How to Fill Your First Program (Even If You Don't Have a List)

The top 3 strategies for filling your pilot program:

- Set your price at a low "one-time only, introductory, pilot" level price (e.g. $197 instead of $1,997)
- Reach out to people who already know, like and trust you, one at a time – you need to have 1-1 conversations!!!
- Talk about the results that your program provides (e.g. "You will learn to dance," "You will create a signature talk"), not the mechanics (e.g. "The program is 7 weeks and you will get weekly calls and recorded videos") or your process.

Here are 15 quick ideas to help you fill your online program:

1. People Who Know You Well

Start with people in your circle of influence. Does your program provide a solution they might be looking for? Make a list of 20 people, and reach out to them personally to explain what you are doing and how they would benefit from taking your program. And if it's not a good fit – ask them if they can help you spread the word. Also – make sure to document all of their objections and the reasons they don't think it's a good fit.

How To Fill Your Pilot

2. Facebook

Use your Facebook reach and post on your FB page, on your personal profile and in FB groups you are active in. Ask your friends and followers to share your posts. Do a Facebook LIVE broadcast and tell people why they should sign up. The most effective way is to reach out personally to people you know via private messages and ask them to jump on a quick call with you. But don't start with a sales pitch – have a conversation first.

3. Local Events and Meetups (In-Person or Virtual)

Local networking events are great places to talk to people one-on-one and tell them about your upcoming program. Look for the opportunities to sponsor a booth or a table for even more exposure. Offer 2-for-1 discounts for signing up on the spot.

4. Existing & Past Clients

People who bought from you in the past are very likely to invest in your program. Check with them individually (via phone or text), and tell them about your new and exciting offer.

5. People Who Didn't Hire You

Are there people who were interested in your services but for some reason didn't hire you? Reach out to them – your new program might be a better fit for them logistically and financially.

6. Email

Regardless of the size of your list, email marketing can be a powerful way to fill your program. Make sure to send several emails to your list describing the benefits of your program. Bonus Tip: Add a line to your email signature encouraging people to check out your upcoming course.

7. JV Partners

Do you know other business owners who are working with the same audience? Would they be willing to share the news about your upcoming program with their community? Give them the exact message to share with their followers to make it easy for them. In exchange, you can offer them an affiliate commission, a free spot in your program, or a reciprocal promotion.

8. Other Social Media Sites

Use the power of social media to reach out to even more people. The possibilities are endless - LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, TickTock, WhatsApp, X, etc..

Note: Don't waste time on platforms you are not currently active on. Focus on the ones that you use on a regular basis and have established relationships and connections.

9. Masterminds and Programs

Are you currently participating in any group trainings? Are you a part of a program or a mastermind? You never know – your peers might be very interested in taking your program. Also – don't forget to ask for help spreading the word.

Note: Make sure you are not violating the rules of the community you are in.

10. Live Events and Conferences (In-Person or Virtual)

Live events, conventions and conferences are great for connecting and getting to know people. Talk to people, ask questions, and if you feel that your program addresses their needs – ask them if they would like to hear about it.

11. Speaking Opportunities

One of the fastest and easiest ways to gain credibility and authority is to speak in front of an audience. Look for speaking opportunities and interviews locally as well as online, to share your message and invite people to sign up for your program. Here are just some possibilities: local chamber events, meetups, business clubs, radio shows, podcasts, TV shows, telesummits, conferences, guest expert appearances, etc… You can also organize your own opportunities and hold a workshop and a virtual event.

How To Fill Your Pilot

12. Strategy Sessions

If you offer free strategy sessions to your potential clients, you can use that opportunity to talk about your program as a "downsell" when people are not ready for your one-on-one services, or as a bonus for signing up to work with you.

13. Blog or Article

Write a blog or an article around the topic of your upcoming program to increase awareness. Write a post that's educational and provides real value for your readers, and make sure to add a call to action to sign up for your program. If you don't have a blog – find out who is looking for guest bloggers.

14. "Bring-a-Friend"

Ask people who already signed up for your program to share about it with their friends. As an incentive, you can offer a prize for the person who signs up the most friends, a discount on future services or programs, and a discounted program price for their friends, or even a free ticket for their friends.

15. Raffle, Drawing or Contest

Hold a drawing/contest for a spot in your program. This'll give your upcoming program great visibility and add fun, excitement and anticipation to the process. This can be done with people on your list, at a networking event or in your Facebook group (adhere to FB rules for contests).