

MODULE 4: OUTLINING, WRITING & EDITING

“I’m not a very good writer, but I’m an excellent rewriter.”

~James Michener

“Every writer I know has trouble writing.”

~Joseph Heller

Contents

Pre-Planning Your eBook	1
Tools for Organizing Your Thoughts.....	2
Turning Blog Posts into an eBook	5
Your Writing Process.....	7
Working with Your Personality and Preferences	7
Writing Programs	8
Finding Time to Write	9
Balancing eBook Writing and Family	9
Balancing eBook Writing & Blogging	10
The Importance of Editing	12
Things to Watch for When You Edit.....	12
Hire an Editor	13
Alternatives to a Professional Editor	14
A Few More Tips Before You Get Started	15
Quoting Other Writers and Citing Sources	15
Setting – and Meeting – Deadlines	15
Monetizing Your eBook.....	16

Pre-Planning Your eBook

Writing can be a time-consuming task, and while there are no real shortcuts to avoiding the hard work of putting words to paper, there are ways to be more productive when you sit down to write so that you have more time to create better quality content rather than just rushing a product to launch.

One of the keys to being a more productive writer is simply to pre-write – first in your head and then as an outline on paper – well before you actually sit down to write.

When I'm working on a writing project, I think about what I want to say as I go about the routine tasks of my day: folding laundry, washing dishes, stirring something on the stove, taking a shower.

A few days before I plan to write, I actually write a rough outline for the project. I write down the main points I want to make, examples, subpoints, etc. This is easy because I've already been thinking about it for a few days, and it literally takes just 5 minutes or so per chapter, module or blog post.

Then I sit on it for another day or two. Surprisingly, this part tends to be very important for me, and this summer I discovered that there's actual research suggesting that working through or struggling with a problem or task and then walking away for some time before coming back to it makes it easier to solve the second time around. Walking away allows your brain to subconsciously do the hard work of making connections and sorting your thoughts before you actually start writing!

If I need to do actual research rather than just organizing my thoughts, I'll also research in between outlining and writing, making notes as I go but not worrying about complete sentences, organizing the research, etc.

All of that prep work means that when I'm finally ready to sit down and write, the concept is basically written in my head, which means I don't have to stop to think about what I want to write; I *just write*.

Any good writer will tell you that the key to writing well is to just write without worrying about how it sounds, proper structure or correct grammar. As you write this way, the words begin to flow and you actually write better. You still have to edit and tweak when you're done, of course, but your thoughts are more complete and more eloquent than if you overanalyze every word while you write.

Unfortunately, it's really hard to do that in non-fiction writing if you don't know what you want to say ahead of time because you have to stop and think about it often. However, when you've spent time thinking through what you want to say and the important points you want to make, it flows much easier, which means writing is much faster and, as a bonus, a lot less frustrating!

Tools for Organizing Your Thoughts

The challenge, of course, when writing an ebook – as opposed to a simple blog post – is organizing the many moving parts and deciding on the structure of your content. Here's a simple process for structuring your content, but keep in mind that you'll still probably edit that structure as you begin to flesh out each section:

Start with a Brain Dump

I often use [brain dumps as a productivity tool](#), but they're pretty handy for brainstorming as well.

The basic idea is to write down every possible subtopic, idea, point or example relating to your topic. It doesn't mean you have to actually include all of those bits and pieces in your ebook, but getting it on paper ensures that you won't forget it later on. This is an important step for organizing your thoughts because it can be hard to remember everything you want to include when you're actually writing an outline or planning chapters, and trying to think of everything at the same time you're trying to organize your ideas is not very effective.

Create a Mind Map or Outline...or Both

Once you've created a fairly exhaustive list of subtopics and the information you want to cover, you're ready to start working on an outline. Some people prefer an outline where they label their main subtopics and then break those down further underneath each heading, like this:

I. Why eBooks?

- *Writing eBooks for Profit
- *eBooks to Upsell Products & Services
- *Comparing eBooks to Traditional Publishing
- *Obstacles to Publishing an eBook
- *Other Digital Products

II. Choosing a Topic

- *Writing from Your Expertise & Passion
- *Methods for Brainstorming
- *Evaluating the Market for Your Topic
- *Creating your Unique Selling Proposition
- *Coming Up with a Title & Subtitle

III. Exceeding Expectations

- *Go Beyond "Good Enough"
- *How to Exceed Expectations
- *Avoid Perfection Paralysis

Other people prefer to start with a mind map. ([Get a printable mind map here.](#))

A mind map allows you to start with one idea and break it down into more detailed or focused subtopics through a kind of free-flowing thought process. When you're creating an outline for an ebook, a mind map helps you take a big idea and articulate related subtopics and then decide where all the other pieces of information fit within those broader topics.

To start, take one big idea and place it in the large box in the center. If you're writing an ebook on remote-controlled airplanes, for example, you'd write "remote-controlled airplanes" in the middle box. Next, think about subtopics related to that main topic. In this example, you might talk about why remote-controlled airplanes are a fun hobby, the costs involved, how to get started, etc. Once you've defined these subtopics, you'll add all of the little pieces of information you want to cover to the appropriate subtopic: generic versus name brand parts, the best planes for beginners, forums for hobbyists, etc.

I prefer paper and pen for organizing my ebooks, but if you prefer digital organization, try one of these tools:

- **Evernote** :: Although I don't personally use it, [Evernote](#) is a widely used tool for research and brainstorming because it allows you to save information, quotes, images and more and organize all of those moving pieces into folders and notebooks so that you can pull from your research and inspiration as needed. You can also install the app on your phone, tablet and computer and sync the information between them so you have access to it wherever you are!
- **Scrivener** :: [Scrivener](#), on the other hand, is a digital version of the classic index card system, where you write your facts, points and notes on individual index cards and move them around to organize your thoughts. In Scrivener, you are able to actually write, edit and restructure your content, piece by piece, so that you can work on one focused area at a time. It also allows you to save your research – text, documents, images, etc. – right inside the program and open those files next to your writing window so that you don't have to spend time switching between windows. And Scrivener allows you to export your file in various formats – including a Word document, PDF, Kindle file and more – which we'll talk about more in the module on formats!

Turning Blog Posts into an eBook

A popular strategy for creating ebooks is to start with a popular topic or series on your blog and compile those into an ebook and offer it to readers for convenience. This is a strategy I myself have used, and it works, but I think there are a few things to keep in mind:

Choose Carefully

If you're going to do this, you want to start with your best content, not posts that might be mediocre at best. If there's a series on your blog that is really popular with readers and on social media – it gets a lot of pageviews or comments or shares – that is a good place to start. But in your effort to "bulk up" your ebook with quality content, don't sacrifice the quality part of that equation.

Add New Content

Once you have your topic chosen and a list of blog posts to include, start adding new content. In fact, the more new content you can add (again, choosing quality over quantity!), the better, because it gives people who enjoyed the series of posts on your blog a reason to buy the ebook. Fill in any gaps, add additional details, create transitions between topics, etc. so that the ebook begins to read less like a series of blog posts and more like an actual book.

Edit Liberally

After you have compiled your content into one file and ordered the way you'd like it, edit liberally. Don't send it off to an actual editor yet because there's a lot of work for you to do at this point to take it from a "bunch of blog posts thrown together" to an actual ebook. You may need to remove references such as "like I said yesterday" as well as uber casual writing that may be a better fit for your blog than an ebook, etc.

Since you're not spending as much time writing all new content, take the time to park at this stage for a while and really edit and add content and cull paragraphs liberally until it's a high quality manuscript.

Be Upfront with Potential Customers

It's important to tell people upfront that some/most of the content in the ebook came from your blog. Many, many people will still buy it because of the convenience of having it in a single file, and you'll be much less likely to end up with unsatisfied customers if you're upfront about it with them.

Your Writing Process

The idea of “just writing” is probably the single most important – and most difficult – concept for writers. Not because it doesn’t make sense or we don’t believe it to be true but because the perfectionist side of each of us wants to edit our words as we write.

However, it’s important to remember that the best thing you can do is simply get words on the paper. They don’t have to be good words or final words or even words that make total sense. Just words on the paper.

That’s because starting is much harder than finishing, and once you start writing, the words tend to flow. There’s plenty of time for editing later, and it’s much easier to edit, edit again and edit some more than it is to create something from nothing.

“Of course, the only path to amazing runs directly through not-yet-amazing. But not-yet-amazing is a great place to start, because that’s where you are. For now.

There’s a big difference between not settling and not starting.”

~Seth Godin on [Overcoming the Impossibility of Amazing](#)

When you set aside time for writing your ebook, it’s important to actually use that time to focus on writing and not editing or tweaking your words. If you stop at the end of every sentence to reread what you’ve written, you’ll never get into the zone where the words are flowing onto your page. And if you have 10-30,000+ words to write, that will make for a very frustrating process!

Working with Your Personality and Preferences

Your writing process will be as unique as you are, and it’s important to figure out what works best for you – early morning or midday, a bright, sunlit room or a shady one, background noise or silence – so that you can set yourself up for success every time.

For all writers, it’s also important to eliminate distractions, and the best place to start is with the physical clutter around you. Some people work well with stacks of books and piles of research spread around them for easy access while they write; some need a clear desk. Either way, eliminate unrelated clutter – bills to be paid, papers to be filed, etc. – that could become a distraction and an excuse to procrastinate.

Then, work on your digital clutter, closing unnecessary tabs in your browser (Facebook, anyone?), turning off notifications on your phone, avoiding the urge to check your email. There are programs, like [Rescue Time](#), that allow you to actually block sites for a specific period of time, so take advantage of those if you need to!

And finally, if your mind is racing with a million things you need to do or remember, do a brain dump and get all of those out of your head and onto paper so that you can focus on your writing instead. You can come back and organize your to-do list when you’re done.

“After writing four books and almost one thousand blog posts, I have learned two things about writing:

1. Sometimes, I just need to park myself in my chair, fire-up my laptop, and force myself to start. Nine times out of ten, this works for me.
2. When that doesn't work—after a concerted effort—I just need to quit. I have to get up and do something else.

This is all part of the mystery of writing. It's a balancing act, isn't it?

You want to exercise self-discipline and force yourself to write, even when you don't feel like it. But you also have to trust the process and recognize when that won't work. If you are patient—with yourself and with the process—the Muse will eventually speak.”

~Michael Hyatt on [The Mystery of Writing](#)

Writing Programs

While Evernote and Scrivener are programs that help you organize your research and ideas, and some people actually write their books inside the Scrivener program, there are other, simpler programs that writers can use to eliminate distractions and focus on their writing.

The most popular of these include:

- [Writer \(web-based\)](#) :: This simple web-based program allows you to “just write” without any fancy options. It saves your work automatically as you write and allows you to create multiple documents within your account for easy reference later.
- [Q10 \(Windows\)](#) :: With this full-screen editor, you can eliminate the distractions on your computer and simply focus on your words. Q10 also offers word counts, timers, target word counts and more to encourage you as you write.
- [WriteRoom \(Mac, iPad and iPhone\)](#) :: Similarly, WriteRoom offers a full-screen writing environment for Mac and iOS products so that you can write in a distraction-free environment.

There are other programs as well, but one caution: be willing to try new tools to find the ones that work best for you, but don't get so caught up in finding the perfect tool that it becomes just one more obstacle between you and actually writing!

Finding Time to Write

One of the most common obstacles to writing an ebook is finding the time, especially because writing – unlike so many other tasks – typically requires focused time in a quiet environment. If you have little kids at home during your writing hours or you're balancing an ebook and other writing commitments, that can be a challenge, and it requires some creativity in coming up with time and space to write.

Balancing eBook Writing and Family

If you're a stay-at-home or work-at-home mom juggling kids all day, here are a few ideas to get you started thinking about the possibilities for dedicated writing time:

Write while they sleep.

I'm a fan of early morning writing, as opposed to late evenings, because there are built-in boundaries. You wake up at the crack of dawn, and at some point your children get up, at which time you switch your focus to their needs. When you write or work in the evenings, one of the benefits is you can go longer without interruption, but that also means you're more likely to stay up later than you should and sacrifice more sleep than you should, which will ultimately make you less productive.

That's not to say that late night writing can't ever work, but you do need to be conscious about getting to bed in time to get enough sleep so that you can continue making progress rather than burning out after a late night or two.

Hire a babysitter or mother's helper.

If it's in your budget, hiring a babysitter or mother's helper is a great way to find a few extra writing hours a week. You can use this strategy once a week in conjunction with other strategies or hire help several days a week for dedicated writing time, but the key is to actually use that time wisely for the tasks that require the most focus and concentration rather than frittering away the hours doing things that either don't matter or can be done any time.

Swap childcare with another family.

One strategy that works well for a lot of people is to simply swap childcare with another family. You watch their children for several hours a week and, in exchange, they watch yours. Not only does this offer a play date opportunity for your kids, but it gives each of you dedicated work/project time without the expense of hiring help.

Schedule writing time with your spouse.

For many families, simply scheduling writing time with your spouse might be the way to go. Depending on your schedules, that could mean evening hours when you're able to sneak away to an office or bedroom to write or a Saturday writing session at the local coffee shop. Although a few hours a week probably isn't enough time to finish an ebook very quickly, it's a great place to start and get some focused work time on a regular basis.

From [Stephanie Langford](#):

I find it challenging to fit in time for book writing while maintaining my blog, since blogging as a mom and homemaker can already be stretching as it is. The majority of the content for my books has been written during extra “coffee shop sessions”, over and above the time I usually set aside each week to work and write. When I’m in a book writing season, my husband (or sometimes, a hired babysitter) will help make it work for me to sneak in extra afternoons, evenings, or occasionally full days out, so that I can focus hard and push through a lot of writing at once. I wish I was one of those diligent writers who can pump out books by devoting 15-20 minutes per day, but it just doesn’t work for me. I have to get into my groove and be completely focused.

Because it adds so much extra to my plate during these seasons, I have to space them apart and take long breaks in between. One book per year is my absolute maximum, and it’s usually less often than that. Also, I don’t pressure myself with short deadlines. My two longer books both took between 6-12 months to write, and though I’d prefer to make the process shorter, that was the best that I could do. In my opinion, it’s better to take longer to do it and actually get that book written, then to never attempt it because you can’t do it in a short window of time.

[Read Stephanie’s full case study interview here.](#)

Balancing eBook Writing & Blogging

Similarly, writing an ebook while also writing multiple, lengthy blog posts per week can be a recipe for burnout. If you’re taking the slow-and-steady approach to your ebook (which is okay!), then it will probably work to keep your regular blogging schedule. But if your goal is to write larger chunks of the ebook all at once, it’s a good idea to consider some alternatives for your posting schedule since you don’t want to sacrifice your content (now is the time to build your audience, not neglect them!) while you’re writing the ebook.

Here are a few ideas:

Build a queue of posts.

Before you start writing your ebook, begin filling a queue with posts that you can spread out throughout the ebook writing process. You’ll obviously want to choose evergreen content rather than time sensitive material so that it’s still relevant when you hit publish, but getting 4-6 posts written ahead of time can give you one less post to write for many weeks or a couple weeks’ worth of content for the whole week.

Feature guest posters.

Another strategy is to invite guest posters to share on your blog, which can be a win-win as they send you traffic and you send them traffic. It’s important to keep your standards high when evaluating guest posts and not just accept crappy content just to avoid having to write posts yourself, but this is a great time for networking and partnering with other bloggers as well.

Republish old content.

And finally, this is a great time to republish some of your most popular posts from the archives. You

probably want to stick with posts that are at least a year old, but republishing posts is a great way to give them new life and take a break from writing.

From [Tsh Oxenreider](#):

My traditional books take quite a bit longer to write, because they're longer. But with both, I hunker down and do nothing but write for a short amount of time. For my ebooks, I've taken about two weeks and swept aside almost everything else on my calendar for the sake of creating it (that includes writing, editing, etc.). My book-writing is the same, though I write the outline and about a third of the book here and there for several months, with the final two-thirds or so written in about a month.

[Read Tsh's full case study interview here.](#)

The Importance of Editing

While writing is incredibly important because your ebook won't happen without it, editing is an equally important step once your words are written.

I personally do not believe that all writing needs to follow grammatical rules to a T – in fact, some of the best writers throughout history break those rules on purpose – but it's important that your writing be clear and crisp and that any stylistic choices you make are made intentionally and not out of laziness or poor editing.

The reason editing is so important is because it has a huge effect on your credibility. If readers have trouble making sense of a sentence you've written, or there are glaring mistakes in word choice (they're instead of their or there, for example), you tend to lose credibility right off the bat, no matter how good your ideas or information is.

Some editing is less objective and more stylistic, done to make the words and thoughts flow better so that readers don't feel like they have to work to understand your point as they read.

The key, then, is to spend an equal amount of time editing your words as you've actually spent writing them so that you can make your point concisely and clearly.

Things to Watch for When You Edit

When you're reading through the words you've written, you'll want to do several pass-throughs:

On one, you'll consider the big picture: Do your ideas flow throughout the book? Are the transitions between paragraphs and chapters smooth? Is your point clear? Does it address your target audience?

On another, you'll double check your facts and research. Have you verified the facts you mention? Are your sources cited correctly?

And finally, you'll consider things like sentence structure and word choice – eliminating unnecessary words, breaking up run-on sentences, adding commas where needed.

If you try to catch all of those things on a single read through, you'll end up missing plenty of each, so focus on one at a time instead!

From Mary Carver, [professional editor](#):

Commas and hyphens and capitalization, oh my! Seriously, punctuation isn't just for nerds. Correct punctuation makes your book more easily and accurately read and understood. In the bigger picture I find a lot of writers unintentionally use weak writing, starting sentences and phrases with "empty" words like "there." "There" doesn't really mean much and most uses can be eliminated to make stronger, more compelling copy.

[Read Mary's full case study interview here.](#)

Hire an Editor

The ideal approach to editing is to make several read-throughs of the ebook yourself before sending it off to a professional editor to be edited. There will still be plenty for them to critique and edit – I promise! – but they'll be able to do a better job once you've already cleaned it up a bit.

A professional editor not only has the skills to catch mistakes and help guide you through word choices and style issues but also brings an objective, fresh eye to the project, something writers tend to lose the more familiar they become with their own words.

From Sandra Peoples of [Next Step Editing](#):

John E. McIntyre (editor for The Baltimore Sun) says, "If you're your own editor, you're working without a net." You can do it, but it's risky. It's almost impossible to catch every mistake you make when writing. You often read what you meant to write instead of what you may have actually written. Especially when you've been working on the same book for months and the words start blurring together because you've read them so many times.

[Read Sandra's full case study interview here.](#)

While an editor may seem like an unnecessary expense, it's one of those investments that pays off in the future as people enjoy, trust and share your work. This is especially true if you want to write multiple ebooks since people are more likely to buy a second ebook from you if the first one they get is well-written!

You'll need to keep this process in mind as you plan your launch date. It's a good idea to contact an editor early to find out how much time they'll need with your ebook and how far in advance you need to book their services. Editing needs to be done before the final design and layout, and before the ebook is exported into various formats, because editing can change the lengths of sentences and paragraphs, which can change the way they show up on the page.

Alternatives to a Professional Editor

If hiring an editor is simply not in your budget, there are a couple of other alternatives as well:

Read your words out loud.

Reading the words you've written out loud helps you avoid the trap of reading what you meant to write instead of what you actually wrote. It also allows you to hear the flow of words and sentences, catch repetitive words and other "minor" grammar mistakes that might have slipped your notice in other read-throughs.

Have a friend or colleague read through your manuscript.

Consider swapping manuscripts with another ebook author. Or have a friend or family member read through your manuscript and offer honest feedback. This works best on a shorter ebook since asking

someone to read and edit a 50,000 word ebook for free is probably not realistic, but many people enjoy getting a sneak peek at an upcoming project in exchange for offering their feedback.

Provide advanced copies to readers & bloggers.

A popular approach for cookbooks or other project ebooks is to simply provide loyal readers or other bloggers with an advanced copy of a single recipe or the entire ebook and wait for their feedback. This is a great way to get real feedback on your content before you actually offer it for sale and to build a relationship with readers by including them in the process!

A Few More Tips Before You Get Started

And here are just a few more things to keep in mind as you're working on your ebook:

Quoting Other Writers and Citing Sources

When writing nonfiction, one challenge authors face is deciding how and when to refer to the writings of other experts and authors. Quoting or paraphrasing other documents is a good way to establish credibility for the facts and ideas you're presenting, although you don't want to rely so heavily on other people's works that it doesn't feel like you have any unique or individual ideas of your own.

Use direct quotes when you want to highlight the perspective of another expert and when the language itself contributes to the idea or meaning of the passage. Quotes should always be attributed to their original author.

When referring to an idea that's not tied to specific wording, it's often better to paraphrase the thoughts in your own words, especially if you can do so more concisely or more clearly. When paraphrasing, it's still important to refer back to the source unless the information you're paraphrasing is well known and generally accepted as true.

For example, if you're writing a beginner's sewing ebook, you might start by defining various terms. Your research may include reading how other authors define those terms before rewriting them in your own words. In this case, since the terms are widely used and understood, there's no reason to refer to a specific source. However, if you add a term that has been coined by one particular author, you'll want to reference that author specifically in relation to that term to be sure that credit is given where credit is due.

If your ebook includes a lot of research, you will also need to know how to cite various sources. While the APA Style is generally used in academic settings, The Chicago Manual of Style is more commonly used in publishing, and you'll find details about [citing sources using this style here](#).

Setting – and Meeting – Deadlines

Do you prefer to work on a project to completion and *then* set a launch date or to set a launch date and work toward that date?

While we've talked about not rushing a product to launch if it's not ready, deadlines and launch dates can be great incentive to actually make progress on a project rather than procrastinating and stretching the project out so long that it becomes a drain on your creativity.

I'm a fan of setting realistic but firm launch dates from the beginning. I've met all of my launch dates in the past simply because I begin talking about those dates, planning my promotion and coordinating with other bloggers ahead of time, and working toward a deadline makes me more productive!

It's not enough, however, to set a launch date three months in the future and hope you'll be ready in time. Instead, create smaller, bite-sized milestones along the way so that you have a realistic picture of how much you need to get done each week to stay on track. This may be a general word count, specific chapters to complete, a certain number of recipes to test, etc., but the goal should be measurable and concrete.

I'm also a fan of setting outside accountability with my goals – for example, telling recipe testers that I will have X number of recipes to them per week or asking my assistant to review X number of chapters per week – so that I feel that outside pressure to stay on track even when I'd be tempted to procrastinate otherwise!

Monetizing Your eBook

The best way to monetize your ebook is to sell lots of copies – ha! But there are a few other ways you can maximize your profits within the ebook as well:

Work with a sponsor.

My personal philosophy is that only free ebooks should have sponsors because I want readers who are paying for content to trust that the information and recommendations they're receiving are unbiased. That's one reason why this course doesn't have any sponsors, even though I've been approached by multiple professionals about sponsorship.

On the other hand, some sponsorships work out beautifully. For example, Sarah Mae offset the initial costs of her [31 Days to Clean ebook](#) by working with [ListPlanIt](#) as a sponsor. While a cleaning supply brand might have posed a conflict of interest as a sponsor of a cleaning ebook (because readers would wonder whether Sarah Mae truly recommended those products or was just paid to say she did), Jennifer from ListPlanIt actually provided specific checklists and printables that supported the exercises in the ebook in exchange for including her branding on those checklists. That's really a win-win for everybody involved because Sarah Mae was paid for the sponsorship, ListPlanIt received the branding and promotion within the ebook and on the microsite, and readers got quality checklists and printables to go with the book content.

Include affiliate links in the ebook.

Including relevant affiliate links within the text of your ebook is a popular recommendation for authors, and one I've used myself when recommending products or services, but I've recently discovered that Amazon's terms of service actually state (emphasis mine):

*"6. You will not engage in any promotional, marketing, or other advertising activities on behalf of us or our affiliates, or in connection with the Amazon Site or the Program, that are not expressly permitted under the Operating Agreement. For example, you will not engage in any promotional, marketing, or other advertising activities in any offline manner, including by using any of our or our affiliates' trademarks or logos (including any Amazon Mark), any Content, or any Special Link in connection with an offline promotion or *in any other offline manner (e.g., in any printed material, mailing, email or attachment to email, or **other document**, or any oral solicitation).*"*

While I've read through the terms multiple times, I never fully understood that this section, especially the part I've italicized above, referred to including links in ebooks, but Jenae from I Can Teach My Child actually emailed Amazon for confirmation, and their response, as noted [in her post](#), was:

"You should not place an Amazon Affiliate link within your book. However, you may add the link to your website within the content of your book."

That means that I need to update Easy Homemade to eliminate the affiliate links I did include, and I won't be including links in future ebooks, despite the potential earnings!

I have not looked into the rules of other affiliate programs (since there are so many of them!), so you will want to be sure to read those terms carefully before including any affiliate links in your ebook.

Upsell other products and services.

We talked about this a little bit in the first module, and upselling is actually a pretty big opportunity if you offer a variety of products and services, but it's one you want to handle carefully.

Just as publishing a sponsored ebook can make readers question the authenticity of your content, pushing them too hard to buy other products and services from you turns your ebook into a long sales letter rather than an independent product.

A better approach is to include references to those products and services only when very relevant and add a short "ad page" to the end with more information about what else you offer, much like the pages at the end of traditionally published books that include information about other books or series from the author or publisher.

One of my pet peeves as a reader is when a book refers briefly to important, relevant information and then tells you how to access that information by buying another product. While there's a place for cross-promoting related products, a paid ebook should not contain partial information simply to serve as a sales platform for another product. It needs to be complete and able to stand on its own if people are paying for it!