

2023 USMS Membership Survey – Executive Summary

Background Information

- USMS last conducted a large-scale membership survey in 2011. We had planned a follow up in 2021 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on membership numbers we decided to wait until membership was more stable.
 - USMS has conducted numerous other surveys between 2011 and now but not to this scale.
- Metropolitan State University of Denver's research team, led by USMS members Clayton Daughtrey, Ed.D. and Nicole Vowles, Ph.D., helped formulate, administer, and analyze the 2011 survey as well as this one.
- The survey was sent out in June, July, and August of 2023 to members. And sent out to non-member in July and August.
- 8,923 members answered a question on the survey.
- 680 non-members answered a question on the survey.
- The survey had 39 questions.
- The purpose of the survey was to compare membership responses over time and compare member vs. former member responses.

Action Items

- Clubs and events are the highest regarded benefits and reasons to join. USMS should grow its number of clubs and events to assist in membership growth.
 - Local meets should not be longer than a day and feature sprint events
 - Clinics could be offered alongside events
- Our members are finding other places to swim open water events. USMS should focus on sanctioning more open water events or find a way to make sanctioned open water events more attractive to members.
- Members typically wait to join USMS 30 years after their youth swimming experience. USMS needs to create a better bridge between youth and adult swimming.
 - Continue to grow College Club Swimming and its connection to USMS
 - Introduce Grown-Up Swimming as a low barrier to entry back into group swimming
 - Create a service for those that think traditional USMS membership is currently not the right fit from them

Key Data Points

- Types of members (you could select more than one option in 2023 and 2011)
 - More members are describing themselves as fitness swimmers (64% vs. 26%)
 - Less competitive pool swimmers (59% vs. 51%)
 - Less triathletes (13% vs. 25%)
 - Open water remained the same (34%)
- Main reason for joining (you could select more than one option). This was not asked in 2011.
 - Participating in an event (55%)
 - Club requires it (35%)
 - To support USMS (24%)
 - Non-club and non-event benefits and other (17%)
- 40% do not participate in any swim meets. 44% participate in 1-3 swim meets.
- 30% participate in open water events.
- 39% want USMS to sanction more events
- 51% would attend USMS host clinics
- 50% of members were extremely interested in a sprint events (100 or less)
- Half-day meet formats were the most popular at 37% and full day at 35%.
- There is a strong interest in multi-year memberships, lifetime memberships, and auto-renewals with members.
 - Former members have a strong interest in a rolling registration year and tiered membership options.
- 26% of members waited over 30 years to join USMS, which is up from 18% in 2011. 18% joined within 5 years after their youth swimming experience, same as 2011.
- Even though events are why the most people join USMS, it is not why they swim. They swim for fitness and physical health. Competitions was the last reason.
- Most popular benefits (you could select multiple)
 - Swimming with a club (88%)
 - Swimmer Magazine (84%)
 - Online articles and videos (77%)
 - Searchable workout library (73%)
 - 400 sanctioned events (68%)
 - Streamlines newsletter (67%)
 - Exclusive Partner discounts (65%)
- 66% of members swim at least half of the time with a club.
 - Most of the non-members primarily swim alone.
- 88% of members' clubs has a coach on deck
- 93% of members have a positive experience with their coach
- Most members are happy with the organization but could have a stronger connection to it.

- Most members feel that our partners are important and care about the organization. They are more likely to buy from them.
- 55% of members have graduate degrees.
- 35% are making over \$150k in HH income.