

How to drive greater member loyalty for your association

Tips, trends, and techniques for keeping members around for years to come



Introduction

What makes members loyal to your association? As an association professional, understanding loyalty metrics and what's behind them can make all the difference in the success of your organization.

The good news is that member sentiments and loyalty appear to be at a high point despite disruptions and changes in our world over the past two years. Findings from the 2021 Association Trends Study from Community Brands¹ suggest that member loyalty metrics remain strong and stable, and member sentiments remain positive.

While these findings are encouraging, it's no time to rest on your association's laurels. **Your ability to engage and retain members requires you to deliver ongoing member value, no matter what the future might bring.**

One of the most effective ways to prepare for the future is to understand member loyalty indicators and what drives positive loyalty metrics. In this guide, we'll look at trend data and what you can do to sustain and grow positive momentum around four key loyalty indicators:

- Likelihood to recommend the organization
- Sense of connection with the association
- Likelihood to renew Member satisfaction

Let's get started.

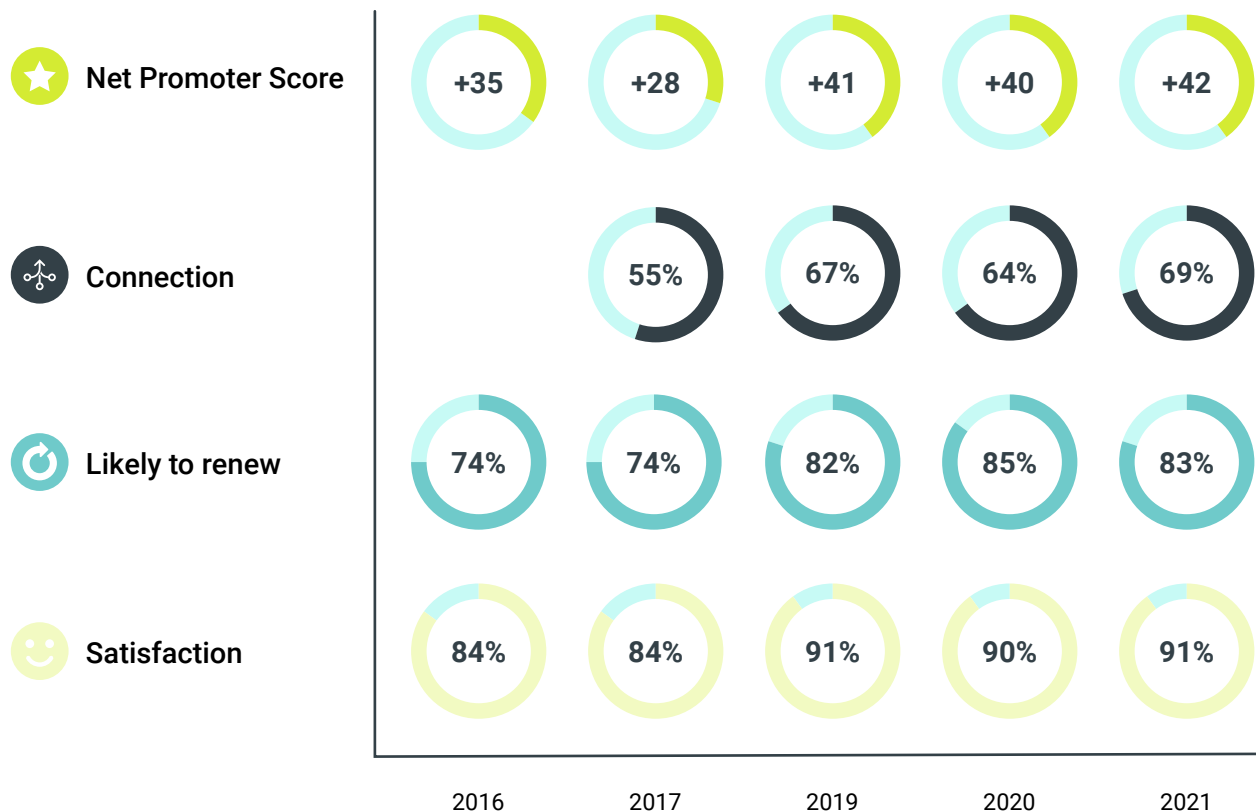


What drives member loyalty

In multiple association and membership studies over the past several years, Community Brands asked members to evaluate their professional membership organization on multiple loyalty metrics: Net Promoter Score, Connection, Likelihood to renew, and Satisfaction. These metrics indicate member sentiments around four questions:

- Net Promoter Score – How likely are you to recommend your association?
- Connection – How connected do you feel to your association?
- Likelihood to renew – How likely are you to renew your membership with your association after your current membership expires?
- Satisfaction – Overall, how satisfied are you with your membership in your association?

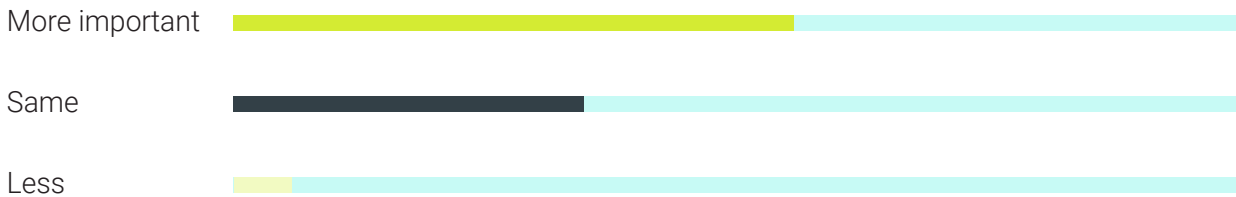
Member loyalty metrics overtime



Other findings in the study around the importance of the organization to members and member interactions with their organization suggest that member sentiments remain positive:

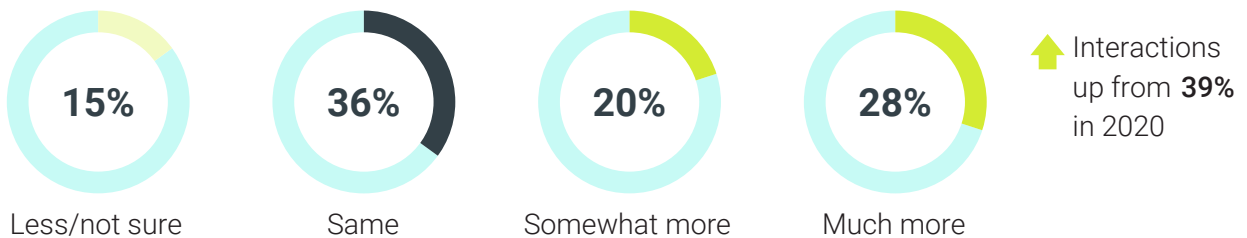
56 percent say their organization is more important to them now than a year ago.

Importance of organization to members compared to a year ago: (current member viewpoints)

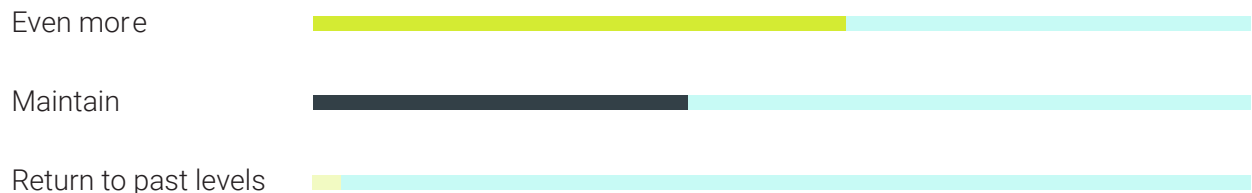


Nearly half (48 percent) say they are interacting more with their organization than in years past. Of those interacting more, 57 percent say they plan to interact with their organization even more in the future.

Member engagement compared to years past:



Member plans to interact in the future: (of those interacting more)



And, 79 percent of members whose employers pay for all or part of their membership dues say they would still renew even if their employers stopped contributing.

Perhaps not surprisingly, there is a big difference in terms of lapsed members' perceptions of how well their organization understands their needs versus current members' perceptions. This suggests that understanding your members better will keep more members around longer.

Perception of how well organization understands needs



4 ways to drive member loyalty and retention

While there are multiple indicators of member loyalty, there isn't just one thing that drives it. Furthering member loyalty requires providing ongoing member value and delivering a great experience throughout each member's relationship with your organization.

With this in mind, here are four highly effective ways to keep members around for the long term:

1 Know your members better

Getting to know more about your members and what they want is the first step in delivering value for years to come. Some tips:

Read the 2021 Association Trends Study, which includes findings about what members value most.

Listen to your members:

- Send a periodic survey to gather their thoughts and ideas about your organization's programs and benefits.
- Read what they're writing in your online community, and participate in the conversations to spark more feedback.
- Host focus groups with diverse audiences of members to find out more about their needs and how you can continue to deliver value for years to come.

TIP: YourMembership association management software (AMS) has survey functionality built in, making it easy to create and send targeted surveys and collect feedback. It also has online community functionality, so you can easily build a community for member networking.



Develop member personas, which are fictional, generalized characters that represent your audience's various demographics, needs, goals, and challenges. They can help you think of your members as groups of people with similar characteristics so you can design communications for them in targeted ways that catch their attention and deliver maximum value.

TIP: Discover more tips on how to create and use member personas: Read the guide, [How to Develop Personas to Deliver Greater Member Value](#).



2 Revisit your organizational strategy and member benefits

To keep members around for the long haul, evaluate your organizational strategy to ensure you're providing value throughout the member journey. For example, consider what your members are doing and what they might need from your organization in each stage of their career.

Also, use what you've learned about your members to make sure you know exactly which benefits are most important to them. As you evaluate your organizational strategy to ensure it provides value throughout the member journey, be sure to incorporate changes to benefits based on the feedback you receive.

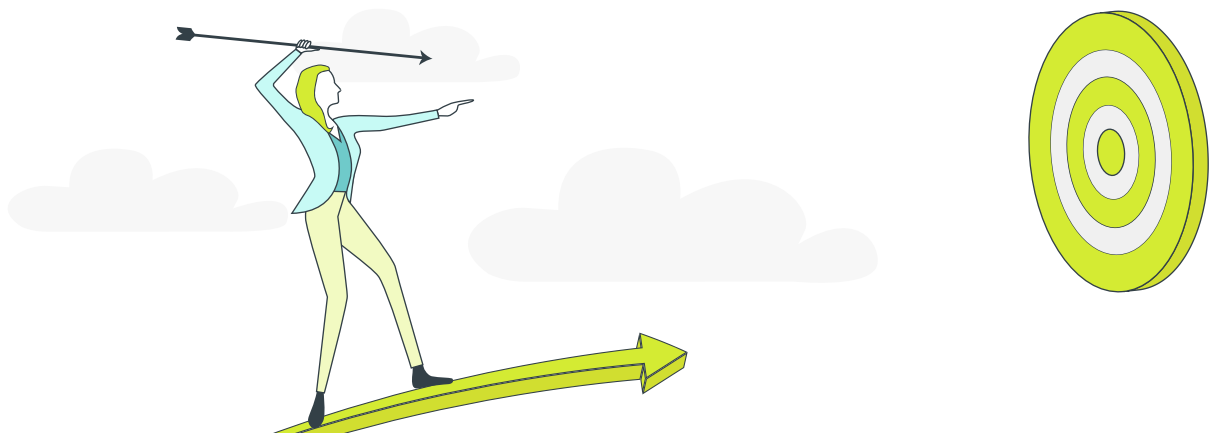


3 Deliver a great overall member experience

Your members' entire experience with your organization – from the moment they join your organization to the day their membership is set to expire – feeds their decision to renew their membership.

Here are some tips for providing a better overall member experience:

Onboarding – Once someone joins your organization, be sure to thank them to make them feel appreciated right away. Then, send them a welcome email that lets them know how your organization works, what to expect next, and where to go for information.



TIP: Get new members participating by asking them to connect with your organization and other members. For example: Pair up new members with a “buddy” (a volunteer member ambassador) in your online community who can make them feel welcome and help them get to know your organization better. You can accomplish this easily with YourMembership AMS.



Engagement – Boost member engagement by sending email communications with content that’s specific to each member’s needs and interests. Also, use your job board, online member community, online learning opportunities, and events to get members more involved with career resources, member discussions, and career development opportunities.

TIP: Learn more tips on how to get members more involved and connected with your organization: Read [The Small Association’s Guide to Increasing Member Engagement](#).



Renewal – Before member renewal dates roll around, thank your members again for being a part of your organization. Send them a heads-up as their renewal data approaches, and send a dues reminder when it’s time to renew.

TIP: Using YourMembership AMS, you can easily set up budget-friendly installment dues payment options for new and renewing members. You can also easily set up an auto-renewal option, with corresponding automated emails that notify members when their membership has been renewed.



4 Be tech-ready

Make sure your organization is prepared to deliver a modern member experience. For example:

A modern, all-in-one AMS system can help you manage member data efficiently, streamline work, and provide a modern digital member experience.

A strong event software platform and professional audio/video services can help ease the challenges of managing events while helping to deliver a great attendee experience.

The right learning management system (LMS) can help you provide the variety of convenient learning options your members expect.

Investing in these types of tools as part of a long-term technology strategy will provide a strong foundation to help your organization deliver a great member experience – one that keeps members around for years to come, no matter what the future might bring.



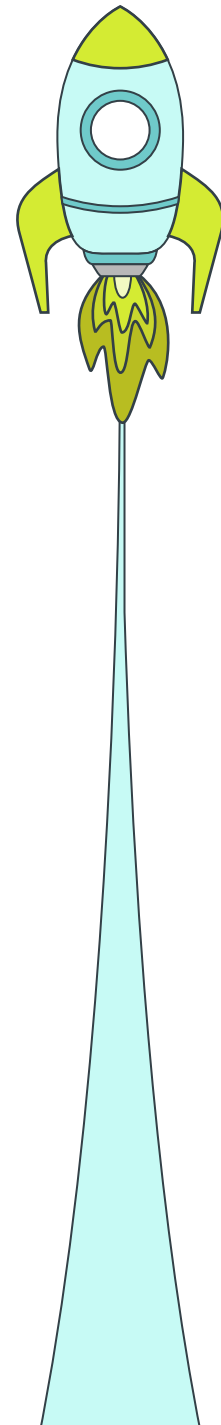
Take member loyalty to the next level

Every day presents another opportunity in a member's experience with your organization to win them over. By using the tips and information in this guide, you'll be well on your way to creating greater member loyalty that will help your association grow and thrive for years to come.

YourMembership AMS offers affordable, easy-to-use, all-in-one membership software for small to mid-sized organizations. It includes membership management functionality combined with email marketing functionality, an online community platform, and more to help you manage member activities while providing members with an easy, everyday way to connect, share, and learn.

Learn more about why YourMembership AMS is the ideal solution for small and growing associations like yours.

Explore YourMembership AMS



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