

MEMBER FARMING

Open The Hidden Bank

Club members are all too often only seen as a revenue source - rarely as a resource.

Marketing gurus constantly invent promotions and various other ways to increase how much members spend in order to improve your bottom line. After all, the bean counters will tell you that increased income leads to increased profits.

Consider, though, that reduced expenditure has the same impact. Were you to increase income while reducing expenditure you'd get a double whammy on your bottom line.

To achieve this, you need to look at your members not just as a revenue source, but as a resource pool, a veritable bank of knowledge, experience and skills on which you can call – usually at no cost. Why hire an architect, engineer, accountant, marketer, PR etc if you can get one for nothing, one who will have a vested interest in your project and a passion to see it succeed.

Perhaps they are retired and no longer wish to work, but five will get you 10 that they will be more than happy to provide advice and to oversee the hiring of professionals within their chosen field.

But who are they? How do you find them? How do you tell if old Barry the second was a strawberry farmer or a stripper?

The gathering of this sort of information is known as Member Farming. It is the acquisition, building and refining of a searchable database of the skills, experience and knowledge that exists within your membership.

There are all manner of Membership Management and database tools, apps and programmes on the market but any club could start with something basic like Excel or Google Sheets.

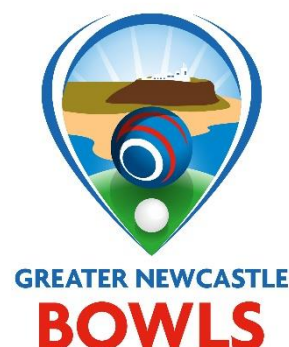
A good starting point to gather this information would be your Membership forms and Renewals. Add questions such as: Occupation, Qualifications, Interests, Hobbies etc. You will be surprised that most people are only too happy to talk about themselves and provide this sort of information.

As it will be an addition to your current form, give it an entirely new section prefaced by an explanation such as: "In order to be better positioned to grow your club and our service offerings we are keen to gather as much information as we can about our members' skills, interests, qualifications and hobbies."

Also, add the perception that there are benefits to be had from participation:

- (1) Add a question with boxes to tick – Would you be interested in us establishing any or all of the following sub-clubs: Darts, Fishing, Snooker, Gardening, Ceramics, Golf etc
- (2) Add a prize incentive: "All members who fully complete this section will go in the draw to win etc"

NB: Do not forget to include a Privacy Protection guarantee paragraph indicating that the information is for the sole and exclusive use of the club and will not be shared with any third parties.



MEMBER SURVEY

Our club has untapped riches – the wealth of our members' experience and knowledge.

This bank of knowledge and experience can help to efficiently guide our success and growth in many ways - improving our governance and saving us money in such things as designing projects or choosing suppliers.

Plus, by knowing your interests, desires and aspirations we can be assured we are on the right track, tailoring your club to suit.

We are not asking you to do the books, plaster the ceiling, run our web site or draw up building plans, but we may seek your advice, thus ensuring we are ticking all of the right boxes and getting the best possible value for our members' money.

To these ends we are keen to build a member database and are seeking your participation. All of the information you provide will only be for the use of this club and will not be shared externally without your permission.

NAME: **Member Number**

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER (Home) **(Mobile)**

EMAIL ADDRESS.....

1. What is your current or most recent profession/trade?
2. What are your trade/professional qualifications
3. Have you had other professions/trades?
4. Do you have other expertise?
5. In what industry do/did you work? (For example, food industry, publishing, etc.)
6. What other sports do you play or have you played?
7. What are you main social interests? (e.g .dancing, cards, pool, fishing etc)

8. Do you have experience/expertise in the following areas? If so, please briefly explain
- A. Leadership roles.....
 - B. Training/teaching
 - C. Human Resources
 - D. Mentoring.....
 - E. Website design or management.....
 - F. Social media (blogging, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).....
 - G. Research or survey design.....
 - H. Fundraising.....
 - I. Public relations or marketing.....
 - J. Project management.....
 - K. Strategic planning.....
 - L. Legal.....
 - M. Accounting
 - N. Architecture/Drafting.....
 - O. Landscaping.....

People you know in the community could be assets to the club. Prospective members are likely to rely on the experiences and opinions of their friends, family, or colleagues when considering joining a club such as ours.

Would you be prepared to invite prospective members to club meetings and events so they can see how our club provides opportunities to form connections and friendships?

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