



The Workings Behind A Successful Membership Business

Musician Robin Nolan runs a thriving online paid membership, founded on his passion for gypsy jazz guitar.

In our recent interview with him, he gave us some behind-the-scenes glimpses of what keeps the business going, what the rewards are, and why it's as successful as it is.

Not a huge team

The core of Gypsy Jazz Club's operations are Robin and his best friend, Jason Rogan. Jason, says Robin, is the brains of the business, while Robin is the guy on camera with the guitar. Jason does the emailing, looks after the list and keeping various moving parts going. Robin does trainings, logs into the membership and takes care of the customers.

Other members of the team are their graphics expert and their website guy, both in the Philippines. Then they have two ladies in Minsk, Belarus doing their customer service and emails. Jason liaises with the four, communicating what the business needs and making sure things run smoothly.

The tech behind the membership

Robin is a 10XPRO user, employing both desktop and app to do his work in their forum, which they call the Campfire.

The app especially is a game-changer, letting Robin do a lot of his work via his phone - answer questions, post photos and videos. It keeps him notified and on top of things, never missing a post. Logging in, he gets instant stats, can see a snapshot of the business's health for the last 30 or 90 days.

Robin resisted setting up a Facebook group in favor of 10XPRO's forum capability, a decision he's happy about. Engagement concerned him at first, but they've since reached the place where members are making their own conversations, answering each other's posts, and welcoming new members.

The live component of the membership, masterclasses and gigs, are streamed through 10XPRO. And as far as camera equipment, Robin does it all with his iPhone 11.

Retention starts when you join

New members to the club are welcomed via a friendly Bonjour video. It starts off with congratulations and some clear starting instructions - log in, don't stress about all the content, say hi to the community if you're up for it. Let us know what guitar you play. People would love to hear from you.

They get a written message as well in their inbox, along the lines of, "Great, you're in. This is going to be good. I'm here to help you all times." People might have connect-



ed with Robin via email or Messenger, but this shift to the forum environment signals their sort of tie to him as a member.

The Minsk ladies then send them an email to help with passwords and other tech. This includes a Calendly link, giving them the option of a 15-minute call with Robin. Not everyone takes him up, which is fine, but those that do usually become longtime members.

Always have something coming

Memberships owners should always give their clients something to look forward to.

For the Gypsy Jazz Club, this is the live component of the membership. Every month, Robin delivers a live online masterclass, roughly an hour long, which later goes into the membership.

Every week too since last May, they have a club hangout via Zoom. It's an open mic event, for which people prepare music during the week. The "ultimate something's coming, for the hardcore", says Robin. It's an opportunity to socialize, relax, have fun. Many of the members, stuck indoors, have found the hangout a lifeline to others just like them.

Getting the customers

Most of the membership's traffic comes from YouTube. At least every week there's a YouTube lesson on their channel, Gypsy Jazz Secrets.

They use Facebook as well. There was a period, says Robin, of doing Facebook lives at least every week. They built a large FB following, which now drives to the membership.

They've been cultivating an email list, too, over the years, sending content every week.

They also do giveaways for members, three or four times a year. Their first prize is a \$3,000 gypsy guitar. Then there's a range of other practical, real solid, physical prizes.

Back when retreats could still be held, they had four a year in different parts of the world, and attendees would get an annual subscription to the membership.

As far as paid traffic, they use Facebook. They're not doing YouTube yet, but it could be something they look at.

They also have a crash course that builds their list daily. In return for your details, it will teach you your first gypsy jazz chords, your first rhythm. From the crash course, there's an upsell to a \$25 "action pack", as they call it, where you can choose rhythm, soloing or repertoire.

They send email sequences as well to people who take the crash course but don't buy after the cart upsell.



Robin also did a book with a publishing company on Amazon called Beginner Gypsy Jazz Guitar. Aside from being a great book, it contains QR codes that lead to a landing page in 10XPRO. And it basically advertises or gives tips from the membership, so they've had members join from the book.

Letting people go and taking them back

When people do leave the membership, the reasons are not unusual - a financial or a time constraint, an operation or the like.

If someone goes with the intent of returning in a few months, the Minsk team keep tabs. They expect an email when the person wants back in, and help them start off on the same footing as when they left. They basically keep in touch, without really an exit strategy in mind.

The joy of keeping things spinning

Maintaining the membership is a joyful thing, says Robin. He knows what to do every day and sees things growing in a steady, organic way. He wakes up and knows the mortgage is paid. He has time both to look after his members and to spend time with family. He feels himself improving as a guitarist, as a communicator, as an educator, as a teacher. And he truly enjoys interacting with his members and knowing he helps them.

Want to know more about Robin and his community? Visit his site, GypsyJazzClub.com

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