

4 TACTICS TO ACCELERATE AUDIENCE GROWTH



Mike: What's up everyone, welcome to episode 73 of The Membership Guys podcast. I'm your host Mike Morrison, one half of the aforementioned membership guys. This is a show in which I dispense proven practical tips and advice for growing a successful membership website.

If you're one of those people who doesn't eagerly await each and every episode of this podcast, downloading it within seconds of release, and if so shame on you, then I want to let you guys know that this is the second part of a two part series so to speak on building and audience. We're talking a lot about audience building here at The Membership Guys to coincide with the release of a brand new course in Member Site Academy all around growing your audience and building and audience for your membership site.

On the last episode, episode 72, we talked about where to actually find your audience, how to identify where your audience are hanging out and what to look out for, what to listen for and [inaudible 00:01:12] to use the information that you gather from simply hanging out with them, observing them, listening to them and so on. In this episode we're going to talk about four tactics that you can use for growing your audience fast.

It's probably going to be more useful to you to listen to those episodes in order but if you're feeling a little bit rebellious and you want to listen to this one first, then I'm not going to stop you. We're talking all about tactics for quick audience growth. The four things we're going to mention in this episode are certainly not the only way of growing your audience, certainly not the only way of marketing your membership, but they are definitely four of the tactics that are going to get you a larger result over a shorter period of time. That's something which is now doubt going to be extremely useful to you if you're starting from scratch in terms of actually having an audience to promote your membership to and you're building up towards a launch and want to make sure you have as many eyeballs as possible on your [newly 00:02:12] opened membership.

The first of those tactics we're going to talk about is running a free online challenge. This will typically be where you develop either a course or a program, a series of emails, webinars, live videos, that are all aimed around getting people a



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particular outcome or helping them achieve a certain goal. You usually run this program or this course over a set period of time, typically seven days, 14 days, 30 days. Certainly no more than 30 days.

Because of that the goal or the outcome that you're looking to deliver through this free challenge is usually going to be something relatively small and achievable within that time frame. It shouldn't require too much direction or instruction from you because you're relying on the people taking part in guiding themselves along and so on. You're not sending the participants in this challenge two or three hours worth of video material to watch every day. Instead you're plotting out a pathway to a particular outcome and then breaking it down into small easy digestible chunks that you then send out on a daily basis or a weekly basis or so on.

A free challenge, because of the fact that you'll do it to a specific fixed time period and you'll often run it so that everybody subscribing starts and ends the challenge on the same dates, that allows you to build a bit of buzz, to make a lot of noise and to get more eyeballs and to use scarcity and urgency as a tactic in actually encouraging people to sign up for free to this challenge. You might have a Facebook group, maybe you have public social media updates where anybody taking part in the challenge can check in or report their progress.

Because of all this kind of stuff it's a lot more compelling and it's a lot more attention grabbing than a regular lead magnet that you might use on your blog post to try and encourage people to join your email list. If you make a big deal about this and you treat it almost like a mini product launch, then that's more likely to get you a large quantity of people opting in to take part in it. People will join this not just for the material but also because they thrive on accountability and they like to be shown the particular route they need to follow. If you structure a free challenge well it can be a huge, huge tactic for generating email signups.

This is something that we did as a key part of the launch of Member Site Academy, having spent years with our head down at the core phase, working with clients one on one with their membership business. When we decided we were going to launch Member Site Academy we had a relatively short space of time to build our audience. The main way in which we really accelerated that was through our 30 day membership challenge, where we took the process of planning, creating and launching a membership, and we broke it down into 30 easy to digest, accessible and easy to accomplish steps, which we then delivered as an email course over a set period of time. That generated us hundreds and hundreds of sign ups which played a big part in the successful launch of Member Site Academy. That's the first tactic for really accelerating your audience building, running a free challenge. Once you've done it once you can then pull it out the back several times a year to give your email list generation an extra boost.

A big part of why that tactic is successful is it enables you to create an event type feel around what is essentially just an email autoresponder sequence. If we want to take that event element even further then the second tactic is using a web summit. A web summit is essentially an online event where you feature experts in your niche or people with knowledge that will really help people within your audience. This ought to really either be live or pre-recorded interviews, webinars or workshops where you're the host. You'll typically have 30 to 40 different experts from different areas and you schedule in the sessions that you have with them over a fixed period of two, maybe three weeks. Again you make a big event



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of it, you brand it all up and you make it free to attend in exchange for somebody subscribing, providing their email and so on.

There are so many different ways in which you can use a web summit in order to actually generate sales, by upselling into the membership, you maybe make the free recordings only available for a certain amount of time and then people actually have to pay to join your membership to get lifetime access. All sorts of ways you can use a web summit as an actual sales generating tool, but purely from an audience building tool again the event element of it, the fact that this is something which will only be taking place at a particular time and when it's done, it's done, you can no longer attend.

That enables you to really use urgency, really use scarcity as a marketing tool to build your audience, but also it makes for an extremely compelling thing for people to sign up for. Simply by providing their email address they get access to expert knowledge all rounded up in one place from all these different people that they'll have heard of, that they'll have respect for. You're the host, you're being associated with them. You obviously get a chance to showcase your own knowledge and expertise, and of course you have these guys on your email list so you can continue that relationship there.

They're now part of your audience. A web summit can be a lot of work and take a lot of logistics in terms of getting it all together. I'd certainly recommend you check our episode 44 of The Membership Guys podcast where I spoke to Yann Ilunga, good friend of mine who had a lot of success running his podcast success summit. Check that out for some more tips on how to run a web summit as an audience building tool as well as a sales tool. That's the second tactic at really accelerating your audience growth running a web summit.

The third tactic is running a contest. Not just any contest but one which actually rewards people for sharing the contest details and for getting other people participate. [Typically 00:08:31] these are social contests, whereby someone entering gets more entries if they encourage other people to actually enter. They benefit for essentially building your audience for you. It's important when it comes to contest to not go crazy with the prices. If you're giving away cars and thousands of dollars and iMacs and MacBooks and all that sort of stuff, then you're just asking to have people trying to game the system, to have people signing up who have no interest in your topic. There's no point in assembling an audience if that audience are not relevant to what you're doing.

You want to keep any prizes that you're actually using in your contest modest and also keep them relevant. This is where bundles of books related to your subject can work very well, maybe even equipment if you're in a particular niche where there's a heavy use of specific equipment, like photography, like teaching people to play an instrument, where maybe you can give away a camera or give away a guitar or a drum kit. The only people who are going to enter a contest to win that stuff are people who have an interest in that particular topic and therefore they're likely going to be more suitable and more relevant to what you actually want to promote to them in terms of your membership site.

You can also include free membership of your site as one of the prizes simply to get the fact that you have a membership on the radar of the people taking part. Of course that gives you then an opportunity or reason to talk about your membership, to provide details of it, maybe show a little tour or a little sneak



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peek, behind the scenes, because you're doing that in the context of explaining a prize that's in the contest rather than simply selling and pitching your product to the participants. The third tactic, run a social contest and there's various different options in terms of the software out there that will enable you to do this in a way that awards extra entries for people who share and who refer other people to your contest. Things like KingSumo, Rafflecopter, [Realbox 00:10:32] just for starters. That sort of software can be very good for this particular tactic.

The fourth tactic for accelerating your audience growth is to partner up with established influencers or established names in your field to run some sort of joined venture promotion. If there are other people out there who have the audience that you want, either within the same niche or within an area where there's going to be some shared interest, then you can tap into those people's audiences by doing a joint venture. That might simply being you going along and using someone else's platform to deliver value to their audience. Maybe you do it with joint webinar, perhaps you guest on their podcast or on their website and you reward them by giving them a small commission on any new sales or any new opt-ins that then turn into sales resulting in your exposure on their platform.

You can go even further than that and actually have these figures who already have these big audiences actively promoting and actively marketing you in exchange for higher commission, in exchange for other incentives. This is typical of high ticket product launches and courses but you can certainly adapt it to memberships, particularly if you're offering lifetime options or annual options where the actual money involved and as a result the potential commission for your joint venture partner is higher than what they would earn on monthly payments.

This is largely a case of [inaudible 00:11:59] identifying sort of people you would want to have a joint venture with and then approaching them to first of all take their temperature as to whether this is something they think would be a good fit for their audience because they know their particular audience better than you do. Then from there it's really down to you to make it as easy as possible for these guys to actually talk about your product, to encourage people to join, to promote your membership, your free opt-in, your free challenge, your web summit and what have you. You're going to need a robust system and software in place that's going to be able to track somebody from clicking through from a link on your joint venture partner's website through to opting in for a particular freebie, all the way through to actually joining your membership.

The relevancy to their audience, the amount of commission being offered and how likely they think it is that they'll be able to generate a lot of sales is going to really play a part in the decision making of these potential partners as to whether they actually want to work with you. Focusing on those areas when you're actually making these approaches is key. A good joint venture arrangement can do wonders for accelerating your list growth and then of course accelerating sales.

This sort of joint venture promotion is something that you're going to want to do when you're ready to launch. A well established influencer with a huge audience isn't going to put in all this effort purely to add email subscribers to your list. Any sort of lead generation or any sort of free opt-ins that you actually use in this partnership need to be done as the first step of a sales process. In most cases that's going to be part of your launch strategy. You need to be able to show your potential partners the direct path between them sending someone to you in order



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for that person to opt into email and that then resulting in a sale within a relatively short window of time.

Again this isn't something that you would likely do early on in the process, when you're still building and you're still putting together your membership because it's not going to be worthwhile of your joint venture partners. This is something everyone's going to be able to take advantage of and certainly it's something where there's more scope for doing it if your topic is in the online marketing arena, but you can get creative and apply the same sort of strategy to all sorts of markets and all sort of topics simply by identifying the influencers, the product providers and the other people who are already servicing audiences that you also want to target.

Those are the four strategies you can use to accelerate your audience building. Run some sort of free challenge, make a lot of hype, turn it into a bit of an event. If you want to take that event element even further tactic number two, run a web summit where you bring together all these experts on a particular topic and over the space of two to three weeks you run a schedule of programming of educational material, interviews, workshops and so on, that is free to anyone who subscribes to your list and submits their email address.

Third tactic is running a contest that encourages social sharing and referrals, but again the key for this is making sure that the prizes you use aren't so valuable that you'll get all sorts of people who are not interested in your topic taking part simply because they want to win a free TV. The fourth tactic is using joint venture partnerships in order to tap into other people's audiences.

As we said at the top of the episode, those four tactics are in now way the only way of marketing and promoting and growing your membership. They're certainly not the only way of generating leads, but if you're looking to accelerate your audience building efforts then these four tactics are definitely amongst the most effective ways of getting a lot of people signing up to your email list, a lot of people joining your audience within a short space of time.

Audience building really is a key activity for anyone thinking of starting a membership site. Even if your membership is already growing you need to make sure your audience is growing along with it so this isn't just something you do when you're preparing for launch, this is something you need to be doing on a continuous basis because without an audience who are you going to sell to? Build it and they will come is not a valid strategy so make sure you've invested time in audience building.

To help you do that we have just released a brand new course inside Member Site Academy that is all around audience building strategies for membership site owners. This delves into researching your audience, determining what they want and how to give it to them, creating audience avatars and segmenting your audience to make sure that all your marketing campaigns are as highly targeted and highly effective as possible. It also digs deeper into the strategies and the tactics, the specific stuff that you can do to actually grow your audience as well as how to take your relationship with your audience even further so you get more out of it and it's more profitable for you and more rewarding for them.

This is an absolutely essential course for anybody thinking of starting a membership or currently running a membership who's looking for more ways to



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attract new members. This has just launched inside Member Site Academy. We're very excited about it and already it's getting fantastic feedback. Head on over to membersiteacademy.com to find out more not only about this course but also a whole library of courses, training, resources, perks, our community and all that amazing stuff that we have inside the academy. Check that out at membersiteacademy.com

That's it for me for this episode of The Membership Guys podcast. Thank you so much for downloading the show. I hope you've enjoyed it, I hope you found it useful. As always give me a shout on social media @MembershipGuys on Twitter or the Facebook group is talkmemberships.com, and of course if you're serious about building your audience, if you're serious about making your membership site a success, check out membersiteacademy.com as well. Thanks very much for downloading this episode, I'll be back again very soon with another installment of The Membership Guys podcast.

If you've enjoyed today's episode of The Membership Guys podcast we invite you to check out the 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 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.



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