

Welcome to Episode 108 of the Membership Guys Podcast. I am your host Mike Morrison; this is the show where I dispense proved and practical tips and advice for growing a successful membership website.

And today we are talking about how you inject new life into a stagnant membership.

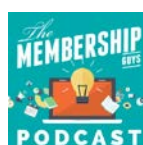
Momentum plays such a huge part in your membership growth and in fact you'll often find that there's a snowball effect that kicks in once you achieve a certain level of growth where you are bringing members in, you are doing a good job of hanging on to them. You find that things just start to pick up speed and that growth seems like it's getting easier and easier and you start growing faster and faster. But one of your memberships has slowed down recently and started to stagnate. What can you do to re ignite that momentum and get back on track?

That's what we are talking about in today's show but before we dive into that I want to remind you guys that the Membership Guys Podcast is brought to you by MemberSiteAcademy.com, the biggest and best educational community for membership site owners where we offer everything you need to plan, build, launch and grow a successful membership website. Including over 30 comprehensive courses, regular training and mastermind sessions, a support of community that will help you along the way plus member perks, offers, tools and all of that good stuff that will help you make your membership a success. Head on over to MemberSiteAcademy.com to check it out.

Okay so how do we go about injecting new life into a stagnant membership that has slowed down?

The first thing you need to do is diagnose the issue and that starts by clarifying the problem. Is the problem that you are not getting new members? Is the problem that you are getting members but you are losing too many of your existing membership base? And so you are almost going backwards. You are losing more people than you bring in. Or do you actually have decent growth but a zero engagement in your community and that's where the stagnation has kicked in.

You need to figure out what that actual problem is so you need to crunch down into your stats. You need to look at how many members you've had, what your churn rate is and so on and so on. Or for the past months or indeed years to figure out where the real problem area is.



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You want to try and find any easy fixes. Sometimes it's just a case one or two little things not quite being in tuned. So if there is low hanging fruit out there that we can address first, we want to jump on that stuff before we dive deeper into the more difficult or more in depth areas we need to improve.

Start by honestly asking yourself these questions.

### **First of all, are you adding value to your membership?**

If you want people to pay you on an ongoing business you need to deliver value on an ongoing business. Quite often that means continuously adding content but that doesn't always have to be the case. You don't have to be churning out content after content. There's other ways of adding value so you need to decide honestly whether you are actually giving enough value to justify people continuing their subscription.

### **Are you actually showing up in your community and being there for your members?**

A large part of the reason why many people join memberships is to gain access to you as the community leader, the thought leader, the expert and so you need to actually show up and serve your community. If you are barely there in your community, if you can't be bothered to post in your forums, why should anybody else? So ask yourself honestly, are you showing up in your community and it's that something you can change and make time for.

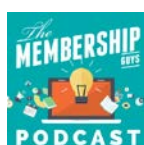
### **Can you identify a turning point?**

So looking back at where things start to drop off when things start to slow. Is there a specific event that you can map this to? Maybe there was a change in terms of the type of content you are writing, the frequency with what you are releasing content, maybe there was a redesign or a new feature added or even a feature removed. Was there a price increase? Was there a particular promotion that you did after which things start to slow down?

If you can nail down the point of which things start to stagnate then that is going to go a long way to helping you to figure out what should be your priority in terms of getting things back on track. Your audience are going to be crucial in this whole process of diagnosing the issue and you should be serving them and engaging with them to get the feedback you need in order to make any improvements in your membership.

You want to survey your members so you want to find out from them what do they like? What do they not like? What do they think your membership should have more of and what should it have less of? Encourage open answers and if you do a survey and you conduct a survey using a tool like Survey Monkey or Type Form, make that survey anonymous if you want to get genuine feedback.

You also want to survey non-members so people who have never joined your membership site to try and find out why they haven't joined. What objections do they have? What would it take to get them to join? This is especially important if part of the problem is you are simply not getting enough new members. And also survey your ex-members; people who would some point cancel their subscription. Find out why they left and what it would take to get them back. All of this information, all these data is going to be extremely revealing and extremely helpful in helping you to determine where you should be focusing on in order to re-ignite the momentum within your membership.



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If you want to really dive deep, then try to get some of your most active users, or maybe even people who were once very active in your membership but now they are not really present, they are not really using your site. Try to get those guys on the phone, in a Skype call or a Zoom session. Either one on one or in a small group call, to use them as your focus group and really delve into what they see as being issues within your membership. Not just the bad stuff or the things they want to change but also the things they like the most that perhaps you could emphasize or do more of.

Diagnosing this issue and gathering as much data as you can from the people that matter is going to help you to better determine what action you need to take in order to turn things around.

One thing that you might consider doing to re-ignite your membership is considering a re-launch. So this could be a soft re-launch. So where you are not actually launching something new but you make the sort of noise that you would make if you were. At the end of the day, if someone just discovers your membership site today then it's brand new to them regardless of how long you've been around. So to re-ignite the momentum in your membership, you could do a soft re-launch.

So this might involve doing a whole bunch of podcast interviews, guest blogs, maybe doing some event based marketing so running things like web summits or online challenges or 24 hour live streams. The sorts of stuff that's going to get attention, that's going to get eyeballs.

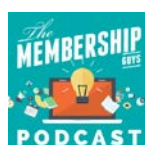
Maybe running a promotion, so a discount perhaps you have a price increase coming and so you can run a promo based on that. Maybe a lifetime offer, something that is not normally available. All designed to get a lot of noise, a lot of buzz, a lot of hype and a lot of excitement that normally would be reserved for the sorts of things that you do when you bring the new membership out. But in this case is designed to try and kick start your membership.

Now we called this a soft re-launch because you are not actually launching. You are not necessarily re-launching but if when you are researching and digging into the problem areas of your membership, you determine that actually there's quite a lot of changes needed, then you might consider actually closing the doors to your membership completely, so you stop taking in new members. You still have it available for your existing members. They can still get the content. They can still login and so on. You are just not accepting new members for a certain period of time.

If you close the doors of your membership, then you can focus 100% on making the improvements you need to make.

We actually have a member of our academy who did just that. He identified a whole bunch of things he wants to work on in order to improve the member experience and to give his membership a little bit of a shot in the arm. So rather than trying to do that while juggling everything else that's involved in attracting new members and all the plates you got to spin when running your membership. He closed down his site so he closed the door to new members. Still had his existing members in there but that enabled him to free up more of his time and bandwidth so that he could focus on making substantial improvements to his membership.

And he is actually involving his existing members in fleshing those improvements out. He is getting feedback and direction from them so that when he re-opens the door, he knows he's doing so with a brand new shiny improved offering and of course he can make all of that noise and do all of that buzz building stuff to get attention for that re-opening too.



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So consider a re-launch whether it's a hard re-launch where you do actually close the doors and then re-open or a soft re-launch where it's more just about the scheduling and the coordination of a timely marketing activity.

Something else that can re-ignite your membership is doing something designed to grab your member's attention. So this could be something like a huge content dump. So if your members are accustomed to our releasing one new thing every couple of weeks, then you can disrupt that pattern and grab their attention by releasing a whole bunch of content all at once.

This might be a brand new format or a brand new type of content. It might be that you've batch produced so you've already got the rest of the year's worth of content and you just drop it all on them at once. Essentially just something that breaks them out with the routine in terms of when they expect to get value from you and it's something that again, you can make a big song and dance about. It's something that's going to be a little bit exciting. It's new. It's fresh. It's interesting that you are doing that. It's going to get people logging in to check things out. And that can be enough to just give that little spark that can re-ignite your membership.

Something else that works great for getting members attention is running live events. So this could be an actual physical offline live event, like a conference, or a series of workshops or a summit or it can be virtual. Maybe it's a weekend long Facebook live stream or a virtual summit. Again, the sort of things where you use an event based marketing to really get people excited, to get their attention; their eyeballs except now you are doing it to re-engage your members rather than doing it externally to bring in new members in.

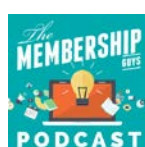
Of course whether its offline or whether its virtual, if you have an event going on then there will no doubt be recordings of the sessions and so on. So that actually provides its own little content dump when you add those recording into the membership which we just talked about before. And if it is an offline event then member meet ups and planning on the social side of things can be a huge huge factor in getting people re-engaged and getting them passionate about your membership again.

And lastly a simple way to just reconnect with your members is to potentially offer them a free gift or some sort of bonus. It could actually be a gift that you send them through the mail or it could be a little bit of one on one time that you either offer to all of your existing members or you offer to your legacy members. So, perhaps that first people to join or to people celebrating their anniversary of being in your membership for a year or 2 years or something like that.

Again just something they are not accustomed to, something that is delivering them value that they weren't expecting that's going to make them feel good, that's going to generate good will, that's going to have them re-engage with your membership and feel positive about it again, which is hopefully going to lead to them logging in more often consuming content, engaging with the community and so on.

So if your membership site has slowed down and if it starts to stagnate, then all is definitely not lost. It is very much possible to inject that bit of new life to re-ignite, re-spark your membership and get things back on track and start building up that momentum again.

It all starts with diagnosing the issue. Find the easy fixes and address them right away. Clarify what the actual problem area is. Be honest with yourself about whether you are actually showing up and delivering value. And survey and speak to your audience to figure out what the problems are. They will tell you. Consider a re-launch if that makes sense in terms of what the actual issues are behind

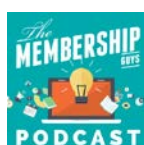


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your membership slipping a little. And try to do something that is going to grab your members attention, that's going to make them fall in love with your membership all over again and get them re-engaged, get them enthusiastic, get them positive about being part of your membership community. So if you have found yourself in that situation where you feel things have slowed down a little then hopefully this has given you a little bit of inspiration and some food for thought on how you can turn things around.

That's it for me for this week, thank you once again for joining me for this show. Hopefully you've enjoyed it. Hopefully you've found it useful. As always reach out to me on social media @membershipguys on Twitter or over on Facebook in our free Facebook group talkmemberships.com. Punch that in to your browser and it will take you to our Facebook group or just search for Membership Mastermind, you'll find our group. We've got over 4 and a half thousand membership site owners in there. So drop in there let me know what you thought of this week's episode and of course, ask any questions, any follow ups that you may have on the back of what we've been talking about.

Thanks again for tuning in. I'll be back again this week with another installment of the Membership Guys podcast.



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