

Membership Research Report

From Sue Froggatt Training & Consulting

Insights into what is happening in the membership sector



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"Once again Sue has used her unrivalled knowledge and contacts with the membership sector to produce usable research which will help focus the management teams of many organisations who are currently struggling with ambitious targets versus recession. I will certainly be using the report to establish how well we are performing against the sector overall and I am sure many others will be doing the same." James Jaynes, Head of Membership Services, SOLACE & Chair of the Membership & Association Managers Network (MemNet)

"Congratulations on a very effective survey. I particularly like the detailed feedback sections. Full of very useful information." Mervyn Pilley, Secretary General, Business Management Association

"I really liked this report. It embraced the essence of membership and I found it most interesting that many of the things that we as an organization were looking at were similar or the same as other organizations – even though we are not engaging with the same sort of people in most instances. It is easy to read, gets the point across very well and makes it easy to start thinking about many issues that organizations need to think about when recruiting and retaining members. Much food for thought." Karen Morris, Membership Recruitment Officer, The National Association of Headteachers

"Well done – a very interesting report, especially with retention rates and life of a member." Will Reeves, Business Development Manager, SOE

"I found the report very interesting and informative. It's a great source of information for benchmarking purposes." Maciej Zwierzanski, Marketing Manager, Institution of Civil Engineers

"This is an interesting piece of work especially the member research section. There are some useful benchmarks, for example the retention rates. It is also encouraging that most of those who responded expect their associations to grow in the future. I am sure these findings will be read with interest by other Associations." Jeremy Vibert, Head of Marketing & Information, TRADA

"We have long passed the time when effective management of an organisation's membership function can be done by looking at internal data and using our intuition. We need to be able benchmark our efforts against those organisations who have been successful. This survey gives us current information we can use to help move our efforts to the next level." Mark Levin, CAE, CSP

Preface

Research is one of the defining hallmarks of successful organisations^{*1}, and this is particularly true for membership associations^{*2}. Continually collecting feedback, evaluating the results and taking steps to improve performance, is what sets learning and growing organisations apart from others. This survey was undertaken to help associations with this endeavour and to assist in planning member recruitment and retention activity.

The observations made in this report are very much a top view – looking at the results overall rather than by specific group subsets. Whilst it would have been preferable to compare like associations, i.e. comparing “apples with apples”, it was felt that the numbers needed to be higher for this type of analysis to be valid.

The survey was completed from mid 2008 to early 2009, against the backdrop of an economic recession.

It was developed by UK membership specialist Sue Froggatt, with assistance and contributions from two other leading membership experts, Belinda Busoli from Australia and Mark Levin from the USA.

If you would like to share your thoughts, observations, or ask questions to other readers of this report, then please join in the LinkedIn discussion group.

^{*1} Kotler on Marketing, by Philip Kotler

^{*2} 7 Measures of Success, ASAE & the Center for Association Leadership

About the Survey

- The survey was completed from mid 2008 to early 2009. Respondents gave opinions and facts about past activity and future expectations. The detailed financial and membership figures were taken from published reports available at the time.
- 126 respondents were deemed to have completed the survey in sufficient details to be included in the analysis.

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