

Squarespace releases new features focusing on 'everything to sell anything' to consumers

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Until a couple of months ago, lifestyle blogger and podcast host Alisha Leben would readily admit that she wasn't the best video editor when it comes to creating content for her Squarespace-built website.

But after beta testing the user-friendly website host and e-commerce platform's Video

Studio app, Leben said her professional-quality-looking videos have led to an increase in traffic on her site and podcasts by about 50%. She

added that sales of her graphic T-shirts and hats have spiked as well.

"I've just been able to plug-and-play," said the Miami-based Leben about the video app, which is among a suite of new features and updates Squarespace released on Wednesday.

"Instead of fearing the worst," Leben added. "I'm making the most out of it and it's been wonderful."

She's an example of Squarespace's new "Everything to Sell Anything" campaign which includes the new and updated [product features](#) for subscribers. The changes come amid a mad scramble for [small businesses](#) and entrepreneurs seeking to cash in on their side hustles to increase their online presence as the pandemic lingers.

With nearly 4 million subscribers, Squarespace said it has seen its revenue increase 31% year-over-year. The platform also said it has seen an increase in several categories, including health and fitness during the pandemic.

The goal of the new and updated product features is to give subscribers more tools to sell goods and other services to consumers online, Squarespace CEO Anthony Casalena told U.S. TODAY. He cited a survey Squarespace conducted with the Harris Poll earlier this year asking Americans what type of business would they start in this current climate.

Their top responses were selling services such as teaching a class, offering advice, and tutoring rather than selling a physical product, Casalena said. The survey also finds that 60% of Generation Z and 62% of millennials say that how you present yourself online is more crucial than how you appear in person.

Also, the survey found that Americans are becoming more invested in the online world, especially millennials and Gen Z. That data coincides with Squarespace's new and updated features allowing its users to better sell access to gated content, schedule reservations, take to-go orders, and manage an event.

"We think features give our customers even more ability to take their economic destiny under their control," Casalena said. "I like our positioning."

Noted photographer Cam Kirk said that Squarespace's strategic positioning is "immensely" serving his business well. He recently beta-tested Squarespace's updated Scheduling feature on the website for his popular and always-busy downtown Atlanta-based photo studio.

Kirk said his 3,000-square-foot full-service studio within [walking distance](#) to Atlanta's Mercedes Benz Stadium books about 600 appointments a month (sometimes as many as 40 appointments on weekends). The studio is a hub of creativity and innovation ranging from photoshoots, tutorials, art shows, pop-up shops to community focus groups, he said.

Additionally, Kirk said his studio has served as the locale for many celebrity shoots and music videos for the likes of actor Samuel L. Jackson to hip-hop stars Lil Baby, Migos, Moneybagg Yo and Lotto.

Kirk said that means he and his staff always have to "stay ready" as celebrity-related events can often come at a moment's notice given their often hectic and unpredictable schedules.

"We have to be very fluid as I can get a call from a client saying, 'Yo, I need to come to the studio in 30 minutes. You got space?'" Kirk said.

He added that the Squarespace Scheduling feature allows him to collect details about his clients to share with his staff. This may include how much lighting is needed, whether a solid-colored or no backdrop is necessary, whether clients need to use the entire studio, and how many people are coming?

"It's super vital for us as we try to make our clients' experience that more personal," Kirk said.

Squarespace head Casalena echoes a similar sentiment.

"It's always been about helping our customers establish their online presence and thriving in the process," he said.

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