

# Always be planning.

A helpful guide for creating your very own project timeline.

## I.

### Build your project.

- 1 Do your research.**

Before you start, learn from and get inspired by other [projects in your category](#). Look at their storytelling methods, project updates, reward tiers, and project video. We've also noticed that creators who support other creators are generally more successful, so if you feel so inclined, go ahead and back a few projects.
- 2 Complete each step in Project Build.**

Since account verification may take a few days, start with the account tab to avoid any launch delays.
- 3 Create a budget.**

Account for everything — packaging, postage, value-added tax for EU backers, [shipping costs](#) — and use this information to set your funding goal. Check out [this discussion](#) featuring tips from fellow creators about how to come up with a solid budget.
- 4 Assemble your team.**

Set yourself up for success by adding team members (collaborators) whom you know and trust. They can help build your project, tell your story, communicate with backers, fulfill rewards, and more.
- 5 Develop a promo plan.**

**Prepare marketing assets and write a press release.**  
Create [media assets](#) to share across all channels throughout the campaign. We also recommend [writing a solid press release](#) so your message to the media is strong and consistent.

**Make an outreach list.**  
[Compile a master list](#) of everyone you know — people who will champion your project, influencers, tastemakers, and press. Strong outreach will make a big difference.

**Create a marketing schedule.**  
Think about how, when, and where you'll share your project after day one. To build and maintain momentum, successful campaigns share fresh content across channels every couple of days.

## II.

### Prepare to launch.

- 1 Get feedback.**

Circulate your project preview link to get feedback from close friends, advisors, influencers, and key members from your press list. Share your launch timeline and make sure they keep the link private until launch.
- 2 Sweat the details.**

Run through the [Final Countdown](#) and double-check everything so you can launch confidently and with your best foot forward. Projects that launch strong are more likely to be successfully funded.
- 3 Finalize your plan for launch day.**

Set a launch time, develop a communications strategy, and clearly identify who's responsible for each task. Make sure that all assets are ready, messaging is consistent, and everyone on your team is in sync for a flawless launch. Here's a sample [communications plan](#) to help you get started.

Pro-tip: Consider throwing a launch party to build excitement with your community.

## III.

### It's live.

- 1 Launch like a champ.**
  - Run through your launch plan, one step at a time.
  - Soft-launch to a select group of fans and supporters to get momentum going on your project page before the whole world sees it.
  - Update your website and all other channels with an announcement and link to your project page.
  - Announce your project to your email and press list.
  - Activate your social media channels and get people sharing your story on your behalf.
  - At the end of the day, thank your first set of backers via email and social media.
- 2 After day one.**

Use your dashboard to track your campaign's progress and learn which promotional efforts are working best. You can even try [referral tracking](#).

Respond to your backers' comments and questions and add answers to common or recurring questions to your project FAQ. Consider turning the answers to very common questions into a project update.

Keep sharing your project on social media with fresh content. Read these [21 tips](#) for pointers.
- 3 After week one.**

Stay persistent by following up with your contact list on a one-to-one basis. The most effective form of outreach is direct and personal, usually over email.

Iterate and stay flexible. Tailor your communications plan for a variety of scenarios. How will you communicate with backers if you're exceeding your goal? How will you communicate if you still have a ways to go?
- 4 Celebrate milestones.**

**20% funded**  
When you reach 20 or 30% of your goal, send a project update to thank your backers. Include news about your project, press coverage if you have any, and some fun media for them to enjoy and share.

**50% funded**  
Repeat the above at 50% funding and when you're really close to reaching your goal.

**80% funded**  
When you're super close to reaching your goal, consider a closing promotional strategy to push you to the end — another event, new content, a new influencer, etc.
- 5 Build your narrative.**

[Live stream](#) a performance, demo a prototype, or share [insights](#) into your process. Keep your backers looped in by sending updates when you have news to share.
- 6 Do not fear the plateau.**

Engagement tends to dip towards the middle of the campaign, so use this time to catch your breath, pivot your outreach strategy, introduce new rewards, and re-engage people in your contact list who haven't pledged to your project yet.

Or try any of [these ideas](#).

## IV.

### You've hit your funding goal.

- 1 Celebrate.**

Savor this moment and celebrate with your backers — you made it happen together. Send a project update, host a live stream, or share a video of your excitement.
- 2 Think before you stretch.**

Stretch-goals are a nice way to add momentum to your campaign and help motivate your community — either through a new funding goal or a new backer goal — once you reach your initial goal. Before introducing a stretch-goal, be sure to plan carefully and wisely to avoid unexpected problems or delays down the line.

## V.

### Finish strong.

- 1 Keep backers in the loop.**

Send reward surveys to collect the info you'll need to fulfill rewards, then post an update to thank your backers and tell them what's next.

Use [Spotlight](#) to turn your project page into a custom homepage that tells your story from beginning to end.
- 2 Have you sent out all rewards? Mission accomplished.**

Let your community know that the project is over and you've fulfilled all rewards. We recommend sending updates periodically to your backers as you achieve new milestones, gain press, earn awards, etc.

# You did it.