

# KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN **B2C** & **B2B** MEMBERSHIPS



Mike: What's up, everyone? Thanks for downloading the latest episode of The Membership Guys Podcast. Episode 66, in fact. I'm your host, Mike Morrison, one half of The Membership Guys, this is the show where we just dispense proven, practical tips and advice for successful membership websites.

In today's episode, we're talking about some of the main differences between business to business memberships, and business to consumer memberships. Many of the principles, many of the strategies we talk about when it comes to membership websites, apply whatever niche or whatever market you're in, but there are some key differences between a B2B membership and a B2C membership that's going to affect your approach, or strategy, mindset, marketing, and a whole bunch of other things. The first of those is that when it comes to business to consumer memberships, you often find that the problems and the solutions that people are dealing with vary to a greater degree than with business to business.

With B2C memberships, at one end of the scale, you have your hobbyist where they join the membership purely to get better at their hobby or to indulge in a hobby that really, at the end of the day, doesn't make a big difference to their lives. It's just something they do because they have an interest in that. It's not life or death, it's not something that if they were no longer able to do it, they would fall apart. At one end of the scale you have something that is fairly unimportant in the grand scheme of things, but at the other end of the scale with B2C memberships, you can have stuff that can be truly life changing in terms of the subject, in terms of the problems that your audience have.

People who have chronic weight problems, who join a membership to lose weight, people who have crippling confidence issues, maybe people in massive debt, or people who want to quit smoking. Those sort of things are going to be so much more impactful, so much more life-changing than what you'll typically find with a B2B membership in terms of what that covers.

With B2B, usually, it's more around skills. It's more around wanting to develop skills that are going to be used in a business. You typically have people joining, expecting a return on an investment. Quite often they view their membership from a logical point of view rather than an emotional one, but the range of



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problems and the range of solutions that you can provide tends to be a lot narrower than with B2C memberships.

Now, of course, there's going to be exceptions to the rule, but broadly speaking, the scale of how important your membership is, and how much of an impact it can make, is usually going to be far broader with a B2C membership. It's perhaps more important with those types of memberships that you spend a good amount of time researching and assessing where your membership fits on the scale, to make sure that you're approaching, and you're marketing, and you're positioning your membership accordingly. That's the first big difference between B2C and B2B, just how vast the range is between a B2C being fairly inconsequential or be majorly life-changing.

The second big difference when it comes to B2B and B2C memberships comes down to attitudes towards cost and affordability. Typically, with a B2C membership, your members are going to look at their monthly subscription as a cost. They're going to assess it alongside their cell phone bill, alongside their grocery bills, alongside basically the cost of living, and so if things get a little bit tight, your membership becomes fairly expendable. Even if it is a membership where you're helping them to get some sort of life-changing result, like losing weight, like devolving confidence, like getting out of debt, ultimately, when push comes to shove, nobody is going to risk getting their mobile phone disconnected so that they can remain in a part of your membership.

When it comes to B2B memberships, your members will typically look at their subscription as an expense. They'll likely be paying for numerous other services. Maybe they're more likely to be part of several different memberships too, so it's a business expense, not a personal expense. While obviously you don't want to take it for granted that that means that members will stick around, or they won't think twice about the fact they're paying you, you're probably going to have less issues with people leaving simply because they have to in order to be able to put food on the table that months. The issue you will have though with B2B memberships when it comes to their attitudes towards the cost, is your membership, and how much is put into it, will typically be compared to other services or other memberships that your member is actually paying for, and assessed in terms of the value they're getting and the return on investment. It's even more important that you deliver a result, and you give people a reason to continue paying month after month.

Now, the actual level of affordability when it comes to memberships typically does vary between B2B and B2C memberships. A B2C membership will often be expected to be cheaper or more affordable than a B2B membership. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to pricing, and there's certainly not a set industry average, you'll often find in terms of monthly payments that a B2C membership will fall somewhere between \$15, to maybe \$35, or \$40, whereas a B2B membership is usually around the \$30 to \$60 mark. Obviously, that's going to vary depending on particulars, but again, it's just an indicator that B2C will usually cost less, and there'll usually be an expectation that it won't cost anywhere near as much as a B2B membership. That again comes back to how your members are going to perceive the importance of your membership site, as well as the value and the result they're going to get out of it.

Now, one thing in a consideration with B2C memberships is whether or not there's a financial barrier to entry when it comes to the particular subject your



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membership's based around. If you run a membership that is aimed at photography enthusiasts, then your customer base are one where they're having to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars in support of their hobby in terms of buying equipment. That applies to musicians, where they have to spend hundreds and thousands of dollars on instruments. It applies to high-tech hobbyists, so perhaps people who are building really expensive, really high-end PCs or gadgets, or something like that. Basically, whenever anyone is having to spend a lot of money just to get in the game, just to actually participate in that hobby, then that gives you a little bit more leeway in terms of what you can realistically charge, because they are accustomed to the fact that their hobby does have a financial element to it. It gives you a little bit more flexibility, but again, B2C is usually going to be expected to be a bit cheaper than a B2B membership.

The third big difference is how much time your members are going to have available to them. When you're working with B2B memberships, usually you're competing against work and home obligations. Your members are going to be utilizing your membership in their spare time. It's not something they can sit and do at work, whereas with a B2B membership, then actually taking some time and scheduling in time to use your site may actually be viewed as a viable or business activity that they can set time aside for.

When it's B2C, you have generally a much smaller amount of time available, so you need to account for this in terms of the content you're producing, in terms of the expectations and the demands that you put on your audience. If your emailing your members daily to remind them to do this or remind to do that, and it's a B2C membership, then they're probably going to get quite fed up quite quickly, because it may just be that they just haven't found the time to use your membership that week. They're typically going to be a little more sensitive to overwhelm. It's down to you to find ways that you can deliver value, deliver results without demanding a lot of your members time. You need to make it convenient for them to use your membership, and a good way of doing that, or a good idea for these type of memberships is actually provide something that shows, and teaches, and demonstrates to your members how to actually make good use of your membership, how to manage time, how to make time for actually implementing this stuff that they're learning.

The third thing to consider when looking at the differences between B2B memberships and B2C memberships is the level of exposure your market has to advertising, sales, or marketing tactics. In the B2B world, depending on your niche, your audience, your potential members will have had a lot more exposure to commonly used marketing tactics. They're going to possibly be able to recognise things like the product launch formula, three video launch sequence. They're possibly going to be able to recognise things like when a webinar is automated, versus when it's live and real time.

If it's business to consumer, maybe they're going to be a little more creeped out by remarketing on Facebook, for example, than a B2B member who is accustomed to that because they know what it is. Maybe they do it for their own business. Think about the level of exposure that your audience will have had to various different marketing tactics. You obviously don't want to put off your audience by having them focusing on the tactic itself, rather than the message you're trying to get across, or the activity, or the action you're trying to provoke. While there's not going to be extremes in how B2C react to a particular marketing strategy, versus how B2B would react to it, there certainly are differences, there's certainly



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nuances that you want to take into consideration when thinking about how to promote and grow your membership.

Those are four of the core differences between catering to B2B or catering to a B2C audience with your membership. First and foremost, how vast the range of potential impact your membership could have with the B2C market, versus with a B2B market, and the importance of assessing and analyzing where you actually fit on the scale between something that's more of a hobby, and something that's truly life-changing, and making sure that you're actually approaching, positioning, and marketing your membership accordingly.

Second big thing is the attitudes towards cost and affordability. B2C typically will be expected to be a bit cheaper than B2B memberships. There are exceptions to the rule, but a big part of the reason for that is how your audience will actually perceive and place the regular subscription costs, and how they'll think about it in terms of other stuff they're paying for on a month to month basis.

The third is how much time your members will have available, and the fact that there's typically going to be more time constraints for a B2C member. It comes down to you to make it convenient for them and to ensure they avoid overwhelm, and that your content delivery, and the way in which you engage and interact with your members, takes into account the fact that they might not have time to fully engage in the way you'd like them to.

The fourth and final difference is the difference in the level of exposure to various marketing tactics between business audiences and consumer audiences. Whichever of those groups that your membership is catering towards, make sure you're taking into account those four key elements.

Hopefully, you guys enjoyed the show. Hopefully, you've found some nuggets you can take away from that in terms of how to position, and market, and promote, and develop your membership. I'll be back again very soon with another episode of The Membership Guys Podcast.

If you've enjoyed today's episode of the membership guides podcast, we invite you to check out the [membersiteacademy.com](https://membersiteacademy.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 way, with feedback, encouragement, and advice, the Member Site Academy is the perfect place to be for anyone looking to start, manage, and grow a successful membership website. Check it out at [membersiteacademy.com](https://membersiteacademy.com).



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