

# Rotary District 7090 Survey Results

May 2023



## **Purposes of the Survey**

To provide direction for the Strategic Plan for the District by identifying the areas that are most valuable for action during the coming 3 years, and specifically in 2023 – 2024

To generate feedback for the District Executive which identifies how the members of District 7090 view the actions of the past year in terms of value and effectiveness

To review the actions of the plan from the year(s) previous and determine which have been implemented and/or which have become part of the “operation” of the District.

The Survey was conducted over a two-week period between April 29 and May 11, 2023

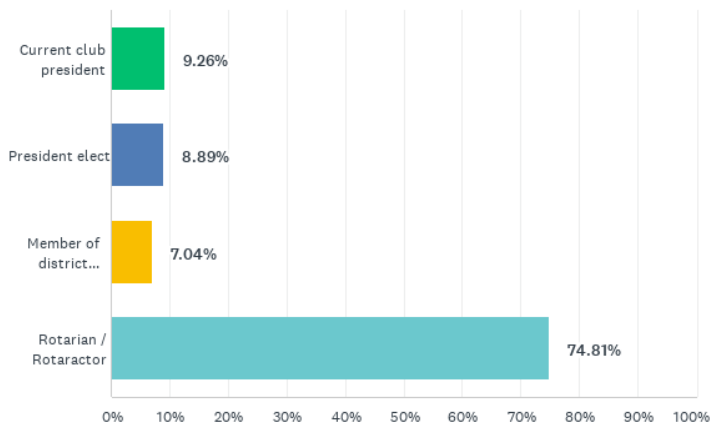


## Who Responded to the Survey

In 2021 – 2022, the survey was opened to all Rotarians and Rotaractors in District 7090. This, then, is only the second year in which all Rotarians in the District have been asked to complete the survey.

- 316 Rotarians and Rotaractors responded from the base of approximately 1850 – a response rate of 17%. This is up considerably from last year – where only 251 Rotarians answered the survey.

Q13 Please share your role in your club / district to help us see differences among responses to our survey

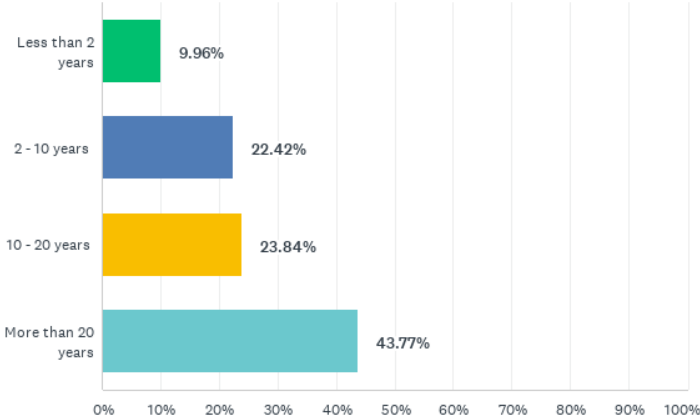


- 18.2% of the respondents were in their presidential year or were President-Elect of their respective clubs.
- 7% were members of District Council
- 74.8% were Rotarians or Rotaractors not associated with the roles noted above.

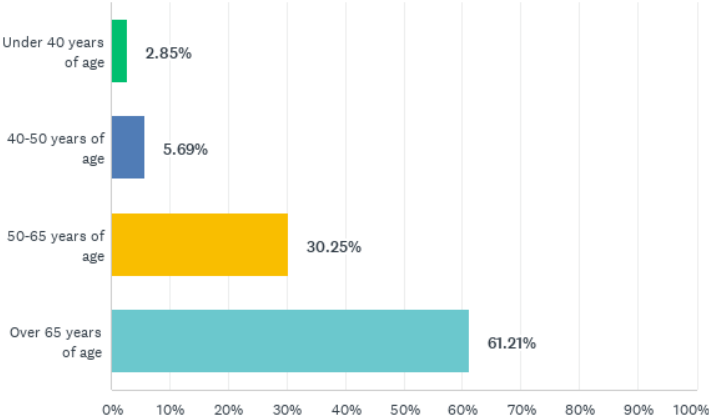
Note: The percentage Rotarians/Rotaractors not in District Council or in an immediate top leadership role in their clubs who responded increased from 67% to almost 75% during the current year. Hopefully, this percentage will continue to increase in the future as more Rotarians become aware of the role of the district as it relates to their club.

In addition, the following information was gathered about the respondents – their age and the number of years in Rotary.

Q15 How long have you been in Rotary?



Q14 Knowing the age of our members often helps to customize elements of the Strategic Plan. Please let us know what category fits with your age.



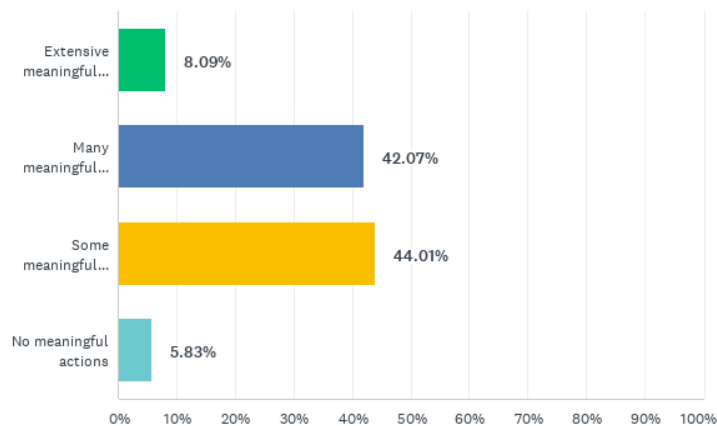
## District Effectiveness

Note: This year, we have tried to maintain a 4-point response system wherever possible. This sometimes provides data in a little bit different light than a 5-point system. However, the 4-point response system effectively promotes respondents to move to “one side or the other” and not take a mid-point.

Our District is here to serve the clubs and members in the administrative area called District 7090. The Mission is “to inspire and support all the clubs in Rotary District 7090 to be the best that they can be”. The first question in the District Survey asked how well we have done in aspiring to this mission.

To what extent has the district taken meaningful actions that have helped you/your club to this point in the Rotary year?

Q1 District 7090's mission statement is to "inspire and support all the clubs in District 7090 to be the best they can be." To what extent has the district taken meaningful action that have helped you/your club to this point in the Rotary Year.



ANSWER CHOICES	2022	2023
Extensive meaningful actions	6.02%	8.1%
Many meaningful actions	28.5%	42.1%
Some meaningful actions	55%	44.0%
No meaningful actions	10%	5.8%

NOTE: Nearly 95% indicated that the District had done some, many or extensive meaningful actions during the current year, an increase of 6% from the previous year. In addition, the number of respondents indicating “many” meaningful actions increased significantly.

However, in 2022, 55% said the district did many or an extensive number of meaningful events. In 2023, that number is now 50% selected many or an extensive number – not necessarily

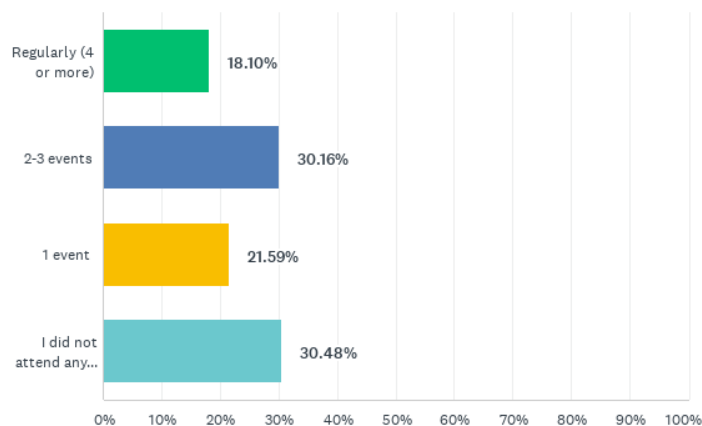


statistically significant but not necessarily moving in the direction desired. The good news is that if you filter out the opinions of Presidents, President Elects and District Council members (who are likely closer to what is going on in the District, 47% of the average Rotarian says we are doing many or an extensive number of meaningful actions. Only 8% of the average Rotarian who answered this survey said there were no meaningful actions taken this past year.

The district has devoted much volunteer time and effort in 2022 – 2023 to support its mission and provide leadership in helping clubs to find new ideas and become more vibrant.

Question #2 asked individuals about their personal involvement during the year in district-led or initiated events such as WebTalks, Rotary Leadership Institute, District Conference, President-Elect Training and the Great Lakes Watershed Clean-Up.

Q2 To support its mission, District 7090 has played a lead role in helping clubs find new ideas and become even more vibrant. How much have you personally participated in these events such as WebTalks, Rotary Leadership Institute, President-Elect Training, District Conference, Great Lakes Watershed Clean-Up over the past 12 months



ANSWER CHOICES	2022	2023
Regularly (4 or more)	16.8	18.1
2 - 3	32.4	30.2
1	18.4	21.6
None	32.4	30.5

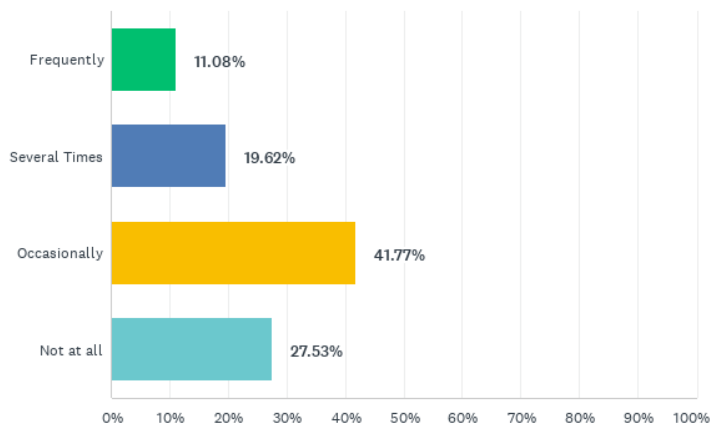
This is just the second year for this question to be answered by all possible district Rotarians and it is a step in the positive direction that the number of Rotarians who have not been involved at the District level has been reduced from 32.4% to 30.5%. The remaining categories are not significantly different, year over year.

Again if you filter out the President Elects, Presidents and members of District Council, 37.6% attended 2 or more events this past year compared to 48% when you look at the complete sample.

Communications with members will always be a difficult one. Rotary is no exception to the changes that are taking place so rapidly in this area. Most organizations are struggling to find the best way to “keep in touch” without overwhelming members. The District website has been updated recently and many more resources added ... to assist members in areas such as public image, membership and Foundation.

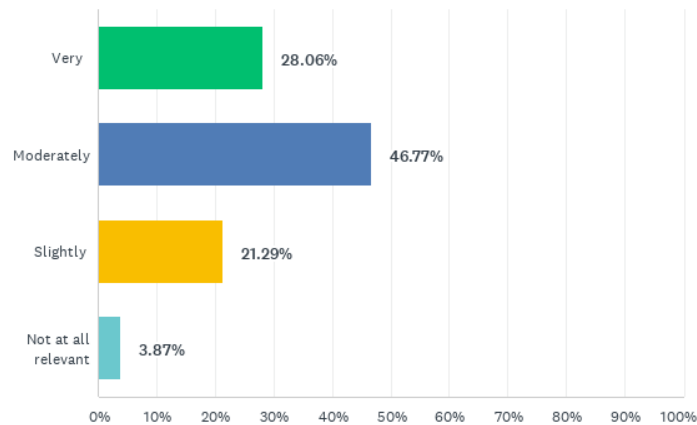
Question #3 asked how often members have used these resources on the District 7090 website over the past 12 months. The results will provide a basis for comparison for future years.

Q3 The District website has been updated recently and many more resources added ... to assist you in areas such as public image, membership, foundation. How often have you used these resources on the District 7090 website over the past 12 months?



Within a world-wide organization of 1.4 million members, the organization of the administration is crucial to the organization in several ways. The district is often seen as being an intermediary between the members/clubs ... and Rotary International. The district is there to serve its members and to help members appreciate the “big picture” of Rotary on a global scale. Members were asked to rate the relevancy of the District for both the member and the club.

Q4 Please rate the relevancy of the District for you/your club in the current Rotary Year?



Note that this is one of the questions which has been changed from a 5-point to a 4-point response format. Consequently, the results may not be directly comparable.

ANSWER CHOICES	2022	2023
Very	16.8	28.1
Relevant	30.9	n/a
Moderately	32.3	46.8
Slightly	16.9	21.3
Not at all relevant	5.47	3.9

In the current strategic plan, we had a relevance rating of 66% in June 2020. We set a goal in this plan of achieving a goal of 76% relevance rating. This year's results were very close to goal – with a 74% relevance rating.

Again the results do not differ much – whether you have all the results as noted in chart above or just look at how those who are NOT Presidents, President Elects or members of District Council scored. 72% of this portion of the sample found district to be very relevant or relevant.



## POTENTIAL STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIONS

In the two months prior to the survey being sent out for member responses, a number of meetings were held in which members were given the opportunity to provide input for the key areas of the strategic plan for the upcoming year(s).

Members of District 7090 are involved in the process in a several ways with the lead taking place at the district level by the appropriate chair for Strategic Planning, the District Governor “chain”, Past District Governors, Committee Chairs and members of committees, Presidents-Elect, Assistant Governors, and District Council.

As is always the case in the development plans like these, there are some people who will be more impacted by the plan than others. However, any member who wants to provide input to the product can do so as part of the plan development process including this survey.

The survey results and the draft Strategic Plan are circulated for input to test some of the possible ideas to see if members see benefit and value in them. Time is set aside for any member to provide input. Last year, members could attend a ZOOM meeting organized **solely for input from the members** to those responsible for the development of the final copy of the Strategic Plan. This will also be a component of the development of the new plan for 2023 – 2026.

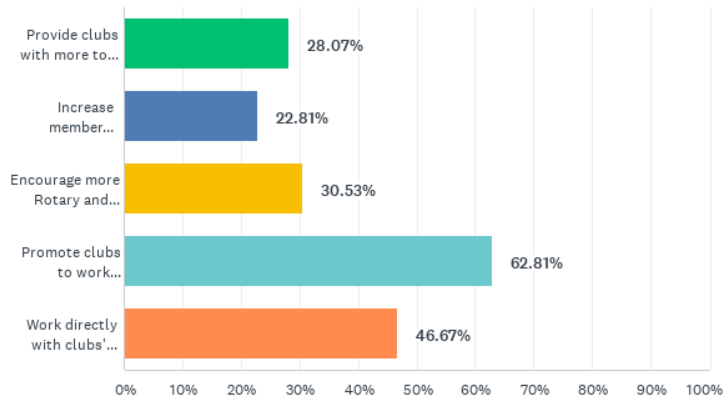
YOUR Strategic Plan, which provides direction for the district and a nice template for clubs, is presented to District Council in June for implementation in the following year. Note that several clubs have asked for a template that they can use to develop their own Strategic Plan. We are looking at this and will follow through.

One key component to the Strategic Plan is implementation; the plan provides the framework for committee chairs and their regular submissions to District Council. To understand what parts are working best and what parts need extra traction, the plan is a focus for all District Council meetings.

The basic strategies for the district Strategic Plan match the Action Plan strategies of Rotary International. This was a basic decision made by the District to show continuity and to avoid a variety of “messages” being conveyed about what the main areas of focus should entail.

The first strategy is about the district helping clubs to **increase our Impact**.

Q5 The first strategy is about helping our clubs "Increase Our Impact". What TWO (2) tactics would you most like to see the District focus on in the next three years to help your club and others in the District.



**ANSWER CHOICES-**

- Provide clubs with more tools and ways to assess and measure their impact in the community

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- Increase member knowledge about The Rotary Foundation and the impact we make locally and internationally

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- Encourage more Rotary and Rotaract clubs to work together on projects and in implementing District / Global grants

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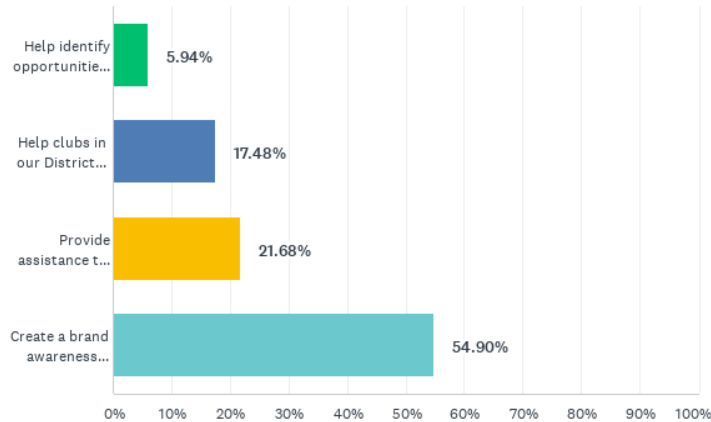
- Promote clubs to work together to provide service and / or raise funds - as we make a bigger impact when we collaborate

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- Work directly with clubs' membership committees to build an effective customized membership plan focused on both recruitment and retention

The second strategy is to **expand our reach**.

Q6 The second strategy is about "Expanding our Reach". We are planning to act on a couple of these options. Please select the action that would be most valuable in your eyes?

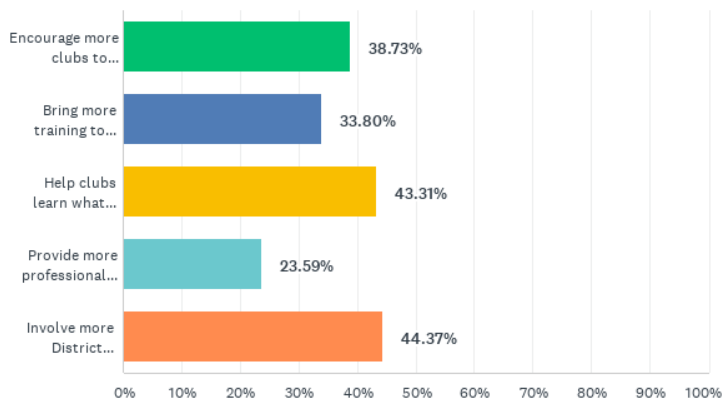


**ANSWER CHOICES-**

- Help identify opportunities for new clubs to be established such as satellite, cause-based, passport and e-clubs
- Help clubs in our District embrace more youth programs such as Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), Short-Term and Long-Term exchanges, Interact, etc as this is the "next generation" of Rotarians.
- Provide assistance to clubs to make their social media more vibrant and effective
- Create a brand awareness campaign about Rotary that a club can replicate on its website and social media telling of our impact to a wider audience

The third strategy is "enhance participant engagement"

Q7 The third strategy is "enhance participant engagement" - not only our members but also the family of Rotary, our charity partners and all others touched by our clubs. Pick TWO (2) actions that you think would be the most valuable for the District to support your club.

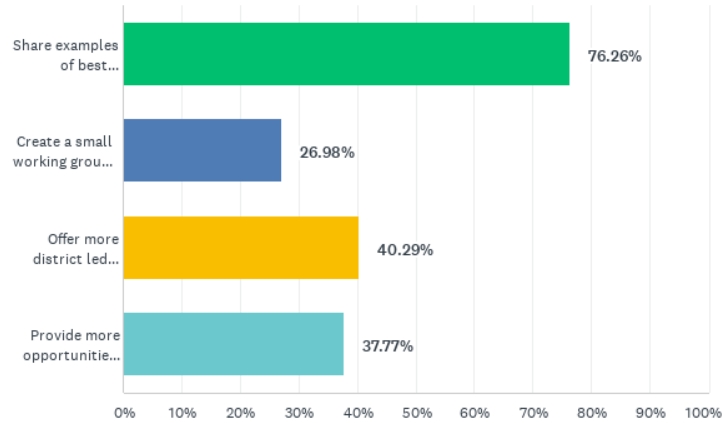


#### ANSWER CHOICES-

- Encourage more clubs to measure member satisfaction and develop actions plans to address the results
- Bring more training to clubs in the same geographic area rather than asking you to join online or in-person district events
- Help clubs learn what other clubs are doing to develop succession plans for leadership positions
- Provide more professional and leadership development opportunities for members in your club such as Toastmasters, conflict resolution, team building
- Involve more District volunteers at your club meetings to share initiatives, club success stories and how clubs could benefit from strategic planning, governance assistance, etc.

The fourth strategy is **increase our ability to adapt**.

Q8 The final strategy is "increase our ability to adapt". Select TWO (2) actions from this list below that you deem to be the most valuable.



**ANSWER CHOICES-**

-

Share examples of best practices and innovative examples of what other clubs are doing to change and adapt

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Create a small working group to explore how clubs could use more of the advances afforded to us by artificial intelligence and other technology advances

-

Offer more district led social events making it easier to meet other Rotarians and uncover what makes their club great

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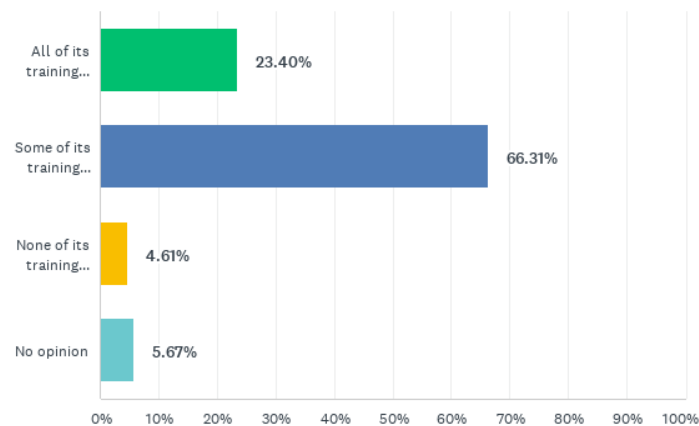
Provide more opportunities for individual to engage in District and area events with more of a "Family of Rotary" focus (involving more than just the Rotarian)

Members were asked if they had suggestions of actions or tactics related to the 4 strategies that the District could consider putting into place to help their clubs to “be the best that it can be”. There was a very wide range of opinions and some excellent ideas that might be considered.

- Increasing social events outside of Rotary business – FUN events [several]
- Providing a framework for small clubs to share successful ideas and to maintain themselves as a “small club” (Several people suggested this)
- Encourage clubs to work together and share resources [came up several times]
- Reduce e-mails [several]
- Keep the focus on what Rotary is all about – service
- Continue to engage clubs and members
- Develop a satellite club to enable members to do make-ups
- Simplify the leadership structure at the District level
- Need to attract leaders for executive positions, at the club and district level [several]
- Partner with other organizations locally
- Membership – help with both getting new members and keeping them [several]
- Diversity training, especially related to membership perspectives

Training is a significant component in the Rotary world. Training is offered in a variety of ways in the district including Rotary Leadership Institute, President-Elect Training, and the Leadership Training Assembly. Members were asked about HOW training should be offered; if there is one area in the survey with broad acceptance it is that training should be offered all, or some of the time in an on-line setting.

#### Q10 Should the District offer:



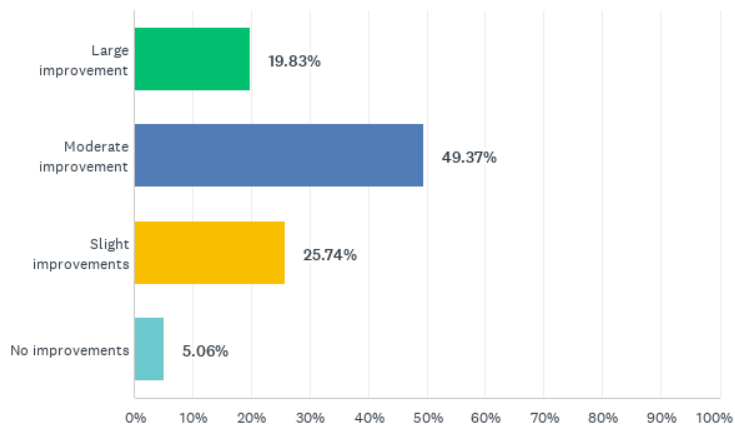
Note that over 90% of the respondents indicated that some or all of the training should be on-line

## District Communications

Communications within the District is an area always in need of attention. The district website has been upgraded, some new approaches to sharing information such as Presidents Fireside Chats have been started and we use Facebook and other social media where appropriate.

Members were asked to provide a rating for the District's efforts. It was rewarding to see that over 94% of the members indicated that improvement had been made.

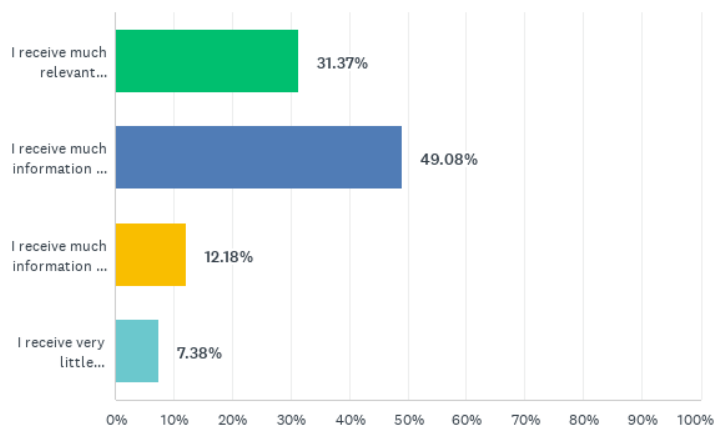
Q11 Communications within the District is an area always in need of attention. The district website has been upgraded, some new approaches to sharing information such as Presidents Fireside Chats have been started and we use Facebook and other social media where appropriate. Tell us how we did this year, please.



As some of the comments for question #9 indicated, members often feel inundated with emails. As a District, we struggle with how much information to share with members. Our members did indicate how they felt about the RELEVANCE and the VOLUME of information provided by the district.

Most of the respondents were pleased with the amount and relevancy of the information; however, there is still room for improvement in this area.

Q12 As a District we struggle with how much information to share with members. Please provide your opinion about the relevance and volume of information provided.





Members were asked to provide comments or advice that could help us to shape the Strategic Plan to meet the needs of the members and the needs of the club over the next three (3) years.

Here are some of the comments received; they have been grouped where appropriate.

- Membership – attracting new young members, bringing back the numbers from before the pandemic [many]
- Increasing the FUN level in Rotary and increasing member participation rates in all club activities [several]
- Governance and duties/roles for club boards of directors
- Interaction with other clubs (and other non-Rotary clubs)
- Make sure that we are meeting community needs ... some projects that have been done for years may not be as relevant today (e.g., clubs may need to deal with growing mental health and opioid issues)
- Technology assistance and help with hybrid meetings
- Share more club information with other clubs
- Abuse Policy needs to be reviewed
- Fundraising ideas
- Training at the club level or area level rather than at the district level
- Focus on small clubs [several]

And, the big idea ...

Here's your chance! Exit this survey by giving us a "big idea" that you think could have a positive impact for your club and your District. Something "off the wall" that has been lurking in the back of your mind that is specific, measurable, realistic, and results-oriented.

- Had a great District Conference. However, it seemed too many people at the Conference avoided the room that several Clubs had displays and information on Club events. Somehow we need to encourage Rotarians, particularly younger ones and upcoming leaders to be better participants.
- Have a Young Employee, professional event to Network folks in the community. Rotary be the Host.
- Set specific targets of district club engagement with youth programs. (e.g. there could be many more than 8 clubs participating in the youth exchange program). Youth bring energy and vibrancy to clubs/district and of course the cliché 'they are our future' but challenging clubs to be more engaged with ALL youth programs will help stimulate (and cross-pollinate) the programs themselves. (Early Actors, become Interactors, who become Rotaractors who participate in RYLA/Junior and Youth Exchange and who become strong community members and Rotarians!
- I would like to see a large gathering of all clubs in the district to celebrate Rotary. Perhaps a picnic at a state park with the food being catered.
- Environmental projects seem to have a way to bring people together. Mental health is also an issue, this we are not qualified to do this.
- Food sustainability. As a strong food producing district, along with a number of food research and development institutions within the district - we are well placed to promote the development, promotion and sharing of sound sustainability practices and strategies.

- District wide tree planting like the GLWC in partnership with other service clubs and Conservation Authorities, Community Parks and Recreation departments. Involve youth. Could be part of Earth Day GLWC initiative.
- Area meetings such as Michele's Membership Last Fall was Great. Stay away from classroom mentality and be creative. Interaction by all participants is the best instructor....and most memorable!
- Have each club sponsor a local teen in need through age 16 to 22, to graduate high school and go to post sec. education supported. We are business owners, we can provide 6 weeks job placements, and some funding and mentoring, and they can hang out with our exchange student too. We do this for international students and job share people from other countries. We need to do more in our community. And Each club should do something quarterly for seniors, homeless, and the environment.
- Instead of offering events that we attend, and you host, encourage participation in clubs existing events. Getting people to go to "more" events is very difficult. Sharing is Caring.
- Partnering with large, socially across-the-spectrum, sports teams like the Bills on our efforts to be seen
- A yearly "summit" in each City or community involving all the local clubs. In Hamilton we have 9 clubs and far too little sharing and joint participation.
- A Collaborative District Grant that includes/ is supported by every club in District 7090.
- Target Corporate Memberships. Build a standard corporate membership package that Clubs can use.
- Find out what the local community wants that is significant in scope and examine if it is feasible for the club to do. This could be a capital item, or it could be the incubation and start of a specific service.
- It is the result of what we do that the world needs to here. Two of those type of stories from our club have been in the Rotarian magazine over this past year. It is wonderful that the Rotary World sees what impact these individuals have had on the world, but what about the rest?
- Hate to say it, but we might need to look at club mergers given membership. Or encourage Area and even "sub-area" cooperation.
- I'm inexperienced as a Rotarian with decades of experience in the auto manufacturing sector. I'd like to see standard templates for process management and measurement.
- Find a way to get Rotarians to attend Rotary International Conference. Whether clubs can sponsor one or two members it is worth the expense. It changes the life of a Rotarian. The impact and knowledge the Rotarian can bring back to the club is unmeasurable. This will bridge the gap between clubs and RI. With the economy as it is, not everyone is retired and can afford to attend. I see it as a way of investing in our club future.
- Create a unique project for the District that all Clubs can contribute to that will generate awareness for Rotary and a lasting impact on the citizens of the district.
- Conduct a survey to determine what service or facility is missing then plan to build a hospital wing/hospice/specialized accessible community centre, etc. All the Clubs are doing their own thing, creating "bandaid" solutions for the community. Let's join together and create a real legacy of impact.
- EDI (Diversity and Inclusion will be huge thing moving forwards so continuing to make people aware of social stigmas, race, religion and sexuality stigmas. And trying to teach clubs how to be inclusive by limiting our use of stereotypes and keeping people aware of their own personal stigmas) will be game changing. (ie.

- rather than saying a Muslim joined my club, saying instead that a person joined my club who happens to be Muslim, etc.)
- Youth exchange is struggling to attract host families. Would a tour of inbound youth to club meetings generate more interest?
  - The District should waive the District Dues for any "Young" member - under 35 who joins a Rotary Club as long as the RC waives their membership dues. The cost of Rotary is a huge barrier for young people
  - I would like to see a commercial, no different than Sarah McLaughlin's, trying to save all the puppies of the world, substitute in with children in need throughout the world And being assisted and helped by Rotary international. " for \$10 a month. U2 can help support this child or this family through your local Rotary club. Join a club now or donate locally to help all of the needy children and families in the world."
  - Promote success stories in the global news media. Be more outgoing.
  - Reach out to all departed Rotarians to try and get them back into the fold. Big job, but there are some out there that we can get back.
  - Allow clubs to have their own culture, don't tell them what officers they have to have, how they choose to organize their clubs, cut out all the organizational bullshit.
  - Locally, our greatest need is housing. And it is a huge need. Is there some way for Rotary to help create more housing supply? Raise funds for the purchase of modular homes and then construct them ourselves? Team up with Habitat for Humanity? Volunteer to assist tradespeople with refurbishing old homes?
  - District wide environmental project, that includes all members. Something big that would highlight Rotary in our region. Pollinator, waterway or reforestation project that we could work with other organizations such as Fish and Wildlife, Western New York Land Conservancy or Ontario Land Trust Alliance.
  - One of the reasons I joined the club is that I wanted to upgrade a local urban creekside trail to make it fully accessible and to provide signage to inform users of the creek's historic significance. This project has been approved.
  - It is important to build a sense of community. Suggestion: have meetings 3 Wednesdays a month and have 1 Wednesday as a social, building community event (eg. at a restaurant).
  - Split the District at the border, adding each half to other districts in the same country.
  - I believe we should create a Rotary Message Center. You would click on a "Message Center" link on District website. The Message Center would be divided into several areas (ie Public Image, Membership, etc.) Each area can be further sub-divided. A rotarian would click on a link, which would take them to threads of all questions asked and the answers to those questions for that subject area. Documents and websites could be linked in the answers. Each thread would have a title established by the questioner. This idea is modeled after a Message Center for members of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, to which I belong. When someone has a question, they go to the message center and first search using search terms, to see if their question has already been asked and answered. It is a great way to share information.
  - Make district visible and accessible at each club meeting. A 2min report.