



Membership Recruitment & Retention toolkit:
Practical advice for professional associations / societies

Introduction



We understand that your members are key!

For membership organisations, delivering for your current members while also attracting new members will help to ensure your long term survival and growth. Within this document we will highlight some ideas and tips for conducting campaigns for:

- 1) Membership retention
- 2) Membership recruitment



Check out our top tips on each page



Introduction Continued.

What does our experience mean to you?

Firstly, we want to give you a short introduction to who we are and our experience so that you know we are experts in your field.

We are a Professional Conference Organiser (PCO) and Association Management Company with a team of 26 and over 30 years experience. Our focus is in the field of healthcare.

Some of our clients include; British and Irish Stroke Association (BIASP), Association for Continence Advice (ACA), British Association of Urological Nurses (BAUN), European Society of Paediatric Infectious Diseases (ESPID), and Infection Prevention Society (IPS). Read more about us at www.fitwise.co.uk.

Is this document for me?

This toolkit has been created by our Head of Sales and Marketing, Katie Hill. Katie has been with Fitwise for 13 years, working across our client base on membership recruitment and retention campaigns.

This document is designed to give non-marketers ideas and tips. We are happy to discuss any of the aspects in more detail, and advise on how Fitwise can help support your organisation's membership goals.



We are providing practical tips and ideas for non-marketers



Katie.Hill@fitwise.co.uk

Setting a goal

Initially: set a target

It is important to set a target at the start of any marketing campaign to channel focus and measure progress.

Firstly you will need to determine what success looks like to your organisation:

- Is it stabilising your membership?
- Is it increasing geographic representation?
- Is it growing certain membership types?
- Is it increasing your income from membership?

The goal should be linked to your strategic objectives, and a SWOT analysis should help identify areas of strength, weakness, opportunity and threat which should be taken into consideration.

Consider also how you will report on membership and track the performance of the campaign.

How many potential members are there?

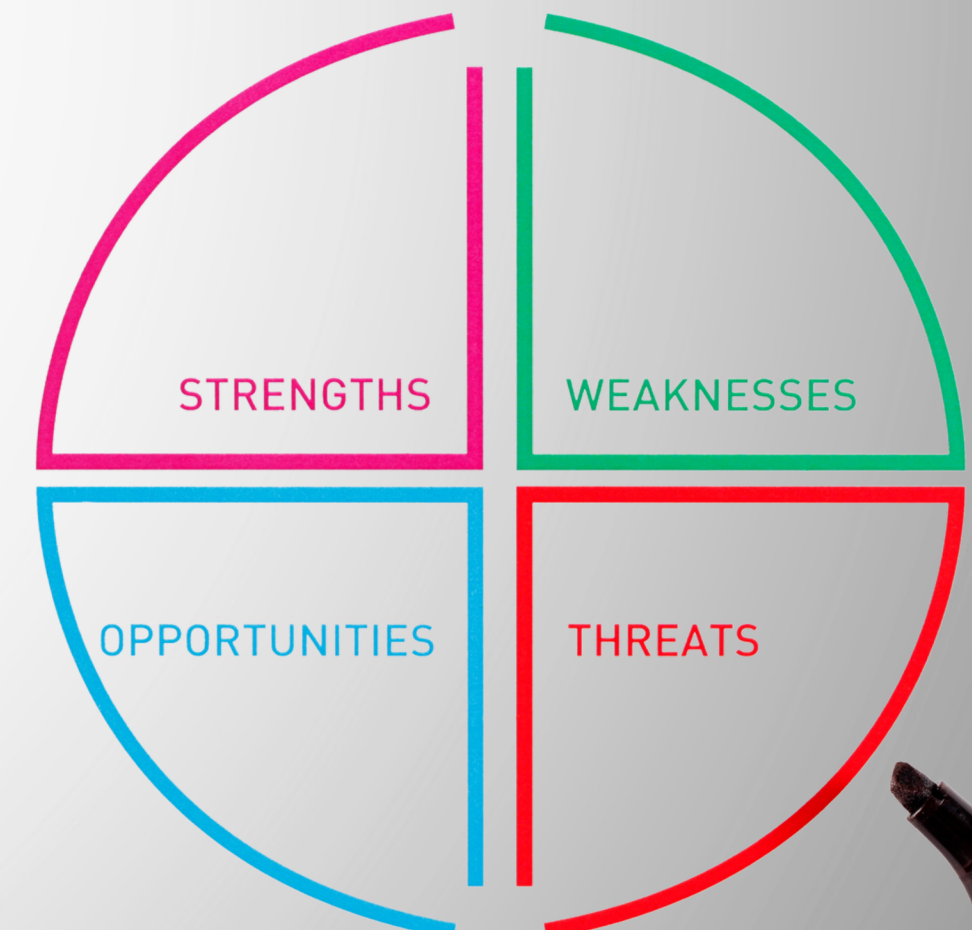


Most professional organisations have a clearly defined membership categories. Can you work out how many potential members you could have?

- Would a Freedom of Information request help determine this?
- Can you access any research?
- Can you do your own research utilising members / lapsed members?



You will need to determine what success looks like to your organisation

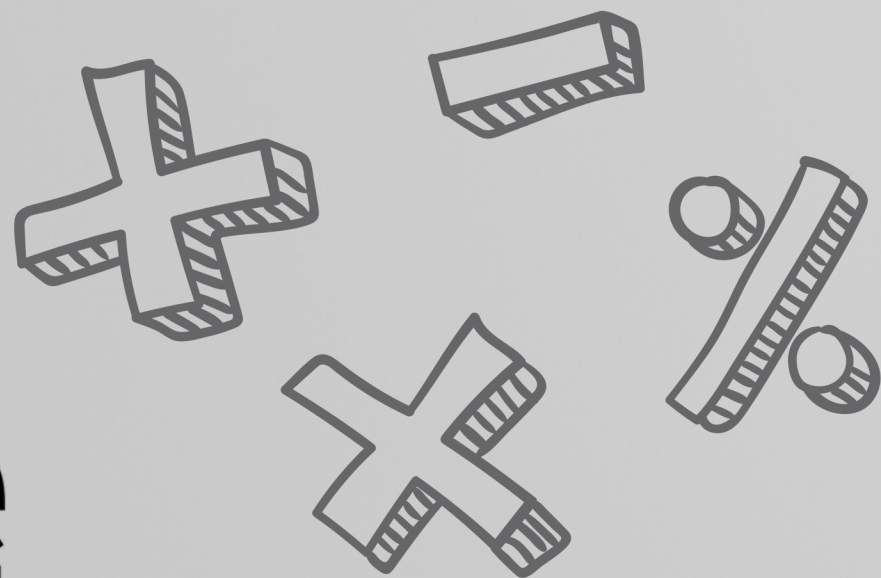


Cost of a new member / Lifetime value of a member

When considering spending money on a membership recruitment campaign you should work out the direct costs attributed to a new member, along with the lifetime value of that member so it is clear how many members need to be recruited to cover costs / achieve goals. This can help justify costs and provide a measurable target.

Work out the contribution a new member makes:

Standard membership fee
- Cost to process a new member
= Contribution per member



Lifetime value of a member

- Can you determine the average length of one of your members?
- What is the total contribution from membership over the average membership lifetime?



Work out the income per member to help justify costs and provide a measurable target

Membership Retention

Is your
bucket
leaking?



In order to boost membership numbers it is important to retain as many current members as possible.

A "leaky bucket" is an organisation that is losing members.

There are a number of actions which can be undertaken to "fix that leak". We have outlined some suggestions:

Membership survey

We recommend that a survey of members be carried out to assess their feelings and views on key aspects of membership. Not only will this help remind members of their benefits and make them feel valued, but it will also help identify which benefits members value most.

A survey can also:

- Identify any advocates who can help spread the word amongst their local colleagues and any avenues for promotion.
- Determine new benefits that members would like to see added.

A separate survey targeted at members who have not renewed over the past 18 months could also be conducted to try to identify the reasons behind this.



To track trends it is advisable to carry out membership surveys annually

Membership Retention Continued.

Review membership renewal / sign up process



It is worth, before conducting any membership recruitment campaign, to review the current joining / renewal process.

- Is it clear and intuitive? This is especially important for those who are not native speakers of English (if boosting international members is your target)
- Are there any improvements which can be made to simplify the process?
- Is it clear who should be in which membership category?
- Are the benefits clearly outlined?
- Are the benefits tangible and meaningful?

Review membership packages



Before launching a membership recruitment campaign, it is also important to consider if more can be done to make membership more appealing and inclusive.

It is important that if any changes are made to the membership / resources that the existing members are informed too - that will aid retention and happy members will become your advocates and help promote the society to their colleagues and contacts.

Consider if there is a way you can make your membership packages tailored to the individual. The more personal, the more likely they are to be of value.



**Review all your current processes,
packages and communications!**

Membership Retention

Continued.



Review membership messaging

We would suggest a review of current member messaging / website and any collateral (digital or print). Are these still fit for purpose and reflective of the organisation?



Make sure you update documents to include information on work you have done on inclusivity and sustainability.

Communication Campaign

Develop a communication campaign targeted at retaining existing members to reinforce the need for their ongoing support and loyalty and to remind them of the value for money and significant benefits of membership. This should utilise new and existing communications channels.

Consider how you can maximise use of your current platforms to reach current and potential members, for example by using video across your social media channels and website, and ensure that membership is promoted at your events.



Don't forget, a retention campaign can be done jointly with a membership recruitment campaign to save resources



Membership Recruitment

What's on offer?



Here is a snapshot of a number of tried and tested campaigns which could be considered to attract new members.

It goes without saying that these should be adapted to your audience and organisation.



Campaigns will have a dual purpose of reminding members what their benefits are, as well as appealing to and attracting new members:

Limited time offer?

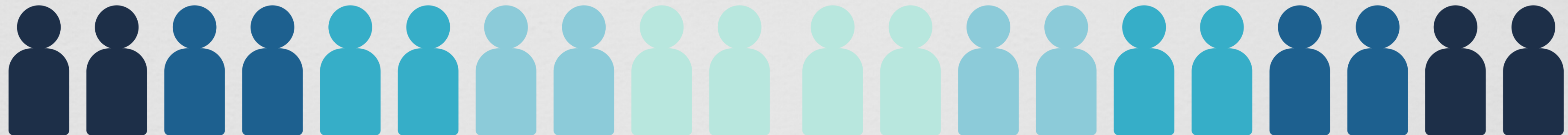
It is useful to have a time limited offer to initially attract new members. This could be 10% off new membership if you join before a certain date.

Referral scheme?

Utilising existing members as advocates for can work well and running a member-get-member campaign with benefits to both current members and the new members has been proven to work.



Before implementing any offers or schemes work out how much time it will take to administer and factor in the money off / reward into the campaign budget



Membership **Recruitment**

What's on offer? Continued.

Conference offer?

If you have an annual conference, have you considered the following:

- Setting your non-member rate as more than the membership rate + membership
- Offering the first 6 months of membership free of charge within the non-member conference registration fee. These individuals can then be targeted to retain.
- If you are recording your conference presentations, are you making the most of them? Could they be made available to members at a certain point after the event, could they be offered free of charge to those members from lower income countries?
- Providing a buddy system or social opportunity to those who are new to members or would like to find out more.
- Making the most of your non-member attendee list to promote membership
- Making the most of promotional opportunities at the event - slides, flyer, offer to sign up, video...



Clearly signpost all membership benefits within the conference marketing



PREPARED BY FITWISE
MANAGEMENT LTD



Katie Hill
Head of Sales and Marketing
Katie.Hill@fitwise.co.uk
01506-292037



If you would like to discuss your association's requirements for membership recruitment and retention, and learn how Fitwise could support you, please get in touch!



Blackburn House | Red House Road | Seafield | EH47 7AQ