

SUBSCRIPTION ENTREPRENEUR



HOSTED BY ERIC TURNNESSEN, FOUNDER OF [membermouse™](#)

EP 140: The Life Changing Magic Of A Membership Site with Neil Asher

“When we go to a new country we want to learn to speak the language so that we can communicate with people. And I think that the analogy is kind of very similar to starting a new business, because when you are kind of thinking about learning a new language, you've got to look like an idiot to begin with. And people don't want to look like an idiot. They're like, ‘Oh, I don't want to look like an idiot.’

But it's important and it's actually the only way that we learn is by going in there and making heaps and heaps of mistakes. And so I think building a business is kind of similar to that. It's drilled into us not to make any mistakes. It's drilled into us that we've got to be perfect. And because of that, people are reticent to try new things and to try things out.”

INTRO:

That's Neil Asher, my special guest on today's episode of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Neil is the founder of Aussie Online Entrepreneurs - a membership site where he's taught over 5,000 people how to achieve financial freedom by creating profitable businesses on Amazon.com.

He's a self-described nomadic, traveling entrepreneur and currently splits his time between his home base in Australia and Lisbon, Portugal.

In our conversation, you'll hear from Neil about how he built an online membership business that now gives him the freedom and flexibility to travel the world, spend more time with his family, and positively impact the lives of thousands of people.

We chat candidly about all things related to life, business, and entrepreneurship, exploring a number of engaging topics like:

- Why starting a business is like learning a new language...
- The perils and pitfalls of not creating the proper foundation for your membership site from the very start...
- Some of the specific MemberMouse features that have helped Neil add hundreds of thousands of dollars to his business...
- And a lot more!

Neil is a seasoned entrepreneur and I'm grateful for the opportunity to share his wisdom with you. My hope is that you'll walk away from our conversation with a more expansive perspective about what's possible for your life and business.

As always, I'm your host Eric Turnnessen and this is Episode 140 of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Eric: Hey Neil, welcome to the show.

Neil: Hey Eric, thanks so much for having me on. Really, really excited to be here.

Eric: Yeah, it's my pleasure. Thank you so much for joining us. To kick things off, let's just get a little bit of background of who you are and what you do.

Neil: I am Neil Asher, nomadic traveling entrepreneur, currently residing between Australia and Lisbon in Portugal, long-term listener, first time caller. Our membership site is for folks here in Australia, which is where I currently am, who are building out their own businesses on Amazon. We give them training and mentoring, create a kind of community for them, and me as well because I get a heap out of doing it, to help them with their business journey, I guess, is pretty much the basics of it. We have just under 1,800 members now in our platform and we've been doing it for, gosh, this will be our fourth year we've been doing it.

Eric: What's the URL of the site that you're using MemberMouse on?

Neil: The URL is vip.roarlocal.com.au. That's where we have our membership platform.

Eric: So, roarlocal.com.au is where you have MemberMouse installed?

Neil: That's actually the digital marketing agency that I still own and still run. I could talk a lot about setting things up properly from the get go. Originally, the whole kind of help people to sell their things on Amazon deal was really just a kind of little side thing that I was doing, just because I thought it was kind of cool to help people out with that. It ended up growing into something, it's a fairly big business now. It was not set up properly from the get go, so I'm happy to talk about the perils of not setting things up properly from the get go and, how later on as the business actually developed, that actually created some tracking problems for us with regards to how we were able to track and measure different advertising campaigns that we were doing and stuff like that. The main business website is on aussiepreneur.com.au, aussieonlineentrepreneurs.com.au. It's a very simple business. I mean it is a super simple business, that is.

Eric: Simple is good.

Neil: Simple is good. Yeah.

Eric: This aussieonlineentrepreneurs.com.au is the one that has almost 1,800 members on it?

Neil: That's right. I think we've put through the business just under 5,000 people. Then, with churn and things like that, but we've got active members just under 1,800 people.

Eric: Active is the best kind of member to have.

Neil: They're the only ones that count. Yeah.

Eric: [laugh] So, this site now as it exists, you mentioned that there was a journey of getting it to this point and maybe some things that weren't as useful, what were some of the things that weren't working for you and that MemberMouse helped out with?

Neil: To give you some context for that, we had got the digital marketing agency in a couple of different countries, but specifically with regards to Australia, we had Amazon that we were kind of talking to saying that they were going to launch Amazon in Australia properly, like they have it in the USA. They were set to launch it properly in Australia. We kind of leaked that to some of our bigger clients and basically they said to us, "Hey, you've got to help us get onto Amazon. We don't know what the hell we're doing," and neither did we really back then either. "We don't know what the hell we're doing. You've got to get us onto it."

We searched around literally, I mean you would know what it's like with software. Every piece of software is kind of like it's a bit of a compromise. There isn't one software that does absolutely everything. You have to figure out what it is you're actually looking for, which at the beginning of your journey is actually quite hard because you don't really realize what you want until you get further into the journey. We looked around absolutely everywhere. We checked out heaps of different software, spoke to heaps of different people and consistently MemberMouse came up as the best all-round platform to use. With what thought was kind of important was a lot of tools built into it to help you grow.

So, we come from a digital marketing background, so heaps of tracking and wanting to know what's actually working and what's not working. We decided upon MemberMouse and then put it onto the subdomain and just kind of put our existing clients into it and said, hey look, what we'll do is we're going to kind of separate this out from the Roar Local business, but we'll find out what we can and we'll teach you it and this is where we'll place all that information or that content about how you can actually get your products selling on Amazon.

So, we started with that and so it was kept onto the Roar Local side, because it was originally, they were Roar Local clients that we were actually teaching rather than heaps and heaps of business owners here in Australia and also want to be business owners as well here in Australia. So, in retrospect, had we actually taken the piece of software and put it onto its own platform that we could then use for marketing purposes and kept everything onto the same Google analytics and stuff like that. So, it was all on the same platform versus having it on various different platforms. It would have been much, much easier. So, had I taken the time to actually speak to somebody at MemberMouse, I'm sure that I could have found out all that wonderful information. So, it was a mistake not to speak to somebody but retrospect is a wonderful thing,

Eric: I look back over the last 10 years since I started MemberMouse and from my current perspective, I can look at a lot of things as mistakes, but it's not really helpful because the fact of the matter is I am where I am and I'm happy where things are so who am I to say that if something had been different, it would have been better.

Neil: Yeah, I like that.

Eric: We don't have the full perspective to see.

Neil: Absolutely. That's right. We set the software up onto the existing Roar Local platform and then it kind of organically just started to grow from there with our business clients telling us about other businesses and we went to a trade fair as well in Australia and we were talking to heaps of different people at this trade fair about Amazon and what Amazon was doing, and so he kind of just grew organically out of that. And of course, the wonderful thing about MemberMouse is it really does facilitate growth, particularly when once I had got the more advanced platform, it really facilitated growth because we then got access to all the reporting tools and things like that. That for me was a big lesson. Something I think is really important for people to realize is that there's a night and day difference in my opinion, between the kind of slim deck platform and the professional platform that gives you the advantage reporting options as well as some other things as well.

Eric: Yeah, and the support automation, like automated overdue payment, billing activity logs, etc. A lot of these features were added in because we saw that people were doing high volume and not having an automated solution for common things like rebill payment declines was creating problems resulting in lost revenue and profits. We use MemberMouse on membermouse.com so we're also customers. So, we always have the benefit of direct experience which guides us to know what can be improved. So, it's really cool that way because we take the feedback from customers and how it can be improved. We take it from our direct experience and we make the improvements and then everybody can benefit.

Neil: So, with regards to the increased ability for charge and credit cards and the ability to kind of alter when the credit card billing schedules happen that you get in the professional. For me, I mean the difference just that made to our ability to reduce the churn in the business as it's added hundreds of thousands of dollars to the business, just that one feature alone.

Eric: People don't know when they're starting a business what they're going to need when they actually have success. When you start from ground zero you don't have the benefit of experience to tell you the kinds of challenges you'll face when things start to pick up in a positive way. When you start making more money, that great, but with this comes increased support costs, an increase in maintenance items, an increase in number of actions that customers want to take like updating their credit card details, managing subscriptions, increased traffic on your site and the list goes on. The benefit of using platforms like MemberMouse is the benefit of experience is built into the software so that by the time you

get to a point where you need automation, customer self-service tools, increased performance and reliability, it's already there and working.

Neil: Exactly. Firstly, it's been a revolution in the business side, it has. And now the revenue that we make from the membership side of our business, it actually exceeds the revenue that we make from the digital marketing side of the business. So, our little kind of side thing that we started has kind of turned into a much bigger thing and overtaken the other business that it was built upon.

Eric: I see this trend a lot. MemberMouse was a sponsor at a conference last year, a customer of ours in the UK and I went out there. A lot of the people in the audience were people who were trading time for money. They were consultants. Helping people to build information products, helping them build membership sites, et cetera, et cetera. But the one-off project business can eat away at you over time. In order to maintain the same level of revenue each month, you have to constantly find new clients and working with clients can be touch and go. It's never clean-cut thing.

Neil: That's right.

Eric: So, many people want to make that switch to having a subscription business or product business. They've developed a certain amount of expertise and the fact of the matter is, you can help more people if you can figure out a way to do that. It is a skill to take your ability to work one on one with somebody and transform that conceptually into a product that will work for a larger group of people. But if you can do that, then it's great because you have a more sustainable and reliable revenue stream from that business and now every time you put work into it, it helps everybody, not just one person.

Neil: That's right. You get to really disseminate information to a much larger audience because of the way that membership sites are structured. For us, it's been absolutely incredible. Who was the conference that you spoke at in the UK?

Eric: It was called ATOMICON. The customers are Andrew and Pete. That's basically the name they go by. Their YouTube channel is called Andrew and Pete and they come as a package deal essentially. That's their stick. Can you tell me a little bit more about Amazon businesses? Because, I obviously shop on Amazon, but I don't know what kinds of avenues people are taking to actually build businesses on Amazon.

Neil: Most people, I mean in the age of coronavirus this maybe a little bit, not old hat, but certainly out of date, but most people would traditionally source their products from a country like China for instance, and then import them into the USA, or wherever it may be and then put their own particular markup onto it and start selling them on Amazon. And that's a very, very tried and tested business strategy that's been going since the days of the East India Trading Company and things like that where exports and imports, et cetera.

What we encourage our members to do is to find local producers, whether that's within their region or things like that. Certainly, here in Australia, find local Australian manufacturers and to work with them to bring their products to market because most manufacturers are manufacturing companies. They are not marketers. They are not interested in selling their products B to C. They're only interested in selling their products, B to B. So, there's a big opportunity there to help Australian manufacturers or USA manufacturers to get their products out there, to get their products known and to work with them to bring their business and their products and their ideas to market.

So, that's where we tend to focus, not so much on the import products from China market, but from the let's help businesses within our own country to actually scale out and also businesses in other countries as well. So, a lot of people who are in Australia, are migrants and so we say to them, hey look, if you are Italian for instance, then go find a brilliant supplier in Italy and let's bring them into Amazon and into Australia and bring them into the world as well. So, that's kind of where we focus rather than on this traditional business model that a lot of folks focus on, which is the import from China into the USA for instance. Let's not focus on that. Let's focus on something else instead.

Eric: So, since you weren't doing that and that wasn't your focus from the beginning, then this situation with the virus going on right now, hasn't affected you as much as it could have?

Neil: Probably not as much as it could have. I mean, right now the whole virus thing is very, very interesting. China for a big part did shut its doors for a couple of weeks. What essentially happened is after Chinese New Year, a lot of the factories, traditionally what would happen is everybody would go back to work pretty much at the same time after Chinese New Year, which is month basically holiday where factories in China are essentially closed. They're on a very much a skeleton support stuff, but Chinese government stopped all of that, so they had a phased people going back to work rather than just this big overall group of folks going back to work. And so that did put a little bit of a damper on Chinese exports out of the country because there wasn't the people there to support that.

But now that's to a big degree, now that's kind of over. I mean the number of cases of the virus in China is dropping, factories are going back to work. It seems to be the case that China is kind of getting back into the swing of things. There's that. However, because a lot of folks within our community, they actually don't source from China, they're sourcing either domestically or from other countries where they're from, they're natives of and they've kind of migrated to China. It didn't really have the same effect on them. So, it was an interesting exercise for a lot of people to understand how these things happen, like geo-economics happen at that scale and to see the benefits of actually having a plan B in place for them as well. So, that was interesting to be a part of and to be a part of that solution for people as well.

Eric: There's a lot of things coming to a head in the world at this time. Climate issues, resource constraints, social unrest, so I think that bringing things closer to the local community is beneficial in all areas. It's great that we have the option as humans to send something across

the world. But it shouldn't be the default. We need to be doing more things close to home, building relationships with people close to home, supporting people who are doing things close to home. It's more sustainable.

Neil: I 100% agree. As a long-term economic model, it's far more sustainable for people, that is. I'm 100% behind that too.

Eric: It allows us to maintain our human relationships, which are also extremely important to maintain the mental health of everybody when everything's so disconnected and you essentially just live out of a dark room with a computer screen then you end up with all these escalating statistics of different mental & physical health issues that people are wrestling with.

Neil: That's exactly right. I mean, one of the things that we've done within our membership site is really focused on that aspect of that community aspect of that developing new friendships, developing new relationships with people. In two weeks' time for instance, we've got a big conference that we put on every year, Aussie Online Entrepreneurs conference where we've got 200 of the folks who are members of our platform all getting together for a two day party. So, I think that's an incredibly important component of it and it's the thing that most folks don't really understand when they start into these online businesses that you don't have in the work environment, in the traditional work environment. They have inbuilt into them community, friendships and things like that built into them. But as soon as you take yourself out of that, then you have to engineer those things into your life to maintain those fundamental things that actually make us happy and give us food for the soul.

Eric: It can be a challenge depending on a personality type to do that.

Neil: That's right. Absolutely.

Eric: For me, I went through a period where I had to come to a point where I specifically made it a priority because it wasn't natural.

Neil: I think that's good.

Eric: Yeah, it is good.

Neil: Knowing yourself sufficiently to understand that that's something that you need to actually make a priority. One of the biggest things I think is that knowing yourself and what actually makes you tick and what you need to focus on, because I'm the same, I could very, very easily just get absorbed so much in what I'm doing, to the detriment of everything else around me and so I have to engineer that into my life as well.

Eric: With these Amazon businesses, what does the trajectory of a prospect look like? Are you dealing with absolute beginners? Like somebody just wakes up one day and they're like, "I want to make some money on Amazon." And then they search around and they find you. Are you

dealing with someone from the absolute beginning and holding their hand through the entire setup?

Neil: One of the things that MemberMouse facilitates is the ability to target people dependent on the phase of their sophistication about that particular endeavor. So, in this instance, Amazon, I'm selling things on Amazon for instance. So, MemberMouse allows us to set up different levels depending on the customer's sophistication. So, that means that we can target people who are the very, very beginning of their journey. And so, the marketing that we undertake is 100% all about the beginning of their journey, what's going on for them as people, as they embark upon this journey, as they think about if that's something they can do. If they wrestle with their own confidence about stepping out of their comfort zone and starting a business, we can communicate directly with them and then bring them into MemberMouse at a point where we're then, it's everything's for the beginning, everything's based around what's going on for that specific person at that specific moment.

And then as they become more advanced we can kind of ascend them through the process. And we can also target people through our marketing who are more advanced, who are business owners and are looking for a way to sell their products and services on Amazon as another distribution channel for what they're doing. So, we target those people as well. And of course, MemberMouse gives us the functionality to go after that particular level of sophistication as well, as well as the advanced people who all already selling on Amazon, already making seven figures on Amazon, whatever it may be. And to give them the tools they need to get to eight figures or more.

So, MemberMouse has enabled us to tailor made our marketing to suit each individual person, which has really broadened our marketplace that we can go after. I mean we focus 100% on Australia and the Australian market right now. We have no plans to diversifying scale-out into other marketplaces. I'd much rather be a big fish in a small pond as far as that's concerned and just target and with 100% accuracy, the narrative that people are having inside their heads. In Australia, we understand the Australian market really well. That's been a really important thing for us to come to realize and to put my megalomania in check.

Eric: It's interesting. I just recorded a podcast with Andre Chaperon whose business is called Tiny Little Businesses. Do you know him?

Neil: I know Andre. Yeah.

Eric: It's all about that. It's more important to have a small group of people who are your super fans then to have just a massive amount of people who you're just trying to collect in order to get some amount of money. I also subscribe to that. I mean, I think keeping it small allows you to have those touch points that you're talking about. Segmenting the group, honing your marketing such that it's speaking to them directly. And speaking about these beginner people... I find in our business, and I wonder if it's the same with you, that for beginners a lot of it's about qualification. It's about saying, here's a small preview of what this is going to be like. Are

you sure you want to do this? Number one, are you really ready to commit and be consistent? It's basically like raising all the objections to see if they're actually ready to embark on this journey, because it's not just like they say, yes I want it. And then immediately money starts flowing in.

Neil: Our strategy I think is same, same, but a little bit different. So, we come from I think a slightly different space whereby what we're saying to folks is, "Hey, okay, you're interested in starting a business on Amazon. So, here is step one thinking through that process." Because it's what I find with business owners or want to be business owners, is there's a lot of fear about making that leap, that transition and there's a of uncertainty about what their life will look like if they do start a business. For most people, they have a kind of better the devil you know attitude to this sort of thing.

So, what we found is a really good thing to do is to very, very gently, kind of demonstrate to them that their existing skills that they have, their existing intellectual resources they have, can be simply apply to something new and that's been a real shift for us as a way of actually thinking about our audience and the way that they start these businesses. Because most of these decisions not to move ahead are kind of, "Oh, I'm not comfortable, I'm unsure. I don't know. I don't know how to do this without making myself look like an idiot." That kind of thing. And then a great analogy is we do heaps and heaps of traveling. I mean the MemberMouse business that we have has really meant that not only do we get to do a lot of traveling, but I could also say, "Hey, I'm traveling because I'm out there looking at different products and looking at different countries and seeing what's going to go really, really well on Amazon." And that's something we really love to do.

So, one of the things we do is we go and live in new countries and we do that heaps and we'll have one or two years in a new country as well as having our base here in Australia. So, we are currently living in Portugal and Portugal is where I live most of the time. And I know Andre for instance, is in Spain. So, there's a long history of us doing that. But when we go to a new country we want to learn to speak the language so that we can communicate with people. And I think that the analogy is kind of very similar to starting a new business, because when you are kind of thinking about learning a new language, you've got to look like an idiot to begin with. You know what I mean? You've got to make mistakes.

Eric: You have to be willing to look like an idiot [laugh]

Neil: And people don't want to look like an idiot. They're like, "Oh, I don't want to look like an idiot." Nobody wants to be the idiot. You know what I mean? But it's important and it's actually the only way that we learn is by going in there and making heaps and heaps of mistakes and not being able to say the words properly and getting laughed at, in a nice way though, when you made those mistakes. And so, I think building a business is kind of similar to that. It's drilled into us not to make any mistakes. It's drilled into us that we've got to be perfect. And because of that, people are reticent to try new things and to try things out. And so that's the space we come from.

We come from the space of, "Okay, well, yes, this is going to be a little bit scary. It is going to be kind of weird. You are going to make a few mistakes, but hey, look at all these other people who will all make your mistakes too."

Eric: Right, and look at me. [laugh]

Neil: That's right. Look at me. Anybody who's kind of on my Facebook page, I make a point making a big thing about all the mistakes I make because I want people to realize that that's just normal. That's just a normal thing that we do. We have to go through that phase. We don't ever get to be masters of it. You're always learning, because we're always learning. You're always making mistakes.

Eric: It's part of the game and I really appreciate that perspective and approach. I can be tough sometimes. I don't know if you know anything about astrology, but I'm a double Scorpio.

Neil: Are you?

Eric: Yeah [scoff]

Neil: Wow.

Eric: My personality is like if there's a pool, I'll throw myself in the deep end and see if I sink or swim. That's personally what feels natural to me and I can forget that that's not the most comfortable thing for everybody. For most people really. So, being reminded that, having an encouraging perspective, taking the benefit from the place of experience is not to be so much warning against, hey, you need to make sure that you have all these things in a row. It's more like, look, we've all started at square one at some point. Yes, these things are going to happen and they're not going to feel comfortable, but that's the way through. That's how you get there. I'll be here with you, we'll help you do it and guide you so that you're not wasting your energy and then ultimately if you stick with it, you stick with us. We'll get there together.

Neil: I like that. And one of the things that MemberMouse I personally feel does very, very well, which kind of speaks to that is that support side of things. I find MemberMouse's support to be absolutely first rate. In my experience, they've been hands down the best support for software anyway that I've had, and I think that speaks a lot to the attitudes that you guys have. They do a really great job. They really do.

Eric: I put a high priority on support early on.

Neil: Good.

Eric: I started as a developer and I'm a software engineer, so I started building the software. That was my first role in the company, built the first version of MemberMouse and then

immediately after that it was very clear that somebody had to play support. So, in the first three years, personally, I was answering thousands of support tickets.

Neil: That's incredible.

Eric: Great experience, also super hard. Super tough. Psychologically very tough because you're hearing often with support, a lot of the negativity about what's going wrong, not about what's going right. People don't necessarily voluntarily always come and tell you how great things are through the support channel.

Neil: Yeah, that's right.

Eric: It was a very good lesson for me though to be in that position, but ultimately it got to the point where if the business was going to proceed, I couldn't be stuck doing support tickets.

Neil: Absolutely.

Eric: Then we had to hire people, but I think that I have a natural aspect of my own personality where I genuinely want people to be successful and support is a big portion of that and so naturally I work to attract people and instill into the team that that's important. Now I'm not saying the support team is great because of me. That's not why I'm saying this. It's just to highlight that there was a progression here, but now it's great because it was also letting the support team come into its own and allowed me to accept weaknesses that had developed in me. For example... The fact that I don't do support means the support team knows a lot more than me now about the nuances of what can go wrong. Relinquishing that control to another group of people was a big thing for me to have to go through about five years in. But again, it's one of those things that come up that you need to let go and let others shine for the whole thing to move forward.

Neil: I think that that sort of thing, that lessons to be learned upon the journey that we all go through as business owners, regardless of what sort of business we're building, they're fundamental lessons that you have to go through as you're on your business building your entrepreneurial journey. That's why for me, listening to things like your podcast that you do and going to events and sitting with other business owners and just hearing that, "Oh, I'm on that same journey too. I'm at this phase in the journey, but I'm on that same journey too."

I find that incredibly fulfilling to do that, to be immersed and within that the entrepreneurial world and to just understand, Eric's had to go through that too. Eric's had to go for the place where he was doing all the support. He really understood what was going on and you have to humble yourself to hear all this shit, what's going on, excuse my language. You have to hear all that stuff, but then you kind of go, okay, well now I understand. Now I understand and now I can think about how I'm going to put a team in place. Well, not only be able to do that supersede my ability to do that too, and I think that's great that you've got the self-awareness to go through that, but I think moreover it's important that other people get to hear that too

because that's a natural part of the entrepreneurial journey. That's a natural thing that we all go through as entrepreneurs. Doesn't matter what business you're building. Everybody goes through that process.

Eric: Agreed. At this point is there anything else that you can think of that would be something valuable to share with the audience and maybe something that's really front of mind for you these days?

Neil: I think that depending on, where you all in your membership platform journey? I think that the single most important thing that you can do, and this is probably my marketer's brain speaking, I've got pretty adept marketer's brain, but the single most important thing you can do is remember that the people who are your members are people. They are somebody sitting at their computer trying to figure this shit out for themselves, trying to get to the point where you've got into in your own particular journey. And trying to figure out how to do that and how to build their own lives, improve their lives, set themselves free, whatever that means for them.

It's somebody sat at their computer. I know I found that the greatest breakthroughs I've had in my own business is when I've really sat down and thought about who that person is. What are they worried about? What are they excited about? What is it that keeps them up at night? What are they trying to achieve? Why are they trying to achieve it? I found that asking myself those questions and thinking a lot about that person has enabled me to put things into the business that oftentimes the people who are in my business didn't even realize they needed, but when we've introduced them, they'd been, "Oh, this is the greatest thing ever. I'm so glad you've done this." And it's been a really big thing for them without recognizing that's what it was that they wanted. And so I find that to be a really useful exercise and I also think as well in this age where we aren't as connected, that's a really cool thing to do as well. And this has really nothing to say as we would say in England, I find it really makes your heart warm to think about that as well, to think about that your customers and what they're looking for. You kind of really connect with people well, I think that's really important. I found personally that's a really cool thing to do.

Eric: And also, to remember that whether you have one customer 10, 100, 1,000, 10,000, the fact that they are there and said yes to whatever you were offering at whatever stage of the journey that you were on is the reason that you are able to do what you're doing.

Neil: Nice. Absolutely. That's very nicely put.

Eric: You can't do it without the customers.

Neil: That's right. Hey Eric, I've got a question for you. If you don't mind, are you thinking of or planning to do a MemberMouse seminar conference, get together where you invite people like myself who are uses of the software to come along and sit in a room, talk to each other, listen to people like yourself and other folks who are using MemberMouse and just to learn how we can better build our membership businesses.

Eric: As of 30 seconds ago. Yes. So, whenever you want to come to Santa Fe, you let me know when you've got your ticket and then I'll invite some more people.

Neil: Is that for real? I mean, I would love to come. I would love to come to a seminar and come in sit in.

Eric: Yes! Of course! It's totally for real. That's the only place that I know to start because the thing is, and this is something I'm working with in all aspects of my life right now, I tend to over complicate things and when I do that, what ends up happening is some things never see the light of day because I'm trying to make it too perfect. I'm trying to make it too good. It took me two years to get an MVP out of MemberMouse. You know I have to go through my lessons right because I was trying to get everything done. My whole vision all at once. But I know now the quicker you can get anything out in front of somebody, the better. No matter how dank you think it is. As long as it does something, the feedback is what's going to help guide it. The feedback loops from the people, the users are going to help guide it because you can't know everything on your own.

So, yeah, I'm 100% serious. If it starts with us, we say yes, then we say, Hey, Neil and I are getting together. Do you want to come? There was a couple of people up in Canada who have asked me that question too. And if it's five of us, great. It doesn't need to be a huge ordeal. If we start somewhere then it can go somewhere. I love that idea.

Neil: All right, well without putting too fine a point on it, you can absolutely expect me in Santa Fe as soon as I get, I mean I'm in Australia now to come and do this conference that we're doing here in Australia before I fly back to Brisbane at the end of this month, my next thing will be booking a ticket to come over to Santa Fe and come and say hi.

Eric: And also, I'll say I'm going to be in Scotland June 24th 25th. I was asked to speak at a conference there and host a panel of creatives at the Xpo North conference who are trying to find other ways to support their craft and looking to membership solutions, things like Patreon and so we'll be talking about that. So, I also know I'll be in that part of the world at that time. So, that's another option.

Neil: That's a great option too. I mean, you've already got Andrew and Pete who I'm sure would be interested in meeting up and without knowing who those guys are, I am sure that you would find a lot of people who would be very interested in coming along and saying hi and just meeting like-minded people. You know what it's like.

Eric: Sounds good to me. I would love to do that.

Neil: Pretty lonely. So, it'd be awesome to kind of get together and just say hi to everybody.

Eric: Yeah, and one of the ways that I get around that actually is I do tea ceremonies. I have an Airbnb experience where people who travel to Santa Fe can book a tea ceremony with me and we hang out for an hour and a half and drink Chinese teas prepared in the traditional gongfu style and it's really great.

Neil: That's fantastic. We were just in Japan, I say just, I think it was probably about four or five months ago. We're in Japan, something like that, and we did the whole kind of tea ceremony there as well, and it was the most ornate and classically beautiful thing that I've done. It was absolutely brilliant.

Eric: Mine's a little bit more wabi-sabi than Japanese ceremonies. They're very precise. Yeah. Japanese is a very precise ceremony. Mine's a, it's different. Different style, but gongfu through, it's basically, it's a martial art. It's a practice and everybody brings their own personality to it. I mean, there are fundamentals to it. It's like learning to play piano. I mean everybody learns the basics, you press the keys, but then ultimately each person expresses themselves individually through the instrument.

Neil: Nice. That's a wonderful way of putting it. I like that. My wife is an artist. She makes pottery and ceramics and things like that. And so I'm very familiar with the wabi-sabi kind of concept of how things are put together. I think our house is built upon those founding principles.

Eric: That's great.

Neil: Oh, that sounds wonderful. I'd love to be a part of that too. That sounds nice.

Eric: I have had a strong meditation practice for the past five years. I've been to India three times for two months at a time. Sat in silence for 40 days

Neil: Doing the vipassana?

Eric: No, just doing different practices. Not strictly of vipassana, but in silence. So, deepening my relationship with myself and all this subtle, the work with the tea and the work with meditation and it all bleeds back into the other work because how you do one thing, it's how you do everything. And it's just the big theme for me in my life right now. It's just surrender. Notice the indicators that move me to action other than my ego. And then just follow it spontaneously when it happens. Don't try to control too much. Don't try to plan too much all this stuff.

Neil: Man, I love that. I do a yoga practice every day and what I've taken from my own yoga practice is a deeper awareness of the things outside myself feeling and understanding how I'm responding to them so I can 100% see where you're going and I've been and done meditation retreats where I've sat in silence for 12 days. I haven't done a 40 day one.

Eric: I didn't want to start talking again after it. One of the things you realize is how much trouble you get yourself into when you talk.

Neil: Exactly. I did one retreat here in Australia this was. It was in a place called the Blue Mountains. I went in, it was a 10-day retreat and then I came back into my regular life here in Sydney and I was asked as I was driving on the drive back from sitting in silence for 10 days coming into Sydney. I felt kind of stress re-enter my body. It was the weirdest, because you become very subtly aware of little things going on in your body. I felt the stress reentering it. It was fascinating to go through it.

Eric: The freneticism of the city, there is a physicality, even though it's at a subtle level and it's not visible, there's a physicality that energy of people in close proximity moving around and it influences you.

Neil: Absolutely, it does. Oh, I think we're going to get on really well. Okay, that's great. I'm so excited too. I've met you. That's awesome.

Eric: As we wrap up here, can you tell people listening where they can learn more about you?

Neil: I want to learn more about me. Just go to aussieonlineentrepreneurs.com.au and it's A-U, double S-I-E-O-N-L-I-N-E-E-N-T-R-E-P-R-E-N-E-U-R-S com.au

Eric: The time that you realize that you should have chosen a shorter domain name. [laugh]

Neil: I was just thinking about that. Why didn't I choose A-O-E, they just the letters?

Eric: It doesn't matter 'cause we'll put it in the show notes so people don't have to figure it out.

Neil: Oh, that's excellent I appreciate that, that's great.

Eric: It's been a pleasure. Neil. Thank you so much for taking the time to chat.

Neil: Likewise. Thank you so much. I really meant it when I said that to MemberMouse has absolutely revolutionized my life. I mean, without that single piece of software, it would not afford us not only the lifestyle that we have, but the ability to spend time with my children, the ability to spend more time with my wife. It would not afford me any of that. So, I am deeply grateful that you took the time and the two years you took to get your beat around. I am deeply grateful that you did.

Eric: Yeah. Well, I'm deeply grateful that you're a part of our family and that you being here means that I can continue to be here. So, here we are.

OUTRO:

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