

Subject line: The POD Small Run Revolution

Friday Income Opportunity Review

# THE POD SMALL RUN REVOLUTION



**How You Can Now Turn Ideas Into  
Real-World Products Without  
Big Budgets or Risk**

Hi NAME

A few weeks ago I went to see a friend's band play in Shoreditch.

Afterwards, there was the expected bout of celebratory drinking in the venue bar.

There I got talking to an interesting chap.

He runs his own seedling stall as his main business.

But he also likes to make music, and told me that he'd just self-released an album on vinyl.

I was slightly taken aback by this, as I know that physical vinyl releases used to be something that only record labels can afford to do.

Usually, self-released stuff comes out on digital creator platforms like Bandcamp.com.

But things have changed.

The continued rise in popularity of Print On Demand has created opportunities for physical products that would have been beyond reach only a few years ago.

The guy I talked to at the bar told me that he had used a POD business called [ElasticStage.com](https://ElasticStage.com) to release his album on vinyl.

There are no upfront costs to stump up, and no need for minimum orders.

Once uploaded, the album gets its own page that you can promote to friends, subscribers or social media followers ([this is his album page](#))

When somebody orders, Elastic Stage makes the product and ships it out within a few weeks. They also handle customer services, lost packages and replacements for faulty and broken goods.

In return they take a percentage of the revenue after the cost of production.

An album costs around £27-£33.90 for customers who buy online via the website.

That might sound expensive but actually this is similar to the price of many new releases in record shops these days.

For each online sale, the creator will earn 20% of the retail price, which means each sale makes £6.80 profit (from a £33.90 record).

However, the creator could ALSO order a bulk-batch box of LPs from Elastic Stage at a discount.

For example, a box of 50 albums would cost £20 per unit.

Which means they could sell the record at gigs with a £13.90 profit each time.

Okay, so it's not the road to mega riches.

BUT it's a fantastic way to make a small side income from something you enjoy doing anyway.

Not only that, but you could end up with an impressive physical product of which you'll be proud,... and which you can share with family and friends...

A legacy to hand down to your children and grandchildren!

## **The Small Print Run Revolution**

Things are moving fast in the world print-on-demand.

New platforms and services mean it's now possible to create small runs of physical products that were once prohibitively expensive to make.

What's more you don't need the skills and time it used to require.

You can outsource to online freelancers or use AI tools for anything that you find tricky, including design, editing, copywriting, illustration and marketing.

Doing a small-run vinyl release of your own music is just one example.

If you're creative in any way – or you love books, art, fashion or design – then there are other ways you might be able to turn your interests and passions into a physical product.

## **Books, Zines & Magazines**

You could consider turning any of the following into beautiful, limited edition, short-run volumes...

- **Novels, short story collections, poetry and plays** – if you write for fun, why not turn your creations into something precious to share?
- **Photobooks**– even iPhone snaps of walks through towns and countryside could make for great photobooks, particularly if you focus on a niche.

- **Zines & Fanzines** – you could share your interest in music, culture or sports. Perhaps you have a band, film genre or fashion style that you're obsessed with. It doesn't even require any writing, as you could share clippings, gig tickets and photos.
- **Comics and art** – you could create comic strips and artbooks, either using your own work or combining your ideas with AI.
- **Cookbooks or Recipe Collections** – you could document family recipes or make themed food journals (e.g. vegan baking favourites).
- **How-to Booklets** – you could share knitting patterns, gardening guides, or fitness routines.
- **Community, Political, Charity or Event Magazines and Newspapers.**
- **Calendars, planners & Notebooks**

Printed books and magazines are easy to make through print-on-demand.

For traditional books, you could try:

- [Amazon KDP](#) - KDP prints on demand with no upfront inventory and deducts the print cost from your royalty. A 200-page black and white paperback might cost £2.85 to print, but then you choose your list price and royalty of 50% - 60%).
- [IngramSpark.com](#) - You can upload your book for free, set UK/EU/US prices, and then reach thousands of retailers including indie bookshops.
- [BookVault.app](#) - This Peterborough-based company can print anything from a single-copy to a run of hundreds, even thousands. They specialise in “book of one” manufacturing and can produce a single copy in less than 24 hours.

Or if you want to branch out into a wider range of physical formats, then try:

- [Lulu.com](#) - Lulu prints books, comics, photo books and calendars via a global network including services in the UK, You can also pair

up Lulu Direct with Shopify, WooCommerce or Wix to sell direct from your own website. Lulu will print and ship to customers automatically.

- [Photobubble](#) - This UK-based company offers POD services for photobooks, calendars, notebooks, mugs and all kinds of personalised gifts.
- [Mixam + PrintLink](#) - Mixam's PrintLink service lets you create a public page for products, including books, magazines, comics and zines, artbooks, photobooks and pamphlets.
- [ExWhyZed.com](#) - Another good option for zines, photobooks and comics. You can print from a single copy upward with fast turnarounds (zines often within 3–4 working days).
- [Doxdirect](#) - This company specialises in booklets, manuals and loose-sheet zines. You can choose from multiple bindings including saddle-stitch, perfect and spiral.
- [Blurb](#) - Blurb can make you books, magazines, and photo books with shipping to the UK. They can also offer you services via [MagCloud](#), which is excellent for short run magazine publishing.
- [Newspaper Club](#) - With this company you could make your own newspaper – anything from 1 to 1,000 copies, with fast UK delivery. Choose from broadsheet, tabloid or mini formats, printed on recycled paper.

## Clothing and Accessories

I've written a lot recently about print-on-demand items like mugs and t-shirts. But you could also consider creating more unusual, high value niche items.

For example, limited-edition embroidered hoodies, a short run of eco-cotton tote bags to sell at a festival, or a line of premium T-shirts with bespoke artwork that you sell at £30 each.

You could use:

- [Printful](#) - They've got a fulfilment centre in Birmingham, which means UK buyers get fast delivery (around two days).

- [Inkthreadable](#) - This Blackburn-based company will give you 50% off your first sample order (so you can see your creation before you sell it). They ship worldwide and use biodegradable packaging.
- [Gelato](#) - offer sustainable products with recycled papers, eco options, and integration with Shopify or Etsy.
- [Gooten](#) - They offer the usual T-shirts, hoodies and mugs, but also less-common products like bandanas and aprons.

## Toys, Games & Stationery

There is also scope to make short run gift products like toys, games and stationary. For example:

- [Budsies](#) This company is based in the US but ships to the UK. It is famous for allowing people to turn children's drawings into soft toys. But they also create plushies, mascots and custom characters in one-offs or small runs. You could use this to create unique toys that you can sell as high value gifts, souvenirs, or collectables.
- [TheGameCrafter.com](#) - This is US-based but also ships to the UK. It lets you design and order a single copy or small runs of board games and jigsaws.
- [BoardGamesMaker](#) - Another international POD service for card games, board games, and custom accessories and components like dice. You could also check out [PrintPlayGames.com](#)
- [Printed.com](#) - This printer offers short runs of premium cards, invitations, and stationery, with finishes like foil stamping, embossing, and spot UV.
- [Thortful](#) - This British card marketplace lets you upload designs and earn royalties when customers order. So you could create bespoke wedding invitations or thank-you cards, personalised business stationery, or limited seasonal editions (Mother's Day, Christmas and birthdays).

## Custom Fabrics and Homewares

Fabric design used to be the preserve of big textile houses.

You'd need an order of thousands of metres before anyone would fire up a printing press for you.

Today, that's been turned on its head by a couple of print-on-demand services:

- [Contrado](#) – A London-based company, with over 450 custom products. You can print fabric by the metre or apply your design to ready-made items like scarves, cushions, pyjamas, or curtains.
- [Spoonflower.com](#) – This is US-based but ships worldwide, including the UK. You upload your design (a photo, a pattern, a doodle turned digital), choose fabrics (cotton, linen, silk, jersey, wallpaper, even peel-and-stick decals), and they print it by the metre.

Both platforms also allow you to upload designs to their marketplaces, meaning other people can buy your patterns and you get a royalty on every sale — so you can earn money without ever ordering physical stock yourself.

You could sell...

- **Quilting fabrics** – Upload a collection of patterns (floral, geometric, retro) and sell them to crafters on Etsy. A metre of cotton fabric could fetch £15–£25.
- **Wallpaper & wall decals** – Spoonflower does rolls of wallpaper, while Contrado can produce wall hangings and murals.
- **Fashion fabrics** – Create a run of patterned silk and market it to small sewing businesses.
- **Upholstery cotton** - for cushions, curtains, or beanbags.
- **Seasonal collections** – Christmas themed fabrics, Halloween prints, or items for Valentine's Day.

These are all classic print on demand opps.

But if you have some skills and time to spare, you could broaden out into other kinds of homeware.

In the past, if you wanted to design a new chair, lamp, or cushion, you had to cough up for an expensive factory prototype. But thanks to digital fabrication and makerspaces, you can rent time on machines to create short runs or even one-off products. For example...

- [Makerversity](#) - A professional workspace for makers and designers with access to wood, metal, textiles, and digital fabrication tools.
- [FabLab Plymouth](#) - University-based but open to the public; offers 3D printing, CNC milling, and laser cutting.
- [Cambridge Makespace](#) – A large community workshop offering everything from ceramics kilns to electronics labs.

You could consider laser-cut acrylic lampshades... plywood chairs, stools, or shelves... Laser-cut slate coasters... or ceramic 3D-printed bowls, candle holders or vases.

## **What Could You Create?**

If today's email inspires you, my advice is to focus on your passions and interests, and think of something that YOU would want to see in the world.

Remember, you're not trying to appeal to a lot of people – or sell large numbers of products at low prices.

With short run products your aim is to create unique items aimed at a targeted niche, who will be willing to pay above the usual price for something special.

If you do have an idea for a potential short-run product, feel free to send me the details and I'll give you my opinion!

Best regards

Nick