

# Marketing to Build Membership

By Ed Reynolds with Tim Reed

January 12, 2007

USA WP National Convention

Marketing is attracting and retaining members.

That **VISION** thing.

What do we want our club to  
be when we grow up?

# Some Options

- a feeder to high school(s) ??
- an open club??
- a community based club??
- a high school, college or masters club??
- an appendage to a swim team??

# More Options

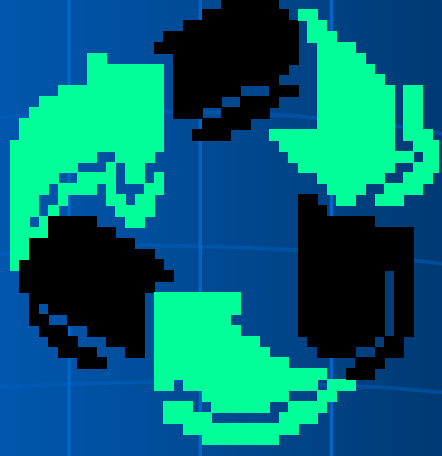
- a “feel good” club??
  - (having fun more important than winning)
- a “championship” club??
  - (winning important)
- a size limited club??

# Marketing Builds Presence

Marketing →

Builds Your Brand →

And Builds Your  
Community!!!



SOCAL Water Polo is an  
open, competitive club with  
a responsibility to our  
community.

# Why New Parents Come to Polo

- The child wants to play the sport
  - Want child to build team relationships
- They want child to play a sport
  - Want child to have a challenge
- Want a healthy release/alternative to academics
  - Want child to have life lessons of sport
  - Want child to have opportunities

# What New Parents Want From Polo

- A good first impression
- A clear calendar/schedule
- Academics as a Priority!!!
- An excellent operation
- Inclusiveness
- Value based program
- The best training/coaches
- An "E" Ticket.... Great value!

# Why Kids Quit After Day One

- I have to wear a Speedo??
- Is the water cold?
- The ball hit me in the head.
- I have to play with Boys? Girls?

# Return on Marketing Investment

## In one season:

1 nine year old = \$250

## In a ten year career:

1 nine year old = \$10,000

# Return on Marketing Investment

One Two Week  
Newspaper Advert  
or 10,000 flyers  
(\$1,500):

Equals Six Nine Year  
Olds in One Season

Equals 1/6 of a nine  
year old career

**TUSTIN AREA**  
**WATER POLO** AND SWIM  
CONDITIONING  
**AUTUMN PROGRAM**  
(MUST SWIM 100 YARDS PROFICIENTLY)  
**GIRLS AND BOYS • 7-14 YRS. OLD**

If you missed out on water polo this summer, you have another opportunity to join us for the water polo "high season" this fall when we have league play. All Tustin high schools need aquatic athletes. Many of our athletes attend the best colleges. This year our student-athletes are entering Stanford, UCLA, Berkeley, USC, UCI, Cal Baptist, UCSD and many other colleges. Wow! Many water polo players get cool summer jobs and find they can enjoy aquatics for life.

We invite you to water polo and the love of aquatics. We welcome you to contact us ANYTIME. We are organizing our fall season quickly!! New players who complete three sessions will receive a t-shirt.

**Website:** <http://www.socalwaterpolo.org>

For more information:  
**Ed Reynolds**  
714-920-9310 (leave a message)

**Parent Information Meetings**

**Tuesday, Sept. 5, 7pm**  
Foothill High Pool

**Thursday, Sept. 7, 5pm**  
Tustin High Pool

**Friday, Sept. 8, 5pm**  
Beckman High Pool

► If you don't make a meeting, look at our web site calendar, find the appropriate practice and come meet our friendly coaching staff.

**AUTUMN PROGRAM**

Conclusion:  
Investing \$\$\$  
to Attract and Retain  
Members can Have a Very  
High Rate of Return

Recommendation:  
Include Marketing in Your  
Annual Budget

# Attracting New Members (External Marketing)

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- **e-Attraction**
- **The "Field Work"**

# Attracting New Members

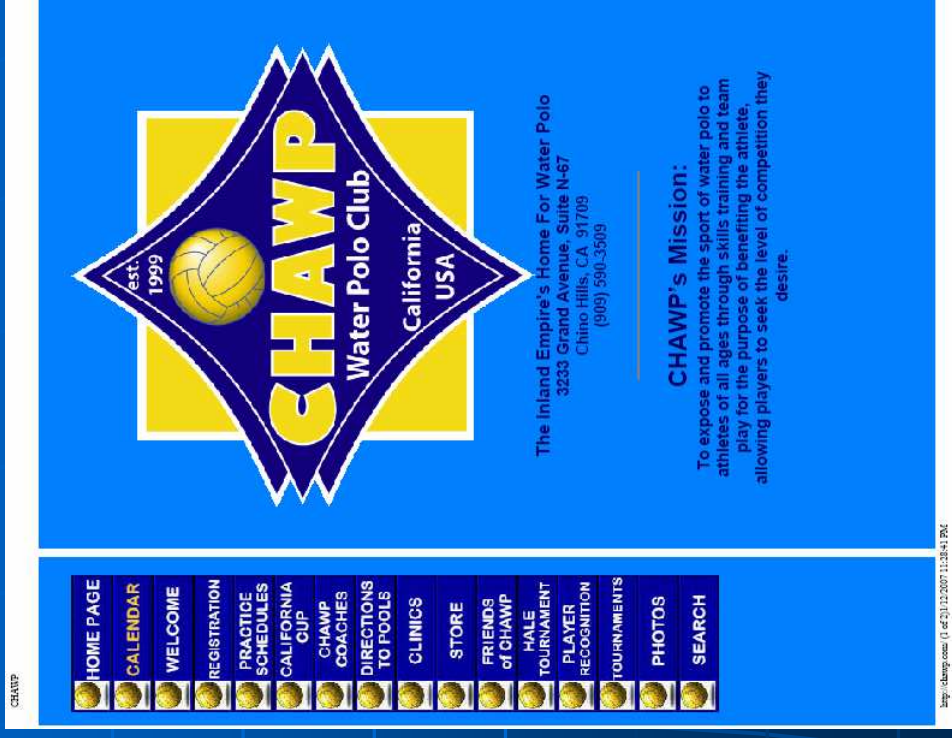
## ***e-Attraction***

- The internet is ubiquitous
- A web site forces a club to organize its marketing materials
- Web sites act as hubs where clubs directs everyone who becomes interested from the **"Field Work"**

# Attracting New Members *e-Attraction*

- Excellence creates a great image.
- Image can build brand.
- Brand can build community

<http://www.chawp.com>



The screenshot shows the CHAWP website homepage. At the top left, there is a navigation menu with 17 items: HOME PAGE, CALENDAR, WELCOME, REGISTRATION, PRACTICE SCHEDULES, CALIFORNIA CUP, CHAWP COACHES, DIRECTIONS TO POOLS, CLINICS, STORE, FRIENDS of CHAWP, HALE TOURNAMENT, PLAYER RECOGNITION, TOURNAMENTS, PHOTOS, and SEARCH. Each item is accompanied by a small water polo ball icon. The main content area features the CHAWP logo, which is a blue diamond shape with a yellow water polo ball in the center. The text 'CHAWP' is written in large, bold, yellow letters across the diamond, with 'Water Polo Club' and 'California USA' written in smaller white letters below it. To the right of the logo, the text reads: 'The Inland Empire's Home For Water Polo', '3233 Grand Avenue, Suite N-67', 'Chino Hills, CA 91709', and '(909) 390-3509'. Below this, the 'CHAWP's Mission:' is stated: 'To expose and promote the sport of water polo to athletes of all ages through skills training and team play for the purpose of benefiting the athlete, allowing players to seek the level of competition they desire.'

CHAWP

HOME PAGE  
CALENDAR  
WELCOME  
REGISTRATION  
PRACTICE SCHEDULES  
CALIFORNIA CUP  
CHAWP COACHES  
DIRECTIONS TO POOLS  
CLINICS  
STORE  
FRIENDS of CHAWP  
HALE TOURNAMENT  
PLAYER RECOGNITION  
TOURNAMENTS  
PHOTOS  
SEARCH

**CHAWP**  
Water Polo Club  
California  
USA

The Inland Empire's Home For Water Polo  
3233 Grand Avenue, Suite N-67  
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**CHAWP's Mission:**  
To expose and promote the sport of water polo to athletes of all ages through skills training and team play for the purpose of benefiting the athlete, allowing players to seek the level of competition they desire.

<http://www.chawp.com> (1 of 3) 12/2007 11:28:41 PM

Attracting New Members  
(click on hyperlink for web site)

## **e-Attraction**

- Ed Reynolds ([SOCAL](#))
- Brad Schumaker ( [SET](#) )
- Bill Smith ([Greenwich](#))
- Rachel Ruano ([American River](#))
- Lynn Kachmarik ([St. Mary's](#))
- Mike Graff ([Warburg Pincus](#))
- Brad B ([Corona Del Mar](#))

# Attracting New Members

## ***e-Attraction***

Common Elements of Web Sites:

Calendar

Pool Locations

Registration

Announcements

Coaches Information

# Attracting New Members

## **“Field Work”**

### Getting the Word Out

- Flyers to Schools, City, Parks & Rec
- Newspaper Ads
- The Free Press (a little discussion)
- Direct Mail Campaigns
- Posters

# Attracting New Members

## **“Field Work”**

### Campaigns at Schools

- Meet the Principal
- Know the AD's/PE Coaches
- Home Bulletins
- Water Polo Day at School
- Celebrate Kids on Announcements
- T-shirts
- Free Give Aways

# Attracting New Members

## **“Field Work”**

- “Bounties” for Finding Members
- Guerilla Marketing on Other Fields
- Banners at High Traffic Areas
- Parks and Recreation Connection
- Sprinkling \$\$\$\$ (small donations)

# Attracting New Members

## **“Field Work”**

- Non-threatening introductory leagues

“Pee-Wee” Leagues

Middle School Leagues

House Leagues

Key: Low Entry Pricing

# Attracting New Members

## “**Field Work**”

### Relationships with Swim Clubs??

- Threat ?? Foe?? Evil??
- **Ally?? (SOCAL/NOVA Model)**
- Go it Alone (Build our Own)??
- Summer Rec Programs??
- Learn to Swim Programs??

# Attracting New Members

## “**Field Work**”

### Elements of Brand Building

- Character of Coaching Staff
- Common Look and Feel
- Colors and themes → The Team Look
- Just Being Around (Staying Power)

(Bill Clinton said 90% of his success was due just to continuing to show up.)

- Ooops! That thing called **WINNING**

# Retaining Members

# Retaining Members

- ***The First Encounter***
- ***Operational Excellence***
- ***e-Retention***

# Retaining Members *The First Encounter*

(begins when they walk on pool deck)

***THEIR FIRST EXPERIENCES  
The Most Important!***

***First impressions are everything.***

# Retaining Members

## *The First Encounter*

@ SOCAL, on First Encounter We  
Project Mega "Feel Goods"

Explain the three principles!

(one hand underneath, ready, gun side away)

Encourage!

Encourage their water time!

Be friendly... remember them.

Get their contact info!!!

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

### Staff Characteristics:

1. Stable, Low Turnover, LOYALTY
2. Excellent Teachers
3. Superior Managers of Small Pools  
Teaming with Unequal Players
4. INTERN Coaches

# Little on Intern Coaches

Bring back your former players for part time jobs....

- they're cheap
- they know infinitely more than you think
- it builds their resumes
- some of them will love it !!!
- they lighten your load.

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

- Character Does Matter
- Ooops! That thing called *WINNING*
- Inclusiveness/Avoiding Elitism
- Advocating for Average Athlete... the "B" Team
- The "Feel Good"
- Rotating the Coaching Staff: Attention to Everyone
- Managing the Parents

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

- Personal Touch (High Contact)
- Connect to the Higher Purpose
- Celebrate the “Graduates”
- Listen to Complaints (1 = 30)
- Form Team Experiences
- Know your “Leaky Pipelines”
- Build toward fewer goals in a year
- Plan, Plan, Plan  
and Communicate the Plan

.....continued next slide

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

### Personal Touch (High Contact)

Find ways, even silly ways to engage everyone in your club.  
(The Birthday E-mail)

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

Connect to the Higher Purpose

Every successful club has someone connected to the highest level of the sport.

- A former player
- A Coach who Goes to the Convention
- Someone involved at the Zone Level

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

### Celebrate Your “Graduates”

- Who went to college and played polo?
- Who is a doctor, lawyer or engineer now?
- Who went to high school and played well?
- Who had a newspaper article written?
- Who played on a Zone or National Team?
- Bring them on the pool deck and honor them.

# Retaining Members *Operational Excellence*

## Listen to Complaints

If One Person  
Has the B\*lls to  
COMPLAIN  
30 Members  
Have the Same Complaint

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

Form Team Experiences

Dinners

Banquets

Trips

Facility Cleaning Days

Tie-Dye

Key: Many don't know scope of whole club

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

Know your “Leaky Pipelines”

Who did not come back this season?

Why didn't they come back?

Is there a pattern?

Did we invite them?

Did we do something wrong?

SOCAL: Where are the 70 ten year olds we had last season?? Only 8 showed up today!!!

# Retaining Members *Operational Excellence*

Build toward FEWER  
annual performance goals

Every Competition is NOT the  
World Championships

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

- Plan,
- Plan,
- Plan, and
- Communicate the Plan

# Retaining Members

## *Operational Excellence*

### Potential Pitfalls

- Coaching Problems
- Inclusivity
- Affordability
- The Leaky Pipeline
- Stupid Behavior (Lack of Character)

# Retaining Members

## *e-Retention*

- Programming/Calendar Visibility
- Communication
- Ease of Registration
- Introductory Fees
- Scholarships

# Retaining Members

## *e-Retention*

### *Old Model*

- Many spreadsheets
- Calendar confusion
- Venue Inaccessibility
- Inefficient Communication
- Lack of personal touch
- Paper Registration
- Checks and Cash

# Retaining Members

## *e-Retention*

- *New Model*
  - Database Accessible anywhere in the world
    - On Line Registration
    - Real-Time Calendar
      - Google Maps All Venues
  - Manage Infinite Communication
  - Personal Touch (Birthdays/Salutations)
    - Improved Cash Flow
    - Family Revenue Tracking
  - Coach Payroll and Time Management
    - Permanent Member Retention

# Retaining Members

## *e-Retention*

SOCAL uses

[Clubassistant.com](http://Clubassistant.com)

(Ed Reynolds has no fiduciary affiliation to Club Assistant. Explore and use at own risk.)

# Valuable Marketing Support Positions in Your Club

- Registration Manager
- Roll Keeper
- School Liason
- Community Development Manager
- Database Manager
- Leaky Pipeline Visibility Person
- Quality Feedback Loop
- Calendar/Marketing Manager

# How Can USA Water Polo Support the Effort to Build Membership?

## **Operational Excellence**

USA WATER POLO  
could provide backbone  
infrastructure for clubs so our few  
coaches can coach. Let's leverage!

# ***National Support?***

## **e-Attraction**

Homepages are commodities, USA  
Water Polo could build one platform  
to suit all clubs that is the "Best" and  
builds brand identity....

**SOCAL will donate \$2,500.**

# ***National Support?***

## **e-Retention**

USAWP could supply an internet database solution to our membership, development, billing, and calendar functions that is cheap, adds value, builds our brand, and **BUILDS MEMBERSHIP.....**

# ***National Support?***

## **COLLATERAL MATERIAL**

USA Water Polo could provide us:

- Posters for high schools and bus stops
- Banners for high traffic areas

(any club can order at Signs-R-Us)

# *Other Brainstorming Ideas*

USA Water Polo could provide:

- Easy club locators on web sites
- Value for membership \$\$\$
- Sports Development Managers who go to areas of unregistereds and steer them to clubs in that area
- Increase press coverage... national advertisements with linkages
- Newcomer videos/intros on web site....  
Streaming training videos...

# ***National Support?***

*Do you have any ideas how  
USA Water Polo can help us all,*

*"Market to Build Membership"??*

# THE END

Email suggestions to:  
[reynolds@reynolds-group.com](mailto:reynolds@reynolds-group.com)