

LEVEL UP MEMBERSHIP

WACE 2024



TELL US ABOUT YOUR CHAMBER

How many Members: Under 300, 300-600, 600-1k, 1k+
CEO, Membership Directors, Events, Admin, Finance
Budget: Under 300k, 300k-600k, 600k-1m, 1m+

LEVEL UP

ABOUT THE SESSION

Successful chambers are steadily developing onboarding, engagement, and retention practices. Your retention plan should be a living document that gets updated frequently with regular action items. In this session, we will discuss: practical lessons in successful membership onboarding, proven engagement outcomes and strong retention results. You will walk away with how to find your retention rate, more than one retention plan with emphasis on first year members, marketing, and communications plans, and more.

UPLOADS TO APP

Retention Plans, Communication/Drip Campaigns, First-Year Member Relations Playbook, Membership Packages, Tiers, Recruitment Plan





Member Retention

WACE February 2024



Vision: to develop and enhance community vitality
Mission: to lead collaboration

Active Members as of 12/29/23: 763

2023 Retention Rate: 90%

Annual Budget: \$1.25 Million

Staff: 8 FT & 2 PT

Board Size: 15 members

What is Retention?

The percentage of members retained over a given period.

- Can be calculated at any point in time, not just year-end.
- Formula: **(End Count – New Members) ÷ Start Count x 100 = Retention Rate**

Example: At the end of 2022 there were 760 members (start count). At the end of 2023, there were 763 members (end count), which included 79 new members and 76 dropped members.

*763 (end count) – 79 (new members) = 684 (ec-nm)
684 (ec-nm) ÷ 760 (start count) = .90 x 100 = retention rate
Retention Rate = 90%*

Source: GrowthZone: <https://www.growthzone.com/blog/member-retention-calculation/>

Why is Retention Important?

- It costs more in time, energy, and resources to recruit new members than retain existing members.
- Retention = relationships, members will get to know and trust your chamber.
- Long-term members are the key to recruiting new members, participating on committees, and helping your chamber achieve its goals.
- Recruit to Retain!

Who is Responsible for Retention?

Hint: not just membership staff.

Retention is a team effort!

- VVP staff actively participate in segmented communications and listening sessions with their program participants and respective groups.
- Ongoing, segmented engagement leads to relevant programming which = member engagement and retention.
- Being an active listener and problem solver = member engagement and retention.
- Engagement and retention = referrals and testimonials to help recruit new members.

Questions to Consider

1. Are you tracking your membership data?
2. Do you have onboarding and retention plans?
3. Do you know what is important to your members and can you demonstrate how you are meeting their needs?
4. Are you able to segment member communications so that members are getting the information that is relevant to them?

Resources!

[Membership Calculations for Association Professionals Who Hate Math Workbook](#) – free workbook from GrowthZone

[Helpful Resources by Cathi Hight](#) – free articles

[Hight Performance Group Blog Archive](#) – free Membership Retention Videos

WACE Resource Library – free (for members) access to member retention plans and other peer content
www.waceonline.com

[ACCE Resource Guides](#) – free (for members) access to member retention plans and other peer content

ACCE Membership Development Division – facilitates sharing of best practices and professional development resources for chamber sales and membership professionals at all levels.
www.acce.org

[Chamber of Commerce Professionals Facebook Group](#)

Thank you!



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About us

- Established in 1910
- One of the largest Chambers in Southern California
- Members as of 12/31/2023: 737
- 2023 Retention Rate: 84%
- Annual Budget: \$1.4 million
- Staff: 9 Full-time
- Chamber Board: 25
- Ambassadors: 22

Retention starts with Communication

1. How often?

Too much? Too little?

2. What are you communicating?

Is it personal/custom?

Does it provide value to the member?



Who is “At Risk”?

EVERYONE!



Engagement...

What is it??

It takes 2 to Tango



How are you tracking?



- Winging it?
- Manually/Excel/Word file?
- Database?
 - Chambermaster
 - Utilizing the Benefit Tracking Feature

**What is the most
common misconception
that members have about
joining a Chamber?**



Chambers Create Opportunities

How does your Chamber stand out?

How do you differ from your neighbor Chamber?
(Yes, they are your competition)



Possible Retention Strategies

Networking Events
Communication Channels
Recognition Programs
Training and Development

Advocacy Initiatives
Committee Participation
Member Surveys
Online Presence





Value = Retention

- Give the member a no-brainer reason to pay their membership dues
- Do not become an optional invoice to pay

**“Every successful business story
has a chapter that begins with
“Chamber Member”**

- Deserie Ramirez





Member Relations



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What Is The Greatest Driving Factor Behind Chamber Growth?



First-Year Retention

- ☐ Believe it or not... Many chambers have great retention rates, but they still aren't growing...
- ☐ You may have a hole in the bottom of the boat...
- ☐ Is new member recruiting neutralized by your number of dropped members?
- ☐ **First-Year Retention = Sustainable Growth!**

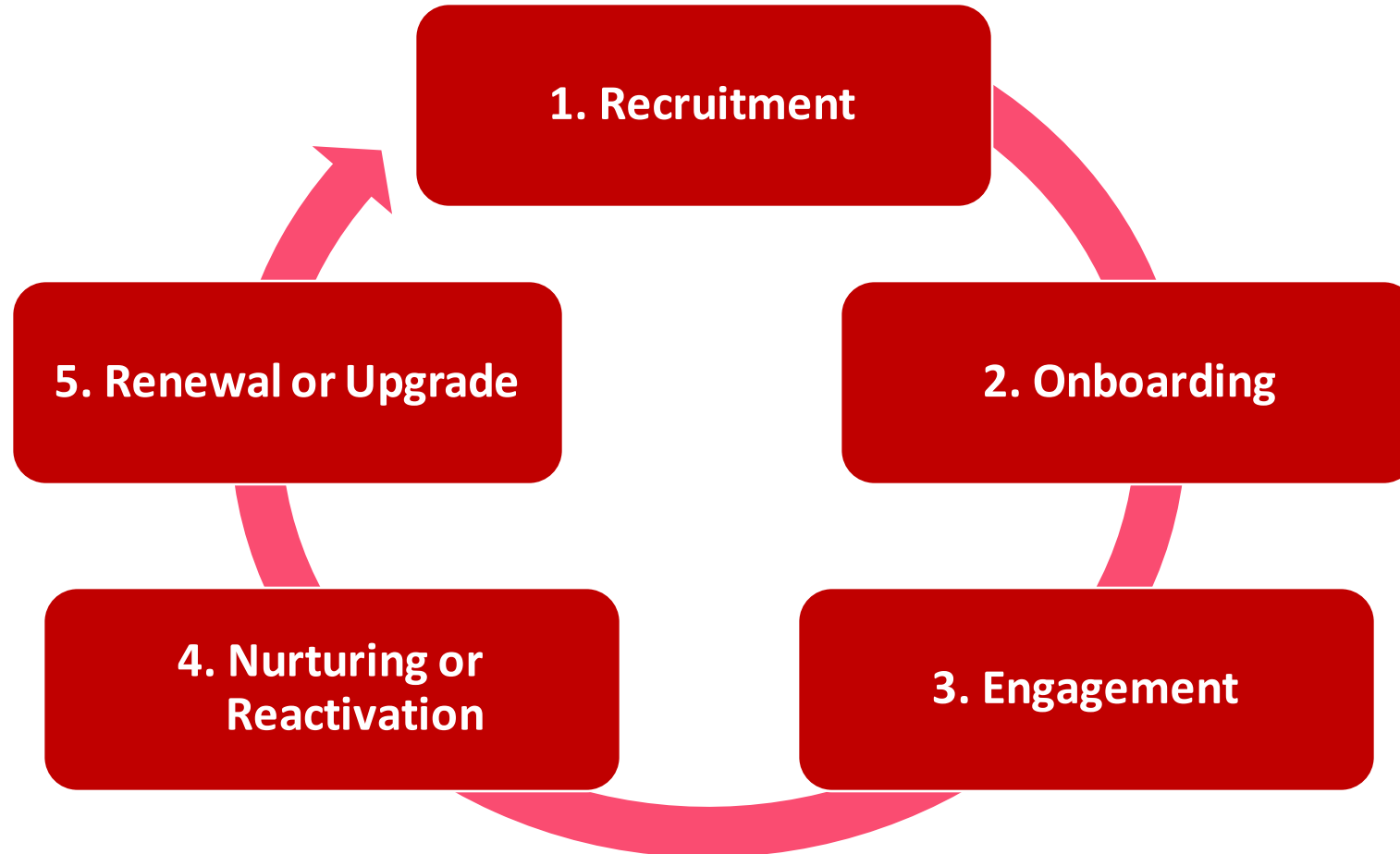


Playbook Available

- ❑ Overview of how to enhance first-year retention.
- ❑ Download **Holman Brothers First-Year Member Retention Playbook** in the W.A.C.E. convention app!



First-Year Member Continuum



1. Recruitment

- ☐ What is the most crucial element of first-year member retention?
- ☐ Your recruiting process.
- ☐ Enroll “GOOD-FIT” Members!



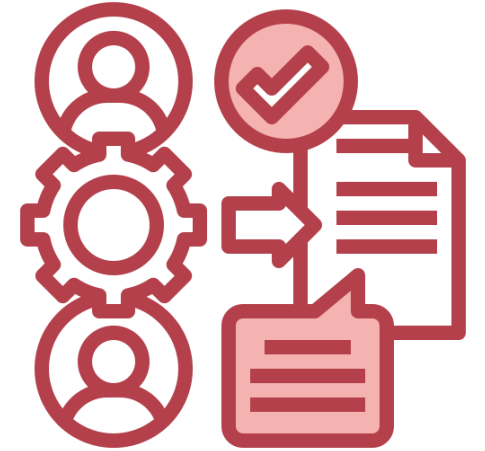
What is a “GOOD-FIT” Member?

- ☐ Gains an advantage by investing.
- ☐ More likely to participate and reinvest.
- ☐ Cultural fit is equally important.
- ☐ Who are you inviting to join your membership organization?



2. Onboarding

- ❑ Standard practice...
- ❑ One-size-fits-all... And we HOPE they get the message.
- ❑ We cannot afford to delay efforts to connect with new members.
- ❑ Personally guide them through your welcome process.
- ❑ Individualized onboarding sets the tone for THIS member's plan of engagement.



3. Engagement

- ❑ Every member has a *WHY*.
- ❑ Guide them to achieve their goals through your chamber.
- ❑ Take the time to ensure that **THIS** member understands how things work.
- ❑ **You create genuine connections when you help THIS member succeed!**



4. Nurturing or Reactivation

- ☐ Members tend to drop when they don't feel connected.
- ☐ Personally follow through to ensure benefit fulfillment.
- ☐ Connect with inactive members and troubleshoot!
- ☐ Don't let members sit passively on the sidelines...



5. Renewal or Upgrade

- ❑ Standard practice...
- ❑ 60-day, 30-day... Uh-oh!
- ❑ Let them know their anniversary is near and confirm whether they intend to renew.
- ❑ If they do, offer to take a credit card, and manage the renewal process for them.



5. Renewal or Upgrade

- ☐ If a member is on the fence, ask them why they feel that way.
- ☐ Find out early and you have time to save the membership. Past due is typically too late.
- ☐ **Help members succeed and you'll inevitably uncover opportunities to help them achieve even more via a membership upgrade.**



Let's Review...

- 1. Recruitment...** Enroll “GOOD-FIT” Members!
- 2. Onboarding...** Personally guide new members through your welcome process.
- 3. Engagement...** Guide first-year members to achieve their goals through your chamber.
- 4. Nurturing or Reactivation...** Stay connected with first-year members to ensure benefit fulfillment.
- 5. Renewal or Upgrade...** Reach-out and personal confirm whether they intend to renew.



Questions For Our Speakers?





THANK YOU

Thursday Evaluations



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