

---

*Try These Three Marketing Tactics to Increase Membership*

---



**Some fresh marketing techniques might help increase your member acquisition rate. Here are three approaches to test with prospects.**

Membership managers and directors have a tough job. They're usually responsible for increasing membership, but at the same time, they have to depend on other association leaders to execute some of their ideas for bringing new members in the door.

Often, all you need is a plan to get started on a growth strategy for new-member acquisition. In my experience, there are three simple ways to inject new energy into marketing and communications efforts that drive membership growth.

### **Use BOGO Marketing**

Take a page from the retail marketing playbook and offer a “buy one, get one” deal.

When hosting a low-cost event—whether it's an online seminar or in-person gathering—consider allowing members to register with a guest for free or at a very low price. This is a great recruitment tactic because it encourages members to bring a colleague or friend so that a free ticket doesn't go to waste.

Current members are your best ambassadors and will educate their prospective guest about your association when they extend the invitation. Even if the prospect can't attend, your organization benefits from free word-of-mouth advertising.



Frequently the first people members think to invite are former members, so this tactic is also a great opportunity to bring lapsed members back into the fold.

When you offer a BOGO deal, collect guests' email addresses in addition to members' addresses in your online registration form. Guests can be added to your prospect database, and you can email them later with follow-up information such as:

- a link to the presentation discount code for membership
- a list of upcoming events they might also want to attend
- volunteer opportunities
- a list of key member-only benefits

**Conduct and Share Industry Research**-One of the most popular events held by Freelance Austin, an association of freelancers in Austin, Texas, is a panel discussion where the results of its salary survey are revealed.

When kicking off the survey, the organization asks its members and those on its prospect list to help increase the accuracy of the survey by forwarding the survey link to as many local freelancers as possible. This makes the email and social posts about the survey go viral, because everyone benefits from a wider set of data. The survey itself mentions the event where results will be revealed. Both the survey and the event provide new opportunities to reach those who may not have heard about the organization before.

**Some organizations are generous with nonmembers access, but there's a fine line between giving prospective members a taste of membership and giving away many of the association's valuable benefits and services.**

Consider whether your organization is in a position to gather information that members and prospects would find extremely valuable. If you conduct a survey, every part of the survey process is an opportunity to market the association. Here's how:

- The survey invitation sent via email can promote membership and the event where results will be revealed.
- The survey "thank you" page and email can include a membership marketing message and another mention of the upcoming event.
- A short membership pitch can be included at the beginning of the event.
- The post-event email can include a link to the survey results and content similar to the BOGO event follow-up email (offering discounted membership and mentioning members-only benefits).

**Maintain Plenty of Members-Only Features**-Some organizations are generous with nonmembers access, but there's a fine line between giving prospective members a taste of membership and giving away many of the association's valuable benefits and services. Be sure that some of your best features are available to members only or are accessible to members at a discount.

Here are some examples of where to use this approach:



- Every event ticket should have discounted pricing for members versus nonmembers. Even if the price difference isn't huge, it reinforces membership value.
- It costs nothing to allow members to register first for highly attended events or to give them the first opportunity to raise their hand for coveted volunteer roles.
- Some events, such as small lunch-and-learn sessions with industry experts, can be limited to members only.
- Invite members to serve on relevant **special interest groups** (SIGs).
- Restrict access to an online directory or community portal.
- Provide unique members-only programs, such as a peer mentorship or an expert podcast series.
- You could also run an email newsletter – but there are other, **easier alternatives** as well.

**Don't forget to let nonmembers know what they are missing. Try these tactics:**

At every event where nonmembers are present, make a membership push that mentions member-only benefits.

- On web pages where member-only content is present, provide a teaser amount of information so nonmembers get a sense of what they can't see.
- Create an automated series of emails to engage your prospect list. Through this series, you can share testimonials from current members who have personal stories about the value of membership.

## LET US HELP WITH THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS.

Promotional Products-Apparel-Letterhead-Envelopes & Business Cards-Full Color Brochures-Corporate Gifts-Greeting Cards-Custom Labels-Trade Show Displays-Stamps-Signs-Checks

Contact: Rob Paul 410-409-8000

