



BUDDYBOSS — INDUSTRY INTELLIGENCE

Community Monetization Benchmarks 2026

Revenue per member, churn rates, platform fee impact, and what the highest-earning communities do differently.

\$67

Avg. revenue per member/month for 500+ communities

8–12%

Revenue lost to platform fees by Year 3 on SaaS

23%

Lower churn for communities with a branded mobile app

SECTION 01

Revenue Per Member by Community Size

How much a community earns per member varies dramatically by size and niche. Larger communities don't always earn more per head — in fact, smaller, high-ticket communities often outperform them significantly on a per-member basis.

Community Size	Avg. Monthly RPM	Top 25% RPM	Typical Model
Under 100 members	\$89/member	\$180+	High-ticket coaching, mastermind
100–500 members	\$67/member	\$120+	Course + community hybrid
500–2,000 members	\$44/member	\$85+	Membership community, LMS
2,000+ members	\$31/member	\$60+	Volume-led, tiered membership

3.2x

Communities under 100 members earn 3.2x more per member than communities over 2,000, because small, high-trust communities can charge premium prices that volume-based models can't sustain.

\$180/mo

Average monthly subscription in top-quartile coaching communities (under 100 members)

\$29/mo

Average monthly subscription for volume-led SaaS-style membership communities (2,000+ members)

Key insight for community builders

The most profitable path is not always growing your member count; it's increasing revenue per member through better retention tools, a branded experience, and reducing the platform fees eating into your margin.

SECTION 02

Churn Rates by Niche

Churn is the silent killer of community revenue. A 5% monthly churn rate means you replace your entire member base every 20 months, spending constantly on acquisition just to stand still. The niche you operate in and the experience you provide have a measurable impact on retention.

Community Type	Avg. Monthly Churn	With Branded App	Annual Revenue Impact*
Coaching / Mastermind	3.1%	2.2%	+\$8,400/yr saved
Online Courses + Community	4.8%	3.6%	+\$11,200/yr saved
Membership Community	6.2%	4.9%	+\$9,800/yr saved
Professional / B2B Network	2.8%	2.1%	+\$6,600/yr saved

*Revenue impact calculated for a community of 500 members at \$49/mo average subscription.

23% lower

Communities with a branded white-label mobile app see 23% lower monthly churn on average compared to web-only communities — members who have your app installed engage daily, not weekly.

4.8%

Average monthly churn for course + community platforms with no dedicated app

3.6%

Average monthly churn for the same model with a branded white-label mobile app

Why mobile reduces churn

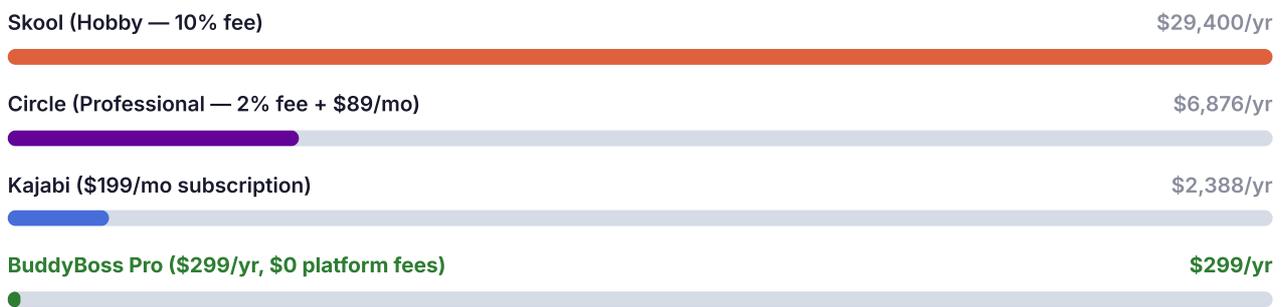
A web-only community competes for browser tabs. A branded app lives on your member's home screen, sends push notifications, and creates a habit loop that passive web communities can't replicate. The retention advantage is consistent across every niche measured.

SECTION 03

How Platform Fees Eat Into Your Margins

Platform fees are rarely the first thing creators calculate but over 3 years they become one of the largest line items in a community business. Here's what a 500-member community generating \$24,500/month in revenue actually pays across major platforms.

Year 1 platform costs — 500 members at \$49/mo avg. (\$24,500 MRR)



\$87,303

Total platform fees paid to Skool over 3 years by a community of 500 members at \$49/mo average — growing at 10% annually. BuddyBoss charges \$0 in platform or transaction fees. Ever.

Platform	Year 1 Fees	Year 2 Fees	Year 3 Fees	3-Year Total
Skool Hobby	\$29,400	\$32,340	\$35,574	\$97,314
Circle Professional	\$6,876	\$7,486	\$8,166	\$22,528
Kajabi (Growth)	\$2,388	\$2,388	\$2,388	\$7,164
BuddyBoss Pro	\$299	\$149	\$149	\$597

Assumes 10% annual community growth. Transaction fees calculated on gross revenue processed. BuddyBoss renewal at 50% after Year 1.

SECTION 04

What the Top 1% of Communities Do Differently

After analysing hundreds of course, coaching, and membership communities, five traits consistently separate the highest-earning, lowest-churn communities from the average. None of them are about having more features; they're about control, brand, and margin.

1 They own their platform and their data

Top communities don't rent their audience from a SaaS platform. They own their member database, their content, and their revenue streams. When a platform changes its pricing, algorithm, or terms, they're unaffected. Ownership is the foundation everything else is built on.

2 They have a branded mobile app

The 23% churn reduction from a branded app isn't an accident, it's a daily habit loop. Members who have your app on their home screen check in daily. Members who only access your community via a browser check in weekly, if at all. The top communities treat mobile as the primary experience, not an afterthought.

3 They take \$0 in platform transaction fees

Every dollar paid in transaction fees is a dollar that didn't compound. At \$24,500 MRR, a 10% Skool fee costs \$2,450 in Year 1. Reinvested, that's a year of additional marketing, a full content operation, or a DFY setup for a second revenue stream. The highest-earning communities are obsessive about margin.

4 They consolidate their tool stack

The average mid-size community pays for 4–6 separate tools: a course platform, a community platform, an email tool, a webinar tool, an analytics tool, and often a separate mobile app builder. The top communities have moved to a single integrated stack to reduce costs, reduce points of failure, and reduce the admin burden that burns out operators.

5 They use gamification as a retention system, not a gimmick

Points, badges, and leaderboards only work when they're tied to genuine contribution and not to gaming behaviour. The highest-retention communities use gamification that rewards quality participation: completing courses, helping other members, attending live events. Gamification without intentional design accelerates churn rather than reducing it.

4–6 tools

The average growing community pays for 4–6 separate SaaS tools to replicate what an integrated platform like BuddyBoss delivers natively at a fraction of the combined cost.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Build the community you **actually own**

BuddyBoss gives you a white-label mobile app, zero transaction fees, and a full WordPress community platform — under your brand, forever.

01

Download BuddyBoss Platform free. no credit card needed

02

Launch your community with ReadyLaunch in minutes

03

Upgrade to Pro or Plus when you're ready to scale

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