



Ian Jackson

Presents

"Brick-Simple Continuity"

**My business Associate's method for
adding a Recurring income to your
business...**

(Without going broke, getting bored or being confused)

...and that you can start within 24 hours

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Tony Shepherd here...

My wife knows when it's my *time of the month*.

Because I become very happy and watch the calendar with great interest!

No it's nothing to do with my *MANstrual* cycle.

I'm talking that time of the month when my membership rebills come in.

Those three or so days when the payment pings on my phone just don't stop.

And every time I add a new recurring membership element to my business it gets easier because of the strategies and shortcuts I've learned over the years.

And that's what I'm sharing for the first time in this publication.

So here goes...

Best,

Yorkshire, UK

Introduction

There are loads of HUGE courses on continuity and membership sites that examine the different ways to set up recurring income models.

But I'm not even going to TRY to go that deep.

There's too much.

Instead I'm simply going to share how I do it

...and how successful continuity marketers I know or respect do it, so you'll see what genuinely works (**in real life** not just in theory) because there's more to it than just setting up a fancy membership site and opening for business :)

Let's start...

Quickie - Why Continuity?

I probably don't need to tell you WHY you should have continuity either IN your business or AS your business, right?

But in case you didn't know... *it's because it's a LOT easier to create content for an existing subscriber or member or client who pays you a fee every month than it is to acquire a new customer.*

That and it's just solves a SHEDLOAD of financial worries when you know that \$10,000 in rebills will come into your account on 12th-15th of each and every month. (Or whatever dates you choose obviously)

You can plan your finances.

You can budget.

And that gives you an edge over a lot if your competitors.

Here's how:

If you know when your rebills are arriving you can plan your ad or solo buying campaigns in advance, hire freelancers and a hundred other things that are harder to do if you're relying on day to say sales.

But to be honest, the main thing for me with continuity was feeling safe.

I'm not a worrier by nature but until I created my first continuity income, I hadn't realised just how flaky the whole online income thing felt to me.

The need to make sales every month, watching my projection figures fall short and worrying.

For sure - continuity is probably THE biggest and most POSITIVE change I every made in my business.

How do you know that's true?

Well since I created my first one YEARS ago, I've never been without a continuity or membership of some kind.

I can't recommend you do this strongly enough.

And that's the whole point of this publication:

To get started on your OWN continuity income stream or business within 24 hours.

Onwards...

Decide on what kind of continuity model you want to create...

First off, I'm NOT talking about the *technical* aspect of continuity (although there is a chapter on that later)

Please understand that the platform or script or software you use to PROVIDE your continuity content or service **is NOT the continuity itself.**

I can't count the times I've seen people spend *weeks* getting some platform or software set up to deliver their content.

Taking days to decide which platform or plugin to go with, weighing up the pros and cons, then when they finally decide, tweaking the script, messing with the php code, customising it, hiring a coder to get it exactly how they want it...

...and then spending just half a day throwing some weak content into it and expecting people to buy.

TOP TIP: Your customers don't give a flying, flaming, fandango-dancing CRAP about which platform your continuity is based on, as long as it delivers the content.

Because they ONLY care about your content, product or service.

And so should you.

If you think about any continuity you pay a subscription fee for, ask yourself **WHY** you subscribe?

For me it's always ALWAYS about the content, and it will be for your customer too.

So make your **content** the MAIN thing when it comes to building your continuity. (*We'll cover that later in detail*)

IMPORTANT: Although the content is the most important thing you need to have delivery models in mind when you're thinking about what content to sell, which is why I cover model in THIS chapter and content in the NEXT

There are different ways you can go with the model.

Here are just a few:

Drip-feed or regular content. (This is my *Inner Circle* model) Probably the best known model that gives access to a members area where new content is supplied every month.

If it's a course I recommend choosing a platform that allows you to make sure *all new members* start on Lesson 1 or Module 1

Or if there is a lot of content you can make sure that new members don't get access to it all immediately. Again I'll cover this in more detail later.

The 'All In' model. This is where your members get access to everything at once, as soon as they sign up. If you want to make this a monthly rebill you'll probably have to add access to some sort of forum or *add content monthly* to stop them signing up, downloading everything and unsubscribing.

However this can be a great model if used with a one-off payment to get access to all (or how much you choose of) your products. I've seen this work really well as an upsell in a sales funnel. It's not my personal choice though.

Personally I prefer monthly rebills.

And of course you can choose your own intervals. It doesn't have to be monthly. You can supply content weekly or rebill every 2 weeks or six months if it suits your business or your content.

The Online Course. This is the model I used for my 52-weekly lesson '*Kickstart Course*' and it can work really well.

You can either drip-feed the content as I did or have everything in there and accessible when they sign up so they can work through it at their own pace. This is a great evergreen model where once the content is created, **all you need to do is to get new subscribers who will start at Month 1** and the content will be automatically presented to them either drip-fed or all in once chunk, with you having to do no more work except a little updating and some support.

I've also seen this done by some marketers where they have a course with content already created, and provide coaching along with it. They charge a one off fee (usually \$1,000 - \$5,000) and only open the course just two or three times a year, giving access to the entire course at once.

The Paid Community. This is when you charge a monthly fee for access to a private group, forum or other community.

The Fixed-Period Membership. This works well for something that has an end result such as a weight-loss program, detox or '*Add 5,000 subscribers to your list in 16 weeks*' type training.

My Kickstart Course was a combination of fixed-period (52 weekly lessons, billed monthly) and a drip-fed online course. For me the main advantage of the fixed-period membership is that you and your members both know how long you're committed for. This helps retention a **lot**.

The Product Delivery Model. To me this isn't strictly a membership site but it's worth mentioning since it happens a lot. When some vendors sell a

product they give access via a membership site. So you pay a fee for your product as normal but access is behind a protected membership site.

The advantages are being able to collect your buyer details so you can contact them again to sell, and also that you can offer other paid levels of access or more products when they log in to collect their purchase. It also makes sense because your buyers can track what they've bought from you.

If you have the sort of business where your buyers purchase pretty much everything you put out, this might work for you.

The Subscription model. There is a lot of room for wiggle in this model. It can be used from everything from a newsletter subscription (the model I used when I first started my newsletter) to a software subscription that perhaps gives access to a platform (think Clickfunnels or Aweber) or even coaching.

The Coaching Model. It's worth mentioning this as a stand-alone even though it really fits into the subscription model above. If you offer coaching on a subscription model it can be as simple as creating a subscription button in Paypal (for example \$1,000 a month) and then the client simply rebills or cancels if they want to hire you for another month. I've used this to great effect countless times.

Your membership site doesn't need to fit into any of these categories OR it might overlap into two or three. You can mix and match as you wish or make up a totally new model.

That's totally fine.

There are no rules.

So what did I start with?

Well I started my Newsletter AND my Kickstart course (sales page seen below) which have brought me hundreds of thousand of dollars using just Aweber and Paypal.

So how does the Aweber/PayPal thing work?

Just cue up a download link in an email, call it 'Lesson One' and set it to be sent automatically as the first lesson when the customer subscribes.

Next Set up Lesson 2 in your autoresponder sequence. Include the link to download Lesson 2 and cue THAT one to go 7 days after the first.

Do the same with all the future lessons, making sure they are scheduled to go 7 days after the previous one. It's really simple.

Or in the case of my newsletter it was a PayPal subscription button that takes them to a page where they sign up for my newsletter list via an Aweber form.

Every month when the newsletter is ready I email that list *only* with a link they can download the newsletter from.

In both cases if a customer unsubscribes I remove them from the list so they don't get any future emails. They're effectively unsubscribed.

So you can do it any way that works for you.

My advice is to keep it simple and inexpensive at first.

**THE BEAUTY OF THIS MODEL IS YOU CAN HAVE IT UP AND RUNNING
IN 24 HOURS OR LESS!**

Now let's decide on what content to sell...

Deciding on your content...

I'll be honest...

Many membership sites are BORING.

The content is boring, generic, obviously PLR or BADLY outsourced and often out of date.

Then you hear the owner moaning how hard continuity is to sell.

I'll tell you right now - **MY continuity is an EASY sell.**

Because it's interesting, relevant to the people who subscribe, and is 100% unique content that can't be found ANYWHERE else in the known universe.

Which certainly helps sales...

And that's why what you need to do now is decide on the content to sell.

CONTENT is more important than anything else, because the delivery, the pricing, the model and the frequency are secondary to the actual content you'll be selling.

Again, because that's really all your customer cares about.

Let's look at my own Inner Circle membership:

In my Inner Circle membership I release (monthly)

1 x Private Newsletter (Internet marketing case studies and strategies)

1 x IC Bulletin (My thoughts and business ideas on the current IM scene)

1 x Income Update (I share my own income figures for the previous month)

1 x Insights Update (The reasons I do certain things in my business)

Membership of my Private Facebook Group

Members also get Ad Hoc releases from time to time and **a discount on every single product I create and sell.**

The thing to note is that ALL the content I provide is unique to me and as I said earlier, you can't get it anywhere else.

Importantly I also don't release it to my *non-members*.

So even the *buyers* on my list don't get to share in how much I make from my various launches, promotions, releases, partnerships and so on unless they join my Inner Circle.

Which adds the next key ingredient: **EXCLUSIVITY.**

So even if you're not a member of my Inner Circle I hope you can see why people subscribe and my retention rate is very good.

It's unique and interesting content and highly relevant for anyone who is a fan of my stuff and sees me produce and launch my work.

It's the 'Next Logical Step' to join if you're one of my readers or buyers!

Don't underestimate the value of that last sentence.

Think back to being a kid.

You like a certain pop star.

You buy his/her records

You buy their posters and other merchandise

You go to their concerts.

So when they announce that a 'fan club' is being launched with a monthly or yearly fee and if you join you get 'unreleased' songs, posters that aren't on general sale, a newsletter from the artist (ghost written probably), discounts or pre-release tickets and albums...

Of course you're going to join.

You'd elbow a crippled pensioner out of the way to get to the front of the queue!

And THAT is one of the main secrets of selling continuity.

It has to be the LOGICAL NEXT STEP*

*I borrowed that phrase from one of Daniels Priestly's excellent books - can't remember which, sorry DP

Because being the Logical Next Step makes the sale almost effortless.

Not to say it can't be done otherwise (we'll cover that in this publication) but if you use your continuity offer as a way of taking your readers CLOSER to you, or to a premium level or to have more access to you...**then the sale almost makes itself!**

So the first thing you must do is decide on *what content to sell*.

It needs to be unique

Now that isn't to say that the content itself must be totally unique - in fact there's very little new under the sun - but you must MAKE IT UNIQUE.

And you do that by having an **opinion**.

By sharing what you think about it, trying to out and sharing your thoughts

By including things that have happened to you personally

By finding case studies where other have tried it out

And by positioning and presenting it in a way that HELPS OR INTERESTS your members or SOLVES A PROBLEM FOR THEM.

Another example from my own membership:

Here's the title from an article in one of my Inner Circle Bulletins:

Now the information in the actual article is really good in my opinion. It's about how to break down what you do into small chunks so you easily achieve them but in a practical, profitable way not just in theory.

I talk about how I do it in my own business, and share some strategies that I don't share with anyone outside my Inner Circle membership.

But there are also mentions of Ghandi, Superman, St Francis, a case study, a picture of me with long hair compared to how short it is today, a few stories about me and my business, some comments on how other marketers do things... But above ALL else...

IT'S MY OPINION ON HOW AND WHY YOU SHOULD KEEP THINGS SIMPLE IN YOUR BUSINESS AND HOW TO DO IT PROFITABLY.

It's a good article, shares some things I don't usually share and I bring it all together with my take on the whole thing.

The actual strategy though? *Well that could be sourced from any half decent time management blog or book.*

It's what I add that makes it unique to me.

SAME FOR YOU - It's what YOU add...That makes it so saleable.

What makes it interesting are the examples from my own business, the case studies, the screenshots, the examples of how other marketers do things, the slightly off the wall stuff like pics of my hair, mentioning Ghandi and tying it all together in something that actually helps your reader.

Now if you're thinking 'OMG that sounds bloody hard' you're wrong.

Take a look at this article from *Forbes*

You can find it (or a dozen like it) by just Googling.

It's an interesting article.

And if you add your own personal view, chuck in some case studies, add some screenshots or your own business OR of other examples you can make something like that into PREMIUM content for your members*.

*You can of course outsource this too with a decent writer.

But creating content and then making it your own is for me the easiest way of providing membership content that people will be happy to pay - SUBSCRIBE - for *and* to keep on paying for, for a long time.

There are other types of content too...

I know of some very successful memberships that sell ongoing information such as the latest SEO strategies and updates, current domains or websites that are available or about to drop.

I might have mentioned before that years back when I was in a band and striving to get a big record deal we subscribed to a *newsletter called '*The Bandit A&R Newsletter*' which gave updates on which record companies were looking for talent, what kinds of bands etc

*When we subscribed it was just a three of four sheet roughly photocopied sheet. When researching this publication I was delighted to discover it's now gone online and is going strong!

And it's still only £9 a month to subscribe. I think I remember it being £6.00 all of 20 years ago :)

The secret to their success (and yours, and mine) is to **know what challenges your target audience are facing**

But be careful - I'd assumed that one of the key challenges faced by my audience is they want to build an online business.

But after some surveys, some questions in my group and many emails I discovered that although they DID want to build an online business, the things that were stopping them were things like:

>> Not knowing what happens inside a successful business

>> What income figures are real and not hyped up

>> How a successful marketer works, thinks and implements ideas

>> The day to day structure of what to do

>> New income, marketing and sales ideas

And so that's what I supplied in my membership.

Those were the ACTUAL things that needed solving.

So I pulled my existing newsletter into a new membership, added more monthly content and it's taken off really well.

So whether you're supplying content that you produce yourself, a resource list, coaching, an update, a service or a tool in your membership, you must supply a solution to the challenges your audience are facing.

In Short: Give them content that makes their business or life easier, faster, better, happier or more productive and they'll stay forever!

TOP TIP: Size matters.

BUT it's also a double-edged sword. When customers first arrive in your member's area, a lot of content is a good thing. For me this is back issues of everything I write going back about a year.

So they'll get multiple issues of my Newsletter, Bulletin, Income Reports and the rest, as well as searchable posts and content in my Private Facebook group.

But the flip side of that is that my MONTHLY content is short, no-fluff and to the point. Between 10 and 20 page typically. This has proved to be a 'sweet spot' for me. Not overwhelming my members with monthly content, just supplying the meat and bones. *Who has the time to read a 200 page PDF each month?*

That's why I cut my content back so it is 100% pure content. There is no padding or waffle. It's pure information to help my subscribers.

To end this chapter I'll leave you with some ideas for the type of content you could supply:

Courses
Live Webinars
Member Calls
Content Archives
Community Forum
Downloads
Member perks
Stand-alone content
Cheat Sheets
Workbooks and Action Plans
Interviews
Member News/Newsletter

Ongoing or Fixed-Period Membership?

I've offered both ongoing memberships (like my current Inner Circle) and fixed-period memberships like my KickStart course which was a monthly paid internet marketing course that lasted for 12 months.

Lessons were weekly and the price was \$27 a month as I said earlier.

The downside to a fixed-period membership is that when your subscribers has finished the course he/she stops paying you!

The upside is that many marketers believe they're an easier sell.

Perhaps people prefer to know when something will finish.

Certainly if it's a course or you're teaching something it might be a daunting thing for a potential subscriber if they think it'll never end :)

Personally I never noticed a difference in conversion rates and firmly believe that if you have a relationship with your list, a certain percentage of them will buy everything you offer in order to get 'closer' to you and your strategies.

And of course if you keep pouring people into the top of your fixed-period membership then those subscription payments will keep coming to compensate for those who graduate*

My biggest Doh! moment was **not** offering some sort of *Premium Kickstart Course* or *KS Gold Upgrade* offer to everyone who 'graduated' Lesson 52. My arse is still sore from kicking myself :) I left SO MUCH money on the table and could have sold them into another continuity.

There's another key difference too.

Once I'd written all 52 lessons of my KickStart course it was essentially finished and all I had to do was to put new members into the top and watch the software drip-feed the lessons starting with Number 1 and ending with Number 52 automatically.

So every new person who subscribed started at Lesson 1

Apart from updating the Lessons now and again I needed to do NOTHING except a little support (lost links etc) and continue to market the course.

With my current ongoing membership I need to write a minimum of four pieces of content every month.

Now that's no biggie for me because writing is what I do, but if you're not a content creator or struggle with research or ideas then perhaps that's not ideal for you. Or outsource it of course.

But the fact is it's not that hard to do once you get into a routine.

In the past I've run short 12-week courses that were paid monthly too

So a \$497 course can be broken down into three monthly payments of \$167.

These sell well and again once the content has been created you just need to get new members.

So not all continuity needs to be *ongoing* to be successful as you can see.

Quick Recap:

Decide on your content.

Decide on your model

Decide if it'll be ongoing or fixed term.

But remember all of this can be changed or adapted so don't sweat the decision at this stage...

JUST MAKE IT AND MOVE ON

So You've Decided on your content, Delivery and model?

Now it's time to go SHOPPING For A Platform!

Firstly, congratulation on doing things this way around.

Too many people try to make their model fit with software or a platform they bought because it looks really great only to find it 'doesn't do drip-feed' or 'it won't let me add another paid level'

If you have your content, model and delivery already jotted down on a piece of paper then you have a much better chance of not losing money by selecting the wrong platform.

Knowing your requirements is important when you're choosing a platform

It also allows you to be lazy.

If you know your model requires X, Y and Z functions just email the support for whatever platform you're looking at (for example LeadPages or Clickfunnels and ASK them if it does what you need)

Not only will you get a clear answer but if it turns out after your buy it that it DOESN'T offer that functionality, you'll have the support answer on email or screenshot and that'll make your refund go much smoother ;)

Look out for free/trial periods too.

It gives you a chance to get a feel for a platform.

I used LeadPages for a year or so but I didn't realise I didn't like it until I started using Clickfunnels, which (for me) was much more intuitive.

There are a lot of membership scripts, platform and software out there so put a few days aside to check them out and make a decision.

The main thing is to keep in mind it needs to offer the functionality you need.

The other thing to think about is how easy (or not) it is to use.

I hated using Wordpress membership sites (using plugins such as Wishlist) because personally, they felt horrible to use.

The dashboard feels crappy and almost like I'm doing some coding (not a fun thing for me) whereas *Clickfunnels has big bright buttons that look as though a 6 year old could use them and that suits me just fine.

*I'd better say that while I use Clickfunnels and love it for my sales pages, **I do not recommend it at time of writing as a membership site**. It works well in terms of ease and content delivery but there is some sort of glitch that caused me all manner of hassle when I set up my Inner Circle.

It's mentioned on a lot of CF forums and to me it seems to be that if your customer has previously come into contact with any Clickfunnels membership cookie it doesn't recognise that they're trying to open a new one and won't display the screen for customers to create their own login.

You also need to think about what email system you can use with your membership site (I keep it separate and use Aweber) and whether it has a built-in one or integrates with the payment processor you use.

Here are just a few platform solutions, off the top of my head.

There are more :)

Clickfunnels

New Kajabi

Wild Apricot

ValueAddon

Simplero

Teachable

Woo Commerce

Thinkific

Memberful

Ruzuku

Easy Member Pro

Zenler

Memberspace

Teachery

Coach

Digital Access Pass

Wordpress + Wishlist. MemberPress (or other) plugin

But here's *another* option you might want to consider:

Do it yourself.

Keep it simple.

If budget is an issue then as I mentioned above, using a PayPal subscription button and Aweber or Getresponse to drip feed or deliver your content is a really inexpensive way of getting started.

If for some reason you find your membership isn't working, it's going to be pretty painful paying \$297 a month for a top level membership site with no revenue coming in.

Whereas PayPal and Aweber cost very little (You probably already have both these for your business anyway) and when your membership starts to take off you can just move to a paid platform when then numbers stack, put all your *new* members into that and eventually your PayPal and Aweber system will end as members leave*.

*Or you can move everyone over en masse if you know how to do it - I didn't so ran both for a while :)

IMPORTANT: Making the decision about which platform to choose is one where many people grind to a halt!

Up until this point their membership idea has all been on paper and it's been great fun mapping out the idea, doing the income projections (WOW! I could be making \$112,000 a MONTH by this time next year) and drawing how the funnel will work...

And then it all gets real.

It becomes time to spend money on a platform or if you're going inexpensive, to build the system yourself.

It becomes decision time, and many people are a little scared of making (and taking responsibility for) their own decisions, so they freeze.

So here's how I can help:

As I said above, **get your content, model and delivery *set in STONE** for when you go shopping for a platform.

*Again it will probably be possible to change later if you get it seriously wrong although you might lose a few quid if you have to do so.

Otherwise you'll be dazzled by every clever feature you see and perhaps be tempted to adapt the model you've decided on to fit the snazzy feature.

Big mistake unless it's obviously going to get you more customers or higher prices.

Your customers don't give a shit if the members area slides in from the left or looks cool because it fades in from a black background!

Write down the *functionality* you need and go shopping for that.

Trust me, keeping overheads down goes more towards having a profitable membership site than expensive bells and whistles :)

But here's the BIGGIE:

Using my strategy, the platform doesn't really MATTER.

By the time this publication is 6 months old there will probably be at least one NEW membership platform, and you'll see a lot of the marketing herd running to base their memberships around it.

But if you build your continuity around CONTENT, DELIVERY and PROFIT ADDING STRATEGIES you'll never go out of date.

I have used many membership platforms over the past ten years, but my overall *strategy* of providing up to date, unique and personal information has ALWAYS worked. ALWAYS!

Pricing!

There are lots of different pricing models and ideas when it comes to continuity pricing.

I'll run through a few and give you my opinion.

For an ongoing monthly membership like mine, my testing shows \$27 per month to be the optimum for me.

It's an easy 'no-brainer' price for my niche so it doesn't cause any prospective member to stop and raise their eyebrows too much. It doesn't stop the sales flow.

\$27 is a 'normal' price in my niche.

I have priced some micro-memberships in the past at \$7 and \$9 too which is an incredibly sticky price. By this I mean that it's low enough that many members will simply *NEVER cancel because the price is so low as to not be worth the hassle of cancelling.

*I have quite a number of members who still pay me \$7 a month *even though it's ten years* since they joined when I ran a special offer. I still produce the content and can't image many of them will ever leave!

But at \$7 it's difficult to make the numbers stack in terms of making a good profit.

For example **200 members at \$27 each brings you a monthly \$5,400** which is arguably enough for an average person to live on.

But **200 members at \$7 is just \$1,400** which in my opinion would be very tight as a sole income.

Setting a ball park figure is important.

Most memberships in my niche charge \$7 - \$97 per month but there ARE successful memberships that charge *much* more.

I personally think you should go 'average'* for your industry to *begin with* and then you have 'tweak room' to move your prices up or down depending on your result

*Continuity is probably the ONLY model where I would say 'go average' on price. On the whole I believe in premium pricing and positioning for your products, but when it comes to pricing your products continuity needs to be affordable to keep members in. A good example is Dan Kennedy who sells single courses for upwards of \$2,000 but still only charges \$59.97 per month for his entry level gold membership.

So despite what most marketers would say, I think it's worth setting your price strategy by looking at how many members you think you can obtain over a set time period (set by you) and how much you WANT to earn.

So if you need to earn £10,000 a month and your ballpark monthly subscription amount for your niche is £25 you need to maintain 400 members

There's also a difference between instalments and recurring payments.

My KickStart Course was priced at 12 x \$27 monthly instalments.

So in effect the course cost \$324 in total, but I liked having the *monthly* income so didn't offer a yearly fee until later (as part of a campaign to bring in a lump sum to fund another project)

*When I realised that the average member stayed for 6 months so their lifetime value was \$162 (27 x 6 months) I could offer a discount yearly option for \$197 and therefore **ensure** the equivalent of 6 months' worth of \$27 fees (the normal retention rate) would come in anyway.*

You could also go the other way and make the yearly price MORE expensive to encourage *monthly* sign-ups. So I *could* have offered my course for one yearly price of \$497 although I've never tried this AND you would also have to have all the content created and ready to go* to be able to do this.

*With my courses I usually write an outline and then write up the modules in full only the month before they're due to be published.

That's why it's important to know your average* retention rates. When I first launched my KS Course the payment processor was ClickBank and the retention stats were readily available. *If your platform doesn't offer this you could just run a spreadsheet and do it manually because it IS important.*

*Remember these rates are **average**. Some members will leave after the first month while others will remain for years.

I also recommend you split test your pricing.*

How to do this:

Duplicate your sales pages exactly and try offering one at price at \$27 per month and one at (for example) \$37 or \$17. See which gives the best return.

The \$37 price might convert significantly worse but gives the best profit because of the higher price.

*You can use Leadpages, Clickfunnels or many other platforms to do this, as well as Wordpress plugins or just tracking the stats manually with different payment buttons and tracking links

Your pricing is not set in stone.

Here's something that most marketers won't share with you:

>> I have subscribers at DIFFERENT prices in all my memberships <<

This is the result of various split tests, offers and trials I've run.

Is this fair to my customers?

The short answer is yes - it's business.

It's just that most marketers won't be honest with you about this.

It's not done to 'rip off' my members.

I would never do that.

It's done ONLY to test prices and see what works so the end result is my membership is able to continue because of this testing I've done.

If this is worrying you I strongly advise you put it out of your mind and go ahead with split testing anyway. It's really important and there's nothing underhand or unethical about it.

If you're not confident about a starting point for testing, or lost about what pricing to use for your own continuity, there are several ways to find your price point:

I've listed some of these below...

Look at what your competitors are charging and how your product compares. This is a good way of getting a starting price.

Work out the value that your membership has for your member. If you supply a product or service that can bring your member \$5,000 a year in additional sales then they'll surely pay \$500 a year (or around \$39 per month) for it

Survey your audience and see what price range they would be willing to pay. Don't take this as an absolute rule though, because people often say what they think you want to hear in surveys, but it's a good starting point

Think about where you are currently positioned in the market and where you WANT to be positioned. Are you high-end or cheap and cheerful? Are you exclusive or mass appeal?

Can you increase your price or increase value by adding a hands-on element or more access to yourself? You can typically charge higher prices if your offer includes personal support.

Or simply work out how much you want to earn and set your pricing from there! \$3,000 a month can come from 3 x \$1,000 members or 300 x \$10 members.

Additional Income Streams and Profit Tweaks From Your Continuity...

This is about maximising the profit from your continuity in various ways.

Kind of like an upsell or one time offer you might use in a sales funnel, membership and continuity also have built-in characteristics that you can exploit (in a business sense) to maximise your income.

Here are a few you might want to explore:

Pay to access content

If you have more than a few months' back-content you can lock it away in a protected area* and offer your new members the ability to unlock it for a fee.

*You can do the same if you're just using Aweber and PayPal by just having a separate download page and a payment button in the download area.

So for example I have around a year's worth of back issues of my newsletter.

I have the option to allow all new members to access it as soon as they join
OR I can charge a one-off fee - for example \$97 - to unlock* all the back issues.

*By 'unlock' I could simply mean *give access to*, It could be as simple as a zip file download or a whole new member's area. Your choice

Below is another way of profiting from back-content that I like and know a couple of well-known marketers who do this:

Joining fee:

With this strategy you allow everyone to access your *entire* back content in your membership site, but charge a 'joining fee' to protect your profits from anyone who decides to download everything then unsubscribe after the first month.

So a membership might be \$27 a month, with a one-off joining fee of \$67 upon joining.

Or a monthly fee of \$97 with a joining fee of \$197.

On the sales page you (of course) highlight the value of the content that is already in the membership area and stress the fact that the joining fee is a one-off payment.

You might as well profit from the 'download and go' crowd eh?

Personally I prefer the idea of *letting the member decide* whether they unlock back content rather than force them to paying a joining fee. That said I've seen (and promoted) some extremely successful membership sites that operate the joining fee method.

The fact is, why give away your back content for free who you can make a profit from it?

At the moment I *include* a year or so worth of back content with my membership but now it's established I plan to change that for new members.

Profiting by having tiered membership levels.

I've seen this done to great effect.

You join a membership site as a free OR as a paid member but come in at *basic level*, for example it could be called the Bronze Membership level.

And you also offer the customer the option to upgrade to Silver or Gold (or whatever you choose to call them) for an increased fee.

In Dan Kennedy's N.O.B.S. (**No BullShit**) membership model, his basic level is a Gold Membership priced at \$59.97 per month. He also has a Diamond Membership priced at \$259.00 a *month* and then higher levels called Platinum and Titanium.

Platinum is by application only and priced at \$12,000 (*if* you pre-pay. It's \$15k if you don't) and then his ultra-exclusive Titanium level which is by invitation only.

I couldn't find any price for Titanium level but I did hear someone at one of Dan Kennedy's speaking events saying he paid around \$450,000 a year towards membership and other fees...

...and was absolutely delighted to do so because of the multi-million dollar business it had helped him build.

Now I'm not relating this because I'm a Dan Kennedy fan (which I am) but to illustrate that **if you can provide more value to your customer than it costs for them to be a member of your continuity, they'll pay pretty much ANY fee.**

An easy way to add value (and therefore charge higher prices) for your levels is to allow more personal access to *yourself* as the levels increase.

Maybe start with email support and go right up to weekly personal 1-2-1 calls, charging whatever you deem appropriate for your time.

My own position is that I don't use levels in my membership.

Here are my reasons:

This is a personal choice but when I experimented in the past I found it involved *far too much product creation* and was really overly complex. I like to keep my business simple and with levels it never felt like that.

I also didn't like having to decide on where to 'split' my content. Deciding what to 'hold back' from one level to put into another felt a bit weird to me.

Obviously I could see the value in charging more money to have more access to me personally, but I decided to **separate** that from my continuity and *introduce it as a coaching or consulting service which was stand-alone.*

I still do this.

Of course you might feel that having levels are the way to go and many marketers use them to great effect.

Monetize Existing Customers

Membership sites (or lists or groups) are sources of ongoing free traffic.

They're going to *log in on a regular basis* to get the latest content, contribute to any group that is involved or to access discount coupons, vouchers or links that you might provide.

So it's a good idea to have a prominent area that they see when they log in

One that you can fill with offers, discounts, services, upsells, your other products, affiliate links and other things to sell.

It can be a very soft sell (*mine is so soft I haven't done it yet!*) or you could make it loud and proud and have a changing banner called 'Recommended Product Of The Month!' and recommend affiliate products.

Really the only limit with this is your imagination

MY Method

Creating Your CORE, simple Yet profitable membership site without too much work...

The reality is that unless you have an existing big list, or can attract a lot of JV partners or can afford a lot of paid traffic (*or at least break even with paid traffic*) then it's unlikely you'll launch your continuity and have 300 members by the end of the week.

And that's fine.

In my opinion, continuity income is a long-term, ongoing income strategy.

It's something you build up over time and that will provide you with a recurring monthly income for years.

At least that's how I've gone about it.

All my continuity programs have lasted for YEARS.

And all the early ones (when I had a tiny list and an even smaller budget) were created simply and profitably using the method I'm about to share with you

**So here is my method for creating a fast, simple continuity that pays monthly and is open-ended
*(in no particular order)***

Keep overheads down.

You don't need a \$297 a month platform to start with unless it has some features that your model can't function without.

You can set up a free membership 'drip-feed' system by using PayPal, Aweber and email delivery or cheap (or even free*) WP plugins It's how I started mine.

*Here are a few free of freemium WP membership plugins to start off your research:

S2 Members Framework
Paid Membership Pro
Membership 2

WP-Members
Ultimate Member

You know this by now because I keep saying it.

But there's a reason I keep saying it - for me using the slightly clunky and decidedly un-tech Aweber and PayPal method **meant I could actually afford to start my first continuity membership**

And that in turn meant I could earn six figures a year.

THAT'S why I'm such an advocate for simplicity :)

Here's my take on this:

I used the Aweber/PayPal 'on the cheap' version because I knew both systems well. I knew I could set it up and maintain it quickly and it would cost me nothing because I was already using both.

I also realised **I could set it up in less than an hour and have my first paying customers by the end of the day**. That was a biggie for me. I like to move fast with projects.

I'm also crap with Wordpress and knew it would personally take me ages to sort out plugins and membership areas and I'd probably lose interest in the whole thing. (You could of course Fiverr the installation)

My advice is that whatever model you've decided on (see previous chapters) make sure you can set it up fast, and maintain it yourself, at least until you have a good chunk of revenue coming from it.

Get at least two months' content in place if you're drip-feeding.

If you know you have two months worth of content ready to go this gives you two weeks to concentrate on getting new members in.

Two months is a comfortable gap to be in front of your readers.

If you're *not* drip-feeding or you have to create an entire course first then it's going to be a lot more work to start. I have never done this purely because I do not have the discipline or (let's be honest) the work ethic to write 52 PDF lessons in one go. I have other things to do.

If *you* do, I take my hat off to you :)

But on the whole if **you're offering a course** I really would recommend **launching your membership and then drip-feeding content until your whole course is created so you can create it as you earn.**

It's all about simplicity.

I'd aim to have my membership site ready to go after no more than three day's work. I recommend you have the same goal.

TOP TIP: How to get started with NO content.

Schedule webinars in your diary that are only available to members.

Record the webinars as they go out live and then place the recordings into the members area. This will build a training library.

Even better, one webinar a month can be dedicated to a question and answer format. These are very popular AND they don't take any planning because your listeners ask the questions and essentially create the webinar plan for you.

Spend a LOT of time on your sales page.

This needs to be a page that can sell your continuity to your existing readers and customers *and* to new people who haven't come across your offer before.

For me that means explaining on your sales page **exactly what is on offer** and **what is in it for them**

I explain that joining my Inner Circle is the ONLY way they can get hold of my regular monthly content.

I also explain that this one membership covers ALL my core monthly content AND that's this particular content is only available to members.

Then I list what content is included.

They can choose whether they want that content enough to subscribe of course, but again I make it very clear that joining my Inner Circle is the ONLY way to get it, which really boosts conversions. (I push this aspect in the sales emails advertising my membership too)

I chose deliberately NOT to show a screenshot or 'tour' of the member's area because I strongly believe that a big part of making the sale is the *mystery* of what lies inside :)

Also because my membership is pretty much all written material in PDF format, I wouldn't get the same effect as someone doing a video tour who could show a lot of videos ready to play.

Although my content is really good and unique (in my humble opinion), showing a shedload of *download buttons* in a screenshot of the inside of the member's area isn't the sexiest thing, right?

I also chose not to use social proof or testimonials.

This is because I don't need them with the way I sell my membership.

(Plus it's a bloody nightmare now with various bodies and organisational rules and regulations about testimonials so I find it easier not to use them at all)

But also because of how I do things:

My model is geared up to opening my subscription to my full list perhaps just two or three times a year. **In between those times I build my list with new subscribers who come onto my main, daily email list and get a flavour of what I'm about.**

They get content, stories, jokes, information, education and everything else in my daily emails to my list. **So by the time I open my continuity a couple of times a year they usually sign up without thinking because they're now a raving fan*.**

*That's not arrogance - I practise repulsion marketing and people who don't like me just unsubscribe from my list and don't buy anything from me. The ones who stay typically buy a high proportion of my offers.

Don't be shy about telling them CLEARLY it's a recurring billing membership

You have to be proud of what you produce, and once you are there isn't a problem telling someone the price, telling them if it's recurring billing and being very direct with your call to action.

Apart from that, when I've seen people put into forced continuity where perhaps it's *not* made clear that it IS a rebilling product for whatever reason, *the shit really hits the fan* when the first rebill comes around and your customer had no idea they were going to be billed.

Obviously that can be damaging for your payment processor, your reputation and your relationship with your list.

Make it a *logical next step* if they're a fan of your work

On my sales page I keep telling readers that this is my ONLY Inner Circle.

It's THE place to be in they want to be in contact with me and get my members-only content.

I can't emphasise how much this works for me. It's because my business model is very much focused on relationship building with my readers and forming a sense of being 'one of the chaps or chapesses'

When you build a relationship with your list to the extent that they're almost fans of your work. (Again that's not arrogance - I'm happy to call myself a big fan of some marketers) then they WILL want to get hold of all the content you put out.

So they'll join your inner circle, or private group, or inner sanctum or VIP members club or whatever you call it *eagerly*.

Repurposing your content to earn while you build

There's a fine line between repurposing the content you're creating for your membership site and not losing the uniqueness that will draw people to it.

After all, if your customers know you are going to release that content to anyone, why would they bother to become a member?

The key word there is **KNOW**

It's possible to repurpose content in such a way that your general customers (and your members) simply don't realise that it's being re-purposed although it does involve some work.

Probably the most effective way of repurposing content is by changing the format.

So a webinar becomes a transcript.

An ebook becomes the script for a video.

And I'd also recommend focusing on just ONE small aspect of the training.

So for example if your membership site teaches your subscribers how to write sales copy for their online products you could take the part about (for example) writing headlines or call to action statements, or the use of testimonials and repurpose *that one aspect* into another format.

If your course is video-based then use the part about headlines, which will be a small part of your course, transcribe it and write it up into a PDF report.

Call it 'Special Focus Training' or 'Power Headline Writing Micro-Masterclass' and add some case studies from other websites and marketers you know

(totally legal and a great way to show real-world examples without needing any of your own) and sell it outside your membership site.

No one will have an issue with this - it's doubtful they'll even notice - and you'll be able to sell the same content outside your membership, to FUND your membership launch, but without compromising your member content.

I did this with my subscription-only newsletter.

I took a handful of choice newsletter articles and re-wrote them into 3 or 4 page reports (I called them 'Micro-Reports' or 'In The Trenches' reports or something like that) and used them as lead generators but also sold the white label rights to my customers for a decent profit.

In the past I've also bundled back issues of my newsletter and sold them for a lump-sum price outside my membership.

The thing is to ensure you only take a SMALL PART of your membership content to repurpose. Once you've chosen that small part do this:

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If your autoresponder or list management platform allows you to *exclude* your continuity members from seeing or receiving the repurposed offer then you might feel more comfortable doing that.

Personally I prefer to be transparent and let my list see everything I do.

After all, I can always write up the strategy and include it in my member's area ;)

Put in an affiliate program* and encourage your members to cover their fees and make a profit by promoting it.

*I have done this for all my past membership sites except my current Inner Circle. This is because I have no affiliate program at this time. I'm looking into it

The best possible people to promote your membership are the people who are already in it and love it.

So create an affiliates area where they can get links to promote and make the affiliates page as convincing as your sales page. You need to tell these lovely members WHY they should promote your continuity.

In terms of percentage give them 50% or more.

It doesn't matter to you if you give them 100% quite frankly, because even if you don't get any front-end or even recurring profit from the introduced member, you should monetise them in other ways such as them paying to unlock content as mentioned earlier. And of course they'll be offered all your new contents forever.

It's a great one for affiliates and an easy one to attract them because they just have to refer one sale and they get a commission every month for as long as the referral remains a member.

Coaching.

Many people don't see coaching as a continuity program but it certainly can be and I often operate mine that way.

It also has the advantage of being the simplest form of continuity to set up by a long way.

You don't need to create content, all you need is a sales page and a delivery page to tell the client what to do next and how to contact you once they've subscribed.

You notice I said '*subscribed*'?

That's because a PayPal subscription put the control of payment into your client's hands (so make a BIG thing about that on your sales page!)

They can choose whether to stay with your coaching another month or to simply cancel by logging into their PayPal account and doing so.

The beauty of a subscription base coaching program is that the default is set for them to rebill after a month is up.

You don't have to contact them to ask if they want to hire you for another month and **more importantly THEY don't have to do anything either.**

This means they'll often just let it run because they're getting value from working with you even though they're ready to set off on their own.

And of course the rebills REALLY add up fast because with coaching they're usually higher ticket.

It's very easy in terms of time to work with six or seven people a month, and if they're paying you \$1997 you're looking at the best part of \$14,000 a month.

Speaks for itself really.

This isn't your traditional 'membership site' but it IS a continuity income (although it'll typically be shorter than a lower priced one) but who cares?

It's dead simple to set up and it works.

Getting it out there

My strategy in the past has always been PUT IT EVERYWHERE.

If you already sell products or services or have lead generation funnels, social media, a blog or any sort of existing business infrastructure **just put your continuity offer on the backend of EVERYTHING!**

Delivery pages after you've processed a sale are amazing for this. They work really well, as does having an affiliate program like the one I mentioned above. Even better if you can offer a free report or lead magnet through a squeeze page first and then present your membership offer (making sure your affiliate gets credited for the sale*)

*I think JVzoo still allows you to do this

Paid traffic

As you know, I don't offer advice on free traffic because I think it's hard work, takes a stupid amount of time to get together (if it ever works) and with the state of SEO at the moment, unless you're a bit of a wizard you'll probably not get anywhere with that source either.

Paid traffic however is easy.

You can go out and buy some traffic to send to your offer right now.

Some say it's risky.

It's not.

As long as you know your numbers.

You have to be able to cover the cost of your advertising from some part of your sales process - whether that's a front-end sale, a back end sale or some kind of follow-up process that involves making a sale (or several) from your customer.

You also have to remember this:

If an average member in your continuity stays in your membership for six months (and you charge \$27 per month) then you stand to make an average of \$162 from that person.

Now obviously you want to make a profit, but when you consider that \$162 can buy you around 300 clicks to your membership site, then you only need ONE new member out of 300 clicks to break even.

Any new members after that first sale will bring on average \$162 profit.

So how many sales can you make from 300 clicks?

That's the metric you need to track (after adjusting your own pricing and retention average of course)

Once you know those figures, and they stack...you know how much you can spend on paid traffic.

That's why membership sites are GREAT to use with paid traffic in my opinion.

Scarcity

If you've read any of my other publication you'll know I'm a great fan of scarcity - I keep all my own (non-membership) products *closed* and open them individually for a 24-48 hour period to promote scarcity.

I know a couple of well-known marketers who operate this model with their continuity.

One very clever marketer opens his a couple of times a year, charges a one-off \$1000 - \$2000 for access and for around 6 weeks offers personal help with the course (it's a video course)

And it works.

It's certainly something to think about if you have other aspects to your business. If your only source of income is your membership site then maybe spend six months to a year to get it established first by continually marketing it.

The choice is yours of course.

Personally with my own I prefer to open it initially with perhaps one or two 24-48 hour re-opens within six weeks and then keep it closed while I look at all the metrics - the stats, retention rates, conversion rates, do some split tests and whatever else I need.

At time of writing it is six months since I opened it and I'm pretty much ready to include it in all my back-end pages, links in my publications and sort out some paid traffic to it.

Again that's a personal preference but I like to know my numbers before I start seriously marketing it.

Obviously there has been some drop-off in that time but retention is very good and that figure will form part of the equation that really matters,

especially when I need to know how much I can spend to acquire a new member.

Retention

There are a lot of theories about how to make people STAY in your membership such as giving free access to some areas , providing the ability to pause their membership or even allowing them to switch to a lower-priced 'lite' membership.

My approach to this is pretty simple:

I tell them what's coming next month.

So for example the last section in my newsletter will say something like:

'And next month I'll show you how to add \$500 per month to you bottom line by simply sending out ONE email on the first Monday of the month!'

And the other thing I do is to **include one element that is ongoing and current and pretty much in REAL TIME albeit on a monthly basis.**

I'm talking about my monthly income report, where I share one or two of the promotions or releases I've done over that month, how it performed, how I launched it and **how much money it made for me.**

I include actual figures, I talk about what went wrong, what went right or why things happened in an unexpected way.

It's me laying my marketing bare.

Being transparent.

And because the figures are *real* they're just in the thousands not the hundred of thousand or millions like some marketers boast, which (in my

humble opinion) totally bloody alienates the average person who is trying to get a business together online.

But if they can **see** that I wrote a 40-page report and made \$6,000 launching it in-house to my list, and then more on an ONGOING basis using the open/close marketing method that I freely share with my members...

...well I think that makes my subscribers stay around longer than the average because the info is BANG up to date. Hell they can even see me launch, and then buy one of my new products...

...and then log into the members area to see how much money I made, what went wrong, what went right and what I would have changed!

In short if you look after your members, be transparent and honest with them and share the things they want to know, you'll have a successful membership.

It might take time to build, but it'll be a SOLID monthly income stream for you in a way that relying on day to day sales or launching new products every 6 weeks can never be.

Best of luck

Ian & Tony