

Grow Meeting Attendance & Membership

"50+ Ideas You Can Use Now"

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Meetings & Membership Idea... Getting Started

- Develop Your Concept -- What do you want to accomplish -- how many new members, when, at what cost?
- Have a Written Plan -- " Any Road Will Do When You Don't Care Where You Go."
- Know Your Competition -- Who else is marketing the same or similar meetings & memberships repeat their successes, avoid their failures.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... Target Audiences

- Communicate meeting objectives to targeted groups w/targeted messages.
- Understand what is most important to each group.
- Communicate realistic outcomes -- the results of attending or joining.

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Meeting Idea... Create a Unique Logo

- Use the logo often, especially in correspondence.
- Include in signature blocks on emails.
- Important to create & maintain the brand of your meeting.

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Meeting Idea... Announce Next Year This Year

- Secure a facility and date at least one year out.
- Make sure its somewhere members want to go at a good time of year.
- Collaborate with Marketing & PR staff to obtain best locations for promoting the coming year in pubs, signage, literature.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... Create Key Messaging

- What makes your meeting/membership unique -- its USP?
 - If you had 15 seconds to sell me, what would you say?
- What is your brand and what does it represent?
- Always reinforce your key messages in all promotions.

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Meeting Idea...

Good Promotions = Attendance

- What are your communications strategies – why come?
- Start early, end late.
- Maintain timely responses and troubleshoot honestly & quickly.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

Create an Easy to use Website

- Use a qualified web designer.
- Information must be updated routinely.
- Information must be easy to find.
- Site should be interactive.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

Use Attendees to Recruit

- Word-of-Mouth is best promotion to use.
- Tell everyone you can as soon as you can.
- Use suppliers and others to spread the word.
- Have an organized volunteer group to help.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

Use Social Media

- Blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn and others can help spread the word.
- Determine messaging and timing.
- Have dedicated staff or volunteers monitor sites and write threads.

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Meeting Idea...

Use CVBs & Tourism Groups

- Other groups may help to spread the word for you and support your efforts.
- Some will help pay for or sponsor your efforts.
- Link websites.
- Piggyback on their promotional efforts.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

Use All Media

- Use email, direct mail, phone, ads, other collateral.
- All should have "Call to Action".
- Create a "Sense of Urgency".
- Make it easy to respond – by mail, phone, web.

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Meeting Idea...

Promote Success Stories

- From previous meetings.
- How can attending make "me better, smarter, more likely to get promoted"?
- Who will I meet?
- What will I see?
- What will I learn?

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

Use Testimonials

- People buy People so let one get one.
- Attendees & Members like to see their names in print or online.
- Testimonials can act as guarantees in the mind of new attendees & members.
- Use guarantee of satisfaction.

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Meeting Idea...

Incent Action

- Include an "earlybird" discount or premiums.
- Price aggressively but do not under price.
- Cheap may mean not worth it.
- Prepare to negotiate to get attendees.

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Meeting Idea...

Use Industry Anniversaries

- Use meeting to celebrate – key industry or professional milestones or celebrities.
- May is "Better Hearing & Speech Month"
- Can we create a buzz?

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Meeting Idea...

Content is "KING"!

- Use a variety of speakers and topics.
- Make sure topics are timely, interesting and meet member needs.
- Use surveys to find out what topics are hot.
- Test drive sessions.
- Hire qualified Key Note speaker.

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Meeting Idea...

Variety is "Queen"

- Look for new presentation formats.
- Adult learners learn differently.
- Use wide variety of formats, venues.

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Meeting Idea...

Help "1st Time Attendees"

- Promote ease of registering and attending.
- Treat 1st timers special and different.
- Use ribbons and receptions.
- Use special offerings and onsite help to guarantee they will be satisfied.

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Meeting Idea...

Appreciate Your Exhibitors & Sponsors

- Include them in planning.
- Thank them in-person for their participation and contributions.
- Help them network and market to attendees.
- Ask them for new ideas to help improve the meeting and grow attendance.

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Membership Idea...

What Media Works Best

- Word of Mouth.
- Direct Mail.
- Personal Sales Calls.
- Recommendations by Current Members.
- Promotions at Conferences & Meetings.
- Emails.
- Telemarketing.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

What's Most Important

- In order, it's:
 - The List,
 - The Offer (price and terms),
 - The Format (creative),
 - The Follow-up,
 - The Analysis.

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Meetings & Membership Idea...

What Do I Do Next?

- Use what works -- Do not reinvent the wheel. If it "works" use it. If it doesn't, don't.
- Multiple efforts are better than single efforts.
- Multiple media is better than any single media.

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Membership Idea...

Top Reasons To Join

- Networking.
- Access to Information.
- Continuing Education/Learn Best Practices.
- Advocacy.
- Obtain Discounts.
- Publications.

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Membership Idea... Most Effective Offers

- Discounts to Conferences & Meetings.
- 1st Year Dues Discounts.
- Member Referral Incentives.
- Free Trial.
- Multiple Year Discount.
- Free Gifts or Premiums.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... About Copywriting

- Write the response form first.
- Write like your members talk.
- Use short sentences, simple words.
- Use testimonials & endorsements.
- Use pictures and charts.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... About Copywriting

- Don't be cute/funny.
- Adults only scan copy.
- Most powerful word is... FREE.
- Write to appropriate length.
- Most people read the p.s. & look to see if their name is spelled correctly.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... About The Offer

- Make it clear.
- Make it compelling.
- Make it easy to respond to immediately.
- Sell benefits not features.
- Negatives out-pull positives.

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Meetings & Membership Idea... About The Graphics

- Simple works best.
- 2-color works as good as 4-color.
- If they gotta "fill it out, make sure they can".
- Use appropriate formats.

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Membership Idea... About The Audience

- Who Do I Market To
 - Former Members,
 - Non-Member Customers,
 - Qualified Prospects,
 - Buyers of "Like Things",
 - Everyone Else.

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Membership Idea... About The Media

- If you have two addresses on file – try marketing to them both.
- People who tell You “NO” -- are better prospects than those that stay silent.
- Use a List Broker_-- they usually work for FREE, and can help you with research, trade customs and problems.
- Rent “Hotline” names -- they are the most recent and freshest.

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Membership Idea... About The Market

- How “sticky” is the association?
- What makes us “indispensible”?
- What do we know about our attendees or members outside the association?

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Membership Idea... About The Economics

- Market backwards – results you want determine how much you do.
- Know the numbers –
 - What's Break-even?
 - What's Lifetime Value?
 - What's the Big Mac?
- Keep records from previous years –
 - What's Your Half-Life, Doubling Date?
- Know industry statistics -- How do you compare to your competition, to other non-profits, etc.?

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Questions & Thank You!

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