

**Nicheology Membership Academy**

**Lesson #17**

# **10 Things I've Learned About Running An FTM Site**

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# Introduction

Those who go first discover so many things that benefit those who follow. Quite a few of those discoveries are learned "the hard way". Lewis And Clark had no maps to follow as their trailblazed the westward trail. They WERE the mapmakers!

In running my own FTM sites, I've learned a lot of things that come from being ahead of the pack. In today's lesson I'm going to share ten of them with you.

## 1. People are schedule oriented.

As you've no doubt learned yourself, email isn't 100% reliable. There are a variety of factors that contribute to delivery problems on both the sender AND the receiver end of the process.

- ➔ Example (Sender): Sometimes an autoresponder service might be experiencing technical difficulties and thus the scheduled lesson doesn't get mailed out until the next day.
- ➔ Example (Receiver): Sometimes the ISP's mail serve may be experiencing difficulties and the lesson makes it to the ISP but not into the receiver's inbox until the next day.

There are MANY different possibilities that I won't begin to list here. Suffice it to say that if a member is expecting to receive a lesson on Wednesday, it might NOT arrive on that day ... even if it's been arriving on Wednesday for weeks or even months without fail.

And people are schedule oriented. Translation: If they expect to have the lesson on Wednesday, they adjust their schedules so they can work on their lesson that day. If it doesn't arrive on Wednesday, they've wasted their day and don't have time to work on the lesson later in the week in many cases.

That's one of the few downsides to running an autoresponder membership site. Fortunately, there is a very simple remedy...

***Encourage those who "must" have a lesson on a specific day of the week to SKIP one week.***

That's what I've done with members who have contacted me about this situation and it has worked very well.

The idea is simple: When the next lesson arrives in your inbox, don't read it or act upon it. Just leave it sitting there until the NEXT WEEK. That way, you'll always have your lesson EARLY. Regardless of if there are technical problems on the sending or receiving end, your lesson will almost NEVER be so late that it's over 7 days late.

## **2. There really are "frequently asked" questions.**

I get the same questions asked over and over and over again. Some of which I have already answered, but I still get the questions anyway! ☺

There REALLY ARE "frequently asked questions". You'll find that there are probably ten questions that you'll get asked over and over again.

What I suggest – and what I've done myself – is to create ready-made responses that you simply "copy and paste" as replies to these questions.

Most email programs have the ability to store these messages (sometimes called "templates" or "stationery" or something similar) and simply click on a button to auto-paste them (complete with personalized name of the recipient!). Check your email program for details.

You'll find that this will save you a LOT of time. I now spend less than 2-3 mins per day answering these commons questions.

Note: You may be asking, "why not just setup a frequently asked page to send folks to?" While it might cut back some of the questions, it won't eliminate as many as you think it will. Heck, you'll have people emailing you to ask where the FAQ page is! You can set one up to cut back on some of the emails, but expect to continue getting your share. Copy and paste templates are great time-savers.

One more quick note: be courteous in your replies. You might be tempted to say "I've already told you how to do this 847 times!!!!", but don't do it. The customer is always right. Even when she isn't.

## **3. There are many ways to sell coaching.**

If you don't have a coaching program setup for your FTM site, then stop right now and get it setup. Or, at least stop and consider it. It's a great way to add a LOT of extra income to your monthly profit. (See Lesson Seven for details on setting up your own program.)

What I've discovered is that there are a lot of different ways to sell coaching to your members without being aggressive and offensive.

Here's the key...

***Relate your coaching to the lesson.***

While I'm not going to waste your time referencing all the times I've done this in the past. I know that it has worked because many joined the coaching program to get help.

Bottom line -> It works.

Whether you use a simple postscript, insert a sidebar or even mention it in the foreword, by relating your coaching to the lesson itself you'll find that you'll get more takers automatically.

Explain it to them ... Here's just ONE MORE benefit to you as a coaching client in what you'll get in relation to TODAY'S lesson.

**4. When all else fails to deliver, turn to Gmail.**

There are a lot of trigger-happy ISPs and ESPs. I've mentioned this before. They consider a lesson you've sent spam for whatever reason and they nuke it before your member even sees it.

That's a problem. But, unfortunately, it's not the only one.

There are also other delivery problems on the receiver end of things that might be thwarting your communication. For example: if the receiver's mailbox is full, then they won't receive your email.

This actually becomes a bigger program because when the email is bounced back as undeliverable, many mailing and autoresponder services will automatically UNSUBSCRIBE that person from YOUR LIST to prevent repeated bounces and unnecessary strains on their servers.

So, then you've got people emailing you to complain that they never received your email. You check into it and see that they are unsubscribed. Nobody's happy.

**This happened to me quite a few times early on.** Then, I figured out what was happening and turned to Gmail. Gmail has a large storage space, isn't trigger happy and to date I've never had delivery issues with them.

If you find that a member is having problems receiving your emails, then encourage them to get a free Gmail account and change their subscription to direct your emails there.

In fact, you can avoid a lot of problems like this by adding a box like the one below to your introductory lesson...

**URGENT: Your Email Address ... Potential Delivery Problems**

There are a couple of ISPs that are spam trigger happy and unfortunately yours may be one of them. Oftentimes whitelisting [myname@membershipxyz.site](mailto:myname@membershipxyz.site) will remedy this. However, in some cases it is necessary to use a different email address.

**Please check your email** and if you do not receive the "welcome" email within 24 hours then I recommend you get a free Gmail email address (not Yahoo or Hotmail as they are trigger happy too!) to use for these lessons.

You can get a free Gmail email address in just a few short minutes at <http://mail.google.com/mail/signup> . Once you have done so, please email me back and I'll manually reconcile the new email address to your account so you'll properly receive the lessons.

You may want to consider adding this to your instructions as well. Feel free to modify the one above for your own use.

**5. The more templates and ready-made solutions, the better.**

If you can provide ready-made templates, scripts, and other already prepared solutions for your members, this is definitely a plus.

In fact, I continue to get emails with "thank you" messages because I've provided a lot of things that members can use instead of having to create these materials themselves.

A few so far have been...

- ➔ Webpage templates
- ➔ Lesson templates
- ➔ Email message templates

Just one point above you'll find a box showing what I've done to instruct members about using Gmail. Followed closely after it are the words...

***"Feel free to modify the one above for your own use."***

This is an invaluable asset to members. Instead of having to create their own from scratch (which requires an investment of time, knowledge of how to do it, and experimenting with the right words, etc.) they can simply make some slight changes and plug it into their own situation.

Members love this. Anything you can provide to make it easier, faster or better for them, do it.

Think three words: "your own use".

## **6. Others are willing to contribute content.**

We'll talk a lot beginning in our next lesson about different WAYS you can get content for your lessons, but one thing I want to introduce here is the fact that you can get other people to contribute content for you.

In fact, many are very willing to do so.

*(In a lot of cases, you'll be doing them a favor by accepting their contributions.)*

Remember last week's lesson? It was all CASE STUDIES of FTM sites that fixed term membership members have submitted to me to profile. All I did was compile them into a lesson for you to see how the FTM model was being used in "real" scenarios from people just like you.

That's the key: just like you.

*Sure, an Internet Marketing expert can do this. They are "guru's". They've been online for a lot of years. They have existing assets and leverage. But, what about the ordinary guy? What about the girl who isn't super creative? What about someone like me who's budget is tight?*

**People want to see your lessons come to life ...** and not just in what YOU'VE done (heck, you're the expert, you're SUPPOSED to be able to see results), but rather what ***other people who are like them have done.***

When you provide case studies, you not only deliver the goods in terms of content they want to see ... but you have the added benefit to yourself that you don't have to create the content. Others provide it for you.

I strongly encourage you to get other people involved. Simply ask for those who are willing to share their story with your readers. Look back to the Forewords of several of the lessons from this course and you'll find that this is exactly what I have done.

And an entire lesson (last week's lesson #16) was a huge success as a result.

## **7. In FTM anatomy, it's better to be ahead than behind.**

There are a lot of things that can go wrong in your life that might prevent you from writing a weekly lesson. Since launching this course I've dealt with most of them...

- ➔ Sickness.
- ➔ Down internet access.
- ➔ Computer crashes.
- ➔ Writer's block.
- ➔ Lack of discipline to stay on track.
- ➔ Family issues.
- ➔ Interruptions.

The list could go on and on. And while many people might be sympathetic to your situation once or twice, repeated delays are not going to go over well with your membership.



I strongly recommend that you stay at least two lessons ahead of where you need to be for reasons such as this. If that means delaying your launch for a week or two, then that's what I'd do. If that means taking this weekend to write a couple of extra lessons so you can get ahead, then that's what I'd do.

***You will absolutely destroy your membership site if you are repeatedly late in delivering the content that subscribers are expecting and have paid for.***

Being ahead never hurts you. Being behind almost always does.

## **8. It's all about your gameplan.**

Speaking of getting ahead ... your gameplan, particularly your schedule, is how you stay on track. What I want to do is give you just a quick example schedule that you can follow to stay on top of things and not only run your FTM site, but grow it as well...

- ➔ Mon: Write the next lesson in your series.
- ➔ Tue: Complete 1-2 traffic generation tactics.
- ➔ Wed: Complete 1-2 list marketing tactics.
- ➔ Thu: Plan out future lessons, backends, ideas.
- ➔ Fri: Catchup on any small tasks related to site.

If you'll stay on this basic schedule, you should have ample time (just an hour or so each day) to really make this work even part-time.

As your numbers grow (I.E. Traffic -> Members -> Profit), then you can "quit your day job" and work longer days to grow your FTM business.

But, the point is the same: you gotta stay on schedule.

## **9. Variations keep everyone happy.**

If your FTM site targets a specific experience and/or knowledge level (I.E. It's ONLY for "beginners" or it's ONLY for those who are "advanced"), then you'll be fine without this tip.

But...

If your FTM site targets members of all experience and knowledge levels, it's important that you keep everyone happy with the information you share.

This can be tricky. If you keep it too basic, your "advanced" folks will get bored and drop you. If you keep it too advanced, your "beginning" folks will get confused and drop you.

Boredom and confusion are not good for those of you keeping score. ☺

So, how can you keep everyone happy without overworking yourself? It's simple, actually...

***Teach the basics ... with a twist.***

In other words, teach the fundamentals (using language and explanations that are newbie-friendly) of any practice or principle you are sharing ... AND throw in at least one (several is better) "variations" that advanced users can relish.

In most of my lessons (not all, but most) you'll find a concept shared in beginner language. And embedded in there somewhere will usually be at least one golden nugget that will force advanced members to have a light bulb moment.

That's the point here.

You can do it by offering...

- ➔ Several tips.
- ➔ Multiple ways to apply.
- ➔ Other uses.
- ➔ Extra examples.
- ➔ Shortcuts.
- ➔ Things to avoid.
- ➔ Resources.

Basically, anything you can offer to EXPAND upon a fundamental concept.

**10. The best content is what they've asked for.**

Want to know what keeps people coming around? When they get what they want.

Think about it for just a moment. What lists do you stay subscribed to? Those that give you what you want. What restaurants do you eat at? Those that give you what you want. Who cuts your hair? Those that give you what you want. Who services your car? Those that give you what you want.

***When we have options, we consistently and repeatedly do business with those who give us what we want as opposed to those who don't.***

Fast forward to your FTM site. What keeps subscribers active is giving them the content that they want. And what better way to do that than to give them what they ASK FOR?

You don't have to be a mindreader. When I gave you a list of things you need to get started in this business several months ago, I didn't include a CRYSTAL BALL or TAROT CARDS. It's not necessary that you foretell the future or draw straws or use good ol' fashioned guesswork.

You simply give them what they ask for.

Now, I know of at least two great ways to do this...

- ➔ Pay attention! The first thing you can do is watch your inbox and pay attention to any suggestions you get from your members via email. Some will likely complain or critique. Don't get mad, instead get to work creating content to appease those complaints. Some will likely offer suggestions. Take these to heart. Some will likely ask questions. Create lessons with answers. Some will likely recommend topics or items to write about. Do it. When you hear from your customers, take care of them. And they'll remain your customers.
- ➔ Poll quarterly! At least once per quarter, SOLICIT questions from your members. In other words, ask THEM what THEY want you to cover. You may have noticed that I've done this TWICE now (including the current lesson you are reading ... review the "foreword" as a reminder). I highly recommend that you stay in touch with your customers in this manner at least one time per 3 months. Maybe even twice. Look for common questions and suggestions ... and write about them in lessons.

Unless there are dire reasons to quit (financial crisis, illness, etc.), most people will never leave something that gives them what they want. Why would they?

So, there you have it, "10 things I've learned about running an FTM site". I think you'll find some great insights here based on my own experiences that are sure to help you in yours.

## **This Week's Assignment**

- 1) Put into practice at least TWO of today's tips.** Print out this lesson (you should be doing this every week, by the way!) and mark at least TWO of the tips that you are going to apply this week. Schedule as many of these ideas as relevant to you for the next few weeks.

### **Coming Up Next...**

Lesson #18: "Lesson Ideas, Part 1 of 2"

In this lesson I'll help you find plenty of sources for your lesson content as we identify easy WAYS to get information to share each week. Hint: The "case studies" from others that I mentioned earlier is just ONE of the different sources you can use.