



**BOWLS**  
**AUSTRALIA**

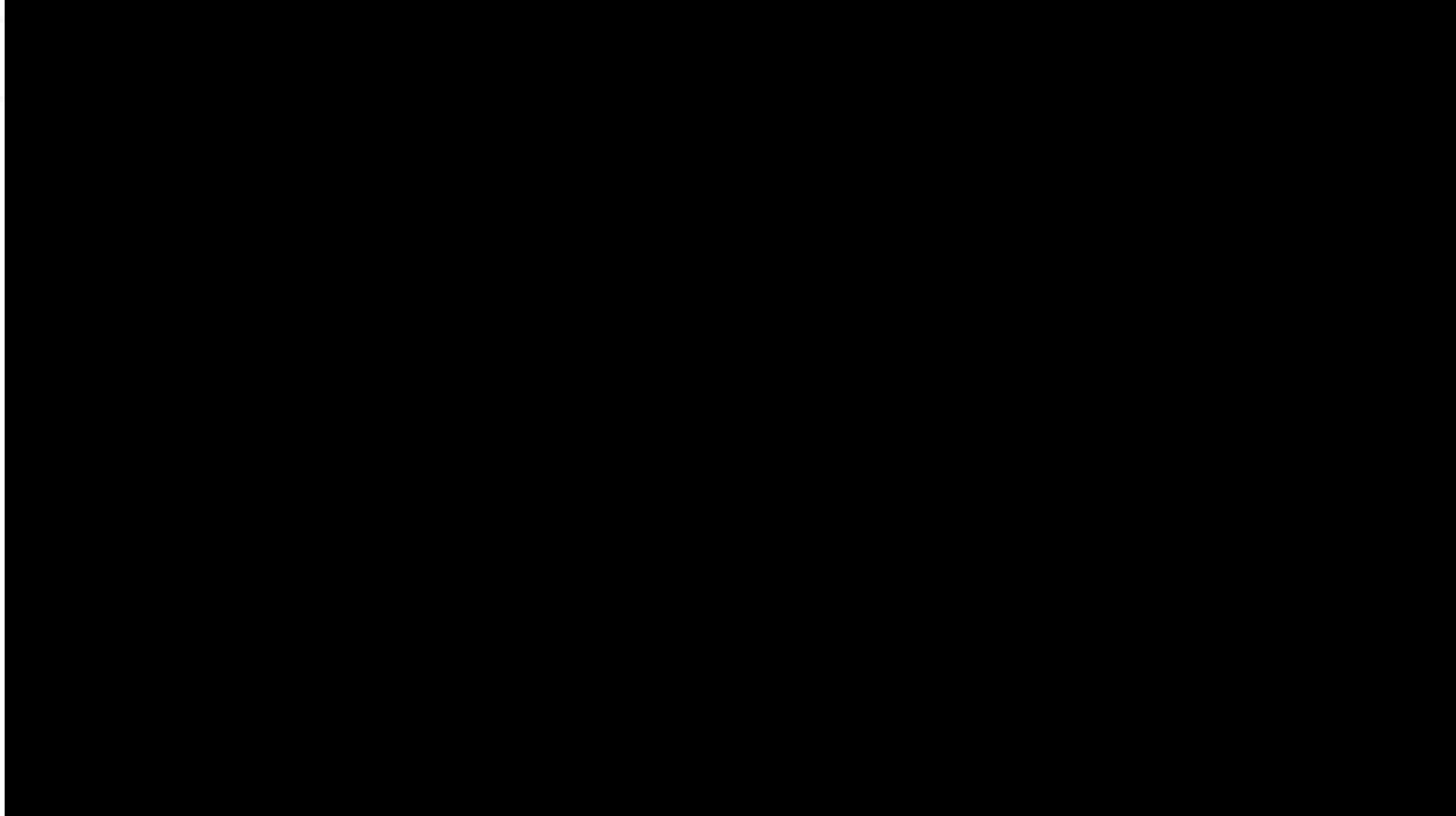
# Community Engagement

*Clive Adams*

# *Things we will cover*

- Market Segmentation – a video
- Social Trends in consuming sport
- Communication Options in the Community
- Different Formats of our game
- Why should I come to your club?
- Your Club Committee Structure
- Ways of recruiting and retaining members

# ***Market Segmentation Study – 2013!***



# *Market Segmentation Study - Takeaways*

- The Situation
  - Membership stagnating
  - People have more choices
  - There are more demands on our time
  - Participation in sporting activities has gone up – on people's own terms
  - Social bowls participation continues to grow
- Club Member Types
  - Loyalists
  - Socially Engaged
  - Sport Driven
  - Apathetic Clubbers

# *Market Segmentation Study - Takeaways*

- Non-Club Member Types
  - Sidelined Sportsters
  - Club Wary
  - Ponderers
  - Self-Focused
  - Sport Indifferent
  - Sport Atheist
- Some opportunities lie in the top three non-club member types
- In general, people want to be part of clubs, but they have some reservations

# *Market Segmentation Study - Takeaways*

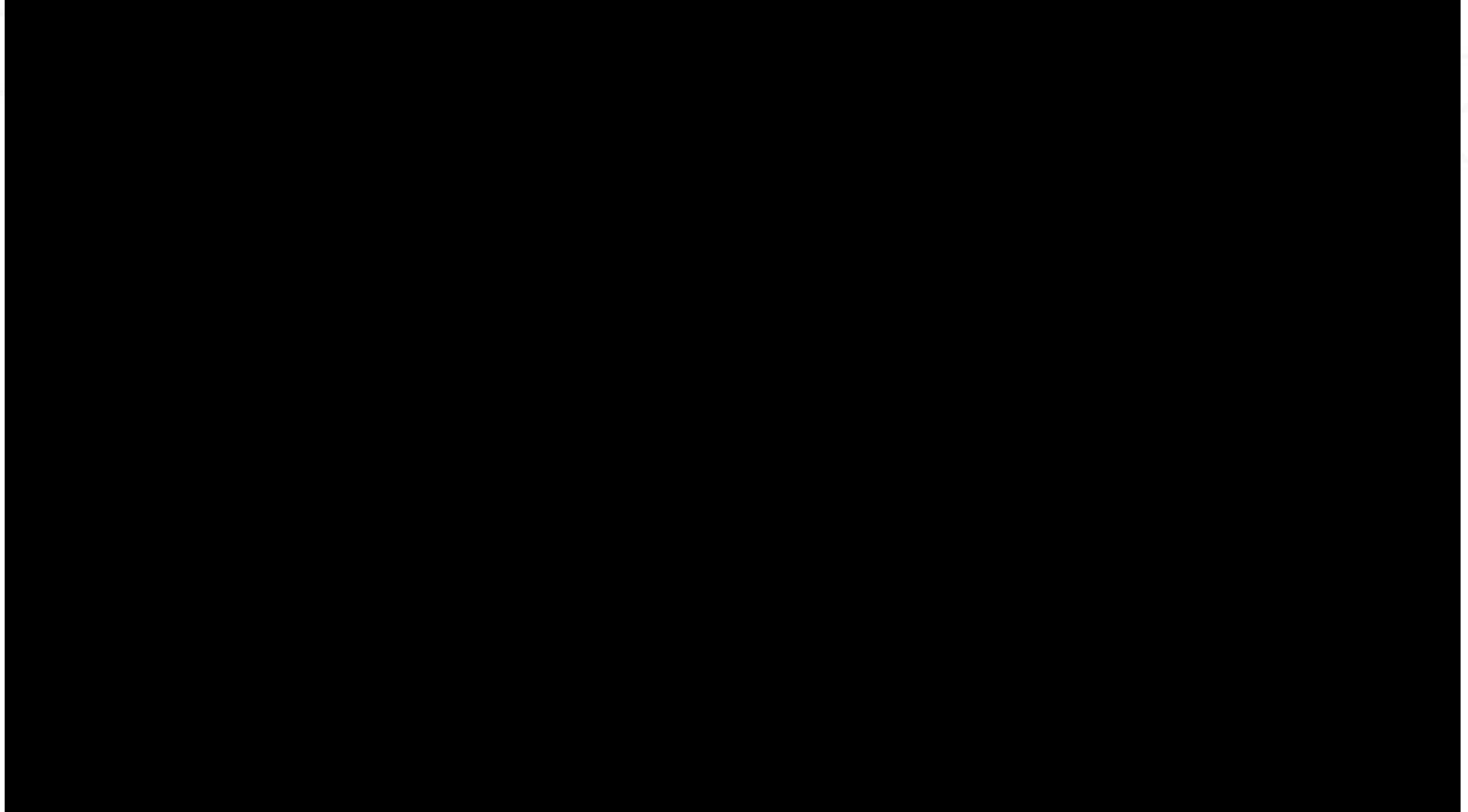
- Reasons for not wanting to be in clubs
  - Inflexible schedules
  - Clicky
  - Cost
  - Lack of opportunity for beginners
- What do we need to do?
  - Create a fun environment
  - Value each player
  - Flexible “family friendly” membership options
  - Cater for different groups on different days
  - Alternative game formats
  - Let friends play together, rather than judge on talent

# ***Market Segmentation Study - Takeaways***

- Take a few minutes to think about what your club is doing differently to what you were doing in 2013
- What about the sport – what is the sport doing differently to 2013?
- For another few minutes, pick two things about what your club is doing differently and think about how they were portrayed to the public? How were they marketed? Are/were they successful – why?
- Who wants to share?



# *Communication Options*



# Communication Options

- Baby Boomers
  - Proven research and hard copy information
- Gen X
  - Want to feel like they are getting a deal
  - Free offer, or discounts etc work here
- Millennials
  - Care about social impact
  - Use testimonials
- Decide who you are marketing to, and then go with the method and style that suits

# Communication Options

- Social Media
  - Websites
  - Newsletters
  - Newspapers – Local
  - Word of mouth – this is still the best
  - Letterbox drops
  - Mailouts
  - Email
  - Pictures and Images
  - Feel good stories
  - Testimonials
- 
- Average age of Australians is 37

# *Know your community*

- What does your Club want to be? Make sure you and your members know the answer
- Who do you have in your community? What are the age groups, the ethnicity, the socio-economic factors etc
- How do you access these groups eg. Ethnic groups will have leaders – if you want to attract them and their groups of people you need to ask them what they want
- Ever had someone who lives over the road walk in and say they didn't even know they could come in? That should ring alarm bells
- Bayswater BC - revival

# *Why should I come to your Club?*

- Can we answer this question?
- Activity: Can we answer the question from the point of view of:
  - A 60 year old male
  - A married couple aged 40 with two teenage kids
  - A young couple with a small child
  - A single 35 year old female
  - A junior player
- If we can't tell them why they should be using our club, then how do we expect them to know?
- When federal budgets are handed down, we read about how it affects certain different people – that is so we can relate. Perhaps we can market in a similar way

# ***Social trends have changed***

- People don't go out for the same reasons as they used to
- Sport on the big screen is no longer a drawcard as everyone has a big screen TV at home
- Policing of alcohol consumption as well as the social implications mean people are being more careful
- What are the reasons people might go to a club these days?

# Your Committee Structures

- Most clubs have portfolios with a similar structure to this:
  - Finance
  - Greens and Surrounds
  - Match Committee
  - Selection Committee
  - Social Committee
  - Sponsorship and Promotions
- 90% of our committee structures are inward facing – they worry about things within the club
- Outward facing examples:
  - Membership and Recruitment Committee
  - Relationship Officer (council, other stakeholders etc)
  - Social Media co-ordinator

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# *So what do we have happening at clubs?*

- Bowls related
  - Corporate/Community Bowls
  - Barefoot Bowls
  - Jack Attack
  - BPL Cup
  - Pennant Competitions
  - Social Bowls
  - School Competitions?
- Non-bowls related
  - Food (to varying degrees)
  - Functions
  - Social gathering
  - Exercise Classes (RBTC, Zumba etc)
  - Coffee/Cake

# *Why do we exist as Clubs?*

- Is it just as bowls venues or is it more than that?
- Can clubs survive just as bowls venues?
- Clubs have a role to play in the community
  - Bring people together
  - Mental health – some people might just otherwise sit at home, or work longer hours
  - Safe place for families – we know many of our bowlers come from family links
- But how are we conveying that to the community? Are we doing it at all?

# *So what can we do?*

- Firstly, we can't do it alone – we need the members on board
- If members want their clubs to exist, we need them empowered to promote the club and to get our message out there
- We need visitors to our club to share their experiences – hopefully positive ones!
- The best advertising for your Club is when someone else does it for you!

# *So what can we do?*

- Bring a friend, or membership discount incentives
- Have days where we welcome the community in
  - Don't call them Open Days
  - Call them “Family Fun Day” or “Come n Try Day” etc
- Explore alternate formats of the sport, get inventive, and be flexible when games can be played
- Step back from the insistence to “coach” new people and just let them have a go and have fun
- Get amongst the community and promote why people should be involved in your club
  - Shopping center displays
  - Retirement Village visits
  - Other sporting clubs
  - Schools

# *So what can we do?*

- Get involved with Council initiatives – expos, have-a-go days etc
- Offer opportunities for volunteers rather than calling for them
- Local Radio opportunities
- Make sure people can see in to your Club – hedges and big fences/walls send the wrong message
- Family membership options
- Food truck festivals
- Embrace other sporting options at your club
- Local Newspapers
- Letterbox drops – with a call to action!

## *No-one likes planning but...*

- Let's say your community bowls starts in March
- Perhaps a story in the local newspaper in January about last year's champions or how one of them has progressed into the sport might be a good thing to plan
- A shopping center display that offers a raffle for free entry into the competition, and perhaps free membership of the club. At the very least you'll get plenty of people's details that you can promote the competition to.
- Award medals at the end, and encourage winners to post on social media – get another story in the paper

# *Think about the community*

- Ever actually got out and surveyed the community?
- Ask members, on their membership forms, where they heard about the club – if you get a feel for what works you can do more of it
- Ask members that leave why they are leaving. They might be more honest on paper/electronically than they will be face-to-face
- Encourage visitors to the club to provide feedback – don't be scared of the truth. There may be things you need to know

## *So where to from here...*

- As clubs, we need to think how we are getting things out there – we need to plan or at least arrange our thoughts
- Elect a Membership Committee and empower them to promote the club
- We may need to spend some money on promoting the club
- Think of things from a community point-of-view rather than a club point-of-view



## *In summary...*

- Our community is changing – we need to change with it
- We need to offer different options to the community and we may need to take some risks
- We need to communicate with people in a way that suits them, not just the way that suits us
- We need to get out there and be part of our community – not wait for people to come to us, because, in general, they aren't coming



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