

MEMBERSHIP

MODELS AND FORMATS



Membership Card

FULLY COMPREHENSIVE MANUAL FOR PICKING
THE IDEAL MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND FORMAT

Exclusive Report

Membership Models & Formats

As I'm sure you've realized by now, membership sites are all around you. Even in the common every day networks. Think about it for a minute...

Now, there's something else you need to consider. It's actually rather important.

When creating your membership website, there are many different models that you can choose from, including coaching or training, email based courses, monthly updates or you can even choose to set up a "time limited" membership site, where subscribers pay to access training materials or weekly courses for a limited time.

For example, depending on your goals, you might want to create a membership website that is short term, where it's designed to offer content on a sequential basis, until the cycle ends, and then the subscription is terminated, and re-starts as new subscribers sign up.

This is particularly common with e-mail based courses, where a subscriber signs up at a flat rate and receives weekly e-courses in their inbox for a period of time (usually 30-90 days). Once the eCourse finishes, the subscription cycle ends and the subscriber is no longer charged for access to the training.

On the other hand, if you are interested in developing long term membership programs, you may want to focus on the traditional platform, where members pay a monthly subscription fee to access content or resources, where the membership program never ends unless the subscriber chooses to terminate their subscription.

In the following pages, we'll take a close look at the different options available to you so that you can choose the best format for you, and begin building your membership site and profiting.

Different Membership Site Models

In this section, what I want to put focus on is analyzing the various types of popular membership site models that have been successful. In particular, we'll look at 3 different models that you can focus on. Of course, this is not the only ideas, and you can always expand upon these or come up with your own concepts as well.

Coaching Programs

Coaching based training programs typically offer members the opportunity to receive training or personal assistance for a flat fee, although there are membership based coaching sites that charge on a monthly basis for continued access to new training modules or lesson plans.

With a coaching based membership site, lessons are accessible only to members of the site, with schedules being made available for all members in regards to meeting times, personal coaching sessions and live calls.

- Coaching may include:
- Personal training (one on one sessions)
- Group Session Training (forums, conference calls etc)
- Forum Based Training
- Ecourse Training (delivery of lessons via email)

You need to be objective when analyzing your member base, so that you can create a tailor made training program suitable for specific segments of your market.

For example, your training program will need to address a specific skill, or experience level so that you can ensure your members can understand and apply the information you provide during the course. You want to be very careful to first survey what kind of help potential members are interested in, so you can gauge the overall demand and interest and create a laser targeted coaching program.

Coaching based membership websites are extremely easy to set up because unlike traditional membership websites where you'll need to develop and publish content

prior to your website launch, with service based membership websites, you can update your website less frequently, creating content and resources only as the site grows.

Email Programs

The easiest way to set up an email based membership website is to create a simple subscription page that features a subscription button (You can create these directly within your Paypal account). When a visitor to your site decides to enrol in your course training, they can either choose to subscribe to a monthly payment plan, where they receive one new module every month, or perhaps a one-time flat fee for the entire training series.

With an email based membership program, you are able to set up complete membership sites quickly, with very little start up costs or work involved. After all, since the majority of the content will be delivered via email, you don't need a dedicated server, or expensive membership software to manage your program!

You will also want to determine a delivery schedule, making sure to send out the newsletters on the same day each week, for consistency.

When it comes to frequency, the most common formats include eCourses sent weekly, bi weekly or monthly. When you are deciding what your publishing schedule will be, keep in mind the kind of information you will be supplying to your membership and its "dated importance".

If you are offering information that changes quickly or regularly, then you are going to want to consider sending out your courses more frequently, perhaps even implementing a RSS feed into your course, so that members can receive instant broadcasts of new updates.

If your information is evergreen and unlikely to change quickly, you can set up a weekly or even monthly e-course, where subscribers receive a new module or lesson through email on a regular basis.

eCourses are exceptionally profitable, because you can minimize the workload involved in launching your membership program. You will only need a professional autoresponder/email delivery account, such as <http://www.Aweber.com> or <http://www.GetResponse.com>, the first month of content, and a way of accepting payment for each subscription.

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Traditional Platform Membership Sites

With a traditional membership website, your subscribers pay monthly for regular content updates and new releases.

This is by far the most common method of building a membership website, however it does require more frequent updates than other membership types.

In many cases, traditional membership sites either offer a low trial price with the cost increasing once the trial is over, as a way of generating interest and encouraging visitors to explore the website's offer. (this is also a great way to stand out from the competition in the event they are not offering a no-risk trial).

Example: A subscriber would be given the option to join the membership site for only \$17 for the first week (7 days), then \$37 monthly, set on a fixed term rate. This means that even in the event you increase your prices later on, charter members who initially took advantage of your introductory offer, are locked in, and are not required to pay any additional charges or increased fees.

This structure is a very successful one, and can really help your membership website get off the ground, as you are providing a clear incentive to subscribers, as well as encouraging members to stay subscribed to your website so that they can continue to receive access at a lower rate than future subscribers.

Traditional membership sites are usually updated on the 1st of every month, but one savvy technique is to update halfway through the month so that subscribers don't join at the end of the month only to gain access to two months worth of content.

You should also consider setting up an archive section of your website, so that new members are able to purchase previous releases or updates, rather than gain access to everything. Remember, your subscribers are paying for monthly access to your content so it's only fair that you value their subscription by limiting content on a monthly basis. Anyone who joins your website halfway through a month should only be able to access the current months content.

Traditional membership sites can be set up a number of different ways, customizing everything from the delivery format, to the update schedule. It's your website, so make sure that you evaluate the different options and choose a platform that works best for you based on the time you have to allocate to your community, as well as what you believe your members would prefer.

The Free Format vs The Paid Format of Memberships

The obvious benefit of a paid membership program is the monetary element, however, setting up a free membership program can be just as rewarding.

With free memberships, the foundation is usually based on allowing free entry with the intention of selling a membership upgrade. Using teaser options like this, you initially attract a customer with a no obligation, no cost offer. In other words, you eliminate the risks involved and instead of forcing a visitor into making a quick decision to join your site or exit your page, you are able to capture their information, add them to your database and follow up at a later date, in the event they failed to upgrade right away.

The free membership module works very well if you have the ability to create quality content on the front end to wet their appetite, and work towards encouraging subscribers to upgrade for access to even more information or resources.

Building a subscriber database from free membership accounts may seem less profitable than charging an entry fee on the front end, however by capturing leads you will have an opportunity to communicate with them through follow up emails later on, encouraging them to upgrade their account for full access to your material or resources.

It's said that the average visitor needs to visit a website up to 3 times before deciding to purchase a product, and by offering them free entry on the front-end, you eliminate lost sales while building a laser targeted mailing list!

We've just covered the most common membership formats online. Consider which format will work best for you.