

# Member Engagement Series: Inspirational Content

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## MEMBER ENGAGEMENT SERIES INSPIRATIONAL CONTENT

When a member walks into your gym, you have no trouble engaging them—whether it’s chatting about the great weather you’ve been having, asking what they think of the new routes, or, for members you know well, checking in about how that project at the local crag is coming along.

At its core, engaging your audience online and on your social channels is the same. It’s easy to overthink it: Am I using the right hashtags? How many likes should my posts be getting? But when you boil it down, the things you’re posting on your gym’s social channels are just a way to break the ice and get your members talking. View your content as a conversation starter, and you’re well on your way to building solid content.

## Ask Your Audience

The folks who know best what your audience wants are right in front of you. In fact, they might already be telling you what they want—take a look at your most recent survey results. Do your members give your gym’s yoga classes a five-star rating? Content written by or spotlighting a favorite yoga teacher, whether it’s an Instagram takeover or a blog post, will likely be a hit. Are you getting tons of feedback on the new brand of energy bars you’re stocking? Maybe a series of posts on nutrition for climbers will draw engagement. Don’t be afraid to ask your members directly: “What topics would you like to see our staff write about for future posts?”

## Draw Inspiration From Others

There’s a reason big-name brands have huge social followings. Your gym may not have the



resources to do tons of market research on what your audience wants to see—and that's ok, because climbing brands (gear manufacturers and sponsored athletes, for example) likely have much of the same audience your gym does. Does a particular climber get tons of likes and comments when they ask their followers a question? Do brands get a huge response when they do a giveaway? Those trends might help you identify what your audience is looking for.

## Turn the Spotlight to Your Members

It's always fun to see your own name on the marquis, so to speak. One way to deepen member engagement is to invite members into your feed. This can be as easy as creating a simple hashtag (#climbat[your gym's name]) that members can tag their photos with, then going through those posts and choosing some to repost on your own channel. It could also mean running a contest: Ask your audience to caption a funny photo; the winner gets to do a week-long takeover of your Instagram account. The more members see themselves and their friends in your feed, the more excited they'll be to engage.

## Repurpose Content You Love

Sometimes, it doesn't make sense to reinvent the wheel. Is there a recent article that's super relevant to your audience, like a piece in a climbing magazine about your local crag or about climbing gaining popularity? Keep an eye out for news that might interest your audience, whether it's about the local bouldering scene, a climbing-related podcast with a story that made you laugh or cry, or a review of this year's hottest climbing shoes. Whenever you repost content, check the creator's policies—you may need to ask them for permission, and you'll definitely need to give them credit.

## Give a Peek Behind the Scenes

Nothing makes an audience feel like part of the in-crowd more than learning what's going on behind the curtain. Think beyond explaining the reasoning behind a new policy: What inspires you? Maybe it's a post on the history of your gym, a few tips from a rock-star routesetter, or a Q&A with a coach about how they come up with ideas for classes and training sessions. This category often makes for great evergreen content, meaning it's relevant just about any time you decide to post it.

## Ready to Level Up?

If you're doing the first five items on this list, you're well on your way to creating a vibrant online community. Keep up the good work!

When you're ready to take your content to the next level, consider the following steps:

- Find creative ways to engage with your audience. Social media algorithms take engagement—likes, follows, comments, and shares—into account, so actually conversing with your audience makes a difference. ([Learn more here.](#))



- Develop an email marketing strategy. Showing up in your audience's inboxes means they don't have to seek you out to engage. Chances are you collect email addresses from your members anyway, so building a strategy to send marketing emails to your audience is a logical next step.
- Take a look at your analytics. Your website or blog platform likely has analytics built in, and if you've got a business page on Facebook or a business account on Instagram, you can do the same thing for your social channels. Use these tools to understand the best timing and topics for your posts and change up your strategy accordingly.
- Learn more about search engine optimization (SEO). This is how you'll ensure that your gym's posts pop up first when folks search for relevant keywords. [These tips](#) will help you get started.

Not sure where to begin with content? [Check out our previous post on how to start a blog for your gym.](#)



## About The Author

Emma Walker is a freelance writer, editor, and an account manager with Golden, Colorado-based [Bonfire Collective](#). Emma earned her M.S. in Outdoor and Environmental Education from Alaska Pacific University and has worked as an educator and guide at gyms, crags, and peaks around the American West.

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