



STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL MEMBERSHIP SITE MEMBERCOME

*How To Make \$100,000 Per Year
With A Membership Site*



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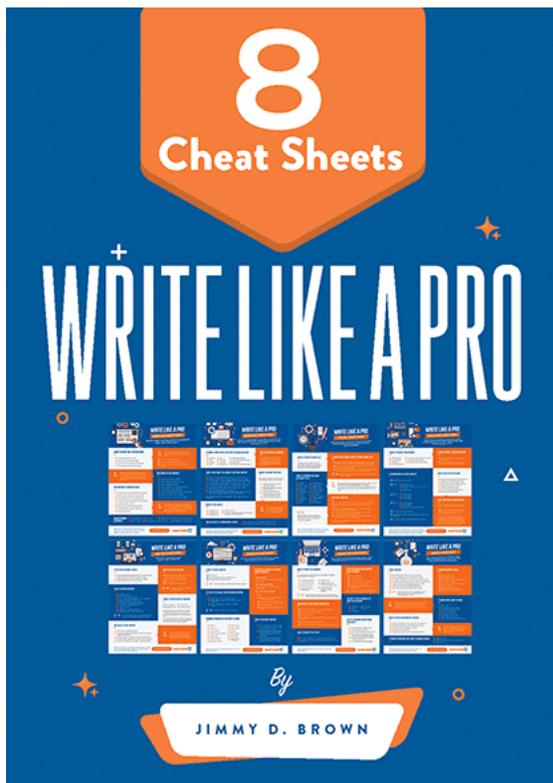
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Lesson One

How To Make \$100,000 Per Year With A Membership Site

Welcome to the *Membercome* course, where you'll learn how to set up and run a \$100,000 per year membership site.

Important Disclaimer & Sidebar: Now, that's not to say you WILL make \$100,000. No one can guarantee that, obviously. In fact, I don't guarantee you will make a single penny from a membership site. Let's be clear about that from the beginning. But what I can guarantee is that by the time you're finished with this course, you'll know the same steps and strategies that other six-figure membership site owners like myself use every day to run their businesses – and you can use this information to create your own membership site. Results will vary.

To that end, this course is going to start out by walking you through the five essential components of a membership site. These components include:

1. Market Criteria.
2. Model Choice.
3. Metrics Calculation.
4. Member Content.
5. Monthly Calendar.

Let's take a closer look...

Component #1: Market Criteria

The first thing you will want to do is pick your target market, your topic, your slant (USP) and your brand.

The short version is this...

Who do you want to help, and how will you help them?

I'm a big believer that a business of any kind (including membership sites) should produce two outcomes: **benefits for the customer and profits for the owner.**

Your membership site should help your members solve their problems, reach their goals and / or enjoy their interests while generating revenue for your business.

So...

Obviously, this first step of making the right selections is a pretty big deal. It's key.

- If you choose a small market or one without any money to spend, you're going to find it difficult to make money yourself.
- If you choose a topic that no one is interested in, your site is going to have little to no demand.
- And if you don't set yourself apart with a really good unique selling point and brand, then your competitors are going to get paying customers instead of you.

That's why "market criteria" is important and why I suggest you focus your attention on what will bring the greatest benefit to others and profit to yourself.

SIDEBAR: It's wonderful to help people for free. There will be times to do that in and through your business, but in terms of making a difference in the lives of the most people and generating the most revenue (which can be used to help people for free and on things that matter most to you), it's important to focus on large, lucrative markets rather than smaller ones that have less people and less interest.

We'll talk about all of this and more in the next lesson. But for now, let me give you a couple of quick ways to gauge interest in a membership site topic...

- 1. Develop a "lite" version of your membership site. Create a month's worth of membership site content that you sell as a standalone product to test how well the product (the content, format, price point, etc.) converts. Once you have it nailed down, launch a membership site which delivers ongoing content in a similar offer.*
- 2. Do a "lite" promotion for a competitor. Find a membership site similar to the one you intend to create, and do a small promotion as an affiliate. This will earn you some quick commissions while allowing you to gauge interest.*

Again, we'll talk more about "market criteria" in an upcoming lesson.

Next...

Component #2: Model Choice

Your next decision revolves around what type of membership site to set up. For example, are you going to set up an ongoing membership site? A fixed-term site? A vault-style site? Or something else?

- If your topic can be completely explained in a just a few months, there is a model for you.
- If your training is so comprehensive that it needs to be delivered in tiny doses so it can be understood and used, there is a model for you.
- If your membership involves heavy community interaction in order to be successful, there is a model for you.
- If your offer includes a suite of ongoing and open-ended tools and training, there is a model for you.

- If your audience wants more “instant gratification” and less waiting for long-term installments, there is a model for you.
- If your own preferences and personality work best with “doneness” OR “open-endedness,” there is a model for you.

There are lots of options, one of which is sure to be a good fit for you and your audience.

That’s where you’ll want to start: think about your audience, the type of content you want to deliver, and your own lifestyle. This will help you decide the best model for you.

For example, if you like to travel all over the world (specially to remote sites), then an ongoing membership site may not be a good fit for you. That’s because this site has ongoing virtual demands which can be difficult when you’re trying to get a signal during a backcountry expedition! Solution? You might do better with the “set it and forget it” fixed-term model, which is a much more hands-free way to run a profitable site.

We’ll discuss these options and more in Lesson #3.

Component #3: Metrics Calculation

Making \$100,000 with a membership site isn’t a lucky accident. It starts by you figuring out what you’re going to charge per month, and then figuring out how many members you need to get to your target income.

Here’s my recommendation...

Aim for 500 members at \$20 per month.

That’s a reasonable number of customers to acquire, and at \$20 per month, these customers are expecting quality, but they’re not expecting the sun and the moon. This is a price point where meeting expectations is very doable and shouldn’t overwhelm you with monthly commitments.

Remember, the goal that I said all businesses should aim for is “benefits for the customer and profits for the owner.” These numbers are really good for accomplishing both of those goals: helping 500 people every month and bringing in \$10,000 in revenue per month ticks both boxes.

Which brings us to the next point as we consider what kind of help you will need to provide for your members in order to bring benefit to them and keep the profit coming in for you...

Component #4: Member Content

Your content is going to be what attracts people to your membership site, and keeps them as active members for the long term. That’s why you need to take great care in planning out your content, and that’s why Lesson #5 is going to cover 12 types of deliverables your customers will love.

Now here’s an important tip...

No matter what sort of content you deliver to your members, you need to give your members a big reason to maintain their membership. To that end, do the following:

- Research your market so that you’re delivering content that you’re absolutely certain your audience wants.
- Deliver high-quality content that helps them solve their problems, reach their goals and / or enjoy their interests.
- Always deliver the content on time.
- Try to share tips and strategies your audience can’t find anywhere else (or at least present information in a way that is unique to you).
- Share your personal experiences and other niche-relevant stories, which personalizes your membership and makes your content more unique.

The bottom line is this: people will join your membership site because they believe you can help them. Your objective is to prove them right.

And finally...

Component #5: Monthly Calendar

Here's where a lot of membership site owners fail: they build their site fast with a burst of enthusiasm, and then they just sort of sit back and expect the site to keep growing magically, all on its own.

It doesn't work that way.

In order to keep growing your site (helping more people, generating more income), you need to take consistent steps every day with an eye on growth. This includes:

- Creating new content for your members.
- Doing the marketing to acquire new members.
- Supporting your existing members so they'll stay members.

Here's the key: don't try to grow your site in bursts. This is a marathon, not a sprint, so you'll get better results working consistently rather than sporadically.

It's also essential that you learn to focus on what's important and avoid busywork.

For example, don't get bogged down for hours commenting on social media while convincing yourself that you're "growing your business." Instead, set goals, create to-do lists, and stick to your schedule so that you don't get sidetracked. You want a "balanced attack" that devotes time and effort to all of the important areas of your membership site business. Be sure to track these things so you can see what is working and what isn't.

Be sure to check out Lesson #6, where you'll learn more about creating a calendar with the aim of growing your site.

YOUR NEXT STEP

What you've seen so far is an overview of where this course is going to take you. Your assignment for this lesson is to start thinking about your "market criteria" by answering the question that I posed in that section: *Who do you want to help, and how will you help them?*

P.S. Throughout this course I'll be referring to the membership site at ContentCreationU.com for a real-life case study example of what your membership site can look like by pointing out how I've personally applied the training in my own business.

Lesson Two

The 4-Part System For Creating A Unique Membership That Stands Out

Welcome to Lesson #2, where we're going to take a closer look at the first step in creating a \$100,000 membership site business, which is to determine your *Market Criteria*. The four parts include determining:

- Your market.
- The topic.
- The angle/slant.
- The brand name for your site.

As I mentioned in the overview, this lesson is all about answering this fundamental question...

Who do you want to help, and how will you help them?

Let's jump in...

Part One: The Market

The first thing you need to determine is your target market (your audience) for your site.

You can start by brainstorming your own problems, goals and interests. If you want to expand this brainstorm, then also consider the problems, goals and interests of your friends and family.

For example, if you like to scuba dive, there's a potential market. If a co-worker is adopting a baby from overseas, that's a potential market.

Or if your friend is struggling to get traffic to their website, that's another potential market.

You can also just think about some of the popular, evergreen markets such as:

- Weight loss.
- Travel.
- Hobbies (golf, car restoration, home improvement).
- Investment/finance.
- Business / marketing.
- Career/job.
- Computers.
- Self-improvement.
- Anti-aging.
- Family/kids.
- Relationships/marriage/divorce.
- Physical and mental health issues.
- Pets.
- Fitness.
- Cooking.

Any of these are great places to start because they are “*evergreen*” with longstanding proof of staying power in terms of popularity and profitability.

Every membership site should be built on accomplishing one of these key objectives...

1. Helping members solve a problem.
2. Helping members reach a goal.
3. Helping members enjoy an interest.

Start there.

Of course, what you'll want to do is focus in on a smaller target market and address one specific topic within that niche. That's what's next...

EXAMPLE: The target audience / market that is the focus of the membership site at [ContentCreationU.com](https://www.ContentCreationU.com) includes ANYONE who does any kind of business online (membership site owners, coaches, course creators, bloggers, ebook authors, etc.)

Part Two: The Topic

The second thing you need to figure out is what your membership site is going to be about – i.e., what topic?

Here's where you turn to market research. That's because the best way to figure out what topic is going to be beneficial for your audience and profitable for your business is to look at what sorts of content your market is already buying.

- To that end, enter your market keywords (such as "weight loss") into the search boxes of marketplaces such as ClickBank.com, Amazon.com and Udemy.com.
- You can also search Google for your keywords alongside words like "membership site" (or other infoproducts such as "course" or "ebook"). Take note of which topics are popular and profitable (e.g., they are bestsellers, and there are plenty of competitors).

For example, you may find that "weight loss for women over 40" is a popular, profitable topic. Or perhaps you find a topic such as "training service dogs" seems to be popular and profitable.

Other than determining if a topic is profitable (i.e., your market is already buying content on the same topic), ask yourself these questions:

1. Is this a topic that interests me?

It's best if the topic not only interests you, but you also have some experience with it. That way, you can share your own unique insights and experiences. This isn't required, but it is definitely a big advantage. If there are a number of solid options available, always go

with something you are already experienced in and knowledgeable about.

2. *Would this topic be a good fit for a membership site?*

You need to pick a topic around which you can create a lot of content (such as a training site with multiple lessons). In other words, if all you can create around a topic is one slim report, then that's not a good fit for a membership site.

Don't worry if there's competition, as that's just a sign that the topic is popular and profitable (which is a good thing). You'll separate your site from the competitor's site in the next step.

EXAMPLE: For ContentCreationU.com, I chose the topic of "content creation" because I'm considered one of the leading experts on the subject, having sold multiple millions of dollars worth of digital content over my 20+ year career. That's what I know best and am best able to teach to others. The retention rate at CCU (how many members remain active) is incredibly high because members get a "content creation education" that is super helpful and unlike anything else in the world.

Part Three: The Angle

What you need to do in this step is determine your angle/slant/USP (unique selling point). This is the one thing that makes your membership site different and better than your competitors' offers.

Take a look at the competing information products in your niche, and then ask yourself the following questions. (Take note that you may not be able to fully answer these questions until you review the rest of this course.)

1. Do you have a unique qualification to teach this content?
2. Have you pioneered any strategies, come up with new tips, or are able to offer unique stories or insights regarding the niche?

3. Have you developed a unique “formula” or “system” around a process?
4. Have you coined any new phrases related to the niche?
5. Are you the only one delivering this content via a membership site?
6. Is your pricing unique in some way?
7. Do you offer any unique bonuses?
8. Do you offer anything like “certification” that sets your site apart?
9. Is your customer service unique in some way?
10. Does your site serve a unique segment of the market?
11. In what other ways is your site unique/different?

The point is this: you want to offer a compelling reason for people to join YOUR membership site instead of looking at other solutions.

You can help them; you just need them to believe that you can help them. But not only that, you need them to believe that you are the best option to help them.

There are a lot of people who will offer them help; why should they pick you?

EXAMPLE: There are a number of unique things about my membership site at ContentCreationU.com. As previously mentioned, I’m well-known as a content creator / provider (people around the world license my content) with a 20-year track record (not many people in the world have been doing what I do as long as I’ve been doing it). And there is the title “Content Creation U” (see Part Four below). But there is also something else unique about the membership. I offer a “3 For 1 Matching Program” where members automatically receive extra exclusive products and resources each month that match the price they pay for the regular monthly modules,

AND they also get a graduation package (again, exclusive resources not found elsewhere) that matches what they paid for the year's training.

That brings up another important point: the more unique aspects of your membership you can offer, the better. As you review the questions above, strive to choose a topic where you can incorporate as many of the angles as possible. What you'll have in the end is truly something unique that simply cannot be found elsewhere.

If your audience wants it, they'll have to get it from you.

And finally...

Part Four: The Brand Name

The last thing you need to do is create a memorable brand name for your site. If you've pioneered and named a strategy, that's a good option for a brand name. If you can develop a brand name around any other part of your USP, that's good too.

EXAMPLE: The name "Content Creation U" was chosen for the membership site at ContentCreationU.com because it expresses two key ideas: that it's all about "content creation" and that it is an in-depth training program similar to a course of study at a university ("u" is short for "university"). Or as I like to refer to it, it's a "content creation education."

Here are three quick ways to create a brand name...

1. Combine two related words to create a brand name.

For example, look at this course: Membercome. That's a combination of "member" (or "membership") and "income" combined to create one memorable nickname.

2. Use alliteration to create a brand name.

For example, let's suppose your membership site is all about ultramarathon training. You might choose the name "Workouts That Work." The double letters starting with the letter P sound good together when said out loud.

3. Nichefy proven models to create a brand name.

Look at existing membership sites in other niches and tweak them slightly to create your own brand name. For example: you might look at the name "Nicheology" (my initial PLR site from waaaaay back in the day) and name your membership site "Marathonology." Do a quick search at Google for "popular membership sites" and brainstorm ideas. Just be sure that you don't plagiarize anyone's name. IE You can't name your membership site Chick-fil-A Chronicles ... that would be trademark infringement.

YOUR NEXT STEP

For this lesson, your assignment is to research, plan and develop the four market criteria you just learned about. Specifically:

- Who is your target market?
- What is the topic for your site?
- How will you set your site apart from competing offers in your market?
- What is the brand name?

Set some time aside to do some researching, brainstorming and planning on these issues. Don't move on to the next lesson until you've answered this all-important question...

Who do you want to help, and how will you help them?

After that, I'll see you in the next lesson.

Lesson Three

The 5 Best Models For Faster, Easier And Better Memberships

Welcome to Lesson #3, where we're going to look at the next component of starting a membership site: *Model Choice*. This is where you're going to take a look at your business goals and your topic in order to decide the best membership model to fit your needs and meet your members' needs.

We'll be building upon the answer to this foundational question that we posed in lesson two...

Who do you want to help, and how will you help them?

Today, we'll be focusing on choosing a type of membership site that will best enable you to provide that help to your members.

With that in mind, let's take a look at five of the best and most popular models...

Model #1: The Drip-Feed (Ongoing) Membership Site

This is one of the most popular types of membership sites. It works like this: your members pay a regular fee (usually monthly), and in exchange you, deliver new content to them on a weekly or monthly basis.

Because this membership site goes on indefinitely, it works particularly well for two types of content:

1. *Big, sprawling topics.* For example, a site teaching people how to make money online is such a big topic that you could produce new material every month for years.

2. *PLR/resell rights sites.* Here's where you produce products with resell rights or private label rights for your members to use and resell. You can run this sort of site indefinitely.

.... Or any other site where you have the capacity to deliver fresh content each and every month for the foreseeable future.

One big advantage of this style of membership site is that you have a lot of backend sales opportunities (as long as the person remains a member). In other words, you get an opportunity to promote another related offer every time you deliver new content to your members to further help them and grow your business.

For example: If you provide a monthly training module to your members in exchange for their membership fee, you could also promote related resources such as tools, coaching, licensing, and services that would provide additional benefit at an extra cost for those who want more.

However, the churn rate (the number of people dropping out) can be high with an ongoing membership site. There are ways to reduce the churn rate (aka increase retention rate), which we'll talk about later in this course.

One way to improve retention/reduce churn is to select a different membership model, especially the fixed-term model. Which brings us to the next point...

Model #2: The Fixed-Term Membership Site

The premise behind this site is that you deliver new content (and members pay their monthly fee) for a set amount of time, such as three months, six months, one year or more. This works great for sites where you're delivering a set amount of content, such as a training site.

Example #1: You might set up a 12-month training site that offers a monthly module to help new homeschoolers through their first year of home education.

Example #2: You might set up a 6-month training site that offers 24 lessons (one per week) on the topic of generating web traffic.

Example #3: You might set up a 4-month training site that offers multiple short lessons every week on the topic of training for a 100-mile ultramarathon.

The advantage of doing a fixed-term membership site over an ongoing site is that the retention rate tends to be higher. That's because people see an end in sight, so they want to finish what they started. (And that means more membership fee profits in your pocket, as well as opportunities to sell related offers on the backend.)

For example, if you set up a membership site that goes on indefinitely, you'd probably have people dropping out after an average of three months. If you set up a fixed-term site that goes for six months, you'd have more people sticking around and paying their membership fee for the full six months (which doubles your money in this example, not including backend opportunities). Of course, the longer they stick around, the more help you provide for them too ... making not only profit for your business, but also making a difference in their lives for their good.

And here's one more advantage: you can run your entire membership through your autoresponder. Just upload your content to a hidden place on your website, and then use your autoresponder to deliver links to this content on a weekly basis. Easy peasy.

With this model, you don't need a membership platform or plugin.

It's a true "set it and forget it" model. Once you set up the series of content pieces, you have no more ongoing content creation commitments. You can focus on member acquisition so new members are continually joining.

EXAMPLE: The membership site at ContentCreationU.com is a 12-month "fixed-term" membership site (FTM) consisting of 12 monthly modules of 10 lessons each (120 lessons total throughout the

year and over 1,000 pages of content) plus other resources (checklists, cheat sheets, worksheets, templates, etc.).

Next...

Model #3: The Vault Membership Site

Here's where you collect a large amount of content and deliver it all at once to members.

Depending on your topic, members may like this because they get **instant access** to all of the content in the membership site.

Example #1: You may deliver a complete course and all the bonuses at once for members to access.

Example #2: You may deliver a large digital library of related training lessons at once for members to access.

Example #3: You may deliver a collection of resources such as checklists, templates, cheat sheets, worksheets, swipe files and so forth at once for members to access.

A big advantage of this type of membership site is that it can impress, excite and motivate your members when they see all the content of the membership site at once.

Two downsides of this style of membership are...

1. While the fee for this type of membership site will be higher than an ongoing monthly membership site, you only get paid one time.
2. Since you're not delivering new content weekly or monthly via email, your members may stop reading your future emails.

NOTE: Which means you lose ongoing influence in their lives to continue helping them and ongoing opportunities to promote related resources of interest to them.

However, you can get around this by being sure to create an onboarding sequence, and then continue sending good content regularly in order to train your members to continue to open your emails.

For example: You might send new tips, tools and other valuable content every week, which keeps members happy and keeps them opening your emails every single week.

Model #4: The SaaS Membership Site

The software as a service membership site gives people ongoing access to software in exchange for a monthly fee. An example of this is your autoresponder, where you pay a monthly fee in exchange for access to the platform that helps you manage your list, capture new leads, segment them, send them emails, etc.

This works well for any type of software that people are likely to use on a regular basis (especially weekly), as then they'll remain members because they feel like they're getting their money's worth.

For example, you might sell access to a meal planning and exercise-tracking platform. Active members get access to the software and the data the software collects (e.g., their past meals, fitness routines, goals, etc.), while those who cancel lose these benefits. In fact, a "tracking progress" platform in just about all markets (especially in conjunction with content) is a good option for a membership site as it helps customers work towards an outcome and visualize their journey.

And finally...

Model #5: The Coaching/Community Membership Site

Here's where you offer access to a community in exchange for a monthly fee. You might set up a private forum or Facebook group where members can get support and ask questions from their peers as well as from you (via group coaching).

Example #1: You might sell access to a weight-loss support group for people who are trying to lose weight.

Example #2: You might offer group-coaching to people who are setting up their own portable businesses so they can work from an RV.

Example #3: You might set up a membership community for people who want to home educate their children.

The advantage of this sort of membership site is that people don't want to drop out because they receive personal support and are part of a community of like-minded people who encourage and help one another. And that means you tend to have a higher retention rate. You can, of course, also promote related offers directly in the group (as well as via email).

YOUR NEXT STEP

Now it's time for you to choose your model. Think about your audience and the type of content you'd like to deliver to this audience. Also consider your goals for the membership site (e.g., do you want to "set it and forget it" to avoid ongoing monthly content creation commitments?). Then ask yourself, which membership model is the best fit for your content, audience and goals?

Lesson Four

Perfectly Profitable Pricing – Nailing Down Your Monthly Fee Structure

The next component of setting up your membership site is to do your *Metrics Calculation*. This is where you crunch a few numbers in order to figure out...

How much you'll need to charge your members in order to make your desired income.

First, we'll start by looking at different pricing models to see what sort of content your members might expect at each price point. Then we'll do a few calculations to help you arrive at the most suitable price point for your particular site.

Let's jump in...

PART ONE: Pricing Options and Expectations

There are a number of monthly pricing models from which you can choose. Some of the most common include:

- \$9.97 per month
- \$19.97 per month
- \$47 per month
- \$97 per month

Before you pick a price, you need to consider **what type of content and value you'll be offering**. Obviously, someone who's paying \$97 per month is going to have a much higher expectation regarding the quality (and possibly quantity too) of content versus someone who's paying \$19.97 per month.

Let me give you a general idea of what your users may expect at these different price points:

1. The \$9.97 Per Month Price Point. This is a relatively low amount for a membership site, so your customers might expect something as simple as one new report per month.

2. The \$19.97 Per Month Price Point. This is another common price for a membership site. Your customers might expect one of the following:

- A new mini-course or module.
- A set of four (weekly) lessons.
- Access to a support group.

Or something else that's easily worth around twenty dollars per month.

SIDEBAR: This is a good spot for me to say something important... A guiding principle that I use in my own business which I now recommend to you is this: compete on value, not on price. In other words, don't try to be the "low price leader." In most niches, you won't be the only person providing content to the audience. A common temptation is to find the lowest priced competitor and offer something at an even lower price point. This. Is. A. Mistake. You will almost certainly find it too difficult to reach the financial numbers that make the membership site sustainable. Don't try to outdo competitors by offering your materials at lower prices; try to outdo them by offering greater materials at a value to your audience.

3. The \$47 Per Month Price Point. At this price point, your customers are going to expect a little more. For example, they might expect one of the following:

- An in-depth guide or course.
- Two shorter ebooks or modules.
- A combination of training and access to a group.
- Access to software.
- A package of resources.
- Licensing to content.

4. The \$97 Per Month Price Point. Your customers' expectations are going to be even higher at this price point. You may offer one of the following:

- Access to a high-end piece of software (the type a business might use).
- Coaching.
- Advanced, in-depth training.
- A done-for-you service.
- A combination of high-end content, coaching, and/or access to a support group.
- Licensing to premium content.

...or something similar.

Figure out what you intend to offer, and then do your pricing research to determine how much people charge for something similar in your niche. Your goal is to **give people a lot of value** to keep them satisfied.

For example, if you see others charge \$19.97 per month or so for what you plan to offer in your membership site, you may overdeliver and add a few more member benefits.

One question that I always get is this...

Which price point do you recommend?

The purpose of this lesson is to provide some framework for answering that question. When you consider the options that are available, the expectations of each price point, and the revenue goals for your membership site, you should be able to make a good decision for a price point.

However, I know that some people simply want an answer. So, here it is...

\$19.97 per month is the price point that I recommend for most "typical" membership sites.

This is a nice sweet spot to set most people up for success. Let's see if the numbers back this up...

PART TWO: Profit Calculations

The next thing you need to do is run the numbers in order to figure out how many members you need at \$X per month in order to hit a goal of \$100,000 per year.

SIDEBAR: As you recall, this series of ten lessons is all about learning what it takes to create a \$100,000 per year membership site. If your goals are different (higher or lower), then simply adjust the calculations to fit.

Now, in order to calculate this correctly, you need to figure out your expenses. These expenses include:

- The cost to create content (if you're outsourcing).
- Webhosting.
- Autoresponder.
- Marketing expenses.
- Customer support.
- Any other expenses, such as purchasing membership scripts, outsourcing something not mentioned here, etc.

Generally, your **webhosting and autoresponder** costs are pretty minimal, ranging from about \$30 to \$60 per month on average (more if you build a really large list).

Your **customer support** depends on if you've hired any independent contractors. If you're just getting started, you may be able to field inquiries yourself or hire someone on a very limited basis (e.g., maybe a couple hundred dollars per month to get started).

Marketing expenses depend on whether you're using paid advertising, such as Facebook Ads, pay per click (Google) or other ads. This varies widely depending on the platform, your niche and how many ads you place. You could spend anywhere from thousands per month to as little as \$25. As such, you'll need to fill in this number yourself based on your needs.

Note: If you already have an existing customer base from other existing products and services, then you may not need an advertising budget to begin with as you will seek to convince your subscribers and customers to join your membership site. Or, if you plan to use free advertising such as an affiliate network, joint ventures or guest blogging, your advertising budget can be minimized or even eliminated.

That leaves **content creation**, which is likely to be your biggest expense if you don't create it yourself. This too will vary, depending on how much content you need and how much your freelance writer charges.

For example, if you need just one report or ebook per month, you might spend anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a thousand or more (depending on the length, topic and the freelancer's rates).

How about a possible scenario?

Let's suppose you spend \$1500 per month outsourcing content. That means your content creation costs are about \$18,000 per year. Let's add another couple thousand dollars for the other expenses mentioned above.

For this example, your grand total is \$20,000 for expenses. That means you need to make \$120,000 annually in order to clear \$100,000 in profit per year.

Now you need to do your calculations to determine how many members you need to clear \$100,000 based on how much you're charging per month.

My recommendation?

Charge \$19.97 per month and aim for 500 members, which will give you the six-figure income you're looking for.

(That works out to just about \$120,000 per year - \$20,000 in expenses = \$100,000 net revenue).

EXAMPLE: The monthly fees for my ContentCreationU.com membership site is \$19.97 per month with a "3 for 1" special offer where I "match" your monthly fees with extra exclusive bonuses throughout the year, and then I match it again after you "graduate" in 12 months with a massive bonus. Bottom line: You pay \$19.97 per month and get \$19.97 + \$19.97 + \$19.97 per month in materials. It's actually more than that, because each "base" of monthly materials is about 60-80 pages of "no fluff, no filler" training that would be sold at much more if I packaged it as a standalone product. Again ... value, value, value. That's how you get new members and keep them active.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Now it's time for you to crunch your own numbers. For this exercise, we'll assume you want to make \$100,000 per year (net) on the frontend of your business (for now, we're not going to calculate backend revenue). Answer these questions:

- How much are your autoresponder and webhosting fees?
- How much do you expect to pay for content creation?
- How much do you expect to pay for customer support?
- How much do you expect to pay for marketing expenses?
- How much do you expect to pay for all other expenses?
- What is the grand total of these expenses per year?
- How much will you charge per month?

- How many members do you need to get in order to arrive at a six-figure net income? (E.G., Your membership fees – expenses = \$100,000 yearly.)

Go ahead and crunch those numbers, and then I'll see you in the next lesson.

Lesson Five

12 Ideas For Monthly Deliverables Members Will Anticipate And Love

You've been planning your membership site, including your niche, the topic you'll be focusing on, and even how much you intend to charge for access. Now here's the next question: in what format will you be delivering your content? This lesson is all about *Member Content* options.

Check out these 12 ideas for monthly deliverables that your customers are sure to love...

Idea #1: Training Lessons (Articles)

Here you can deliver training articles via email, post them on a private blog, or share them in a password protected members' area at your site. You might aim for one per week, for a total of four per month.

For example, if you have a membership site covering traffic generation, each week you may send out a new article covering a different tactic (e.g., Facebook marketing, pay per click advertising, SEO and guest blogging).

Idea #2: Report

Here's where you deliver a report, typically to teach someone how to do something. There are two options that make for a good series of reports...

1. Same topic, different step. Each month you would provide a detailed report sharing how to take the next step toward a single objective.

Example: If you are helping home educators through their first year, you might offer a report on planning out the calendar in month one, to be followed throughout the year by other reports related to establishing healthy routines, handling discipline,

connecting with other home educators and so forth.

2. Same topic, different method.

Example: If you have a membership site devoted to the topic of "weight loss," you might deliver a report each month that teaches a different way (than the others in the series) to shed extra pounds. Month one might be about nutrition and calories, month two about boosting metabolism, month three about HITT (high intensity interval training), and so forth.

Idea #3: PLR Licensing

This is where you deliver content with licensing rights, which means your customers have the right to modify, giveaway and/or sell the content in whatever way suits their business (you decide the terms, which they agree to prior to purchasing the license). Your PLR content can take a wide variety of forms, including:

- Courses
- Reports
- Articles
- Emails/autoresponder series
- Tools (worksheets, checklists, etc.)

And similar. You might even deliver a "business in a box" each month, such as a course with PLR licensing, a sales letter to sell it, and extra marketing materials such as blog articles and emails.

Idea #4: Accessory

These are tools that you provide to your members. These accessories may take the form of:

- A checklist.
- A worksheet.
- A template.
- A swipe file.

- A planner.
- A mindmap.
- A cheat sheet.

For example, every month you might send members of an online business owners' membership site a new set of email templates that they can "fill in the blanks" to promote their businesses.

Take note that you can deliver the same type of accessory every month (such as delivering a planner each month), or you can deliver a different type every month (e.g., a planner this month, a checklist next month, a worksheet the month after, etc.).

Idea #5: Toolkit

Here's where you deliver a new collection of tools to members. These might be tools your members use directly, or tools that your members pass on to their customers. (Such as when you provide meal-planning tools for fitness trainers to pass on to their fitness clients.)

For example, you might give coaches/consultants a new toolkit each month, such as:

- *A client acquisition toolkit that includes things like a keyword list, ad templates, a traffic generation checklist, a content creation worksheet, etc.*
- *A client transformation toolkit that includes things like questionnaires, intake/assessment/other forms, a list of exercises, a swipe file of feedback examples or assignment examples, etc.*

Here's another valuable deliverable...

Idea #6: Group Coaching Q&A

Here you provide answers to your members' questions, which you deliver in a group-coaching setting. You may deliver these questions and answers by email, on a private blog, or inside a private group. (Note that delivering

them on a blog or in a group/forum is preferable so that members can ask follow up questions. This interaction helps create loyal members!)

NOTE: Ideally, this would be a "live" session initially and then made available to view on demand in the members' area of your site.

Where do you get the questions? Primarily, you can solicit them from your members. You can also answer frequently asked questions that you've encountered in the past.

Idea #7: Video Tutorials

Video tends to have a higher perceived value than text-based content, which makes this format a great choice for higher end membership sites. It's also a great option when you need to demonstrate something to your members.

For example, if you're teaching about classic car restoration, you can present a new tutorial every month that teaches people how to do things such as replace the headliner, fix the horn, convert a car from 6v to 12v charging systems, and similar.

Idea #8: Ready-Made Lessons

This is a "done for you" offer where you create lessons for people to use to save time and money. For example, you can create:

- *A set of lesson plans for homeschoolers.*
- *A set of lessons for Bible school teachers.*
- *A set of lessons for daycare providers to give to kids for educational enrichment purposes.*
- *A set of lessons for "continuing education" teachers to give to their adult students.*

- *A set of lessons for marketing teachers to give to their weekend workshop students.*
- *A set of lessons for life coaches to give to their clients for establishing new habits.*

And similar.

Idea #9: Podcast

Audio tends to have a higher perceived value than text content, which makes a podcast seem more valuable than a comparable article or report. Indeed, you can deliver “how to” and other content via a podcast. This strategy is even more beneficial to members if audio enhances the delivery.

For example, if you’re teaching people how to speak French, then obviously this is easier to do via an audio as opposed to text content.

Idea #10: Newsletter

Here’s where you deliver a newsletter via email every week or every month. Typically, a newsletter has multiple pieces of content contained within it.

For example, you might create a weight-loss newsletter with one featured article on the topic of eating “clean,” alongside a shorter article about cardio exercise, and a couple smaller features (such as three low-calorie recipes and a meal plan).

Idea #11: Mastermind Group

Here’s where you pull together like-minded individuals who can help each other achieve a similar goal.

For example, you might put together a group of aspiring entrepreneurs who can bounce ideas off one another (and you).

Idea #12: Graphics

Here you create graphics for your customers to use in one of these two ways...

1. For your members to use directly (such as bloggers who need graphics to place on their own blogs).
2. For your members to give to their customers (such as ecover designers to use to create Kindle book covers for their clients).

YOUR NEXT STEP

Time to plan your content. Ask yourself this: what types of deliverables would best serve your business model, your audience and the type of content you need to deliver?

Here is my recommendation...

Create a membership site that delivers a monthly module in PDF format.

That's what I do myself...

EXAMPLE: I offer a monthly "module" through my ContentCreationU.com membership site that consists of 10 lessons (approximately 60-80 pages per month) in various categories related to content creation. Plus, there are an ongoing set of other tools provided throughout the year as well. All of the content is available exclusively for CCU members only and cannot be obtained elsewhere.

Of course, you don't have to deliver as much content as I do. You might deliver a 15-20 page module per month.

I find the "PDF of the month" model to be the best option for combining both "ease" and "effectiveness" in a membership site. It is not difficult to deliver a module each month, and the retention rate is solid (assuming the content is good enough to keep 'em coming back).

One final thing...

Keep in mind that you can deliver a mix of content. For example, you might have a site where you deliver a new training article each month alongside a group coaching session. As such, detail your strategy thoroughly... and I'll see you in the next lesson.

Lesson Six

How To Manage Your Membership Process Every Month

We've now reached the fifth component you need to snap into place to run your membership site, which is your *Monthly Calendar*. Here we'll talk about the three things you need to do every month, including:

- Sourcing, which is where you create the content for your membership site.
- Sales, which are the marketing activities you need to complete to get more members.
- Support, which is servicing and satisfying existing customers (which helps with retention and backend sales).

Let's look at each of these three separately...

Monthly Activity #1: Sourcing

Here you have multiple options for sourcing your content, including:

- Do it yourself.
- Outsource it.
- Use PLR to create your content.

No matter what option you choose, you need to develop a consistent schedule so that you get your content out on time every month.

TIP: It's a good idea to have at least one extra month of content on hand at all times, just in case something happens and you can't deliver the current month. In other words, give yourself a cushion in case you fall ill, your freelancer falls ill, or something similar happens.

For example, if you need to create one new report which you typically deliver at the beginning of every month, then halfway through the previous month, you need to set aside enough time to create the content. (Or to hire a freelancer and check on their progress.)

Here's the next component that needs to find a place on your monthly calendar...

Monthly Activity #2: Sales

This is where you take consistent steps every day you work to generate new customers.

Here's my advice: start by picking just ONE advertising method, implement it fully, and be sure you're getting good results. Once you're getting good results, then you can add another method.

For example, this month you may set up an affiliate program. In a month or two (once that's getting consistent results for you), then you can add paid advertising. Once you're getting good results with paid advertising, then you can add another method, such as guest blogging.

Once you have these various methods set up, then you'll take additional steps to keep them running and getting results. For example:

- For an affiliate program, your tasks will include recruiting new affiliates and creating fresh marketing materials for your marketing partners.
- For guest blogging, your regular tasks will include finding new blogging opportunities and creating new content for these opportunities.
- For paid advertising, your tasks will include tracking and testing your ad campaigns to improve your conversions and profits.

As always, you don't need to do this yourself. You can outsource some or even all of your marketing tasks to freelancers.

Monthly Activity #3: Support

For this task, you'll need to allocate enough time every month (or hire someone) to staff your customer support desk. If you offer any group coaching (either as the main offer or the bonus), then you need to set aside time for that as well.

For example, if you have minimum inquiries, then you might answer customer support questions at two or three set times per day (such as 9:00am, 1:00am and 5:00pm).

If you outsource this task, then you need to set aside time to check if your staff has any questions for you that they're unable to answer. Initially, you'll also need to set aside time to train your staff.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Planning Your Monthly Calendar...

So, now that you know the three main activities that must appear on your monthly calendar (Sourcing, Sales and Support), it's time to develop your custom calendar. Here's a worksheet you can use to plan it...

Sourcing

What content do you need to create each month?

How long is this content (e.g., how many words or pages)? _____

Will you do it yourself or outsource it? _____

How long will it take you to create this content? (Be specific in terms of hours, and give yourself a wide cushion if you're not absolutely sure how long it will take.)

Sales

Which marketing method do you intend to implement first? _____

List all the steps you need to take to set up this method: _____

How long will it take to set up? _____

List all the steps you'll need to take to maintain or grow this method: _____

Now answer these same questions for your second marketing method, third marketing method and so on. Be sure to list the set-up steps as well as the maintenance steps for each method.

Support

How much time do you need to set aside daily to answer support questions?

What times of the day will you answer these questions? _____

If you're not already outsourcing this task, at what point do you plan to begin outsourcing it?

Overall

How much time will all these tasks take you? _____

Note: if you don't have enough work time scheduled, then you'll need to outsource.

Creating Your Calendar

Now you need to plan your calendar.

1. Start with your support tasks, since you'll likely do those at fixed times (such as checking inquiries three times a day as mentioned above).

2. Secondly, plan your content creation early in the day to be sure you meet your deadlines.
3. Third, add in your marketing activities during the second part of your workday.

Let me give you an example of what a typical day might look like. Your day may look quite a bit different depending on what you've outsourced and what marketing methods you're pursuing.

9:00am: Answer support inquiries

10:00 – Noon: work on content

(Lunch)

1:00pm: Answer support inquiries

1:30 – 5:00: Marketing activities

Example breakdown:

1:30: Guest blogging set up: search out new guest blogging opportunities.

2:00: Send inquiries to these potential opportunities.

2:30-3:30: Create an article for guest blogging purposes.

3:30-5:00: Do ongoing tasks for your other methods, such as monitoring paid campaigns, posting a tip on social media, creating an ad for affiliates, etc.

5:00pm: Answer support inquiries.

(Off for the day.)

Again, that's just an example. Go ahead and create your own daily and weekly schedules, and then compile them to create your monthly calendar. Note that when you've completed your content creation for the month, then your entire day will focus primarily on marketing activities.

See you in the next lesson...

Lesson Seven

The Top 7 Plugins And Platforms For Super-Simple Site Setup

If you're not particularly technically inclined, then the thought of setting up and maintaining a membership site might give you that feeling of dread.

Now here's the good news:

There are plenty of plugins and platforms that make it super simple to set up and maintain your site.

Let's review seven of them right now...

Plugin / Platform #1: MemberPress

This is a popular and powerful WordPress plugin that you can use to create your membership site. It has a lot of great features, including the ability to offer coupons, reporting so you know what's working, and the ability to create multiple membership levels with ease. Read more about this solution at www.memberpress.com.

Plugin / Platform #2: DigitalAccessPass

This is another powerful membership site that works with WordPress, with the added benefit that you can use DigitalAccessPass even if you're not using WordPress. This is the script that invented content dripping for membership sites, plus they have a lot of other great features such as download protection, easy integrations and more. See them all at www.digitalaccesspass.com.

Plugin / Platform #3: LearnDash

Here's another WordPress plugin which is primarily designed to deliver courses to customers. It has a drag and drop course builder, payment

integrations, and Zapier integration so you can automate your site. Check out all the features at www.learndash.com.

Plugin / Platform #4: MemberMouse

This solution is a plugin that makes it easy to sell products, subscriptions and memberships on your WordPress site. Features include content protection, one-click upsells, tracking, automated customer service and more. Read about all the details at www.membermouse.com.

Plugin / Platform #5: RestrictContentPro

This is a full-featured WordPress plugin that makes it easy to protect your content and serve it up to your members. Features include easy integrations, automation, discount codes and more. Learn more at www.restrictcontentpro.com.

Plugin / Platform #6: WishListMember

This is a WordPress plugin trusted by nearly 100,000 users, and it makes it easy to set up a membership site. It integrates with a wide variety of email providers and payment processors, plus it gives you everything else you need like reporting, and ease of setting up your membership levels and content scheduling. Learn more at www.wishlistmember.com.

Plugin / Platform #7: aMember

Amember is not as “beginner friendly” as the other options mentioned above, but I include it in this list because it’s a robust option that gives you a lot of flexibility to create any sort of membership site, and it will scale as your business grows. If you want some power, and you’re technically minded (and/or you’re outsourcing your site’s development), then you’ll want to check out www.amember.com.

EXAMPLE: I personally use Amember Pro as the platform for running my ContentCreationU.com membership site.

While it would be easy for me to simply point you to one of these options and say, “*this is the one – get it,*” I’m not going to do that. These are all great options, but the one that is the best for you is the one that you feel most comfortable using that has the features that you most need.

That’s why YOU need to spend a few hours evaluating the options listed and make a decision that only you are in a position to make. Do that now.

Then...

Getting Everything Set Up

Once you choose your membership platform, then you need to get everything all set up.

Now, there are too many variables here (membership model, platform, payment processor, etc.) to detail exactly how to set up your site. No course can cover all these variables.

That’s why I’m going to give you an overview of how to get set up, but you’ll need to refer to your specific platforms in order to get more details and instructions for each specific platform.

Here’s an overview of the basic steps...

1. *Get a domain name.* Be sure to select a .com name that’s brandable and memorable. (IE A name that matches your membership site name.)
2. *Secure webhosting.* Stick with the big, well-known webhosts that pride themselves on reliability (uptime) and good customer service.
3. *Change your domain name servers.* Your webhost will give you a set of two nameservers. Go to your domain registrar’s dashboard to change the existing nameservers to the ones given to you by your webhost. This step will connect your domain name and host, so that your site is visible on the web. (Check with your registrar for detailed instructions

on how to do this.)

4. *Install WordPress.org (where applicable).* If you're installing WordPress, refer to their complete onsite instructions. You can also select a theme from their extensive catalog of themes (both free and premium options available).
5. *Install your membership site platform.* If you're installing a plugin, this is as easy as downloading the plugin and then activating it (just a couple clicks of your mouse). As always, check the platform user's manual for more information.
6. *Customize your site.* Again, check your platform's user manual for more information about how to customize the form and function of your new membership site.
7. *Integrate your payment processor.* Most platforms make it easy to integrate the most common payment processors, such as PayPal, Stripe, 2Checkout and similar options.
8. *Integrate your autoresponder.* Likewise, most membership platforms make it easy to integrate your autoresponder (provided you're using a well-known third-party service).

A quick note: If you do not know how to complete the "technical" steps (even after reading the specific instructions your platform provides), don't let this get you stuck. Instead, outsource this to someone who does this all the time. It shouldn't cost more than a couple hundred dollars. Many platforms will offer setup as a service for an additional fee. Alternatively, you can find a freelancer at a site like upwork.com.

And now let's wrap things up...

YOUR NEXT STEP

Your assignment for this lesson includes:

- Review and research the various membership site platforms and plugins mentioned above.
- Choose the platform that's a good fit for you.
- Get your site set up using this platform. (You can outsource it if you'd like.)

For best results, refer to the user manual or setup guide for the plugin or platform you choose. See you in the next lesson!

Lesson Eight

The Profit Trifecta: 3 Keys To Maximizing Membership Profitability

So, imagine this...

Your site is up and running. (Yay!) You've got a set of initial members. (Woot!) You're making some money. (Yahoo!) You're helping people. (Awesome!) This worked out exactly like you hoped that it would.

Now what?

Is that where you stop and rest on your successes? No way! It's time to take things to the next level. 😊

What happens next is that you need to maximize your membership profitability. Primarily, you do this in three ways:

- Churn reduction.
- Creation of backend offers.
- Customer acquisition.

Let's look at these three profitability factors separately...

Sidebar: Hold on for just a minute before you move on. It's easy to focus so much on profit for your business that you lose sight of something of equal importance, and that's benefit for your audience. While this lesson is going to share three ways to maximize profit, don't forget that in doing so you'll also be maximizing benefits. Think about this...

- *When less people drop out of your membership site, that means you get to continue helping them solve their problems, reach their goals and enjoy their interests.*

- *When members purchase additional products from you, that means you get more opportunities to make a real difference in their lives.*
- *When greater numbers of those in your niche join your membership site, that means you get to help people that you previously weren't helping.*

Yes, all three of these strategies will increase your profit. But they will also increase the benefits to those you are serving. Your business can be both a money-maker AND a difference-maker!

1. Churn Reduction

The first thing you need to consider is how to **reduce churn** (meaning reducing the number of people who drop out of your membership site). Or another way to put it is you need to **improve your retention rate**.

So, how do you do this? Check out these two ideas...

Create an Onboarding Sequence

One big reason people cancel their membership is because **they're not using it**. That's why you want to create an onboarding sequence of emails which does the following:

- Reminds them of the benefits of their membership.
- Encourages them to start using their membership (such as by specifically pointing them to one resource in the site, building anticipation for it, and then encouraging them to consume/use it).
- Offers a quick-start guide (especially useful for a vault-style site that has a lot of content, which can be overwhelming).

Next...

Offer Unadvertised Bonuses

Another way to reduce churn is by sending unadvertised bonuses from time to time. This creates satisfied (and delighted!) members who'll stick around for a longer duration.

You can also send out strategic advertised bonuses. For example, you might set up monthly bonuses and a "graduation bonus" for your fixed-term membership site to keep your customers as members for the entire duration of the training.

EXAMPLE: For my ContentCreationU.com membership site, I give people two kinds of bonuses to increase retention: First, there is a monthly "matching" bonus where members receive an exclusive product that is valued at the price of their monthly fee. Second, there is a "graduation" bonus that is valued at the price of what they paid for the entire year's worth of monthly fees. This keeps people active. Few people want to miss out on a \$240 free bonus that awaits at the end of the 12-month membership!

NOTE: See the next lesson for more information about improving retention rates.

Meanwhile, check out this next profitability factor...

2. Creation of Backend Offers

The next way to boost your profits is by creating related backend offers. Indeed, depending on how your membership site is set up, you may make the majority of your membership income through your backend offers.

The key here is to create a variety of offers.

If you're delivering a set of lessons, then each lesson should promote a related offer. These offers could be infoproducts (ebooks, videos, courses, other membership sites), tools (checklists, worksheets, templates, planners, etc.), coaching, or even services.

For example, if a particular marketing lesson talks about how to set up a Facebook ad campaign, then you might promote a set of Facebook ad templates.

Or if a dieting course talks about developing a nutrition plan, you might offer personal coaching to create a custom nutrition plan.

Or maybe a resource in your membership site is about replacing the headliner on a classic car, in which case you pitch a headliner replacement tool that makes the job easy.

Point is, you'll do best if your backend offers are **directly related to whatever piece of content the member is currently reading**. You can promote these backend offers:

- Directly within your lessons or other content.
- Inside the membership site (including in any private groups/forums).
- Via any emails you send to members.

Now let's look at the third factor for boosting profitability...

SIDEBAR: Offer an exclusive discount code for your members to apply to these additional products. This serves two purposes: First, it adds value to your membership site by giving an additional perk. Second, it encourages members to buy because they receive a better price than non-members. I give ContentCreationU.com members 50% off every product of mine.

3. Customer Acquisition

The third item that will improve your site's profitability is to acquire more customers. In other words, **get more members**.

Here's the thing: your content-creation costs are fixed costs.

That means they remain the same whether you have 50 members or 500 members. As such, the more members you have, the more money you make (and the content-creation costs don't change).

Here are a few ideas to acquire more customers...

Set Up an Affiliate Program

There are plenty of marketers who have huge platforms, which you can leverage in exchange for a nice commission (preferably a recurring commission). For best results, go out and personally recruit the super affiliates in your niche to join your affiliate program.

Create a Referral Program

Your satisfied customers may be some of the best advocates for your site, which is why you'll want to consider setting up a referral program. For example, you can offer your current members free months of membership in exchange for every two paying members they refer to your site.

Use Paid Advertising

Another good way to acquire new customers is via paid advertising. This includes Facebook ads, Google ads, and purchasing advertising on niche sites. Be sure to test and track all your campaigns so that you're only putting money into profitable ads.

Do Guest Blogging

The idea here is to find high-quality blogs in your niche that accept guest content, and then create engaging content that the publisher is sure to love. You'll want to create a "useful yet incomplete" post – one that is useful so that readers can solve part of their problem, but one that is incomplete so that it naturally leads to your membership site.

For example, you might create a post for a dieting blog called "Five Proven Ways to Rev Up Your Metabolism." You'd then provide a link to your dieting membership alongside a call to action. E.G., "If you liked

these five tips, then you're going to LOVE the support and results you get when you join the net's best weight-loss support group for women over 40. Click here to check it out right now, because we're waiting to help you create a slimmer version of you."

***NOTE:** See Lesson #10 for specific, proven ideas on how to rapidly acquire new customers.*

***EXAMPLE:** Every module from ContentCreationU.com has a reference to one of my other products. People LOVE the CCU membership and, as such, readily buy many of my other highlighted products, even choosing to license those products to sell as their own.*

YOUR NEXT STEP

Time for you to think about how you're going to boost your site's profitability. Ask yourself these questions:

- In what specific ways will you reduce churn?
- What types of offers will you sell on the backend? (Be specific.)
- How, exactly, will you promote these backend offers?
- In what specific ways will you acquire new customers?

Take a few minutes and work on your membership's profitability plan. And then I'll see you in the next lesson...

Lesson Nine

Retention Secrets: 5 Ways To Keep Members Active Month After Month

Keeping your existing members happy and active month after month is the key to a profitable membership site.

Not only do these existing members keep paying their membership fees every month, but they also put even more profit in your pocket by taking advantage of your backend offers.

Remember: the more benefit you provide for your members, the more profit they will provide for your business.

That's why you'll want to check out these five ways to keep members active, satisfied, and paying their membership fees...

1. Unlock Additional Content Strategically

The idea behind this strategy is to unlock content after a certain period of time has elapsed.

Hint: Your goal is to identify what month is the most common cancel point, and then unlock content that keeps members active AFTER that point.

For example, if you find that you have the highest churn rate right before people enter their fourth month of membership (i.e., they cancel after three months), then you'll want to unlock bonuses and other content during month number four. These should be highly desirable, highly valuable bonuses that keep members engaged and looking forward to the next round of unlocked content and bonuses (which may happen every two months thereafter, as an example).

2. Use Exams and Certificates

Another way to keep members active is to offer exams after members have completed a course or other training, and then provide certificates that show they've completed the exam at a satisfactory level.

You can do this simply as a symbolic gesture to members, meaning the certificate doesn't confer any direct benefit to the member. It works as a symbolic gesture, simply because people feel good about getting any sort of certificate that reflects their hard work (especially if you send a physical copy in the mail).

NOTE: Alternatively, you can create a more stringent program where your certification means something in the niche. This requires more legwork (to get others to recognize your certificate), but it's also not necessary in order to keep your members engaged and active.

If you create a fixed-term membership, then this is a perfect scenario for you to offer some kind of one-page document **certifying the completion** of your training program.

EXAMPLE: [ContentCreationU.com](https://www.ContentCreationU.com) members receive an attractive, fun "degree" document when they "graduate" from the "university."

It may not mean much in the eyes of the world, but it can mean a lot to your members to know that they have successfully finished the course.

Here's the next idea...

3. Offer Exclusive Resources

For this strategy, you want to create highly valuable tools and resources that are **ONLY** available to people when they log into the membership site. In other words, these resources cannot be downloaded and used offsite.

For example:

- Access to a private group or forum.

- Web-based software and other tools (only accessible through your site).
- Streaming (non-downloadable) videos.

In short, provide something really valuable that's only accessible to members, and you'll have members sticking around for the long term.

4. Provide Live interaction

Still another way to not only boost the value of your site but increase retention is by making yourself available to your members. Here are ways to do this:

- Create "office hours" each week where people can contact you with questions.
- Offer live webinars to field questions and/or teach a specific topic.
- Do group-coaching sessions.
- Interact on the membership forum or group.

Naturally, take into consideration the membership cost when you plan how to offer live interaction. E.G., you don't want to offer one-on-one coaching with members if you're only charging \$20 per month.

5. Avoid Common Mistakes

In order to boost your retention rate, you're going to want to avoid the most common mistakes that can sink your membership site. Take a look...

Mistake #1. Substituting Quantity for Quality Content

Sometimes membership marketers decide that the key to high retention is to inundate their members with content.

Sure, providing a lot of content is a good thing in general. But it needs to be AWESOME content. If you pile a heap of junk content on your members, they're going to be canceling their memberships faster than you can say, "What on earth just happened?" 😞

Point is...

Be sure EVERY piece of content in your membership site is valuable, desirable, useful, and the highest quality.

This means it should not only solve a problem, but it should also be presented in a professional manner (e.g., proofread and professionally designed).

Here's the next mistake...

Mistake #2: Providing a Poor User Experience

When people log into their accounts, they should be logging into a membership site with a clean, professional design and intuitive layout and navigation. They should also have easy access to everything they've paid for, as well as to your help desk/customer service. All links and scripts should be in perfect working order.

Point is, if your site's interface frustrates users, or if they otherwise have poor user experience, they're going to bail on you.

Note: If you don't have the skills or time to create a good experience for your members, then outsource the site design and maintenance to a competent professional. It's worth the small investment.

And finally...

Mistake #3: Focusing on New Customers Instead of Existing Customers

A lot of beginning membership site owners have a "churn and burn" mentality. This means they focus almost entirely on getting new members, to the point that they begin to neglect their existing members.

But here's the thing...

The easiest sale you'll ever make is to sell another month in your membership or a backend offer to your existing customers.

That's why you'll want to put all the above retention tactics to work to create satisfied, happy customers who'll buy from you again and again.

EXAMPLE: As mentioned earlier, with a [ContentCreationU.com](https://www.ContentCreationU.com) membership, you not only get the massive monthly training module, but I always give members exclusive extras every month that are equal to the value they pay for the modules. (One example is a "Course Creation A To Z" package of 26 double-sided cheat sheets.) I also provide a huge bonus package at the conclusion of the 12-month membership as a "graduation" gift. This increases retention and keeps people active/paying until the completion of the series.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Now it's time for you to plan out how you're going to retain your members and keep them happy. Answer these questions:

1. What sort of content and bonuses can you strategically offer? What month has the highest cancellation rate in your site? (Determine this so you can offer content to combat churn.)
2. What sort of onsite tools and resources can you offer to keep members active?
3. What types of exams and certificates could you offer?
4. What type of live interaction could you offer?
5. Review the mistakes list mentioned near the end of this lesson. Are you making any of these mistakes? If so, how will you correct these problems?

That's it for this time. I'll see you in the next lesson.

Lesson Ten

Five Ways To Rapidly Get New Paying Members For Your Site

Elsewhere in this course, we talked about a few different ways to get targeted traffic to your sales page (aka “traffic generation”). Now here in this lesson, you’re going to find out five tricks of the trade for rapidly getting new paying members for your site (aka “traffic conversion”).

Need more members? Check out these ideas...

1. Offer Charter Pricing

The idea behind this strategy is to lock in a low price for life to the first X number of people who purchase within a specific time period.

For example, you might offer the first 150 members who purchase their membership within two weeks after the launch date a low price of \$9.97 per month... for life. Even when you raise the price, your charter members will never pay more.

This accomplishes the following:

1. It generates sales, because people don’t want to miss out on the best deal. Why pay more when you can get a discount on the exact same offer?
2. It makes charter members feel special (as they are!). That’s because you’re not just offering them a good deal, you’re also recognizing them as “*charter members.*” And when people feel special, they tend to be more loyal... which means you’ll retain a good number of your charter members.

Here’s the next strategy for getting more members...

2. Create a \$1.00 Trial

You've got prospects who are really interested in your membership site offer, but they're a little skeptical. They've been burned before on offers that seemed almost too good to be true. So, how do you get this type of buyer off the fence and clicking your "join now" button?

Answer: offer them a \$1 trial.

Most people can afford a buck really easily, so this is a virtually risk-free way for them to find out what's actually inside your site. And since charging \$1 gets you their payment information, you're set up to do recurring billing (at the full monthly rate) just as soon as the trial period ends.

End result? You get a flood of new members coming in for a \$1... getting impressed by what they see inside... and staying on as fully paying members once the trial is over. It's a great way to quickly turn prospects into cash-paying customers.

Here's another way...

3. Splinter Content

The idea behind this strategy is to splinter off a month's worth of content and sell it as a low-cost frontend product (aka "tripwire product"). You then sell the membership site on the backend of this offer. Naturally, anyone who likes the product is going to be extremely interested in the membership, which makes this an easy sale.

Here's what you need to do:

1. As needed, create a new introduction and conclusion to the content to make it clear that it's part of a membership site (and that readers can become members).
2. Include the benefits of the membership site and a strong call to action at the end of the product.

3. If there are any links to other membership resources mentioned in the content, send readers to the membership sales page instead.
4. Review the rest of the content to be sure it makes sense as a standalone frontend (tripwire) offer.
5. Attach a low price to the offer, such as \$10.
6. Promote the membership site inside a series of follow-up emails that you send to customers who purchase the splintered offer.

Here's the next idea...

4. Use Time-Sensitive Incentives

Sometimes prospects are really interested in an offer, but they decide they'll purchase it later. Maybe "later" is after they sleep on it, after they talk to a partner about it, or even just when they get home. There is nothing wrong with any of those things (there is actually wisdom in them!).

Except you know the problem:

"Later" never comes.

People get busy. They forget about your offer. And the longer they're away from your sales page, the less they're going to feel like buying. All that enthusiasm you generated for your offer just fades away.

Here's the solution: offer some sort of time-sensitive incentive. This encourages people to buy right now, rather than putting it off for later and forgetting about it. For example, you can offer:

- A discount that's only available for a limited time or to a limited number of people.
- A bonus offer that's only available for a limited time or to a limited number of people.

- A combination of a bonus and a discount that's only available for a limited time or to a limited number of people.

For example:

- *The first 100 people to join now will get 50% off their first six months of membership.*
- *Join now and you'll get access to a private support group for FREE. Others pay \$10 per month for this offer, but it's yours free if you join by [expiration date].*
- *Use coupon code [insert coupon code] to take 25% off your monthly membership fee – but this offer ends [date] or whenever 200 people have taken advantage of the offer, whichever happens first.*

And finally...

5. Motivate Marketing Partners

Just because you've built an affiliate program or have joint venture partners doesn't mean those partners are going to promote regularly. That's why you need to give them a little nudge from time to time to motivate them to promote the offer just as hard as you promote it.

For example:

- *Create a launch event.* Here's where you put together an incentive package and the emails and other marketing materials for a launch event that lasts about a week.
- *Organize an affiliate contest.* For this tactic, you offer your affiliates the chance to win cash prizes if they top your sales leaderboard during a specific time period.

- *Give affiliates coupon codes to distribute.* This works best if the coupon codes have an expiration date (which motivates your partners to distribute them sooner rather than later).
- *Run special offers.* For example, you might offer a 36-hour flash sale, and give your partners a heads-up at least a week or two in advance.
- *Offer exclusive incentives.* Here you give select marketing partners exclusive incentives to pass on to their customers. For example, you might create a unique landing page for the partner and offer a bonus package to their customers.

It's also a good idea to motivate your partners through regular (weekly) emails which include announcements of sales, events and coupon codes, access to fresh marketing materials, training materials, and even case studies of other successful marketing partners.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Your assignment for this lesson is to go through each of the five strategies mentioned above and plan how to implement them in your business. Answer these questions:

1. What kind of special pricing will you offer to new members?
2. What content will you splinter to create an entry-level product?
3. What exactly do you plan to do to motivate marketing partners?
4. What type of time-sensitive incentives will you offer?

Once you formulate your plan for getting new paying members for your site, you'll be ready to implement everything you've learned.

EXAMPLE: There was a special charter membership price point for [ContentCreationU.com](https://www.ContentCreationU.com) when it launched, allowing members to lock-in at the best price. (The price has since increased ... but is still very

budget-friendly and affordable, and includes a "triple matching" incentive program.) I employ these other strategies as well, with existing members receiving any perks that might be offered to attract new members.

Conclusion

And with that, you now know exactly how to start and run a profitable membership site. Congratulations! 😊

Here's a quick recap of the five essential components that we unpacked in this course...

1. Market Criteria. This is where you learned how to pick your target market, your topic, your slant (USP) and your brand.
2. Model Choice. This is where you decided what type of membership model is best for you to set up.
3. Metrics Calculation. This is where you figured out how much you're going to charge per month and how many members you need to get to your target income.
4. Member Content. This is where you decided what type of deliverables to make available to your members every month.
5. Monthly Calendar. This is where you set a schedule that allows you to manage all of the important pieces of running your membership site.

Plus, we've mixed in a lot of other lessons and ideas to further strengthen these core concepts. It's time for you to get to work! 😊

If you haven't yet completed all the assignments in this course, I strongly urge you to do so now. Because the sooner you do, the sooner you'll have your own profitable membership site up and running.

ONE FINAL THING: you're going to need a lot of content for your membership site (free content to attract members, paid content to keep members). Here's what I recommend to help with that...



ENROLL TODAY: For A 12-Month Training Program To Help You Create And Sell Content That Is

Helpful For Your Audience And Profitable For Your Business.

- Your **one-stop training** for content creation that *builds and monetizes your list, generates and converts website traffic, and develops sellable products.*
- Everything you need (and nothing you don't) to create effective content THAT PEOPLE LOVE by helping them *solve their problems, reach their goals and enjoy their interests.*
- A **comprehensive library** that you can work your way through at your own pace and refer to over and over again for life to craft every new piece of content into one *that gets results.*
- All the **shortcuts, strategies and systems** that I've been using and perfecting for the past 20 years to build a business that has given me the *freedom and flexibility* to live for what matters most to me.

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