

Club Evaluation

AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

CHANCES ARE, YOU ARE READING THIS BECAUSE YOUR AD CLUB OR FEDERATION IS INTERESTED IN GROWING ITS MEMBERSHIP, RETAINING CURRENT MEMBERS AND INCREASING ITS REVENUE. TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS, YOU NEED TO TAKE SEVERAL STEPS. THE FIRST AND MOST CRITICAL STEP IS A PROPER ASSESSMENT OF YOUR CLUB AND MARKET. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUGGESTED PROCEDURE YOU CAN FOLLOW TO MEASURE YOUR ORGANIZATION.

1. ESTABLISH AN ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Because members are the club's primary asset, the makeup of an assessment committee is crucial. While the size of the committee depends on your club's membership size, we suggest that at least six people in addition to the chairman should be assigned to this committee.

1a. The Chairman

Consider asking your first vice president/president-elect to serve as the chairman of this project. Chairing the committee can be a strong leadership-training experience and help prepare this officer for the term of club president. In addition, your president-elect will have a vested interest in this project because membership growth will impact the success of his/her presidency.

1b. The Committee

Consider asking your board of directors to serve as the members of this committee. Along with the club's first vice president/president-elect, your board members will have a vested interest in the success of this project because it will assist them with their individual goals and commitments to the board. By being educated on the dynamics of your club and market, board members will be better equipped to lead and manage your club since membership information is interrelated to all other club functions. In addition, board members are

knowledgeable about the club's mission, areas of operation and programs. This dynamic is crucial to the success of your goals.

2. HOW TO ASSESS YOUR CLUB

You will compile and assess three groups of information:

- **Group A** Facts and information you currently have.
- **Group B** Information you need to gather by asking your members.
- **Group C** Information you want to compile from non-members and prospective members.

To gather the data for Groups B and C, we have included a sample survey you can use to poll these groups.

- **Group A** Facts and information you currently have.

1. Evaluate your club in terms of composition (demographic profile) by examining the following for each member:

- Age/Gender
- Industry segment
- Job category (level and rank)
- Self-sponsored or company-sponsored membership.

2. Evaluate your club in terms of benefits.

- Define current benefits and evaluate their success.

3. Evaluate the following:

3a. Club portfolios, to assess whether or not they provide benefit to membership.

Assess the following:

- Socials
- Programs
- ADDY® Awards
- Public service
- Other club activities

3b. Revenue performance

- Trends
- Future needs
- Income-generating programs and projects vs. non-income-generating programs and projects

3c. Board members' and officers' performance

- Board meeting attendance
- Event attendance
- Committee involvement
- Committee performance
- Advocates for the board

3d. Membership attrition (for each former member)

- Length of membership
- When did the member join? When did the member drop out?
- Based on level of career

4. Evaluate the competitive environment.

- Identify all other advertising-related organizations in your community and define their target markets.
- Determine which organizations are competing directly with your club.
- Develop a membership dues and benefits comparison.

5. Evaluate local market trends.

- The local economy
- Business won/lost/relocated
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Layoffs and closings

•Group B Information you need to gather by asking your members.

Ascertain current membership's assessment of benefits, services and club image in terms of value and how well the club is doing. Evaluate the following for each member, based on his/her responses:

- Perception of the club within the market
- Perception of the club within the community
- Reason for membership
- Level of involvement/attendance at event
- Perception of benefits
- Perception of programs
- Employer support
- Suggestions for improvement
- Professional development needs

•Group C Information you want to compile from non-members and prospective members.

Ascertain information about the benefits, services and awareness of the club that would be valuable to a prospective member. Evaluate the following for each non-member or prospective member, based on his/her responses:

- Demographics
- Professional development needs
- Interest in benefits and services
- Awareness of club
- Reluctance to join
- Past involvement
- Logistics
- Pricing structure
- Preferred meeting location
- Preferred meeting time of day

3. SETTING OBJECTIVES AND DEFINING STRATEGIES

Research will determine your club's strengths and weaknesses, which will serve as the basis for developing your membership growth objectives and strategies.

Objectives

The rationale for objectives should flow directly from the research process, common sense and creative thinking. Objectives should be reasonable and realistic, based on the potential for membership in your community, financial and human resources, and the club's ability to serve more members effectively. The Assessment Committee should establish objectives for membership recruitment, retention and involvement.

Suggested Objectives

- Increase membership by 10 percent over a three-year period.
- Decrease membership attrition by 5 percent.
- Improve member participation and involvement.
- Increase club revenues by X percent.
- Increase awareness of the club's activities within the membership and/or within the local community.
- Promote the advertising profession.

Strategies

Strategies are activities, tasks and tools that should be designed to achieve the objectives set forth. To identify and define the activities, tasks and tools, your board should do the following:

- Develop a flow chart with specific projects and assignments.
- Develop a timeline of action.
- Establish a financial plan to fund this project.
- Meet regularly to assess progress.

4. TOOLS YOU CAN USE TO HELP DETERMINE AND IMPLEMENT YOUR STRATEGIES

Included in this kit are samples of the following items that you can use and adapt to your club's specific objectives, strategies, needs and goals:

Target marketing piece (club membership/marketing brochure).

- What it should say
- Who should receive the brochure
- How to use it
- Other adaptations of the marketing piece
- Press releases
- Meeting announcement
- Club activities
 - ADDY® Awards
 - Programs
 - Public service projects
 - Election results
- Member testimonials (sample quotes provided)
- Feedback forms
 - Programs
 - Socials
 - ADDY® Awards
 - Communications
 - Others as deemed necessary

5. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

From your research you might learn information that will affect the general health of your club in the future. You will want to evaluate this information and work it into other areas of club operations.

Once you have assessed your club's membership, you understand the organization's strengths and weaknesses, and you have identified its potential for growth, this guide provides materials to help maximize your efforts.

The benefits of club membership are identified so you will be well prepared to discuss membership advantages. A kit is provided for your board of directors and/or membership committee describing how to market your club effectively for membership

growth. A sample brochure is offered as a marketing tool. Ideas are also provided for prospecting efforts.

In addition to the tools necessary for a successful new-membership effort, this kit provides information and tactics to help you retain members. A satisfied and happy membership, whose professional needs are being met, is a crucial component of any membership development plan.

While many materials in this kit are ready to use by your club, some must be tailored and customized for your local needs. The intention of this guide is to lay out a plan, providing a range of materials to make your club's membership development effort as easy as possible.