



**SPI Podcast Session #124 -
Your Author Empire –
Pick a Niche and Publish for Profit
with Steve Scott**

Show notes: www.smartpassiveincome.com/session124

This is the smart passive income podcast with Pat Flynn, session #124. It's time.

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. And now your host, he wants to compete in a triathlon someday, Pat Flynn.

Pat Flynn: It's on my bucket list. It is on my bucket list. I think just the swimming part is going to kill me but we'll see. I'll let you know when it happens though, for sure.

Guys, thank you so much for joining me, this is session 124 of the smart passive income podcast. I hope you're having an awesome day. I am. I'm actually in Australia right now, doing my thing at the ProBlogger event. Follow me on Twitter and Facebook to see the latest pictures and news from that event. I'll be back in the U.S. very soon.

In the meantime, we have a great episode for you today, especially if you're interested in publishing books. Whether you are going to publish a book very soon or you have already published books, I think we all have a book in us. I think we all know that.

I've already published one called [Let Go](#). It's a shorter book, it was published a couple of years ago and it got to number one on Amazon and it's still the number one book in the Snippet app platform actually, where I initially launched it. It did really well. One of the things I did to help promote and publicize the creation of that book, before it came out even, actually several months before it came out, I created a group on Facebook. This group has grown to become a hub for people publishing books on Amazon and Kindle writers and a lot of traditional writers as well.

Many people within that group, which has grown to over 7000 people now, at the time I launched [Let Go](#) there was maybe 1500. It's like 7000 people now. It's awesome. You can go to patsfirstbook.com to get redirected to that and ask to join.



I or one of the administrators there will let you in. Don't spam, that's the only thing we ask you to do. You'll see the rules there.

Anyway, on this group, a number of different people have stood out and have become leaders and have used this group to show their authority in the space and talk about their success and share tips and strategies. One of those people is Steve Scott from stevescottsite.com and he's publishing books like crazy, to a tune of one per month.

He's doing really well. [Let Go](#) was fairly easy for me to write because it was about my personal story. I've tried and sat down, tried writing actual non-fiction books before. It's so hard. I remember spending time watching a blank screen or just that cursor blinking, waiting for me to type on my keyboard for hours. I just wasn't able to get anything done.

Steve, here he is, writing a book a month and he's doing extremely well on Amazon. Five figures a month. We're not just talking \$10,000 a month but you know, last month I think he - and he mentions this, he reveals all his numbers, very transparent and authentic on this show, which I'm very thankful for and I know you will be too. I think last month he made \$60,000 from all of his books. He has a number of books out there. He's not just spamming. He's not just having writers write his books for him. He's doing it himself and he's using outsourcing but in a very smart way.

If you're interested in publishing, if you're interested in perhaps getting into the Amazon market and the Kindle market, this is going to be a fantastic episode for you.

Let's not wait any longer, let's get right into the episode with Steve Scott. You can find him at stevescottsite.com and also on Amazon. We'll talk about some of his best-selling books and pros and cons of going this way, what he did right, what he did wrong, all the things you need to get started and build your own book publishing empire.

So here we go. Enjoy the episode.

Alright, what's up everybody? I'm so happy to welcome Steve Scott to the smart passive income podcast. Steve, welcome to the show.

Steve Scott: Thanks Pat. It's an honor to be on the podcast, I'm a huge fan of yours.

Pat Flynn: I have to thank you too because I have this Facebook group that I started when I was writing *Let Go* and a couple of other books that I actually never finished



and I did that just to give everybody an insider look of the process, what was going on and to hopefully give inspiration as I was writing books. I've been a little bit behind on the book writing side of things but you are a part of that group and you sort of stood out as a leader in that group, not just with your success and all the books you've written, which we'll talk about and all the great strategies. You're there helping people all the time and first of all I wanted to thank you publicly here for doing that, thank you.

Steve Scott: Oh, it's been my pleasure, I actually joined right around the time when I was trying to start my own Kindle experience. I was just connecting with people inside that group. I could rattle off a whole bunch of names of the people inside that group that personally helped me as well. It's been my honor.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome. For those of you who are listening to this, if you want to go to that group right now, you have to request to join but I or one of the other administrators will put you in there. If you follow all the rules, there's some rules as far as like - you can't just promote all the books that you've published, you'll see the rules up there in the front.

You can go to patsfirstbook.com and that will redirect you to that Facebook page. Currently we have over 7000 members, which is awesome. This is like helping me light a fire under me in order to get my book stuff done because that's a great community. Everybody in there is awesome. I know they're all waiting for me to write something new but writing books is difficult. You found a way to do it and you do it well. Let's get into that. Even before you started writing books, who was Steve Scott? What were you doing before and how did you get into all this?

Steve Scott: I'll give the Cliff Notes version because I'm sure people want to hear about the Kindle stuff.

I've been into online marketing since 2004 so it's been about a decade. I've had moderate success over the years up until the last couple of years, making six figures a year, mostly through affiliate marketing.

About two years ago, I was really kind of burned out from affiliate marketing, you talk a lot about affiliate marketing. It gets kind of tiresome trying to have to figure out campaign after campaign. You do a really good job of it, it's really hard to blend the content of free content but also try to get people to buy affiliate products. As a way to



drive traffic, about two years ago I stumbled across Kindle publishing. At the time I was looking at it as a traffic generating strategy instead of an income strategy.

I basically did what a lot of people do, I re-purposed blog posts and put it up there on Kindle publishing. This was February 2012, not really thinking too much about it. Most books were basically 'how to make money online' and the experiences I had from that. What I noticed was that the books made money, they were making anywhere from \$5-10 a day and my thought was I really wasn't putting forth any effort behind them.

It wasn't around until September 2012 when I think it was a month or two after you started the group, and I said "What happens if I sit down and really try to write one Kindle book every single month about different things and see where it goes from there? Instead of writing blog posts I would just write all my stuff in Kindle format." As I say, the rest is history.

I did pretty well with the internet marketing books but it wasn't until I got into the habit books that things really started taking off.

Pat Flynn: Nice, let's go back to February of 2012, you published these books primarily for traffic generation methods, sort of experimental and then they start to make money. Are you saying that anybody can publish anything, can re-purpose blog posts and they'll begin to make money?

Steve Scott: No.

Pat Flynn: How did you get money at that time?

Steve Scott: I would say maybe that was beginner's luck and I would really honestly say you shouldn't just re-purpose content from your blog. Don't do what I do. Don't just throw it up there. Actually since then I've taken down those blog posts because what I didn't know at the time is that breaks the rule for KDP Select [08:13], which we'll definitely get into. Basically within KDP Select you can't have your content published elsewhere. I didn't know that at the time.

It was kind of a novice thing that I did, not knowing any better. I would say - and this is probably what we should talk about during the interview - I've really kind of evolved from that strategy where I tried to create as much of a real book as possible. I know I don't have what traditionally published people have, groups of editors and teams of people helping behind your book. I try to get it to that level as much as possible.



I would say, to answer your question, try to do as good of a job as possible, don't just throw up a bunch of content and expect it to do well on the Kindle platform.

Pat Flynn: With that being said, you were still able to make money.

Steve Scott: Yes.

Pat Flynn: I'm not encouraging anybody to do that but it just shows the power of getting on a platform like Amazon and publishing Kindle books.

Steve Scott: Absolutely. I'll be honest, sometimes with a lot of my books, even now, I'll take some old blog posts and re-work them and make them fit inside the book itself. If you have a blog it's definitely what I would consider the best launching pad for Kindle success.

Pat Flynn: Let's go to September 2012, a couple of months after you joined the group, you get inspired to experiment and try to do a book a month, which is a crazy goal. Why a book a month and what was your first one?

Steve Scott: Let's see. I kind of did the meta, my third book was [how to find best-selling book ideas] because I spent weeks trying to figure out what would actually sell on Amazon. I wrote pages and pages of notes. Instead of coming out and telling people I was a Kindle publisher (because I knew I wasn't), I tried to find that one specific idea and try to provide an in-depth solution to that. That really evolved into what my strategy is now - to find one topic and write about that.

From there, I think the one - actually I really honestly truly forget the fourth one. I actually created a couple of YouTube videos that were really successful through affiliate marketing, so I think I wrote about that one. The idea there is I kept on tackling these small little topics and really trying to drill down on those, almost like a blog post. Instead of trying to write everything in one single post, you try to talk about one thing and do a good job of providing a lot of step-by-step information.

Pat Flynn: How many books do you have total now?

Steve Scott: I actually forget, I think it's 42 or 43 would be my best guess.

Pat Flynn: And you've been consistent month after month publishing new books?



Steve Scott: That figure doesn't describe some things. I try to outsource a whole 14 book, children's book thing. I might as well talk about it now. It's like animal picture books. I thought that would be a great market but that was a complete failure. I still made my money back but I thought it would do a lot better than it did.

Fourteen of those books are ones that I wrote myself or I had outsourced and they're only like 4,000 or 5,000 words a piece.

I guess a better answer would be maybe 28 books that are about 10,000 to 15,000 words in length.

Sorry, there was a follow up question that you asked.

Pat Flynn: How long were each of the books?

Steve Scott: I started out in the 12,000 to 15,000 word range. Now I'm trying to get anywhere between 20,000 to 25,000. My future books, I really want to start bumping up that number to 25/30 books. It's getting more competitive on Amazon. I really want to continue to try to stand out and have my books be a little bit better than the stuff that's out there.

Pat Flynn: 12,000 to 15,000 isn't that much. When you think about a book that we get at Barnes & Noble, those could be a couple of hundred pages, 80,000 to 100,000 words. But I think when you pick a single topic like this, there's less to talk about obviously when you do that. Are there any ramifications or consequences of the books being on the shorter end?

Steve Scott: I try to mitigate that a bit. I know my books are shorter so I keep them at the \$2.99 price point. I try to price them lower. Hopefully if someone reads my book and they like it, they'll go on to buy my 2nd/3rd/4th/5th book, etc.

I think keeping them at a lower price point. 99% of the people are pretty happy with that. I do try to be very forward that this is one book that's about one solution, it doesn't try to teach everything. That's why it's \$2.99 and not \$14.99 like what a traditionally published book would be.

I get a little bit of brush back by people. Once in a while, I get a negative review basically saying it's not very long or something like that.



I feel most people honestly like the very straight forward solutions to their one problem.

Pat Flynn: I have a book on Kindle, [Let Go](#), which is on other platforms too. I had one 1-star review or something. There's 299 reviews. About 99% of them are 5-star. You get the occasional person that says the thing that doesn't matter in terms of the content of the book. One person was like "This is too short! This should be \$0.99, not \$2.99". I'm like, "Really? Really, 2 dollars?"

I think something interesting you said was, people who buy one book, you want them to get interested and involved with the other books.

Steve Scott: Yes.

Pat Flynn: How are you encouraging that and even tracking that?

Steve Scott: To be honest, it's really hard to track it in particular. Amazon is not very thorough with their metrics. They're not going to tell you who bought the books. You do actually kind of see a little bit of that with the 'Customers also bought...' that's at the bottom of every book listing on Amazon.

What they're also starting to do now is 'This book together with this book, customers also bought that'. So that's a quick way of telling that people are going to buy your books.

I do it more without tracking but kind of my interaction with people on a regular basis through emails, like "Oh I like all your books, I've gone on to buy a bunch of them". In the reviews themselves, the comments, I love seeing this "I love S. J. Scott's books", something like that, that shows that it's working.

I would say specifically, I know you really bang this drum is through email marketing. I'm a huge believer in building email lists. I actually use [LeadPages](#) like you recommend as well. My number 1, 2 and 3 marketing strategy is building email lists. Every time I do a book launch I try to use my email list to get as many sales as possible at the 99 cent price point.

Pat Flynn: Sweet. Awesome.



We're going to get into your process so anybody out there can hopefully learn from how you do things, the methods all the way from finding the book idea to the launch process.

Before we even get to that, I want to ask the question that I think is on everybody's mind right now. Your 30(ish) books - a little bit more with the children's series that didn't work out - if you don't mind sharing, how well are the books doing? How many are you selling? If you can give us the revenue, that would be awesome too.

Steve Scott: To be honest, the actual unit's I haven't tracked in two months but I would say lately I've been selling around 20,000 to 25,000 units a month or so. For the last couple of months, actually I did pull up an earnings report because I thought you might ask this question! I would say for the beginning of 2014 for a couple of months I was doing 20,000 and in the last couple of months things have really jumped up to \$60,000 and in the last two months it's been about \$50-45,000 a month for the Kindle stuff specifically and some other stuff through Create Space and ACX.

Pat Flynn: \$45,000 to \$60,000 a month?

Steve Scott: Yes. That's obviously the last couple of months, I've had a really good month. The way I describe it, it goes up then it goes down then it goes up a little more. If you're looking at a graph, it continuously goes up as you publish more books and build your brand.

Pat Flynn: Wow, so you have this empire of books now and series and people can get other ones. That's amazing money right there. Congratulations. That's pretty cool.

Steve Scott: A bit eye opening after the last couple of months, I'm amazed myself.

Pat Flynn: In terms of distribution of revenue per book, is it 20% of your books making 80% of the results or is it pretty spread out evenly?

Steve Scott: It definitely is the 80/20 rule that a couple of books drive an insane amount of my sales. That said, when I looked at the report right before I got on the call, with Kindle Unlimited - that's a new program where members get to sign up for all the books they want for \$9 per month - I've seen the payout, that's like \$1.80 per Kindle Unlimited borrow. What was really interesting, I saw a lot of people pick up some of my other books that really weren't doing that well and they're starting to take off.



With Kindle Unlimited, I'm starting to see a little more spread out amongst other books. To me, that's more exciting than the few ones that do really well.

Pat Flynn: That's cool. We'll talk about KDP Unlimited and KDP Select and what all that means for everybody out there. Let's go to your book publishing process. Where do you start with how to find an idea? Is it totally based on your own life experiences or do you do any keyword research for market research on Amazon? How do you start?

Steve Scott: I used to have a different answer but I will tell you what I do now. First off I'm a strong believer in building a brand, just like you recommend with a blog. You don't want to try writing a bunch of books that aren't really related. You want to kind of hone in on one particular topic and build an audience like you would with a podcast, YouTube channel or a blog, you want to find that one audience and really continue to write books about that.

Pat Flynn: Your audience is...

Steve Scott: I really focus on habits because that's honestly what I'm really interested in right now, my own self-improvement and self-development. So I really try to write books that... Some of them have a loose, tenuous relation to habit but I feel that all of them come under that one particular umbrella.

Pat Flynn: Sure. What are some of the books in that space? Name a few of them for us.

Steve Scott: OK, there's 23 Anti-Procrastination Habits, that The idea of getting behind why you're procrastinating and I provide a bunch of different habit's that you can do to overcome that limiting belief.

I know you talked about this on your podcast a few months back, de-clutter your inbox with the idea of how to actually end with Inbox 0 on a consistent basis. Honestly, that came from my own personal struggle. Like you talk about, when you get a lot of email on a daily basis, it becomes overwhelming and there are certain habit's that you can specifically adapt to kind of help... You won't completely overcome it, but it will at least help minimize the time that you spend in your inbox.



The one that did really well but also got a lot of brush back by negative reviews, a thing called [Habit Stacking](#), that's what I like to do in the morning, I find a bunch of small 5 minute or less habit's and group them together. So you take your pill... For me it was texting my girlfriend when we were apart, kind of sending something really nice to her to help strengthen my personal relationships, stuff like that. These small, little things that we know we should be doing. I just put that into kind of a streamline process and just do that every single morning before I start my day.

So that's the idea there to answer the question from a couple of minutes ago, I do try to take a lot of my personal experience and bring them into a book. Really a lot of my market research, I look on Amazon for the [?] of the market, to see if that sells. It's half seeing what will sell, it's also kind of comes from what I think people would enjoy, almost like a blog post - you put stuff out there and see if it does well.

Pat Flynn: We've had other Kindle authors on the show before, [Jeff Goins](#), and [Jonny Andrews](#). Jonny especially was talking about how you should definitely be in some kind of vertical in terms of picking a specific market or niche or idea and building stuff around that. Instead of one person who talks about airplanes and then his next book is about how to roll sushi and then his next one is about parenting. That wouldn't all fit together. So I really like this idea of building a brand, becoming an expert and an authority on this specific space.

OK, we've got the brand, we've got the space, we have an idea of what part of the market we want to get into. Where do you go from there?

Steve Scott: Basically every writer has their own process, I'll try to give the Cliff Notes version of mine. I like to start with a legal pad, just a piece of paper and I'll literally do a brain dump of everything I know about that particular topic.

Actually let me take one step back. When I have an idea I'll actually put it into Evernote, I'll actually create a notebook for that particular idea and I will spend a week or two just adding ideas to it, random thoughts. I do a lot of my best thinking when I am running so when I come back from running I am constantly adding two or three ideas to that particular book I want to write about.

Almost a kind of subconscious thinking about your next book idea over the course of a couple of weeks really helps create a catalogue of ideas that you want to include in the actual book itself.



From there I do what I mentioned the legal pad where I write down a bunch of ideas. From there I actually go old school, I just take a stack of index cards and I'll write down ideas, I'll write down chapter headings on the back of those. I'll write down the individual stuff from the legal pad. This takes about a day or so and at the end of the day I have a stack of index cards that I can then sort, cross out, rip up the cards, that sort of thing.

I know this is kind of what people taught about outlining and it sounds grueling but it helps clarify what you actually want to put into a book.

From there I basically do a rough draft, I'll write down almost a stream of consciousness, everything I can possibly think about in the logical order. It's pretty much a hot mess, it's just a bunch of thoughts in a somewhat logical order. Then the second draft, I am really painstakingly going over that. Same with the third draft, I really try to make the stuff as tight as possible and then I pass it off to two editors.

The first editor really goes over the stuff and now I actually have a second editor who acts more as a proofreader and then I just upload the Kindle stuff. I have a book I really really want to focus on having a good launch almost using the stuff you talked about with [Jeff Goins](#) so I really want to expand on that and really have a formal week long launch after that.

Before that, once it's published, I release it to my email list and then just let it rip and see what happens.

Pat Flynn: Nice. That's cool. Let's talk more about the writing process. I have a few questions here and comments. I think the note cards are really smart and that is something I think would help me because often times I'll create a mind map. That's always a good way to categorize and organize a brain dump and then you can reorder things and things like that.

It's sort of the same thing as the note cards but I like the note cards idea specifically because when you are looking at one note card, that's the only note card you are really looking at. If you have a stack of them then you can just focus on that idea, ask questions about it and then you can spread them out if you wanted to and re-order them and do all that other stuff. There is something about doing it with your hands that really helps take it to the next level, sort of materializes it a little bit.



Steve Scott: Yeah, actually I am a little bit older. I am going to be 40 next year so it's, I still kind of remember before the internet, before computers, not as much as I am sure some older people but I still like to actually do the... Actually I enjoy getting out a piece of paper and a pen and just writing stuff down instead of constantly being in front of a laptop, I think that taps into our subconscious mind better than just constantly being in front of the doodads and technology.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, definitely. It makes you wonder if I were to ask people, when was the last time you wrote with a pencil? They would probably say months or years.

Steve Scott: Yesterday.

Pat Flynn: It works for you. OK, writing process, still on that. How much time and how much money would you say, on average you spend to create a book?

Steve Scott: I would say time, I am really kind of trying to lengthen. I used to be, I said before actually a month to write a book. At some point I was trying to like crank them out at 3 weeks per book. I've kind of back-tracked on that. I think now it's more, kind of starting to think that 6-8 weeks would be a better time. As I mentioned before, I'm really trying to improve the quality of the books themselves. For me 6-8 weeks but honestly if you think a book is ready to go, then by all means get that out there, I am just trying to evolve my process.

As far as financial, I'll be honest, like once in a while for a chapter I think I don't really need to write myself, I'll outsource it. But that's like maybe 10% - 20% of my books now so I have a little bit of stuff where I know that someone else can do just a good of a job so I am trying to fine tune what I do. I also now have an audio version, a print version with edits, with cover design. I would say I spend around \$1,500 to \$2,000 per book but I can't remember the last time I haven't made my money back on that.

Pat Flynn: \$1,500 - \$2,000. Awesome. At first you said 3-4 weeks to write a book and now you want to kind of up it a little bit but in terms of a day to day basis, how much time are you dedicating to your books or how much are you focused on it? Is it just sort of an hour before I go to bed type of thing, or are you working on it 8 hours a day for those weeks?

Steve Scott: Definitely not. I would say because I write about habit's, I am a really firm believer in the writing habit of pretty much the first thing I do every morning is to do some form of writing. To quantify it I would say anywhere from 15-20 hours a week



and that's actually the extreme amount. I would say on some weeks I would do maybe 10-15 hours so I would say almost like a small part time job. If you have a full time job elsewhere you could definitely squeeze this in over a weekend or get up an hour or two earlier before your workday and do it. I definitely have followed that model myself so I know.

I think once or twice I have actually done the kind of rush, I'll do it over a week or two, almost writing full time but I never really liked that process because it does feel rushed to me. Yeah, the answer to that question is 10-15 hours per week.

Pat Flynn: I'm not as popular as you, I just checked my phone and it's not on silent but nobody calls me.

Steve Scott: I'm actually visiting my family so I am at their house so that is why I just have a cell phone so I do apologize to you and the listeners. Yeah, I would say about 10-20 hours, maximum 20 hours a week writing.

Pat Flynn: OK, awesome. Then you mentioned outsourcing, you don't outsource the entire book because part of it is it's coming from your own experience so that would be difficult but you do outsource parts of it. I think a lot of people might be like "Oh my gosh, you outsource the book!" like that's bad, but do you have any thoughts on outsourcing?

Steve Scott: I actually, really, it depends on when you ask me because for instance, if I outsource then it's 15 resources for this, it's stuff like that. It's more something that I'll ask my VA to do. I have a couple of writers that I work with on an occasional basis. I feel the stuff that doesn't necessarily come from your own personal experience, you can do a little bit of but I would definitely caution against trying to outsource the whole book because really you lose that individual experience and basic part of your brand. It's almost like outsourcing a bunch of blog posts. You can do it here and there a little bit but I wouldn't recommend doing a whole outsourced book.

Pat Flynn: Yeah because I am imagining a few people in the audience listening to this and they are like "Wow I could do what Steve's doing by just hiring all the people to do it for me and not have to put any work in at all".

Steve Scott: Yeah, I would actually really caution against that and to be honest, I am almost hesitant sometimes to talk about the fact that I use a little bit of it because I don't want to give people the wrong idea. I would say like I imagine, a little bit here, a



little bit there is okay but even the stuff I get back I go over and I have my editor go over and I think a lot of mistakes that people make is they think it is just a 'push button' solution where they just pay someone the lowest amount of money and throw it up there. I feel that Amazon is constantly evolving and trying to throw old junk up is not the long term model to follow.

Pat Flynn: Putting outsourcing aside now, just in terms of book writing in general, what are your thoughts or perhaps even tips for people writing fiction?

Steve Scott: I'm going to avoid that question for the simple fact that I have never written fiction. I would say marketing wise, pretty much the same principal, you want to build a brand, you want to write in the same genre. If you're writing fantasy, you want to keep writing fantasy, if you're writing science fiction you want to keep writing science fiction. What I would do, I would recommend checking out the Creative Pen, I'll give you the link for the show notes. The Creative Pen or the Self-Publishing Podcast and that one is not a family friendly podcast but I would say, I listen to both those people.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, is somebody who has. . .

Steve Scott: All four of those people are providing good valuable content on fiction. I know I shouldn't be talking about certain topics. I would say just go check out those two podcasts.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Yeah thanks. Great to defer to those people. A couple more things before we finish up here. This is, again been a great conversation, you had mentioned earlier for your habit stacking book that you had some negative reviews and you wanted to talk about that a little bit. Why the blow back on that?

Steve Scott: When looking at it, it's weird because that literally has been by far my biggest income generator. I think part of it is the title I picked. The title I picked was Habit Stacking 97 Small Life Changes That Take 5 Minutes or Less. I think the promise of a sub-title, it was providing a quick solution and so half of the book really kind of provides more of the framework. I think maybe I spent too much time on the 97 habits. It really is as generic for some of them as 'take a pill' and I think people felt gipped on that, they didn't get a full solution. They got more of a, they just got ideas that everyone knows and that was a huge mistake on my part and I'll be the first to admit it. Maybe I didn't spend enough time on the framework but I guess a few lessons here:



The first one is you can always publish a second edition. I definitely plan on improving the quality of that book, definitely providing more content on the framework.

And the second lesson proves the kind of idea behind habit's is really, I know people are kind of hungry for specific information so I used the negative experiences from that to really focus on the next book, which unfortunately I am not going to want to talk about the actual title or the scope of the next book but the next one I really need to take in that negative experience and really focusing it on trying to make the best possible book.

The book took off and sold really well but it's starting to tank simply because I got a bunch of one star reviews, maybe they are well deserved, I just made a mistake that is part of this model, I publish and make mistakes and I learned from them.

I felt like a lot of the negative reviews, it felt it wasn't as good of a book and I learned a lot by reading them and I now don't really, it actually taught me not to read all the negative reviews. I've got to the point now where I just don't look at my negative reviews.

Pat Flynn: I don't either. They can do that to you. I have grown a thick skin as of late because you know I am pretty out there, a lot of people either on the blog or on my Facebook page, there's a few trolls out there and if you know that they are there... There's no reason to go and look at your one star reviews really.

I mean, sorry I should take that back. There is a reason to look because there could be some room for improvement and they're obviously a part of your audience, you want to listen to your audience but there are one star reviews that are just completely negative, just trying to start up stuff and you know, you could read them but just don't take them personally.

Steve Scott: Actually my trick now is I have my VA go and include all the two and one star reviews and give me a little monthly report. It's like pulling off a band aid one time a month, I've got to look at them just to kind of see what's out there and then I just get annoyed for an hour or two and then just forget it.

Pat Flynn: Well that's not a bad idea actually, having your VA filter through the negative disrespectful ones that you shouldn't even consume and give you the ones that are actually useful to you.



Steve Scott: Yeah, it is, I really truly feel it is important to pay attention to the ones that are helpful, like the trolls, they say haters are going to hate. But there are a lot of people that are giving you valuable feedback and you do want to pay attention to them.

Pat Flynn: Right. Haters are going to hate for sure. You had mentioned the second edition of this book that is going to be done using improvements, you know based on this feedback, is that something - if we are publishing on Kindle and you publish a book, does the second edition, you just kind of replace the first one or does it become an actual second product?

Steve Scott: You could do either/or. You can just upload a newer version and basically put in the actual description 'This is a new, improved updated version' but to be honest, that book got ripped apart so much that it's almost like putting lipstick on a pig now. It's really, it almost would make no sense to just do an updated version, I would say literally have a second version with X amount of new content and just basically take the old one down. With Amazon you can kind of do both. That being said I haven't actually ever done a second edition before. I'm kind of curious to see how it would work. My initial gut reaction would be to take the whole thing down and just start afresh. I feel the topic itself actually has some merit, just maybe my execution was poor.

Pat Flynn: Sure. Thank you for that. Before we get into some of the specifics of Kindle to finish up, I have one question I want to ask you. What if we don't consider ourselves a good writer? Is there something we can still do? How do we learn to become a good writer?

Steve Scott: It's hard. I actually still don't consider myself a great writer and that is why I have editors. It's a challenging one to answer because I know there are some people that just really struggle with this. Specifically there's a couple of people who are smart people but English isn't their first language so they often struggle with that.

My best piece of advice and actually I have given this to a couple of people is to basically create as thorough of an outline as possible, almost kind of follow the model I discussed before. I would say upwards of 5,000 - 7,000 words of an outline and then just pass it off to a ghost writer and then basically have them almost as a co-author. They'll put the information that comes from your experience. I know some people have done that with great success but for me it's really just, I wasn't a good writer at all a couple of years ago, almost having it ripped apart by editors and kind of constantly



doing it on a continuous basis I learnt how to get a little bit better and hopefully in a few years from now I will be a lot better.

For me it is an evolving process but I would say if you are really struggling with it perhaps you want to work with the ghost writer and use an outline.

Pat Flynn: Yeah and for me when I started on my blog in 2008 I wasn't that good a writer, I wasn't great at all. I still read some of those older posts and I'm like "Wow, this is crazy" but you know the more I have done it, the better I have gotten, the more I have learned. I have read great blogs and I sort of pick up things here and there that work on theirs and then I put them into my style. You just got to do it. It's going to be tough at first and it's going to be a nice test for you to see if you really want it but just keep going, keep writing and even if you don't publish it, just keep writing.

I think there are a couple of sites out there that allow you to write in a journal online and you have the option of keeping it private or... I think it's like 750 words or...

Steve Scott: Yeah, I have heard of them but I have never personally used them. Honestly like you said, any amount of writing that you can do, don't be afraid to put it out there, trust me. Like I said, I have got a bunch of books out there and some have got ripped apart. I'll be the first to admit it stings a bit. Really, that's how you learn. It's not like people are coming to your house and beating you up. You get your ego knocked around a bit but understand that this is a process and you just, every lesson teaches you how to be a little bit better.

Pat Flynn: Okay now, can you define for us really quick what KDP Select is for all of us authors out there and how do we best utilize what it is?

Steve Scott: KDP Select is a pretty much constantly evolving program. It's basically a program that Amazon offers to authors that basically for 90 days if you put your book inside KDP Select you get all these sales tools - and I'll describe the sales tools in a second. Basically the idea here is you give them 90 days of exclusivity. That means you can't publish your book on a blog, you can't publish the book even as content elsewhere unless it is completely re-worked. You can't publish on other platforms like Barnes and Noble, Smash Words, Apple, that sort of thing.

What you get with KDP Select is a number of tools. Specifically you get a promotional tool that every 90 days you can either give away your book for free for 5 days and if you are getting started that is actually a great way to start building a launch. You



basically give away your book for free and I have a blog post on my site that Nick Loper did where he used a free promotion and got something like 20,000 downloads so he is a great example of someone who did a great free promotion.

Or the other tool is a countdown deal and basically you get to drop your book down to 99c, which on Amazon has a little ticking clock that shows it is only 99c for a certain amount of time and the idea here is you can... I should have added that you get 70% on that royalty instead of the standard 35% if it's at 99c - and the idea here is you actually get a lot of sales in a short amount of time, which helps your overall ranking.

In addition to that, there is a couple of other small... Your book gets 70% commission or royalty rate on sites like or countries like Japan or Brazil, that sort of thing but for me what's really exciting are the borrows. Up until last month borrows are 10% of my business and they borrow about \$2 a pop.

But now with the Kindle Unlimited program, which I mentioned before where readers can sign into Kindle Unlimited for \$9 per month and they can read pretty much an unlimited amount of books that are in the Kindle Unlimited and what I'm starting to see is as long as they read 10% of your book you get about \$1.80 and that's for this month's rate, I'm not too sure what it will be for August or September. You get \$1.80 per borrow and that's really dramatically increased my overall [inaudible] just by these Kindle Unlimited borrows.

So the bottom line is KPD Select offers you a lot of different sales tools. I guess the huge caveat here is basically you are giving up a huge part of your business in Amazon's hands and just from my experience with Google, I am always a little bit wary of leaving too much of your business into an entity that you don't control but obviously for people getting started, Amazon [inaudible] obviously be very careful about what you control and what you don't control.

Pat Flynn: Perfect. Awesome. Man we have covered a lot of things and obviously we could probably talk more about this and maybe we should talk more about this, you know have you come back on later.

I love creating shows for all the authors out there, the [Jeff Goins](#) podcast did very well and I am sure this one will do very well too.



Dude, thank you so much Steve for sharing all of your wisdom and congratulations on all your success. If anyone out there wants to find out more information from you, where should they go or how can they get in contact with you?

Steve Scott: I would guess a couple of places. All my Kindle books are habitbooks.com released the ones we talked about here. And actually the blog at stevescottsite.com, I talk pretty much nonstop about Kindle publishing and obviously I have a [free report](#), that sort of thing. I would say check out both of those sites and just honestly just drop me an email to stevescottsite@gmail.com

I actually am a firm believer in really answering every single email personally and really trying to help people.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thank you so much Steve. We appreciate you and will talk to you soon.

Steve Scott: That's my pleasure.

Pat Flynn: Alright, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Steve Scott.

Awesome advice and I feel bad there at the end, the connection was getting all weird so I want to make sure that the links and the URLs that were mentioned from Steve at the end there are re-mentioned here clearly. So, the first one is habitbooks.com. If you go to habitbooks.com that will redirect you actually to Steve's Amazon author profile page with a list of all of his books and you can see them and rank them based on popularity and see what he has got going on there.

A lot of amazing stuff going on there. I think that's just fantastic advice in terms of getting into a specific space or niche market within the publishing realm or within Amazon Kindle market. So that's awesome. habitbooks.com. Then stevescottsite.com. There he just blogs about his experience writing books and publishing and you can email him he mentioned also at stevescottsite@gmail.com.

So, Steve, awesome job, thank you so much and keep up the great work, it's very inspirational and I think this is going to be the start of a lot of people's sort of empires on Amazon as well. You can just niche down and provide value and do it right, just like Steve did. Show notes can be found at smartpassiveincome.com/session124.



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