Justifying
a Membership Management Software
Investment

Strategies to Get Your Board
On Board

GrowthZone
chamber edition
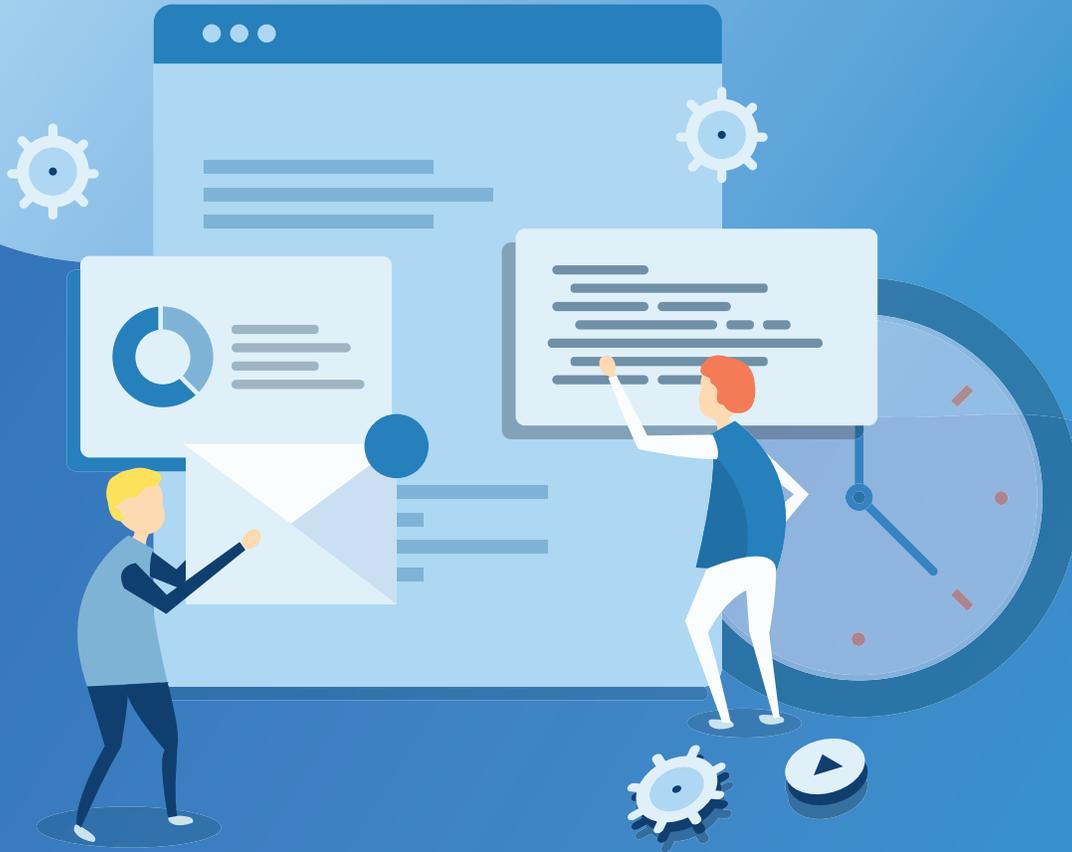
Having robust member management software has far-reaching benefits to members, staff, the board of directors, and the chamber as a whole. But like any investment, there are aspects of it that provide a clear ROI, whereas other attributes aren't as easily quantified. This helpful guide provides strategies to implement as you navigate your journey of justifying a software purchase to your board.

Table of Contents

Make a Convincing Presentation to Your Board

The process of researching member management software options often falls on the shoulders of the chamber staff. After extensive research and analysis, the alternatives are typically narrowed down and presented to the board of directors.

If yours is like most boards, they use a "big picture" approach to decision making with ROI playing a significant role. To ensure your board is "seeing the forest for the trees," ask yourself:

- What are the benefits of the software?
- What will the board think the software needs to do to make it worth it?

Quantifiable vs Indirect Benefits

The correlation between cost and benefit isn't always clear, so when pitching chamber software to the board, be sure to differentiate between ROI and VOI (value on investment). Although it's important to stress the large-scale benefits provided by a robust system, resist the urge to illustrate intangible or indirect benefits with broad strokes. Instead, detail the value of solving specific problems.

Depending on the nature of your board, determine whether it makes more sense to open your presentation by focusing on quantifiable data, or to begin with the indirect benefits (just remember to talk in terms of value).

It has been said that "What gets measured gets managed." What it doesn't say is, "What can't be measured isn't worth managing."

How to Quantify ROI

Start with what is possible. Know what you want, what's important to you, and how you can make it important to the board.

Consider beginning with a statement along the lines of, "This chamber software will allow us to…"

Complete the statement above with features that have the potential to quickly and dramatically affect the bottom line, such as:

Increase registrations due to improved user experience

Achieve a higher renewal rate

See a lift in non-dues revenue from sponsorship and ad sales

Increase ease of donations

Enhance our online store

Reduce paper & postage costs
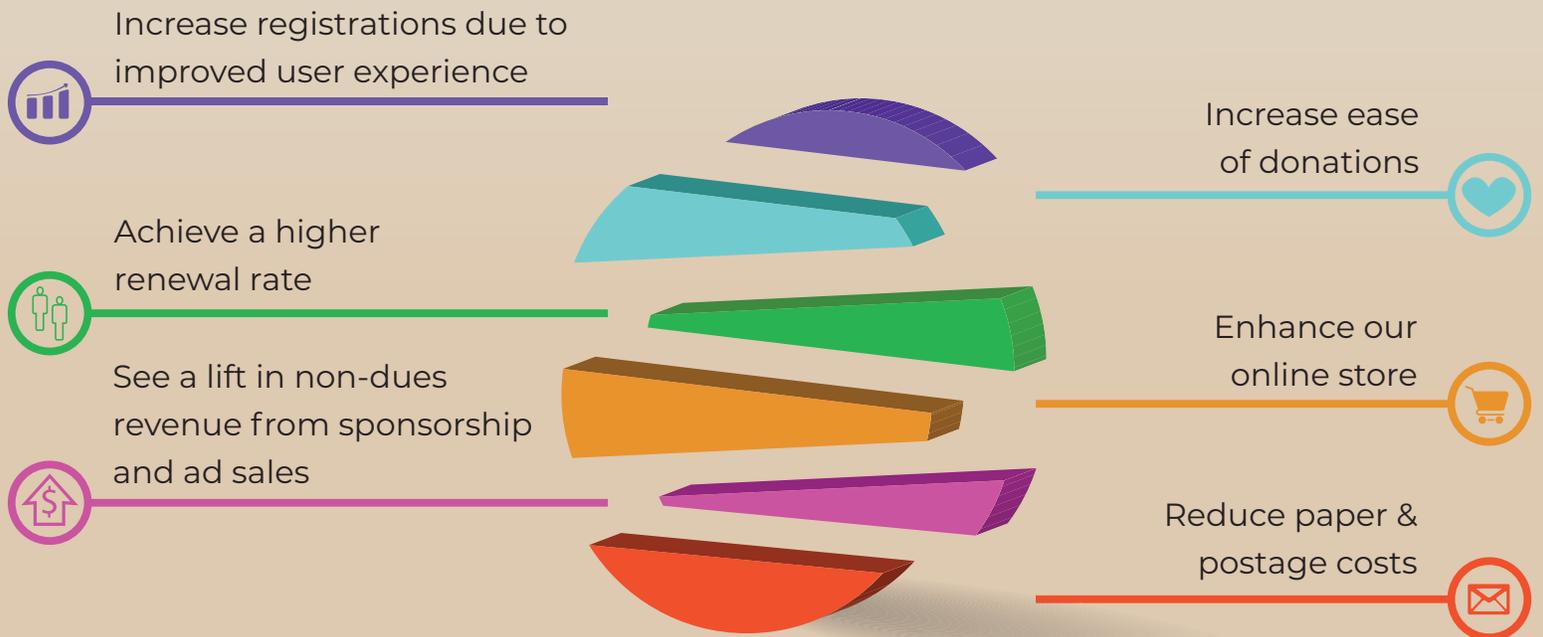
> **"Efficiency is doing better what is already being done."**
> **– Peter F. Drucker**

Making Indirect Benefits Matter

Define the value your chamber will receive from the software. Typically, this should focus on solutions to member challenges and improvement to their overall experience. Follow that with benefits to the industry (and/or the public), the chamber as a whole, the board, and then the staff.

To establish this information, review your chamber's mission and/or vision statements and then relate software features and modules to key words in those statements. Overall, chamber progress should be at the core of your value proposition.

> **"You've got to think about big things while you're doing small things so that all the small things go in the right direction."**
> – Alvin Toffler

If the value you'll receive from a new member management system involves intangibles, you could say, "This singular tool with multiple capabilities will allow us to…"

- **PROGRESS FORWARD!**
- Enhance the member experience
- Improve communication
- Equip members with resources
- Provide real-time continuing education data
- Simplify member networking
- Increase member engagement and satisfaction
- Facilitate strategic planning
- Generate accurate, faster, actionable data
- Identify progress meeting short and long-term goals
- Track and close sales opportunities
- Optimize the utilization of resources
- Increase accuracy and accountability
- Improve processes to free up time to focus on mission
- Streamline daily operations
- Replace outdated tools with improved technology
- Reduce repetitive data entry
- Improve morale and reduce turnover by automating mundane and repetitive tasks

Frame Up What You'll Do With The Extra Time

Busy-work is not value-added work. And it often doesn't help meet objectives, so be sure to outline what you'll do with the time your organization frees up by having the software. Focus on the mission, but also deep dive into details.

Sell the Potential

Your board will likely ask, "How will we know if our new software launch has been successful?"

Be sure to caution that results take time. There will be a lag between launch and explicit return on and value of the investment.

Innovation is an investment in the potential of the organization. Keep your eye on the prize.

"Time isn't just about minutes and seconds, though;
it's about the value of those minutes and seconds."
– Phil McKinley, Forbes

GrowthZone
chamber edition

GrowthZone: The Chamber Success Platform Built for You!

GrowthZone helps organizations grow and retain membership, engage and inform members and prospects, and streamline tedious tasks. It's a smarter solution designed for efficiency and growth. The cloud-based system is powerful, easy to use, and designed to manage all the day-to-day operations of your organization.

Check out our resources for chamber professionals.

VISIT

Contact us today for a personalized product demo.

CONTACT