



How To Retain Membership Customers – The Membership Series



The membership series continues with James Schramko and 10XPRO.io's John Lint sharing tips on how to make members stay longer.



John Lint from 10XPRO.io

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is another episode from the membership series. The first episode was actually [Episode 608](#). And this one is How to Retain Members for Your Membership. And I brought back special guest, John Lint from 10XPRO.io. Welcome back.

John: Hey, everybody! Thanks for having me, James.

James: These short, punchy episodes are really addressing the most common questions that you and I get asked. I provide [training for people with online businesses](#). I've been running my own memberships for almost a decade. And John, you provide software that does a few different things. Namely, it helps you get people into an offer. And usually, it's helping people take delivery of a course or a membership and that is [10XPRO.io](#). Would that be a fair simple description?

John: Yeah, correct. And it's being able to do all the things that we need without struggling with any tech headaches, or complicated scripts, and plugins and trying to spend hours trying to integrate everything together, right? So our goal is to really help you simplify your business. Use that one tool that will allow you to do the main things that you need, and allow you to scale and grow with your business.

James: Exactly. So we're trying to shift the balance here between spending all your time trying to glue together bits and pieces or get all the 27 different tools that you need to make it work. Once you can sort that out, then it's really down to the most important part, I talked about this in [my book](#). And this is having [an offer that converts](#). This is what are you able to offer to people they can pay money for, get a great investment, and then you can deliver it as simply as possible.

The secret to a successful membership

So you get lots of questions running this software tool. I get lots of questions coaching members, and we're going to dive into one of them now. And someone asked us, what is the best way to build an active forum from scratch? And then how do you get engagement and activities from the members? Now I'm going to translate this question a bit. The biggest question we should be asking is beyond that. And like Peter Drucker said, you know, sure, the purpose of a business is to attract a customer, but also retain a customer. So the big thing with memberships, and I talked about this in the [previous episode](#), is we need to retain customers.



In our business, that metric is called churn. It's how many people come, and then how many people go. And really, the secret to having a successful membership business is to increase the frequency of purchases. Ideally, someone comes and stays forever. And now your efforts can be on retaining that customer and making sure they get a great experience, and they stay. And so some big hints are focusing on a solution where people can continue to get a result from working with you. You've probably seen this, John, where some people try and set up a membership that is more or less a one-time solution, and then they wonder why people leave. So that's a pretty obvious one but some people still flout that.

John: Yeah, exactly. If you want to, say an online course, a one-time thing, that's fine. But we're really talking about the big picture here, right? Building a business that is working for you. And that business gives you that lifestyle that gives you that freedom so you can finally go on holidays and forget about your business. And you really enjoy it right? And enjoy your time away because you know, that when you come back, you actually have a real business. You have a business that probably generated leads without your involvement, generated sales without your involvement, things are running, and that is what we're so, you know, for membership sites, and building that community, and that content that is going to work for you and allow you to build a real business.

Do you have a real business?

I talked about this with members, you know, the focus is always to build a real business. And they asked me, "What do you mean by a real business?" Well, it's exactly that. It's that if you don't do anything today, or for a whole month, would your business have increased? If the answer is no or you're not sure, chances are you don't have a real business. So yeah, that's why we're so gung-ho on membership site.

James: And an easy way to grow your membership is to be able to have people stay so that as you keep adding them, it compounds like a snowball instead of just one in-one out, which gets a bit tiring. And this kind of relates to how do we get this active form. I think a membership nightmare for some people if they want to go down the route where they're actually letting members discuss things with each other, is if the member would join and there's nothing happening. It's completely inactive.

So to build an active forum, I would suggest you've got to put enough members in it. I remember a long time ago on this particular podcast, one of my guests suggested to create fake profiles and have conversations between them. And I said, "No way! I do not endorse that." And that is not a real business. That's a pretend business. So how do you actually get real people doing it?

Your business's number one asset

Well, the first thing is, you might build up a waiting list. And I know you've got tools that can do this on 10XPRO. Until you're ready to open, you make sure you got enough people. I call this the metaphor of a dam. You let the dam fill up with water first before you turn it on. In that way, if you have a low ticket membership, which I would classify as under \$100 a month, it will be nice to fill it with 65 or 70 members at once, which means you probably need several hundred people on a waiting list. If they're very warm, or they're ready for it and they are interested and you have a high conversion ratio, you might want a couple of hundred people. If you have a colder approach and you have a low conversion ratio, you might need hundreds and hundreds of people to end up with 65 sales. Keep in mind though, 65 times 100 is 6500 per month so it's a good start out of the gates. Now, a good thing to do is to start building this thing in the background and that is building your waiting list page.

That would be the number one asset to build is a waiting list page that is a brief description of what's coming and start filling that off the back of whatever else you're doing. Let people find this page, put it in your sequence, put it in the footer of your email as a PS. Let your members know in your current information products that there's a waiting list for this product that is going to be open, and build up the damn. What do you think about that, John?

John: Yeah, that's brilliant and that's exactly what, you know, in 10XPRO we have a special product called membership site, a master class and that is really the strategy, which obviously I learned from you. It's all about that. It's all about letting people know, OK this is the membership site, this is what it is. And it's almost like pre-selling already because anyone who joins, they already kind of know this is what's the membership site is going to be, I'm going to get those benefits, he's going to help me this way, great. They joined the membership site. They are pretty much almost sold already. Now, it's a matter of following up and having that sale sequence. So as part of the class that's what we do. We teach. OK build that waiting list, obviously your membership site first, look at the different areas and think about how you're going to structure it. That's fine, you can easily do it with 10XPRO and then you build that waiting list.

And that's the number one thing, it is your most important business asset. You always want to be building your list. And like you said, you do it on the back of great content, you do it with an amazing podcast and that's how people discover you. You can have [your book](#) now so people discovered you that way. They go on your site, "Oh great. I want to learn about the SFB. I need to join the waiting list. Great." And especially if you're just starting out, it's a great strategy because, yeah, we want to build that list. So it might not be instant, right? Obviously, it's not going to happen overnight but that's fine. It might take a few weeks, you're going to get hundreds and hundreds of people joining your waiting list. That's fine. And then when the time is right, you do your first sale, right? Your first launch, your first sale, which is as simple as you open the doors and you say "OK, well here's a sales page. This is everything that you're going to get, this is what I have, this is what it will do for you. This is what you need to do next." Which is mainly to order, click on the button to order and then they join.

That will maximize your chances of building that community because yeah, site is awesome. And yeah, usually you have different components that are going to get content, but most of the people are going to stay time, especially if you have a good community. And we see that with communities like the SuperFastBusiness where people love the community. They love the interaction, they love the help that other members provide. And yeah, I think that's a great strategy and definitely what I recommend to people for sure.

James: And of course, if you've got and you want to speed things up, you can actually buy traffic. And in the next episode, we're going to be talking about how to get traffic to your membership or to your information product sites. And I'm also going to share what my day-to-day routine promotion looks like. Somebody asked me that and I think it's a really interesting question so we're going to go a bit behind the scenes on that one.

Helping people stay

But when you do actually open up and you get members, quite a few things you can do to make sure people stick around. So we're just going to share a few of those tips right now.

So one thing that's really good is to have some firestarter discussions. You can put some starter content that just makes sense for people to get going on. And I'd keep it light and easy and short. I like to welcome people, explain how it works, and where the best resources are. And also get people introducing if you're going down the path of letting people talk to each other. Now, you might want to talk about the different options you've seen, John, because you can do this a few different ways.

John: Yeah, you can set up your community in multiple different ways, right? And so when we are talking about this, I was actually thinking, well, how do you do it if you even don't have as many members as you would like for a forum? And in 10XPRO you have many options, right? You have the basic commenting so you can have basically a community there where people are commenting, and replying and posting stuff around a specific topic. So that's actually the fastest way. You don't need that many members, right? So you don't need to worry about, 'Oh men! I just got 20 members. And yeah, if I have a full on , that's, you know, maybe not enough.' Fine, so you can start that way, which is basic commenting.

And then you can upgrade to what I call social walls. So we have social walls that you can easily add to any type of course, and imagine a social wall as your private group, a private group. It's one page where you have discussions and there, the advantage of that is that you don't need again that many members because it doesn't look like; a forum if there's not that many members, it kind of looks empty. With a social wall, it will not. It's just one page where people can participate in conversations, we can like each other's stuff, they can reply and engage with each other, which is cool.



And then when you're ready, as your business grows, now, let's say you are at that 60 people. Great. Now, you can start creating that forum. And it takes two seconds to do and now you have just added the forum to your area. And like you said, you know, you have so many ways that you can ask them to engage and asking a question is the usual stuff that you want to do, right? So that when you post a video on YouTube, when you post a post on social media, the best way to get engagement is always to ask them. Hey, what do you guys think about that? or How are you guys doing that? Or what do you recommend? What tools do you use? Whatever. It always ends with asking them a question. So yeah, the 'introduce yourself' is awesome. But whenever you post something, obviously, as an administrator, you can initiate threads and topics so of course, try to always end it with a good question that is going to make people think about it, and share their own experience.

The secret glue to an online business

James: Yeah, and people like to, especially in a private community, where it's a little bit away from the prying eyes of public forums, and small communities can really build a rich culture. I've noticed the community that I've built, become almost family-like, really. Over so many years, they meet each other face-to-face, which is really a big secret. We're in this online business and it's tempting to think everything's online. But if you can meet people face-to-face in real life; as I've met you, John, a few times now, when you meet people face-to-face, it takes on another dimension. So this is a secret glue to an online business is have a user convention or local meetups for your members. That will be fantastic.

Another thing you can do that's very is encourage people or have software that uploads people's pictures so that they can see each other. There's some research in Cialdini's book, which I found out well after I'd been doing this for years, is that people who had seen pictures of each other when they're talking on the phone had more influence than people who had not. So I make sure people upload a picture. And if they don't, I go and look for one, and some software actually pulls in a picture, which is even better.

John: Yeah, you can connect with different and different services that will connect to some of the databases out there. And then if someone has a profile, you can basically display an image and obviously, allowing them to upload their image is super powerful. I mean, that's something I do. When I have private demonstrations of 10XPRO and clients who want to find out more about him, I always make sure that my camera is turned on. I'm actually always online on Zoom with my camera on. I'm not going to do any without the camera. And then people jump in and the relationship just changes. And this shows more like a casual chat and nobody's hiding behind their computer. And the same thing applies to your membership sites.

And yeah, I think that your meetups are extremely powerful. Every time you login to the forum, you see someone who is in charge of the meetup in Sydney. Oh, well, we're meeting this month, we're meeting there, so you can't avoid it. So maybe at the beginning, you might be shy about it and you might think I'm not going to go. But hey, at one point you're going to go, as soon as you go, this is going to be your membership, this is going to be your gang, this is going to be your tribe. And at that point, it's going to be very hard to... you're not going to want to cancel or to leave because you have formed those strong bonds with other people.

James: And what we found is, the leaders of those meetups will generally reach out to new members when they notice their geolocation. And often that's disclosed by the member themselves. They say, "Hi. I'm such and such from so and so," a place. And they go, "Oh, just letting you know, we've got a meetup and you're welcome to come."

Keeping it personal

And something I do that's a little bit of extra effort is I send a personal welcome video to every single member when they join. And I know when they click on that video, they're expecting it to be a canned response, a standard generic video, but it's not. I say their name. And I talk about something specific to them. I did an [episode](#) on the tool that I use, which is called [Bonjoro](#). It's as easy as even sending it from your phone. Every phone has a camera, you can record a little video on the camera and email it to customers. So that's a very powerful feature. And I think some software programs have the capability for meetings or webinars built in. I think you're now hooking into a popular platform for 10XPRO.

John: Yeah, I mean, you can hook it up with Zoom. And you can obviously use that. We do have a feature that will allow you to do those live event calls every single month and really get people to talk and ask. So yeah, that's also built in with 10XPRO.

But yeah, I agree. Those videos that you do, and actually, the way I discovered them is when I joined one of your products. And when I got your video, I was like, wow, this is fantastic. And ever since, I started to do that, and I saw a big change as well in 10XPRO. Your membership, you know, people love it, especially when it comes to software. Having that personal contact, that personal video is extremely powerful.

Fresh content in multiple modalities

James: And those monthly trainings, adding something fresh each month, new content is keeping a baseline of value. People are thinking, wow, even if I just joined to get this new product, I think of it like my members have subscribed to get a new information product from me each month. That's one way that I'm helping people. And for some people, that's all they need. They don't want or need private coaching, they just like to log in and check out the latest training or read it or listen to it or watch the video. And there's a tip right there, go to the effort to put your information in multiple modalities.

So I upload the video. And by "I" I mean my team. After the training, they go and grab it and transcribe it and they put up a PDF with every picture from the video, they put up the video, they put up the audio. The members can then discuss the training right next to the training, which really gives a lot of power because it's not enough just to provide the training. What I want is for my members to actually consume the training and implement the training, and then ask me questions around it and get the results from the training.

One of the trainings [inside SuperFastBusiness](#) was an entire training on just keeping customers and you know, for the small bullet points we're talking about today, there's a whole module on this particular topic. And that was one of the most popular ones because it's really the least discussed aspect of membership sites is keeping members. And there's this often quoted industry norm of three months. And I'm going to tell you that's out by a factor of, it's missing a zero. You should be keeping members for 30 months if you're doing your job right. And the sort of stuff we're talking about here will get you down that path.



And another thing that's not so obvious is only accepting the right members in the first place. Never let someone buy unless you know you can help them. So I have pretty clear wording in my sales offer. In fact, I screen people out at the front door who not a good fit for my program. And then I encourage people who are a good fit to join. And this is really talking about the topic of that front-end messaging and the tools and the approach that you can use to let people through to the next stage. And I've been sort of putting a few different systems together to do that. And again, John, you just come along and built that into the system. So [10XPRO](#) can do that for you now. It can actually sort and filter people through to let them have the right piece of content, depending on where they're up to.

John: Yeah, exactly. We call it dynamic content delivery, and it allows you to basically segment your members and based on their answers, you can tell them about this offer that you have or this other product or the membership or your high-end coaching program. You can do a lot of things and really offer what is a good fit for them. And like you said, the waiting list is where you're going to be doing a lot of putting the right messaging and really ensuring that only the right people go into the membership site.

The reason membership sites are great



Because that's the beautiful thing, that's what I love as well about membership sites is, it's a recurring type of business. You're going to get paid every single month. The goal is to get them to stay, you don't want them to cancel. So how do you do that? Well, that forces you as the owner to not be lazy and to not be, OK great, I got some sales now. I can retire. No, you're going to have to do some work and provide awesome content and help people get results, which is what James does every single month. He has training every single month. Great. So that's going to keep you on track. It also makes sure that you don't have to, you know, to sale. There's no such thing as forcing the sale in the membership site. Yes, you can be a great copywriter and good for you, that's great. You're going to get a better conversion rate. But what's the point if they cancel after two months? Big deal. You just got one sale in one month. It's nothing. We want people to stay. So you do an awesome filtering system at the beginning, provide great content and help them out.

And if you need more motivation, every single training program that you create every single month, you could actually use that as part of a strategy to sell access to the membership site. You could even sell those as lower ticket item, as front-end ticket items that you can use in different funnels and strategies. So it's definitely worth your time. You're going to be providing awesome content, people are going to be happy. Like you said, you want people to talk about the specific topic, you're going to get that engagement, you're going to get that community. It's basically a roller coaster and it's going to compound, the effect is going to be multiplied by you just showing up once a month, creating one type of content, helping them out solve a specific problem. And with that, you can then leverage that in so many ways. Super powerful.

James: Yes, it's actually the opposite of the approach where you have people join and then you hope they forget about the billing.

John: Exactly,

James: I've actually seen people teach that and I was pretty turned off by that approach. I've done something counterintuitive and I actually send out weekly news emails, which links people to the most popular discussion items.

And we get a very high open rate on these emails, which means people are interested in it, click on the links. If one of those links is useful for them, they've had a good week. So I'm actually reminding them about their membership at least four times a month. And if they disappear, I'll track them down and send them an email and say, "Hey, what are you up to?" I will not let them escape because I want them to get a result. And if you want to keep members, helping people get a result is a fantastic strategy. It gives you great brand reputation, people stay, you get referrals and you're actually being a good human, which is not really talked about that much, but I really think it's very important.

Reaping the rewards

John: It's the most important. To me, it is the most important. Being able to, I mean it sounds a bit exaggerated but sleeping at night or when you get a sale and not feel like, is it really worth it? I mean money is great but, you know, I want to hear from my members. That's why I do this extra stuff, that's why I do those videos, that's why I actually give my Skype ID to some people, that's why I actually show up and do a Zoom call because I want that contact. I want to know that what I created, what I spent so much time creating that it's actually directly impacting them. And that I can see. For me, it's so much more valuable when I talk to a member and he tells me, "Man, I just used these features. It's so awesome and this is how I'm using it." I love doing that. And yeah, is it leveraged? No, it's not leveraged." Are we building a business that is running on autopilot? No, of course not. You will need to be involved. But it's awesome because it makes me feel super good about myself. And some people, some members are, you know, super cool. They're like, I don't want to take too much of your time, John. I know you're busy. For me, it's awesome.

Because every time I talk to one of my members, I feel so much more energized. I feel that hey, I'm doing something good. And yeah, that feel good factor, I think it's so important for us marketers and creators especially. We always have that doubt in our mind, right? We create something. Me too. I create something, it's probably sh*t. Nobody likes it, right? Nobody's going to love it. We all think that because we are our worst enemy or our judge. But you know, having that contact of other people saying, "Hey, man! It's great." And it's super, super valuable to me. Super important to me.



James: Yeah. So if you really want to look after members too, something that I have found effective after your early members. They took their risk with you, they've started with you when you started out. And I actually lock them into a lower rate. I call this grandfathering. I know that's the industry term. But if they start on a low rate and then I put the rates up over time as I get better and more experienced, I mean, you can imagine the amount of experience I have now compared to 2009 when I opened my membership, I have substantially more experience. I'm coaching people at a much higher level. So over time, the rates have increased, and I reward the people who are already leaving them on the lower rates. And this creates this amazing effect where if someone were to leave, they'd be giving up a market rate discount. I've got several members who are on less than 50 percent of what I charge now. And they are getting that reward for getting there early and investing with me for the long haul, and they get rewarded. Every single month that rolls around, they get that loyalty lock-in rate, which is really good for them. And it's my way of saying thank you for getting in there.

Now, another thing that's absolutely critical, and we've touched on it is the onboarding process. So it's good to not bombard people a second they join, so stage out your emails, try different touch points. Sometimes you can have in-app notifications or triggers. I also segment when people join. I've already found out what thing they're most interested in. And I only send them stuff relating to that in the beginning, so that I'm not going to confuse them and try and give them too much too quickly and get paralyzed.

John: Yeah, that's a great strategy. And I think you do that with your first question when people land on your website, right? What are they interested in – conversions or traffic or things like that, right?

James: Exactly. And then what I do is, I pay attention to which members are the catalysts. There are always some members who start more posts, who ask more questions, who are driving the theme of the membership and I pay attention to them. I've got my antenna up, and I work with them to understand the needs of the community. So if you're ever stuck for ideas on where to go next or what next training, you can always ask your members or observe the questions they're asking and go down that path. So that's a good tip there.

A quick recap and what's coming up

But I think the best thing you can do is, just sort of recapping here, is you can build up a waiting list, wait till you have a clear audience who knows what they want, work on crafting your offer to be a perfect match for that, exclude out the worst type of members, get the best members, look after them when they come, look after them ongoing and care about them, and be responsive, and make sure you have incredible support. And I'm talking seven days a week live human support, if possible, and you're going to have people stay as long as they're getting results. And you will get results if you tune into what they need. And you have happy customers.

And this is the recipe that's been working for me. And that's how I've been able to sustain memberships when a lot of memberships have closed out there in the market. There have been some podcasts lately where famous internet marketers have closed their membership because the churn was in excess of 10. We've had not-so-famous marketers closed their membership because they just couldn't figure it out. If you get the right tool and you've got a great offer, and you care about people and you apply some of today's lessons, you're going to be able to keep members, which will be handy because then next week, we're going to be talking about how to get customers in the first place.

We'll talk about some traffic techniques to drive your information product business and I'm going to share a little bit about my own routine and how that works. And I'm also going to ask John to talk about what he's seen some of the members of 10XPRO doing as well.

John: Awesome. Yeah.

James: John, thanks for coming along and sharing. As always, we got a couple of nice comments on our [last episode](#), which we're truly grateful for. Of course, we accept positive reviews in iTunes as well. But if you've got a question relating to memberships, please go and ask where you see this episode because we do look at those questions and of course we answer them.

This will be Episode 609 and look forward to catching you on the next episode.



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