



# Why Have a Membership Website? - The Membership Series

A membership website is one of the most rewarding income streams you can have. Discover why you might consider this business model in this episode.





James Schramko and John Lint

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness. And today, I have my regular guest, [John Lint](#), we're talking about memberships. Hello, John.

**John:** Hi, how are you, James?

**James:** Good, thank you. You're the founder of [10XPRO](#). It's my preferred platform for membership sites. And we're just going to be working our way through a series of topics as part of our [membership course](#)/education/software provision, you know, that you and I have been working on for years. We're going to just address some of the single topics that come up most frequently.

And they will more or less line up with the book that I'm currently getting in order that's going to help people understand more about memberships. Now, I've got you on board, because you're seeing what happens on the back end of this. You're watching the memberships get built in your platform at [10XPRO.io](#). And we share a lot of the same customers, because lots of my customers are seeing how useful that is for them.

The topic for today is, what's the point of a membership website? I think this is an important one, because when I research training formats, there is literally one called Format, and one of the first parts of the acronym for the Format training is why. We have to understand, why would we want a membership?

And I know that it might be a few steps too basic for our average listener. However, we were discussing this, and we don't want to assume that a person has listened to every single one of our podcasts before. We've pushed out so many episodes. We've got so much training inside SuperFastBusiness, out there in the public. We've got social media posts, etc.

## **The business that is all about freedom**

But let's just step it through. Why would we actually want a membership?

**John:** Yeah, and it's always good to repeat the basics and go through the important things. And understanding the power of a membership site, of having a membership site in your online business, is extremely important, because ultimately, it's all about freedom. It's all about getting leverage. It's all about building a real online business, not creating an online job, but creating an online business.

And what does that mean? It's a business that is going to work for you. It's always working, basically. Instead of you working in the business, the business is basically generating income, even while you're sleeping, or whatever you want to say. So you have a real business, you have members that join your membership program, and they are basically being charged every single month or every single year for access to your membership site.

So ultimately, it's a subscription-based business. It's a recurring revenue-based business, meaning that every single month, you know that, Okay, I have X amount of members. So I can expect X amount of dollars, or euros, whatever you're using, at the end of the month, or at the end of the year.

It's a beautiful thing. Because instead of being stuck in the hamster wheel, trying to sell, sell, sell and create a course and sell it, or creating a product and sell it, or creating a service, sell it and try to promote and all that stuff, instead of doing all of that, you can just focus on your business, you can create a ton of value, you can create different things for your members, you can help them out, help them get the results that they desire, and solve the problems that they have.

And when you do that, then they are part of your membership site. They are paying every single month, every single sixth month, every single year or whatever plan you have set up in your membership site. And now you know that you have predictable income coming in on a regular basis.

And it's a beautiful thing, because finally, you have a real online business and you can relax and you can focus on the things that matter. And yeah, to me, that's one of the main reasons why our 10XPRO.io members are following our training and are setting up the different components that are part of having a membership site.

**James:** There's nothing left for me to say. Okay, so you're very easy on me as a podcast host, because you're delivering the goods here.

One of the things that has become obvious to me is some of the members of my community have listened to the case study episodes we did. We had some 10XPRO users on board, in everything, from [midwifery](#) through to [business coaching](#) and [food](#). They listened to [Adam's episode](#).

We'll link all of these in the show notes where this podcast episode appears. And what they've been inspired about is just the ease of bringing this all together.

## **James and his membership journey**

So I just want to chip in here with a little bit of history, how I ended up with memberships, because I started off trying to build an online business while I still had a job.

And of course, a job means that you've committed to selling your time to someone else, and they pay you a wage. But when you stop working, you stop getting paid. You're not building an asset, and you get paid while you do the work, which is fine if you've got a great job, and you don't really need to have a huge amount of money in the future or whatever.

But for me, I really felt like I wanted to grow something. And I observed a lot of my Mercedes-Benz clients had their own business. So in the process of coming online, I tried a few different business models. I was an affiliate, which meant I sold other people's things for money, and that was good.

But I'd make the sale and then I'd get paid the money, and then that was it. And I'd have to go and make another sale. I then switched to selling other people's subscription products, and that was a huge leverage point for me in my online journey. That one change really changed my future where I would sell people into memberships and get paid recurring commission.

I also sold information products. But again, one-time sale. And the very first membership I had was actually giving people access to their delivery, where I did webinars, and I updated the product for free for everyone who was a member. So that was what we'd call a lifetime membership.

And again, I'd get paid once, and that was it. And I kept servicing the member. So I'm not a huge fan of lifetime memberships. The good thing about it, is you've got a warm prospect list, who you can reach out and contact because you've built value, they're likely to take other recommendations.

The challenge, of course, is what are you going to recommend to them that they don't already have within the membership? So I springboard from that into the eventual scenario. And along the way, I also did services, I provided services. And that's good. That's a fast setup, high ticket, easy to do on a small scale, hard to do on a large scale type business, agency.

I mean, almost all my agency clients go through a stage where they say, I hate my agency, I just want to sell it. Teach me how to sell information products. Like that's the evolution of them. But you can break through them, and I've got plenty of agencies doing \$5 million to \$10 million a year now, and they've busted through that. But you have to be good at leading a team.

One thing about a membership is you don't need a big team. If you had 10XPRO, for example, you're pretty much outsourcing your tech team, your design team, your maintenance team, because you no longer have to worry about hosting, plugins, PHP, JavaScript, security, backups, all the stuff that most people get bogged down in.

And John, you and I observe the communities online, and that's like 90 percent of the noise. It's like, I've launched my membership, for the big launch to my Facebook group and two people bought. What do I do now? And then the rest of the discussion is tech; tech, tech, tech, tech. What goes with that? What's cheapest? What's easiest? What's free or whatever.

But what I like about a membership, and this really stuck with me, and this would have to be a tweetable, you sell it once and you get paid over and over again. Now, how much over and over again, is really up to you. And we'll be covering that in future episodes when we cover the topic of churn and member attention.

But this is a big deal. When I switched my model to selling once and getting paid over and over again, that was it. So since 2009, (the beginning of 2009 is when I opened up my membership) and it's been going ever since. So we're now recording this in 2021, and I've had the benefit of over a decade of coming into every single month with the automatic invoicing already set up. So it just happens, it just flows.

Then the balancing act is simply delivering value for your members, and making sure that you keep as many members as leave, so that you can neutralize your membership. If possible, you even grow it. But I will say this, if you grow it too quickly, then you'll also have a lot of people leave quickly. There's a definite relationship.

## **Membership versus other business models**

But back to why a membership, for me it was the transition from doing one-time work and getting paid once to doing one-time work and getting paid over and over again. That is like the overarching theme. There are other reasons, which we can touch on. But reason number one, it's a low amount of effort that you can have a long term impact for, and I think that's one of the big reasons why a membership should be on the consideration card as a potential business model.

And we can maybe sort of compare it to a couple of other business models, because it's a natural thing. Like, you don't have to go far on Instagram to see someone selling an ecommerce course. I saw one just before; a guy I've actually helped, but he's showing screenshots of his customers who made \$500,000 in the first month and stuff.

These young guys selling this ecom - when you dig a little deeper into it, and you find out, they're not really actually doing the model themselves sometimes, or they can sell product, but they can't make it profitable. What you're talking about here with ecommerce is low-margin business, and it's a difficult business.

You have a lot of competition, none the least being Amazon. And if you partner with them, then it's kind of like building a YouTube channel or a Facebook page. You're kind of at the whim and mercy of any changes or whatever that they make. So I think the ecommerce model is a hard model compared to the membership model.



And then there's the [agency model](#), and we kind of touched on that, and they're still hard to scale. It's hard to scale an agency past yourself. So I know lots of solopreneurs, that's the word we use to say, I've got a job, but I'm my own boss. And if you have a solopreneur business, if you are the business, you don't have a business, you have a job.

And it's only when you get a team, or a lot of customers that you start to actually have a business. But it's really hard to scale an agency past a few hundred thousand dollars a year without building team. And I think this is the Achilles heel of a lot of people, not everyone is cut out for or wants to be running an adult daycare setup, which is what an agency can look like because invariably, you're going to need people who make the sales and people who deal with the customers.

There are solutions out there where you can plug into, that help with the customer service. There are solutions out there you can plug into that help with the sale, but it is a more high stakes business model compared to an agency. Just your thoughts on this, John.

**John:** Yeah, I mean, exactly right. I mean, when it comes to ecommerce, it's all about the profit margin that you can get. So the cons is that you're going to have to spend maybe a lot of money to buy the products that you're going to hope to resell. And then obviously, you need to try to buy those products at the lowest price possible so you can sell them at the highest price possible to make some profit.

**James:** And it has to be the right product, like product selection, there's the real money. You've got to get samples, and then you've got to buy stuff. And then you've got to go through shipping and customs, and then quality control, and hopefully they're the correct product. And the funny thing, if it actually goes well, then it's really hard to keep growing the business, because you need all the cash coming in to buy more stock, and there's not much left over, if any, and usually you have to take a loan to grow an ecommerce business.

**John:** Exactly. So there is that, you have the stock, all of these things. Now, there are some methods to use like drop shipping, but then dropshipping, it's not really your own products, like you're reselling someone else's product. And those products might be made in China, and then they dropship it.

So at the end of the day, you're not really building your own thing. So you have that going on for ecommerce, which is not my preferred thing. Then you talked about coaching or agencies and providing a service. The issue with that, the con is that, again, you're trading your time for money. And obviously there's a ceiling to that. Because I mean, there's only 24 hours per day.



So you know, it's very hard to scale and to grow that, unless, like you said, you have a huge team. And now you're managing hundreds of people that are working for you, because you're servicing hundreds of clients. Now that's possible. But basically, you now have this beast that you now need to manage 24/7, and it's not, again, not the most leveraged type of business.

That's why we have a lot of people who have agencies that come to us at [10XPRO.io](https://10XPRO.io), and ask us, hey, how can I get more leverage? And this is what I talked about at the beginning, how can I get more freedom, freedom to do what I want, freedom to enjoy my life, freedom to spend the time doing whatever I want, whenever I want, all of that stuff, and how can I get more leverage?

Meaning that, Okay, I'm going to spend eight hours per day or four hours per day, I want to maximize my profits for that time spent. And that's why they then try to go into an online business, and one of the best online businesses to provide you with that freedom and that leverage is what you and I have been doing for years, which is all about information, publishing and selling basically that type of information or that coaching, right?

So it's all in an information type of format, where your members can pay for access to either a course, or like we are talking about now, to a membership site, which basically means ongoing, recurring revenue, right? Because they pay every single month. So that's what happens with the agency, the part I don't like because you're trading your time for money. And at the end of the day, it's kind of like you're creating a job if you're doing that, right?

And from the agency part, we then have the people who are coaches, right? So now they are orienting themselves less into providing a service, like, for example, if I'm talking about agency, there'll be someone who is doing maybe pay per click advertising, or maybe he's doing Facebook advertising for clients, right?

Well, he still needs to have a team that's going to set up the ads, create the graphics, all of that. That takes time, right? Or maybe you are a web designer. I mean that's great as an agency, but again, you're providing that service.

## The coaching model and memberships

And then you can transition to more like a coaching type of business where, Okay, now I'm not providing the service. But I'm just providing advices, basically, advice, and I'm consulting, and that's great, that's a better step already.



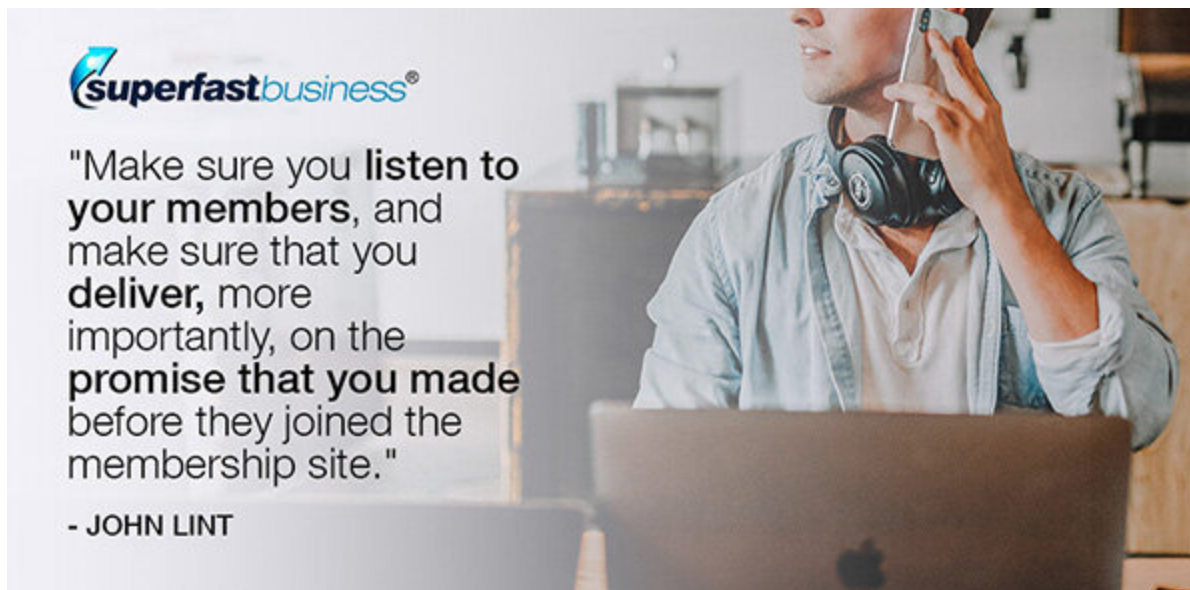
The margin can be higher, and you are going towards that freedom and that leverage, which is the ultimate online business that we're talking about, because in the coaching model, the problem is that, again, you're trading your time for money. And if you're doing one-on-one coaching, then that's going to limit you in the amount of clients that you can get.

So what is the play in a coaching type of model? You need to have maybe less clients, if you want freedom and leverage, you need to have less clients and charge them more, right? That will be at least a way for you to remain sane, and not go crazy by basically just being on coaching calls all day, right? If you're doing this for 100 bucks an hour, then you're not going to be very profitable, because you're going to be working like crazy.

So maybe having less clients and higher fees can be a solution. But again, you need to show up all the time, and you need to be there all the time. So the next step to get more leverage is to do coaching, but one to many. And that's why we talk about the membership site, because it's the ultimate way for you to provide coaching or education or in delivering training, one-to-many, meaning that you create it once, and you can resell it forever, or you can offer it forever, or you can put it on autopilot, and it's being delivered automatically.

And the same thing we do coaching as part of a membership site, you and I do those things. We do different things as part of our membership program. You in SuperFastBusiness.com, you have Q&A calls that you do for a lot of members, you have trainings that you do once a month for multiple members.

So what do you do? You deliver that class one-to-many, you're delivering that coaching experience, meaning I'm going to answer your questions, one-to-many, so you're not spending 30 minutes with one member, you're spending 30 minutes or an hour with multiple members. And that is where that leverage comes in, that freedom comes in, because now all of a sudden, you have all of these hours in a week that open up, you have that business that is working on autopilot (even though I don't like that word, autopilot, it's very hypey), but effectively, that's what happens, right?



You wake up, you've got some sales, you get that email that tells you this person has joined, it's all working on autopilot, kind of. And you still need to show up. That's the key, like you talked about this, the key is to show up, make sure that you deliver, make sure you listen to your members, and make sure that you deliver, more importantly, on the promise that you made before they joined the membership site, because that's one of the biggest mistakes that most people make.

We see this all the time with some of those gurus out there or whatever. Big promises, big headlines, and then you join, you don't even see them. You're never there. That's why I love what you do, James, because you're always there, you always show up, you are on your forums every single day, you are delivering the goods as part of your SuperFastBusiness membership. And I think that's very, very important for people to remember.

But once you do that, you have a business that can scale, and it can scale to as many members as you might want, depending on the type of business that you want to build.

### **Why have a membership site, in short**

**James:** Fantastic. So we're talking about, why have a membership site? This is Episode 837 at SuperFastBusiness.com. I'm speaking with [John Lint](#), who's the founder of 10XPRO.io. That's the platform I use for [SuperFastResults](#), by the way. And at SuperFastResults, there is a membership training. It's called [Profitable Membership Business](#), and that is a great foundation training, where you'll go through the chapters.

But today, we're just talking about why. To summarize what John said, we're now selling our expertise, but not necessarily our labor. And as John correctly mentioned, I do run group Ask Me Anythings, I run weekly group calls for my higher-level members. And I do offer private coaching, but it's leveraged via chat.

And these days, one of my favorite tools is Loom, and I've installed it on my telephone. And I can very easily make personalized videos for my higher-paying customers, and they get a customized experience. But they also get to enjoy the frameworks, the checklists, the trainings that I'm going to refer them to that they need to step through to get the results that we talked about.

So it's a hybrid where I can put my intellectual property. So instead of stock on an ecommerce store, and instead of me doing things for the customer, which is what an agency more or less is, it is an information zone, where I have the element of content, I have the element of coaching, and I have the element of community.

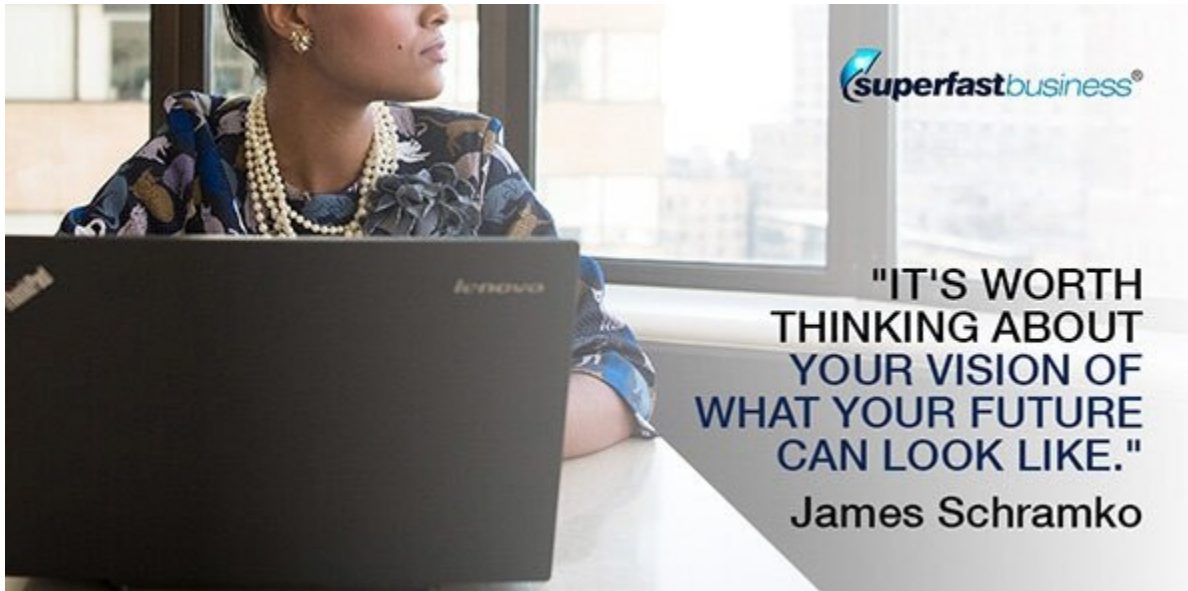
And we're going to cover these in future episodes, but we're just going to step through it topic by topic. This one is about, why have a membership. In short, you get to own your own income stream, you get to sell once and get paid over and over again. My favorite metaphor for this is a locomotive.

It's like you're setting up the train tracks, you're getting that engine running, you're putting some coal in, and then you're heading off. And as you get to each of the platforms, some people are going to get on the train. And if you look after them, they stay on the train.

Now, some people are going to get off the train, too. And we'll cover all of that in our topics of retention.

We're going to discuss what you need to have in your membership, so that you can have something attractive. We're going to talk about how you actually choose what your membership is about. For the platform, that's an easy one. I recommend 10XPRO.io. And that's going to remove about a million tech questions and challenges that could have been a problem if you want to go and do this or that or the other. But that's the simple part. Thank goodness for John.

So that's why I have a membership. This is Episode 837, SuperFastBusiness.com. We're going to come at you with the next episode, which will be, Is a Membership Site Right for You? So we're going to talk about what factors would negate you from being a good candidate for a membership, or whether you're green lights and ready, set, go. So check that out.



But for now, I think it's worth thinking about your vision of what your future can look like. I can tell you before we recorded this podcast, I was trading surfing stories with John, because I've had four of the best surfing days I've ever had in my entire life. And I couldn't do that without the business model I have.

You know, today I've only had two or three calls. I've really only got two jobs now. One is to create some content to let people know about my membership. And two is to deliver my coaching services within my membership. That's my main job. I love my job. Thank you for listening to SuperFastBusiness.

### **Some ideas in parting**

John, have you got any closing thoughts?

**John:** Yeah, I mean, it's all about that freedom. You just mentioned that, freedom to do what you want, whenever you want, and that comes by having a recurring revenue type of business. That's why we love it. That leverage is extremely important, because otherwise people get burnt out. They discover like, Okay, I wanted to do stuff online. But now I'm stuck doing this thing that I don't enjoy.

And it's about being independent, you know, you have all these people that are working. I see all of these content creators out there on YouTube or on different platforms, and you can see that now, they're really trying to be independent, to try to build their own thing, their own brand. That's good to see.

And more and more are switching into that subscription-based business, that membership type of business that you mentioned, because it gives you that peace of mind. Like Okay, yeah, I don't have to get stuck in that sale-do, sale-do cycle being stuck on that hamster wheel, trying to sell, sell, sell, create something, sell, create something, sell.

No, you don't have to do that. Just build that brand, attract people to you, offer them the next step to join maybe your email list, we can talk about this in future episodes, but it's about joining your audience, helping them further, making an offer, get them to join your recurring revenue-based business, your subscription-based business, your membership site, and once they're in, you keep on delivering value, but now you're building that base.

So two people become four, become eight, 16, 32. It grows and grows and grows, and your revenue grows as well. If you deliver and you can keep on doing your thing, you attract more people, then you have a beast that is now working for you, helping you out. And if like you, you have good waves today, you take the day off, there's no stress, because you know the money is there. Tomorrow you do whatever you need to do. But now for today, you can enjoy the waves and smash it, basically.

**James:** That's it. And, you know, to answer the question that might be on your mind, is the membership system easy? Is it as easy as they say, when the launch is coming out, and everyone's talking about and they get hyped up? And I've had people send me emails saying, Hey, I've just invested my life savings on the latest, greatest course.

And my answer would be no. This is not an instant riches thing. This doesn't just flip the switch on for next week. Unless you're extremely fast at implementing, you already have experience online, and you already have an audience, and you have expertise, then some of those questions, if you give me the right answers, I might say, Well, this is going to be a great business model for you fairly soon.

If you're just starting out, I want to really set the tone here. If you are going to lay tracks and build a railway system, there's going to be an upfront effort, okay? I'm not even talking about the investment. You need to allow some money for the tools, and you need to allow time, and you need to allow the energy expenditure to get that system up and running.

However, once you set it up, I don't think there's a business like it, I really don't. So I'm excited about our future episodes. John, from [10XPRO.io](https://10XPRO.io), thank you for sharing with us. We'll put this up at SuperFastBusiness, Episode 837, Why Have a Membership?

If you're interested in this topic, head over to [SuperFastResults](#), see my 10XPRO installation, get the [Profitable Membership course](#), or even take any of the free training. There's a [challenge](#) there. My book is free, [Work Less, Make More](#), you can get it for free. See how it's set up. I'm using 10XPRO for that. I'm a big believer in doing what I say, and we use the platform for my own business because it's good. Catch you on the next one.

**John:** Thank you.





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