

## Attracting Members to Rotary

Let's face it - attracting members to join a service organization is not an easy task. In fact, oftentimes, we see that even though the majority of people are aware of Rotary, only a few know what Rotarians actually do. The prospective members that we try and recruit are often our friends, colleagues or family members. These are people that are easy to recruit because you share a personal relationship with them and can easily explain the work of Rotarians to them.

The question then arises, how do we attract those outside of our personal radar to Rotary? How do we attract the younger generation to become Rotarians? Essentially, it is about publicity.

- 1. Take Advantage of Social Media** - Your social media channels (i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, etc) can help you reach a wider audience. Promote your events, accomplishments and club or District pictures on social media channels and drive traffic back to your website, where visitors can read more about the wonderful things your club does. This idea is - you always want to be where your audience is, so that you can easily communicate with them.
- 2. Make it a Media Event** - Invite your local newspaper journalist to cover your next Rotary event or simply inquire about having an article published about your current project. By promoting your club through a local media outlet, you can share more information about your Rotary club to members of your own community. By doing so, you generate interest about Rotary among those who you may have never reached otherwise.
- 3. Host an Open House** - Invite members of your local community to a lively membership night! Play some ice-breaker games so prospective members and members of your club can socialize. Invite a prominent community member to give a short talk on a hot topic. Have some marketing collaterals ready to give out at this event that consist of information about your club, activities and Rotary. This way, prospective members have something conclusive to take away and read. Invite all prospective members at the membership night to attend your next regular club meeting so they can get a feel of what the dynamic of the club is like. Those who are really interested will attend and you'll have an opportunity to formally invite them to join the club.
- 4. Get Involved in Local Events** - By being where your audience is, you have the potential to reach an array of potential members. Consider participating in local events such as the local community picnic. Your club can set up a booth and either sell items (e.g. lemonade) or can simply open a stand to collect donations for a specific charity. Not only is this a great way to fundraise but it will also give you the opportunity to meet and greet with potential members who if interested can sign up for your newsletter and take some collateral with them to learn more about your club.
- 5. Create Partnerships** - Think of your club as a brand. When businesses want to reach a wider audience, they often form partnerships with other companies, also known as co-branding. Similarly, you can form an alliance with another club or an organization that you regularly deal with, whereby you can consider 'joint venture co-branding'. You can then work with the organization to come up with a way to market your club effectively. For example, if you partner with a local school, sports team or even charity, you can consider donating a percentage of membership dues you receive from new members back to the organization. Find a specific project or cause that fits the goals of both organizations for maximum success, and use each organization's strengths to pull it through. For instance, you may have the manpower to source volunteers but the partner organization may have the broad reach of a wide audience. This concept would not only give your club that added publicity of a larger event, but would essentially be your marketing strategy to entice prospective members to join.



There are many ways we can attract new members or at least generate interest about Rotary. To generate interest, we have to spread awareness amongst our audience by utilizing the channels they use. Essentially, we always want to be where our audience is. By targeting people outside of our personal radar, we have the opportunity to reach a wider audience, which if done effectively, can help clubs reach their membership goals sooner.

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