

PREPARING YOUR CLUB FOR MARKETING ACTIVITY



PREPARING YOUR CLUB FOR MARKETING ACTIVITY



1. Who is your target audience?

Think about who you are trying to reach and attract to your club.

Always be realistic – you are unlikely to have the budget, the reach or the scope to target everyone within your community, and not everybody will be interested in coming to your club either. Trying to target too many people can easily become a lot of effort with a generic offering that doesn't appeal to anybody.

Be specific – Think about what will drive them to play tennis and join your club? What are the barriers or issues that might prevent them from joining your club? The more you know about your target audience the better; with that information you can shape your marketing and promotion. And remember, it's just as important to have a plan for the experience you provide once they arrive.

2. What are you offering?

Point of difference – Once you know who you are trying to attract into your tennis club, you need to consider what will encourage them to take the steps to join your club. What is the offer the club will promote? Think of this as your campaign. A club can have multiple campaigns – ie Hot Shots, Open Court Sessions, Book a Court – they're all distinct offerings, which appeal to very different audiences, and your promotion should reflect that. It's also important to consider what you are competing against for their time and money. What other sporting clubs are around you, what do they do well? Why should they join your club?

3. How are you going to promote?

Now that you have a clear picture of your target audience and an offer that will appeal to them, the next stage is to work out how best to deliver your message and gain maximum uptake.

Who is your target audience influenced by and what other activities or places do they attend? What channel is best for communicating with them and what type of language do they use? Can you shape and personalise the message specifically for the target audience?

4. Promoting your Club

Following the development of a clear and well thought-out marketing campaign, the next stage is to promote it and raise awareness within your specified target audience.

5. Traditional versus digital marketing

Most clubs will have some experience using traditional marketing techniques, such as ads in the local newspapers or sending out leaflets and flyers. Today, there is much more emphasis on digital marketing, which focuses on using the internet to spread the word about your club, through social networks, mobile apps or websites. It could be the case that having a mixture of traditional and digital marketing will work best for your club, but it will depend on the audience that you are targeting as well as the budget and resources you have available.

The principles for traditional and digital campaigns remain the same. You need to be targeted in how you promote to gain maximum impact, value for money and effort. If you are using posters and flyers, you must target where you display them to reach your target audience.

If you're trying to grow your presence on social media, think about the messages you write and the language you use to ensure you're appealing to the right audience.

Consider the most impactful methods for reaching your target audience. How do they consume most of their information? Prioritise the opportunities that are likely to have greatest impact. Be targeted in how you deploy your marketing resources. What does success look like for your campaign?

PREPARING YOUR CLUB FOR MARKETING ACTIVITY



6. Content

The quality of your marketing content is crucial if your campaign is to be successful. Whether it's a poster, an ad or a tweet - you must make sure that the content is focussed and relevant to the needs of the target audience.

Consider what type of content is needed, including the tone, style and language used.

What does the target audience like, share and engage with now? What are the key messages that you are aiming to get across? Is it clear what you would like the individual to do once they've seen the content (i.e. where do they go to find out more, to sign up etc)?

Be consistent - try to create a consistent feel for your marketing and branding. If you are directing the audience to find out more from your website, then make sure the website reinforces the tone and content and is geared towards your target audience.

7. Campaign follow through

Delivering your Campaign - Developing an effective marketing campaign is pointless if your tennis club doesn't follow through and deliver what was promised in the promotional offer.

Marketing is only one element of growing your membership and participant base, equally important is providing high quality customer service once these new participants start attending your club. If they get a poor experience when they first arrive, it will be very difficult to encourage them to return.

Consider the various steps that new members and participants take when joining the club. How can you make these steps as straightforward and easy as possible? What can you do to improve their satisfaction and feel welcome before they arrive? Don't assume that all new members have been part of a tennis (or sports) club before. Explain how the club operates and help signpost them to the aspects of the club that they might be interested in. Consider what the new member/ participant actually wants from the club, not what you think they may want.

Don't be afraid to ask new people what they are hoping to get from the club. Do you follow-up with them from time-to time to see how they are getting on and if you can offer any support? If you have provided an initial promotional offer to join the club at the end of the promotion has someone from the club talked to them about the next steps in joining the club? Is the club collecting any information or data on participants that don't join the club to understand the impact of your promotional activity and how it can be improved for the future?

There is plenty to be learnt when you listen to the people you are trying to reach - old habits die hard, but being open to new things is what will help your club grow!