FOUNDING MEMBERSHIPS

The club that had to stop selling memberships

How two padel clubs turned memberships into cash for operating costs, before court revenue arrived. One in central London. One in a town of 40,000 people.

£150k+	200+	5	0
COLLECTED IN MONTH ONE	FOUNDING MEMBERSHIPS	COURTS	COURT HOURS RENTED YET

The problem every new club has

The build is paid. The team is hired. Rent, salaries and electricity start on day one. Court revenue does not. It takes months to fill the evenings, and until then the club runs on the owner's savings or a loan. Most clubs accept this as normal. Some do not.

Case 1: central London

A padel club in central London opened its own branded app, powered by SmashClub, next to the booking platform it already used. Before the courts were ready, it offered a limited number of founding memberships, paid annually.

In the first month after launch, more than 200 players paid. Over £150,000 went straight into the club's own Stripe account. Then the club closed sales: the founders' places were gone.

All of it happened before the first court was booked.

Why it worked

1. **A fixed number.** Founding memberships were limited. A limit is what makes people pay today instead of next month.
2. **A price with a story.** The founding price was set at roughly 16 hours of court time, not as a discount. Members were buying a place in the club, not cheaper games.
3. **Real founder benefits.** Early access to courts and events, points and rewards in the app, a status other players can see.
4. **The club's own app.** Players joined and paid in the club's branded app. The club set the price, the benefits and the moment to stop.

Per court: 40+ founding members and £30,000+ collected before opening. That is the number to remember. The total depends on how many courts you build.

CASE 2 · PAPHOS, CYPRUS

Same mechanic, small town

Central London is not a typical market. So here is the other end of the scale: a six-court club in Paphos, a town of about 40,000 people, where a court hour costs around €27.

Eight months after launching its SmashClub app, the club has **200 members**: 120 on paid plans, from €120 a year, some at €400, and 80 on a free plan that keeps them inside the club's app and rewards.

Paid annually, in advance. The free plan is the list the club sells the next upgrade to.

WHAT A CLUB GETS FROM MEMBERSHIPS

Cash before revenue

Court bookings pay you after the game. Memberships pay you before it. For a new club that covers the first months of rent and salaries. For an open club it covers the slow season. Both clubs kept their booking platform.

The math for your city

Two real clubs give two real ratios. London: about 45 founding members per court, at a price of about 16 court hours. Paphos: 20 paying members per court, at about 4.5 court hours. We put a six-court club in seven markets and applied both ratios, plus a middle target of 30 members per court at 10 court hours. Court prices are 90-day averages from public booking data, September 2026.

MARKET	COURT PRICE	CONSERVATIVE Paphos ratios	TARGET 30 per court	STRONG LAUNCH London ratios
Paris	€48/h	€26k	**€86k**	€206k
Dubai	€48/h	€26k	**€86k**	€206k
Manchester area	€38/h	€21k	**€69k**	€165k
Limassol	€36/h	€19k	**€65k**	€155k
Berlin	€33/h	€18k	**€60k**	€144k
Paphos	€27/h	€15k	**€49k**	€117k
Madrid	€16/h	€9k	**€29k**	€70k

Cash collected up front, six-court club, rounded. Formula: members per court × courts × court hours × local court price. The conservative column is exactly what the Paphos club did. Even in Madrid, Europe's cheapest padel market, the target scenario brings close to €30,000 before the first booking.

What the club needs

- A launch date 6 to 10 weeks away, or an open club with a quiet season ahead
- A fixed number of founding places and a short list of real benefits
- A Stripe account. The money goes to the club, not to us. The booking platform stays

What SmashClub does

- Branded club app and web portal, set up in 1 to 2 working days
- Membership plans, joining fees, family plans and renewals via Stripe
- Points, rewards, early access and events. Works alongside Playtomic and other booking systems

See what this looks like for your club
A 30-minute call. We bring the numbers for your city.

smashclub.io/book-demo