

AVOIDING PARALYSIS *by* ANALYSIS WHEN CREATING YOUR MEMBERSHIP



Mike: Welcome to episode 67 of The Membership Guys Podcast. I'm your host Mike Morrison. This is the show for planning, starting and growing a successful membership website. In today's episode I want to talk about something which plagues a lot of people who are still in the planning and building stage of their memberships, as well as people who actually got their membership up and running and they're trying to figure new strategies, new approaches to the growth of their site, and that is paralysis by analysis.

It's that situation where you get all up in your head and you get all neurotic and you worry about every little thing and you over plan and you stress, and ultimately you get nothing done because you spend so much time fretting and wringing your hands about every little thing that it stifles action.

We see this all the time. We see people where it's taken them months and months to plan and launch their site because they're trying to cram in every possible idea under the sun. They get to a certain point in their planning or their building stage and it looks like everything is going well, and then they see another shiny object that they absolutely must have in their site before they launch, and then all of a sudden they're spiralling once again. These people are fretting about every possible scenario or what-if. They're worrying about what they're going to do 12 months down the line of a membership that hasn't even opened its doors yet. They're really over complicating the whole process, second guessing every decision, every move they do. This leads to them being frozen, to constantly being stuck in the mode, never getting to where they need to get to because they're piling on all of this mental load that stops them making progress.

In this episode I want to give you my top tips for avoiding paralysis by analysis. First of all you need to follow the KISS principle, Keep It Super Simple. That's one way of saying it, the other is Keep It Simple Stupid, but I don't want to offend too many of you. Keep It Super Simple. Think about some of the best experiences that you've had when you've been buying something online or using new software or gadgets, booking a holiday, booking a restaurant. The one thing all those great experiences tend to have in common is that they're simple. They're effortless. They don't make you think too hard. You don't need a 200 page manual to do it. The simplicity is the thing that makes it so great.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

Think about companies like Apple. One of the big reasons people give for loving all their software and all their products is how user friendly they are, how easy, how obvious, how super simple they are to use. The whole catchphrase that so many Apple fanatics use is, "It just works." That simplicity, the principle of keeping things simple is the secret to the success of so many websites, so many products, so many services. The first thing you need to do is actually recognize that simplicity is a good thing. Complexity is usually not a positive element when it comes to your membership, particularly if your members are going to be at different levels of tech-savviness, with different levels of experience, maybe it's not a technical audience whatsoever. More wrinkles, more complications, more features on top of features on top of features is going to make things more complex, going your website more difficult to use and to understand. Embrace simplicity, first step to avoiding paralysis by analysis because once you start striving for simplicity then you recognize that all these massive bells and whistles and having too much stuff going on is actually a bad thing.

The second tip for avoiding paralysis by analysis is to get input from other people. If you've got a Facebook group, you've social media followers, existing clients, perhaps you have a business partner or a business coach. Involve them in discussions, talk this stuff out with them. You don't want to get into a situation where too many cooks spoil the broth but you don't want to go in the opposite direction of putting all the pressure just on your shoulders and not getting any input. What you'll actually find is if you're worrying about 101 things then a simple conversation with your audience, a simple conversation with a trusted friend or advisor will make you realize that 99% of what you're thinking about or worrying about is of little consequence. It's not important. Usually the things that you care about and you think are absolutely crucial to your membership, other people wouldn't notice if they weren't there.

That shiny object, that absolutely crucial feature that you're determined to put in your membership, how do you know that anyone will even notice it's there, or they'll even care? Why do you want all these bells and whistles? Why have you decided you needed to have 20 different types of content? Usually it's because you see other people doing things, and so you join one membership that's doing one thing really great and you think, "I'll take that." Then you see someone else doing another thing really great and you'll say, "I'll take that as well." Then you try and create this Frankenstein's monster of all the possible features, all the possible content and it becomes this big ugly hulking behemoth that has all sort of elements that people won't care about. Talk to your audience, engage in a dialog. Speak to your Facebook group, find out the most important things to them, and then apply that of feedback and engage them in discussion when you're thinking about the real essentials of your membership site.

Question when you're looking at a list of features you want, when you're trying to plan things out and build things, question why you deem something is important as you feel it is. Usually it has nothing to do with your audience actually telling you they want that thing, usually it's because you've seen something pretty cool and you've decided that there's no way that your membership could ever possibly launch unless you had all these cool things. Get other people involved in the discussion, they'll help you wade through all the stuff that doesn't really matter and get focused on the important stuff that is actually going to appeal to your audience and help them to achieve the results they want to achieve.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

You also want to try setting decision deadlines. Make a date in a diary by which you will have a final decision on a particular area. If you're trying to decide what features your membership needs to have, put a date down in that diary and be strict and stern with yourself that beyond that date you will not spend any more time on making that decision. That helps you get real focused real quick. If you remain disciplined and if you stick to it then it helps you, again, avoid the overwhelm because you're actually making decisions, you're actually making progress.

Listen, there's nothing wrong with weighing up options and thinking of all the possibilities. There's nothing wrong with envisioning this perfect membership but ultimately you need to make a decision at some point. Set deadlines, set milestones for when decisions will be made, and then adhere to those. Commit to moving forward without then revisiting and constantly rehashing decisions that are already in the bank.

Another important step is to embrace your limitations. You should not expect to be able to do everything yourself. If you are not a web designer or a web developer you should not have the expectation of being able to develop all sorts of custom stuff or have a website that looks absolutely phenomenal, that looks as good as professional web designer websites would look. You shouldn't expect to be able to do that without hiring someone in. Embrace your limitations. Stick to what you're good at, and if you want to have a website that looks as great as a \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 professionally designed website then hire somebody to do it for you. If it's not important enough for you to actually pay for somebody to do then it's not important. Focus on what you're good at. Focus on your strengths.

Accept the fact that you have limitations. Don't bury yourself in trying to do all the sort of stuff that you shouldn't really be spending time on. I've actually seen people taking a course on how to be a web developer during the process of planning their membership, and as a result putting their membership on hold by 6 months or 12 months while they teach themselves to become a web developer, even though again the end result of that, they're still not going to be on level as someone that's been doing it for a decade. That's an example of focusing on the wrong things. Unless you're planning on becoming a professional web designer or a professional web developer, then you have no business taking a course to teach yourself all that stuff just so you can build your membership. Accept the limitations, move on beyond them.

Recognize that while your membership site might not look as polished as someone who's a professional web designer, that you will have strengths that they don't have. Leverage those strengths, really focus on those strengths and embrace and accept the fact that you have limitations. Again, going back to that KISS principle, keeping things simple. Most of the time when we see people who are really struggling with the technical side of their membership, it's problems of their own creation because they're trying to make their website do back flips. They're trying to have it do all of this really complex, really advanced stuff that actually requires custom coding, when actually if they just stuck to what the membership plugin they're using or what the system they're using could do out of the box and they kept things simple, they would be making so much more progress.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

Usually the really over complicated fancy stuff they're trying to make their membership do it's not important. It really doesn't matter. They just have this stone in their shoe, they have this idea in their head that this sort of thing is crucial. It really, really isn't. Embrace your limitations. Accept them and focus on actually taking action of focusing on the stuff that you are good at, and either hiring in for the stuff you're not good that or simply deeming it unimportant.

Another big tip for avoiding paralysis analysis is to understand that membership are an evolution. The membership you launch today will not look the same in 12 months time. That's because your members will shape the direction of your membership. The best ideas, the best content, the best features that your membership will have 1 year, 2 years, 3 years down the line, they'll probably come from your members themselves, from the people who are using and interacting with your membership, who are consuming your content. The people you're trying to serve, they will tell you how they want to be served. They will inspire you. They will give you feedback.

That thing that you spent 20 or 30 hours fretting over, that piece of content or that feature, you'll probably find that nobody cares about it. That's the thing that falls flat, that doesn't quite work. The great thing with memberships is that it's not a finished product, you're not selling a static finished article. You have so much room to grow and to evolve. You don't have to pack in every piece of content or every possible feature that your membership could ever possibly have in for day 1. You have time, it's a marathon it's not a sprint. Your membership will grow. It will change and it will evolve over time.

Understanding that, again that's key to avoiding that paralysis by analysis because when you truly appreciate the fact that the best memberships in the world are constantly evolving, you'll realize you don't need to have every decision made before you open the doors. You don't need to have every feature in place before you launch. You don't need to know how to deal with this imaginary scenario that you foresee happening 2 years down the line. This stuff will come, you'll make mistakes, you'll have successes that you hadn't expected. The stuff that you think will work fantastically well will fall flat on its backside. The stuff that you just do on a whim, a quick little tweak, will have massive positive results. That's what happens. Realize that memberships are an evolution and take advantage of the reduction of pressure that that gives you.

The membership model is one of the lowest pressured kind of models in terms of getting everything perfect from the get-go. People's expectations from a membership aren't as high as if they're buying a course or they're buying a piece of software because they know and they recognize and they expect that the membership will grow and evolve over time. There's going to be more forgiveness for a particular piece of content not being there or a particular feature not being there. Actually continuously adding features, continuously adding content is better for you in terms of securing that long term retention, delivering value to people over time. Really take advantage of the fact that the membership model allows you that room to breathe and to grow. Recognize that memberships are an evolution, you don't need to have everything perfect from the get-go. What it all comes down to is that a membership that is imperfect and launched and earning money and getting new members and evolving and changing and adapting, a membership that's imperfect at launch is better than one that is striving for complete perfection but isn't launched. Imperfect launched is better than perfect and not.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

My top tips for avoiding paralysis by analysis, embrace the KISS principle, Keep It Super Simple. The best businesses, the best experiences, the best systems are simple. They don't make their users or their members think hard about how to use them. Don't convince yourself you need all these spinning bells and whistles, all these elements. I promise you the stuff you think is crucial really isn't. Get input from other people. Make sure that you're actually focusing on stuff your audience wants or your audience need. Sometimes you need a sanity check from trusted advisors and friends who will help you realize that 90% of what you're panicking about, 90% of what you've got stuck in your head really doesn't matter.

Set yourself decision deadlines and commit to them so that you know you're going to be making progress rather than just getting stuck in the mud, fretting and bringing your hands about stuff that really is of little consequence. Accept that you have limitations, embrace them, move on and focus on the stuff that you're good at. Hire in people to take care of the stuff you can't do or you're not good at. If you don't think it's important enough to spend money and spend time hiring, then it's not important enough for you to spend your time and your brain power on. Understand and embrace and take advantage of the fact that memberships are an evolution. The best memberships are never finished. That means you can't get it perfect from day 1 because the best bits of your membership, the most successful stuff, are ones that you won't even realize until your membership's up and running and you've got members using your site, feeding back you and giving you ideas. Imperfect and launched beats perfect and not launched every single time.

There's a real opportunity cost that comes in when you find yourself stuck in the mud, when you find yourself not moving forward, because you're over complicating everything. Your audience and your market are out there. They have problems that need solving and if you dither and dally too long someone else is going to come along and provide a solution. The opportunity cost of paralysis by analysis is huge so don't over complicate everything. Don't try and put every feature and every idea and every piece of content under the sun into your membership. Don't assume that every little thing is crucial and urgent and important and you have to have every bell and whistle. You really don't. Keep things simple, make decisions, make progress, get your membership launched and evolve it over time.

Hopefully that has helped some of you come unstuck if you found yourself in that situation. If not, hopefully it serves as a little reminder or a little bit of fire in your belly for making sure you stay focused and making sure that you're always making progress with your membership. What I'd like you guys to do on the back of this episode, if you have been languishing in that paralysis by analysis situation, I want you to send me a tweet @MembershipGuys, or to jump into our free Facebook Group for membership site owners, talkmemberships.com. Let me know what you've done and what you've taken away from this episode to help you move forward. I want to know that you've taken that next step, that you've moved passed decision and that you're making progress on your membership as a result of listening to this episode. Please let me know on Twitter, on Facebook how this episode has helped you out. Thanks for choosing to spend a little bit of time with me today with The Membership Guys Podcast. I really do hope you found it useful. I hope it's helping you in the planning and the growth of your own membership. I'll be back again very soon with another episode of The Membership Guys Podcast.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

If you've enjoyed today's episode of The Membership Guys Podcast we invite you to check out themembersiteacademy.com. The Member Site Academy is the essential resource for any one 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 a successful membership website. Check it out at membersiteacademy.com.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)