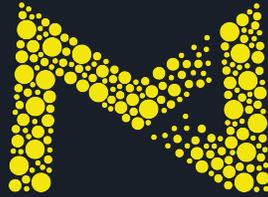


How to launch a membership community



If you take nothing else away from this guide, it's this.

You have everything you need right now to create a thriving membership site for your fans.

When you choose to create a community for your fans to meet each other, exclusive content and behind-the-scenes experiences are the start to the conversation.

As your fans start to build relationships with each other, they'll share more, do more, and allow you to take your project, art, writing, product, course, and community to places you never thought possible.

This guide reflects the successful experiences of thousands of creators like you over the past decade, so you too can quickly get up and running with your own membership community—and start getting paid for your work.

Ready? Let's go.



Who do you want to serve with your membership community?

If your community is for everyone, it's for no one.

The clearer and more specific you define the interests of your fans or what makes them unique, the better your new membership community can serve them.

The most obvious place to start is with **you**. Your unique combination of experiences or take on the world may be just the hook that attracts your fans to a community that needs to exist in the world.

So, who are you motivated to bring together?

- People who are **fans of your work**
- People who share the same **specialty**
- People who share the same **profession**
- People with the same **interests**
- People who care about the same **cause**
- People who **follow your work on social media**
- People at the same **stage in life**
- People who can **benefit from your work**
- People who care about the same **issues**
- People with a **common condition or diagnosis**

Who do you want to bring together? The more specific, the better.

What are the 5 or 10 characteristics or experiences that define your fans?



Why will people be motivated to join?

With so many apps available today, you might think that your fans are too busy to join a new membership community. You'd be wrong.

In 2017, busy people from all walks of life remain highly motivated to join a community of people like them when it will help them achieve a common goal or feel less isolated.

There are three overwhelming reasons people join a new membership site:

- Access exclusive content or behind-the-scenes experiences
- Meet people like you for support, encouragement, and to learn from each other
- Create together the largest collection of stories, experiences, and practical ideas for people like you
- Navigate topics that don't have easy or obvious answers (the stuff you can't Google)

Reinforcing the "why"—or the motivations for joining—in your invitations, your social media posts, or your ads will make it much easier to get your fans to join your new membership site.

Which of these reasons will most appeal to your fans?

What other benefits would your fans want to see from joining your membership community?



How will you make your community stand out?

People decide if a membership community is right for them in the first few seconds. The best way to seize this moment is with a memorable name—or “hook”—that captures your unique take on the world.

The easiest place to start is with **you**. You can feature your name and your story as the focal point of your new membership community. Or, you can come up with a fun name that reflects your brand.

A few of our favorites include:

- **Better** for fans of self-help author and podcaster Gretchen Rubin
- **Hairbrained** for craft hairdressers
- **Beyond Type 1** for people thriving with Type 1 diabetes
- **The Offbeat Bride Tribe** for brides who are looking for non-traditional wedding inspiration
- **Beat Infertility** for women navigating fertility issues

Don't yet have a name you love? Grab a friend and generate as many names you can think of below. The more you generate, the faster you'll find a name that will click with your fans.



What do you want your fans to do together?

There are a number of activities that are proven to build real relationships between fans in a membership community:

- Connect fans to each other based on where they live or their common interests
- Organize conversations and activities by specific topics they care about
- Use polls to crowdsource answers to specific questions that are relevant to their experiences
- Use questions to gather stories, experiences, and practical feedback from your fans
- Post your own story and experiences, and encourage your fans to post theirs
- Host virtual events like live chats (with text chat, photos, and emojis) or a video conference
- Host real world meetups with your fans

What do you want your fans to do together in your membership community? Jot down as many ideas as you can below for the best results.



What questions will help your fans break the ice?

Connecting your fans in a membership community isn't so different from your first day at camp or kicking off a retreat. A round of icebreaker questions goes a long way in getting people talking to each other right from their very first session.

Here are a few of our most popular icebreaker questions:

- What do you want to get from joining a community of people like you?
- What's the one thing you want to accomplish today?
- What is your main goal for 2017?
- What is your favorite part of being a _____?
- What's one new thing you're hoping to learn from the other people here?

Whether you choose something general or more specific, these questions are proven to put your fans at ease and get them talking.

What are a few of your favorite icebreaker questions that are most relevant to your fans?



What topics are important to your fans?

Topics are a great way to organize all the great conversations happening between you and your fans in your membership community.

What do we mean by topics? Let's take one example. In a membership community for fans of popular author and podcaster Gretchen Rubin, the topics are focused around self-improvement and creating better habits, such as:

- Achieving goals
- Building habits
- Accountability
- Better health
- Productivity
- Work and career

What topics do *your* fans care about? We recommend defining between 4 and 10 to start.



How will you measure success for your membership community?

You're almost there! The last step before inviting in your fans is the most important one. How will you measure success for the investment of time and energy you're making in your new membership community?

Think about how you want to measure success for your community. We recommend starting with:

- Number of fans who join
- Number of fans paying for monthly or annual access to your membership community
- Percentage of fans who contribute by commenting or attending events
- Popularity of specific polls, prompts, posts, and events in your membership community
- Percentage of fans who are returning every month

How will you define success for your membership community? Jot down a few of the numbers that matter **most to you today when you think the value of your work and how you want your fans to get to know each other in your new community.**



You're ready to share it out!

Congratulations! By following this guide, you've defined a strategy for your new membership community that reflects the most successful experiences of other creators, authors, podcasters, artists, and makers like you who are bringing together their fans and getting paid.

Now you're ready to invite in your fans. Who are the best folks to invite upfront? This is where a clear definition of who your membership community serves will come in handy.

If you have an email list, start there. If you're building one from scratch, your best bet is to:

Browse your contacts and pick 10 or 20 friends who fit the profile you've laid out for your fans:

From there, make a list of friends who can provide recommendations for who to share it with next:

Lastly, share the launch of your new community daily on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Snapchat, or anywhere else where you can get it in front of the right people.

Congratulations! You're ready to go.

You now have everything you need to launch a thriving membership community for your fans that only you can uniquely bring into the world.

Have questions or want to go to the next level with your Mighty Network? Join us in **Mighty Creators** at creators.mn.co 💪

See you on the other side!

