



North Shore Golf Club

CASE STUDY:

**Membership Recruitment & Retention:
Innovative ways of recruiting and
retaining members**

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF RECRUITING AND RETAINING MEMBERS

North Shore Golf Club General Manager Warren Collett identified a key issue with recruiting and retaining members in the 20 -39 year old age group. This age group, seen as the future of the club, was difficult to engage with employing the standard membership structure.

Collett and his board noted it was imperative to attract this age group to secure the future membership base for the North Shore Golf Club.

Junior members found the jump from junior membership to full membership too large. Non-members in this stage of life were either engaged in tertiary education,

beginning careers or starting families and looking at home ownership. Each of these situations puts a strain on disposable income.

In order to address this, the North Shore Golf Club introduced a sliding scale of membership where each year the increase was a manageable step towards full playing membership.

CHALLENGES



RETAINING JUNIORS

“The leap from junior membership to full playing membership was just not achievable for our young adults. We needed to address this to retain our youth,” said Collett.



ATTRACTING & RETAINING 20 - 39 YEAR OLDS

“We needed a product that suited the lifestyle of this age group and provided them with a payment structure that was achievable,” he said.



LOSING FULL PLAYING MEMBERS TO CHEAPER CATEGORIES

“We were aware that some of our full playing members were in this age group and that we may lose some members to the lower paying memberships.”

SOLUTION

To address the struggle North Shore Golf Club had with attracting and engaging 20 - 39 year olds, the club introduced a sliding scale of fees that started slightly higher than junior membership and increased incrementally each year.

Focusing on the retention of juniors, they started the scale just above junior membership. Making the change in fees manageable instead of one large leap to a new rate.

The sliding scale of payments provided the club with a specific point of difference that they could use to market to the 20 - 39 age group specifically to attract new members.

Collet noted that: "The pricing structure makes membership a lot more attractive to people aged between 20 - 39 and provides them a membership pathway that they are aware of and suits their position in life."

There was a small loss of members from the higher paying membership down to the lower sliding scale but Collett has seen this as a positive move for the future of the club.

"Even those members who have changed from full playing to sliding scale memberships are likely to be with the club for a longer period of time and that will hopefully create loyalty to the club," he said.

RESULTS

40
NEW MEMBERS

Since the inception of the project the club has seen the numbers rise from 51 members in this age category to 91.

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TRANSPARENCY

"The fees are completely transparent so that members know from year to year what their increase will be. This takes the guess work out of membership and removes any nasty surprises."

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ENGAGEMENT

The members were engaged with the idea of a sliding scale which was created by their demand for this type of membership.

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SUSTAINABILITY

North Shore Golf Club believes their future is more sustainable by retaining this key demographic.

KEY LEARNING / LESSONS:

Collett said that the success of the structure was due to its customer centric approach.

"It's about understanding what people of that age group want," he said. The ability to understand this group has paid dividends for the club who have seen an increase in members within this age bracket.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY:

"The success of the project has been in setting our membership up to suit the potential members and not ourselves," said Collett.

"We would always like to have more full playing members, but we're aware that this may be out of reach for some people."

The North Shore Golf Club is very excited about the potential of this sliding scale of membership.

It was only introduced at the beginning of 2014 and in those 10 months it has created 40 members and Collett believed it will deliver greater results in time with word of mouth and further promotion.

"We are excited to have made this change and feel that it is in the best interests of the future of the club. We need to tailor our membership offering to meet the demand. A key to this initiative's success was making it as easy as possible for the current members to stay at the club."

Collett said all golf clubs need to focus on recruiting new members but just as important is the retention of existing members.

For more information visit: www.northshoregolfclub.co.nz





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