"UNDER 40s ROTARY CLUB"

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The Rotary Club of Melbourne Park is Melbourne's only 'young' Rotary Club. We represent a unique sector of the Rotary world as all of our members are aged under 40s. This means we need to use a different approach for membership recruitment compared to most Rotary clubs.

The first step is to understand your target audience

It is important to understand your target market to know how to best attract them. For example, our target age group (40s and under):

- Utilise the internet as their preferred route of communication,
- Value a product by it's appearance online,
- And are not likely to recognise the Rotary brand, or if they do, they associate it with a 'more experienced' age range.

Therefore we have styled our membership approach around these key characteristics.

Thinking about how we sell our club

We cannot use Rotary as a leading pitch for new members, as they often do not recognise it or think it applies to them.
Therefore we use our volunteering opportunities, and speaker program, to promote interest in our club towards getting people to a meeting. Then after they visit the club, we can then tell them about Rotary International and what membership with our club involves.

Utilising online tools to reach potential new members

Given that our target audience uses the internet daily, we utilise online tools to promote our club, and our upcoming speaker and volunteering events. For example see our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/rcmelpark) which functions like a club bulletin, and our Meetup page (www.meetup.com/The-Young-Rotary-Club-of-Melbourne-Park) which advertises upcoming events specifically. These platforms reach beyond our own networks too, and are often how they first hear about our club. Given that our target audience values a product by its appearance online, we also need to have professional club website that embodies the energy of the club and is updated regularly (www.rcmelpark.com).

Being deliberate about the language we use to describe our club

We are also mindful of the language that we use to describe our club to the target audience. For example words like 'service' or 'fellowship' are not well recognised words among under 40s, therefore we would use words like 'volunteering' and 'friendship' to capture their attention more effectively.

Retaining interest and new members

Once you get a potential member along to the club, the meeting atmosphere and experience is pivotal to retaining their interest and membership. We make the traditions of Rotary relevant for our target age group, and while we love our sergeant's session, we do not sing the anthem, say a toast or grace, and do not have a top table. We also keep the costs associated with membership as affordable as possible.

We have experienced wonderful membership growth by taking these strategic approaches. Hopefully this provides some food for thought about how to ensure your approach for recruitment is as effective as possible. Good luck!