



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Membership Growth and Retention Support for Clubs

One of the three strategic priorities of Rotary International's Strategic Plan seeks to support and strengthen clubs, which includes the goal of improving recruitment and retention of qualified, enthusiastic members. Your club and your district are partners in membership development, and RI supports your membership growth and retention efforts through its online membership program. Introduced in 2001, the program helps clubs and districts identify prospective members, connect returning members with former or new clubs, and connect relocating Rotarians with clubs in their new area.



PROGRAM SUCCESS

This online program has proven a successful method for introducing prospective members and former Rotarians to Rotary clubs. Since 2002, use of the online program and interest from prospective and relocating members has increased 270 percent. A study of the conversion rate from inquiry to membership shows that at least 60 percent of prospective and former Rotarians who completed forms online joined a club between 2004 and 2008. Club and district leaders who have followed up on inquiries report successful results in recruiting qualified new members. They refer to this membership growth in quantity as well as quality.



"We have converted over 80 percent of these leads into active Rotarians or soon-to-be Rotarians!"

Governor, District 5360, June 2009

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Recruitment with Prospective Member Form

Prospective members, who are qualified non-Rotarians or alumni of Rotary Foundation or RI programs, can contact clubs directly or fill out the Prospective Member Form on the RI website. This online form provides guidance on the membership process, explains membership criteria, and asks for contact and professional information.



EACH ROTARIAN:
REACH ONE, KEEP ONE

Membership Growth and Retention through Referrals and Relocations

In June 2009, the RI Board of Directors adopted the membership slogan “Each Rotarian: Reach One, Keep One.”

The slogan emphasizes both primary goals of increasing and sustaining Rotary club membership. Every Rotarian can directly support Rotary’s membership growth and retention by using the membership referral and Rotarian relocation forms.

The Membership Referral Form is designed for Rotarians wishing to recommend a potential candidate for membership in a Rotary club other than their own. Qualified candidates may be

- Friends or business associates
- Engaging guest speakers who are unable to join your club
- RI or Rotary Foundation program alumni who would contribute their expertise and experience to a local Rotary club but who live outside of your town, district, or country
- Relocating Rotarians who haven’t established contact with another club
- Family members living outside your club area who are familiar with Rotary’s Service Above Self ideal

The Rotarian Relocation Form is designed for

- Rotarians who are moving or have moved and cannot remain in their current club
- Former Rotarians who wish to return to a local club
- Rotarians who have not moved but need to change clubs because of conflicting obligations or an interest in another club’s activities



“Many thanks for all RI referrals. In some cases a new member coming from ‘out of the blue’ gives the clubs the incentive to go out and recruit with more enthusiasm.”

Membership Development Committee Chair,
District 9680, April 2009

Rotarians whose membership has been terminated due to relocation but have not joined a new club yet are directed to the relocation form through [relocation postcards](#) or e-mails from RI.

How can I help?

- Place a [banner ad](#) linking to the online form on your club's website or blog.
- Include the [print ad](#) in your newsletters to direct Rotarians to the appropriate form on Rotary.org.
- Encourage prospective members to visit [Rotary.org](#), view membership videos, and complete a prospective member form.
- Encourage your club members to become familiar with Rotary's membership program by distributing copies of this [brochure](#) and of the downloadable [referral](#) and [relocation](#) forms during a club discussion of membership activities.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Processing the Forms

RI receives and thoroughly screens all prospective member, relocation, and referral forms. Only valid and complete inquiries are sent to the district for further consideration and follow-up.

Responding to the Candidate's Interest

As club president, you're encouraged to assess each candidate inquiry forwarded by the district and contact prospective members directly if you're interested. *As always, invitations for membership are at the discretion of your club.* Consider [creating a club brochure](#) or [elevator speech](#) to provide an overview of your Rotary club. If you develop a standard welcome e-mail to initiate correspondence with prospective members, be certain to provide the following information:

- Welcome and thank-you to candidate for his/her interest in Rotary
- Overview of the club with a brief outline of the organization's mission and humanitarian goals, a recent club/district service project, and typical club/district activities
- Club meeting information, including the name, meeting time, and location
- Additional resources, including links to club/district websites or Rotary publications
- Follow-up information on the club's next steps in the process



"I certainly enjoyed my time as a member of an active club participating in fundraising and community projects. This is a wonderful initiative, and I'm pleased that Rotary would follow up past members to try and keep people involved."

Former club secretary of the Rotary Club of Toowoomba
Garden City, Queensland, Australia, February 2010

After you've made the initial contact, please send a progress update to membershipdevelopment@rotary.org so RI can track the status of online inquiries and measure the effectiveness of the membership program. RI is always interested in further updates after candidates have been inducted or completed the membership process.

If your club invites a relocating Rotarian to join, please use his or her existing membership number to report the new membership to RI to avoid duplicate records and to allow the Rotarian to retain membership and donation history.

Related Information

- Membership Data Form can be used to report new or terminating members or membership information changes, including address updates, to RI.
- How to Propose a New Member (254) can be used to refer someone to your own Rotary club or propose someone for membership.
- Membership Video Set (427) includes two DVDs for both new and prospective members.
- Start with Rotary wallet cards (613) and Start with Rotary postcards (614) are perfect for extending an invitation to prospective members to attend a Rotary club meeting.
- Prospective Member Information Kit (423) provides prospective members or club visitors with basic information on RI, The Rotary Foundation, and the responsibilities of club membership.
- New Member Information Kit (426) provides new members with essential information on RI and The Rotary Foundation.
- Rotary coordinators are well-versed in all aspects of RI, and are able to offer guidance and tools on building membership and to share Rotary club and district best practices.
- Your Club and District Support representative will be able to answer questions about policy issues.



“The clubs really seem to enjoy and appreciate making these contacts. The successes we have enjoyed have caused the Membership Committee to assure that the websites are friendly to the public. As a result, several clubs are adding a ‘Contact us for more information’ link to their websites.”

Membership Development Committee Chair,
District 6420, March 2009