

PETS

Ask Peter a Question Session

Q1. How can we sell the benefits of Rotary vs the cost of being a member? What is the value proposition?

Connect first at an emotional level by identifying how can we meet their needs. Keep the conversation with the prospect focused on asking and exploring what does he / she want to achieve, what interests them. Once that is identified and you connect at that level so that he / she attaches their value to membership, the membership costs are easier dealt with. Remember we have more flexibility now around the time and cost. Clubs can be creative about addressing the cost to the member.

Q2. What is the one thing you would like to achieve in your year as DG if all else fails?

I'm a believer that good communication is the foundation to success so the one achievement would be through better communication between clubs, between clubs and the District team and most importantly between clubs and their communities that clubs have strengthened their community connection.

Q3. Would Rotary consider 'amalgamation' as a policy rather than a voluntary action to rationalise the number of clubs across regions?

I would prefer to think of bringing clubs together over joint projects to gain a combined direction and form a partnership. Of course this depends on the scale of the projects, the resources and the geography. Some small clubs are really effective and some larger clubs not so. We need to understand what's going on in clubs and the use of Assistant Governors in a more responsive role with zones and clusters is a way to address that need. Work together/ bigger scale but let's not lose the individuality of clubs. I can't speak on behalf of Rotary International but I can't image the Council of Legislation obtaining agreement on an amalgamation policy.

Peter Kirkwood gave example of Waitara and Hornsby coming together on projects and eventually amalgamating

Q4. How can we change the image of Rotary from old white haired men when there seems to be a reticence at District level to invest in PR about what we do and how well we do it eg TV ads? What is the District's role?

The District role is to provide PR support to the clubs. A new PR campaign with a range of resources to use and messages to distribute will be showcased at District Assembly and we will be asking clubs to take advantage of this approach. D9685 contributes \$ to an Australia-wide PR initiative that is preparing television adds and running a social media campaign to generate membership leads.

Ultimately it comes back to club members to follow up any PR campaigns. One on one interactions and how clubs communicate in their communities will have the most impact. Social media will play an increasingly larger role in how we communicate about Rotary. I'm currently looking for volunteers with current commercial PR experience and contacts, also social media success to strengthen our PR capabilities and work with the District PR team.

Tamara Harding reported on her crowd funding experience using Facebook advertising. Cost \$50 for 6 weeks. She reached 1000's and raised \$4000 in 3 days

Q5. Are there any definitions for the following categories of membership:

- **Associate**
- **Corporate**
- **Friend of Rotary?**

Any suggestions on the subscription/fees payable for these categories?

The RI Bylaws and Standard Rotary Club Constitution provide for two types of membership: active and honorary. By amending their bylaws, clubs may offer additional membership types that are desired in the community, such as associate, corporate, family membership or others.

- Rotary International will continue to record, and grant all of the benefits of membership to active members only who pay RI dues
- Clubs that offer additional membership categories should report these members to Rotary International as active and are responsible for paying said members' RI dues
- Clubs and districts set their own policies about these members' other financial obligations (club and district dues, meal costs, etc.), attendance requirements, and service expectations and reflect these policies in their bylaws
- Clubs determine how they accept former or transferring members, including whether they allow current Rotaractors to join

Honorary members are considered "friends of Rotary" – they are recorded on the member database, typically they receive RDU etc but do not pay dues (clubs bear the cost of RDU subscription). Clubs may have a less formal group of "friends of Rotary" - they may get a club bulletin, invites to meetings and have a role in projects and events but do not have member status.

From MyRotary.org:

How do corporate memberships work?

Your club is free to offer alternative membership types of any kind, as long as new members are counted as individuals — corporate members in this case — rather than the corporations that sponsor their membership. If the members pay RI dues, they will be included in your club's official membership count and receive all the benefits that other active, dues-paying members enjoy.

Your club can have different policies for these members' other financial obligations (club and district dues, meal costs, etc.), attendance requirements, or service expectations, as long as these policies are reflected in the club bylaws.

How do associate memberships work?

Your club can define associate membership as it wishes. Some clubs use associate membership as a trial period to engage interested people. If the associate members see value in the experience, they can join the club. In such cases, the club would report them as active members

once they've joined, and the members would then receive all the benefits that other active, dues-paying members enjoy and would be included in the club's membership count.

What's the difference between active and honorary members?

Rotary International defines active members as those who meet the requirements for membership, pay RI dues, are eligible to vote on district matters, and are eligible to hold a club officer position. Honorary membership is used to recognize people who have distinguished themselves by meritorious service and embody Rotary ideals, or those considered friends of Rotary for their support of Rotary's causes. They are exempt from paying RI dues, have no vote in Rotary matters, are not eligible to hold any club office, and are not included in a club's membership numbers. Active members are called Rotarians, while honorary members are called honorary Rotarians.

Q6. Getting Rotary club stories printed in local newspapers. Never has there been less interest from the press in handing reporting over a cheque or telling a good news story. What is the answer to get into the press?

No easy answer. Comments from the floor:

- Try advertorials
- Write your own copy with pictures and send in. Still often used with the reference to Rotary removed (Pride of Workmanship example).
- Another approach is to get the beneficiaries of donations, community service to write the articles (Hills district example).
- Local papers are driven by advertising, so the less they have to do to make a story work the more likely they are to use it. Write short succinct good copy.
- Chris Compton runs 5X publications. Mentioned regularity, consistency and efficiency as the key drivers for publications. Space costs.

Q7. What about business cards?

Response from the meeting was interested in receiving business cards. In prior years District was able to provide business cards at no cost due to the generosity of a Rotarian. I'm currently looking at how we can provide business cards at minimal or no cost.

Mark Anderson suggested go to www.rotary.org Brand Centre – the Brand Centre includes templates that you can use to create your own business cards, brochures etc.