Prospecting For New Members *Part II of III*

By Ted Robinson

"QUIT LOOKING FOR THE PEOPLE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AND START LOOKING FOR THE PEOPLE THAT ARE LOOKING FOR YOU." – DOUG FIREBAUGH, MARKETING TRAINER AND CONSULTANT

In part I of this series, we focused on developing the club's brand position, determining how that brand fits with its with its market and segments, and Asking the question: "Is there a balance between the member experience and the financial performance?"

So when the target market is defined and the club product meets the market's needs the next step is identifying an adequate number of prospective members to accomplish the club's replacement and growth goals.

PCA's simple membership market formula states: "It takes **X** prospects to schedule Y tours to receive **Z** qualified applications."

For example, if your club has 400 members a common attrition rate of seven percent will require replacing 28 members.

If the club budgets a five percent growth another 20 members are required, for a total of 48 applications.

Using a factor of 20, or conversion rate of 20 percent requires 240 tours. Taking a typical factor of 10, 2,400 prospects would be needed to schedule the 240 tours.

Member referrals are absolutely the best and most reliable prospects and need to be cultivated at every level.

Developing a culture of regeneration, providing incentives and sponsor programs, and warmly welcoming brand new members has historically produced qualified applicants.

But the probability of 400 members generating 2,400 prospects is lower than seeing the Chicago Cubs win the World Series.

So in addition to working the membership for new leads successful membership directors will have to rely on emerging and/or new technology such as social 'live' CRM (Customer Relationship Management) networks.

For example it is now possible to:

1. Profile your club's membership DNA: What are the key commonalties of your club's membership i.e. demographics, psychographics, purchase patterns, social media use, etc.?

2. Identify every individual, household and/or business that most resembles your best members' DNA in the club's geographic market.

3. Identify those individuals, households or businesses who will most likely respond favorably to direct mail, email, social network contacts or telephone calls – within any radius from one mile to 3,000 miles from your club.

4. Learn who within this radius are serious golfers; who currently belong to clubs; who are looking to join, when and why?

5. Match social network activity to your club – who is on which social networks within the club's radius - which of your members is on which social networks?

Once you identify your club's highly qualified prospects and those with a high proclivity to respond, you must then determine the most appropriate approach, which will most probably be a combination of techniques that will reinforce your brand position and will most effectively turn prospects into candidates.

"In an era of social CRM networks, Internet crawling, digital data convergence, pattern recognition software and complex event processing, identifying exactly who will be interested in becoming YOUR next club member has never been easier." – Van Mayros, CEO, GEMS GROUP

Stay tuned for the next installment. **BR**

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