



APRIL 2017

MARKETING SUPPORT SYSTEM VFW DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS

This month's article *covers a hotchpotch of recommendations.*

1. **Annual, Life and Legacy memberships:**
 - a. **Bring new members on as Life members or convert Annual members to Life members. Transitioning Annual to Life members saves a tremendous amount of time and effort in locating, convincing and processing annual renewals. Avenues to increase Life memberships include:**
 - i. **Advertise the installment plan.**
 - ii. **Fully utilize National funding that pays for indigent veteran's memberships.**
 - iii. **Be creative in using the DPA membership funds (e.g. If a post receives enough funds to upgrade two memberships, see if four members agree to split the cost with the post to become a Life member.).**
 - iv. **Posts hold events to generate funds to upgrade memberships from Annual to Life.**
 - v. **Posts put in their annual budgets enough funds to upgrade a certain number of memberships. This can include having new members pay for their initial annual dues and the post cover the additional cost for an Annual membership. To assist in budgeting, posts should determine the total cost of upgrading all members to an Annual membership.**
 - b. **Every attempt should also be made to have Life members become Legacy Life members. Some of the above methods are ways that can assist in this effort.**
2. **Improving visibility:**
 - a. **Pacific Stars & Stripes website: Public Service Announcements (PSA) are available for non-revenue generating events. Have the DPA get a PSA for the Adopt a Unit program and/or benefits assistance.**
 - b. **Free publicity: If a Post holds an event where sponsors are solicited (e.g. beach bash, golf tournament, etc.), recognize the sponsor with a plaque or banner that the sponsor can display at their establishment.**
 - c. **Integrate recruiting into all Post events and activities. All Post members are recruiters. We need to recruit at all opportunities.**
 - i. **During Service Officer or VA Outreach events, have a table there with a banner that prominently displays that we are with the VFW. Have recruitment material on the table.**
 - d. **Develop relationships with and support other local organizations (e.g. on and off base women's groups, RAO, FRA, RSL, etc.) as well as out of area organizations. Developing these relationships will increase VFW's visibility and hopefully bring in new members.**
3. **The DPA and Posts need to ensure they keep the information on their websites and Facebook pages up to date! There is nothing more frustrating for a person visiting your website / Facebook page to click on the "Events" link and find it blank or the most recent event was a year ago. Equally frustrating for a visitor is to call the listed phone number or send an email only to find it is incorrect.**
 - a. **Having an out of date website or Facebook page says volumes about the Post and their overall attitude.**
4. **Soliciting and utilizing member feedback: Not only potential members, but every member in good standing is a customer of the VFW. If we treat our customers badly, they will vote with their feet.**
 - a. **In the Marketing section of the DPA website are recommended questionnaires to provide new (recommend three months after joining) and current (recommend annually) members on how to increase membership and quality of services.**
5. **When a non-VFW member asks for benefits or other assistance (e.g. Disability claim) ask them where he / she learned of the VFW. This will let us know what marketing efforts are working.**

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR INPUT, COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS TO:

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Quote of the Month: "The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself." – Peter Drucker