The 2017 Membership Benchmarking Survey

1. About This Survey

I would like to invite you to complete the 2017 Membership Benchmarking Survey.

This survey is important because it will help membership organisations benchmark their performance, produce valuable insights for planning, indicate which recruitment approaches are working best and highlight the key challenges facing the sector.

This is a comprehensive survey that will take 15-20 minutes to complete.

To familiarise yourself with:

* All the questions beforehand - use this <u>copy of the questionnaire</u>
* The membership figures you will be prompted for -<u>click here</u>.

There are several advantages of participating:

1. You will receive a free copy of the results (RRP £49.95 - approx. €60/A$85/C$89/US$65).
2. Many have found the process of completing this survey valuable - it helped them identify new areas to investigate.
3. You will be contributing to a significant international study that will help the sector move forward. In the last study, 425 organisations participated.

Deadlines

Please respond to the survey by Wednesday 31st May 2017 to ensure you are included.

The results will be available mid July 2017.

Background

The survey was developed by membership development expert Sue Froggatt from the UK, with contributions from membership experts Mark Levin from the USA and Belinda Moore from Australia. It is the fourth survey undertaken since 2008.

The survey has been endorsed by <u>MemNet</u>, <u>Memberwise</u>, the <u>IoAM</u> (The Institute of Association Management) and the <u>CSAE</u> (Canadian Society of Association Executives).

This survey is being kindly sponsored by <u>SmartImpact</u> who provide membership and event CRM solutions.

It is confidential and anonymous.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email sue@suefroggatt.com.

I know you must have a busy schedule - so I appreciate you taking the time to read this and hope you can participate.

Kind regards

Sue Froggatt

PS: Don't forget, if it would be helpful to download a copy of the questionnaire to prepare your answers, please click here.

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2. About Your Membership

* 1. What type of membership do you have? (Tick one.)

○ Only individuals   ○ Only organisations (trade/corporate)   ○ Both - individuals and organisations

2. In which countries and regions are most of your members based? (Tick as many as apply.)

☐ Australia	☐ USA	☐ SE Asia
☐ Canada	☐ Africa	☐ South America
☐ Eire	☐ Eastern Europe	☐ They are spread all over the world
☐ New Zealand	☐ Europe	
☐ UK	☐ Middle East	

Other (please specify)

[   ]

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3. Key Membership Statistics

In this section we ask for figures that will enable us to calculate and analyse key statistics, for example member retention rates.

Please use the latest annual information that you have. (If is not available, please use the figures from the last published annual report or plan.)

3. How many members did you have at the start of the 12 month period?

Number of members at the start

4. How many members did you have at the end of the 12 month period?

Number of members at the end

5. How many new members joined over the 12 month period?

New members

6. Which 12 month period have you used for the figures given in the above questions?

Month /Year Ending

Period of coverage

7. Over the next 12 months, are you expecting membership to increase, decrease or stay the same?
Please choose from the following options the range which best represents your predicted change.

% Change

Expected change in total membership

8. Please comment on why you are predicting this change.

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4. Membership Subscription Rate/Dues

9. What is the current annual membership fee (to the nearest £, $ or €)? Please just enter whole numbers in the box i.e. don't enter commas, full stops or currency symbols (£, $ or €) - for example "125" or "1500". NB: If you only have one subscription level, enter the same figure in all boxes.

Highest

Lowest

Mostly frequently paid fee

* 10. What currency have you used above? (NB: This is a mandatory question.)

◯ £ - UK   ◯ $ - Canada

◯ € - Euros   ◯ $ - New Zealand

◯ $ - Australia   ◯ $ - USA

◯ Other - please indicate your country and unit of financial measurement

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5. Member Recruitment

11. What do you believe are the main reasons members join your organisation? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Access grants
- ☐ Support your cause
- ☐ Access advice or support helplines
- ☐ Develop their business e.g. sales opportunities, cost reduction, etc.
- ☐ Develop their career e.g. continued education, qualifications, certification
- ☐ Demonstrate their professionalism
- ☐ Gain discounts or free resources
- ☐ Attend events e.g. conferences, exhibitions, seminars
- ☐ Learn best practice
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ In order to practice or do-business - membership is mandatory

- ☐ It is expected by their boss, clients or customers
- ☐ Keep up-to-date with what is happening
- ☐ Grow their network of contacts
- ☐ Reduce isolation
- ☐ Representation, lobbying or advocacy
- ☐ Access specialised information or research
- ☐ Get involved and volunteer
- ☐ Gain credibility e.g. post-nominal (letters after their name), use the logo
- ☐ The magazine
- ☐ Meet other people with the same interests
- ☐ Not sure

Other

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6. Recruitment Spend/Budget

12. Over the last 12 months, approximately how much did you spend on member recruitment?

Recruitment spend [   ]

13. Does the above figure include or exclude overheads e.g. staff costs?

- ○ Includes overheads
- ○ Excludes overheads
- ○ Don't know if it includes or excludes overheads

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7. Recruitment Methods

14. Please indicate the main approaches you use to recruit new members and, for those you use, which do you think are the most and least effective in recruiting new members?

	Use - Very Effective	Use - Not Very Effective	Use - Don't Know How Effective	Don't Use
Content marketing	○	○	○	○
Cross selling other products and services	○	○	○	○
Direct mail/mailshots	○	○	○	○
Email marketing	○	○	○	○
Events - booths at exhibitions	○	○	○	○
Events - local branches/chapters/regions	○	○	○	○
Events - national conferences	○	○	○	○
Events - training courses/seminars/workshops	○	○	○	○
Mobile apps	○	○	○	○
Paid for advertising - printed publications	○	○	○	○
Paid for advertising - radio or TV	○	○	○	○
Paid for advertising - search engines	○	○	○	○
Personal sales calls & presentations	○	○	○	○
PR e.g. articles in the press	○	○	○	○
Publications/magazines	○	○	○	○
Recommendations - from a member, colleague or friend	○	○	○	○
Recommendations - from a teacher, lecturer or other educator	○	○	○	○
Recommendations - from other organisations	○	○	○	○
Recommendations - from a manager or employer	○	○	○	○
Recommendations - specific 'member-get-member' campaign(s)	○	○	○	○
Search engine optimisation - SEO	○	○	○	○
Social media	○	○	○	○
Tele-marketing/sales	○	○	○	○
Your web site	○	○	○	○

15. Which social media do you use to recruit new members and, for those you use, which do you think are the most and least effective in attracting new members?

	Use - Very Effective	Use - Not Very Effective	Use - Don't Know How Effective	Don't Use
Blogs	○	○	○	○
Google+	○	○	○	○
Groups run by other organisations	○	○	○	○
Facebook	○	○	○	○
Flickr	○	○	○	○
Instagram	○	○	○	○
LinkedIn	○	○	○	○
Pinterest	○	○	○	○
Twitter	○	○	○	○
YouTube	○	○	○	○

Other social media that you use which is very effective:

[   ]

16. What is your favourite recruitment tip, tactic or strategy?

[   ]

17. Do other organisations act as partners or influencers in helping you recruit new members?

○ No   ○ Yes

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8. Types of Recruitment Partners

18. What types of organisations help you recruit new members? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Educators/Educational institutions

☐ Event companies or venues

☐ Employers

☐ Public sector organisations/Government institutions

☐ Recruitment agencies

☐ Service providers e.g. accountants, insurers, helplines, software providers

☐ Sponsors/Corporate partners

☐ Organisations/companies in the supply chain

☐ Other membership organisations

Other recruitment partners

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9. Use of Incentives

19. Do you use promotional incentives or special offers/deals to encourage people to join?

◯ Yes

◯ No

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10. More On Incentives

20. Which joining incentives do you find most effective?

	Very effective	Sometimes effective	Not very effective	Use - don't know how effective	Don't use
Discounted membership fee	○	○	○	○	○
Free membership for a period	○	○	○	○	○
Free taster events	○	○	○	○	○
Discounted event fees	○	○	○	○	○
Free gifts	○	○	○	○	○
Vouchers	○	○	○	○	○
Prize draws	○	○	○	○	○
Free publications	○	○	○	○	○
Special experiences	○	○	○	○	○

Other incentives that you find effective:

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11. Recruitment Challenges

21. What are your greatest recruitment challenges? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Getting prospective members to discover/find us

☐ Clearly communicating the benefits of membership – so they are easy to understand

☐ Creating a powerful/compelling/appealing membership package

☐ Making membership good value for money

☐ Offering benefits that are unique and difficult for others to copy

☐ Making joining easy and effortless

☐ Competition

☐ Getting members to recommend membership

☐ Finding partners and influencers who can recommend membership

☐ Making the journey into membership a great experience

22. When a new member joins, do you have any special activity in place to get them involved or engaged?

None	Occasionally	Some	Lots
○	○	○	○

23. Do you have groups/chapters that organise activities or events for members locally/regionally?

○ Yes   ○ No

24. What is your favourite engagement tip, tactic or strategy?

[   ]

25. Which best describes your main approach to member communications? (Tick one)

○ One-to all: All members get the same information

○ One-to-some: Communications are customise for different categories/segments/group

○ One-to-one: Communications are personalised according to the stated preferences of each member or their past interactions

26. If known, what is the average number of years that a member stays in membership (tenure)?

Average number of years in membership   [   ]

27. What are your greatest retention challenges? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

- [ ] Welcoming new members
- [ ] Making sure that new members get the value they anticipated
- [ ] Getting members to participate (show-up)
- [ ] Making the first year of membership a great experience
- [ ] Getting members to contribute and more actively engage
- [ ] Getting members to connect with other members
- [ ] Getting members to step forward and take leadership roles
- [ ] Recognising the contributions of members who actively participate
- [ ] Supporting members who volunteer
- [ ] Making things as simple and effortless as possible for members
- [ ] Understanding what members need, want and value
- [ ] Being able to segment our members
- [ ] Tracking member engagement
- [ ] Anticipating member needs
- [ ] Understanding members worries and concerns – what keeps them awake at night
- [ ] Meeting member expectations
- [ ] Building a strong community
- [ ] Creating a sense of belonging
- [ ] Getting members to emotionally engage with what we do/our cause

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14. Renewals

28. How do you organise renewals? (Please tick all the options you offer.)

☐ Annual - fixed date (members all get their renewal notice on the same day)

☐ Annual - anniversary date (members get their renewal notice 12 months after they have joined)

☐ Quarterly

☐ Monthly

☐ Life - a one off payment

☐ Other

Other (please specify)

[   ]

29. What are the main reasons why members leave? (Please tick all those which are significant factors.)

☐ They did not use or take-up the benefits	☐ Business closed or merger
☐ Lack of engagement or involvement	☐ Unhappy with performance of benefits
☐ Did not enjoy the membership experience	☐ Switched to a competitor
☐ Not good value for money / Too expensive	☐ Strong competitor activity
☐ Poor customer service	☐ Employer will no longer pay their subscription
☐ Disagreed with what we were doing	☐ Lack of relevant communication
☐ Change in interests / no longer relevant	☐ Did not see/get the renewal notice
☐ Retired / left the profession / made redundant	☐ Forgot to renew
☐ Pressure on funds / budget cuts / no longer afford / recession	

Other reasons for not renewing membership:

[   ]

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15. Member Research

30. Below is a list of different types of research or surveys undertaken by associations. Which did you undertake in the last 12 months as a single survey, or as a section or element of a larger survey? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

- [ ] Benchmarking studies against other organisations (formal or informal)
- [ ] Membership benefits e.g. usage, value or awareness
- [ ] Competitor analysis
- [ ] Customer service
- [ ] Exit/lapsed member survey
- [ ] Event feedback
- [ ] Fail-to-join research
- [ ] Future trends affecting members and the association
- [ ] Market penetration
- [ ] Member journey mapping / the membership experience
- [ ] Member segmentation
- [ ] Member wants and/or needs
- [ ] Member satisfaction
- [ ] Member communications

- [ ] New member satisfaction
- [ ] New product and service development
- [ ] Non-member research
- [ ] Mystery shopping
- [ ] Competitive positioning
- [ ] Readership
- [ ] Sector benchmarking
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] Volunteer involvement/satisfaction
- [ ] Organisational awareness/image/branding
- [ ] The value of membership
- [ ] Training needs analysis
- [ ] Web site ease of use/functionality

31. Please describe any other type of research that you do, that was not mentioned in the above list.

32. What is the most valuable research that you do?

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16. Other Challenges

33. What do you feel are your greatest communication challenges? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Getting attention

☐ Managing the volume of information members receive

☐ Personalising member communications

☐ Creating engaging and relevant content

☐ Creating content for different audiences

☐ Managing the growing number of channels including social media, apps, etc.

34. What do you feel are your greatest challenges regarding your image and profile in the sector? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Raising our profile and awareness

☐ Gaining more recognition for what we achieve

☐ Being seen as the 'go-to/go-ahead' place or an inspiring organisation

☐ Being seen as a leader

35. What do you feel are your greatest organisational challenges? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Making sure everyone in the organisation values the contribution made by membership

☐ Getting the board and senior managers to understand the challenges and opportunities facing membership

☐ Getting the organisation to anticipate change (rather than respond to it)

☐ Being agile / flexible - so you can take advantage of new opportunities

☐ Getting departments to work together

☐ Improving internal processes and procedures

☐ Having processes in place which inform decision makers of critical issues

☐ Having the resources to develop new benefits

☐ Expanding into new areas/sectors

☐ Developing new revenue streams

36. What do you feel are your greatest planning challenges? (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐ Having a mission/vision that guides our plans for membership

☐ Having a good planning process

☐ Getting the right people involved

☐ Having the right data and insights to help us plan well

☐ Having sufficient resources e.g. staff or funds to execute the plan

37. What do you feel are your greatest data and technology challenges? (Please tick all that apply.)

☐ Improving the quality of data

☐ Preventing data silos

☐ Extracting useful insights from the data we have

☐ Ensuring the privacy of member data

☐ Ensuring the security of member data

☐ Managing the growing number of communication devices

☐ Integrating different systems so they talk to each other

☐ Improving our membership database/CRM system

☐ Developing our web site

☐ Keeping pace with the speed of change

38. If you have any other key challenges not mentioned so far, then please list them below.

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17. Planning & Managing Membership Activity

39. What measures or metrics do you use that you find effective. (Please tick ALL that apply.)

☐	Average number of years in membership	☐	Number of new members recruited
☐	Average spend per member	☐	Number of new members who have been recommended by members
☐	Awareness of our organisation in the sector or community	☐	Percentage of members who are actively involved
☐	Benefit usage / take-up	☐	Percentage of members who renew - the renewal rate
☐	Conversion rate (% of people or organisations who enquire then join)	☐	A member effort score (MES)
☐	Donations, giving or gifts	☐	Sense of belonging
☐	An engagement score or rating	☐	The 'Net Promoter Score' (NPS)
☐	Growth in membership numbers	☐	Total revenue (gross or net)
☐	Media impact	☐	Click through rates
☐	Member satisfaction rating	☐	Open rates
☐	Member upgrades	☐	Downloads
☐	Number of people attending events	☐	Social media likes or posts
☐	Number of new enquires about membership		
☐	Other measures/metrics used		

40. Do you use the Net Promoter Score (NPS)?

◯ Yes   ◯ No

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18. Net Promoter Score

41. What is your current Net Promotor Score?

42. Please confirm if your NPS score is positive or negative?

19. Your Membership Categories & Structure

43. Which best describes the membership fee structure that you have? (Tick only one option.)

○ Everyone pays the same subscription

○ They pay a fee which is based on certain attributes e.g. qualifications, experience, size, turnover, etc.

○ The fee is based on a tiered structure e.g. bronze, silver, gold, platinum, etc.

○ They select the types of benefits they want and pay a fee for those benefits (cafeteria style)

Other (please specify)

[   ]

44. How many different categories of membership do you have in total?

	Number of Categories
Categories	[ ]

45. Is membership mandatory or optional?

○ Membership is optional

○ Membership is mandatory for some members & optional for others

○ Membership is mandatory/compulsory to practice or operate

Other

[   ]

20. About Your Organisation

46. How many full time paid staff or equivalents (FTEs) do you have working in your organisation?

○ None ○ 1-4 ○ 5-9 ○ 10-19 ○ 20-49 ○ 50-99 ○ 100-499 ○ 500+

47. What is the approximate turnover of the association i.e. total revenue/income from all sources? (Please enter whole numbers to the nearest $/£/€ & leave out all commas.)

Total
revenue

48. What type of membership organisation are you? (Please tick ALL which apply.)

☐ Professional body	☐ Trade association	☐ Fan club
☐ Trade union	☐ Government organisation	☐ Owners club
☐ Pressure or lobbying group	☐ Academic organisation	☐ Hobby or leisure club
☐ Charity	☐ Friendly, mutual or co-operative society	☐ Religious group
☐ Commercial business	☐ Social welfare organisation	☐ Local business association
☐ Chartered Institute	☐ Sports or fitness club/society	☐ Regulatory body
☐ Federation	☐ Nonprofit / Not-for-profit	☐ Private members club
☐ Chamber of Commerce	☐ Social club	
☐ Other (please specify)		

49. Which best describes your position or role?

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21. About Member-to-Member Activity

50. In general, are your core members in competition with each other?

◯ No ◯ Yes ◯ Sometimes

Other (please specify)

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22. Final Section

51. If you could ask other membership teams one question, what would you ask?

52. If you could give one piece of advice to other membership teams, what would you say?

53. If you could make one big change in your organisation to help you drive membership development, what would it be?

54. Please indicate if you would like to be included on the mailing lists for any of the following:

☐ Sue Froggatt's free membership Tips Bulletin for associations

☐ Belinda Moore's Strategic Membership Solutions free Bulletin

☐ Mark Levin's free resources for associations

55. How easy or difficult did you find this survey to complete?

◯ Very easy ◯ Easy ◯ Neither easy or difficult ◯ Difficult ◯ Very difficult

56. Please make any other comments, including how this survey could be improved next time, below.

57. A free copy of the published results of this study will be available to anyone who completes the survey. To receive your complimentary copy, please enter your email address below.

Your email address

Re-confirm your email address

Your first name