of high quality, and good copy (descriptions of your work) is important, too. Bigcartel.com hosts artists' and designers' online stores. See also deviantart.com for prints.

### Launch without websites

Launch your Play project before you've even created a website by using facebook, linkedin, or twitter to tell the world you've arrived. Or share your expertise on quora.com. Take things a step further by registering your own domain name and pointing the domain at the appropriate site.

### Websites and blogs

For books and businesses, a blog is the ultimate tool for working out what you want to do as you go along. Try blogger.com if you're a complete technophobe. Wordpress.org and Wordpress.com allow you to set up excellent entry-level sites and blogs. Explore Soup.io, tumblr, and pinterest - these are free services for posting text and images, reflecting the trend for curating online. If you want to build a community around your Play Project, look at Ning.com.

### Events

Use meetup.com and eventbrite.co.uk to create event pages and sell tickets.

### Expertise

You can find people to fill gaps in your expertise at peopleperhour.com, freelancer.com and odesk.com.

### Funding

You could try to raise funding for your creative project or business idea through crowd funding sites such as kickstarter.com or sponsume.com. An iPod dock was the first Kickstarter project to raise over \$1m, achieved within 40 hours of going live on the site. The dock's creators had developed their product and actually made one before seeking funding. See also crowdfunder.co.uk and crowdcube.com. International sites include pozible.com in Australia, together.asia for Asian crowd funding, demohour.com in China, and idea.me in Latin America. Piggybackr.com is for teenagers, children, teams and schools. Flattr.com allows users of websites to make micro-payments in appreciation of web content to a set monthly limit, particularly via social media.

### Payment

Paypal.com is a trusted and simple way to allow customers to pay. For physical products, consider registering with the Amazon marketplace at Amazon.com.

### Experts

You can even find people to do things for you. Fiverr.com is a marketplace for people offering services from graphics and design to birthday serenades, at a cost of \$5 and up. Freelancer.com connects freelance specialists with small businesses looking to outsource work, as does elance.com. Also check out 99designs.co.uk for freelance graphic design.

The exciting thing about these online tools is that they give us unparalleled opportunities to create and deliver value, ie to make good stuff and share it with others. And that is the key to getting paid to do what you love.

Go and have a play!

