



## 5 Things To Consider When Validating Your Membership Idea

### 1. Should free and low-cost training be used to build a community that will eventually elevate its members to a premium priced product? Or should low and high-priced memberships operate independently of each other?

A premium version of a product might validly be positioned separately from its lower-priced counterpart. However, if the two differ only slightly from each, with one perhaps being basic and the other an iteration with various add-ons, it may be a good idea to place them under one brand as bundles.

It's also worth noting that the ascension model, wherein a customer graduates from a lower-priced or free product to a premium one, does not usually reflect the reality of buyers' behavior. A customer can opt straightaway for a high-ticket item, bypassing the low-cost option.

### 2. How will you sell?

Depending on the price of your product, there are a couple of ways you could sell. For a low-price membership, say under \$100 monthly, you'd need to attract hundreds of members to make it worthwhile. With a premium product and a small audience, high-value content on the front end leading people to your proposition works well. You can consider as well an application process to go with such a scenario, with telephone sales calls playing an important role.

In the early stage of your membership you might focus on business development, where you're getting business through strong funnels, maybe paid traffic. If you have good positioning and reasonable exposure, you might operate in an order-taker sort of mode, where customers come to you already wanting what you have. Then once you've built the membership, you can take on a relationship manager role, mostly just keeping your customers happy.

### 3. If your list is small, how do you start?

A membership site can be hard to sell straight up unless you have many customers and are in the lower price range, and unless your audience are warm or you have a very good sales funnel.

A good way to warm up prospects is with great content marketing. You want people to know who you are before they get to your sales page. This can also be accomplished with short low-ticket courses, for which the membership can be an upsell.

You might also sell masterminds, on the back of which you can offer a one or two-month trial of your membership.



#### 4. When you're starting from scratch

If you're not even sure there's a market for your membership idea, a good approach would be to sell a \$10 product to validate the market. If you sell a lot of these low-ticket items, it can give you a buyers' list that you can then warm up to the idea of a membership.

#### 5. Do you have enough for a forum?

Is 20 to 30 members too little for a forum? It depends on the need of the members. If they are there primarily for the resources and coaching and private discussions, there's no real need for a lot of peer-to-peer interaction.

What's important is setting expectations. Do members enter the community for the interactions, or for the content and coaching? It also depends on what you are comfortable with. Are you up to the task of managing a full-on forum of hundreds, or do you have your plate full with a couple of dozen?

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