Speaker 1: Welcome to "Build Your Tribe," with your host, Chalene Johnson.

Chalene Johnson: Let's take a look at what goes into a launch. First, what is a launch? The expert on the subject is none other than Jeff Walker. Credit where credit is due, it is from the teachings of, "The Product Launch Formula," and his book, "Launch," authored by Jeff Walker, that we've really learned to customize this process for ourselves.

So generally speaking, I would summarize a launch as an event. It's something other than just a sale that's always available. In other words, if you think about Hollywood, or you think about Apple, for example, there's always a lot of buzz surrounding whatever it is they're about to launch next. They don't simply release a product, they create an event out of it, and let you know it's in the works. There's lots of excitement and anticipation for their next product.

That's how you want to think of a launch. Again, most of what I'll be sharing with you today is how we've taken the product launch formula as taught by Jeff Walker, and learned to experiment with it a little bit, put some tweaks into his formula so that it perfectly fits our model. Now, we don't have this perfected yet, and we're always looking to improve. But I will share with you what goes on behind the scenes.

So many of you have been part of our launches, and you've gotten to see the finished product or the videos. But in this program, I want to share with you what goes on behind the scenes. Now that you're participating in one of my programs, I want to help you understand how to create your own program. You might be ready to have your own launch, or maybe you just want to know more about how we do this. In this documentary, I'm going to lift the hood and I'll share exactly how we put together a launch. I can tell you, this might work for some of you, or there may be little pieces that you'll incorporate into your own process.

For the record, I just want to make sure that everyone is perfectly clear that this is not a formula we developed. The product launch formula itself, the ins and outs, the exact details that you need to do your own launch, well, I just think the master is Jeff Walker.

What we'll be sharing here is how our team has taken his trainings and how we make it work for us. I think it's critical to share with you my opinion, that even though there are those who actually think you can do a launch to build your email list, I personally would prefer that people work on building their email list before they do their launch, instead of using a launch to build your email list. Now if you plan to do it that way, if you plan to use a launch as a means by which to build your email list, that's totally cool. Just make sure you know that is your intended goal. However, if sales is your goal, then it's really important that you, yourself, have an email list, or you're able to partner with affiliates who ave great reach. Either a ton of affiliates, or a couple of key affiliates with a key list. That list consists of lifers who are looking for the type of product or service that you will be offering.

Now, assuming that you've got this product or service that you would like to launch, a couple of things that we keep in mind. The thing that we do a product launch for are marketing impact academy as well as smart success. We have other programs that are available all year long, but it's just those two big programs and by big I mean they are incredibly robust products. It's just those to products that we do a product launch for. So if you were to go to my website now, Comprehensiveness, you might be able to find some stuff on smart success or marketing impact. But you won't be able to join one of those programs from the website. In fact, you'll find very little about them on the website and that's intentional and I'll share that part of our strategy for creating a successful launch.

Instead, what we do is we talk about the scarcity all year long. In my podcast, broadcast, as well as on Facebook, twitter, and interviews, I will always refer to these two programs as only being available twice a year during our launch sequence. So in other words, it's during those short periods of time that we open up registration and allow people to join Marketing Impact Academy or Smart Success. We're creating that event, that excitement, that enthusiasm for this opportunity to join at that time.

Now that of course, is part of the scarcity. It's part of the excitement. It's part of the allure. You can't get in at any one time and what that does is it makes people realize, if I'm going to be forced to make this decision again, I won't have this opportunity for another twelve months or so.

So once we've decided what it is that we're going to launch, which is what you will do as well, your next step, our next step, is to set a date. Now, setting a date is important We have to factor in several different considerations. My own workload, what other things we have as commitments on our calendar. We also have to factor in what the commitments are of the affiliates we are working with.

Now we don't do a ton of affiliate work, and for those of you who are unfamiliar with the term, "affiliates," in other words, we have partners who are in a similar industry as us. Perhaps they teach Facebook marketing. Or, product launch formula, like Jeff Walker. Jeff Walker is one of our favorite affiliates. So for this example, when we're launching Marketing Impact Academy, we'll look at the date that we're considering for our launch period, which is a two week period. That two weeks represents only the time that we will be promoting it.

It doesn't include our prep time, our filming and editing, etc. If we are just looking at the two weeks that we will be promoting this event, we then want to check with our top affiliates and find out if in fact, that date, those two weeks are a time which we can count on their support. So if our top affiliates, the ones who have a list of compatibility, people on their emails, people who subscribe to their programs, who are likely to want to purchase marketing impact academy, we need to check with our top affiliates and ask them if in fact, they are going to be promoting anything else during that two week period.

Let's say hypothetically speaking, that Jeff Walker was promoting product launch formula during the same two week period that we were looking to promote marketing impact academy. Well, if his relationship with us is that important, we will change the date. So there are no hard and fast rules with regard to dates. It's just like anything else. If your best friend is getting married the same weekend that you picked, between the two of you, you'll need to figure out who has the most flexibility in terms of changing their date and just try to be the most accommodating. That way you'll always come out on top.

Other considerations when determining which date is best for your launch is consider when vacation time falls. I wouldn't recommend doing launch during Superbowl Sunday, or holidays or other times that you just know people are not paying attention to their emails. Most of your launch sequences will begin with an email. So if you're scheduling things to release at a time when no one is at work and very few people are checking their emails, you're already diminishing your return on investment. Picking the perfect date is far more complicated than you might assume. Not only do we have to factor in the two launch dates that we have for our own products, and try to space them approximately four to six months apart, and the reason why we do that, by the way, is so that we're not bombarding our emails to our customers.

So we'll try to space them out, at least four to six months apart. But in addition to to that, we're also trying to take into consideration any programs that we think are a great fit and the perfect partnership, so that we can send those offers to our email list. Those affiliates that we want to partner with and we can send their launch to our list, and we've got to figure out when and where to place those. So say for example, two of our best partners are both releasing programs this year on how to do Facebook ads. Well, if they're both in the very same month, it just wouldn't make sense for us to send for both affiliates. We'd have to decide which one made the most sense in terms of our timing, in terms of the last thing we promoted to our list, and we calendar all of this in one meeting.

It's really important to do this, and that's why it's so valuable to create these relationships with your top affiliates, so you know you've got a really good idea of what they're creating, what they're promoting and what they will be launching soon. This first step of planning for a launch usually takes one to two meetings where we will follow up with phone calls, emails, dates, confirmations of what our affiliates are doing. Then of course, taking a look at the dates we are considering and how those line up with our top consultants.

We don't have full time editors or full time video crew. We need to check with them and make sure that they, those important members of our team, our consultants, are available during the times that we are looking at to film for our upcoming launch.

The next meeting that we'll have for our launch really revolves around deciding what it is we want to teach. So in following a traditional product launch formula, we'll usually take our launch over the course of two weeks. Now, that's a general rule of thumb. Your launch can go three weeks or four weeks or even a couple of days. But typically, our launch period will last approximately two weeks.

The first week is what we call pre-launch. Now, in the pre-launch week, that is where we're releasing content, usually a couple of days apart, and each piece of content, at least for our purposes, has been a long form video, where I'm teaching my highest level content. Really deep information. Incredibly valuable. The kind of things most people would pay for to go to a seminar. Insider information. By the way, all of that content needs to specifically relate to what it is we are doing a launch for.

In other words, if I were to do a launch for marketing impact, and in my content value videos I were teaching personality or what I means to be an introvert or an extrovert, that's very little to do with marketing impact.

Rather, I need to teach content that's incredibly valuable, and related to marketing your business on line. So in our follow up to that second meeting, that first meeting of course, again, was about our calendar. The second meeting is where we decide what exactly we think is best suited to deliver to our customers in our pre launch videos. How long those videos will be, what type of content we need to provide, and then even the specific details with regard to what will the call to action be at the end of each content video.

In our pre-launch videos, or our pre-launch week, we might release say, three long form videos. We'll decide what is the content of each one of those, the call to action and that call to action needs to be very specific to the content included in the long form video. But more importantly it needs to get people involved. Perhaps often overlooked, is the value of being able to use people's interaction in the form of a call to action. Give considerable attention to this part of your prelaunch planning by asking the right question in your first video. You'll get the type of interaction you are looking for. They're interaction will help you to provide exactly the information you need to captivate people and get them excited about tuning in to your second video.

The most difficult part of a launch is creating content that gets them to the point where they're excited about what they've learned, yet even more excited to watch the next video. So even though each video should be able to stand on it's own, the best and m well crafted launch videos will not only be able to stand on their own, but they will build excitement, anticipation and almost a need to watch the sequel or the follow up video, which will release just a few days later.

The key to a successful launch is to hold and maintain people's attention while at the same time educating them but get them to stay with you to the point where you release your sales video. So while some people plan all of that out in it's entirety, word for word scripted before their launch, I'm much more comfortable with taking my cues from my customers. I want to see how they respond to our questions, what they're saying about each content video and factor that in before creating our next video. In that week of videos that are released during prelaunch.

Let's call this second round of meetings our "prelaunch planning meetings." Now I think this is secret sauce information right here, right now. So lean forward and take some notes. I believe one of the reasons why we have had such tremendous success with our prelaunch videos not just in building our email list but converting those opt ins to sales, is because we make this very collaborative. We make it a habit of not only inviting every member of our team, but we invite over our best customers, our ideal customers, those who perhaps haven't yet bought our product, but we know they need it. We invite them into that process. We ask them, "What is it you need to learn?" "What is it you feel like you're struggling with?" "What is it that's most interesting to you?" "What would grab your attention and get you to opt in to something to learn for 30 minutes?"

During that collaboration, I take notes. I listen to what everyone has to say and ask tons of questions. Remember, you already know your product inside and out. To really get the edge, you have to understand what someone doesn't understand about your product. So the best way to do this is with a mini focus group. Just sit quietly, ask lots of questions, and take copious notes. By the end of this meeting, it's our goal to have figured out exactly which content we're going to teach in our first content videos, or our pre-launch videos.

Now, we do allow for some room for change. In other words, if we record that first video, and the response, the social proof from our audience tells us that we need to take a slightly different direction in video two or video three, we allow the flexibility to be able to do that.

Now, some people when they do a product launch they don't allow for that. Everything is scripted. They decide well in advance what will be taught, and in fact, they will record all of those videos, ask for feedback, ask for social proof, but they've already decided what the second, third and perhaps even the fourth video will include and they'll script them out and actually record them. Our hope at the end of this meeting, is that we've decided roughly what we're going to record in the second and third and perhaps the fourth video, but that we've allowed for some flexibility.

We select the content based on what we hear from our test group, people still are struggling with. What they want to learn. Or perhaps it's a piece of marketing impact or smart success that really makes a difference for people and by sharing this, they're going to want to join the academy. So we try to pick content to teach that is so incredibly valuable, that you might even yourself wonder, "Gosh, should you be giving this away to people who aren't already Academy members?"

The answer to that is "Yes." It's just a fine balance between teaching content that's incredibly valuable, but doesn't give away all of the details. Here's what I mean by that. We'll explain in theory how to do something, the steps, and just about everything you need except the nuts and bolts. The nuts and bolts, you have a choice. You can either join the academy and we will walk you through it, step by step with the expert teaching you, or you can figure this out on your own.

The honest truth is, those who are watching the video, even those who don't buy, need to walk away feeling like they got incredible value. They might not have every possible question answered, but they've got a good start. It will blow them away that it was free. Once we've outlined the general topics that we're going to teach in those first three to four videos, then what we do is we assign one staff member to find testimonials, our own students. Case studies, if you will. People who have actually applied these principals and had tremendous results. That provides social proof. It's also a way to verify and to prove to people that this stuff really works. Don't just take my word for it. Here are some students.

At the end of that meeting, we also start to schedule our first filming dates. We take into consideration how much research and prep time needs to be done before each video and make sure that all of our consultants are available for filming and editing.

Our next steps are to bullet point the content that we'll be teaching in that first content video. We also discuss, what do we want the setting to look like? I personally think that's pretty important. I mean, there's so many videos out there now, even teaching videos. So I'll ask myself and I'll ask my staff and the focus group that we've assembled, "What kind of videos capture your attention? What are you sick of seeing? What do you see and it makes you feel like it's probably going to be sales, so you tune out? What makes you pay attention?" Because videos trend, just like anything else. So for a while, everything was on an infinity white backdrop. Then you saw videos of marketers driving around in their cars. Yes, I'm embarrassed to say I did one of those videos, too. I thought it was revolutionary until I realized everybody was doing those videos.

Then for a while, we kind of started seeing people on kind of fake, almost blue screen sets and in cozy settings that looked like it could be their home, or it might be a movie set. I specifically like to pull up videos that have captured my attention, that I like to watch. Then I take into consideration my target audience. My target audience. My lifer. My avatar, if you will, is someone who is about my age, about my height, about my level of education, interested in many of the same things I am.

So I can use my own opinion to kind of shape what it is I want to see on video. I really like videos where I get a sense of who you are, where you live, and what's important to you. What your life is like. Just kind of have a little slice of lifestyle, and a little bit of personality, if you will.

We've done the infinity white backdrops many times, and I think they look professional if they're lit correctly. But now I'm tending to lean towards filming in my own home. Filming in my living room. In these last couple videos that we did, we actually filmed in the kitchen. Because I know my lifer most likely is a female about my age.

Now that doesn't necessarily mean that a 70 year old man in Australia is not going to be interested, but if I don't start with what I specifically want, it's really hard to figure out what to do. So don't be afraid of alienating someone. Just know your avatar. Know one person. Yes, others will be interested, too but if you try to please everybody, if you try to produce something that everyone's going to like to see, you'll end up missing the mark.

Think of yourself first, because you are probably very much like your avatar. Your lifer.

Chalene Johnson: Thanks for listening to this episode of "Build Your Tribe." This episode of "Build Your Tribe," is sponsored by you. Yes. You. Because of your help and your support. Because of your ratings and review. It is because of you that I am able to deliver this show. So I ask you to demonstrate that you're in this with me by going back to I Tunes or back to the place where you found this podcast for your Android, and offer other people a quick review on what they can expect from build your tribe. That is also how you are able to submit your name, your information, to be eligible for our monthly drawing.

Each month I select randomly one person, and we give them lifetime access to the marketing impact academy, as well as all the other bonuses. If you'd like to be considered for that opportunity, all you have to do is leave a review by going to I Tunes and giving us a rating as well. In your review, please be sure to use the hashtag, "I want MIA." That way, we'll be able to identify you and of course, as always, be honest.

Then lastly, please, don't use that hashtag unless you truly and honestly and wholeheartedly will use that scholarship. That means a lot to me. I want the scholarship each month to go to someone who needs it, who will use it. For me, that's everything.

I love you guys.