FAQs

- **What is the purpose of a Rotary e-club?**

  - The purpose of a Rotary e-club is to extend Rotary to business, professional and community leaders in any Rotary District who are unable to meet traditional attendance requirements. Inability to attend a traditional Rotary club could be the result of demanding business or professional commitments, extensive travel, confinement due to ill health or disability, or residence beyond reasonable distance from an existing Rotary club.

- **Is a Rotary e-club just a "virtual" club that lacks Rotary service?**

  - Rotary e-clubs are not "virtual" Rotary clubs. We are real Rotary clubs comprised of real living, breathing, working Rotarians doing real Rotary projects. We simply use the Internet as a tool to manage the club and manage projects. Use of the word "virtual" in the Rotary context is deemed to be inappropriate, because Rotary works in the real world, not in the virtual world. A Rotary e-club is part of the real world of Rotary International.

- **What are the 5 key goals of every Rotary e-club?**

  - When Rotary E-Club One received its charter on 4 January 2002, the Board of Directors of RI prescribed 5 key goals, all of which now apply to every Rotary e-club:

  1. Use the Internet to retain Rotarians who would otherwise be lost to Rotary.
  2. Use the Internet to attract new Rotarians.
  3. Use the Internet to facilitate meetings.
  4. Use the Internet to manage service projects.
  5. Use the Internet for fellowship by creating a friendly community of like-minded Rotarians.

- **What are the attributes of successful Rotary e-clubs?**

  - Successful Rotary e-clubs (pure e-club model or hybrid e-club model) have a number of common attributes including:

  1. clarity of purpose
  2. commitment to excellence
  3. intelligent leadership
  4. sound organizational planning
  5. meaningful projects and activities
  6. continuous contact with members
  7. harmonious member interactions and fellowship
  8. careful membership development
  9. close engagement with the Rotary District
  10. effective use of appropriate technologies

  Many Rotarians are surprised to see "technologies" as item 10 at the bottom of the list, rather than at the top. The most successful Rotary e-clubs knew from the beginning that technology is purely an enabler, nothing more.

- **What is a pure Rotary e-club?**

  - A pure Rotary e-club conducts 100% of its Rotary business on the Internet.

  Typically, members have one face-to-face dinner meeting per year, usually at the RI Convention. Members are likely to come from a wide geographic area which may be global. Rotary service is undertaken in the community where a member lives, or groups of members collaborate and work together as teams on service projects in needy communities where no member resides. Rotary E-Club One is a good example of a pure Rotary e-club.

- **What is a hybrid Rotary e-club?**

  - A hybrid Rotary e-club conducts most of its Rotary business on the Internet, but meets face-to-face once a month for a dinner meeting. A hybrid Rotary e-club is a good option when all the members live within a relatively compact geographic area that enables them to travel to the monthly face-to-face meeting. Rotary service projects are undertaken within the geographic area and beyond. Rotary E-Club of 3310 Singapore is a good example of a hybrid Rotary e-club.

- **Can a Rotary e-club change from the pure model to the hybrid model or vice versa?**

  - Rotary International does not prescribe which model a Rotary e-club adopts at any time in its life. This means that a Rotary e-club is at liberty to change its model at any time. However, there is an important strategic question to be addressed - what impact would the change of model have upon retention of current members and membership development? Because a Rotary e-club is a finite "asset" of the Rotary District (maximum limit of two Rotary e-clubs per district) it would be prudent to consult with the district before changing the model.

- **What is the Rotary International naming policy for Rotary e-clubs?**

  - The Board of Directors of RI has mandated that the generic name is Rotary e-clubs. This requires "e-club" to be in lower case letters with a hyphen included as shown. The word "Rotary" must always precede the word "e-club". When referring to the name of a specific Rotary e-club, as named upon its charter document, the letter e must become upper case, for example Rotary E-Club of District 3310. There has been some confusion about this RI naming protocol because it is inconsistent with the international standard which is eTrade, eHealth, eBanking, eSecurity, eCommerce, eClub etc with no hyphen separating the e.

- **What is the URL naming protocol for a Rotary e-club?**

  - The typical method is www.rotaryeclubxxxx.org the xxxx being the Rotary District number, or the geographic location of the Rotary e-club. Here are two examples:

  • http://www.rotaryeclub3310.org
  • http://www.rotaryeclublatinoamerica.org

- **Why "Rotary e-club" and not "Rotary cyber club"?**

  - In 2004, the Board of Rotary eClub One submitted a proposal to the Board of RI recommending that the descriptor "cyber club" be abandoned in favor of "eClub". The proposal was based on the premise that Rotary, as an international NGO, should follow the established naming protocol of the United Nations - eGovernment, eTrade, eCommerce, eBanking, eHealth etc. The Board of RI endorsed this proposal and issued a directive that online Rotary clubs must no longer be referred to as "cyber-clubs". Additionally, the Board of RI directed that the word "eClub" must always be preceded with the word "Rotary".

- **If I establish the first Rotary e-club in my country, may I call it "e-club one" or "Rotary one" e-club?**

  - No, you cannot. "Rotary E-Club One" is a unique name, authorized for the sole use of the Rotary E-Club of District 5450 by Rotary International, in recognition of the status of the Rotary E-Club One of District 5450 as the first Rotary club on the World Wide Web. No other Rotary club may be described as or be referred to as "Rotary E-Club One", or "E-Club One" in any manner whatsoever. The name "Rotary E-Club One" is a Trademark of Rotary International of Evanston Illinois, USA. "Rotary One" and "Rotary/One" is a unique name, authorized for the sole use of the Rotary Club of Chicago, in recognition of the Rotary Club of Chicago as the first traditional Rotary club. No other Rotary club may be described as or be referred to as "Rotary One", or "Rotary/One" in any manner whatsoever. The name "Rotary/One" is a Trademark of Rotary International of Evanston Illinois, USA.

- **If a Rotary e-club has members located in different countries, in what language does it conduct its business?**

  - At the time of its formation a Rotary e-club commits to the single language in which it will operate. Currently there are Rotary e-clubs operating in the following languages: English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Finnish, Portuguese, and Spanish. Some Rotary e-clubs offer a language selection menu in the public area of their website so that text can be read in more than one language.

- **Can a Rotary e-club admit a new member from a country where Rotary does not exist?**

  - No it cannot. Rotary International expressly forbids membership of any person domiciled in any country where Rotary does not exist.

- **Why does a typical Rotary e-club have a public website for visitors and make-up attendance, and a separate members' clubhouse that is closed to visitors?**

  - Internet security is of paramount importance. We must protect our members and their immediate families from identity theft and other fraudulent activity that could threaten their privacy, their security, or their personal safety.

  Personal details of each member, and a member's immediate family, are stored in the Clubhouse which also contains the club's Board minutes, financial reports, service project administration, and discussion forums for every member to access and read. Information is stored in a secure database protected by AES 256-bit encryption security.

  IMPORTANT NOTE - Information security, in the context of Rotary e-club administration, must be given top priority. Many countries have stringent privacy laws in relation to the collection, use, disclosure, security and access to personal information.

- **Does a secure clubhouse create a "secret society" version of Rotary?**

  - Of course not. The Clubhouse offers every member 24/7 access to Board meeting minutes, financial reports, committee meeting minutes, Rotary service reports, project plans, discussion forums, weekly meeting notes and every other aspect of club management and operations.

  The District Governor and the Assistant District Governor each have a "key to the Clubhouse door" with their own user name and password for access any time they choose. Most traditional Rotary clubs do not allow this level of scrutiny by the DG.

- **How are members of Rotary e-clubs encouraged to login to the clubhouse?**

  - The meetings of traditional Rotary clubs must offer high quality programs (speakers), service projects for which members share a passion, interesting interactive forums and enjoyable fellowship between members. The Clubhouse of a Rotary e-club must offer exactly the same high quality content to maintain members' interest and encourage regular attendance. Members of Rotary e-clubs are expected to visit their online Clubhouse at least once a week. Rotary E-Club One uses its Clubhouse to keep members connected, informed and inspired.

- **What online meeting software is used by Rotary E-Club One?**

  - We use GoToMeeting, a Web-hosted service created and marketed by Citrix Online, a division of Citrix Systems. This is remote meeting and desktop sharing software that enables a member of Rotary E-Club One to meet with other members, collaborate with fellow Rotarians in organizing and managing service projects, and attend meetings with others via the Internet in real-time. Some Rotary e-clubs use similar collaboration software from other vendors to facilitate their meetings in real-time.

- **Is there any low cost collaboration software suitable for a new Rotary e-club that may have a very limited operating budget?**

  - Yes there is. Glance Networks provides a simple one-button screen sharing tool that lets people instantly show their live PC or Mac screens to anyone online. Glance allows screen sharing for up to 100 participants. Rotary E-Club One used Glance during our early years and we found it was simple, stable and reliable at a relatively low cost.

- **What etiquette is expected during Rotary meetings online?**

  - • Check that the computer you are using has collaboration software installed
  • Ensure you have the correct dial-in number and meeting access code
  • Log on before the start of the meeting (late arrivals break the flow of discussions)
  • Be aware of background noise at your location that could intrude
  • State your name whenever you speak
  • Concentrate on meeting content and avoid distractions around you
  • Take notes to help you summarize your thoughts and make succinct comments
  • Speak clearly at a measured pace
  • Avoid speaking over the top of other participants
  • Follow the guidance of the meeting moderator and be respectful of others

- **What online payment system is best for a Rotary e-club to receive club membership dues and accept member contributions to The Rotary Foundation?**

  - It is essential that a new Rotary e-club establishes a financial structure that ensures the best utilization of club finances, effective cash flow management, fund-raising procedures, transparent accountability and legal and taxation obligations. An effective system enables the club to forecast the availability of funds for operational activities and projects as funds are required. There are numerous payment systems available for receiving payments. PayPal is a good option for a small start-up Rotary e-club because it is very simple, and credit cards are accepted with no requirement for the credit card user to have a PayPal account. PayPal payment records provide up-to-date revenue data.

- **In what currency does a Rotary e-club conduct its business?**

  - Each Rotary e-club operates in the currency of its Rotary District. e.g. Rotary E-Club of 3310 - Singapore Dollars (SGD), Rotary E-Club of London Centenary - British Pounds (GBP), Rotary E-Club One, Colorado - US Dollars (USD). For a number of practical and legal reasons, the Treasurer of Rotary E-Club One must always be a US citizen.

- **Why does Rotary E-Club One require 12 hours service per quarter as a mandatory condition of membership?**

  - **Please note that this is a membership requirement of Rotary E-Club One. It is not a rule of Rotary International.**

  Each member of Rotary E-Club One must commit to a minimum of 12 hours Rotary service per calendar quarter, or lose membership. People who wish to join Rotary E-Club One are informed of our Rotary service rule when they first inquire about membership. At this point some people withdraw their membership application, while others proceed and become part of our deep commitment to Service Above Self. Our secure Clubhouse has a system for recording members' service hours as they are reported each month. Many of our members contribute more than 12 hours Rotary service per quarter.

- **How does a Rotarian transfer membership from a traditional Rotary club to a Rotary e-club?**

  - Because each Rotary e-club is self-governing, just as each traditional Rotary club is self-governing, membership is not transferable. Once an existing Rotarian has satisfied the membership criteria of a particular Rotary e-club, and has been accepted for membership, he or she should resign membership in the former Rotary club as of the admittance date to the Rotary e-club. The Secretary of the Rotary e-club will advise RI of the new membership, using the Rotarian's former Rotary membership number so as to retain membership history and avoid duplicate records at RI.

- **How does a Rotarian confirm his or her membership number?**

  - Every Rotarian has a unique membership number, held in a central database at RI.

  Rotarians have three ways to get their membership identification number:

  • Check the address label of your copy of The Rotarian or official Rotary regional magazine. The identification number is located directly over your name.
  • E-mail RI's Data Services Department , and ask to have this information faxed or mailed to you.
  • Ask your club President or Secretary.

  Please note that RI prohibits giving membership identification numbers over the phone or via e-mail.

  Club Presidents and Secretaries: You can get your club members' identification numbers online via Member Access. If you're not already registered, be sure to have your district, club, and membership identification numbers ready. Once you have registered, you will be able to view your club's membership records.

- **How important is Rotary district involvement in the establishment of a new Rotary e-club?**

  - Rotary District involvement in design, planning, establishment and ongoing quality assurance is essential. It is critically important that the Rotary District recognizes that a Rotary e-club is a valuable asset, requiring the investment of intelligent planning and careful attention to detail.

- **Where can my Rotary district get more information about how to plan and establish a Rotary e-club?**

  - The purpose of www.rotaryeclubs.com is to provide practical information on the establishment and operation of a successful Rotary e-club. There are critical strategic decisions (some quite complex) that a Rotary District must address before prescribing the type of Rotary e-club (pure or hybrid) and membership reach (district or global). Unless these fundamental issues and their key drivers are addressed at the very beginning, there is the risk of failure.

  A helpful resource for the exchange of information about Rotary e-clubs is at the Facebook group ROTARY E-CLUBS. Visit this Facebook page for more information.

  Register online to receive news updates and alerts.

- **What membership composition will aid the success of a new Rotary e-club?**

- In the first year, at least 50% of the total membership should be Rotarians or former Rotarians. A Rotarian joining a new Rotary e-club as a Charter Member must resign membership in his or her existing Rotary club by the time the new Rotary e-club is admitted to RI. A former Rotarian is any person who has been a member of a Rotary club in the past.

The optimal composition of the Board of a new Rotary e-club in its first year of operation is 100% Rotarians or former Rotarians. The Rotary e-clubs proof of concept pilot study revealed that e-clubs that filled Board positions in the first year with people who had no former Rotary experience, were more likely to lose the ethos of Rotary and encounter serious operational problems caused by a lack of understanding of Rotary's mission and values.

- **In the context of a hybrid Rotary e-club, what are teams?**

- Some Rotary Districts, that are large in geographic size, are exploring the idea of having teams within a hybrid Rotary e-club, each team co-ordinated by a "team captain" reporting to the club's Board. The purpose of teams is not to divide the Rotary e-club, but to create cohesive sub-groups containing members who are no more than 2-hours by car from each other. This could enable members to participate more effectively in a community service team that is involved in projects within their part of the District, while engaging with the entire membership of the Rotary e-club via the Internet.

- **What is the web address of Rotary E-Club One?**

-The web address for Rotary E-Club One is www.rotaryeclubone.org

- **What are the technical requirements of a typical Rotary e-club?**

- There are the seven basic technical requirements:

1. A user-friendly website that makes members and visitors feel welcome
2. A secure online members-only clubhouse to protect members' privacy
3. A secure online forum for members to share thoughts, ideas and plans
4. A secure payment system for membership subscriptions and donations
5. Collaboration software for meetings (eg GoToMeeting or Glance)
6. Free voice communications (eg Skype or Freshtel Firefly)
7. An online make-up registration system for visiting Rotarians.

- **Do Rotary e-clubs require a special constitution?**

- The standard Rotary club constitution now has specific articles for Rotary e-clubs.

- **What is the attendance rule for members of a Rotary e-club?**

- Rotary International has very strict rules about attendance. A Rotary e-club is required to "hold a regular meeting once each week by posting an interactive activity on the club's web site…" At Rotary E-Club One these meetings are posted weekly in our Fellowship Forum within our secure clubhouse. Each club member receives an email reminder when each meeting is posted.

The Club Administration Committee checks and documents Fellowship Forum visits to ensure that members comply witrh the attendance requirement.

- **Can a member of a Rotary e-club visit traditional Rotary clubs for fellowship and make-ups?**

  - Yes. A member of a Rotary e-club is a Rotarian and is therefore entitled to make-up at any traditional Rotary club or at any Rotary e-club.

- **For how long must a visiting Rotarian log-in to a web-based Rotary e-club to qualify for a make-up credit?**

  - You must visit the website of the Rotary e-club for a minimum of 30 minutes. Please note that this is 30+ continuous minutes. You cannot claim a make-up credit if you have 6 x 5 minute visits in a week. Many visiting Rotarians stay longer than the minimum 30 minutes because website content is very interesting and informative.