

# Retaining Members & Prospects Over The Summer

**Summer's here, and it is time to pay attention to member attrition!**



In the new-year, January and February were all about club member workout resolutions. Certainly, new members and your prospects were driving the conversation about workouts and fitness goals. Now that summer is well underway, it's about action and re-commitment! The action from your club staff to keep your members and prospects engaged, challenged, and moving closer to their fitness goals one daily workout at a time. You've probably noticed that your member's re-commitment may have started to fall off, or will in the coming weeks. Club owners need to be paying attention this time of year because if they are not careful, they will lose members that are starting to get complacent, not show up to class, and do not come to the gym as often. Consequently, they will stop paying dues, cancel their memberships and become a summer casualty rather than a success story.

Your club management software company should have tools available for you to help retain those members and help analyze your attrition making sure you maintain a strong cash flow.

The most critical software report that can help with member retention is ASF's 30/60/90 Day Retention Report. This report contains details of members that have joined during

a specific time period and their attendance within the first 30, 60, and 90 days of their membership. Additionally, you need to see in this type of report the last time they visited your club, and if they are past due (how many days). Finally, you should be able to email members directly from the report, either individually or as a group. Other ASF report options include filtering by the type of membership they have purchased. Looking at this information, as well as additional attendance or nonattendance reports in your gym membership software will help to check with members that signed up earlier in the year. It will also make sure they are still coming to the gym, attending classes, purchasing training sessions, and are on the way to exceed their fitness goals.

## **Keep your members in your club**

It is also the time to be aware that members are going to be tempted to take their cycling and/or other workouts outdoors. Now is a great time to remind them that while a 2-hour bike ride or a long run with friends is fun, these activities should complement their regularly scheduled training in the gym. Whether they have specific fitness goals, or are just trying to live a healthy lifestyle; keeping it all in perspective is important when communicating the bigger picture to your members. For example, a 60-minute cycling class 2-3 times a week will take their fitness goals further and quicker than riding for hours outside. It's more about focus and intensity, and less about having "fun in the sun."

## Listen to your members



Remember that each member has a story to tell as to why they have ended up at your gym, so ask them and patiently listen for their answer. In sales, it's easy to jump in quickly and eagerly explain all the great things your club has to offer. If you don't understand your member, how can you truly explain the benefit to them? Once you take the time to listen, you'll understand why they're coming to the gym, and what their goals are. This allows your sales team to personalize the member's experience and gives them the opportunity to start building a relationship.

In addition, foster those relationships after the close. Clubs generally spend a lot of time, effort and money getting new members to walk through their doors. Don't sign up your newly excited member only to leave them alone and eventually lose them. Set up a follow-up process for the member and your staff so you're keeping connected with all of your new members. This allows you to help build a trusting relationship at a time when your member is most excited.



## Build club community to retain gym members

Be sure to take advantage of ASF's mobile app, which is a super-convenient way for members

to be engaged in your club through social media, plus helping to manage their schedules, sign up for classes, schedule training sessions, make purchases, and keep up with special club offers. In addition, members can keep in-touch with club staff regarding fitness questions, or to discuss the goals they've set for themselves. Mobile apps will also allow you to put forth challenges to your members that promote engagement and community that's centered on improving member health and allow for making that transition to a healthy lifestyle. Members help keep other members engaged and that makes your job much easier. Also, push notifications are a valuable tool to keep members informed and engaged with club happenings.

## Promote the use of wearable fitness trackers

These little mechanical gems keep members engaged, and in many cases addicted through viewing and logging their fitness progress. Members are now enthusiastically tracking their activities, food, steps, heart rate, and more. Wearable devices also give members the added support and encouragement they need by allowing them to invite friends to fitness challenges such as, who can walk the most steps in a day; who can run the furthest; or who can be the most active on a daily or weekly basis. Studies have shown that wearable device users that engage with one friend or more tend to be more active than the average user. Create challenges for those groups and present it on a club mobile app.

Lastly, don't forget to celebrate all your member's success stories! Post them in the club and online, and share them with members that are struggling. Make your members feel good about themselves, and watch your retention become less of a problem.

## Conclusion

By truly listening to members and taking the time to build relationships, they will start to feel like they're part of a community and "not just a number." This is what keeps members active, involved, and wanting to come back. There is no place they would rather be to have the necessary support to accomplish their workout goals. When you start fostering member relationships early on, you have the opportunity for their long-term commitment. By creating a follow up process and using your gym management tools, you are on your way to successfully creating a thriving community for your members!



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