



EPISODE 204

How She Quit Her Day Job and Turned Her Side Hustle Into a Full-Time Thing With Melissa Norris

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AMY PORTERFIELD: Hey there, welcome back to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast, I'm your host, Amy Porterfield. Today I've got a fun one for you.

Today's guest is not only full of energy, she's got a fascinating area of focus. I'm just going to say it, teaching folks how to live like the pioneers.

I'm talking raising pigs and cattle, grinding your own flour, canning vegetables, and things you'll never ever catch me doing although I find it fascinating that she's built an entire business around pioneering.

By day Melissa Norris used to work as a pharmacy tech in a town two hours outside of Seattle. By night she worked on her webinars and her membership site. In less than two years she was able to build up her business and quit her day job.

Today she has a podcast called Pioneering Today and she's got a course called The Pioneering Today Academy. She also has two books, The Made From Scratch Life and Handmade: The Modern Guide to Made-From-Scratch Living.

I wanted to bring her on today's show for a few reasons: One, to talk about the steps she took to quit her day job. I know a lot of you are loving the idea of quitting your own job and you've been asking me the steps to get it done.

I wanted to offer you one roadmap of how a student got there. There are a lot of different ways to get there but I wanted to share one of my student's stories.



The second reason I wanted to have Melissa on the show is because she's had amazing success with webinars. Specifically, she's used webinars to sell her membership site.

She's going to share some insights and some ah-ha moments she's experienced along the way as she's paved her way to great success with webinars.

Speaking of webinars, this episode is brought to you by Webinars That Convert, my A-Z webinar program where I'm going to show you everything you need to know to create a webinar from scratch so that you can sell your programs, products, services, live workshops, or whatever it may be on a live webinar.

I know a thing or two about webinars. I have done hundreds and hundreds of them. I've built my multi-million dollar business using webinars to not only grow my email list but also to sell all of my online courses.

I want to show you a bunch of examples about what works and what doesn't work. I also want to show you the roadmap that you can use to build your own webinar. In order to show you all of that I created a free master class where you will walk away feeling excited, inspired, and 100 percent ready to dive in to learn how to create your own webinar so that you can sell successfully online.

This free master class is at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/webinars>. Don't wait. Sign up right away because I cannot wait to show you what it takes to put a wildly profitable webinar together.

Let's go ahead and jump in as we chat with Melissa Norris.

AMY: Melissa, thank you so much for being on the show. I'm honored to have you here.

MELISSA: Thank you. I'm really excited. I have been a long-time fan of you, Amy. In fact, when you talk about your tribe and the people who listen to every single podcast episode my hand totally raises up.

AMY: I love it. I love when that happens, when I'm excited about your story and you are a loyal listener. I think it's a huge win-win. I'm excited to dive into your story because it's just so interesting in terms of where you were, what you've done, and where you're at now.



If you're cool with it we're just going to dive in.

MELISSA: Yeah, let's go.

AMY: Okay. First, tell me about your full-functioning homestead. What is that? Tell me about it.

MELISSA: We live on what we call a full-functioning homestead. We're in Washington State, the Pacific Northwest. We live on almost 15 acres. My husband and our two kids and I raise all of our own meat. We raise all of our own organic grass-fed beef and organic pork.

We have laying hens so we get fresh eggs every day. We also raise a flock of meat chickens that we butcher and harvest ourselves. We're fully self sufficient when it comes to our meat and then we have a huge vegetable garden and fruit trees.

I can about 500 jars of food every year to stock in the pantry. We do seed saving. That is what I mean by a fully-functioning homestead. We're pretty self sufficient.

We do still use the grocery store but we try to produce as much of our own food as we can.

AMY: Wow. So how long have you been doing this?

MELISSA: I was raised as a homesteader. We live really rurally. My dad always raised our own beef. Beef is something that, even growing up, I've never purchased or really ate from the store unless we went to a barbecue or someone else's house.

That aspect, we always had a vegetable garden. My mom always canned vegetables and we picked blackberries because they just run wild here. We make our jam and jelly for the year.

Part of it was just a natural part of my upbringing. I just thought everybody did that. I had no idea that it was something special or unique in a way until I was older.

When my husband and I got married and we started our family, in fact the first year that my husband and I were married, pre kids, the springtime came and with our growing season you just naturally go out and till up and get the garden ready to plant.



Like I said, at this time I still thought everybody just did this. It was our first year married and I said that we needed to borrow a rototiller or look into getting one of our own because we needed to get the soil raised, "It's time to start planting pretty soon."

He kind of looked at me and goes, "You want to have a vegetable garden?"

I was like, "What do you mean want? That's just what you do."

Bless his heart. He totally jumped in with me. He said, "Yeah, let's do that," and he has just embraced the whole homesteading thing which has been fabulous.

We started there and as we had kids and I had health issues, I actually had my esophagus and upper stomach biopsied for cancer in my late 20s when my daughter was just a year old and my son was five.

When we started looking at our food and the industry as a whole with our groceries and modern agriculture and all that stuff we decided that we were really going to up what we were raising ourselves and that's when we brought in all of the chickens and pork and started doing meat chickens as well and really increased our whole food production.

AMY: So impressive. I love your story. How did you get the idea of teaching others how to do this?

MELISSA: I started a blog because Amy I actually thought I was going to be a historical fiction author. I've always wanted to be a writer since I was a little girl. I learned you needed a thing called a platform, way back in the day in 2011 and 2010.

I decided I needed to create a blog in order to create a platform in order to sell a fiction book. So I started a blog. Because I was going to write historical fiction that had people growing their own food and canning and cooking in Dutch ovens and all the stuff we were doing already I thought I would share those type of tutorials and recipes because people would be interested in how to do that if they like this time period of fiction.

I started a how-to homesteading blog. I just didn't know that's what it was in the very beginning in 2011. The blog started to really grow organically and then I started to look at it as a blog and learning about marketing.



I was actually asked to do a local radio show which then worked into my podcast. Then I got my first book offer by a traditional publisher because of my blog. They saw my content and they said they would love to have me write non-fiction books.

It wasn't the route I thought I was initially going to go. Of course I accepted it. We published two books, which has been a really fun experience, but I had a lot of readers and listeners from the podcast. Both were asking for video content and/or were asking if we ever open up our home to do hands-on training for doing all of the homestead stuff on a weekend at our home.

I realized at that time, because I was still working my day job and I was doing all of this, that I really could not deliver any more in-depth training with the current setup that I had.

Both time and money, because I was putting in 40-50 hours a week on the blog and that part, plus the day job, and then the family, kids, homestead, animals, and all of that.

In order to provide it I needed to invest in a platform, video hosting, equipment, and to pull it together to really do it, it had to be at a paid level so that's when I discovered that I had a need and a want.

I wanted to do it and my readers wanted to do it but I had to find a way to pull it together and actually do some type of either video course or a membership site.

AMY: Got it. So fantastic. Talk to me about when you realized you could transition from your day job and the first step toward doing that. I want to know what it looked like. I know you had a talk with your husband, right?

MELISSA: I did. I absolutely did. At first it was really exciting because I can remember with my blog I earned \$50 and I was like, "Oh my gosh, I actually earned money for this."

That was very exciting. That was really exciting so every year I was seeing growth even though the only income levels I had was from advertising on the blog and affiliate marketing.

I talked to my husband and originally thought our determination was that I needed to make the same amount from the website and blog and everything as what my current day job salary was.



Because I had never been a business owner before I quickly realized that just because you may be taking in that dollar amount it does not mean you're taking it home and it's going into your bank account.

AMY: Right.

MELISSA: So I started working toward the goal of doubling my salary. In the meantime, for that growth to happen, the money coming in from the business that I was getting to take home was used to start paying off any debt we had.

We had a mortgage, of course, and then a car payment and some medical bills and that type of thing. I started taking all of the extra money instead of just putting it in our bank account and spending it I put it all towards bills.

I started with our medical bills. Then I was able to pay off my car a year early. That meant that when I was positioned to quit my day job that our monthly bills were also lower as a kind of a safety net and it's always smart to pay off our debt first.

AMY: That's so brilliant. I love that, just to give you peace of mind when you left your day job. That's great.

MELISSA: It was also really motivating because when I could show my husband I was able to take "this" amount of cash that I earned from the business and pay off "this" loan it was really exciting for both of us. It was really extra motivation on my part because it was so awesome.

AMY: Then you realized you needed to double your salary in order to be able to quit your day job. I think you were telling me that you wanted to make a certain amount for a full year before you quit your day job.

MELISSA: I did because with marketing, especially with what I was doing and when you're in business for yourself, not every month is the same. It's not a guaranteed paycheck, the same amount you would normally get from when you are working a set number of hours.

We needed to know it was true sustainability and that the level was going to stay there. If I was just making my same monthly salary for three months in a row something could really shift.



I needed to know for sure that it was holding before I went ahead and made the leap because I do live so rurally. Pharmacy technician is what I have my certification in. I would be looking at a commute of at least one to 1 ½ hours one way from where I live for the next pharmacy.

I had to really make sure it was going to hold before we made the jump. You could say we're not as much risk taking as a lot of people in that position but I had to make sure it was solid because once I quit there was no going back.

AMY: One of the key principles here that I absolutely love is that you took baby steps and didn't rush this. You were patient. I think that all really paid off for you. I absolutely love your way of thinking in terms of moving from your day job.

Just so I'm really clear, you were going to double your salary in your side hustle. Basically, before you left your day job your side hustle had to make twice as much as you were making as a pharmacy technician. Am I understanding that right?

MELISSA: Absolutely. I should say gross wise. Then I knew I would be taking home close to what I was. My business had to be making gross double my salary from my day job.

AMY: Here's a question I get asked all the time from my students who are building their online businesses. They ask, "Amy, how can I possibly have time to build this side hustle when I have a full-time job and kids and a life and all of this crazy stuff that's going on. How do you ever make time?"

Please give me some insight on how you made that happen.

MELISSA: Oh my goodness.

AMY: Because it's not easy, right?

MELISSA: It's not easy. I want people to know that. It's not that kind of walk in the park dream thing we like to romanticize when we're thinking about it. It's a lot of hard work. Is it worth it? Absolutely.

This is my passion, sharing this with people and doing it. It truly is. But TV was not a thing that I watched. I would get up in the morning early and I would do about two hours of work.



I could be writing a blog post or recording a podcast episode. I would even shoot my videos before I would go to work. I would literally get up at 6 a.m. and can a run of peaches and would be videoing that whole thing for the video.

I would then go to work and come home, do dinner, take care of the animals, the kids, and all of that. Then, after the kids were in bed and all of that was done I would put in about another two hours.

There were some long days and I'll be honest, I was getting really tired but I knew the payoff was going to be coming. I also gave myself a timeline that if it did not start to pay off in a certain amount of time that I would step back and decide if I should keep pursuing this or just do the day job.

I knew long-term sustainability that it would not be possible for me to keep that pace but in a short term it was.

AMY: So good. That's such a great thing for my audience to hear. It's not like you have to keep this pace forever but this is reality. You are running two jobs at one time. I love that your niche is so different than mine.

The fact that you're getting up at 6 a.m., creating videos for your audience, what was it, can a run of peaches? What was that term you used?

MELISSA: Yes. Sorry for talking homesteading lingo. Yes, it was.

AMY: It's so cool.

MELISSA: Oh good. Yeah, I was doing all of our own food preservation and my membership site and my courses are literally taking you through step by step everything we do seasonally on our homestead.

In the summertime when your fruit harvest is on I would need to can. When I say "a run" that's how many jars will fit in my canner at once.

AMY: Okay.

MELISSA: I was canning five quarts of peaches before work that morning.

AMY: So good.



MELISSA: I needed to video that whole process and the beauty of it is that we had that food to eat and I was stocking our pantry, which is part of our goals. It was a two-fold process there. I was doing my work but I was documenting it at the same time.

AMY: I absolutely love it. Here's the deal. I hate the word "hustle" and I've told my listeners before that I feel hustle can run you into the ground. However, in your first few years of business I don't think you can get around it.

You were definitely hustling there and I love that we're talking about it and making it very apparent that it wasn't easy. But I love that you also said it was so totally worth it. This is great.

I'm going to keep moving you forward.

We get to the point that you realize you have to double your salary before you can leave your day job. You are doing that for a full year and then you are finally ready to go out on your own.

Next you had to decide what to sell and how to sell it. Tell me about that.

MELISSA: I do want to mention one thing. I did start decreasing my hours. I also let my employer know that was my end goal. I was very up front about it and they were totally on board with it.

I actually did quitting my day job in baby steps as well.

AMY: I love it. That's exactly what I did at Tony Robbins. I asked to work from home a little bit. Then I asked to go part time. Then I finally took the leap. That was over at least a period of a year.

I think having that open communication, when you're a good employee, I think your employers will respect that, not always but in many instances. You and I were very lucky in that.

MELISSA: We were. In fact, it's fabulous because they actually sell my books for me at the pharmacy so it's a great communication. It's really been a great business relationship between us. I did want to share that point as well.



I realized I needed to double the money and then decide what to sell and how to sell it. At the time my income streams, like I said, was ad revenue from the blog/website and also affiliate marketing.

I did not have my own product to sell and I knew to really continue to grow and make this a full-time living I had to have something to sell. I had been playing with the idea of doing video courses and/or a membership site for a long time.

But I did not know the technology and I did not know how to do it. It was kind of holding me back. Then two things happened. New Kajabi did their founder's launch. I found out about it the very last day you could get in on it so I actually had the tech done for me in one package.

I got that part down and then you had Webinars That Convert, which I actually purchased in the fall but I didn't do my first webinar to launch my membership site until the spring. I kind of sat on it for a little bit.

I used Webinars That Convert to launch and I did a beta launch, a pre-sell model, with the webinar so that when I launched I had one video lesson up waiting for them within the academy with the promise of what I would be delivering every single month to them.

I totally presold the entire thing.

AMY: I love that. You did not have your entire program ready to go. You had just a little bit so you launched it with webinars. From there, what did you promise? What was the offer?

MELISSA: Looking back, at the time I didn't even think to do where you could pay for a whole year in advance and get a discount. It was just set at a monthly fee. At that time, when they got to join it was \$17 a month.

I promised I would do two to three video lessons every single month and that I would deliver it to them. With my video lessons I also deliver a full download guide. Sometimes there are additional recipes, like written recipes, if we're going over that type of thing, especially with canning; it's different recipes for them.

Knowing that my audience is homesteaders I knew they would want to have something they could download and print out so that they would have a hard paper



copy. They are getting a download guide with their tutorials plus the video lesson that I promised I would deliver (two to three a month).

We also did a private Facebook group and I promised I would do a bonus Q&A session once a month as well. That's what I promised to deliver when we first launched and am staying with that.

AMY: You were scrappy at the time. You were doing your own video editing and getting this all together. Did you have a team behind you at all?

MELISSA: I had no team, Amy. Honestly, I still shoot all of my own videos and I still edit all of my own videos. I still do all of that. I am looking at creating a team so that's an area I'm really looking forward to moving into this year but I still do it myself.

I am totally self taught so I want to let you know, because I think that's intimidating for a lot of people. I did invest in a really good light and good audio equipment with the camera. But, you don't have to have it all totally professionally done. You can deliver and then grow and improve.

AMY: This is such a great story because it is really going to resonate with so many people listening right now. They don't have a team. They are doing it on their own. They don't really know the technology.

Self taught is totally okay. As long as you stick with it you will figure it out. There are so many great lessons here.

Now we're actually getting to the good stuff, not that the other stuff wasn't good, but we're really getting into it now because at this point you started to invest more time into your business.

You don't have another full-time job and you can give it your all. Step Three was that you actually sold a membership site as a beta. We already went over all of that but I didn't actually declare it as Step Three.

Now we're getting into Step Four. This step is even better than before because you're starting to invest more time into your business. You quit your day job. You're in it. You're making things happen.

Step Four is scaling. You dedicated more hours to the business. Talk to me about what that looked like.



MELISSA: For scaling, I really wanted to be able to invest more time to my members, my core people. Amy, you have done a great model of that. Let me be honest, I had purchased a lot of courses. I used to have shiny-object syndrome where I purchased every course that came along.

I was really immersing myself in learning. You have been the example to me because even though I purchased Webinars That Convert when you first launched it years back, you still show up and provide hands on training.

You're present in the groups and you're still helping your members even way far down the road. Of all the courses I've joined I've been frustrated to see the lack of that. So I wanted to make sure I could provide that same thing back to my members.

I've been able to survey them. I've been able to get into the group more and find out what they really need more of from me and how I can deliver that as well.

A lot of scaling is that I wanted to make sure I was taking really good care of my core people and then doing more webinars. This year I am really excited. I'm getting ready to launch in just a couple of weeks to do more webinars.

I am looking at the things that really worked and, honestly, webinars is the very best converter for me to bring new people in; and, not just to bring new people into the membership site but to have them stay.

The retention level off of the webinar is much stronger so I'm looking to do more webinars this year than I have in the past and I can do that now. I can actually have different times and days of the week because I don't have to work that around my work schedule.

I am really excited to play and then optimize and find out which of those webinars is working the best now.

AMY: That's such a great feeling when you do all of the work to finally let go of the day job and now you have this time to experiment and try new things and really get in it.

I remember when that happened. It was the best freedom I've ever experienced. I'm excited that you got to that point.

I want to ask you a really quick question because I know some of my listeners that are interested in doing webinars have this question. I'm curious if you could give us a little



snapshot as to what you teach in your webinar and then, of course, you're selling your membership site but what does the free content look like in your webinar?

MELISSA: Absolutely. I will say that because I have a membership site, and mine is a bit seasonal because planting is usually one time of year for the majority of it and canning is predominantly when you're harvest is on, I have different webinars for different times of the year.

They all lead into the same core product. For example, one of the things I do and what I'm getting ready to do is going to be how to raise enough food for a whole year. I go over the crops and things we grow for a whole year and the amount of work that honestly takes us of our hands on time.

We then transition into asking if they want to learn how to do all of this they should come join the membership site and I will walk through and actually show how to butcher the chickens, how to actually prune fruit trees, and how to actually do all of these steps.

I do give them, "If you want to grow enough food for a year, this is really what it takes."

Let me be specific, you cannot grow all of your own food for a year. But this is how to determine which crops or which foods you and your situation with land and the time you have, this is what you will be able to grow an entire year's worth of.

I tell them this is how to take advantage of the area you do have to grow more crops. We look at varieties and ways that you can maximize the space and time you have to get more of it. That's one of the classes that's been really popular that we're going to be doing more of webinar wise.

AMY: Okay. To those that are interested in webinars, let me point out why that works. It is so very smart because Melissa is actually showing people what is possible. She's laying out the roadmap and saying, "This is what it will take."

She's giving them the honest assessment so they don't think it's super easy or that they could do it in a few days. She's really laying it out. This is the real, raw story of how you can grow your food and have your livestock or whatever it might be for a full year.

Now, once they see the opportunity and possibility through her free content they are saying, "This is doable. How do I do it? Sign me up. I want more."



Remember, the free content, the opportunity, the possibility with real-life examples, real stories of someone actually making it happen is so incredibly powerful for free content.

I just wanted to put that in there because I love when our episodes are actually mini lessons that people can walk away with takeaways.

We got to Step Four which was all about scaling and dedicating more hours to the business. You're starting to do webinars at this point. I love these seasonal webinars. It's so fantastic for what you do.

Once you started seeing results and you knew it was working what was the final step that you took? I know you had a big goal for yourself to seal it all together and say, "This is actually working. We're moving full steam ahead."

MELISSA: I had a numbers goal as far as how many people were going to be in the membership. For me, it was 100. When I first launched I knew when I had 100 members in my membership site that's my ultimate goal.

We're there. Of course, one of the fun things about goals is that as soon as you reach it then you're ready to BOOM, stretch that bad boy out and reach again.

AMY: So true. You wanted to reach 100 members in your membership site, which you've done, and now you're set your goals higher and you're reaching for the stars.

MELISSA: Yes.

AMY: Fantastic. Now that we've gone through the steps of what it looked like for you to leave your full-time job and turn your side hustle into a "real" job that you're doing at home every single day I want to talk to you about your membership site.

I don't talk about membership sites very much on my podcast but it's a topic that comes up a lot. Let's just take a few quick minutes to talk about this. How many times do you add new content to your membership site and what kind of stuff do you add to the membership site?

MELISSA: In the beginning when it was in the beta series, like I said, I didn't have anything, at that time I was adding about five to six videos a month because I really wanted to build it up.



Within the membership site I basically have mini courses or mini modules. I wanted some of those modules to be completely finished so that I could sell them as an independent course and open that up to affiliates or joint venture partnerships.

That's what I did with our Home Canning With Confidence course. I delivered all of that over a four-month period. That was putting in additional video beyond the two to three I promised.

It was also great for me because I knew what I was capable of and what I could sustain if I needed to. But I could also feel like six video lessons with me doing everything myself each month is too much. I knew I could sustain two to three for a long period of time and not feel overwhelmed.

I kind of also like to under promise and over deliver whenever possible so I felt like those first three months that the people that came in with me and trusted me without anything being there that I was delivering to them double the amount I said.

I kind of liked that aspect as well but long term that wouldn't work. Now, what I do long term is two to three video lessons a month. Those average anywhere from ten to 20 minutes, it just depends on how detailed the tutorial is on what I'm doing.

I like for those two to three videos every month to be linked together so that they are kind of a miniseries and you can go deeper and deeper with the lessons. Each lesson does get a download guide.

Over the winter months, when you're not out gardening, growing, and raising everything as much, we had grinding your own flour and baking and cooking with fresh flour. We covered ancient grains, how to make your bread with fresh flour, how to form the rolls, how to store your homemade bread.

We did gluten-free baking. We had an entire series on that. They also get all of the download guides linked together to create a mini eBook so that at the end of it you actually have an eBook that you can print out or store on your computer. It complements the video lessons.

AMY: Fantastic stuff. I love these topics too. They are just fascinating to me. I could only imagine me trying to grind my own flour. I think it would be a disaster but I'm always so impressed with people that can do these things. I love the topic.

Tell me about your private Facebook group. What do you do in there?



MELISSA: Honestly, the private Facebook group has been one of the biggest assets to the whole membership site. The group is a true community, which happens in your private Facebooks but doesn't happen in every single one I've been a part of with courses.

I go in there at least once a month and will do a private Facebook Live. It will be a Q&A or a special type of training. It's not always a Q&A, sometimes it's just a Live. In January I showed how to completely reorganize and redo your kitchen and pantry for maximum efficiency.

I needed to do that so I walked everybody through live and throughout the whole month everybody is posting their "after" pictures so that you can see everybody that's doing it and giving additional ideas.

It's been really fun like that. Most people within the group will post pictures of what they are doing and there's a really great support system that has naturally happened. People give great advice.

I was not able to get into the group at the time because I was actually at my day job. One of the members was having trouble with her pressure canner. She didn't know how to fix it and didn't know what to do.

She sent out an SOS for help in the group and another member said, "Here's my phone number." She was an experienced pressure canner and said, "I'll walk you through what to do. Call me right now. I'll help you and we'll get this figured out."

To me that is amazing. They totally connected. They gave each other phone numbers. They totally solved it and got it fixed. This is just amazing to me to see that level of help coming together in a community. I was just floored and feel really honored to be a part of it.

AMY: I love seeing that. It feels like when you are a leader of the Facebook group and you see other people helping each other (even getting offline to help each other) it's like you feel like a proud parent.

You're beaming, "Look what they're doing! This is so fantastic." I know that feeling 100 percent.

I forgot to ask you earlier, how much do you charge for your membership site?



MELISSA: It's currently \$27 a month. If you join and prepay for a year you get a discount and you also get an awesome bonus. You get both of my books, physical paperback copies, shipped to you.

AMY: Oh cool. I love adding that extra in there when people pay in full. Speaking of extras, you do some really fun things to keep your members engaged. Share some of those aspects with me.

MELISSA: For example, when my new book, Handmade, came out this past October if you were in my membership site then you got an email four days before anybody else and you got the opportunity to purchase the book early. You also got a special discount and you also had an option.

If you purchased it you got a discount and you could also get some little free mini measuring spoons. I had a limited edition of these measuring spoons so I opened it up to just my members first.

If I had sold out for them it wouldn't have even gone to the public. I try to give them special discounts. Often times I'm able to work with different companies for supplies that we will need to do things and they will give us special coupons and discounts. My members get those. They don't go out to my regular list.

This year, our two-year anniversary is in March from when the membership opened. My members don't even know this yet but they are going to be getting a special thank-you, happy anniversary package sent to them in the mail.

AMY: That's really cool. You treat them as though they are VIPs. They get all of the special treatment when they're part of your membership site.

MELISSA: Yes.

AMY: I absolutely love that. What do you think are one or two pieces that really click for you when you were selling your membership site? I would love just a few takeaways, whether they had to do with webinars or selling the membership site in general, give me a few takeaways before we wrap it up.

MELISSA: I really liked the membership model because I could build it and release it at the same time that I was earning so that helped to offset the cost. I also liked the membership site because I could release a few videos and then I could get instant feedback on it from the members.



This was especially in the beginning, but even now. In January I just put in, “What are some things you need help with this year?”

It really makes sure I’m delivering the content and help they need and not just what I think they need. It’s not always the same. Sometimes it is.

I loved the idea of the membership site not only being able to deliver what my members really need and to get feedback and fine tune it, I’m also able to take that content (because these are my core people) and look at the content to reverse engineer back some of my blog posts and lead magnets and trip wires so that it funnels in a lot better for better conversion and that everything is congruent and matching up.

AMY: That’s so fantastic. Tell me a little bit about some of your ah-ha’s with your sales sequence.

MELISSA: Oh my goodness! This is one of the things I love so much about Webinars That Convert. I really need a blueprint. I’m a person that you give me a recipe and boom, boom, boom, I’m going to follow it.

I’m going to get it done. I might alter it where needed but I really work well if I have an outline or proven blueprint or proven recipe type thing. That was one of the things I loved about Webinars That Convert.

You described a program and I knew it was for me. One of the things I didn’t even know until I actually got into the program was your email, your preboarding for webinars email sequence and then the follow-up sequence.

You even have a whole email segment to send to people who are on your list but didn’t sign up for the webinar but that still gives your offer. It was fantastic. I used that, of course, for my webinars but I also reverse engineered those emails and tailored them for different campaigns.

If I was doing an affiliate campaign or a promotion for a different type of product I would go back to those emails and use them. Of course I would rewrite them for whatever it was but that was really powerful.

I think that alone was almost as powerful as the whole webinar part.



AMY: Truth be known, I'm a little bit embarrassed. When I asked you that question, Melissa, I didn't actually know you were going to give a shining review to Webinars That Convert. Thank you so much for that but I had known you mentioned the fact that you were sending these follow-up emails and that they were powerful.

Thank you. I didn't mean to set you up to give me a glowing review but I appreciate it all the same.

With that, I just had a lightbulb moment. I have to ask you something we didn't talk about before we actually got on this interview.

You talked about trip wires and affiliates and reengineering email campaigns and doing webinars. You talk about some high-level things. Do you have a marketing background?

How do you know all of these things coming from being in pharmaceuticals? How is that happening?

MELISSA: Oh my goodness, nothing to do with my day job. I have no marketing background whatsoever. I am your girl of pull up your bootstraps, mine are literal bootstraps because I wear rubber boots, and just learning it.

Following your podcast, Amy, yours was one of the...I don't know how I found you but I have been following your website and podcast for years, probably the very first episodes, and then following other online marketers, Digital Marketer, Perpetual Traffic, and really just immersing myself and really learning from the people I think are doing a good job.

If I'm listening to your podcast and it helps me or if I'm following somebody online and the content they are delivering to me works then I look and wonder why that is working on me, especially when not only does it work for me to sign up to buy their product but I get the results from it.

I guess I'm a really big fan of reverse engineering. I am totally just a student of having to get in there and learn it. I couldn't afford to hire this out. I'll just be honest, I could not afford to hire any of this out when I first started.

I also wanted to make sure I understood it enough that I could do it. I may not be as awesome as someone who is a professional at it but before I hired it out I needed to be able to understand it so that when I went to hire it out if something kind of went



wrong I could make sure I gave them what they really needed to do the best job possible because if I'm going to spend my money on somebody they had better be able to do it better than I can.

AMY: So true. I totally believe in that 100 percent. Melissa, you really impress me. I love your ability to just learn what you need to learn, like you said, pull up your bootstraps, get in there and make it happen.

I'm sure you've had your moments of frustration and your moments where you feel you can't do this because it's not making sense. Then you go back to it and make it work.

Perseverance, consistency, I just see it running through everything you've done. I think you're going to be an inspiration for those listeners right now that are feeling they don't know this stuff, marketing doesn't come easy to them. It's not their second language.

It wasn't yours either but you stuck with it and if someone walks away just getting that message it could be a game changer for them. You really are giving people a gift and I appreciate that.

I have two more questions. First, what's next for you? You've done all this great stuff. You've gotten your business to a really solid place but I know you're always shooting for more. So, what's next?

MELISSA: My next goal for 2018 is that I want to double the size of my email list. That is a very big goal. I also want to double the amount of members I have. Doubling is apparently my thing for this year. I want to double the amount of email subscribers and then double the people who are on my membership site. I'm hoping those go hand in hand.

My other thing is consistency. This is where your podcast has been such a great inspiration to me. You put out a podcast episode every single week. I have a podcast. Before I was doing between two and three podcasts a month. Sometimes it would be every week. It was never without fail every single week.

That's my goal for 2018. I love the batching episode that you did and the ones where you've talked about your podcast. A podcast episode every single week for 2018! Those are my three concrete goals.



AMY: I love those goals, absolutely fantastic. I know I've got some people interested in homesteading out there so you've got to tell people where they can check out your content.

MELISSA: At <http://www.MelissaKNorris.com> and the Pioneering Today podcast wherever you listen to podcasts.

AMY: Melissa, thank you again. It has been a true pleasure to have you on the show.

MELISSA: Thank you so much Amy.

AMY: There you have it. I hope you enjoyed this interview with Melissa as much as I have. What I loved most is that Melissa is building a business around a topic that has nothing to do with making money online or marketing online, which is of course my niche. It's what I do.

I like to show examples of how what I do can work in other different niches or different fields or markets or whatever it might be. Melissa is proof of that and I am so glad she came on the show.

Don't forget that this episode is sponsored by Webinars That Convert. If you want to learn how to create your first wildly profitable webinar to sell your online course or membership site or live workshop and do it right the first time out then you've got to get on my free master class at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/webinars>.

This course is exactly what Melissa used in to promote and market her membership site. If you want to see what Melissa used to see the success she now has you've got to check out my free master class at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/webinars>.

I cannot wait to talk to you again next week. We've got an awesome episode planned for you. I'll see you again soon. Bye for now.