



SuperFastBusiness presents

7 Ways To Improve Your Membership (Case Study)

In just two years, SJ Meeson has reached about 30,000 women with her passion project, Christian Women In Business. Discover how she did it in this SuperFastBusiness case study.



7 Ways To Improve Your Membership (Case Study)

by SuperFastBusiness



SJ Meeson

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 587, and I'm pleased to share a case study with a member of SuperFastBusiness who is only in the second year of this online marketing journey. So welcome to the call, SJ.

SJ: Thanks for having me.

James: SJ, you have a fantastic website. It's called ChristianWomenInBusiness.com.au, and you've been helping people around a specific community, and you've been asking me some questions over the last

year or two.

And when you gave me an update recently about what things you've done and where you've gotten to, I was so pleased for you on how you've implemented these things. I asked you if you'd like to come along and talk about this on the podcast, and I'm very excited to do that because you're in a non-internet-marketing market. You're in a passion market or a side sort of portal to the rest of the world. And there's topics that they say we should never talk about, politics and religion. Now let's just get this part out of the way. You can tell us about your website and who you're serving, just to give us some context as to what you've been doing.

About Christian Women in Business

SJ: Sure can. So yes, you're right. Everyone always says never talk about politics, and I think it's sex and money, I'm not sure. But basically, we talk about all of that. I'm sorry, I broke rule number one straight away, but we're a community and directory for Christian women in business. We launched in February 2017, and thanks to yourself, for your support. And thank you for the opportunity to come on here as well. I'm really grateful.

We've now managed to unite women from all over the world. So we are in a kind of niche sect to being Christian. The community is all about God, all about Jesus. Because what I personally found was, as I was, I didn't start off in this. I started off doing investing with property. And what I found was within the church, so to speak, I thought, I guess there wasn't like a, yes, there was lack of support. People didn't really understand what it was that I wanted to do. And they didn't grasp the vision.

And I kind of thought, 'Well, if I'm one person, and one woman even, who thinks like that, how many more other women in the world must there be who have a business, have a dream, and who want to see it come to life, but maybe feel like they can't really talk about it, because, you know, they go to church?' And there's a lot of old school sayings that money is the root of all evil and stuff like that, where that is the case in some instances, but that shouldn't mean that we can't develop investment portfolios or create businesses.

And so I decided I wasn't going to let another woman feel like how I felt. And

so I wanted to create a platform where women can come, really feel supported, strengthened and kind of feel safe, a safe place for them to share all about their faith, as well, because that's kind of shunned upon today.

So yeah, and so we launched and we've probably influenced now over 30,000 women across the globe through different platforms and using a lot of your strategies as well, James. It's been an incredible journey so far. And it was awesome to sit down the other day and kind of... I'm very silent in the community, I just kind of come in when I might need help a little bit, but it was really awesome to come and sit down and go, "Hey, I know I've been silent, but this is what I've been doing." So yeah, it's good.

James: It's just amazing. And there's, you know, you're quietly just doing the steps and you're impacting 30,000 women. I just wonder, how many people as a group my own membership would actually reach. If you're reaching 30,000...

SJ: That's not in the membership, that's our whole platform.

James: Yeah, I'm talking about in our sphere. Like, in my sphere of the people who I'm connected with, they're reaching massive groups. But I do want to specify down onto the platform thing. So I know you don't have 30,000 members. I'm very clear on that.

SJ: Oh my gosh, no.

James: That would be a pretty busy community. But I was imagining you're talking about people you reach via your podcast and social media and various other things like email lists. But what my point was, is a membership like mine is helping people who are helping other people. And that's something that you could feel good about. And I imagine in your catchment of 30,000 women, a lot of them are helping other people and that's why, you know, being the platform organizer and bringing these people together, you're really having a profound impact on a lot of other people's lives.

SJ: Yeah, it's pretty awesome. It's a massive ripple effect that you know, you drop one stone into the pond and we can all keep sharing vision and encouraging each other through that.

[Before and after automation](#)

James: So let's talk about more specifically, around the membership side of things, because one of the first updates you gave me was about how you've not just got a membership, but you also have started to systemize it and you rolled out a strategy of automating how people can join the membership. And that freed you up a little bit to be able to do other things, which we'll hear about in a moment. What was the before situation in that regard? And then what does it look like now?

SJ: So what we did at the beginning and in the first year, and I think it did work really well in the first year because we were still building our audience and we needed a buzz and we needed that kind of atmosphere of new and I don't know what the word is, but, we needed to create a real buzz around... So in the first year, we decided to do kind of intake launches.

So we did our first intake and then I was like, OK, it's time to shut the door. So we shut the door. And then I was like, OK, let's do intakes like every three months and do a big promotion, get campaigns going both on and offline. We managed to match them up with our business socials as well.

So we've got business socials offline that happened, just like you do, James, all across the world now. That's another story in itself. And so we were doing that. But what I was finding was it took a lot of effort and it took a lot of energy from myself. So I'd have to kind of gear myself up, ramp myself up to get ready for the launches and to be excited and to get that buzz happening. And then you'd reach a peak of when intakes have closed, and then intakes would close, your money stops coming in for that period, if you like. And then you go on a downward spiral.

So you put all this work into like, a few weeks or like, the week's building up, it happens and then you're like, OK, I've come down now, I'm tired, and I'm going to have to wait another three months before I get another wad of income on top of the income that's coming in now continuously, if that makes sense.

James: It does make sense. And you've got this huge burden now, service burden, of all the new members, and that's one of the downsides of a launch model, is aside from wreaking havoc with your adrenal glands, it puts you on this cash feast and famine.

SJ: Yeah.

James: I mean, one responsible thing that we can do to help other people is to not be a drain on society financially, right? And if you're wanting to be in a position where you're supporting and helping tens of thousands of people, you need to have that consistency of stable cash flow and also to be in control of your own energy state. So since you put some steps in place, have you experienced a difference in the way that you approach serving your customers?

SJ: Yeah, so basically we still have to have an application process, just to make sure that we're, I don't know if fitting is the right word, but making sure that we don't get people who will just come in and abuse our members. So that bit is still slightly manual, but I don't do that. I have a staff member who does that for me. And so that's kind of taking care of that.



But otherwise, it's meant that I can create really awesome content and I have the energy to sit down and think and look at my community and ask my members, "Hey girls, what is it you want to learn about? What is it that's on your heart that feels missing from your life in business right now?" And I can just sit and listen to them. I think that's one of the biggest keys as a business owner and in marketing, is you have to be able to listen to the audience and know what it is that they want.

So just by freeing myself up from the energy of bringing on new members, I'm

actually focusing all my energy on managing my members. I'm listening and then I'm creating content that they want. I am here, and I'm not accidentally fallen into a mentor-y, coach-type position within the business. But at least I can be there to put that time into people now as well, which before it was like rush, rush, rush, rush, rush, rush, haven't got time for anything. And then I'm trying to get all the applications through all at once, and it was just... Now, it's like, "OK, come in. Welcome to this restful place where we can grow in our businesses and you can feel supported and you've got a leader who is here for you and isn't exhausted."

It's been a real life changer, and what I think took the most was for me to change my mindset and really trust in the process. So as I was thinking I've got to change this, because I'm going to be really tired by the second year if I keep going at this pace. I had to really sit down with myself and go, 'OK, well, if you're going to change your strategy, first you need to implement it outright into the market and have a consistent message.' But I need to get my own head space right and be OK with being open to making money all the time. Which, believe it or not, I was like, 'OK, this is a new realm of business.' Like, I've gotten so used to being – did you call it fast and famine? I forget what you said.

James: Feast. There's a feast and famine.

SJ: Feast and famine.

James: It's like the hunter going out and they might catch something for dinner or they might not.

SJ: Yeah.

Money and faith

James: But you know, as an outsider, it seems to me that religious organizations have done pretty well at consistently making money. You know, for hundreds of years, thousands of years probably, so it's probably still aligns with the brand.

SJ: Dive into it more, a little bit about that.

James: Well, I mean, the Catholic Church, for example, it seems to own pretty much all the premium properties. And they collect plenty of cash through various avenues. Like, they seem to be OK to set up a money making machine.

SJ: Yes, it is. And I think that if you're really smart about it, you can make a lot of money. I mean, especially in property, but I still think it comes down to the individual as well and your own values and your own upbringing of money.

And I grew up in a non-religious family, mom and dad both aren't Christians. And so I've had to fight with what they've taught me and go, 'Actually no, it's OK, I don't need to work super hard to make money, and I don't need to be there each and every hour to make that money.' I just need to be OK and trust myself with the process to make that money and allow that to come into for the business. So we can keep putting money into different avenues that we want to go to. Because if I don't have that money, and if I'm not OK with making that money, I'm not going to have money to be an influence and put into other things that I believe the world needs.

What the Catholics have done with their money, you know, that's up to them. So with any religious organization. And you know, you'll go around Sydney and you'll find that churches have got really good prime locations, and I kind of think, well, they're pretty smart for figuring out that Sydney in a hundred years' time is going to be prime real estate in Australia. So good on God for doing that, I guess.

But I guess for me, it's been more about my own journey of, you know, is it OK to make money? Yes, it is OK to make money. OK, I've made this membership now. And then I've set myself up into a routine of launches. Now, it's OK for me to step back and let me trust the process and make that money through automation and know that I can then put all my energy back into serving our members the best I can.

James: Good. That's exactly the point that I wanted to make, is that you have to decide that it's OK to be in that situation. And it's a very common one, that there's actually a possibility you might choose a more difficult business model because it sits with some old values that have been placed there by your parents, early stages. You mentioned a few of them, that you have to work hard.

SJ: Yeah.

James: That money could be the root of all evil. I mean, I'm very passionate about this topic. I've even published a book on it.

SJ: Yes.

The hows of automating things

James: Which is [Work Less, Make More](#). Because I believe you can take a counterintuitive approach.

Now, I'm sure someone listening to this is dying to know, SJ, what did you specifically do to go from launch mode to having it automatically for sale? You know, you might throw a technique or strategy there or tool.

SJ: So, I scouted your community, or while I was scouting your community and some of your training, I accidentally came across, I can't even remember what the course was called now in it, but...

James: Was it how to sell your membership on autopilot, type course?

SJ: Maybe. But it was where you took us through learning about [deadline funnels](#) and being closed but not being, like, launch closed...

James: It's always being closed but always opening. Exactly.

SJ: Yes, that's right. Yeah.

So what we did was, we still kind of have an intake process, if you like, but we have applications open all the time, which means members can apply to become a member whenever they like. And we've got email sequences set up and we use deals with an ActiveCampaign. So even that's automated. So once we've checked that someone's OK, we simply flick them over onto a different deal, and that triggers off a heap of sequences that pops them into an automation where we don't have to think about it anymore, the automation kind of does the selling.

And it's not even set up to hard sell, either. I think in the course, too, you gave some kind of ideas about different email sequences to send out. And so I read

through them and I'm like, well, that's cool, but (not that you did anything wrong) 'Oh, but I need to make this our own. How can I keep it as simple as possible?' We're not even selling hard and so it's really authentic to us. And so we did that as well. So even the real basic emails are doing the hard work for us. There's nothing complicated about it at all. And so it's really working a treat.

James: Yeah, I think it's one of the most effective and popular trainings we have in the whole membership, is me going through exactly what I did for myself to free myself up from having to manually open and close the membership. And it's been working really well for everyone who's implemented it, so that was excellent.



Now, you indicated that you're getting some help with the application process, so you've employed some contractors to help you do some of the jobs that maybe you couldn't get to, or whatever. I'm thinking it's like the Reverend could be delivering a sermon while other people are handing around the chapel plates. It's hard to do everything in the business, especially as you grow. And two years into it, I'm sure you finding new things that need attention. Could you talk a bit about that process? Maybe start with the mental decision to get help from others, and then the practical application of it?

Getting help with stuff

SJ: Yeah, sure. So people actually found me, which was a really ironic thing. So we launched – no, it was even before we launched, James. So even before we launched, I started sharing the vision, and I kind of knew that it was going to be an offline and online thing. And so I just kind of thought to myself, it'd be really cool if I could find someone to help me with the business socials. And so, divine intervention, if you like, a girl up in Brisbane contacted me and was like "SJ, I love what you're doing, let's chat and meet up." And so we met.

And it was like we'd been best mates forever and, and she was like, "I love being social. Is there any way I can help you out?" I'm like, "Yeah, you can." And so she's managed to grow our business socials from, we had three to start out with, and now we've got eleven around the country. So she helps me managethose, and she's just absolutely amazing at that.

So then that was that sorted. And so then I was like, 'OK, so what's the next thing?' and I knew I wanted to create a podcast show. And I knew that I wanted to share my voice. I knew that I loved recording podcast shows, but I hated the behind the scenes of editing it and getting it on the website and creating the graphics. So I literally, I just wrote down the sequence that I was doing, and then I was like, OK, I don't have massive wads of cash right now. I need to think strategically about how I can get help, because being a business owner is all about thinking out of the box.

And so I just put up an ad in Upwork, I think it's called? And I just put an ad out there, really simple, looking for a podcast editor and put out what it was that I wanted them to do and what they needed to have. Interviewed a bunch of people, found the most amazing girl in the world. I was like, "You're it, you fit within the budget, let's do this." And so I literally just handed over her my systems, recorded a video and sent it to her and said, "Let me know if you've got any questions." And she just started doing it. So that was me sorted for that area in the business.

And so as we've been going along and as we've been growing, we've needed to then implement different, so I've got the bane of my existence for a long time, which was the last thing I decided to delegate, which I think you've said is one of the first things you've delegated, is customer service. So finally, this year I've employed, if you like, a girl that helps me with the customer service side of things too, now. So my job now in the business is to look after the finances

and is to create content and set vision. And then we've got someone who's looking after the branding, she's doing an amazing job. And we've got someone who's doing the social media as well.

So there's compartments, but like, we've got our own little departments now within the business and it's all running on systems and I just love it. If anyone out there listening is going, 'I'm hating what I'm doing right now,' I challenge you to strategically start thinking out of the box, let go of the control. Just write it down on a piece of paper what it is you need them to do in a sequence, put a video together and get it up and get someone doing the work for you, because you'll not regret it.



James: Yeah, having great SOPs or standard operating procedures is the backbone of a well-run business, and I'll be very happy after we record this podcast to hand it over to my team, who will publish it fantastically well without any help from me.

SJ: And I guess, like, to go with [your book](#) as well, James, what has that enabled me to do as well as with the membership intakes is, now, on a Tuesday afternoon, I go climbing.

James: Isn't that great?

SJ: Like, I couldn't have done that before. I'd be too busy worrying, you know, what is it I need to get done? But now I might, no, you know what? I

trust my team. I trust the process. It's OK for me to go and spend a couple of hours climbing. Or, it's OK for me to now go out mountain biking.

James: Well, that's what having an always-selling membership can do for you, is let you carve a strong routine. And I was looking down at the sandy bottom today when I was surfing. It was so clear. There was no wind, and I could see for meters around me, (feet for our overseas listeners) everywhere. I could see fish swimming. It was just, it was like I was in a pool. And I was just thinking, how good is this? I can do this every single day, because I've got that consistency of a system that is working away in the background like a well-oiled machine.

Now something that I thought was really interesting that you did, is you've started the process of developing an app for your business, much like I've got with SuperFastBusiness. And you shared the vision with members, and they even help you pay for it through crowdfunding. So that was a really interesting twist to that update. Would you like to share a little more around that?

The app in the works

SJ: Yeah, sure. So part of our vision and mission is to be able to create a platform for women, not just like in Australia, in the UK, in America, we want to be able to get out to the girls that are in the Philippines and India and Africa where... Actually, the internet's really great. They can get access to the internet, they might not just have like, large sums of money. And so we want to be able to get into those places and support them and encourage them in their business as well.

And so we just, again, it was through your training. I was just pondering through some of the training you had and someone started talking about an app. I was like, oh, app – that could work awesome to get to those women where, you know, resources aren't very good, but they've got their sewing business or whatever it is that they're doing to support their family. Let's see if we can reach them too.

And so I got the girls together and I also wanted to make sure that we're making something that would serve them as well. And so I was like, "Look, girls, this is what I'm thinking. I'd love to be able to make this app, to serve you

and to serve all these other women as well.” And I basically asked, “Are you in?” And I mentioned it to a member. And then I mentioned the cost of it. And she was like, “You know what, you should share this in the community. Like, I’d be happy to put a hundred bucks to it. No worries.”

So I did that. I didn’t just say, “Hey, girls, I’m making an app, please can I have some money?” That’s not cool. I wanted to make the app and I wanted to empower them to develop the app as well. And so we shared about it, I asked them what they’d like in an app, how they would like it to serve them as well. And so I got their ideas, I got their expectations of the app.

And so we’ve all collaboratively worked together to build this app. And the outcome when it launches is, you know, I want to be able to get the app to every woman who might have access to a smartphone and really good internet and for them to be encouraged and supported in their business. Like, we’ve got a podcast, so that’s going to be on there. We’ve got a digital magazine. So they’re going to be able to access the digital magazine, through the app, and it will all be together in one place. And it will be able to serve the members as well. So, you know, a touch of a button, they’ll be able to go through all the workshops that we have. And so it’s just been a really awesome, inspiring process. And I’m really excited to get the app out and launched and serving those women.

James: If someone was going to consider that same process, would you recommend them for the app supplier?

SJ: Yes, I would. Yeah, MatchApp, I think it’s called?

James: So you got it from TheAppMatch?

SJ: TheAppMatch. That’s it. Yeah, [TheAppMatch](#).

James: Perfect. Yeah. [Jarrod Robinson](#) has been on this show a few times. He’s one of the member case studies and doing such a great job. That’s exactly where my app comes from. I have one for [SuperFastBusiness](#) and one for [SilverCircle](#). If you have a podcast and you don’t have an app, you’re really missing out, because of course we’re all so mobile-heavy these days and you’ve got to be on the mobile. And I found with the app that I had a lot more people sticking around the membership and a lot more people logging in for

more sessions. Are you finding a change with retention?

SJ: Well, we haven't launched the app yet.

James: Oh, well you've got that to look forward to.

SJ: Yeah, maybe in a few podcasts' time I can give you some feedback on that. But so far, on the developing side, it's been really easy, and Jarrod's been great to deal with. We sat down and had a really great strategy plan together. I showed him what I wanted. He told me if he could do it or not. He could. So we're just in the development process now.

James: Well, let's talk about more traditional retention strategies, because this is something critical to know. If you have a membership, it's, you know, a lot of people are talking about getting members, there's this whole other discussion, and you know, the less talked-about things. Sometimes members leave. And if you got a ratio where more people are leaving than coming, then your membership runs dry and then it dies. And I've seen a lot of that, there was some very public blogs published where people closed their memberships because the churn rate was too high. Ramit Sethi had one. [I talked to community manager Diana Tower](#) about this in a few episodes ago, and we can link to those in the show notes. But the fact is, if you don't keep members, your membership's not going to be a great membership.

Now you are able to update me and tell me that your churn rate, which is the way that we measure this, has shrunk. It means less people are leaving. And I'd be loving it if you could share, what did you do to achieve more stick, to have people hanging around more?

Handling and preventing churn

SJ: So, the story you just told, I kind of went through that. Luckily, we didn't go to too dry, but it's right, people tell you to start a membership and they tell you to get people in, but the churn and people leaving's like the forbidden word that no one should talk about. And about six months into the business, I started getting messages saying, hey, you know, for whatever reason, I'm going to have to leave. And I'm like, oh, right. People are going to leave. What am I going to do now? I'm like, how do I work this? This is like a whole new territory.

And so we did a couple of things. So we naturally have done grandfathering, we started off at a lower price and as a year and a half's gone on, we've been putting that price up. And in about December last year, we kind of hit a peak price that we wanted to reach for now. And so that kind of helped a little bit within the process.

I think another thing is having me more around now to deliver good content and to make sure that everyone's OK. And we're focusing in the community now, so yeah, it's good to keep doing marketing, you should never stop marketing on the outside, but I think a key turning point for me was realizing that I have to market even more on the inside.

James: And it's easier, isn't it, to deal with existing members?

SJ: Yeah. They're a lot cheaper.

James: That's where I spent almost all my effort. It's, how can I help a member start a private discussion? How can I answer those questions effectively? Because a member who's getting great answers is not leaving.

SJ: Yeah.

James: They are growing the business and getting a return on investment. They're staying. If they join and never use it, they will most likely leave when they get a billing reminder. That's a very common trigger for someone to leave. And the excuse will be not using it. That's the most common one. So if you can direct a lot of effort into helping people use what they've purchased, that's really values-based, it's good for them. It's good for you, even though it's a little more work, but it's less work than going to find a new customer.

SJ: That's exactly right. And it's just a few simple things, like we've done, to try and help with that. So we're doing a weekly newsletter now, reminding the members about what they're getting and what's available to them. If they haven't, we don't use the same system as you, but we do get an email to say you've got interactive users. And so now one of the staff members will send a follow-up email to them, saying, "Hey, we've noticed you've not been in the academy for a while, just reminding you of the courses that are available," you know, get yourself back in there and get learning.

And then we've just done a slight price change as well, in the way that we structured the pricing for the membership. So now we've got three kind of levels available – low, medium and high, if you like, bronze, silver and gold, however it is.

And so, if someone does leave, we always make sure we ask them why they're leaving, because we always want to continually improve what we're doing. The more we can learn, the more we can help people. And so we try and provide an answer back now for each kind of excuse, if you like, someone might have. So if it's, "I don't have enough time," "Oh, well, have you looked at our Simply Focus workshop about how to get back more time?" Or if it's money, "Oh, well, have you had a look at the membership that might be a little bit more affordable right now for you in your situation?" So it's just about listening and even trying to find solutions to excuses.

James: Yeah, absolutely. It's standard practices to identify a challenge and find out where people have that pain and see if you can solve it. So that's a great thing. I also made a whole training on churn, retention. That's probably the other most popular training for our members who, a lot of them, have got memberships. And if you can combine selling automatically with keeping members, then you've got quite a nice business.

There's still a few more things, isn't there, that you can do to really improve the performance of a membership? And I think one of them that you're doing is the same thing that I've been doing, is having a conference to bring people together face-to-face, and you've been selling tickets for that quite a long way in advance.

SJ: Yeah. Oh, I was so excited about the first conference, because also we've been meeting socially in our own little ends of the world. We just thought, 'Man, it's going to be so cool to get everyone in the same room at the same time and be with each other and learn and grow just together.'

The face-to-face element

And so we did our first conference in February, in the Gold Coast. And I knew, leading up to the conference, that I needed to start advertising for the next conference on the day. And so I've made sure that I had a theme for the

conference, I had my speakers booked, I had the location worked out and my sales page. So when that conference ended, we were able to go, "OK, girls, early bird tickets. Get in."

And we've upped it this year. So this year, it's a two-day conference in Sydney. And so while the buzz was still happening from the first conference, that then has led into the second conference, and we were able to grab that buzz and really use it to then sell tickets to the next one. And then I guess I decided too that I wanted to have four early bird rises throughout the year up until next February. And that's worked really well. And we've managed to sell the conference itself and the accommodation, so it's a high-ticketed conference and I just found that that's been really effective.

James: Yeah, that's a really important tip there. I'm just going to reiterate that. When I run events, so for example, my [Maldives event](#) which happens in September, it usually sells out the year prior. Because it's a long way out, you can do things like have multi-pay, so I had a six-pay plan and everyone purchased on a six-pay plan. And of course we're recording this in the end of May 2018, and all the payments have been paid, so it's fully paid up months before the event.

The second thing is, if you can have different price deadlines. For my normal annual event, I usually start selling it at least six months prior, and the price moves up at the end of each month to the point of the event, because the people who buy early get the lowest accommodation prices, the best airfares, and they should be rewarded for putting their money with you earlier. So each end of month, I was getting a bump in ticket sales, when the sequence would go out reminding people it's the last opportunity to buy at this particular rate. And then it worked at work its way up to a higher ticket. And I think, using that, we actually move from around \$700 up to \$2,000 over six months. So it's quite a substantial bump in tickets.

So that's a really great way to bind a community, is to bring people together.

SJ: The members absolutely love it as well.

James: Is it only for members, or to the public?

SJ: No, it's to the public as well.

James: Great.

SJ: Anyone can come, but the members just love that they're talking to each other online and then they get to go and meet each other. Like, they're building a relationship throughout the year, and then here's an opportunity for them to actually come together as humans and go, "Oh my gosh, this is you!" I think it's just a girl thing.

James: It's not a girl thing. I mean, some of my members have been to 12 events and they're like family. And some of them have collected a bunch of different-colored hoodies with the branding on it, even way back to the old brands like FastWebFormula.

SJ: Oh gosh. I'm going to have to take notes of that.

James: Well, you know, just, just a few tips on that. I usually feed people and clothe people and I give them, you know, a book and a pen. So I'm really nurturing them with education and nourishment and then something they can take away and anchor that event and lock in with their branded notebook and their clothing with the brand on it. So there's a few things to add real value to a live event.

But that's not all. I wanted to talk about your podcast, because you mentioned you've got a podcast. It ties in perfectly with an app and a membership. It's no surprise to listeners of this show that I've been doing OK with the podcast. It's pretty much my primary marketing technique, I suppose you'd call it. And I love doing case studies with real people, like we're talking about today, especially when they're members and getting great results, because that's an easy thing for me to talk about. And it's super valuable to someone who's looking to follow your footsteps or even established. I actually wrote down an idea while we were talking. So you can still pick up great ideas, no matter where you're at in the journey.

But could you just tell me about your podcast? And I know you're really grateful for how the podcast has been going, because it is driving members for you. Right?

[About podcasting](#)

SJ: Yeah. I have a little bit of a story I wanted to share with you about that.

So, I actually started some not-so-successful podcast shows. And I think you were like, one of the first people I ever interviewed, and I was so nervous.

James: Was it my fault? Did I tank it?

SJ: No, no, it was completely me. But you introduced me to podcasts. And even though those two were still a failure, I really enjoyed doing them. And so I knew I needed to add a podcast to Christian Women in Business. And I think it's a combination of from everything we've been talking about and how outsourcing has empowered me, and putting all the information have empowered me. And I think, like, last year, I sent you a message. And I just went, "James, I don't know if I can keep doing podcasting." Like, I was just getting tired. I wasn't seeing an instant return, which we all want. And we're all like, I'm doing it right now. Why is it not happening for me right now? And I think you just gently said, you know, "Podcasts are a long-term strategy and it's something you need to be doing consistently over a few years. But once you've got it, it's just going to work like magic." And I was like, 'OK.'

And so when I started questioning myself about it, and you know, what should I do, and going through all that silly stuff, I kept getting heaps of messages from people going "Oh, SJ, I found your podcast, I'm loving it." I'm just like, 'Oh my gosh, it's come at the point break where I'm like, "aaarrghh.'"

And I think that was in between me getting someone to do the podcast system, and then, unfortunately, they had to leave in a very big hurry. And then I had to take over just for the interim while I was finding another person and I was just like, this is the end. And it wasn't, and that's when everyone started telling me, it's awesome, let's do this, what are you going to be talking about next? And then I messaged you, and you were like, nope, keep going, keep going. And I'm like, 'OK.' And so I got through that hard time and it was good and you were there for me. So thank you for that.

And since then, that has been our main source of, I guess, conversion, is the podcast. So we've been doing it for just over a year now. I think we're on our 70s. So it's just a weekly podcast and it's a real basic interview, just like yourself and I are doing now. Sometimes I might just share a message from the Word

or whatever it is that I want to share. And yeah, I'm so glad I wasn't a give-up-straightaway person and stuck with it and it's just worked tremendously.



So if you're thinking about doing it, make sure you outsource the bits you don't like. But do it, if it's suited to your market and you can deliver them great content. Don't just make a podcast for the sake of it and just do a really bad job of it. Love it. Be embraced in it, give out really good value like James does with his podcasts, and people will just love it. And again, listen. Listen to what they want. People make marketing really complex. It's not. You just listen, ask, "What is it you want to learn about?" and then give it to them.

James: That's such a good point. And there is that phase where you might be doing it and not getting results. I'm in that phase at the moment, actually, with the videos that I make. I make a short video every single day. I've been doing it for probably two months at this point, and I'm not getting much of a reaction. And I'm OK with that, because I've put a year on it at least before I'll even worry too much about what sort of stats or traction we're getting. Just because I know the process, you got to believe in the process, that it's going to take time. But once you break through, and you build up that base of subscribers and you find your true fans, it all turns on and something magical happens. And I actually experienced that before when I did videos many years ago, but now everyone's using mobiles and everyone's watching videos. I'm ready to get back into that and I've got a stack of things to talk about. So just stick with the process. And I'm glad that you stuck through it.

How important was it for you to have someone like me to talk to about this when you were in that uncertain phase?

Support in uncertainty

SJ: Oh, James, you've been here for me heaps of times when I've been in uncertain phases. And it's been absolutely priceless.

I don't come to you about everything. I make sure that the questions I do come to you about are going to be not wasting each other's time. But whenever I have come to you, even the podcasts, I've come to you about partnerships, about people approaching me about things now, and you have just been there, and you've just been like, "SJ, this is the point." These are difficult questions and you know, actually, you don't always give me the answers. You coach me as well. So you ask questions back to me, how's it going to affect my business? What are the numbers? Have you thought about this? And it's just been really, really valuable.

James: Well, thank you for challenging me with these questions.

The seven takeaways

Well, SJ, that's been so helpful. We've actually covered seven ways to improve a membership. We've talked about automatically opening and closing a membership. We've talked about employing a team and giving standard operating procedures to get stuff done. We've talked about combining an app to make it easier for your members to use your membership and to access the mobile. We've talked about keeping members, which, you know, retention, churn strategies. We've talked about combining live events and what you call socials as well and a few tips around the best way to sell those live events or certainly the ways that's been effective for me and for you. We've talked about the power of podcasting.

And that's basically seven things. And I just want to say how wonderful it is for you to come along and share this because you're very brave and courageous in business. For two years in, you are so far down the track with the fundamentals. And this foundation is going to grow you a phenomenal business. And the fact that you're already reaching 30,000 people, I can see

that's going to snowball.

Of course, someone listening to this, interested in what it is that you do should head over to ChristianWomenInBusiness.com.au, right?

SJ: It's a bit of a mouthful, yeah. ChristianWomenInBusiness.com.au.

James: You know, the range of businesses that I help spans the most diverse group. And I've learned a lot just from talking to different business owners and that's one of the joys. Having a membership, you get that rich tapestry of members to help.

So keep doing what you're doing.

SJ: Can I be really cheesy?

James: Sure.

SJ: Can I just say that (and this is probably going to make you go), but a lot of it has been your help. And I just, I have to say that a lot of it has been down to God as well. Like, He has just been amazing. And whatever strategy you've given to us to do, James, it's been amplified. And that's how we've managed to reach 30,000 women in like, just over a year. So thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to learn from you and to give me strategies that we've then been able to implement and then have been able to be amplified. It's been really amazing. And thank you so much for your awesome community.

James: Oh, thank you. And, you know, [Perry Marshall, on his episode on this particular podcast](#) was talking about how God told him what to do at a conference. So it's not even the first time that's been mentioned.

SJ: OK, so it's not the first time you've been made to feel awkward. That's good.

James: Look, I'm very open-minded.

So SJ, thanks so much for coming to share, and I look forward to watching your future success.

SJ: Thank you so much. Speak to you next time.

James: Indeed.



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