



SPI 356

Everything Behind the Launch of My New Invention – the SwitchPod

January 30, 2019

Pat Flynn: Fourteen-ish months later and here we are from idea to launch. I'm so scared. I'm so excited. This is something I've never done before. For those of you who don't know myself and my videographer, Caleb, we partnered up, we invented an actual physical product. This idea was conceptualized in October of 2017, and it just launched on Kickstarter. This is a big experiment. Some people have called it a big gamble, but Caleb and I are gonna talk about it and everything about it including how much money we spent in the process so far, what we hope to achieve out of this, where this idea came from, the entire prototyping process, and how we have been marketing this overtime to hopefully have a successful funding campaign.

We'll even answer questions like, well, why are we even funding it on Kickstarter and where is it gonna be manufactured and who even helped us with that process. Do we have any of that experience? The quick answer is no. Make sure you stick around and listen in on the entire process behind the SwitchPod right after the intro. Here we go.

Announcer: *Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later.*

Now, your host, he's patient except when it comes to getting food, Pat Flynn.

Pat: Hey, what's up team Flynn? Thank you so much for joining me today. This is session 356 of the SPI Podcast. Thank you so much for being here today. We got a great and special episode for you today taking you behind the scenes of a product idea and taking it all the way to launch and all the things that we hope to do with it. To join us and help us today is my partner on this project and this business because it is a separate business, Caleb Wojcik. We're just gonna get ready into it right now. Caleb Wojcik and I discuss SwitchPod. Caleb, what's up man? Welcome to the SPI Podcast. Thanks for being here today.

- Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. It's great to be back. I think it's been maybe my third time, fourth time? I don't know.
- Pat: I think so.
- Caleb Wojcik: You have a lot of episodes, but it's hard to keep track.
- Pat: This is gonna be a unique episode. We have a big thing that just went live today and many of you know who have been listening to this show that I have, along with Caleb invented a physical product and it's called [the SwitchPod](#). It's a tripod that's built specifically for vloggers and it is literally the day that this episode comes out is the day that, that thing goes live on Kickstarter. It's a big deal. How are you feeling right now with all this?
- Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. I mean, it's been a long process and we'll get into how long we've been working on it, but it's just nice to finally be able to see if people are willing to vote with their dollars, not just with words that we've heard in person or we see on Instagram or Twitter comments.
- Pat: Right. We have had a lot of positive excellent supported feedback along the way. We've started this journey, what was it October 2017?
- Caleb Wojcik: Yes.
- Pat: It is January 30th, 2019, and along the way, we've had a lot of great feedback, a lot of people saying that this is an invention that should have come out a long time ago, and it is something that is obviously a great solution for the problems that it solves. We're gonna talk about all those things, but I think I wanna start in the beginning, and take people and rewind, and bring people all the way back to why does this thing even exist and what were some of our first steps, who we got connected with. There are a lot of major players who have had a major role in the, just creation and development of this thing.

Not just to give them a shoutout, but to understand and hopefully help you understand the process that we went through and we're gonna over costs, we're gonna go over a lot of lessons that we learned things that we would probably do differently. Then of course we would hopefully have you be interested enough to go to switchpod.co to . . . At the time of the Kickstarter campaign that domain will go to the Kickstarter page and then afterwards if you're listening to this in the future, it will take you to a page of some kind too.

We're not even there yet. We just launched, and it's just so exciting and there's still so many things left to do, but you're right. I'm excited to get people to vote with their dollars hopefully and we'll talk about our funding goals, how much this thing is actually going to cost and it's not cheap which is the benefit of doing digital products because digital products which is the world where I come from and live, you don't have molding and tooling costs, and product testing and compliance—

Caleb Wojcik: The shipping.

Pat: . . . cost, shipping and packaging. It's a lot, so we're gonna break it down for you. Caleb, why don't you take us back to, because it was really your first words that really started this whole thing at a conference called back in October 2017 so let's paint the picture for them and set up how this all even started.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. I always hear people that are giving business advice or product advice or just talking about inventing something and it's always find something that is a problem for people, a frustration and it doesn't have to be something huge, just something minor. We're at this conference where there are a lot of YouTubers, vloggers people that film themselves for a living or for at least a hobby, and just seeing what they were using the tool that they were using to hold their camera out in front of themselves.

It's an advance or heavy duty version of a selfie stick because people have bigger cameras. They have microphones on them and

high quality lenses and everything. The tool I was seeing and we were seeing everyone using that weekend and what we've seen online people using. It just wasn't invented for that. It was made for a different purpose. It was made to wrap around tree branches and railings and things like that. I think I turned to you and I said, "There's got to be a better way. There's just got to be somebody with a product that can make a better solution for this issue that people are having."

Pat: We had this issue too. I mean, I had this product in my hand and I just looked around and I looked at my hands and I was like, "I hate this thing." For those of you who are like, "What product is this?" You've probably seen it before. It's called a GorillaPod by a company named JOBY who's built this amazing thing that has these flexible legs that looks like a bunch of balls connected to each other for a tripod and you can wrap it around a tree and it's flexible. You can move it around.

This is the tool and the product that all these vloggers turned into this more advanced looking selfie stick. What they do is they put the legs together and then they bend it in a way that makes it almost look like a J or an L and then they use to that to extend the camera out a little bit further so that they have a wider angle and then when they want to go back to setting the camera down they either take the legs and spread them out again and then put the camera down like a normal tripod, or the sin, if you will that I always see is they just are too lazy to do that and they just put the camera down and actually put pressure and the weight on the lens and on the camera which is a very common thing to do.

We're just like, "Oh my gosh. There should be a better way to do this." We weren't considering that we would ever be the people to create a solution for this problem, but it did verify that while there's all these people using this product that is under-serving this community, and then you I think, you had some . . . We just started having conversations about it, and I think that's where all entrepreneurs should start with the problems that they see.

What I love, and I wanna give a big shout-out to Tom and Dan from [Studio Neat](#) who we met much later in the process. We're gonna talk a little bit as well who has given us inspiration along the way. I interviewed them [on the podcast](#) not too long ago. They're from Studio Neat. Their entire business is building physical products on Kickstarter and what I love about what they say is they just say, "Look for the little frictions in your life and that's where a lot of people can find opportunities to create solutions, and this was our little friction that we were focusing on and having conversations about. Eventually you said something like what if the legs just came together and became a handle. Is that how it started?"

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. It was just talking through what would enable you to do the two different roads you need which is to hold the camera out in front of you, kind of an extension of your arm and then just set it down in a tripod mode to either not be using it or to filming yourself in tripod mode because the GorillaPod takes forever to change between those two modes and that's the most frustrating part. Even people at the top of the game of vlogging, so someone like Casey Neistat who has been vlogging for years now, he still has his camera fall over he sets it up in tripod mod or Peter McKinnon just had a video recently where he talked about him breaking a lens because the GorillaPod in tripod mode fell over and the lens fell like four feet under the ground and broke a lens that cost over a thousand dollars. A product, a tool that doesn't do what it needs to do, that's just what I was thinking through is like how would it do the two main things that someone needs to do.

Pat: Yeah. It's almost like . . . It was cool that we saw people making their own solution for their needs so for vloggers which is sort of a new thing since Casey put on the map and a lot of people are on YouTube now. Vloggers have just sort of taken on to this tool that wasn't built for them but made it their own. I think that's where if you find people using products in interesting new ways, those are also great places to look for opportunities where then you can then go to those people and ask them questions, and understand more about why they're using that thing in that way instead of what it was really intended for, and then begin to start to think about how you

can create a better solution.

From there, we just . . . I don't know if it was divine intervention or what, but at this conference, and actually we were invited to this conference by a guy named Richie Norton who's been on the show a couple times before. He has a company called Prouduct. It's a combination of proud and product, Prouduct and his company builds physical products for entrepreneurs of all kinds. You think it up, you can go figure out how to build it if an engineering team, product development team, all those kinds of things. Of course, us, we're like, we wouldn't even know where to start. Richie just walks by, and I couldn't believe it. It was crazy, right?

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. It was pretty random that he walked up in that moment of ideation of trying to figure out what would we would do to fix this and he basically at one point was like, "Let's do it."

Pat: Yeah, I know and I was like, "Wait, what?"

Caleb Wojcik: From there, it just went from there. Yeah.

Pat: Our first process was to really just understand what would this thing look like? I think a lot of us can internalize the idea of a solution of some kind for whatever problems exist out there, whatever little frictions happen to be there, but to actually materialize it and turn it into something that we can then take and to actually test is really the next proper step. I found this to be the case when I was even doing digital products, or I still am doing digital products but apps and courses and stuff.

You can tell somebody, "Oh, wouldn't be great if there was an app that did this?" Sure. You're thinking about the solution and what life might be like after that convenience is there but the true entrepreneur thinks about, "Okay. Well, how do we get to that solution? What kinds of iterations need to happen or what might that actually look like? I took out a sketchpad or paper and I just started drawing. It was really crude, and didn't make sense, but

then things start to happen. You start to come out with different concepts.

Then through Richie and Proudct who we were very happy to work with, we got to know a man who works there named Cole, who is their engineer. I think this is where a lot of people especially with physical products they go, Well, I have this idea but I don't even . . . I wouldn't know how to build this. I wouldn't know how to create this.

First of all, when we started working with Cole, we got just essentially prototypes which is always the right process. Prototypes just to get a feel for the size and just the shape of this thing. We all also offered him a number of measurements related to how we and others use the GorillaPod so we actually have tape measures and measured the angles and this is how people seem to be shaping it because we wanted ours to be a permanent shape instead of one that was more flexible.

Part of that was like, "Well, we would be losing the capability to wrap this thing around the pole." Is that something people actually do? What did we do? We had conversations. I know I never did that, but I wasn't sure if that was something that people actually did with this thing. I don't know if we have an exact percentage, Caleb, but it actually maybe 99.9% of people who have one of these flexible tripods but they don't use it to wraparound anything. They use it for holding their camera up and placing it down but that's it.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. No one really said that they . . . They maybe done it once or twice, but on average it's really just vlogging mode and tripod mode not wraparound a tree mode or suspend from somewhere mode.

Pat Flynn: Right. What were some of our next steps there after conceptualizing a version of an idea? We got measurements to Cole and just helped conceptualize what we were thinking but I didn't quite yet know it was all going to work mechanically. I'm not sure if you did either at that point.

Caleb Wojcik: No. It was really just an idea and a conversation that we had that then Cole with an engineer kind of brain and experience, took from us telling him, “Okay. What are the key features? What’s most important to you?” We gave him words like speed is important. Strength is important. Lightweight is important. He took those things into the more technical shaping design material, functional part of engineering these different prototypes that he would 3D print in different materials and ship them to us, and we would be able to hold them and give them feedback, and got to see him in person a couple times over the development of this too to really give feedback through the process.

The main thing was just giving us idea out of our head starting to actually make something physical to hold and that took many iterations to get through to what we have now, I think, at least 10 to 12 months of prototyping has happened in this entire process with, I don’t know how many different types of versions but at least 10 different versions of shapes and materials and sizes that we’ve tried to. It’s just been a long process to get that out of our head into a physical shape and sharing it with other people.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, if you wanna see what this thing looks like, if you go to switchpod.co, you’ll be able to see a video and some images there, and some comparisons as well, but for those of you who are still having some trouble understanding how this works essentially if you imagine a tripod, we can essentially fold the legs together. They spin and then all turn into one handle. If you imagine like a selfie stick that’s a little bit thicker than the ones you see like Disneyland or whatever, that one handle can then be broken and it spirals out into the three legs again, and it can just switch back and forth between those two things.

Something that you said that was really important were the rules that we gave our engineer or the parameters and I think that’s really important too because if we just went we want the strongest tripod for vloggers to use, well then you could potentially create the strongest tripod ever but it might be 50 pounds. We need to have some specific rules and a lot of those rules were informed by our

needs as videographers and vloggers.

Both Caleb and I have a YouTube channel and do a lot of videos, but also especially the conversations we have with people at that event and Richie and a lot of the other team members on Proudct Jace are all also videographers. We just put ourself in that world and try to get in their heads, and extract as much information as possible. That's what created this really high level, but ground rules for, "Okay, Cole. Here are the rules. Go create this, and it needs to do this in these rules."

We got an iteration back and it was like pretty eye opening to see this thing could actually work but it's not quite there yet. I love to discuss these iterations that we've had over time, Caleb and what we're some of the major big decisions that we made and perhaps we can start with maybe the first working prototype that we had where it actually did open and close. There was some things on there that were unexpected that we decided to remove. Do you remember what those things were?

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. As we started to make physical prototypes that actually would function and weren't just you have to imagine when you're holding it, but actually the tripod legs open, you could put a camera on top of it, one of the things that we started to notice was as you add features or as you add things that you think you need, you also add complexity to it which is, A, going to increase the price, B, going to increase the chance that it's going to break and that latter one is what actually happened. We had these little clips that as you open the tripod legs, they would clip into place.

We're using 3D printed, not final materials so just like molded plastic that comes out of a fancy printer, and those clips would just break. At some point I think you were just like this is not going to work. If it's breaking out, it's gonna break after six months or 12 months or something like and we wanted to make something that's going to last, that's going to be something you can invest in and use for years. Then that influenced back into the engineering side. Okay, how can we still have the legs open, stay in place, but not

necessarily have these clips?

That led to using magnets. Each of our decisions during this design process of getting physical prototypes using them ourselves, showing other people, letting them use them getting ideas from people, all of that influence the final prototype that we have now that were then going to try to sell.

Pat Flynn:

Right. The way that it works is that now when it opens, it's not a clip that then locks those legs into place in tripod mode, but they're actual magnets that are hidden inside the mechanism that still give you that feeling of it being locked but is actually there's . . . You have one magnet instead of four or five pieces including a spring and small plastic parts. We were able to actually extrapolate that likely we would save 5 to \$10 per unit just because of that change alone which was pretty amazing. That might not be exact but those numbers do add up especially when your order numbers are in the thousands to tens of thousands of units if this thing were to actually go and be live.

Then it was like, "Okay. Well, we have these magnets that keep them open, but when they're close like what happens then? How do we keep it close?" We have some debates on it'll be close but your hands will be on it. You don't necessarily need another mechanism to lock them and to place when the handles are together because your hand would be doing that. However it was through a lot of conversations with other people that had us determine, it still needed a little bit of stickiness so that when you were holding the thing.

What we ended up doing was we would go to events and go to people, other videographers and just give it to them, and just like not even prime them with any questions about it. We just wanted to hear what they would say. We ended up discovering for this particular part that we're talking about that when people would just hold it, not actually using the camera but holding it to their side and what not, the legs were opening in moments where you didn't really want it to even though it was closed.

That informed, “Okay. Well, how might we be able to use the same magnets because it will be cheaper if we just use the same magnets on the feet?” Then another decision that was informed by our use was like, “Okay. We’ll let’s put in tripod mode and put on a table.” Wow, it’s very slippery. It need some grit. Those are the kinds of things that at the end of the process, you’re like, “Of course it needs some rubber or something to keep it sticking to the platform that it’s on.”

When you’re in the building process like it’s those little things that often get missed, and so we then have an exploration on different solutions for the grip and we explored grip that was part way up the whole entire legs. It was also added for handgrip to spray on rubber to little tiny dots to other things and we ended up with a really beautiful solution that’s shown in some images that really has a nice little rubber foot inlay into the actual metal itself. The materials is a whole another thing. Caleb, would you like to discuss just materials and then how that informed pricing and some of the options that we explored?

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. As far as materials we obviously don’t know anything about what kind of aluminum or what kind of plastic or what have you. That’s not our specialty. We know HTML and email sequencing, and how to edit videos, and all those digital stuff that is not in this physical world of product development. This was another opportunity for us to lean on Proudct and TFN who knows a lot of this stuff along with Cole about all of the physical aspects and materials to be used. We tried a bunch, and we tried using a lighter weight plastic that would give you the benefits of being lightweight.

Maybe it wasn’t strong and rigid enough so some of those prototypes could hold the camera but the heavier your camera, the flimsier it would be, and that’s just not the kind of product we wanted to make. Through iterations and through testing and through feedback, we got closer and closer to the material we want to use in aluminum alloy and metal alloy so that you get the strength and you get the lightweight part of it. This whole process of all these features you just mentioned like the finger groove is all the

way up, the magnet is on the inside to have it snap into place into tripod mode.

The magnets to keep the three legs together. All of those things, the grooves, the rubber feet at the bottom to make it not slide, all of that stuff came from testing using it and showing it to people and whether you're doing a physical product where it's maybe a little bit easier to just hand something to somebody or you're doing digital stuff like a website or an app or maybe even a course. Until you get other people that don't know it as well as you, to know exactly how, "Oh, when you pick it up, you're gonna hold it like this. The legs are gonna open like this."

When you just hand it to somebody fresh, that's what it's gonna be like when a customer sees your product for the first time or tries to use it for the first time. Getting that anonymous feedback from strangers that have . . . They don't have to be nice to you because they're your friend, they're your family members, something like that. That's just a really good way to make sure that what you're making is going to make sense to people and work for them.

Pat Flynn: Exactly. Now, the total cost for the development of this which is just everything from the engineering to the prototyping and all those kinds of things before and we'll get into molds and what that means which is a little bit more specific on the physical product development side but it costs us . . . I'm looking at the numbers here, \$27,500. That's how much money we've invested into just the process of creating something that we believe is and actually have tested via actually handing it to people so you know it's not just like we built something and showed it to people.

What we have is the final version of a number of tests that we are investing. Some people, they might go, Well, it's kind of a gamble isn't it? It is, but we feel like that. We've stacked the odds heavily in our favor with the research process and the conversations that we've had. We've also hopefully positioned ourselves, marketing wise to gain some exposure and we'll talk about that in the second half of the conversation here, but all in all about 27, \$28,000 for just

a total development cost.

Caleb Wojcik: Can I touch on some of the breakdown or how that's been spent?
Just a little bit.

Pat Flynn: Please.

Caleb Wojcik: I think it's important to know that when I first had that idea standing next to you and Richie came up and he was like, "Hey, let's do it. It's gonna take 14 or 15 months. Just give me \$30,000 right now, and we'll make it." That probably would not have happened.

Pat Flynn: I would not have been attracted to that?

Caleb Wojcik: Right. You have to think that we took this step by step to validate this as an idea to see if it was something we wanted to do so the first part of that money was spent on engineering and feedback and some of the early prototypes. Way further down the road was incorporating a business to protect this thing, getting a utility provisional patent paid for. It's like all along the process there where stages were we basically had to go no go like do we wanna keep doing this? This is how much it's gonna cost to keep doing this? Yes, let's keep going.

Throughout each of those stages if we would have gotten more negative feedback or not been excited about it ourselves or not gotten a chance to show it to people in person and get a response of, "How much is it gonna be? When is it gonna come out? I wanna buy this." If we hadn't gotten those types of feedback from people, we probably would have stopped before this much money was spent. About half of that was spent on the team so engineering team, development of it, management of the manufacturing, stuff like that.

The other half strictly to prototypes because we've made so many prototypes and we know have four, final prototypes so that there's enough for us to take product photography with different cameras

on them or to give them to some influencers that we'll talk about later. That spending was not an all in one decision. It's been an incremental thing where we could have turned it off at any time and walked away.

Pat Flynn:

Right. Exactly. If we go all the way back to the start, the total cost to test the idea initially is zero dollars. It was literally conversations and that's something that we can all do because it doesn't cost any money. For a lot of you who are like, "How do I start a business? I don't have any money." You don't need money right away. Sometimes with your idea, you might even have people pay you to go and get it developed because your idea is so great. That's where a lot of businesses especially digital related ones that even use Kickstarter or pre-sell that gives you a lot of funding upfront to then develop the thing that you have made a lot of people excited about which is really cool.

You don't have to spend a lot. Some of our first iterations which were just little cut pieces of plastic which didn't move at all, I mean, those are fairly cheap and anybody can do that. I think a lot of cities now especially major cities have access to or larger commercial size like 3D printer areas. A lot of 3D printers that people see are the ones that can print something like the size of a marble and that's it. There are a lot of companies out there now who will if you have somebody engineer a CAD file, they will then print it out for you and then you can actually see it, and touch it, and hold it, and show it, and get feedback already.

Even if it doesn't work, it's still something that people can see and play with and give you some amazing feedback that you can take and then move forward with. Thank you for sharing that because it was definitely an iterative process. It wasn't all 27,500 upfront. It was all a result of, "Yeah, let's keep going. Yes, we're getting great feedback. Yes, we'll make those changes." Actually to further that, a chunk of the prototyping cost is a result of us landing on some really good finalized versions that we just wanted to have more prototypes of.

We didn't need those but we wanted them for the purpose of having two so that Caleb and I both had one at an event or these influencers that we have been so blessed to have some conversation with to give it to them so that perhaps one day they might actually use it and endorse it in some way shape or form. Thank you for sharing that because that's a really important part of the process.

The way physical products work which is really interesting is that . . . And this isn't all physical products. This is obviously people creating physical products on Etsy. We're talking about highly manufactured things that you can at some point in time have manufactured on a line of some kind. In order to do that, if you were to sell so many units of something and you just want that many made by a machine or factory process, from our understanding you have to think about creating molds and molds are essentially if you think of a mold or something you then pour something into it to create the item in a much more rapid sequence.

Instead of grabbing a large chunk of metal and then carving out by hand, like the shape of this thing. You can actually can create a mold to then pour a substance of some kind that then hardens into the product itself whether it's a plastic or an aluminum alloy or zinc alloy or whatever the final material may be and they each have . . . Things are cheaper than others and other things are more expensive. That's again a lot of decisions that I didn't know I would have to make because initially I thought this thing was gonna be just a nice higher level sort of plastic but we've landed on an aluminum alloy based on the feel and the look of it and the shine and all those kinds of things.

Molds are expensive and for each part that you have in the process, you need a new mold. We were looking for ways to remove the number of mold we needed. I mean, there was at one point where we had a conversation on can we make all three legs the exact same? Which would be amazing because then we would just need one mold.

Caleb Wojcik: Instead of three.

Pat Flynn: Instead of three which would be a significant savings but unfortunately because of the way that the SwitchPod works each one is actually different mostly at the top portion where it connects to the others sort of like a little puzzle. We have three puzzle pieces each that are a little but different unfortunately but it's just the nature of the way that this thing works and that we would want it to be for the end user. In total what's gonna happen is we have What we have called the center leg, the right leg and the left leg. Those are each separate molds. Each costing \$15,000.

If we would want to have this thing manufactured, before paying for any one single unit we would have to have this molds created. \$15,000 each for each of the legs, 7,500 for the mounting plate and the knob, the mold for that is about 6,200 and there's some testing involved. All in all to get the molds created to then begin to stamp out these things is gonna cost \$63,000 or about \$64,000. In our head, we're like, "Wow. Even before we sell one in order to even produce one, we would need \$64,000 plus then the unit price after that. The numbers are mindboggling when it comes to something like this. I'm sure it's relatively simple compared to like say creating an iPod or an iPhone or something.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. I always think of that comparing this to a television or a laptop or something that has so many more pieces. We're talking five molds here and some magnets. It is about the extent of what ours is and a screw, and just thinking about how complex it is to make other inventions or products.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. It makes me appreciate the things that I see around me a lot more when I understand, "Wow. This is . . ." I understand the process of how this might have been ideated prototyped and then manufactured and all the materials and just what that might look like. Speaking of what it looks like, we . . . Again, working with the amazing team at Proudct and Richie, and TFN, and Jace over there. Richie and TFN went to China to scope out a lot of the contact that they have there for a place that could then manufacture these things.

Where things are manufactured is an interesting topic that came up in conversation as well because obviously I think ideally especially Americans we are very prideful in products that are made in America but then initially I was like, “I want it made in America, because I just want it that way.” I wanna keep things in-house if you will, but when it comes to the numbers, and now I understand why products are made in China. It’s just so much more economical. This would not be able to be something that our target audience would be able to afford if it was made in America in the way that we really we would want it to be made.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. That’s a tough decision.

Pat Flynn: It is.

Caleb Wojcik: It comes down to what do we think someone is willing to pay for this and what can we get it made for. If it’s not possible to get it made for that price so there is at least some profit margin so that we don’t go out of business just based on this one product. Then that’s a tough decision you have to make.

Pat Flynn: We’ve kick-started this obviously. We’ve said it earlier and there are specific funding goals that are more front-facing for the audience and which can give us some really good media and marketing but we do have internal goals for how much we hopefully are going to sell. of course just thank you in advance for anybody and everybody who has supported this some way shape or form whether you’d become a backer and got one or get a few so you can give some away or even just sharing the campaign. Again, Switchpod.co is where you can go to check this out and hopefully just see how it’s going overtime.

I’m gonna be very interested in . . . I think the most interesting thing is just me and Caleb honestly. We have ideas of how well this has been received but we have no idea how this will perform on Kickstarter. We haven’t done a physical product like this one, Kickstarter. I’ve done a book on Kickstarter and I know Caleb, you filmed Kickstarter videos before that it performed very well but who

knows what's gonna happen but would you like to speak on what an ideal situation would be for us beyond the pipe dream of let's have it earn \$5 million and be set.

Realistically what are our goals if you don't mind sharing? What are we hoping for? I think this will be a fun transparent before picture and then we can come back together at some point in the future and talk about, "Here's how it went and here's what we probably should have done," which I'm sure there's gonna be some of that but I'm also expecting a lot of, "Wow. This went really well or beyond expectation.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah I see it as a flowchart in my mind of, "Okay. Do we get the funding goal, yes or no?" If no, this idea either dies or we go back to the drawing board and try something else. If yes then we're on the hook to make these for that group of backers. Then above that, it's, "Okay. If we barely get funded, maybe we only make enough for that group and then a little bit . . . Maybe a few hundred more or a thousand more or something like that. If it goes beyond that and we can then invest in not only producing enough to fund the 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 people that bought it so far but maybe bill up inventory a little bit to make five or 10,000 of these, then we have a different kind of business at that point after the Kickstarter of no we have to continue to market and continue to sell this thing.

If it blows up even more in a good way, maybe we'll have potential companies coming to us that want to buy the idea, and by the business from us and that's why we were specific about making this a separate business from both of our existing businesses as well as getting the utility patent to make sure that we own this idea and the thing we've come up with so that if we did want to sell this to another company that has more of a team, has more experience making products or tripods specifically then that would be another option for us. There are bunch of different directions this could go and you and I think like to talk about the potentials of would we sell this or how much could this make?

Pat Flynn: Yes. We've had that conversation.

Caleb Wojcik: Could this fail? Until the Kickstarter launches, until people start voting with dollars we don't know for sure so it's hard for me to sometimes live in the present but we've just been trying to control what we can control which is make the launch a success, do everything we can in our power to do that and see where it goes.

Pat Flynn: See where it goes. I'm optimistic. I usually am, and I think we've done a lot of hard work prior to this time to set up the Kickstarter campaign for success. Some people might be wondering well, why Kickstarter? I think for me it's a couple of things. Number one, and I'll let you speak to this as well. Number one, there are clear costs involve that we hypothetically could put our own money into but the nice thing about Kickstarter is the validation portion of this.

We can know that a specific number for example. We will have money to support the molds and the testing and the manufacturing costs and then deliver this product to people should we meet those specific goals. The other portion of Kickstarter that's amazing to me is that I think it's a very great platform for a product like this. We've had some people who are experts in Kickstarter to say that like it's a product that is set up to do potentially well. Will it? We'll see, but video and electronic related. This isn't electronic. There's no electronic components but it is related to videography and people in that niche tend to spend quite a bit of money on helping make their lives easier and tend to share a lot of things with each other and are just sometimes shopaholics when it comes to the latest and greatest, when it comes to camera and video related stuff and accessories.

That plus I just think this is a beautiful solution for this pain. To me Kickstarter is a great platform for those specific reasons and because it's not a branded to Pat Flynn or branded to Caleb Wojcik although we have shared this to our channels obviously, and here we are sharing it on SPI like you'll notice in the Kickstarter video, we don't show up even until the end. This isn't a, "Hi. My name is Casey Neistat creating a product I think you should all buy here." This is, "Hey, videographers. This is the solution that you need. We are creators just like you."

Then at the end we show our faces, and talk a little bit about the story, but it is product in hope . . . It's hopefully gonna be something that when people see go, yes. I want that. In person, when we've showed it to people, that's what they've said, and we're hoping to amplify that with Kickstarter because they seem to be all connected on there. Caleb, any thoughts on Kickstarter specifically? Then I love to talk about just specific things we've done for marketing along the way.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. Like I was saying earlier, having a place where people can vote with dollars before we make an even bigger investment than what we've already made money and time wise is just the point that we're at with this. If we were a product company and we're used to making products and had more capital to just make it, based on the feedback that I've gotten from people and us talking to people, I'm fairly confident that this would sell, but because we want that stop gap of is this going to actually work? Are people going to actually pay for it? That's where Kickstarter comes in for me. I think that not only is it good for validating an idea and raising funds but it's also just a good marketing platform that people are used to buying stuff at, used to shopping at.

It's not quite Amazon but people are used to backing products and waiting months to receive it because they're a part of the story now. They're a part of the journey of us bringing this thing to life and we discount it at a certain price for the early backers and bring them along with the journey and something I hope to do as this gets funded is introduce more of the product team to the backers and go to the manufacturing plants and show the people that are making it, and show the stacks of thousand of the SwitchPods that we have. I think Kickstarter is a great place for that especially if you're willing to share stuff, be transparent and take them along for the journey as a creator.

Pat Flynn: Absolutely. I love this community aspect of Kickstarter as well versus if we were to just plop this on to Amazon, but going back to what you said earlier if we did have a lot of working capital, if we were a company that has done this for a long time, and we've

had a lot of time to experiment, and try, and learn, I mean, in an ideal world if I had a magic wand and money was not an issue or a thought, we would have these units already available. Whether or not we would use Kickstarter or not, I'm not sure but if people were to buy they would get it sooner.

Also, for marketing purposes, we would have several that we could share with influencers and to shift them and show them, and get them to hopefully all coordinate in some way shape or form that, "Hey, film a video about this. We've given this to you for free." This is called influencer marketing. It's understanding that there are many people out there who have raving fans who will buy whatever they say to buy. If we had more SwitchPods, we would probably most of them away to influencers but because of the costs of the prototype which each one costs about \$2,000 of the final versions that are aluminum and what not, it just didn't make sense financially for us to do that.

We've had to take a little bit more of a smarter relationship based approach to the influencers that we've connected with. We are thankful that we also have some channels with some wide ranging audiences. All of Caleb's audience is in the videography space on his YouTube channel and his brand. A certain percentage of mines are. Some of you might be listening to this and maybe very interested in the product because you are a videographer or somebody who films videos for business even.

We have audiences already which has been very helpful but we've been able to in person create a lot of new relationships by putting ourselves where those people who may be interested in this product would be which is [VidCon](#), [VidSummit](#), other video places. We've created an [Instagram channel](#) and other things to hopefully help, but those are some of the things just on a high level that we have been thinking about in terms of marketing. Yes, there will be ads and those kinds of things as well, but Caleb any other thoughts on marketing or sides of it that we should talk about?

Caleb Wojcik: I think one thing that I really spend a lot of time making sure that I do right and we're doing right with SwitchPod is how we are interacting with people that have large audiences. Influencer is the word that's used for that and I have a very specific way that I think people should be treated as influencers. I'm sure you get it all the time. I get emails from people that basically want me to promote their product for whatever reason. I think there is a proper way to approach people to work with them and to make it a symbiotic relationship instead of you're gonna help me and this is why kind of thing.

As we've been fortunate enough to be at conferences or events where there are bigger influencer people that we would love to work with, give them a SwitchPod and if they like it ideally, share it with their audience. You and I have both been very careful about how we manage those relationships.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, super sensitive.

Caleb Wojcik: There's a few different touch points along the way. The first one is just how you get introduced to somebody. I think it's really important when you're at an event and there's a big name person and they give their talk. You can get in line after they talk and try to give them a pitch or whatever, show them whatever you've made or ask them for something, but that kind of puts you in a specific category of person and it puts you in the fan zone already.

If your first interaction with whoever it is you wanna work with is as a fan and asking for something. That's immediately in my position going to put someone on the defensive versus if you can get an introduction with somebody they already know at a time and place that's not with everyone so maybe that's a speaker dinner or something like that, one conference we were at or it's like a VIP speaker hangout thing one of the nights. They're less on guard to their fans of millions of people that might be at this conference.

If you're introduced by somebody that can vouch for you in a way of, "Hey, you should check out this thing. It's really cool," That

already gives you a step up and then you usually get more time to if you're in a line trying to show someone a product or something like that. You might have 20 or 30 seconds, but if you're at a chill event or you're sitting or you're standing and talking to them, you may get four or five minutes.

We've had a couple of examples of that with high profile people that we would love to give them a SwitchPod. Eventually maybe they'll promote it, but if we've come from this position of, "You have to use this or this is this thing." Instead of service of making the best product that they would want to use, and showing it to them while we're developing it and being very careful about the launch part of it of then potentially sharing it with their audience, I just think that's really important because I think that a lot of companies do it wrong because they want the numbers or they want the reach and that's just something I personally though this process been very careful about how I'm working with a "influencer" or even my friends that have big audiences than I do.

Pat Flynn:

In the same way, I've become very . . . Maybe even overly hypersensitive about that especially with bigger names that I am thankful that I have access to which is cool because I am also a speaker at a lot of these events or I get invited to these exclusive parties and what not but I mean, it could be so simple for me to go, "Hey, giant YouTuber check this out. That's just not the impression I wanna make. In an ideal world I would be introduced by somebody who is a friend of that person already because then you are light years ahead of where you would be if you were to just starting cold, so it's number one.

Number two, never making it about me, and even if you did have a product and you were wanting to share it coming at it from a place of check this thing out that I think is gonna really be helpful for you because I've seen and I've seen some of the issues you've had with other things and you are a huge inspiration for helping me create this and I hope that you like it kind of thing versus, "Hey, it'll be so awesome if you were to promote this and share it, even mention it in a video. We'll make you an affiliate."

People at that level aren't necessarily caring too much about making more money. They care about their people and having fun and enjoying life and I think that a lot of life for those influencers are filtering out the massive amounts of inquiries that they're getting every single day from people who have similar end goals but varying approaches. This is why we likely have yet to even mention any names of those high profile influencers because I don't wanna abuse that, and I don't wanna . . . It takes just a moment to ruin a relationship sometimes.

Caleb Wojcik: I think if you look at the life span or the potential of the relationship or then using your product to recommending your book or what have you, in the long-term I would rather have less people involved that actually liked the product and are promoting it in an authentic way versus a transactional promotional affiliate kind of thing. This is your philosophy with affiliate marketing. Use the product, recommend it to people if you've enjoyed it and if you didn't or don't use the product then don't recommend it. To me, when we had interactions with certain influencers to get feedback or to show them the product, we could have immediately posted a behind the scenes photo with that person or posted B roll or footage of them testing it or what have you.

Pat Flynn: It would have added a lot of credibility for sure.

Caleb Wojcik: Right. It immediately starts to be like, "Oh, this person is looking at her. This person is talking about it," but to me it's much more valuable that in six to 12 months from now they use it and it's linked below every one of their videos because they linked to the gear that they used or what have you, and that they actually liked the product. That is more important to me than any shortcut, social media share. Gary Vaynerchuk used this word recently in a video like leverage-preneuring like getting next to popular people and leveraging that for your own good. I don't think that that's what I ever want to do. It's just something I'm very cautious of and I think you and I are on the same page with this of being friends with these people first and servicing them with the product before expecting anything.

Pat Flynn: Absolutely. I think the listeners know that that's my style as well. I'm just thankful we're having this conversation now especially early in the year, early in the life of SwitchPod and I'm just so thankful that we kept going with it. It's been really fun along the way. I think to finish off, I love to hear what you think after I go about what has been your most favorite part about this process so far? Hopefully, the future favorite part is when either [inaudible 00:54:37] influence started. They start to naturally and organically use this and find it and promote it and this becomes a really big thing, and we crushed the Kickstarter campaign and it gets bought out or whatever.

Those would be really amazing moments, but I think the most amazing moment so far have been actually during the testing rounds, and the new iterations that we've received after collecting feedback. It's always been amazing to receive a new 3D printed prototype or a new iteration in the mail after having collected feedback because it just proves that we are headed in the right direction. Every iteration has been getting better. We have made it iterations of like, "Let's try this, and then we get feedback and we're like, "All right. That didn't work so let's go back and change this other thing."

My ultimate favorite part so far has been direct connections with people who have seen a prototype whether it's a 3D plastic printed one or are more fine-tuned aluminum one and just watching their reactions. When they say things like, "Of course, or why didn't I think of that," to me it's not just like, "Oh, this is a good sign that this thing is gonna sell." To me it's like we're helping people here, and that feels amazing to me and to do it in a complete new niche for me is doubly amazing because I am not a known videographer per se although I do have videos but I'm excited to continue to serve in different ways, and this is like a big new way that I'm able to do it, so that's been the fun part for me.

Caleb Wojcik: I would echo that. I think that's been my favorite part too of just being in person with people whether that's at VidCon, with one of our first prototypes where you're just standing there flipping it open and closing it really fast, and someone just walks by and

goes, “What is that? Where can I get one of those?” It’s like, “You can’t. We invented it. It’s not out yet. Here’s a business card.” That’s always a fun interaction but just getting that real life feedback from somebody or them holding it for the first time or maybe them going like, “Oh, yeah,” or some reaction to it, that’s been the best part for me of making a physical product that I haven’t made before compared to you launch a course and you get some retweets. It’s just a different feeling in person to get feedback like that.

Pat Flynn: That being said, you can get that kind of feedback with digital products. I mean, first of all apps and software is much easier because a person has been struggling to do a thing this way for so long. You give him a solution and it’s done in seconds. “Ooh, wow. Yes, I would pay for this. I need this in my life.” A digital course is a little but different and so where I think there are many comparisons however to the process we just talked about is the conversational part, the iterations and what are you iterating on. What’s your prototype? Your prototype is your outline and the kinds of things that you need to be talking about.

Most entrepreneurs who are building online courses do is many are now finally starting to understand how important research is but then they do the research and they spend all this time creating and then they ship it where as I think there is a lot of opportunity for a lot of things to happen in between where a lot of ooh’s and ah’s can come, but also a lot of, “not so much,” which can help influence with the final product become. Now, people on the digital space have the blessing of being able to more quickly change something than a physical product like ours here but I think that you can find if you give yourself the opportunity those kinds of reactions too.

Caleb Wojcik: Yeah, for sure. You can do the similar process as we’ve been doing. You can have a coming soon page. You can build that buzz. You can pre-sell a course or a program or what have you just like we’re doing through Kickstarter and then actually make it, but I think it’s just been more fun to do a physical product, but it’s also been-

Pat Flynn: It’s been really cool.

- Caleb Wojcik: . . . way more expensive.
- Pat Flynn: It's taken definitely a lot longer than I thought it was going to take. We are 14 months-ish in the process and finally have it now launched. The Kickstarter campaign is gonna be open for 60 days. I know you've been putting a lot of effort into the page. Do you have anything people should know before they go to the page and just how long is it gonna be up and things to look out for there?
- Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. We're doing a 60-day campaign which is the longest you can do it and I've been deep diving into the Kickstarter world and researching best practices and that Cole conversation is probably better suited for after we actually do the campaign and learn even more but just know that there are a lot of resources out there for how to run a Kickstarter campaign and our page we're trying to incorporate some of the best practices of all of those.
- Pat Flynn: Yeah. Go ahead and check it out, switchpod.co. If the campaign has ended, that website will likely bring you to wherever it is going to be sold which we haven't quite discussed and nailed down yet. Also, you could likely find the . . . Eventually you'll find the Kickstarter campaign link which lives on, on the show notes page for this episode. Thank you all for listening. I appreciate you, switchpod.co. Make sure to follow [Caleb on YouTube](#) and all the other places. Again, we'll have links in the show notes page. Any final words, Caleb?
- Caleb Wojcik: I love to just share really quick some of our tag lines we've come up with.
- Pat Flynn: Oh god. Okay.
- Caleb Wojcik: Switch it up, make the switch.
- Pat Flynn: SwitchPod, switch it up.
- Caleb Wojcik: Make the switch. One of my personal favorites is switch it real good.
- Pat Flynn: Switch it real good.

- Caleb Wojcik: Exactly.
- Pat Flynn: We also had some other names. You wanna show what those other names were?
- Caleb Wojcik: I mean, we considered Vlog Pad because it is for vlogging. We didn't think that was catchy enough or easy enough to say. Zoomerang. I don't even . . . Because it looks like an original boomerang shape and zoom is like a photo video termed Zoomerang.
- Pat Flynn: The funny thing with that one was like we were actually considering that. Not that it's a terrible name but it's looking back like if this was called the Zoomerang, that would be really weird. It's one of those things when you're in the moment sometimes and coming up with stuff like what really helped is with the name decision was sleeping on it and also again talking to other people about it. I think if we didn't do that and we just reacted quickly, it could have been called a Zoomerang because we were really stoked about it for whatever reason at that time. Sleeping on those decisions, book title names, title of courses, that's a smart thing. Were there any other ones? Like the ax or the tomahawk even?
- Caleb Wojcik: There were a lot of weapon based names. My wife at the dinner table that one day was like, "You know it's already kind of shaped like a weapon and you probably wanna avoid that," so we did.
- Pat Flynn: Yes. I love SwitchPod. It's very catchy and I hope you guys enjoy this SwitchPod too so check it out. Thank you in advance for everybody who backs the campaign and shares it. It just means so much to us. It's been a wonderful journey so we're just getting started so we'll keep you up to date and we'll see you on the Kickstarter page, switchpod.co. Thanks again, Caleb. Where can people go find you and where you're talking about other things too?
- Caleb Wojcik: Yeah. I'm Caleb Wojcik on all platforms, so C-A-L-E-B W-O-J-C-I-K, and that's my handle everywhere basically.
- Pat Flynn: Love it. I hope you enjoyed that episode. Let me know what you



SHOW NOTES: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session356>

think. You can check out the show notes at [smartpassiveincome.com/session356](http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session356). I hope this was useful to you, perhaps even inspirational for some ideas that you might have whether you are thinking of a physical product or digital product. As you can see a lot of commonalities between the two and the approaches you might take. I hope you especially . . . Maybe even re-listen to the part on influencers because Caleb and I both had strong beliefs about how to properly do that for both sides the maximum benefit.

But of course the ultimate call to action in this particular episode is to check out the SwitchPod, see how it's doing and even help us out a little bit if you like. Switchpod.co.

You guys are awesome. I appreciate you Team Flynn. Thank you for being here in supporting, and I hope this advice, and the behind the scenes thing is something you love because guess what, we're gonna do a lot more of it down the road, not just with SwitchPod and how we end up doing but with a lot of other projects that I have going on for you as well. Team Flynn, thank you so much. Please hit [subscribe](#) if you haven't already. Team Flynn for the win.

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