# Little Monthly Payments Membership Site Checklist

Creating your own "Little Monthly Payments" membership site is easier than you think! This simple checklist will help you get started thinking about what you will need to know. Once you have worked your way through this list, you'll be in prime position to create your own membership site and start generating a consistent monthly income from your own membership site!

**STEP 1: YOUR GOALS**
What goals do you have for your membership site as they relate to your current business? Do you want to generate prospects for your résumé writing services? Offer additional value to your current clients?  Are you looking to create a community for jobseekers? And, do you want to create a passive income stream for your careers industry business?

You may be surprised to know that a membership site can increase both your visitors and your bottom line — fast — often more quickly than many other marketing strategies and business models.

The benefits of running a membership site can include the ability to help you:

- Increase traffic to your résumé business website

- Stay in contact with current clients and prospects

- Give loyal clients and members information that will help in their job search

- Offer increased value to (and generate loyalty from) current clients

- Promote new services and information products to members first for quick sales with no advertising expenses

- Increase your credibility

- Strengthen your brand

So before you move on to the next step, list your goals for your membership site. What do you want it to accomplish? How do you want it to help build and grow your résumé writing business?

Goal #1 _____

_____

_____

Goal #2 _____

_____

_____

Goal #3 _____

_____

_____

You should also set a revenue goal for your new membership site. Research shows that you're more likely to reach your goals if they are specific. So, answer these questions:

How much money do you want to make per month from your membership site? $ _____

How much do you want to make in the first year from your site? $ _____

How many members will it take to reach that goal ($/membership fee) = _____

What will you do with the extra income from your membership site? _____

Having a specific financial goal — AND a plan for what to do with the money — will help supply motivation when you encounter any obstacles in launching your new membership site.

**STEP 2: YOUR IDEA**
What topic will you cover in your membership site? Will it be general career advice? Career advice for a specific niche (i.e., finance professionals, or sales managers)? Or will you focus on a specific sub-topic of the job search: For example, interviewing success strategies?

In order to create a successful membership site, you need to ensure your topic is something that provides value to your members. The process of identifying a problem is perhaps the most important process. It may take longer than actually creating the membership program.

- **Frequently-asked questions.** Do you find yourself always answering the same questions over and over again? These are a great topic for a membership program. Go through your sent emails and see the answers and information you provide frequently.

- **Use social media.** You can ask your clients (via email, Facebook, or Twitter) what their most pressing problem is. Ask… "What is your most challenging problem with your job search?" and "What do you want to know about looking for a job?"

- **Think through the problems of the clients you work with.** Identify 5-10 potential problems your prospects want a solution to. Where do your clients get stuck in their job search? What can you help them with?

- **Keyword research.** What are the most common keyword phrases or questions for your clients? You can create a mindmap to give you ideas.

Identify 5-10 potential problems your prospects want a solution to. Use the space below to document your brainstorming and research.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____


**STEP 3: NAMING YOUR MEMBERSHIP SITE**
The next step in process is to give your membership site a compelling name. Like a book standing on a bookstore shelf, you have about 20 seconds to capture your prospect's attention. If your membership site title and description don't get the job done, it will be harder to attract new members.

Why name it before you create it? Because a great title will practically sell the membership site by itself. So how do you give your membership program a compelling title?

- **Appeal to emotion.** Remember, this is about solving a problem — and, with that comes emotions. Imply the solution to their problem in your membership site title. For example, "Find a Job Faster" implies a solution to their problem in the title.

- **Benefits, benefits, benefits.** The title has to promise or imply a benefit to the prospective member. Think, "How to Win Friends and Influence People." Take a look at the books on your non-fiction bookshelf. What are the titles? Why did you buy them? Chances are, it's because the title implied an immediate benefit or solution to your problem. Check out the list of career books on Amazon.com. See the benefits the authors are promising? That's what your title has to accomplish too.

- **Keywords.** People who are searching for information online search for specific keywords. Your keywords should be in your membership site title if you want prospective members to find your site.

List the benefits, not the features, of your information product. What problem(s) does it solve for your prospect?

Benefit #1: _____

Benefit #2: _____

Benefit #3: _____

Benefit #4: _____

The next step is to determine if your membership site title is available as a domain name. If the exact name isn't available, you can use a keyword and add a community-oriented suffix, like "club," "group," or "team." For example, FindAJobFasterClub.com.

## STEP 4: DETERMINE THE TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP SITE
Here are seven potential models for your membership site.

- **Publisher Model.** The publisher model is the most common type of membership site. In this model, you provide content to members on an ongoing basis. This model allows members to have access to specialized information. The publisher model also works well with model number two. This is one of the models I use. I provide unique, specialized content to members each month. This model requires you to create a regular and consistent flow of information. You must know your topic well and understand what your audience is looking for when it comes to information on that subject. The most common way to monetize this model is to charge a monthly, quarterly, or annual subscription fee.

- **Product Delivery Model.** This model works by delivering a package of content to members each month. This is the second part of the model I use on BeAResumeWriter.com. Each month, I produce content that résumé writers can put their name on and give to their clients or use in their marketing. This model offers

exclusivity, because the only people who are able to access and use the content are members. (You can, however, package and sell the information separately outside of the membership site, but you'll want to charge more for it than what you offer it to folks who are part of your membership program.) You can monetize this model with a membership fee, and you can also upsell members (by offering to customize their content for them, for example, or consult with them on implementing the content in their own job search).

- **Protected Download.** This is a great model for résumé writers looking for a "set it and forget it" type of system. Members subscribe to a secure area of your site and have access to download information. It gives you control over your downloaded material and helps protect against digital theft. You can monetize this model in one of two ways — either offering a monthly subscription with access to the download area, or an annual fee. The monthly subscription would offer recurring revenue, but requires more administration, since you'd have to disable access for those who don't pay their renewal. Offering an annual fee, on the other hand, is low maintenance, and you could even offer a résumé update discount for folks who purchase the service. The protected download model is a great way to present yourself as an authority in your industry.

- **The Community Center.** This model is a little different, because it doesn't provide direct revenue. Many people go online every day with the sole purpose of connecting with other people. You can create a membership site devoted to a particular topic — for example, support for jobseekers in a particular city, or a website for members of a particular occupation. People can become members — generally for free — and then share information on the niche topic in an online forum. The benefit for members is that they can learn and share information with like-minded people. You can make money by selling affiliate products — and you can build your mailing list of prospective clients, because your community center membership site will be targeted to acquiring your "ideal clients."

- **Micro-Continuity Membership Model.** The model is the fixed-term membership program. Continuity membership means there is an implied automatic renewal system in place. Think of the magazines you subscribe to and how many of them automatically renew your subscription when they have your credit card information on file. Many people appreciate the convenience of not having to renew their membership on a monthly basis — but they love fixed-term membership programs because not only does it renew automatically, but they know how long the program will be! With a micro-continuity or fixed-term membership model, they're signing up for three or six months, but they know exactly how long their membership will last. An example of a fixed-term membership site is an online course. I offer one on "Leveraging LinkedIn In Your Job Search" that is an eight-day program, but the same curriculum can be offered as an eight week program, paid in two monthly installments. In a fixed-term program, members receive a predetermined amount of information or lessons. At the end of the course, they're fully trained. This is an excellent model if you want to teach jobseekers

something. People should be fully "trained" in the subject at the end of the pre-determined length of time. FTM programs can be as short as a week and as long as a year. (I teach a program for how to do this step-by-step: Career Membership Sites Made Easy.)

- **Modular Course (Training Delivery).** This model is also used for training delivery — except, instead of it being a predetermined length of time, it's open-ended. You can offer varying levels of membership in this program — for example: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. You can use membership software to automatically advance people from module to module using a sequential upgrade feature. Some programs allow you to require a test to prove "mastery" of the concepts before advancing to the next level. This actually motivates people to continue their membership because they want to achieve the next level. It's a powerful motivator. This is the type of program that would work well with helping jobseekers with a career change, or graduating seniors prepare for the world of work. Ultimately, this membership model offers a system that helps someone learn at his or her own pace. This model can offer a single membership subscription rate (like $10/month, with 12-18 months worth of modules) or the option to upgrade the membership and access all the levels at once (for $99, for example), if they want to get the information all at once. Providing quality training is essential for success with this model. Unlike many of the other models, this can be "evergreen" content. Once your course is developed, you're pretty much done with the content creation part of the site, and you can focus on membership recruitment. (I use JigsawBox for this type of membership site.)

- **The Coaching Model.** This last model is extremely easy to administer. Basically, people are paying for "access" to your expertise. They pay a monthly fee and get access to a group coaching experience with you. You might have a theme for each month's call (like "Online Reputation Management," where you share some tips and strategies, and then open it up for questions on that topic or anything they want to know. Or, each month's call can be a complete "free for all," where members can submit their questions ahead of time or just ask you live on the call. These calls might last anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours, and you can record them for even more revenue potential. You can also offer a monthly teleseminar or webinar each month within this model too. (And remember, you can turn these into downloadable recordings, have them transcribed, or use them as fodder for other information products.)

## STEP 5: PRICING

The most basic way to monetize a membership site is to charge a membership fee. There are many options for how much you charge, when you charge, and whether you charge a flat rate, offer a tiered membership, or give away memberships for free. In addition to choosing to offer free versus paid memberships, you also need to decide how often a membership is paid. There are monthly, quarterly, annual, and lifetime memberships.

A "Freemium" model is basically a free membership with an upgrade offer. It works like this: you put a "free" offer in place on the front end of the site. These members receive access to a limited amount of information or a limited area of your membership site. Then you build in an upgrade offer. You can create tiers: silver, gold, platinum, for example or you can simply have two membership levels — free and paid.

As mentioned earlier, you can also offer a micro-continuity membership where the membership runs out after a specified period of time. (This works well for training-type memberships because it assumes a person will complete the training after a predetermined period of time.)

In addition to membership fees, there are other ways to monetize your membership site. These can include:

- Marketing affiliate products to your members

- Marketing your products and services to members

- Selling advertising space & AdSense-type programs

**STEP 6: PLATFORM**
All of your steps and decisions to this point have been about the planning and creation of your membership site. Now that you have a plan, you need to find the tools to put your plan into action. Namely, you need membership site software — or a platform for hosting your membership site.

Grab a piece of paper and a pen and write down everything you need your membership site software to do to efficiently and effectively run your website. Do you need:

- A site you can brand to your existing business?

- It to work with a WordPress website?

- To be able to create multiple membership levels?

- An autoresponder?

You can create a separate website for your membership program, or integrate the membership functionality into your existing website. For example, if you have a Wordpress website, you can use a resource like Wishlist Member to add membership functionality.

I personally use Wild Apricot, which is both a standalone membership site platform AND can be integrated into some existing websites.

If you want to offer an affiliate program for your membership site, consider a membership site script, like AMember. The script will build a registration form into your site, which will allow paying members to sign up and access the site. It will also keep visitors from accessing your content without paying.

You can also create a membership site without special software. You can set up a membership site using only an email autoresponder (like AWeber) and a way to take payments (like PayPal). You can learn how using this training:
Career Membership Sites Made Easy

**STEP 7: GRAPHICS & SALES PAGE**
The look of your membership site will help set the first impression for your members. In addition to naming your site, create an attention-getting graphic. For example, here is the graphic for my membership site for resume writers interested in earning passive income through affiliate marketing:
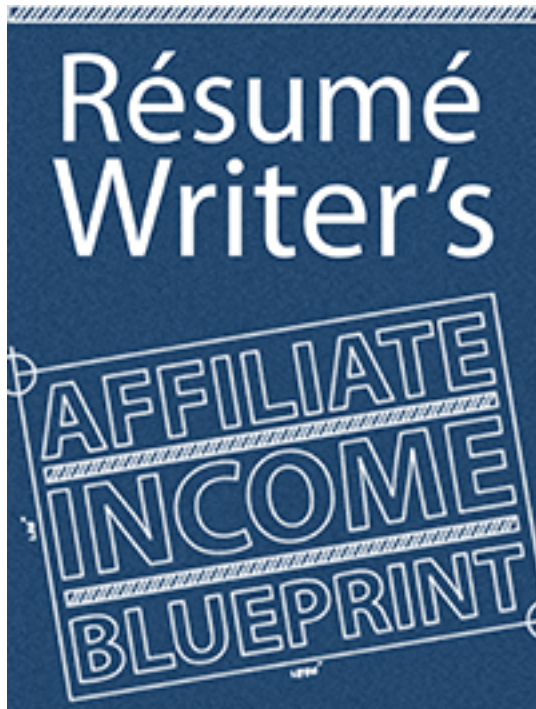


You can have a graphic created for you on Fiverr.com for just $5-10. I recommend Vikiana.

Make sure the graphic reflects the image you want to portray. It should also support your brand.

You will also want to create a sales letter to outline the benefits of membership. Your sales letter can be on the website itself, sent via email, or in video format. Your sales letter should convince visitors why they should join your membership site. Some would consider it to be the most important part of your site, because it gets people in through the door.

Here are some specific things to include in your sales letter:

- **A Strong Headline.** Often, the headline is the first and only thing a prospective member reads. It's critical to enrolling new members in your membership site. Target the biggest problem of your prospective buyer. The headline can also make a promise, grab your prospective buyer's attention, and motivate them to read more on your sales page.

- **Benefits, Not Features.** Again, going back to the list of benefits you brainstormed when coming up with your membership site idea, what you want to emphasize on your sales page is the benefits your buyers will receive by becoming a member. What's in it for them? Review the "problem" your customers have (Not getting interviews? Not getting job offers? Not making enough in their current job?) and then demonstrate how your membership site solves that problem.

- **Emotional Copy.** We buy based on our emotions. When your sales information can tap into your buyer's emotions, you're more likely to get more members.

- **Testimonials.** Nothing motivates buyers more than seeing that others have achieved the results you're promising. The more credible your testimonials, the better. Include your member's name, photo (if possible), city and state, and website or social media contact information, if they will let you include those!

- **Call to Action.** Buyers need to be told what action to take next — even if you think it's obvious. Make sure you have a clear and compelling call to action on your sales page so they know exactly what to do.

## STEP 8: YOUR EDITORIAL SCHEDULE & STARTUP CONTENT
The next step is developing your plan. Getting started — and the first three months — are the hardest part of developing a membership site. So if you plan the first three months in advance and the hardest part will be behind you by the time you accept your first member!

What is your deadline for launching your new membership site? _____

Just like traditional newspapers, your membership site needs an editorial calendar. You don't want to scramble around each month trying to get your content together. Plan ahead the first 12 months (topics only) and then actually put together the first few months of content.

## STEP 9: PRE-LAUNCH/MARKETING
Marketing your membership program is an entire training all by itself! But here are some ideas:

- **Create your sales page.** Yes, I know I already mentioned creating a sales page. But if you haven't actually done it yet, this is the step to finish it (get started).

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- **Market your site to your existing clients.** They already know, like, and trust you, so they're great prospects for becoming members.

- **Use content marketing to generate interest.** Article marketing, blogging and guest blogging, creating short reports, and doing teleseminar preview calls are all good ways to attract attention for your membership site.

- **Post on social media.** Use Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to excerpt content and drive traffic to your sales page.

- **Create joint venture partnerships.** Who else reaches the clients you want to reach? Career coaches? Recruiters? Therapists? Approach people who work with the same target audience and offer an affiliate program or joint venture partnership for new members recruited to your membership site.

By following these steps, you'll be ready to promote your membership site and start earning monthly income. Don't forget to revisit the goals you set for yourself — and your membership site — on the first page of this checklist!

**For a step-by-step system to creating your own Little Monthly Payments membership site, check out Kelly McCausey's training program:**
http://bit.ly/littlemonthlypayments

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*You are under no obligation to make any purchases from my link.*
*I only recommend affiliate products and services that I use or am personally familiar with.*