

# The Five Types of Profitable Membership Sites You'll Want to Build

As an infoproduct creator and seller, you know what one of the keys to a successful sales funnel is to have a variety of products at a variety of price points. For most sellers, it's a good idea to include a membership site in the mix, especially as many of these types of sites provide a passive income for you. In other words, you can sell it once and profit from it for months to come.

When a lot of sellers think of membership sites, the typical monthly membership site comes to mind. Yes, that's definitely one solid model – but it's by no means the only one. Here are some other options:

- Vault Membership
- Monthly Membership Site
- Fixed-Term Membership Site
- SaaS Membership Site
- Community Membership Site

Let's take a closer look at each of these models to see which one is right for you and your business...

## **Vault Membership**

The idea behind this membership is that people get ALL the material inside the membership site just as soon as they join. There's no drip-feeding, nothing is held back – the customers pay once, and they get instant access to everything.

For example, you might set up a dog-training site packed with reports and videos where members can learn about housetraining, obedience training and managing specific problem behaviors.

One benefit of this type of site is that it tends to be a profitable, high-ticket item. Depending on the amount of content you're providing, you may charge as much as \$97, \$197 or more for access to the materials.

Another benefit is that there is no ongoing work for you. You create the materials once and profit from them for as long as you run the site. In other words, you're not chained to your desk creating something new for your members every week.

One downside to this method is that your members may not necessarily open your emails, and thus most of your backend sales are going to be inside the products.

For example, when you run a typical monthly membership site, you can announce new content via email – this guarantees that engaged member will always open your emails. When you're not announcing new membership content, then you tend to have a lower open rate.

Of course, there's a workaround to this problem: DO send new materials to your members every week. You might send a report, a tip, an infographic, a video or something else. Train your members to open your emails by sending follow up content on a regular basis. You can even load it up to your autoresponder as part of your onboarding sequence so you can set it and forget it.

As you might suspect, setting up this type of membership site is fairly simple. You don't even necessarily need a membership site script since you're delivering everything at once. All you need is a download page and an autoresponder for the follow up emails.

*TIP: As mentioned, you don't NEED a membership site area, but you can set one up. That way, people will come back to your membership site regularly to view and download content. This works particular well if not all the content is downloadable, such as if you have streaming videos. Setting up your vault membership this way lets you insert backend offers on the membership site pages.*

Now let's take a look at the second model...

## Monthly Membership Site

This is your classic membership site where you provide fresh content every month (sometimes every week), and in exchange your members pay an ongoing monthly membership fee. This is a good model to choose when you have a nearly unlimited amount of content to share. For example:

- Monthly content licensing site, where you provide new private label rights content or resell rights content to your members. For example, you might offer two new packages every month include a PLR ebook to sell, a report to give away as a lead magnet, a set of autoresponder emails, and the sales materials to promote this content.
- Monthly training, where you provide information on a specific topic on an ongoing basis. These needs to be a big topic (such as setting up a business), or it needs to be one for the long term (such as losing large amounts of weight and keeping it off).

The upside to this type site is that you can generate a passive income (sell it once and profit for months to come), plus affiliates like this income opportunity too. The other upside is that each new product you create along with the associated email announcing it gives you another chance at backend income.

The downside to this type of site is that you need to create and upload new content every single month for the foreseeable future. You can do some of it ahead of time and schedule it to go out, but you're still heavily involved in the day to day workings of the site.

You'll also need to work hard at member retention. That's because, on average, most people will likely remain members for about three to four months. You can increase that number by providing extraordinarily valuable content and employing other retention strategies. Another consideration is to use the next membership site model...

## **Fixed-Term Membership Site**

A fixed-term membership (FTM) site is where you provide new content for a fixed-term, and your members pay their monthly membership fee for that same term. For example, you might have a membership site that goes for six months, nine months or a year. Once the term is over, your members stop paying and you don't need to send them any additional materials.

The big advantage of this type of membership site is that you tend to have a higher membership retention rate. Whereas in monthly membership sites you might have members staying members for three or four months, your average retention is going to be longer in an FTM site – and often, people will simply stay until the end of the term. That's because the FTM site has an end in sight, and since most people like to finish what they start, they'll stick around for the entire duration of the term.

It's also really easy to set up. Generally, all you need to do is deliver content via an autoresponder. You can load up your autoresponder with evergreen materials, which turns maintenance of this site into "set it and forget it" mode.

This type of site works great whenever you have a limited amount of material to send. It works particularly well when you want to share training materials. For example:

- A three-month course teaching people how to become better copywriters.
- A six-month membership site that teaches people how to set up and monetize a blog.
- A twelve-month course that teaches parents about their baby's first year (milestones, health, feeding, etc.).

You'll still need to work on member retention (such as with any membership site), but as mentioned above retention is naturally higher because of the fixed-term. And that not only gives you more money on the frontend in membership fees, you also get more backend sales opportunities.

Here's another model...

## **SaaS Membership Site**

While we've mainly focused on membership sites where you deliver training or other infoproducts, another possibility is to set up a service-oriented membership site. Obviously, unless this is a very high-priced membership, you don't want to deliver these services manually. That's why what we're primarily referring to here is a SaaS (software as a service) site.

Chances are, you already subscribe to one or more SaaS offers. Examples include your autoresponder, your webhosting, and even your mobile phone service plan. In all cases, you pay a monthly fee to the provider, and in return you get access to the platform/service/software.

Obviously, this style of site works best when people are going to need the service month after month for the long term. An autoresponder is a good example, because most business owners use the service daily (each time someone joins your list), and they further access the platform to send out content on at least a weekly basis.

Another example: if you're catering to people who want to lose weight, then you might set up a meal-planning app with a subscription fee. Even after people lose the weight, they'll still want access to the software to continue tracking their meals (for maintenance purposes) and just to be sure they're eating healthy.

As with all membership sites, membership retention is key. You need to be sure you provide a lot of value, and that your subscribers begin using the software immediately. That's why you'll want to implement an onboarding sequence that reminds subscribers of the benefits of the software, and encourages them to start using it immediately.

The second thing you'll want to consider is what happens to the subscriber's data/information if they unsubscribe. Let's go back to the meal-planning example. If someone quits the membership/subscription, will they still get access to their past data?

The reason this is important is because limiting access to past data is one way to improve retention. For example, if a dieter has been using the site for months to track meals, track exercise, and track their progress, they may not want to give up that data. And so, they'll remain a member for as long as they need the data.

Now let's take a look at the last model...

### **Community Membership Site**

We've talked about setting up membership sites for services, training, and other products. Now here's another idea: set up a membership site with the main benefit being that members gain access to a community.

You can set this up as a monthly membership site or even one with an annual fee. Or, you can give your subscribers the choice to go monthly or yearly (with the yearly option being less expensive).

For example, you might offer month to month members access to the site for \$9.99 (which is \$119.88 per year). If people choose to pay for a year upfront, then you can give them a discount, such as charging \$89 or \$99.

Once again, this particular model works well when it's a topic that people want to talk about and study over the long term. Examples include:

- A community of business owners talking about online marketing topics.
- A community of dieters who get information and support in the group.
- A community of people with a chronic illness who support one another and share information.

The key to this strategy is build up a thriving community that's so invaluable that members are unwilling to leave. This requires your members to be active in that they share information, ask questions, and answer questions. It's a good idea to set up an onboarding sequence to encourage members to introduce themselves and become active members of the community.

Here are three other tips for encouraging participation:

- Gamify the site. This means you offer “points” when people complete various activities, such as posting an introductory post, answering a question, and so on. You can then let members trade these points for things like a free month in the site.
- Invite other experts to participate. While many of your members will provide a lot of the information in the group, it’s a good idea to have expert-level advice available. You can invite your joint venture partners to take part in the site (in exchange for you promoting their related offers). You may even do monthly webinars with your experts.
- Participate regularly. Naturally, you should be sharing your expert advice as well. Especially in the beginning, you’ll need to help build the community by posting often. You can answer questions, post advice and so on.

Now a few parting thoughts...

### **Your Assignment**

As mentioned above, some of these models (such as the FTM site) do not require any sort of membership site script. If you do need a script, then you might check out options such as [Amember.com](http://Amember.com), or [MemberPress.com](http://MemberPress.com) or [WooCommerce.com](http://WooCommerce.com) for WordPress memberships or subscriptions.

Meanwhile, here’s your assignment for this lesson: set aside some time right now to consider the type of information you want to share and which model would be a good fit for your business. Then start planning your membership site and how it will best fit into your sales funnel!



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