



## Marketing Zone

### HOW TO RETAIN YOUR MEMBERS

What's the most important thing Toastmasters do in a club? If you think it is giving speeches, you're in for a surprise. The truth is *no one thing* is most important. While many joined your club to improve their public speaking skills, it's important for club leaders to remember that this isn't the case for everyone. Some join because they want experience leading a meeting. Or they want to practice their interpersonal skills. Others simply enjoy the excitement, camaraderie and fun.

Your club can be rewarded with greater membership growth and retention by determining new members' goals and interests and making the effort to accommodate them. An easy way to determine interests is to have all new members fill out a [New Member Profile Sheet](#). It gives your club a written record to review when pairing mentors with members, selecting activities and choosing future officers. So for example, if a new member wants to improve his or her leadership skills and would prefer to work on the *Competent Leadership* manual before giving speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual, you'll help by encouraging this person's progress along the leadership track.

By the same token, your club can build a reputation as the go-to place to learn other professional and personal skills. Members who join to learn how to coordinate or plan corporate events will appreciate taking part in meetings that begin and end on time, offer interesting and varied programs, and follow well-organized agendas. Those who join to learn how to give constructive feedback will find Toastmasters training in offering evaluations worthwhile. Why not emphasize opportunities to offer constructive feedback for those who ask to build skills in that area? This skill will help the parent as much as the corporate leader. Successful clubs offer all of these benefits and more, including new-member orientation and mentoring so that everyone feels ready to participate fully from the start.

A great tool to help your club attract and keep members is this popular [club evaluation checklist](#). It helps club leaders determine what works and what *needs work* in their clubs. Share it with the members, and let their answers help you build a vibrant, successful club!

### Brand Update Wins Industry Award

Toastmasters International has been recognized with a Gold Award in the "Branding Refresh" category of the [2011 MarCom Awards](#). This annual international competition recognizes outstanding creative achievement by marketing and communications professionals.

### What's New

- ▶ Proud of your district conference designs? Show them off to the world! Visit [www.toastmasters.org/brandshowcase](http://www.toastmasters.org/brandshowcase) for more information.
- ▶ Check out the new black-and-white fliers available on the [Virtual Brand Portal](#).
- ▶ Does your club or district have a newsletter? Use one of these [templates](#) to create one.
- ▶ Here's a chance to impress new members and earn 30 percent off your next club order with the new [Open House Showcase](#).

### Facts and Stats

- ▶ According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), employment among young adults has dropped to nearly 55 percent, the lowest number of college graduates employed since World War II.
- ▶ [Hiring professionals](#) surveyed responded overwhelmingly that new college graduates need to improve their communication skills. Reach out to recent college graduates in your community!





## PR Zone

### DEVELOPING A PR CALENDAR

Are you on track to earn the media attention your club or district deserves? Take time to review your PR plan, assess the past year's results and set new goals for the coming months.

When planning your PR activities for the year, you'll find it useful to follow this schedule: Consider the *full year* ahead, plan in detail for *six months* and then revisit your plan every *three months*.

- ▶ **Review the media coverage** you secured last year. Determine which angles, pitches and news releases worked, and take note of those that didn't. List the journalists who reported your news and those who didn't. Look at the overall coverage you received, and check the media coverage other clubs or districts received. The [In the News](#) section of the Toastmasters website offers good examples of club, district and organizational news coverage.
- ▶ Take full advantage of the PR resources that Toastmasters International offers. Be sure to **visit the** new [PR Corner](#) on the Toastmasters website.
- ▶ **Schedule a meeting with your club or district leaders** to review and/or receive the group's overall objectives for the year. Use these objectives to revamp or set the foundation for your current PR plan.
- ▶ **Establish a publicity calendar** to keep track of what's happening in your club or district. Include events, projects and publicity efforts through July (six months), such as club programs, district conferences, announcements, anniversaries, open house meetings, milestones, member achievements and recognitions. Remember to indicate the vehicles you will use to attract and connect with fellow members (internal audience) and news media (external audience), such as news releases and your club or district newsletter, [website](#) and social networking sites.

A publicity calendar should also contain the contact information of everyone you need to reach, what needs to be done, who is responsible and what the deadlines are.

When creating your publicity calendar, research your local news outlets and journalists' deadlines to make sure you don't miss any media opportunities for your club or district. The best way to plan for media exposure is to research the topics that certain journalists write about and match your publicity topics to their subject-matter needs.

Making your own calendar is easy! Save this [sample calendar](#) to your computer. Use it as a template by simply replacing the text examples with your own.

### Q & A

**Q** Where can I find marketing and public relations resources?

**A** Various resources for both can be found on the [Toastmasters website](#). For marketing, visit the [Marketing Resources](#) page, where you'll find brochures, fliers, manuals and promotional materials, as well as tips and ideas that can help boost your results. To create and customize your own agendas, business cards, fliers, brochures and more, visit the [Virtual Brand Portal](#). Public relations resources can be found in the new [PR Corner](#) of the Toastmasters website. There, you'll discover several tools and resources to help you learn more about public relations, access sample materials and develop your club or district PR plan.

Additional materials for both marketing and PR are available on the [Toastmasters Online Store](#).

### Attn: Club and District Web Masters

Do you provide links to Toastmasters International content, such as manuals and PDFs, on your club or district website? If so, be sure you are linking to the most up-to-date, rebranded versions. If you provide a link that takes the user to the content on the Toastmasters website instead of downloading and saving it on your club or district site, then you can be assured your members will always have the current version.



## THE CLUB COACH PROGRAM

It can happen to the most popular club. People move away, get laid off or lose interest. Perhaps the club had to change locations and the new home doesn't attract attendance. If for any reason your club membership is dwindling, consider seeking help from the Toastmasters Club Coach Program. For clubs with 12 or fewer members, this program provides a lifeline that can help rebuild membership to its former glory.

The program provides a valuable resource in expertise. A knowledgeable Toastmaster, usually working toward the Advanced Leader Silver award, helps guide your club back to charter strength. This person attends your club meetings to observe and analyze your situation before recommending solutions.

Does your club need help? Don't be nervous about inviting an "outsider" to observe club activities and plans. Remember, an outsider can offer the most objective assessment of your club's strengths and weaknesses, and help you see the meeting the way visitors see it. The coach is a counselor, a source of knowledge and a fountain of ideas. In addition to learning what can change, you also confirm what you've been doing right. Wouldn't it be great to build on your strengths and watch your club expand? The benefits for your club include increased member enthusiasm, loyalty and a deeper bond that lasts.

Requesting a club coach is simple and free. Learn more about how your club can [request a club coach](#) on the Toastmasters website.

## HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS

Promoting your club or district events can be fun and easy! As you brainstorm, ask yourself the questions below to spark ideas. Your answers will help you identify attention-getting approaches, compelling pitches and other content that journalists and bloggers want to know.

1. What is the most unusual or interesting aspect of the event we're planning?
2. How are we using technology to draw more visitors? Have we created a [Facebook fan page](#) for our club and/or district? How can we attract the attention of members and potential members?
3. Can we create interesting [short videos](#) and upload them to sites like [www.youtube.com](#) to drive traffic to our website?
4. Can we use websites like [www.meetup.com](#) to promote our event?
5. What tips can we include in a [news release](#) about our event? What topic should be our focus with that event?
6. Is our club or district celebrating a significant anniversary, such as a 5th, 10th or 20th, that we can tie to the event? If so, can we locate old photos, documents and other memorabilia and make them available to the media as part of pre-event publicity?
7. Does our event take place on or near a holiday? If so, can we tie in our promotion to that holiday?
8. What value can we offer that will draw more people to our event?
9. Who attended our event last year and might be interviewed by the media about what they saw, learned or experienced?
10. Would a [local reporter](#) be interested in participating in an activity related to our event?
11. What [photos, graphics or logos](#) can we offer the media for their use to accompany an article or simple calendar listing?

**GIVE US YOUR  
FEEDBACK**

Read past issues of the M/PR Newsletter on the Toastmasters website at [www.toastmasters.org/mpnewsletter](#). Let us know what you liked and what you would like to see in future editions by emailing [newsletters@toastmasters.org](#).