

Increasing Temple Membership

What Seabrook has done

- **Started to ask visitors what would keep them here as members** (because finding Seabrook is no easy task, visitors have sought us out so we want to know why)
- **Reviewed and evaluated our membership brochure and flyer**
 - Changed categories
 - Evaluated Pricing
 - Added More of a Package Idea
- **Reminded people that weekly Dana is not the same as membership and explain on a regular basis what membership means, costs and provides.**
- **Asked the Question Japanese Centric or Buddhism Centric Programming**
 - Created Japanese Centric – Kimono Fashion Show, Japanese Food Activities (fundraisers and cooking classes)
 - Japanese Poetry Forms Workshops (Haiku, Haibun and Tanka) → 6 month program
- - Created Buddhist Centric activities – (Ask question about what our membership can offer – have no resident minister and supervising minister is a state away) Buddhist related activities will be limited but don't let discourage there is still planet of talent to offer activities as a sangha. Play to our strengths – don't try to be something we're not)
- **Dharma Summer Programming**
- **Create Partnerships w/ other Organizations** (Not just JAPL or internal subset groups)
 - AA
 - Rowan University (Magna Club)Ask them to me members as an organization and make a donation larger than what a traditional membership would cost

General Ways to Increase Membership:

Form a Membership Committee and ask the following questions. It's great to have an 'idea' of what the Temple needs, but without vetting the topic and having the conversation the process is flawed.

1. **Participants** – Who do you want as participants? This can be defined as specific markets or market segments. It can also be defined as whether the membership is for individuals or groups of people in organizations or companies.
2. **Value** – What products and services are desired by your market that you are able to deliver to the membership? Providing value involves both understanding the need for content, community, savings, etc. and also your knowledge and ability to deliver what is needed.

3. **Fulfillment** – Where do you want to deliver membership benefits? There is a growing shift from providing a paper based or in localized in-person membership to an electronic only membership.

4. **Purpose** – Why do you want to create the membership? The ability to create a membership model and an economic plan to sustain it are very important in planning.

After having a session to dialogue about the above – draft a plan. It doesn't need to be a large document but rather a practical one. Don't get caught up in length and format, get caught up in ideas. But at the same time the plan must be written. This helps form ideas, confirm content of discussion, allows those that are not part of membership committee to have a tangible document that highlights the plan and is a means of checking benchmarks.

Set goals for your members – again must be written – even if very modest.

“A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH”

The other key to generating success is SOLID COMMUNICATION. Whether that communication is in the form of:

- Well thought out/written membership marketing material
- Making sure every Sangha member has an elevator speak ready to communicate the Temple's benefits and pluses of membership
- Idea sharing and reporting amongst Temple membership