

SEASON TWO - EPISODE FOUR

# BEHIND *the* MEMBERSHIP

**KIM BULTSMA**  
ACUPOFCONTENT.COM



**Callie:** On Episode Four of Behind the Membership, season two, I'm talking with Kim Bultsma, from A Cup of Content and Content a la mode. Kim and I talk niching down, running completely free trials to attract new members, implementing member challenges to improve engagement and retention and the joy of watching your members make progress, thanks to your content. We also talk about how Kim came to start her own business in the first place after years of being a teacher, and the impact that this change has had on her family and her life. Plus, Kim shares some of the challenges that she's encountered along the way, particularly when it comes to balancing time between her service business, and the membership site. So, let's get started.

**Speaker 2:** Welcome to Behind the Membership with Callie Willows. Real people, real stories, real memberships.

**Callie:** Today I'm talking with SEO and content strategist Kim Bultsma, from A Cup of Content. Thank you so much for joining me on the show today, Kim.

**Kim:** Callie, thank you so much for having me.

**Callie:** It's great to have you here. You've been a member of the academy for quite a while now, so it's great to actually get to

speaking with you about your membership, especially having seen you in San Diego not that long ago now.

Kim: I know, and it was like the highlight of my year. It's been so powerful for me. So, thank you for that.

Callie: I always love getting to meet our members it's one of my favourite things about this. But anyway, enough about that. Let's start with a few details about your membership site. Can you tell us what A Cup of Content offers, who it's for?

Kim: Sure. A Cup of Content offers ... Essentially, I teach small business owners how to run their own content strategy and implement content from anywhere from blogging to social media to SEO, using Facebook ads, anything with online marketing is essentially what I'm teaching very small business owners how to do for themselves so awesome.

Callie: Awesome. How long have you been running that for now?

Kim: I opened A Cup of Content on Cyber Monday of 2016. It's just about a year and a half now.

Callie: Awesome. And this is you have another business as well where you offering services don't you? So, this is kind of on the side of that?

Kim: I do and actually, it's that other business. It's called Content a la mode, where I actually do content marketing for businesses. That's where I got the idea from. I had people, they would email me or call me and say, "Hey, I want to get together with you. I heard you were really great. I want to pick your brain. Let's meet for coffee." I don't turn coffee down, so I go meet with them.

But what I would learn is that some of these people I meet with were really small business owners. Like solo printer entrepreneur types, and they didn't have a budget to hire someone like me. But they really have the drive and the ambition to want to do it for themselves. I'd meet with these people and they'd literally want

to pick my brain. Essentially, teach them how to do what I did over a cup of coffee I ended up buying for myself. And, they're walking out the door, and I don't have a client, and I'm like, "I really need to capitalise on this." I have a teaching background. I taught high school and university level for over 10 years and I was like, "I can do this. I can teach people how to do this." That's how A Cup of Content really kind of came to fruition.

Callie: Oh, awesome. When you first start thinking about that, did you always know it was going to be a membership site? Did you think about doing courses and things like that?

Kim: Yeah, I did actually. When I started to talk about it with a couple of friends of mine, they were like, "Well, you could offer courses and things like that." And then I started looking. I was peeking around, and it sounded like they were being called membership sites, and so you know I kind of developed it that way. I did a lot of research on plugins and things like that. This was all before I found out about you guys.

That's one thing that if I would have started all over again, I really wish I would have found you guys a little bit earlier so that it would have helped me really develop some of the things that I've had to kind of go back and do. Which has been fine, but that was probably the biggest learning curve. I was like, "Gosh, I'm doing this all by myself and there's all these other people doing it." But yeah, that was the biggest struggle was just like how do I do this and I'm on my own? There's really not many other people doing it, at least I thought at the time.

Callie: Yeah. And so, when you first started putting the membership site together, did you already have an online audience, or had you been focusing kind of on service clients, so you needed to build that audience up for this as well?

Kim: Well, I kind of had an audience. I hate to say it, mostly a lot of my friends and people that I knew. But the audience I kind of used a little bit was a look alike audience compared to Content a la mode, but it was much smaller on a smaller scale. Like those

people who didn't, like I said, have that budget to really hire someone like me to do it but they didn't have the ambition. They wanted to learn how to do it, they knew that it would take some effort, they wanted to learn, and they were willing to implement and try things. So yeah.

It's kind of evolved over time because a lot of people getting into business for themselves is like, I can help everybody, and I even had that problem of until I met with you guys in San Diego. But now that I realised that, I do have to niche down. I do have to really kind of zero laser focus in on the types of people that I can really help, and I found through that process that I couldn't help ... I can help product-based businesses, but it's a totally different level than what service-based business are. And since I am a service-based business, I have a lot of experience in that. That was what I decided to really kind of focus in on.

Callie: Cool. That's sort of one thing that you've changed with the membership. Has anything else changed in the last kind of 18 months since you first got started, or is everything kind of pretty much the same?

Kim: I don't know if I'd say changed, but I'd probably say evolved, just as what I've learned. One of the things that I've implemented, especially recently and because of the meeting with you guys was starting weekly shows within, and this is on the free side of A Cup of Content. Because ultimately, I teach people how to do a lot of what they do organically. Meaning that they're not necessarily always paying for it, because that's the demographic I'm working with. They don't have that huge budget.

So, not only am I teaching them the organic side of it, but for me to build that audience has been really tough. Because if I want to practise what I preach, ultimately, I know that numbers really don't mean a lot to me because I want quality people instead of quantity. However, is all about perception. And, in order for people to know that I know what I'm doing, they're going to be like, "Well, she only has x number of followers. She only has a

couple hundred followers." I get that. And so, I have to kind of rethink a little bit. That's kind of the evolution of what I've done.

Right now, I'm on a campaign where I'm looking to increase my Instagram followers by 50%, because I have a lot of people that I can serve on Instagram. So, I'm making these different goals for myself, growing myself that way. On the outside, that's happening. On the back end of the membership, I've I've changed a lot. I had this thing where it took me a while to actually launch my membership, because I got into that rut of, it's not ready, I have to have all these things in place. What I realised was because of the nature of what I do, it's never going to be completely done ever. I think you guys probably could say that too, right?

Callie: Yeah, definitely. We're still evolving, aren't we?

Kim: Right. I think that as membership site owners, that's really important to understand is that you're never going to be completely done with something. Your membership as a whole is always constantly evolving. And so, I have these on demand courses people can take. But in addition to that, I've got something that I release every month. So, I had new content I would release.

And then what I was finding was the teacher in me was putting together this giant lesson plan that would take them two months to do, and it was too much stuff. I was listening to my feedback that I was getting from the members and I'm like, "Maybe I need to narrow this down." Because again, working with people who are not only working in their business but need to work on it, so that the time on your business gets ... We always push that to the backburner. That's something I've implemented the last couple of months here is challenges. So, I'm doing five day challenges each month. Instead of, here's how the Epic Content planner, have fun.

It allows me to schedule five days out of the month. Each day, we go through the pieces of that five-day challenge, and it has exploded in there. They're just like the engagement increased,

they got excited, they're taking pictures. Little sneak peek pictures of what they're working on. They're sharing it with their friends. So really, listening to what your members, what their feedback is and how ... Thinking like, "Okay, that's ultimately who I'm serving." That can be your best source of referral.

Callie: Yeah. I love that. With those challenges is that something where, do you let members know what the next challenges are going to be? Do you kind of highlight to them what's coming up, or is it kind of a surprise each month what you're going to do?

Kim: Well, I had ... You guys have had a challenge in January, which actually is what ... That challenge is what kind of inspired me to make the change in my group too. Within your challenge, I'd written out the entire year and had it all planned out. Both outward, public facing and then member facing. And then I've done a couple of those things, but then things pop up in this social media world, it's always changing. All of a sudden, I'm like okay, some people are asking you questions in the membership and I'm like, "I see a need here. I need to change my focus" That's kind of what I've done.

It's not like I'm not going to keep working on those ideas that I came up with. But I've switched that focus. For that reason, I haven't really published like here's a calendar of what we're doing in this particular calendar year. That has been okay, and I think a lot of them, they've never really complained that they don't see a calendar of what's happening. But they enjoy the fact that their voice is heard in this community, and I'm teaching them what they need to know and what they want to know. I think that's really what ... That has really kept my retention high.

Callie: Yeah. I think that's really important that actually, yeah, you can have a plan, but actually if your members are telling you, "This is what we need to learn about," or, "This is what we want to do," Then it's also important to listen to that as well and not get so focused on, "Well, I've planned to do this."

Kim: Right. I think for me, it's probably easier for me to do that being a teacher in the past, that sometimes kids are going to ask questions, sometimes adults are going to ask questions. And, maybe you got to rethink a little bit like, "okay, I'm going too fast with this. Maybe I need to pull back and maybe teach more of the basics."

I'm totally okay with doing that. The nice thing about it too is, even I've got some members that are a little more advanced, they're still learning things that they hadn't even thought of even though we might be covering some more of that basic stuff.

Callie: Awesome, Awesome. You kind of touched on this before, but what would you say would have been your biggest challenge so far do you think?

Kim: My biggest challenge is juggling time between Content a la mode and A Cup of Content. The reason for that is because Content a la mode pulls in a bigger recurring revenue for me each month, and it's deadlines and it's a lot of work. I'm conducting strategy and social media, blogging, email marketing for my clients. It's a lot of work. And then I come to A Cup of Content and it's like at the beginning, it was a lot of backburner work. It was like, oh, I can do that later. Oh, I can do that later. And then it just wasn't making me happy.

The whole reason why I got into this was to be able to help a lot of people at once, instead of helping a lot of people a lot of different times. That, I think is what everyone's so crazy about the laptop lifestyle. It's not really all that glamorous, but the fact that I can do so much more for so many more people, the teacher and me, the giver, I really love that.

Callie: Yeah. And so is the plan in the future. It sounds like you've got a recurring revenue element to the existing business as well. Is the plan in the future to kind of have the dynamic between the two shift or are you happy with the balance you have now between those two?

Kim: I definitely want to shift it toward my membership. I enjoy it so much more, and it brings out my passion for teaching and interacting and building relationships with people. Not that Content a la mode doesn't do that, but I've actually had to ... I hired a social media manager for that business because this is my focus. I want someone else to start managing more of that, and I can put more of my focus here.

The weird thing about how I started with this too was I kept Content a la mode because ... Actually, I get business from A Cup of Content in that business too, which is really kind of weird. But the thing that I've gotten the most business from is I've got some members who have ... We've got someone who's a Microsoft partner and they sell a service of establishing CRMs. She is in the membership, she's writing their blogs and doing all the stuff for them, but they hired me to SEO their website. So, I took their website and completely wrote all the content for it.

Callie: Oh great

Kim: Yeah. It's always so strange because I'll get ... It's even coming from the membership. I'm getting this other outside business and I don't mind that stuff. I just want to make sure that I'm only saying yes to the things that I'm really passionate about, and only if it's going to help me better my craft to be able to help my members.

Callie: I understand it's a great position to be in if you're able to do that and kind of pick and choose those clients that are actually ones you want to work with, and they're going to further both you and the business.

Kim: For sure. That's been a huge mindset shift for me. Coming from the teaching world, I had no business experience. No traditional, "Here's a profit loss statement," or any of that stuff, right? I had to change my mindset in not saying yes to everybody, but saying yes to the right people and how to say no. As a business owner, in general, I think that's a huge thing. That it's almost like the crux of

your business is being able to articulate a no that you feel comfortable with, but also to choose the right yeses.

Callie: Yeah. That's such an important thing, as you said, that can take quite a while to actually learn.

Kim: Oh, totally. I actually hired a mindset coach to do it because I struggled with it. I cry about everything, and I get very passionate about things. That's just how I always am. But I needed someone from the outside to be like, "Kim, you can't you can't do that. Here's what you need to do." And oh, it's helped me tremendously.

Callie: That's awesome. This is slightly off topic in terms of memberships, but what made you transition from doing teaching to setting up your own business in the first place?

Kim: Right. My daughter was born in end stage kidney failure. I knew when I was pregnant that there was something wrong with her. We just didn't know what exactly was wrong until she was born. My husband is mandatory staff at the hospital here in town. He is a pharmacist, Doctor of Pharmacy. I was a teacher, and when you're a teacher you work 70 or 80 hours a week and it was really hard to have a child with medical conditions. All of a sudden, she would get sick.

Here's my husband who could not leave his job. Here's me in a job that I could leave but it was really difficult to be like, "Here, substitute teacher. Here's how you run my newspaper, my yearbook class." That was kind of the thing that really got me and my husband talking about, let's be realistic here as a family. We've shelled out over \$100,000 of our own money in medical expenses. That included daycare, because you have to have specialty daycare in order to take care of a child that is an end stage kidney failure and is catheter dependent.

So, I kind of have gotten to a point where I was so burned out with teaching and I don't really like the direction that education is going, and it was really hard for me to morally continue doing it,

even though I knew it was the right thing. But all of those things kind of built together and I just all of a sudden was like, "I can't do this anymore." And my husband was like, "Don't. Just quit. Be done at the end of the year contract and let's find something else." And I did. I started selling cameras at the local camera store, because I had a photography background.

A couple of months into it, I was like, "You guys need a marketing person." And they were like, "Okay, you want to do it?" So, I got a job as a marketing director at the local camera store and was eventually hired away by an agency. I loved that agency. It turned into the hours of teaching again, where I was working a tonne, I wasn't able to buy into this agency at all. And I was like, "I can do this on my own and I can be there for my daughter." That's really was the whole thing that really made me, kind of pushed me in that direction of, I need to be my own boss and that's best for our family for our marriage. It's been the best thing for me. I'm such a happier person now.

Callie: That's great. Obviously, the reasoning behind it isn't great, and hopefully your daughter's doing well now. But it's great that you were able to kind of make that transition in order to be there for her and to help the family.

Kim: Right. She'll be 12 next month going on 21. She's totally normal. Developmentally, she'll still have challenges along the way but yeah. I think she's happier, I'm happier, my husband's happier, and we can get out and do things now that we weren't really able to do before with either of our jobs, and I can take this with me. Even though I've started this weekly live show on Wednesdays, we could be in Oregon this summer, and I can do my live show from out there for half an hour. That's no big deal out of a vacation. I can still work with all of my clients and all of my members and be totally happy with it.

Callie: Yeah. That's what it's all about at the end of the day. I think being able to allow you to have that kind of lifestyle that enables you to do those things. exactly. That's awesome.

So, what's actually been the highlight of running the membership so far then? What's made it feel worth it to you?

Kim: Well, I'm that teacher at heart, and I think my favourite part is when people tell me their successes from what they've learned in the membership. They shout it from the mountaintops and I love it. They'll come into our private Facebook group and they're like, Oh, my gosh, Kim, look at what I did today." Just last week, one of our members came in. She's in her late 50s, not really the most tech savvy. But she took our video course and she used it and she went live with her group of people. She has a multi-level marketing thing, but she went live, and tonnes of people showed up. She got a tonne of feedback out of it and it was very inspiring. She shared the whole video with us in the group. She was just so happy.

That's stuff that I really get excited about. Because I was just like, "Look, I did that. I helped her to feel that way." That really is what makes me happy about this is like helping small businesses do things that they didn't think that they could do.

Callie: Yeah. That's lovely and that has a knock-on effect as well, because then you're helping them, they're helping other people, and yeah, it's a big, warm fuzzy circle. I like that theory.

Kim: Yeah, I'm a warm fuzzy person.

Callie: Okay. Let's shift gears a little now and talk about what you're doing to actually grow the membership. What's something that's worked for you quite well when it comes to getting new members?

Kim: Sure. I know that when I put myself out there and I get in front of people, that they can see the value of what I can offer. That's usually a great way to just say, "Hey, go try the trial. It's free. You get 100% free access to the membership." That trial has really been super beneficial for me. I did try a dollar trial for seven days in my demographic, I got like one person that signed up for it and she did actually join. But it was like crickets.

And so, I kind of brainstormed around that and changed it to a completely free no credit card required 14-day access. They get full access. Am I scared that they're going to download stuff from the membership? Yeah, but really what can I do about that? Who's to say that they can't just pay their \$30 a month and go in there and download a bunch of stuff and then cancel their subscription? I feel that the value that they get not just from the courses and things like that, but the value of the community is totally worth the price of admission. If I can get them into that community, that's the clincher.

I've got about, I think I told you earlier or sometime, but it was about a 25% retention rate from that trial. I think that's really good that I can get them to sign up. I know what things I have to change moving forward, it's getting them into that private Facebook group I always kind of have a struggle with. I do have a forum that I've set up. It's not quite as lovely as yours is, and I'm not quite there from a financial standpoint yet, but I've got a forum back there I've started.

I know what I need to change on my thank you page to get them to go directly to that Facebook group and ask to join. It's like that's what things like your membership has helped me with my membership, is like you know I can see your onboarding process, which was fantastic. Implement one similar to it on mine, identify those places in the membership process or in that trial process where they're not engaging like I want them to, and figure out how I can get it so they do engage.

Callie: Yeah. I think that that kind of getting that engagement is often a big struggle for membership site owners, and initially, especially finding the things that are actually going to work for your audience. It sounds like things like the five-day challenges are something that's working well for you there.

Kim: Right. And then when they're sharing within the group, within that private community, they take a picture of it and they post it in that day's post and they're all commenting on each other stuff. Like, "Oh, that's really a good idea." They're learning from others

too and I think that's part of learning. Is like not only learning for me, who's the subject matter expert, but also learning from their peers and getting that kind of feedback, and honest feedback from people who could be potential clients of theirs. That's what I think is a huge thing.

Callie: Yeah. There's so much value in that kind of community.

Kim: Mh-hmm (affirmative). For sure.

Callie: Going back to the free trial that you're offering. Is that something that are you offering that on the website itself, is it something you offer through the weekly show, your email sequence, how are you presenting that to people?

Kim: Right. With my live show, I use WordPress and I installed this plugin called Pretty Links, so I can kind of track a little bit with the live show. I have a Pretty Link setup, it's like [acupofcontent.com/livetrials](http://acupofcontent.com/livetrials). So, I know that everybody who's coming to my site is coming from a live show of some sort. So, I've used that on that. That's one thing that I do.

I also had been kind of getting into the chat bot world, because I'm trying to see if maybe that would be another avenue that I could bring people into the trial. But I had that, I just went in and ... I've had a problem because I love design. The photographer in me and the creative and me likes design, everything that match. And when I was at social media marketing role, I was just appalled at the conversion rates of the ugliest calls to action. I was like, "All right, I'm pulling the trigger."

Just two days ago, I went in and I change the colour of my call to action for the trial. So, it's a bright pink. Stands out really well. You're looking at that baby when you go to my website, but that is really the point of entry I have first and foremost, is that start your free trial. You have to actually click on the about page to find the Join button, if you want to go that route. So, I'm really trying to push that free trial because I want people to know that I believe in this so much that I'm willing to give this away for 14

days, because I think you'll like it too. I'm sinking a lot of this into that trial, but I know that if I can get in front of them and if they get in there, I can ... They'll perceive the value immediately.

Callie: Are you still taking credit card details on things like that when they sign up for free or are you then relying on the essentially resigning up at the end of the trial?

Kim: Yeah, no, it is totally free. They don't have to put any credit card information in. I kind of wondered if that was like a point where they didn't want to join because they're afraid that ... I mean, I was very clear in there, like with my other trials that I've had, where you've had to put that credit card in there, that you get to that point and they're like, "Okay, now I got to remember in X number of days I've got to go in and cancel it." That's just something I've learned with marketing is the least resistant point of entry. That's what people want.

If they can just click Sign up, get in for free, like, "Oh, man. Okay. That was easy." And then at the end or at any point, they can sign up for one of the memberships.

Callie: Awesome. Once someone's joined then, how do you help to ensure they stay members and they keep getting ongoing value from the site?

Kim: As part of that kind of Facebook community, what I do is I'll point out different people. I think that's really important too, because they feel like it's a little bit more personalised. Now once I get bigger, that might grow to be more and more difficult. But I want them to know that they're not just another \$30. That's something that's important to me is that if I can cater to what they need, they're going to stay engaged with it.

I do that a lot like when I have my office hours each month, they can submit their questions and the things that they want to learn about. And so, I'm using their names. This month, Cindy asked us a great question, or so and so did this back in the Facebook group.

I'm always able to bring those things up so they know I'm paying attention, they know that they're not just a number.

Callie: Yeah. Awesome. That personal touch can really go a long way, I think.

Kim: It can, and I think it probably will most likely be difficult to scale that. But as much as, and how social media has changed, we have to take that minus membership owners too, that we still have to build relationships with these people. Even if you got 7000 people or if you've got 70 people, they somehow have to feel connected. Creating content that really makes them feel like they're connected helps you to retain them longer.

Callie: Yeah, I love that. I think that's the value that memberships have over pretty much any other product that you can offer. Is that you can create that ongoing connection with members and you can develop that relationship, rather than it being kind of, "Well, I've got your money now, so I don't really care." You have to create that connection in order to be successful with a membership site, I think.

Kim: It's funny you say that. One of my members is in New York City, and I'm here in Omaha, Nebraska. She learned about me kind of through a roundabout way, but she signed up for, I have like a month to month, a six-month and 12 months, and she signed up immediately based off of a webinar for the six-month. She was getting close to the end of her six months, and she sent me an email and was like. "Kim, I love this so much. I just want you to know I'm not cancelling my membership." It was like, "Oh, that was super cool." And she tells people a lot of this and that. It's because I've made Marcy feel important.

She is important, and I love what she's doing. And that taking the time to get to know these people just on a one to one basis I think is just crucial in this.

Callie: Yeah, I love that. Just touching on something you mentioned there, you mentioned you offer a six-month membership, as well

as monthly on the annual option. What made you decide to offer that kind of middle ground as well?

Kim: Because people like to have some choices, I've learned in the marketing world. They can pay this \$30 a month and it's so funny because people ask me, "Well, can we do a deal?" I'm like dude, "It's like it's four cups of Starbucks a month. If I could live without four cups of Starbucks month, you can do it too."

But so, I've got that \$30 month, and then when I did was I got a six-month at 149, so they get a month for free. And then a full year is 269, and so they get three months for free. So, I'm trying to get that value add that way if they want to pay a little bit more at once to save some money. I've got several people on that six-month package. That's, like I said, I've really thought long and hard about the dollar amount of what to charge for this because of my demographic. I don't offer any other specials, other than the free trial. It's like I feel, and I'd be totally open to suggestion on that, but I think the price point's right.

When I tell people about it, they're like, "Oh, yeah. Okay, that sounds right." 30 bucks a month is less than a gym membership. A lot of people probably will get more out of my membership than they might get going to the gym, if they don't go. So yeah,

Callie: Cool. And so, just last thing on the trial front there. Do you offer a guarantee as well, or do you kind of use the trial as your main risk reversal there?

Kim: yeah. It's really hard, I think in what I do to offer a guarantee. Because I can guarantee you what I teach them is going to work if they don't implement it. And so, that's the other part of getting the right kinds of people on your membership and then the whole niching down thing, right? It's like I like this analogy I had to come up with to really grasp niching down. It was like if you think of yourself as a business owner or as a fisherman, and you're casting and that out to catch your fish, well, are you casting one net out to catch all of the fish all of the time? Probably not, right? And it's too hard to do that. You're not going to catch everybody.

So, if I can maybe take part of my marketing efforts and focus it just on photographers, and I can just go to the places where they're at, offer this trial to them, show them what it can do for their photography business and reel them in that way, then okay, I've got that system going, now let's switch to another type of niche. Let's change up the bait. Let's change up the net, change the river and start working on them that way. And so, it's kind of like it's really cool, because once you get one of those niches setup, you can kind of duplicate it you know duplicate it for others. I think that trial is that perfect entry point regardless of anybody who ... Any type of service-based business that would sign up.

Callie: Awesome. Let's shift gears a little bit now and talk about life as a membership site owner. We touched on this before in terms of how you actually ended up running the membership in your business. But what does a typical day look like for you now? How much time does the membership take you on an ongoing basis, do you think?

Kim: Now that I'm putting a lot more effort, and I shouldn't say effort. I'm just making it more of a priority for me in this membership. I spend a lot of time engaging with my community, with my members. Listening to them, developing content for what they want. I'm going live in our group talking about maybe some breaking things that I don't talk about on the public facing side, or at least I make sure that they know about it first. I'm creating newsletters for them.

The one thing that I have been doing lately that's really proven to be good in terms of getting myself out there is spending one hour a day just going out and engaging and interacting with people, regardless of whether or not they are in my target demographic. The reason for that is because if I expect people to engage with my content, I need to go out there and engage with theirs. That has like, just in the last ... It'll be a week tomorrow that I've done this. I cannot believe I've got like six new trial numbers. Just like that.

I think that's what we're forgetting. We can market ourselves. Marketing, we think like, let's just put our ... We're going to make this post and oh, instantly someone's going to sign up for whatever, and that's not really true anymore, because they don't have a relationship. It's that know me, like me, buy me. They know me, do they like me yet? Okay, so let's work on that next. But that's what I'm doing. I'm getting involved in different forums and getting involved in Facebook groups, LinkedIn groups. I'm not just getting out there and saying, "Hey, I got this great membership you should try." But giving my true honest ideas and suggestions, and that has been huge.

Just that hour a day, I am working just on the relationship building aspect on the public facing side. I think it's so important. I think a lot of people are forgetting that we got to work on our business and not always in it. But yeah, so that's kind of what my typical day looks like. It's creating content, creating the challenges, recording some video, doing some live shows, things like that. And it's stuff I enjoy doing. That's what makes it so fun.

Callie: Yeah. I really like that. I like what you said there, it comes back to what you were saying about the members as well, that I think more than ever now relationships are so much more important again. And, relationship marketing or whatever you want to call it just actually talking to human beings, I think in the days of Facebook ads and Google ads and all of that, I think it's become easy to forget that actually just connecting with people is still, if not more than ever, really important.

Kim: I know. It's easy enough for people to bash and be mean and hurtful to people on social media, because they've got the screen to hide behind. I think we have to kind of reach through that screen and flip the table on that. We can give positive, constructive criticism and I'm a total Pollyanna here and I know it sucks sometimes, but I just feel like having that mindset and knowing that relationships in the digital world are so extremely important. We can't forget that.

Callie: Yeah. I think that can be a complete difference maker as well, when it comes to people deciding what to buy. Overall then, what impact would you say having the membership has had on your life and business do you think?

Kim: Well, I'm a much happier person, that's for sure.

Callie: It's the best kind of impact, I think.

Kim: Right? That's important. Self-care is always important. But I think the cool thing too is watching my daughter who's 11, going on 12. When someone says, "Well, what does your mom do?" Mallory's like, "She's on Facebook live, and she does all these really cool things to talk to people." She thinks that's totally great, and I think that being that good role model for my daughter, and I've even encouraged my husband to put himself out there. I know he's a pharmacist, but he actually yo-yos. Like trick yo-yo, it's a thing. You guys should look it up. It's amazing.

But I'm like for all of us, it's been just a great thing because we're much more outgoing, we're a lot more, I don't know, relaxed in life because we're just letting things happen and in having experiences over things. That's a big part of I think how our mindset as a family has changed, and what this membership has really helped me with. It's about the experiences that we have in life, not necessarily having that awesome out of need that I'd like to have. But, we're going to take a trip together and we're going to have fun, and I'm still going to make money while I'm gone, and it's going to be awesome.

Callie: Yeah, I really love that. Is there anything you wish you would have known earlier when it comes to running a membership site, or that you'd do differently if you were starting again?

Kim: Finding you guys much sooner.

Callie: Cheques in the post!

Kim: Yeah, because that has been ... The Membership Guys podcast was just, I think I'd been just when I was getting ready to launch this. Or no, it was after I'd already launched. I'm like, "Gosh, I should see if anybody's talking about membership sites on podcast. It's like the first one that shows up. But yeah, I wish that I would have known about you guys sooner and gotten involved in the community much sooner.

But then also, understanding that it's never going to be done and finding peace with that. It's not going to be perfect and you know what? If it were perfect, you would never grow. I think that's okay, and I think being able to learn from your mistakes and not guilt trip yourself to death over the fact that you screwed up and said too many times on the live video that you did. I think that that kind of stuff is like just finding peace with just being you.

Callie: Yeah, I definitely agree with that. I think as well, when it comes to kind of that things will never be done and stuff, that actually that's one of the things I love about a membership site because it keeps it interesting. If it was just the same all the time, I would get bored. We're coming up on three years of the academy now, and if it was exactly the same now as it was three years ago, I'd have got bored by now. I'd be like, "I need something else, I need something to challenge me." or whatever. Whereas, you have that constant evolution and things. I think it keeps it interesting, it keeps it spicy.

Kim: Right. I think that's great advice for anybody thinking about getting involved in a membership or creating a membership, is like don't find something that's just going to have an end in sight. Because I think the excitement of being able to come up with new things and that's what's great about both of our memberships. Is that things are always changing and there's never going to be a lack of content for us to create and for the ideas for us to teach the people who are coming to us for help. I love that. That's like the teacher in me loves the constant learning that I'm able to do for myself.

Callie: Awesome. And so, as we wrap up then, what does the future hold for A Cup of Content? What's next for you?

Kim: Man. Of course, you want me to say, I want to grow my membership. But I think being open minded to change because it's inevitable. We're going to have to make changes as we go through this. But I think the future of probably is specifically for my membership is, there are some things I want to do. Like I'm I really wouldn't mind creating some sort of a weekend retreat and get people to come here where we laser focus in on what's a good content strategy for their particular business, and how can we get that more intimate one to one help? That would be something I want them to implement.

I also just launched a one to one coaching component that goes with A Cup of Content. I just had a meeting this morning with my first person who signed up for it.

Callie: Awesome.

Kim: Yeah. It's great because they get a lot of help from me in the membership, but to be able to sit down with me and one to one, give them ideas, work through a strategy, teach them things that they need to know. We talked this morning about a couple little business things. Like how do you keep track of all of the things that you sign up for and pay on a monthly basis? Giving them strategies for things like that. She needed that. She was like, "Oh my gosh. These are the things that I need in order to grow."

I think that that's a good kind of feature for A Cup of Content, is to still work one to one with people, but just more on a coaching and strategizing capacity, instead of me doing the work for them. It's me, guiding them on what they can do and grow their business.

Callie: Yeah. No, that sounds awesome. I love the idea of that retreat, as well. I think that sounds great.

Kim: Yeah. I found a place here in Omaha, that is amazing that I did not know existed. So, I'm like, "Oh, I have to go talk to her."

Callie: Yeah. I expect to see details about that in the future then.

Kim: Oh, yeah. For sure. Yeah, I'm going to have to light that up because it's going to be, that's going to be great. Just the venue itself is going to be enough, worth the price of admission. So, yeah.

Callie: Awesome. Well, it's been great to talk with you, Kim. I'm really looking forward to seeing your membership grow this year and also how you do bring in more of that coaching element. As I said, yeah, I think the retreat sounds like a brilliant idea as well.

If somebody wants to actually check out the site, find out more about you, where's the best place for them to do that?

Kim: Sure. They can go to [acupofcontent.com](http://acupofcontent.com). I didn't say this before, the whole idea behind this, you can learn how to do content marketing for your business over a cup of your favourite beverage. So, it's short, it's in small increments that you can do in the time that you have. So, [acupofcontent.com](http://acupofcontent.com).

Callie: I love that. I love that idea of just ... Yeah, kind of coffee break learning.

Kim: Yap. That's the live show. The Coffee Break Live.

Callie: Oh, I didn't even realise that.

Kim: Yeah, right? Yeah, The Coffee Break Live is where we dive into the messy world of content marketing, so yeah.

Callie: I love that, yeah. Well, awesome. Thank you so much again for joining me and sharing your membership, what's working for you, what you've got coming up and what challenges you've had. I think that's going to be really useful for everybody listening. So, thank you so much for sharing with us.

Kim: Yeah. Thank you, Callie, so much for inviting me. This was totally the best email I got this year. So, I'm just so excited and humbled that you asked me on the show. So, thank you.

Callie: That's it, folks. Thank you so much, Kim, for joining me on the show today. Be sure to check out her website at [acupofcontent.com](http://acupofcontent.com) to see more of what she's up to. I love that whilst her daughter's ill health was the impetus for starting your own business, doing so has given Kim and her family so much more than just the flexibility to be at home. Instead, it's provided a whole new kind of freedom, which to me is one of the hugest benefits of having a membership site.

If you'd like to check out the show notes or download the transcript from today's episode, then head on over to [themembershipguys.com/btm14](http://themembershipguys.com/btm14). As always, I'd love to hear your takeaways from this episode. Let me know over in the free Membership Mastermind Facebook group, or head on over to [talkmemberships.com](http://talkmemberships.com) to join if you're not already in there. Of course, you can let me know on Twitter by tweeting me @membershipguys, or on our Facebook page, The Membership Guys. I'll be back next week with another episode. Thank you so much for listening.

Speaker 2: If you've enjoyed today's episode of Behind the Membership, we invite you to check out [themembersiteacademy.com](http://themembersiteacademy.com). The Member Site Academy is the essential resource for anyone at any stage of starting, growing and running a membership website. Whether you're still figuring out what your idea is going to be, or whether your website is already up and running, and you're just looking for ways to grow it and attract new members, then The Member Site Academy can help you to get to the next level.

With our extensive course library, monthly training, exclusive member only discounts, perks and tools, and a supportive active community to help you along the way with feedback encouragement and advice, The Member Site Academy is the perfect place to be for anyone looking to start, manage and grow

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