

Membership Site Money Magic



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Membership Site Money Magic

Introduction

Firstly thank you very much for purchasing your copy of Membership Site Money Magic!

Have you ever thought for a small investment you could be earning such a fantastic profit?

A membership website is:

Easy to set up!

#Easy to manage!

#Easy to market!

#Easy to make money!

Everyone knows there is a lot of money to be made on the internet these days, internet marketing is one of the most popular and lucrative areas to be involved in and building a membership website is a fantastic and simple way to get started making a lot of money with internet marketing and are used by many online marketing experts and even newbie's too.

There are however certain membership website models which may suit you and your niche a little better as there is quite a few different models to choose from so in the chapter 'Membership website models' we will cover the different membership website models in more detail.

If I told you, that you could make a website in less than 1 hour, that would only require 1 hours worth of work a week and has the potential to make you over \$10,000 a month would you believe me? You might not believe me now but after reading this guide I'm sure I can change your mind!

Membership websites are a fantastic source for many webmasters who want to charge there users for reading and downloading and literally just having access to their content.

Ok to start with let's get strait into unveiling the secrets of membership sites, what are they about then? To start with I think it's best if we just quickly cover some of the basics of why membership sites are a fantastic way to make money online pretty easily, simple with no

hassle for whatever niche you choose to work with, lets quickly go over there basic mechanics and revenue model, see what there all about briefly and then we'll go into the more hardcore stuff a little later on.

Reasons to start a membership website

1. You want to make a passive income

Make money from the skills you have, shared your opinions and knowledge and start making money from something you love. If you don't like writing you can always create videos, create audio mp3's or even get someone else to do it all for you and pay them a slice of the profits.

2. You dabble in making websites but want to start earning money from them

If you already have a few websites maybe a few small wordpress based blogs with a few adsense advertisements on there and a few links to affiliate programs. You need to focus on really trying to get that passive income. All you need to do is turn your websites into membership sites.

If you really have a passion for a certain subject, any niche whether there is a large market for it or a small one, it doesn't matter about the size really, there is money in almost any niche when it comes to a membership website, that's the power of them.

Its time to turn your passion into cash, lots of cash in fact! As with the help of this guide 'Membership Site Secrets' you will find out how to really make a large profit from one of the hottest, easiest to create, easy to run website methods and it doesn't matter what niche your working in.

How can you make money from membership sites?

Think about it, all you need to do is get 100 users paying you \$10 per month and that's \$1,000 per month then add on the fact that you can promote affiliate products to these subscribers and earn a commission on every single sale, you can also sell your own products to them either additional add on packages including eBooks, videos and additional guides and tools that will be useful to them. You can also have advertising on your membership website in the form of PPC and CPM advertising.

So we have quickly touched on why membership sites are so great, a quick, simple way of making money online via a membership website, as a webmaster running a membership site really do have the users in a win-win situation. If the subscribers use the site a lot you make money, if they don't use the site at all you make money, it doesn't matter.

What are people are saying about recurring revenue and membership websites?

The logo for 'The Inc.' is displayed in a large, bold, black serif font. The word 'The' is smaller and positioned to the left of 'Inc.', which is significantly larger and more prominent. The period at the end of 'Inc.' is also large and bold.

The inc. published that 'Recurring revenue is important'




Who's using the membership site strategy?

FINANCIAL TIMES

The Financial times!

The Financial times who are a UK news paper have incorporated the membership site strategy to selling their newspaper online following in the footsteps of other papers such as the New York Times, The Guardian, Wall Street Journal

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FT Newspaper & FT.com	FT.com only	FT Newspaper only
		
4 weeks for £1	4 weeks for £1	4 weeks for £1
The FT newspaper, FT Weekend and Premium access to FT.com <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery to your home or office by 7am* or flexible pre-paid vouchers• Premium access to all FT.com articles as they break, available via your desktop, tablet and mobile• Full access to the FT ePaper - the digital version of your printed newspaper• Enjoy FT Weekend, a stimulating blend of news and lifestyle features for those more relaxed moments	Premium access to FT.com <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unlimited access to all FT.com articles as they break, available via your desktop, tablet and mobile• Unrivalled access to our 5 year company financials archive• Premium access to exclusive content including the Lex column, the 6am Cut and global press cuttings• Choose to receive over 40 daily email briefings as well as an exclusive monthly letter from the Editor	The FT and FT Weekend <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Award-winning journalists bring you coverage of global business news so you can start the day fully briefed• Delivery to your home or office by 7am* or flexible pre-paid vouchers• Full access to the FT ePaper - the digital version of your printed newspaper• Enjoy FT Weekend, a stimulating blend of news and lifestyle features for those more relaxed moments
Then continue your subscription from just £12 a week	Then continue your subscription from just £6.49 a week	Then continue your subscription from just £6 a week

The WSJ offer a special offer as shown in the image above, they offer 4 weeks for £1.00 which is \$1.23 (USD) and £12 a week which is \$22 ff

That's why if you have your own membership site then you are still making money even if your users are not even using your website, how great is that? If you are relying on making your income solely from affiliate programs and advertising PPC

ads then you only make money when there is a user on your website and affiliate programs only when the users on your website decide to buy something.

If the financial times are using the membership site strategy then this really is saying that the membership site model works. It is being used by many large companies to generate additional revenue for their brand or a way of charging there users for their content.

With a membership site they are paying to basically be on your website full stop. That's the number 1 advantage, you are literally being paid by the user just to pop in and say hello. It's like a gym membership, you pay monthly fee and you can either go every single day or you can hardly ever go, your still paying weather you never go or you go every day then you're are at least getting your money worth if you go every day.

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What you need to do is find the right content that people will pay for. You charge users for getting your content, this content pretty much needs to be exclusive as if it is on another website then you are basically that is then very pointless as the user will literally just go to the website where it is free and read the content there

What you can do is give your users a little sneak preview of site for free and then when it comes to the important part then give them a page to sign up monthly.

Choosing Your Niche

When choosing the content on your membership website, make sure you know what you're talking about and you need to make sure the niche is large enough to be able to get a decent amount of content out of, also you need to learn from your subscribers, study them and make sure you follow their trends, follow the niche on social social networking websites such as Twitter and Facebook groups, search on Twitter and get the general mood about the topic, are people happy, sad, angry, upset about your niche?

What are your potential subscribers talking about, choose a niche where there is conversation?

Passion for your niche

The first rule of picking a niche is make sure are passionate about it, make sure you enjoy the subject and you can see yourself making a successful membership website around it, it's not just passion about the niche but also passion for wanting to earn a passive income online too.

Think about it.. Do you have a passion about the niche you have chosen? Can you write about the subject, can you write about it in such a way that will inspire people to sign up to paying you on a monthly basis?

Can your niche be broken down?

Can you choose a niche that you can break down into many different areas, for example if you have chosen golf courses in California as your niche, then this is a perfect example of a great niche as firstly, it's a local niche, meaning its regarding a subject in a geographical based area, with California being a large state you can break it down into golf courses in certain cities in the state.

The more you can break the niche down into smaller areas then the more content you can produce.

Understand who your subscribers are

Put yourself in your subscribers shoes, pretend you are a potential subscriber coming to your membership site for the first time, would you sign up, what's good, what's bad about the site? You need to get into the mindset of your subscribers, understand who they are and what they want, once you have understood this you can start to manipulate them. You can start to give them exactly what they want, when they want it and make them start wanting more!

Give them more and when they want even more...start looking at your pricing structure and add-on services.

Can you create member interaction and activity easily?

Can you generate 'user generated content' on your site, via a forum and blog comments, can you create a place where people interested in your niche can come and talk to each other and share opinions and post news about certain events relevant to your niche and cut out the work for you? You need to find something where there is active conversation happening constantly so that your subscribers can share their opinions via your membership website, this will keep your website relevant meaning you don't need to spend time making sure it is kept as up to date as you would if you didn't have any way of user generated content.

Can you supply unique content in this niche?

You need to think if there is a large enough amount of information that you know of or can find to write about and to keep supplying content, if it is something that isn't very expandable any more than 3 or 4 pages of content then it's kind of useless creating a site about that subject.

Finding the golden niche

These days everyone's trying to find that golden niche, the area that is totally untapped, don't worry about the niche, any niche is profitable.

All you need to do is look into market segmentation; this is the process of breaking a very large market into smaller, more manageable, easy to control areas of a market and dominating just that aspect. For example a membership website about a huge market such as 'How to make money online' is way too broad to create a website which can really compete with larger websites in a small timescale, what you want to do is break that down into 'How to make money online from selling on Ebay' for example, this way you are only targeting people who sell on Ebay and you're not looking at trying to bring in everyone who wants to make money by using the internet.

Simple Steps to running a membership site

Its easy to run a membership site, the payments are automatic so basically your charging for just getting in, you can either have monthly subscription options or yearly.

Literally all you need is wordpress CMS which is open source (100% free) blogging platform which can be very easily turned into a membership site
Even offer free videos and try and keep things updated as much as possible to keep people coming back, make sure you build an email newsletter marketing list which you can blast emails every out every time you either have some good news to share with your customers or such as either launching a new product or a new sale or anything like that, that would be great as then you are getting directly to the people who pay for your site, so it builds up the quality of the users of the website as if they have paid for it they feel more obliged to actually use it.

A membership site, simple steps firstly you need to install wordpress, so if you have a Cpanel server but you don't Fantastico then you will need to upload the wordpress blogging platform + the theme you want to use on your new membership site.

Its all about the quality teaser content,It looks waving a carrot infront of a donkeys face before throws it down there mouth, it gives them a quick look at what there not having and once you install wordpress you can install wp-member.com which is amazing, which is the same script which is actually used on a site called <http://www.quicksprout.com>

Its easy to run a membership site, the payments are automatic so basically your charging for just getting in, you can either have monthly subscription options or yearly.

If you have heard any of the following then I just want to take a minute to tell you that this is un-true!

If you have heard that a membership website is too much hard work and doesn't make any profit unless you have some script which costs thousands and you need to spend months trying to persuade people to sign up before it starts to make money! ~ Not true

If you have been told that a membership website takes time to perfect as you need to painstakingly pump fresh content in constantly to keep your members happy or else they will cancel there subscription.. Then this is untrue!

If you have heard that members on a membership website don't stay signed up for longer than 2 or 3 months then again! This is again based on what facts? I don't know?!

Examples of the membership site service



Image: Netflix homepage

A membership website is like a service like NetFlix or LoveFilm (Europe) for example, you pay a monthly flat fee and you get to enjoy the fantastically great service, in the case of Netflix you get access to DVD, Game and TV show rental with online streaming options available all month long all for the one simple and easy to pay for monthly price. You can either smash it and use it all the time although as you will have a lot of time on your hands once you have created a membership site earning you a passive income monthly or you can hardly even use it at all, you are still in actual fact paying for it and the company are still making money from you, whether you use it or not that's the model, they make money when you use it and they make money when you don't, that's one little secret right there, you might not see it this way when your being blinded by the fact that's it is just a great deal for a low cost monthly price but that's their business model which has seen them make an annual revenue of \$2.17billion (2010).



Lovefilm who are a European equivalent of Netflix owned and operated by Amazon make \$150million (2009) annually.



Groupon

You may not think it but Groupon are actually a membership site to, they sell deal and you get between 50 and 90% off the deal price. Getting your product on Groupon can really bring you a lot of promotion.

Groupon is a membership website because it asks for your email address. Groupon is a daily deal site which means it will send you out an email with the latest offers and deals in your local area.

Groupon was valued at \$25billion, so wait a minute? How can you do similar to Groupon? I don't think you will go from \$30.5 million in year one to \$713.4 million in year two but you can certainly bring in elements of Groupons business model into your membership site.

You could offer a daily deal in the form of promoting a product from an affiliate program every day, these emails can get quite annoying if your users really are not interested but if you can offer something that the user might find interesting then you have a better chance of getting a conversion.

Another great way you take something from Groupon's success, if you are running a membership site in a niche where there are many retailers selling products in your niche then you could email them, get in touch and you can even run your own daily deals by promoting related products in partnership with related retailers.

CaseStudy: Niel Patel of QuickSprout



QuickSprout which was founded by business start up and online marketing guru Neil Patel who has charged upwards of \$100,000 for consulting the likes of AOL, General Motors, Hewlett-Packard and Viacom on their web strategies and at only 21 years old not only was Neil named a top 100 blogger by Technorati, but he was also named one of the top influencers on the web according to the Wall Street Journal.

Neil decided as he got so much traffic to his blog from loyal readers hanging on every single word he said, he would trial the membership model just to see how things worked.

He charged a onetime fee of \$197 and offered an 8 week training course of 10 pages of content via an email newsletter on how to build up your business.

Although he offered a onetime fee package he did say after the course had finished that **‘it is better to create a monthly subscription program’** he also says that it was a mistake by not making his membership package a recurring fee.

Neil in his own words even states **‘Recurring revenue is the best form of income’**

Neil didn’t really push the membership website model at all, he didn’t market it enough, he didn’t even write a blog post to promote it, all he did was offer 1 little free report advertised in his sidebar to be downloaded from a page which briefly touched on the subject of the membership package.

What we can learn from the QuickSprout Case study:

recurring revenue is best

Having a recurring revenue stream

Membership Website Models

#1 Blog model

If you have a membership blog model you basically are charging users for reading a blog, all you need is a way of blocking the content from users who haven't paid for the content, within a blog you can post content, tutorials, how-to guides and even post videos which you can host on YouTube for example and then post them on your blog, you can allow a commenting feature for users to give you feedback and also to discuss amongst themselves regarding the content .

#2 Forum model

The forum model is where you charge for access to your forum, you can have a forum that is free to view and you make money via advertising but if you want to make a post then you have to sign up for a subscription.

You can also make a forum which is free to use but then when the user wants to click on a link then they have to sign up and pay the subscription to view the link, this is great for download sites where users post download links,

Newsletter models

The newsletter model is basically where you're charging

The hybrid model!

The hybrid model is all 3, a forum a blog and a newsletter!

The Mechanics of Setting Up Your Membership Site

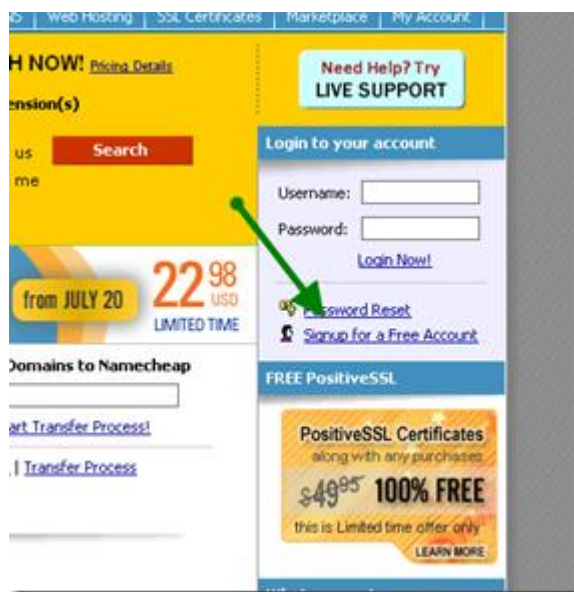
Register your domain name



Buying a domain name with Namecheap you just need to sign up to a free account and once you

have done that then you can start registering cheap domain names with ease.

You'll need a good domain name to kick off your membership site, choose something easy to remember and creative and relevant to your niche.



Once you have purchased a domain name then you can move on to web hosting.



I would recommend using Hostgator for cpanel-based web hosting, they offer a very fast web hosting service at a fantastic price and have great customer service and if you use the

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coupon code: 'MSecrets' you get your web hosting for only \$0.01 for the first month! That's right, only 1cent for a whole month!

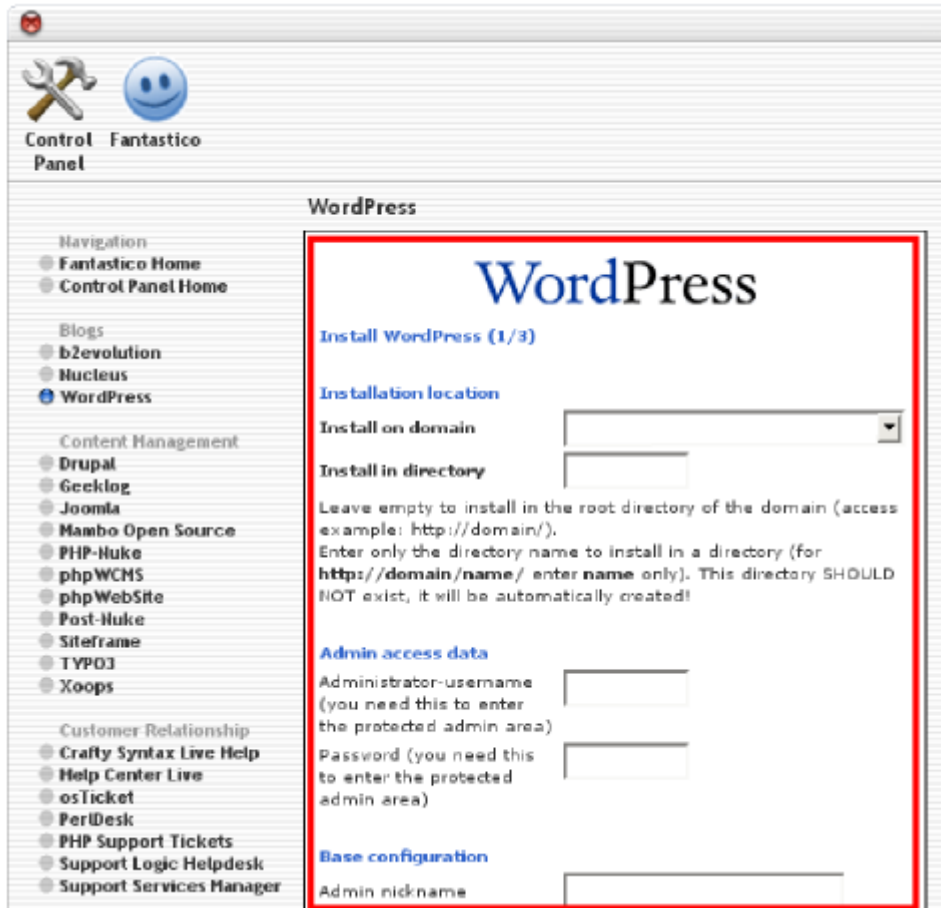
Once your cpanel web hosting account is set up you are ready to install Wordpress which will be for managing your content

Setting up a wordpress blog in Fantastico

If you have chosen Hostgator as your web hosting provider then you will have whats called Fantastico installed on the server, Fantastico can clearly be seen circled in red in the below image.



Fantastico is basically a way of installing wordpress onto your server without messing about creating a database or manually installing any files.



All you need to do to create a wordpress blog in fantastic is to choose the domain you want to install wordpress on, enter admin username and password and enter some more bits of information and you will have your wordpress service fully installed.

Once you have got your blog installed it is now time to install a membership plugin, I would suggest either Magic Members or Wp-Member. Once they are both installed then you are pretty much ready to start adding content.

Once you have installed your membership plugin then you need to look into then how you are going to start getting sign ups. You can start by offering a free promotion in exchange for a name and email address and you can do this by adding something like popup domination to your page. Then once the user has signed up they need to be sent to a thank you page, this is another way of earning revenue.

The Thank You Page



A 'thank you page' like the name suggests is a way of saying thank you to the users of your website for an action that they have done on your website, for example if the user has submitted their email address to your newsletter, you can send them to a quick thank you page, on the thank you page what you should do is usually offer an add on service or deal sweetener! If you have just offered the user a freebie in exchange for their email address send them to a page which gives them a unique discount coupon code for your product, maybe with just 10% off?

Offering the user a coup will make the user think there valued by you and also because you are putting a deal right in front of them then they will find it hard to say no!

Also you should put the coupon code in the footer of the email that you are sending out too for adding visibility but with regards to thank you page it is a chance to re-enforce your brand image, offer the user a good deal and it is a great chance to place advertising, you can have 6 blocks of 250x250 advertising blocks whether this is Google Adsense, Adbrite, Bidvertiser, Buysellads you can also place your own banners for your premium content and you can sell your own advertisements privately.

The thank you page will be the page the user gets redirected too after they have submitted their email address, you can have a page which has your site logo on, the discount coupon code and a call to action to 'Buy now' and then 2 rows of 3 advertising blocks to maximise revenue from advertising.



This is the Obama 08 thank you page you can see quite clearly the 3 blocks of 250x250 advertising banners.

Your Home page

The home page needs to be simple but effective, use video to add value to your website.

Sales copy that converts

It's all about your sales copy, make it persuade the potential subscriber; make them want your product so badly!

You really need to make your sales page really good, it needs to focus on the key elements of your product, it needs to focus on your unique selling points (What is unique about your product which no one else currently offers?)

Hire a content writer

You can hire content writers that will write your sales page for you, they may have experience in knowing what works for webmasters when they're trying to persuade potential subscribers to part with their cash and sign up to a website. You can hire a professional if you want or you can give it a go yourself, remember it's your website, if it's a long term passive income you really want then you will make sure you write amazing content as you have to remember 'First impressions last' meaning that the first time a potential subscriber views your product or website they make their mind up whether it's good or not pretty much straight away, you need to keep the people looking at your website interested at all times. Leave them wanting more and more and then, once you have waved the banana in front of the monkey for as long as you can make them bite your hand off! Make them do anything to get your product as you have built their expectations up that your product will really be beneficial to them.

Prepare, research, analyze and keep on improving

You need to firstly prepare as much as possible before launching your membership site, make sure you have all angles covered when it comes to how to run your membership website.

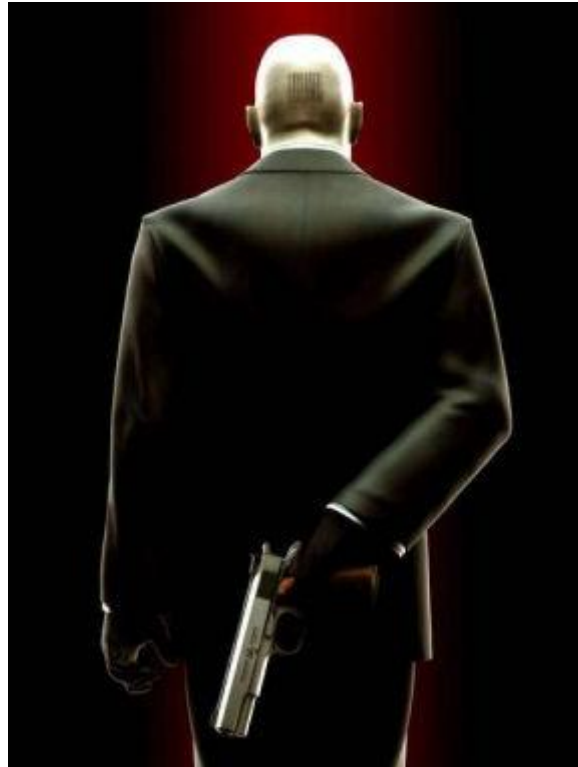
Research the content, research your competitors and try and make sure your product is the best, make sure your product is flawless, don't settle for anything less than better than the best! Honestly the better you make your product the more members you will attract to your website and the more income you will generate.

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Analyze every move your members and subscribers are making, what are they suggesting, you should value all feedback, you can even send them a newsletter update asking them for their feedback, at the end of the day 'Your subscribers are always right' even when they are wrong they are right? Confused?! You should be! You have to remember your subscribers are the most valuable asset to your membership site, its no point having amazing content and the best website money can buy without having any subscribers at all. What's the point in that? There isn't one is there?

You need to build your membership website around your subscribers and don't build your subscribers around the website. You don't pick and choose your subscribers; you can't afford to do that. You need to value their opinions, if they think something needs changing on your site, or if they request to see a certain type of content, even if you don't believe it will be the right option, try and see it from there point of view and try to come to some common ground, try and see if there is any way you can meet there demands, at the end of the day, the secret is that keeping your subscribers happy will generate longevity in your brand!

Killer content!



Using killer content will help keep your users loyal and get justification for paying the monthly fee

It's easy to write killer content, write from the heart! Write as if you want to kill your competition! Write like you have a gun to your head and it has to be best article you have ever written in your life, the best article about that topic available on the internet.

Provide an exclusive that no other site has, whether it's an interview with a very hard to get hold, well known and well respected person in your niche or it's a guide which you have spent 4 months developing and researching! Whatever it is, make sure your users know the difference, put the content which you have spent the most time on in a 'Top picks' area or 'Recommended reading' location in the sidebar or somewhere on your site. This will draw attention to the content and it will have more chance of being read above other content, the more 'killer' content the users are reading the more use they are getting from your site and it will help them stay connected and subscribe for longer periods of time.

Sorry to be a bit morbid here but this type of content is essential for really shocking your subscribers, making them think that your site is the best thing money can buy and that they should buy more useful content from you!

Filler content

Filler content is what you can add so that it looks like your making an update at least, this has to be unique content but it can just be in the form of a few quick facts that you have researched about your niche, or a quick useful how to video that lasts 5 minutes.

It doesn't have to be a 20 page essay full of the most amazing content they have ever read.

Membership milestones and achievements

Adding membership milestones and achievements is a vital key to success when building a membership website, what you can do is explain to your members that after 3 months they receive a special bonus, same after 6 months and again after 12 months and explain that the 6 months and 12 months bonus's are amazing and are well worth hanging on for, also offer achievements, this could be a for example a \$20 amazon voucher to the first subscriber who refers 10 friends to sign up monthly, if you charge \$10 per subscriber then that's \$100 you have made profit, so spending \$20 to get it then that's fine right? Some other opportunity's to apply achievements this could be for example the first subscriber to reach 1,000 posts on your forum you could even ask your subscribers to write 1 topic on the niche and have other users vote there for their favourite article and give a prize for the best article, this means you're getting free content for your site too.

Membership website mistakes!

Tips not to make when running a membership website

By making these mistakes I can guarantee it will lose you potential subscribers very fast and it will help quickly kill your brand! Make these mistakes at your own risk!



Don't be stupid and commit easy to avoid mistakes when running your membership website!

Your website has errors

Uh oh! (404 Error)



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If your website has any errors on it, however small it will quickly put your members off, if there is accessibility issues you are making a big mistake, obviously everyone understands developing a website can sometimes be a tricky job and there is always mistakes made here and there, try your best not to make them! Make sure you test everything vigorously, over and over again until you know its bullet-proof.

Make sure you have no dead links going to 404 pages (Even make your .404 page a way of getting an exclusive bonus! This way, if your subscriber does ever come across a nasty .404 page meaning the content they are looking for on your page is actually not there then you can turn the negative into a positive and actually provide a little gift, if it happens in front of the pay wall meaning the user hasn't actually paid yet, redirect them to the thank you page, just clone the thank you page and change the content, instead of saying 'Thank you for signing up here Is a discount coupon' change it to 'Sorry the content you where looking for is not available but here Is a discount coupon so you can access our premium content' again like the thank you page, put advertising on the page, this way if the user does ever go to the 404 page you are at least profiting from it. If the user views the 404 page when they are beyond the pay wall meaning they have paid for a subscription and they are inside the system then you can always offer them a free 2 page ebook or an exclusive download of some kind depending on your niche.



This is exactly what Hostgator web hosting do for example

Don't look like your drip feeding your killer content

When it comes to drip feeding your content to your subscribers by all means do it but the secret is not to get caught! If you drip feed your 'Killer' content then make sure there is enough 'Filler' content to make up for the lack of killer content available so the subscribers don't get suspicious. Try and use a varied blend of killer and filler content.

Killer content is very important to your site as we have already covered but doesn't drip feed it! Make sure it isn't very long between submitting it.

You aren't making use of membership milestones and achievements

If you are not offering membership milestones and achievements then you are making it harder to convince the users to stick around on your membership site and you are also not allowing membership interactivity to flow.

Building a community on your membership site

Creating a community on your membership website is essential! It really is, this is because it builds up 'stickiness' this means it literally makes the users stick to your website like glue. They will be forming relationships with other members on your website, if you're not providing content yourself then the users will generate their own.

You need to encourage the users to share their examples or experiences with each other, for example if I was going to build a membership website all about membership websites! Then I would encourage the users to post and share their views with each other, discuss relevant techniques in marketing their membership website and review each other's websites, once a user makes a post on the forum then they will almost certainly come back to check the replies out.

You can set up a community pretty simply by installing PHPBB which is a free forum service alternatively you can use Vbulletin which costs \$99.98 per year

By building a community on your membership website you making the users publish their own content meaning you don't have to write as much anymore, the membership site overtime will become self sufficient.

Communities are addictive

Everyone knows how addictive Facebook and Twitter are, think about it for a few seconds, name the top 5 sites you onto daily, I bet 3 of them are communities am I right? Forums of some sort, these websites are the most addictive and if you launch a forum community on your site you can make money, more money!

If no one is posting on your forum, buy posts, pay people to post on the forum, this does cost but it can help get the forum buzzing, you could invite your personal friends to come in and discuss on the forum, at least that would be free.

Outsourcing your work!

Look seriously, you don't want to be spending your time keeping your membership website up to date do you? You want to outsource your work as cheap as possible and make sure you have someone who can produce your work extremely well and most importantly be reliable.

The cheaper you produce your content, then ultimately the more profit you will make, it is literally that simple.

All the major companies, dot com millionaires, whatever, whoever they are, if they have ever had any success in business then it's usually down to outsourcing their work.



Warrior Forum

If you look in the 'Warrior Forum Classified Ads' and 'Warriors for hire' sections of the forum, here you will see many people offering services such as marketing, website creation, sales letter writing and many more services that will come in useful.

Warrior Forum will provide you the contacts to high quality work, it really will!

The users of Warrior forum are of the more professional internet marketing background but you will pay a lot more money for services there. At the end of the day, you get what you pay for and if you're looking for quality outsourced marketing and content writing services then that's the place to look.

On Warrior Forum you won't find as many developers and designers as such, it is mainly more for the outsourced content and marketing services you want to be heading on over there for, you will however come across design and development work and you will be able to find freelancers there if you look hard enough.



Digital Point Forums

Digital Point Forums, here you find again a large amount of different services ranging from design, development, marketing and writing services. Digital Point Forums does tend to be slighter lesser quality than the likes of Warrior Forum but you can find good services at a low cost there.

When it comes to making money from your membership website, you want to be laying out as little upfront cash as possible to start with, the more you spend means the more you need to bring in to start with to break even and to start pumping some real money out of your membership site, so hiring cheaper freelancers from forums such as Digital Point means you can start making money quicker.

These two forums will provide you with a lot of services which could come in useful as they are full of full time designers, programmers, writers, SEO's, you name it there on it! There are people from all over the world offering their services.



Fiverr

Outsourcing to Fiverr could be a great way to save money when you're building your membership website.

You can get really great content writing, web design and SEO services.

Outsourcing your design

When it comes to hiring a designer you need to make sure they have designed to at least a decent standard before, membership sites can be simple in design they just need to function well.

When hiring a designer, firstly make sure you look at their portfolio before you offer them any work and make sure they have reviews from other webmasters who have previously hired them to make sure they are legitimate.

Make sure you clearly tell them everything you need designed on the site, for a membership site you just need to follow a basic model!

"The great thing about a membership website is that it doesn't even need to be 100% complete when you launch it! You can build as you go!"

So to start with all you need is your sales page, telling the potential customers why they should sign up to your membership website, you can give the users a free gift too for signing

Membership Site Money Magic

up for example a 2 page case study on the topic or some other content which will help persuade them to sign up.

Your page needs to be simple but effective

If you don't want to actually hire a designer to design your full website and you want to speed things up you could always look into buying a custom made theme on a website like <http://themeforest.net>

Literally all you need is wordpress CMS which is open source (100% free) blogging platform which can be very easily turned into a membership site

Even offer free videos and try and keep things updated as much as possible to keep people coming back, make sure you build an email newsletter marketing list which you can blast emails every out every time you either have some good news to share with your customers or such as either launching a new product or a new sale or anything like that, that would be great as then you are getting directly to the people who pay for your site, so it builds up the quality of the users of the website as if they have paid for it they feel more obliged to actually use it.

A membership site, simple steps firstly you need to install wordpress, so if you have a Cpanel server but you don't Fantastico then you will need to upload the wordpress blogging platform + the theme you want to use on your new membership site.

It's all about the quality teaser content, It looks waving a carrot in front of a donkeys face before throws it down there mouth, it gives them a quick look at what they're not having and once you install wordpress you can install <http://wp-member.com> which is amazing, which is the same script which is actually used on a site called: <http://www.quicksprout.com> (which was covered in our case study.)

Running the site

Don't worry about being an expert regarding your niche that you have chosen as your topic for your membership site, what you need to focus on trying to find someone who does know how to write about it and make sure they cover it well.

What you need to do is make sure your not giving the members everything all at once, make sure there just getting little snippets over a course of a period of time

What you need to do is upload at least 1 article a week, between 500 and 1,000 words

Pricing: How much to charge?

You have to think of a few things when it comes to the pricing structure, you need to think 'Will people actually prefer to pay monthly or annually for this product?' Obviously if it is monthly then you can break it down in the sales pitch, you can explain that that for just \$9.99 a month which is around \$2.49 per week which is the cost of a coffee the user can get your access to your amazing membership website. If you're asking the customer to pay yearly then you may have to give the customer a little sweetener to lay out a larger amount upfront, you might have to give them 1 month free for example; for \$109.99 you get an annually subscription, or even round it down to \$99.99 and give around 2 months free, you can still break it down per month and per week and even per day, for example if you where charging \$99.99 per year you can say for only 27c per day you get access. This is a physiological way of selling your membership site subscription.

You are making the user think the product is cheap and they're getting a fantastic deal as when they think about the break down they don't see it as that much money at all.

#Name cheap domain name

Do your research

Before doing pretty much anything you need to do your research on the topic you wish to cover, you need to make sure you have conducted as much research as you deem necessary. Once you have done as much research as you can about your chosen topic, you need to then start to look into your competitors. What other sites are there which offer a similar service, similar content etc..

Know your potential customers

Before you open your membership website for business you really do need to know your customer, know who you are aiming the product for, for example if your membership website is about high end real estate then you need to understand that you are going to be dealing with high end clientele. You need to make sure your website is designed with them in mind.

Choose your domain name

Keep your domain name short and simple, something that someone can remember off the top of their head, not something that will keep them banging there head on their desk until they remember it.

Choose your content

Start to think about what kind of content you will make available to your users , will it be videos, images, downloadable software, e-books, blog posts, articles. What's the content going to be and how much will you release of it, what services will you have available on your membership site, will you have a forum, blog etc..?

Think about marketing

It's time to advertise it, it's time to start making buzz, how will you do this? Are you going to submit a press release? Are you going to email all your friends? Are you going to create a facebook group? Are you going to offer a 24 hour discount to users to get some buzz?

Keep your content locked!



Keeping your content locked is a great way to get your users to pay for your content, but if all of your content is locked behind a magic wall which needs a special payment to break through then, why will the users buy if they can't see the content, * Put high quality content available to get the users interested.

A little secret here is to MAKE ALL THE CONTENT AMAZING, there really isn't any way of getting away with articles which aren't that good unless for search engine purposes, spinning content which is used for building up links to your site, you can submit spun content to get ranked on sites such as Squidoo, Hubpages, you can make mini sites with content on to get people interested, make the free content you give away the absolute best content available, because at the end of the day this is what's going to win you new business, but then again.. You need to make sure that the content inside your website, behind the payment wall is amazing too, because you need to keep the subscribers subscribing.

What to keep locked and what not to lock!

What do you put behind the 'paywall' of your new membership site?

You need to make sure you keep some areas hidden, there is a few options on how to do this you can either show all the titles for the hidden content, this will tease the readers into seeing the titles, for this the secret is to make the titles ultra interesting, making the users really want to read them.

The Power of Social Media



WALL STREET JOURNAL



Alan Murray: Deputy managing editor; The Wall Street Journal

Alan Murray from the Wall Street Journal when asked about the membership model said 'The best model is a mix of paid and free content' and he is right!

Promoting your membership site via social media

Promoting your membership website via social networking is 'ESSENTIAL' you can run contests on your website to get a free 1 months subscription for example for sharing your content via Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, Digg, Stumbleupon, Digg, Delicious, Bebo etc..

Don't miss any vital social media website out, there all worthwhile, they allow your content to be socially sent out into the news and be recommended to people!

FACEBOOK

When it comes to promoting your membership website via Facebook you need to firstly create a Facebook page showing off all the benefits of signing up to your program and with the Facebook iframe ability you can actually embed your whole membership website within

Facebook so you have another target market to aim for, with facebook the more likes your page gets the more it looks reputable to new users.

Twitter

You need to make sure you sign up to Twitter, its part of the vital social media marketing campaign you will have to implement to take your membership website to the next level.

Your profile on Twitter needs to get followers to look reputable; you can run contests such as a tweet to download and download per follow, this means you can give a certain free download to users on twitter who have followed you or mentioned you in a tweet.

Keeping your members!

‘It costs more to bring in a new member than to keep 5 existing ones’

People say that once you have the subscribers it’s hard to keep them that is actually untrue! Ok it is a small task trying to come up with new content and keeping your membership site fresh.

If you’re not keeping your members then you’re doing something wrong!

You need to make sure your subscribers feel the value in your product; you need to make them feel that they are needed, every time a user doesn’t subscribe for the next month, email them instantly and ask for feedback!

Getting valuable feedback is needed, why did they feel the need to cancel their subscription, what was wrong with the product, get there feedback and tell them that they get 1 more months free for providing you feedback.

You can then improve on the feedback you have been given.

Get to know your subscribers on a personal level speak to them via email and get to know them personally, ask them what their problems are regarding the niche and ask them for constant feedback on the membership website.

If you keep up a good relationship with your subscribers it gives a fantastic feeling around the community on your websites forums and all around the site.

Crushing your competitors

People think this is one of the hardest areas but it really isn't, as long as you have segmented your market, have the right design

Offer something your competitors don't!

Study the competitors

Analyze your competition, what are they offering, how many members do they have, where do they advertise where you don't???

It doesn't matter what niche your website is, you can crush your competitors, you need to just offer the following:

Show off your USP

Make sure you are putting across your USP (Unique Selling Point) if you are cheaper than the competition then make sure your potential subscribers know this, if you have more content then make sure they know this, if you can't think what your unique selling point is then you need to create one, it's very easy all you need to do is pretend you are a potential subscriber and think 'What would make me sign up?' would it be 1 week free, would it be a free ebook, would it be a competition for example 'Anyone who signs up goes into a prize draw'.

Show off your testimonials

You need to get testimonials, I would suggest trying to get well known people in your niche to give you a testimonial, someone with credibility, if you are seen to be promoted and endorsed by someone in the industry or niche of your website then it can add value to your product.

Build a brand

Try emailing well known faces in the industry and speak to them about your product, give them free access to website or even do a deal with them where you promote their product on your website or you promote them by maybe doing a text based interview where you ask them say 15 questions about the niche, try to start building a brand name, this will really

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help you, if people think of your site as a brand it will really help you sell subscriptions and advertisements. Bringing in well known faces 'Celebrity's basically in your niche' I don't mean actual celebrities but just people who are known in your niche, if it someone who is known in your industry get them to promote the brand in exchange for you promoting them or ask them for an interview as I said before or you could even try and contact them just literally and ask for a quick review of the products/membership website, maybe show them it before its released to the public so they think they're getting 'Star treatment' this way you have a better chance of getting a review from them.

Convenience

Offering something that is convenient is really what matters, your membership website must be easy for the users to log into, easy to share their content and vent their feelings. Just try and keep it as simple as possible so that the users can navigate though the website with no problems at all and if they do come face to face with any issues on your membership site then make sure that is super easy to get some help and guidance.

The easier your website is navigated though then the more chance you will have your members coming back for more and renewing their subscriptions which are ultimately the most important thing.

Price

Price is a big one, when it comes to the price of your membership website, this is what will win and lose you memberships. It needs to be the right price, maybe start off cheap when there isn't that much content on the site and then start to push up the price the more content you have on your site. This method will then push you to add more content on the website, maybe every week push the price up by a dollar every time you make an update, market your website as going up by 1 dollar every week the more you add content. This way the more content you add the higher your profits are.

Make sure instead of charging \$10 you are charging \$9.95 not \$9.99 or anything like that, you need to clearly show that you are even cheaper than \$9.99 as this instantly tells the user this product is a fantastic price as they see the \$9.95 and they instantly think 'What a bargain' it's all about techniques when it comes to selling online.

Limited time offer

Another way you can beat your competition is to offer a limited time offer, this way you are offering something new and exclusive, this could be in the form of a 1 week \$1.00 membership, this will see lots of users sign up to see how it is, you can create a subscription option either via Paypal or direct debit via the users bank, they will sign up at \$1.00 and then they will be charged say \$11.99 the next month, even if you only charge \$10.00 normally you can add \$1.99 on there just to make a few extra bucks for running the promotion, it's a fantastic idea, you can spend 1 full week promoting the product by for example, submitting press releases, doing guest blog posts and mentioning the offer, posting the news on related forums and you can use social media to get the word about. By promoting the offer it will also gain you back links which will help your membership website in the search engine results.

Offer freebies

If you keep offering freebies in the form of a free download for example, even if it just a 3 page ebook then the users will love it. It shows that you care about the members and also it's something that your competitors don't offer. You need to offer things that your competitors don't and so for this you need to stay 1 step ahead of the game when it comes too offering freebies, if you see your competitor offering a freebie as part of its package, you need to make sure your offering not 2 but 3 more than them.



Charging for your content

‘Subscribers will pay if the content is of value to them!’

You need to think about how much you want to charge for your content and how you want your site to be!

How to make cash – Lots of cash!

Do you want to make tonnes and tonnes of cash!?



To make huge amounts of cash then you really need to pull out all the stops, you need to really go crazy with everything, make sure everything is pixel perfect. Make sure you have the maximum amount of advertising placement, advertising where ever possible but still making it blend into your content as well as possible. Try and get your subscribers to buy as many add on services as possible, this will bring in extra revenue.

For additional revenue you can add additional services such as jobs boards for companies with jobs in related niches to advertise on your website, an iPhone/iPad app which you can charge per download and you can also serve advertising via the mobile platforms too.

How To Manage Your Subscription Payments

When it comes to managing payments on your membership website this can be done by the numerous amounts of membership site software which is available to purchase online to handle payments.



Paypal is the most popular payment processor used online these days, it's easy to send and receive payments online. Paypal is an integration that is a must for your website when it comes to accepting paypal you will be really shooting yourself in the foot if you don't accept paypal.



Bitcoin

Bitcoin is great for accepting payments which are not able to be taken via other means of payment for example if you are selling something that goes against the terms and conditions of Paypal and also if you just to offer a simple, cost effective payments. BitCoin hardly takes a fee at all, the fee is so small you don't even recognise it compared to other payment methods who take quite a high percentage just for being the middle man.



Authorize.net costs an initial set up fee of around \$150, basically between \$100 and \$200 depending on the package you choose for your website but it allows more dynamic methods of receiving payments and integrates directly into your website.



Google checkout is Googles alternative to paypal, Google checkout isn't used as widely as Paypal but is still used occasionally by some online users and should be integrated into your membership to offer more choice to your subscribers.

Recommended Resources

Here is a list of recommended products we suggest to help you build a membership website quicker and easier and start to take advantage of the money making opportunity's, using these products will require little or no web development knowledge at all as most of these are simple to use.

A paid membership website offers high quality articles or blog posts, information, facts, software programs, e-books and videos about a certain subject. There is a massive amount of potential to be made with membership websites and the limits of generating new revenue streams are endless.

Magic Members

Pay per post access

Magic Members is brilliant as even when you have got your users signed up to the original subscription you can actually start to sell them add on articles at a smaller cost if you wanted to.

*You can actually offer a 100% membership with Magic Members and then have it advertising supported and offer the posts on a pay-per-post basis. I wouldn't exactly

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recommend this as then the users are basically buying what they want which could work out cheaper for them than paying for a monthly subscription.

100% Compatible with Magic Affiliate

This is great because you can actually then have an affiliate program for your membership website then, you can start letting your members know that if they refer a friend to the site they get cash \$\$\$ They'll be instantly interested and ultimately you get more sales!

Use pop up domination to instantly engage with your potential subscribers



<http://www.popupdomination.com/affiliate/>

This is a really easy way to have a pop up appear over your content when the potential customer gets to your membership site, it's a way of getting their first name and email address.

What will Pop up domination do?

Firstly, you want pop domination to pop up and promote your give away product which will act as both a way to make the customer think they're getting benefit for signing up to your weekly / monthly news letter and also a way to send a free sample of the content the subscriber will end up paying for, so if they like what they see they can sign up.

Pop up nation will help to get newsletter subscriptions it will actually help give away your free content because what you can then do is set up an auto responder to instantly send them a downloadable product to their email address, once the user has submitted their details to the form send them to the 'Thank you page' .

WP MEMBER



What is Wp-Member?

Wp-member allows you to lock your content away if the user is not registered; it allows locking of complete posts, pages and categories. The great thing about Wp-Member is you can have literally an unlimited amount of user access levels, you can certain exactly which pages, categories and posts can be seen by each individual user based on their type of access level.

Wp-Member gives you the tools you need to charge your users a one off payment or a monthly recurring fee.

With Wp-member it allows you to accept 3 different types of payment which are Paypal, Google checkout and Authorize.net



This allows the users to choose which payment gateway they want to pay with, giving them more choice and flexibility in regards to paying..

Wp-member allows you to easily create 'content teasers' showing a slight bit of the article but then locking content away so that the user has to pay for the subscription to see the content



QuickSprout, the site we covered in our case study, used Wp-Member for its membership site trial service.



5 Secrets to membership site success!



Keeping your subscribers happy will generate longevity in your brand



Charge your subscribers so that you make money whether they use your service or not



Don't get caught offering filler content; make everything look its best!



Make your titles super interesting; publish your titles to none paying members



Make all your content amazing! Whether its filler content or killer content!

Conclusion

Making money from membership websites is a quick and easy way of making money on a recurring monthly basis by applying some simple to implement methods to develop market and run you can generate income from multiple streams. You need to keep your subscribers happy to keep them paying month after month and generating you that all important passive income. Outsource your work to keep the costs down meaning your profit will be far greater. Use readily available scripts to cut down on development time, use open source frameworks such as Wordpress as the CMS backbone to your membership website as you can add plugins to give you additional features.