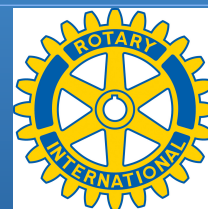


Club Builder



Tips, Ideas, and Success Stories for Attracting and Retaining Members

Does your website need a facelift?

A great website can be one of your most effective recruitment and retention tools. But websites do have a tendency to become stale and ineffective. You need to take a close look at yours with a fresh eye. Maybe it needs a major overhaul. This month we bring you some ideas on starting anew or just sprucing up.

Looking at Your Club's Website

By Chris Potter

In the words of our esteemed District Governor, Tony Jannetta, a club's website is its storefront. It needs to be attractive to Non-Rotarians, but a useful information tool for club members as well. After looking over the websites from a number of clubs both in our District and in the greater Rotary world, I have seen the good, the bad, and the ugly of websites.

To attract visitors to your site, you need to have a recognizable website address. People need to be able to find you. Good examples are rotaryclubofanytown.com or anytownrotary.com. A bad example is to use the name that you get automatically from Clubrunner. They all end with .ca, and who ever heard of that?

Your home page needs to have the Rotary wheel prominently displayed. I visited one club's website in particular, for a large club in Southeastern Pennsylvania, that looks like the website for the municipality where the club is located. There is one tiny Rotary wheel embedded in the picture of this year's theme banner and that's it. Really? Your site must scream Rotary.

(continued on page 2)

Events

"Boosting Your Membership!"

Monday, October 15
Giuseppe's Restaurant
Warminster

Thursday, October 25
Brookside Country Club
Emmaus

Thursday, November 1
Golden Oaks Golf Club
Fleetwood

3 sessions
(Take your pick)

Registration & Dinner (if you wish) at 6:00 pm.
Workshops begin at 7:00

Coming in October

Retention Success Stories
Membership Campaigns

Local Websites to Check Out

Allentown Bethlehem Morning Star Doylestown
Morrisville-Yardley Emmaus Pottstown Fleetwood

Websites (continued from page 1)

It's a good idea to have a public page, with a link for your members to access detailed information. This way, you can keep the website simple and uncluttered, yet informative and complete. You want to feature your meeting location and time prominently, with an embedded link for directions to where you meet. (Google directions is good for this).

Speaking of embedded links, don't post videos and heavy graphics that take a long time to load along with your home page. If it takes more than 3 seconds for your home page to load, people will move on. Place any videos or PowerPoints and the like behind a link on your home page.

You also want to have a link on the page to "like" your Facebook page. Oh yea, you also want to have a Facebook page. This way, every time you update the Facebook page, your guest will be notified.

Many clubs have sold advertising space on their pages to cover the expenses and even as a fundraiser. This seems beneficial to all concerned, if ever anything did. (continued on page 3)

Make a List

During a club meeting, have each member write down five people that they feel would be good prospects for membership. Have the individual members or your membership committee pursue the prospective Rotarians.

Unusual Programs

Solicit area art museums, theatre groups, or music groups to present a program. How about nature centers, wineries, historical sites? Ask those that have benefited from your club's services to speak to your club. There is no substitute for great programs.

Then, consider inviting the speakers to become members of your club.

Spruce Up That Website

- Can prospective members find you? What happens when they search for a Rotary club in your hometown? Google – "_____ Rotary" and see what happens.
- Pretend you're a first time visitor. What do you see? What are your first impressions?
- Know your audience – business owners, professional people, young people.
- When the visitor leaves your site, what will be their lasting impression of your club?
- From a quick browse around your site, would someone conclude, "This looks interesting! I think I would like to learn more."
- How easy is the site to navigate? Will your members keep coming back to use the site.
- What's different about your club? Fundraisers, Projects or Social Events. Highlight it on your site.
- Make Rotary look "fun"!!! Because it is.

Check out these sites for ideas on how you might improve your website:

www.rotary33.org

www.rotarysa.org

www.rotary-austin.org

www.yorkrotary.org

www.hbgrotary.org

www.duluthsuperiorecorotry.org

www.rotary-denver31.org/

www.rotarymadison.org

www.burlingtonvtrotary.org

www.raleighrotary.org/

www.sanjosenorthrotary.org

www.milwaukeeerotary.com

Websites (continued from page 2)

Finally, if your club sponsors an Interact or Rotaract club, perhaps you can get one of the members to run the website and Facebook pages for you, perhaps in return for community service or academic credit. The most technically proficient individuals in our communities are between the ages of 6-12, but there's those pesky child labor laws to contend with :-). A high school or college student is a good compromise. No more excuses that your club doesn't have a tech-savvy member to maintain the club website.

With a little effort and creativity, you can make the website your club's greatest informational, recruiting and fundraising tool. For more tips, see

www.rotary.org/en/mediaandnews/multimedia/graphics/pages/web_design.aspx

Christopher Potter
District Membership Development Committee
Past President, RC of Huntingdon Valley
Assistant Governor, Area 7

No Member Left Behind

Every member is important. We all know that. But, sometimes we get complacent and we forget to pay attention to some of our club members. And before you know it, you find some members drifting away, no longer attending weekly meetings, and not finding the time to show up for fundraisers and projects. They are no longer the first to volunteer.

Your club's Membership Committee should constantly be monitoring. Every month at your Board Meetings review your meeting attendance and fundraiser/project participation.

Activities Gone Bad

Make sure that your club's projects and fundraisers are still relevant for your community and your members. They may have a shelf life. Periodically try something new.

Long-Time Members

Periodically ask long-term members what their interests are, as these will develop and change over time. Assign responsibilities based on their interests, and give them increasing responsibilities to challenge them and keep them motivated.

Encourage Makeups

Every couple of months at weekly meetings your club president should talk about the importance of making up missed meetings. Hand out a list of clubs in your area with their meeting days, times, and meeting places. Tell your members about e-club makeups, and encourage members to visit clubs while traveling on business or pleasure.

“Boosting Your Membership!” - This fall, your District Membership Development Committee will be hosting 3 workshops on member attraction and retention. “Boosting Your Membership!” will be an interactive approach to sharing success stories on getting them in the door, making them Rotarians, and keeping them engaged so they don't leave. Please seriously consider sending several people from your club to one of the workshops. You can find details and registration form on the District website. Feel free to contact Terry Reed, District Membership Chair with questions – 610-743-0818 or terry.reed731@gmail.com.