

7 Keys To Solid Member Retention

Posted by Brent Willis on 11/12/12 2:15 PM

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In many ways, members are the key to the success of your organization.

Without your members' support, you can't accomplish your goals effectively. Though organizations often focus on **attracting new members**, retaining your existing members is just as important, if not more so. Below are some strategies you can use to improve member retention by making sure that your members are engaged and committed to your organization's purpose.



1. Encourage member involvement

Members do not want to sit passively on the sidelines while your organization works toward its goals. If they can't take action -- any action -- they will lose interest in the organization. In many cases, an uninterested member will drop his membership and move on to something else. **To keep members engaged**, do what you can to help them get involved. Encourage them to attend events, help the organization raise funds and take advantage of partner offerings. For any program you roll out to the membership, a well thought out, sustained marketing effort is critical to show the VALUE of engagement and what the program does for the member and the organization.

2. Create value

Your members want to feel like they are helping the organization serve its purpose, but they also want to get something out of it. By providing members with valuable resources and experiences, you can ensure that they don't forget the value of their membership.

To create value for your members, provide them with access to exclusive, members-only offers from your

partners, teach them to improve their own lives through educational resources and tackle legislative issues that are relevant to them.

When your organization wins a fight, make the success a celebration for members. When you lose, make sure that **your members know that your organization will continue to fight.**

3. Communicate appropriately

When it comes to communicating with members, quality is more important than quantity. Make sure that all communications you send are relevant to your members, to the point and timely. Let your members choose their favorite methods of communication, and let them opt out of certain channels. Never forget that every member interaction is an opportunity for branding, and these interactions **must be part of your member retention strategy, from sale -- to onboarding -- to service -- to renewal.**

4. Segment your membership

Segmenting your membership allows you to communicate more effectively and personally with each member. For every member of your organization, make sure that you know the reason they joined, the issues that are most important to them and what type of communications they would like to receive from you.

Let your members feel that their experience with the organization is specifically tailored to their needs and preferences.

5. Use a multi-layer approach for renewals

When the time comes for members to renew their membership, give them as many chances to say, "yes" as possible. Develop a planned approach that involved phone calls, email, postal mail and in-person contact with members. **Track member involvement at all times**, and use the information you collect to remind your members of the programs and resources they've taken advantage of during their membership with your organization.

6. Survey your former members

Even with the best renewal strategies, some members will leave your organization. When members choose not to renew, survey them to find out why they left, which services they liked and which areas of your organization need improvement. Use members' responses to improve your organization's offerings and member retention rates in the future.

7. Sell to the right target audience

Part of retaining a solid membership involves choosing the right members to begin with. Your ideal member is a company or individual that identifies with your purpose, stands to benefit from the accomplishment of your goals and expresses interest in participating in the organization's activities. By focusing your efforts on companies and

individuals that are likely to stay with your organization for the long haul, you can ensure better member retention right from the start.



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Written by Brent Willis

People want to be heard other than just voting every 2,4, or 6 years. Groups that engage them and measure it are positioned to win the public policy battles of the future. My vision and mission is to revive the civic engagement of the American citizen in government relations; at the federal, state, and local level.

Topics: [Member Engagement](#), [Member Retention](#)

matt pikse 1/22/2015, 3:13:40 AM

Thank you

Reply to *matt pikse*

Joanne Jardine 1/27/2015, 12:09:12 PM

Great article....May I use this information in an e-newsletter for our organization - Harmony Inc.? We are a ladies Barbershop organization...

Reply to *Joanne Jardine*

Brent Willis 1/27/2015, 1:03:09 PM

Thanks for the comment, Joanne and yes, please do!

Reply to *Brent Willis*

Devan Lime 4/14/2016, 3:49:33 PM

Helpful information. I did have one question. What is a recommended time frame to go back and call on prior members to possible re-enlist? 1 year, 2 years, 5 years?

Reply to *Devan Lime*

Brent Willis 4/15/2016, 10:42:11 AM

Thanks Devan for the question. There's not really a correct answer to that question. It really depends upon your member engagement strategy, your relationship (past and present) with that member and what you're trying to get them to re-engage for at that time. There's a difference between getting them to engage merely to pay membership fees once again and getting them to re-engage in advocacy b/c a certain policy may / will harm or help them, their particular type of business, their organization or the Industry they belong to. I hope this helps.

Reply to *Brent Willis*

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