



Publicity
Advertising
Marketing

Let the World Know About You

Publicity of your swim program: To some clubs this is the unknown world beyond the pool deck. Where do we locate a Coach? How do we let swimmers know our workout times? What do we need to do to get the word out when we choose to host an event? Who do we tell of our awards and achievements? A few simple ideas can go a long way to getting the word out about your pool and what it offers, program times and dates, success of your swimmers and/or information of your upcoming event. Most ideas cost very little, or better yet, are free. The efforts can be small, but the benefits to your program are great.

Advertising will reach out and grab the attention of swimmers who will participate in your ongoing program or special event. By using a variety of media options and new social outlets, we are able to bridge across age groups, fitness needs and backgrounds, as well as individual athletic goals.

As your club grows, your Marketing demands will increase as well. Your desire to increase club membership will be exchanged with concerns on how to retain the members you have. You will expand from using a pool for workouts to hosting your own clinic or swim meet. Purchasing a pace clock from the local swim shop can evolve into a working partnership in which the store and your club both benefit.

The National Office for U.S. Masters Swimming is always available to you and your facility to provide additional ideas to assist in marketing your program.

U.S. Masters Swimming

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Table of Contents

Locating a Coach.....	4
Publicity and Marketing.....	5
Newsletter / Club Website	
Sharing Club Activities	
Social Media	
“Places to Swim”	
Public Relations.....	6
Create a Press Release	
Press Kit	
Publicity Materials	
Yellow Pages	
Partnering with Local Swim/Tri Shop	
Stroke Clinics	
Meetings	
Club Growth	
USMS National Office.....	9
Marketing Items Order Form.....	10

Locating a Coach

A Coach on the Deck

Coaching is one of the main reasons to join or start a Masters program. Although there are successful programs which do exist that have no coaches. One quality that sets Masters programs apart from nearly all lap swimming programs, is experiencing the benefits of a coach. Qualified coach members help swimmers with technique and training programs. Swimmers become more motivated and stay committed when a good coach is available to provide challenging workouts and stroke instruction.

Selecting a Coach

- Prepare a press release describing the club, general information and expectations of a coach
 - The size of the club
 - Workout hours
 - Experience and certification required of a coach
 - Approximate salary
 - Additional benefits
- Distribute the above release to
 - Local newspapers
 - LMSC newsletter
 - Local colleges, recreation departments, and pools
 - Local USA Swimming programs, newsletter, coaches committee
 - American Swim Coaches Association (ASCA)
 - Over the Internet
 - U. S. Masters Swimming National Office and Coaches Committee
- Prepare a contract outlining
 - The responsibilities of the Coach
 - Compensation and Benefits the Coach will receive
- Contact the American Swim Coaches Association (ASCA)
 - Information on its VVMOST System (Values, Vision, Mission, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics).
 - ASCA emphasizes education, certification, and cooperation through home study courses, books, videos, and audiotapes
 - Request sample coaches' contracts, evaluations, and other information
 - Obtain a list of USMS Masters certified coaches
 - Refer to "Positions Wanted" on both the ASCA and USMS websites

Publicity and Marketing Ideas

Newsletter and Club Website

The newsletter disseminates club information. It can also be a tool for public relations and reaching potential new members. Content can include all aspects of club functioning from pure news to interest articles, written by club officers or submitted by swimmers. The varieties of ideas are endless:

- Meet, clinic, and party announcements
- Calendar (meeting and meet dates, newsletter deadlines)
- Reports (meeting minutes, financial, meet results)
- Sample workouts, stroke drills and tips, favorite workouts, training techniques
- Tips for beginning Masters
- Photos
- Notes from the Chair, Treasurer, Coach, etc
- Interviews
- Medical/nutritional columns
- Recognitions (new members, birthdays, accomplishments)
- Cartoons, humorous essays, jokes, and poems
- Letters to the Editor
- Lists of swimming books and videos
- Names and addresses of club and LMSC officers
- Places to swim within the LMSC and/or state
- Gossip
- Recipes

Sharing Club Activities

Paid advertisements can be sold to help defray newsletter printing and mailing costs. Some clubs in an effort to save money have put their newsletter on their website, thus saving on postage.

- Exchange newsletters with other clubs
- Send issues to the LMSC newsletter editor and to the editors of local newspapers
- Leave extra copies at pool facilities

Social Media

Use varied communications to reach different ages and backgrounds of possible future members

- Facebook
- Twitter

“Places to Swim” on the USMS website

- Resource for potential members to know about your program
- Informs swimmers of workout times
- Provides visiting swimmers with a map to locate pools
- Update this site each year during registration to keep information current

Public Relations

Publicity informs the community of local U.S. Masters Swimming programs and benefits of Masters swimming at the club level. Suggestions and techniques follow that can help enhance public awareness and attract new members.

Create a Press Release

Send your press release to local media outlets such as the local newspaper, local magazines, other business or any other entity that is in the business of publishing, distributing or sharing local news. If an editor, or other decision-maker, deems your press release newsworthy, your press release may be published or shared in its entirety or may lead to a “blurb” about the news that you are sharing.

- **How Do I Write a Press Release?**

There are four important elements to include in your press release

- ✓ Your Contact Information: Include your name, phone number and email address so that editors or other decision-makers can easily contact you for more information or to clarify the news you are presenting.
- ✓ A Catchy Title: A title is important in that it is the first (and sometimes the only) piece of information an editor or decision-maker will read before he or she decides to keep or toss your press release. Include vital information and your “angle” in the title.
- ✓ The Hook: The first paragraph of your press release should provide all necessary information in an interesting manner so that readers can fully grasp the concept of the news story and choose to continue reading.
- ✓ The Details: After you have grabbed the attention of an editor in the title and provided all vital information in the hook, you must provide the details of your news story in the body of the press release. If you are reporting an upcoming event, provide the date, time and other details such as the event website in the body of the press release.

- **Use Press Releases before and after your swim meets and open-water events**

- ✓ Name, location, date, and sponsor of meet
- ✓ Description of event and host-site or club
- ✓ Facts about individual participants - ages, hometowns, swimming backgrounds, unusual facts, names of record holders or nationally ranked swimmers expected, how far traveling to attend, returning to competition
- ✓ Eligibility for participation
- ✓ Results
- ✓ Special performances
- ✓ New club, USMS, or world records
- ✓ Number of participants - local, regional, national
- ✓ Youngest/oldest swimmers
- ✓ Related Masters participants, i.e., husband, wife, adult children
- ✓ Human-interest profile - community leader, or someone who has overcome great obstacles
- ✓ Open to non-members for modest fee and option of USMS membership for a few more dollars

Press Kit

Develop an advertising packet or press kit containing

- Club newsletter
- Brochure describing club activities and benefits of membership
- Calendar of events
- Club workout schedule
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of club officers

Publicity Materials

Distribute publicity materials to...

- Health clubs, gyms, YMCAs, and other pool facilities
- Park and recreation departments
- Doctor and physical therapy offices
- Triathlon clubs
- Booths, clinics, fairs, corporate games
- USA Swimming parents
- Sporting goods stores
- Corporate wellness programs
- Graduating college seniors

Yellow Page Advertising

- Yellow page advertising under Swimming and/or Health Clubs. The smallest ad works!

Partnering with Local Swim/Tri Shops

Most swim/tri shops are trying to attract the same demographic as your Masters program, so partnering with these swim/tri shops will not only be beneficial for you, but their shop may gain new customers by promoting within your program. Start simple. Ask that your brochures, flyers or stickers be placed near the shop's register to be given as a gift to customers. In return, you will provide all of your members with the shop's brochure, flyer or other promotional material.

To build a stronger relationship, brainstorm with the shop's management about various promotions that would be mutually beneficial for his or her shop and your program. Here are a few examples of simple promotions.

- Each new member that registers receives a 10% off discount to the local swim/tri shop. This promotion not only offers an incentive to new members, but also encourages shoppers to spend money in the local swim/tri shop so that they can receive the discount.
- Host a swimming clinic with your local swim/tri shop. The swim/tri shop can provide all necessary "toys" to be used during the clinic while you not only introduce your program to potential members, but also introduce the swim/tri shop's products to customers.
- Trade Links. Provide a logo and link to you local swim/tri shop and ask to be included on their website and offer the same opportunity in return.

Often we expect marketing, advertising and promotions to be expensive, and a little bit intimidating, but it doesn't have to be any of those things. You can get out into your local community and promote your program. Advertising can be fun, simple, and, most important, FREE.

Stroke Clinics

- Available to members for small or no fee
- Swimmers are exposed to the value that a coach on the deck can provide
- Be creative with new techniques and drills
- Underwater Videotaping – enjoyed by all swimmers. Send a digital copy for their review later

Meetings

Regular gatherings of members, to review current operation and propose improvements, ensure consistency and build a better club. Meetings can be small, involving initially a core assembly of organizers, and later the general membership, depending on goals and club size. They can be held informally after workouts or meets, in conjunction with socials, or they can be more structured, as for an annual meeting. Below are some suggestions for successful meetings:

- Obtain an abridged copy of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised and follow this most widely accepted guide for fair and orderly meetings.
- Have an agenda, a clear plan of what is to be accomplished, and circulate it prior to the meeting.
- Publish a calendar of meeting dates, time, and location.

As the Club Grows

Once a club becomes established, the following considerations enhance the organization's depth and stability and build club identity and pride:

- Determine equipment needs beyond what is available at the practice facility
 - Kickboards, pull buoys, hand paddles, and fins can be personal or pool property and are practical workout tools.
 - Dry board and markers are useful for writing workouts and announcements.
 - Stop watches, clipboards, pens, 3x5 cards, rubber bands, masking tape, etc., stored in a club bag are important meet items.
 - A computer can be used to maintain registration lists, update records, write newsletters, and run meets.
- Design a club logo
- Create a club banner
- Inventory merchandise items such as team suits, sweats, caps, T-shirts, decals, bumper stickers, etc., for sale to members.

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National Office Resources

The following resources are available from our National Office for clubs LMSCs and volunteers use in support of U.S. Masters Swimming.

Marketing Materials

Free Swim Caps, Stickers and Brochures are available for all USMS programs to help you to promote Masters Swimming in your area.



Co-Branded / USMS Banners

Free 3' x 6' USMS Banners are available for all registered USMS clubs to hang in their facilities. USMS logo banners and co-branded banners with both the USMS and club logo are available.

Publications

"Streamlines...From the National Office": The National Office newsletter is published quarterly as a resource for all volunteers in U.S. Masters Swimming.

Rule Book: The annual Rule Book is available for viewing online or download, plus a mini rule book is also available. Printed versions are available for \$10 for the full rule book or \$6 for the mini rule book. Make checks payable to "U.S. Masters Swimming" and mail to the national office address above.

Guide to Operations: The guide to operations provides a series of useful documents covering every aspect of managing an LMSC and is an invaluable resource for volunteers.

Video Lending Library: USMS has a number of swimming video titles available for lending out to our members by mail.

Book Lending Library: USMS has a number of swimming book titles available for lending out to our members by mail.

U.S. Masters Swimming

Marketing Resources

Free for all USMS Programs



Oval Stickers



Description: 5.5" x 3" Oval Sticker

Purpose: Show your USMS spirit with this eye-catching sticker.

Facility Stickers



Description: 5" x 4" Rectangle Sticker

Purpose: Recruit members and generate interest in your program with stickers that let people know that a USMS program is available at your facility.

Swim Caps



Description: Regular-sized latex cap, with the logo printed on each side

Purpose: Represent USMS with pride in practice or at swim competitions.

Brochures



outside cover



inside

Description: Tri-fold mail brochure that can be mailed, placed on a welcome table, put in goody bags, etc.

Purpose: Create awareness for your program, give prospective Masters swimmers a brief overview of the organization, and highlight the benefits of membership.