

Australian Sailing Retaining New Participants

A successful club retention strategy.

Club Focus:

- Decide what the club's objectives are.
- Who are you working to retain?
- You may need a different strategy for juniors than for adults or males and females.
- Implement member/participant retention as an item on your club committee meeting agenda

A successful club retention strategy.

Club Pathway.

- Decide which category of membership you hope to direct different groups or individuals to. Will it be straight to 'Full' club membership, or are you going to offer an introductory membership, crew membership, etc.?
- Have you made the next step accessible and identifiable?
- What is the participant or member's next option? Courses? Green fleet? Club coaching pathway?
- Club boats available for charter.
- Is information on all the clubs options freely available, promoted and put in the hands of the right people at the right time
- Club coaching programs
- **Think less about training people to win state/national championships and think more about helping your members to enjoy and improve their sailing experience.**

A successful club retention strategy.

Education.

- A key part to success in retention is also ensuring your existing club staff, volunteers and members all understand the club goal.
- Educate your team so they can assist new participants and potential new members find their best pathway within your club.
- Try to include options for their friends and family such as family days, discover sailing experiences, Out There Sailing opportunities.

A successful club retention strategy.

Find the best people and get them the best training and support possible.

- Reception staff and public facing volunteers need to be the right people. They need the tools (information, factsheets) and training to help them respond positively to enquiries and provide direction to potential new members.
- Instructors and coaches are critical to retention.
 - This team of stars are probably the most underestimated in terms of their impact on retention at clubs.
 - Ensure you have the right fit of instructor for your audience
 - Becoming an instructor or coach should not be a ‘rite of passage’ it should be a privileged and earned position within your club.
- Invest in getting these key people training and regularly provide them with development opportunities to ensure their continual success and in turn the success of your retention strategy.
- Position Descriptions are key to ensuring your instructors and coaches know their responsibilities and should be in place for all volunteer and paid positions.

Top 10 Tips for Keeping New Participants Involved in your Sailing Club

1. Communicate
2. Expression of Interest
3. Invite
4. Feedback
5. Personalise
6. Resources
7. Pictures / Videos
8. Online Games
9. Get Social
10. Learn online



Let's take sailing to the customer, not make the customer come to us!

Remember

3 biggest barriers to continuing after a “Learn to sail course” are:

1. Lack of information on what to do next.
2. Lack of assistance in moving from learn to sail to “participant” (or the next course).
3. Lack of information about access to boats.

Do you provide information on who to call to find out more information?

Do you have someone well versed in customer service to respond to the enquiries and encourage further connection with the club?

1. Communicate

Communication is key.

Let new participants know how the club is going with regular updates.

Provide information on:

- a. options for club membership
- b. how to participate in club activities
- c. future social events/opportunities, as well as courses and programs
- d. how to become a club volunteer
- e. discounts for returning customers and for referring and signing up a friend

Communication Workshop:

- Consider other topics you could / should communicate.
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to communication to your new participants?



Past Participant Action Plan (example)

- On completion - Add participants to your Club Newsletter Distribution List and send a warm fuzzy email with Socials links.
- Week 1 – Letter asking them to come for a sail with SailPass
- Week 4 – Offer them a discount for the next course
- Week 12 – Ask them to come and volunteer for a day
- Week 24 – Invite them to a social function
- Week 36 – Come to our Discover Sailing Day and have some fun
- Week 52 – Fill in our survey (why didn't you come back) to go into the draw to win the next course.

2. Expression of Interest

Distribute an “Expression of Interest” form to capture information of customers that are interested in hearing information on your next round of courses/programs/events/membership as soon as it is available.

Contact them:

- Thank them for registering their interest, provide them with a personal contact.

Expression of Interest Workshop:

- Consider other topics you could / should set up an Expression of Interest for?
- How could you manage an Expression of Interest register? (HINT: RevSport)
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to Expression of Interest for new participants?

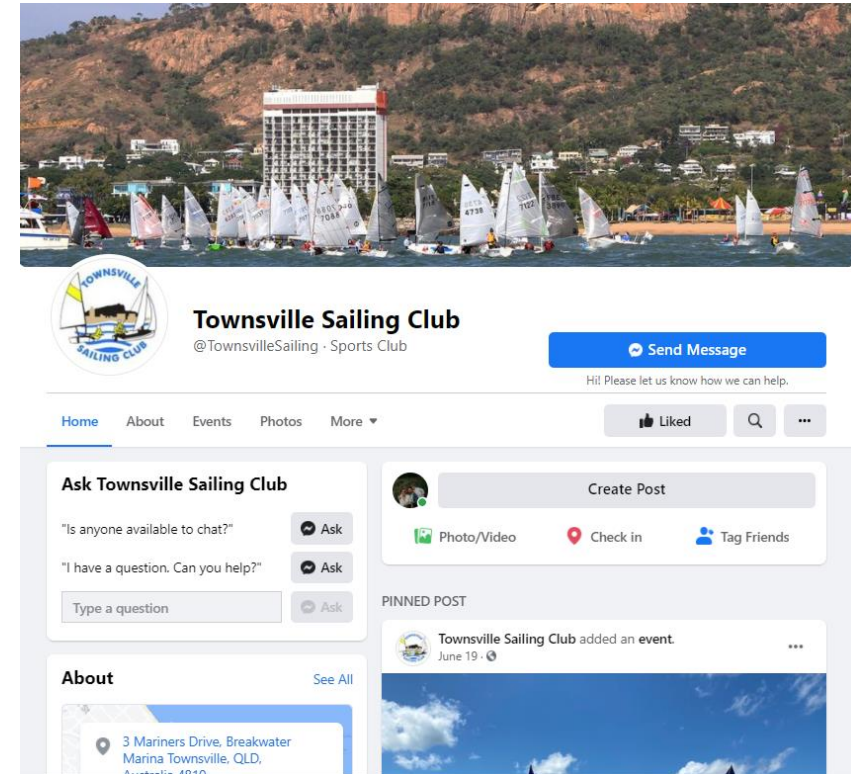


3. Invite

- Encourage them to join the club's social media platforms so they stay informed and contribute to your sailing club's online community.
- Invite new participants to a particular social event / information night / to participate in xyz.

Invite's Workshop:

- Consider other topics you could / should invite new participants to?
- How could you manage your invites? (HINT: EOI & RevSport)
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to invitations for new participants?



4. Feedback

- Ask for feedback on what courses new participants would like to participate in, or how could the club do more to encourage and welcome new participants and potential new members.
- Could be set up automatically for course completion emails, Expression of Interest registrations, new member registration, SailPass registrations.
- Make sure you respond and use the feedback (where appropriate).

Feedback Workshop:

- Consider other topics you could / should invite new participants to provide Feedback on?
- How could you manage your feedback? (HINT: EOI & RevSport)
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to feedback from new participants?



5. Personalise

- Add a personal touch by calling your past customers and ask how they are going or if there is any information they need to assist in continuing their sailing journey.
- Organise for your new participants to meet someone “specific” at the entrance to the club.
 - Make sure this person is easily identifiable, experienced, equipped, engaging

Personalise Workshop:

- Consider other topics you could / should Personalise for new participants?
- How could you manage this? (HINT: RevSport)
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “Personalisation” for new participants?

6. Resources

- Email participants with resources for activities to learn or to entertain the children. Colouring sheets, cross words etc. that they can print at home. The Tackers resources are great.
 - What could you use for adults?
 - Consider using social media to share content (not everyone responds to emails)
- Does the club have resources to assist in the retention of new participants?
 - Information sheets?
 - Email templates for a volunteer to use to communicate with new participants?

Resources Workshop:

- Consider other Resources you could / should share with new participants?
- How could you manage this? (HINT: RevSport)
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “Resources” for new participants?



7. Pictures / Videos

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. So how many is a video worth?

- Send participants pictures or videos of themselves or their children with a short note – “Can’t wait to see Billy back on the water soon”.
- What else could you send a picture / video of?
- A club member with a camera is a huge asset to collecting images for sharing across the club's various platforms. Give the photographer credit for their volunteer work in taking the photos and give them the tools to share those images easily to the club or on the club's social media channels.

Pictures / Videos Workshop:

- Consider how you might facilitate capturing / sending pictures of new participants?
- Are their Pictures / Videos the club could use for new participants?
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “Pictures / Videos” for new participants?

8. Online Games

- Send details on how to join and play an online sailing game. Even better, set up an online event where they can race their friends or classmates. See [LINK](#)
 - eSailing via Virtual Regatta
 - It may break the ice.
 - Keep's them engaged in sailing.

Online Games Workshop:

- Consider how you might facilitate sending details of online games to new participants?
- Are you able to create an online club sailing game for new participants? Mix new with experienced participants?
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “Online Games” for new participants?



9. Get Social

- Encourage them to share a picture or short video on the clubs Instagram or other social media platforms.
- Encourage them to join the clubs social media platforms.
- Conduct new participant social activities.

Get Social Workshop:

- Consider how you might facilitate Social experiences (online or in person) for new participants?
- Are you able to create a positive online social experience for new participants?
- Mix new with experienced participants?
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “Social experiences” for new participants?

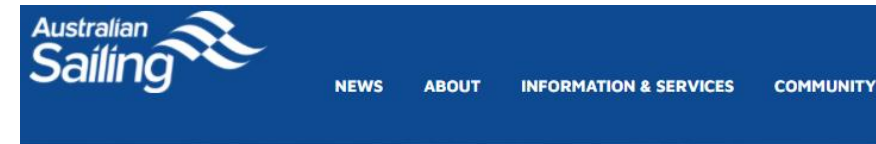


10. Learn Online

- Share online learning opportunities – Online mark Laying course for example – you may just create a volunteer for when your club’s racing calendar returns.

Learn Online Workshop:

- Consider how you might facilitate online learning for new participants?
- Are you able to offer online learning for new participants?
- Local Sport and Rec might have options? Play by the rules?
- What is one thing you could improve with regards to “learn Online” for new participants?



eSailing via Virtual Regatta

Perfect time to start eSailing on Virtual Regatta - free to play

With many sailing clubs and regattas around the country closed, sailors have been getting their fix by competing against friends and foes on Virtual Regatta. Virtual Regatta is World Sailing's eSailing platform and it is a fantastic way to stay in touch whilst practicing your racing tactics from your own home.

For individuals

You don't need to pay to use Virtual Regatta. It's as simple as visiting their **website** from a laptop or PC or downloading the app on a smartphone or iPad and clicking 'play now' on either the inshore or offshore game. You can then enter the game and learn how to use it and compete against others all around the world. If you want to compete and keep your score, you'll need to create a login and a user profile.

For clubs, classes, training centres and other groups

Summary



These ideas will get you started, but if you have success with any new ideas, please let our team know so we can share with others.



Is new member/participant retention an item on your club committee meeting agendas?



Do you talk about new member/participant retention or do you act on it?



Keep the experience fun!



Article - <https://www.sailing.org.au/news/top-10-tips-for-keeping-participants-involved-in-your-dsc/>

Club coaching programs

- Are sometimes considered too difficult, costly, or elite.
- Club coaching programs should be considered part of a **membership retention and membership growth strategy**.
- Club coaching programs should be inclusive of new participants, juniors through to, youth, adults and masters and can be implemented for dinghies and yachts.

Think less about training people to win state/national championships and think more about helping your members to enjoy and improve their sailing experience.

Club Pathways



Sarah Ogilvie

National Club Pathway Lead – NEW role:

Responsible for developing and implementing club pathway programs. Early focus area is on under 24yrs.

Why Club Pathway's?

- Priority to guide clubs growth and retention.
- Empower clubs to develop people and participation.
- Support, retain and grow club membership.

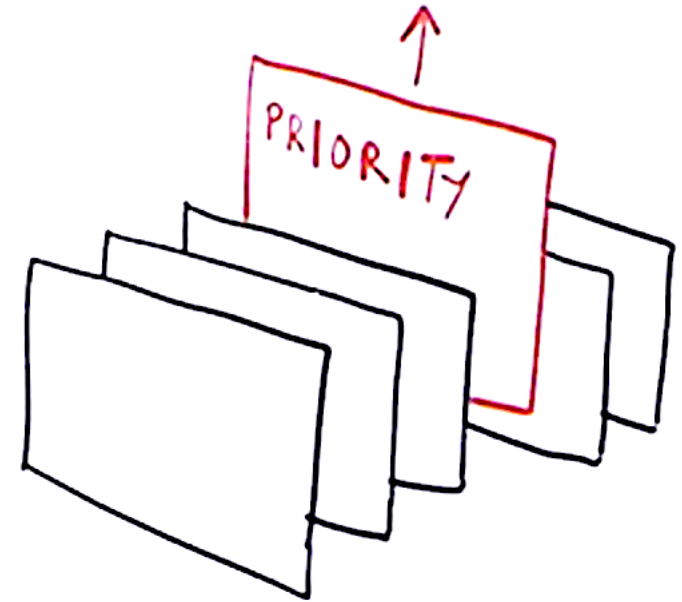
Where does club pathways fit in? > Steps 4 – 6



Summarising priorities from early work...

Three key themes:

1. **Retention, retention, retention!**
2. **Reduce barriers;** for participation, for clubs and for volunteers.
3. **Enable clubs;** with tools and training, education and programs, that are member centric, and club focused.



Two focus areas ahead:

Area of focus #1:

Club coaching (and development) programs towards whole of club skills, + fun and engagement!

Area of focus #2:

Club 'toolkit' for, volunteers, coaches to deliver club pathways.



Pilot examples: Spring – Summer 21/22

Learn to Sail program to Green Fleet (Dinghy or KB).

What / how:

- Instructors/Coach training: Club Induction process, roles, responsibilities (inc. volunteers)
- Instructors complete Intro. Coaching Course
- Transition strategies from one program to next.
- Resource hub: use of session plans/content

Bespoke Pilot: Youth leader development

What:

- A youth project (e.g, a 40-hour youth development project).
- *OR* Youth on Club Committee/s.
- *OR* Junior/Youth Committee.

Outcomes to achieve:

- Great examples of Youth leadership
- Youth centric resources on how to deliver projects, chair a committee...

Club Pathways

- Sarah Ogilvie is the new National Club Pathway Lead, who is responsible for developing and implementing club pathway programs. This is a priority to guide clubs' growth and retention, empower clubs to develop people and participation and to support, retain and grow club membership.
- 3 Key Findings so far; Retention, reduced barriers for participants, clubs, and volunteers; and enable clubs with tools and training, education and programs, that are member centric, and club focused.
-
- Key Focus Areas moving forward: Club Coaching and development programs and Club 'Toolkit 'for volunteers, coaches to deliver club pathways.



[Club and Performance Pathways Webinar](#)



Thank you. Any questions?

