



Developing Your Membership Team

Success and Survival in a Post-COVID Environment



Angel DeLeon

Senior Vice President, Guest Services, HR & Building
Operations (she/her)

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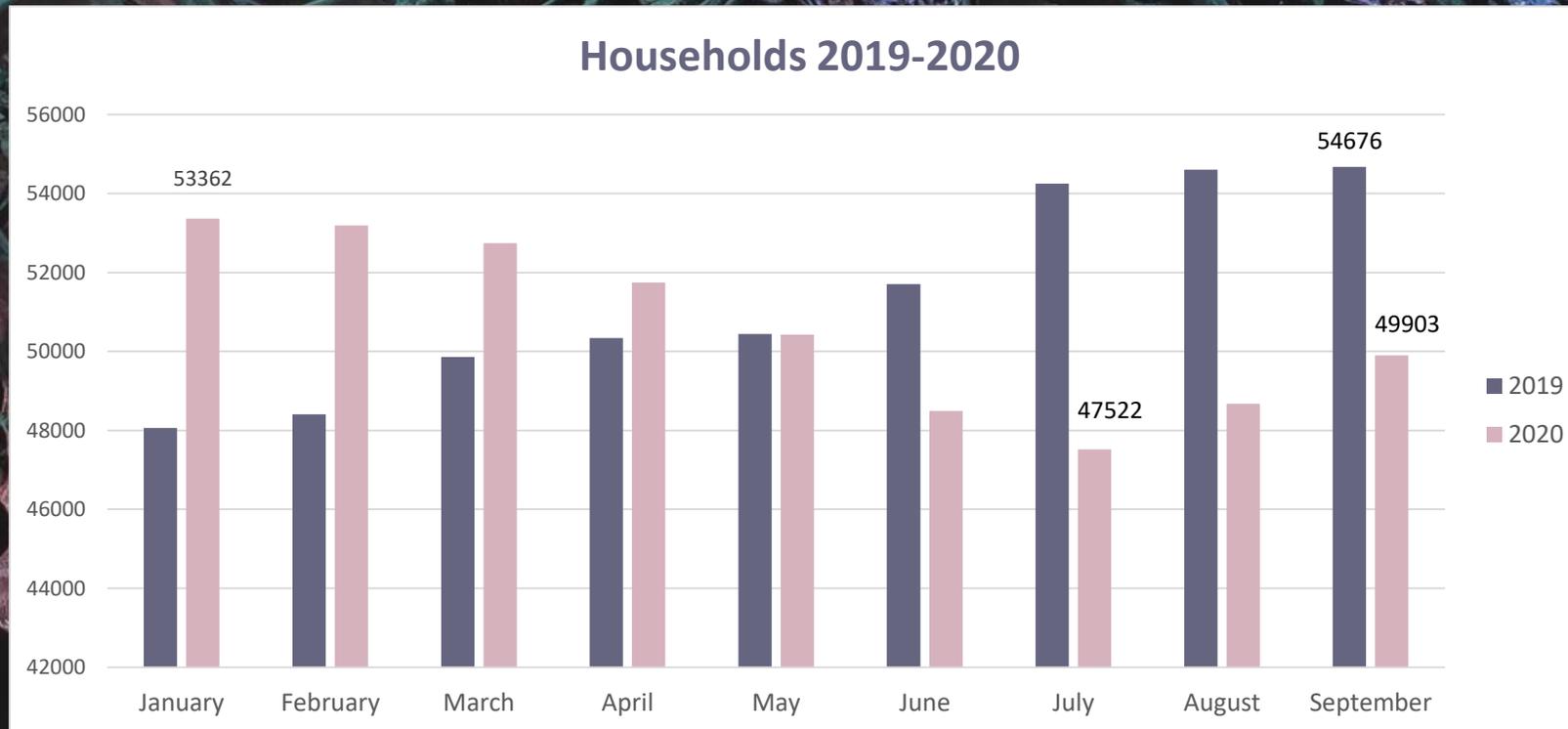
Laura Schneider

Director of Membership (she/her)

Houston Museum of Natural Science

Before we get started...

A little background about Memberships at HMNS



Membership moved to the Guest Services umbrella in September 2018.

Presentation Outline

Part 1.

Membership is a Team Sport

Part 2.

**Teamwork Makes the
Dream Work**

Part 3.

Get Creative – Thanks, COVID

First Things First – You are There to Learn

Learn about the process

Learn about your team

This process helps you
assess work and
communication styles

Introduce your
management style to your
new team

Talk to everyone, not just
department leadership

Remember, you are just listening.

- It's not a complaint session
- Be careful not to tell them they are doing it wrong
- Be careful not to over commit
- Resist the urge to jump in and take over

Identifying Your Needs and Theirs

You need to identify your goals before you can identify your needs.

Be inclusive when setting goals.

- It is OK to set a goal of holding steady
- Change and new plan implementation takes time.

Identifying Your Needs and Theirs

The easy part is coming up with a list of needs to sell memberships.

Top 5 Membership Dept Needs:

- More money
- More technology
- More staff
- More members
- **MORE MONEY!**

Identifying the needs of your teams can be much more challenging.

- What do they need to stay motivated and engaged?
- Remember, different people are motivated by different things.
 - Purpose, contribution, and recognition
 - Financial, title, and growth opportunities

Identifying Your Needs and Theirs

The one thing everyone needs?

Cross-training.

Don't be afraid to challenge your team.

- Take the time and allow them to learn.
- Recognize your role in the process.
- Take the opportunity to assess where they can excel.
 - Creative opportunities
 - Task oriented and data processing and interpretation
 - Customer service and member engagement

Once you understand the capabilities and needs of your team, you can begin to fill the gaps by placing employees where they'll be successful and fulfilled.

Building a Pipeline

Create learning opportunities for your team.

Filling positions from within creates a culture of growth.

- Visible opportunities for vertical movement
- Motivates employees
- Shows an investment in employees
- The room for growth is motivation on its own

The pipeline is *real*.

Every time someone moves up from within, it provides an opportunity for someone else.

Having an ecosystem in place that visibly provides space to learn and grow will result in:

- Buy-in from employees
- Strong employee engagement
- A more robust talent pool

Constructive Feedback Loop

Feedback is necessary for growth and development.

- Negative
- Positive

The feedback loop is a two-way street.

- They must be comfortable coming to you when they see an issue.
- Leaders *listen*.

You can tell them this, but most may be apprehensive.

- Create opportunities to encourage circular communication.
- Meetings can help introduce this format.
- Benefits for our department:
 - Opens a direct line of communication to department management.
 - Gives an opportunity to bring up issues in a neutral environment.
 - A great time to highlight accomplishments and offer praise.

Constructive Feedback Loop

They talk, you listen.

- Encourage them to bring challenges and issues.
- Brainstorm solutions.
- Collectively act on their feedback and follow up.

Give the meetings a chance. They will take time to evolve.

Growing Pains

Mistakes will be made.

Address issues as they arise.

They cannot improve if they do not know you are having issues with their work.

- **DO NOT MAKE THEM A SANDWICH.** (positive / negative / positive feedback)
- **Tell them what the issue was, the impact, and come up with a plan to prevent it from happening again.**

There is no such thing as a perfect employee.

Change is hard for some and impossible for others.

Change takes time.

They have to believe that you believe.

If you remain consistent, the changes will stick.

Nonbelievers normally opt out on their own.

Remember to hold everyone to the same standard.

Not everyone will get on the bus. You just have to be okay with it.

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Teamwork Makes the
Dream Work

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Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

To successfully build a members first culture beyond your department and break down silos...

You have to have a team in place that is agile, creative, and plays well with others.

First, the Mirror

We looked at what *we* were doing.

You can increase value perception and benefits
without increasing costs.

Adjusting the structure of member events can benefit your museum *and* your members.
Small adjustments yield BIG opportunities for our members.

First, the Mirror

Example: September Member Appreciation Month, 2018 vs 2019

- In 2018 & before, we had a single large, catered appreciation event.
- In 2019, we changed to an entire month of special membership promotions and programming for members.
 - A special deal on a venue's tickets per weekend, to promote other departments' areas & their benefits
 - Extra discount in the museum store
 - Special member-only adult education programming

This brought more members through our doors and provided a visible benefit to non-members that provided onsite upsell opportunities.

- Per the changes, there was an 87% increase in member participation (1763 vs 14183 participating tickets).
- The museum saved \$10,000, an expense reduction of 71%.

First, the Mirror

It's the *perception* of value and level of participation that's more important. Having that in place prior to COVID allowed us to make small adjustments and still offer roughly the same structure.

The format had to be adjusted to incorporate virtual options, but ultimately, we were able to celebrate members all month long with the 2019 structure.

Example: Second Saturdays

- Monthly members-only early hours
- Adjusted the structure to go virtual
 - Digital activity packets kids can do with their families

Both of these events gave us an opportunity to engage our members with content and not offers.

Then, the Window

Benefits of working with other departments

- It can help you and them both reach new audiences – if you cross-promote, everyone wins and gets their messages in front of people they wouldn't usually be able to talk to
- It can only increase sales, exposure, and reach
- Ex: In 2019, we worked with the Education department to create an educator membership group that included [additional benefits](#), such as discounts on programming for their school and students. After COVID, we revisited this program and incorporated virtual benefits and worked with Education and Development to celebrate our educators with a membership BOGO promotion.

Why would we do this?

- It helps them
 - Members are already engaged and are more likely to attend museum programming
- It helps you
 - The more your members use their membership, the more likely they are to renew

Visitor Services & Membership – Best Friends Forever

**No other department impacts the member experience more than the frontline staff.
The stronger the relationship between the two departments, the more likely you are to consistently
build your household number.**

Remember, the frontline is contributing to your membership goals

- They are pitching and selling memberships.
- They are responsible for the overall guest/member experience... Every. Single. Visit.
- Your guests and members will associate each team member they come across with their membership purchase.
- How they treat the guest matters, so how your department treats them matters.

Visitor Services & Membership – Best Friends Forever

How can you build collaboration between the two departments?

- Give staff the confidence to contribute, both in the department and the field
 - “If you’ve done what’s right for the customer, you’ve done what’s right for the museum.”
 - You have to be comfortable giving them some autonomy.
 - You can always address and give guidance of your preferred response, but try not to tie their hands.
 - After they have addressed an issue, they should inform management about the problem and solution. This will help you identify trends.

Visitor Services & Membership – Best Friends Forever

How can you build collaboration between the two departments?

Share your data to come up with a plan of action.

In a joint effort, Membership and Visitor Services worked together to look at overall onsite sale transactions as well as individual cashiers who were top sellers.

- We invited our top sellers to a round table where we discussed:
 - Their sales techniques
 - Their membership pitch strategies
 - What they thought we could do to teach others how to do the same
- The outcome was: **A training curriculum that we could incorporate into our cashier training program.**
 - Developed and led by our top membership sellers
 - Includes reviewing transactions with new cashiers to identify missed membership upsell opportunities
- We kicked this program off at the start of Summer 2019 for incoming cashiers.
 - As a result, we saw a 3.7% increase in onsite membership sales.
 - HALF of our top 10 membership sellers had completed this new training curriculum.

Visitor Services & Membership – Best Friends Forever

Before you start a membership promotion, consider brainstorming with the frontline staff.

- This can help you work through potential issues that you may not have thought of.
- Be sure to give them all the information they need to update their box office staff before a promotion begins.
- Share all membership publications with them so they can answer questions effectively.

If you can, also reward the sale at the box office for additional buy-in.

- If a monetary commission is not an option, you can consider:
 - Educational opportunities – ex: free entry to lectures
 - Premium schedule options
 - Longer lunch breaks
 - Contest to reward and recognize top sellers
- Know what motivates your staff, and see what you can do that minimally impacts your budget.

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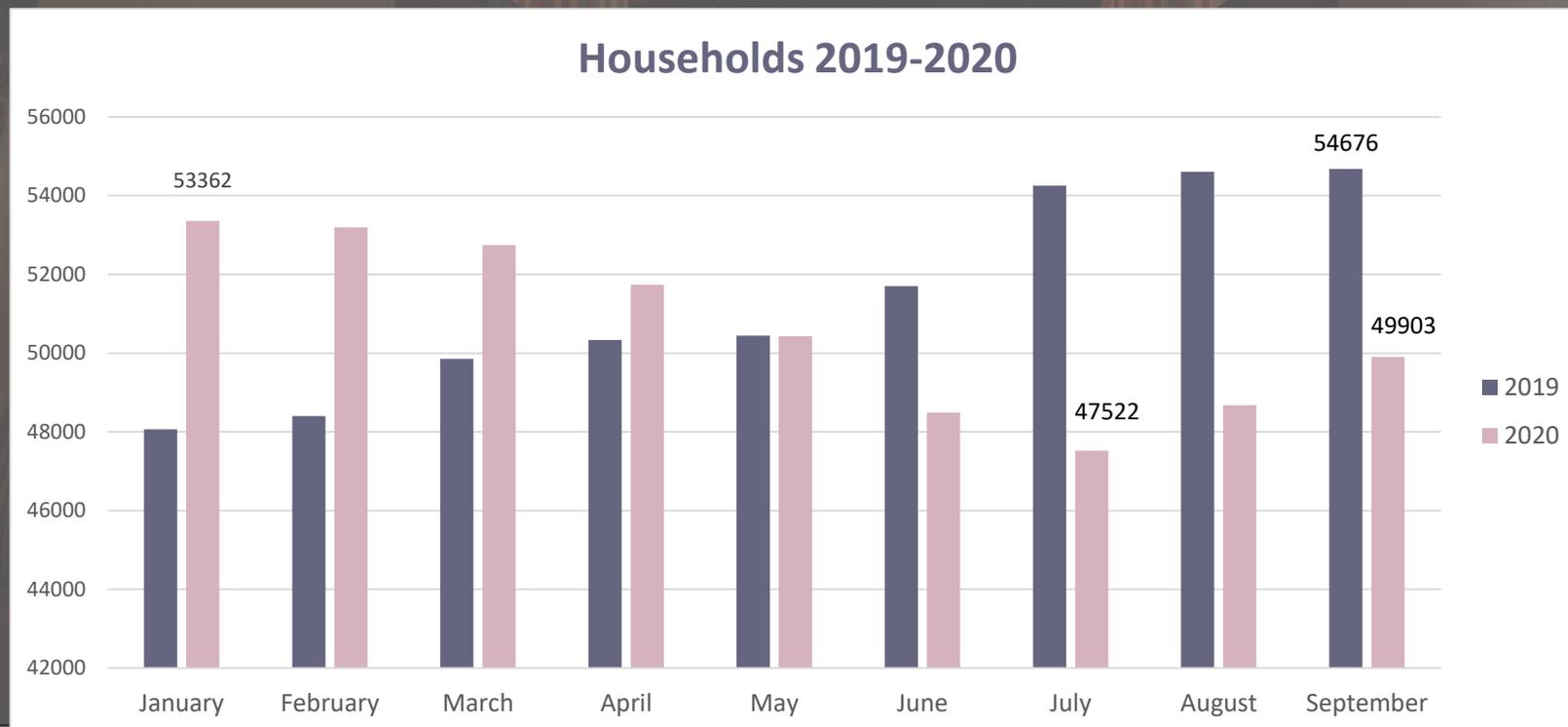
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Get Creative – Thanks, COVID

Get Creative – *Thanks, COVID*

The impact that the long-term closure had was painful and unexpected.

- Our doors are open, but attendance has not normalized.
- Postponed blockbuster exhibits and lost Spring Break/Summer new visitors.
- Our member household number has decreased by 10%.



Get Creative – *Thanks*, COVID

How did we respond?

- First, we took care of our members.
 - Extending all memberships for two months to account for lost time.
- Second, we TALKED and LISTENED to our members.
 - Members are a top resource – we utilized feedback and surveys to help guide our reopening.
 - Take advantage of your niche groups and their unique viewpoints.

Keeping Members Engaged

Remind members about *all* of their membership benefits, as they approach their expiration dates

- Frequency of member offerings will help keep member benefits at the top of their minds
- Reaching out about a benefit rather than an ask can go a long way

Some things we highlighted weren't new, but were under-utilized

Keeping the museum at the top of their mind

- Amped our social media presence across all platforms
 - Don't forget to keep your young donors and niche groups engaged
- Created an HMNS @ Home page on the website to act as a hub for all paid and free virtual options

Overcoming Challenges to Reach Members

When budgets are tight, look at the resources you *do* have and put them to work for you

- Adjust verbiage on purchase confirmations for non-member tickets to incorporate membership messaging
- Explore your ticketing system's options for alerts and offers when someone logs in.

Putting your message in front of non-members

- Signage around the museum helps, with a strong call to action
- If you have a blockbuster special exhibit, point out at the entrance how much they'd have saved if they were members.
- Exit signage to encourage upgrading their ticket purchase.
- Utilize your website real estate to its full potential.
- If your organization has kiosks, see if putting messaging about memberships on the screensaver is an option.
- Reach out to non-member ticket buyers after their visit to see if they are interested in converting.

Overcoming Challenges to Reach Members

Don't forget about the impact of a personal touch

- Rather than focusing on the *value* of the membership, we reminded our members of the *impact* of their membership.
 - We adjusted messaging to remind them of the importance of their support to our mission and how their support allows us to be a resource of the community.
- Utilize your volunteers!
 - We organized an army of volunteers who wanted to help the museum but were in the high-risk category and could not come on site.
 - Arranged and sent out over 10000 hand-written postcards
 - Coordinated efforts to reach out and call members to encourage renewals
- DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PERSONALLY REACHING OUT TO PEOPLE.

Key Factors That Helped Us Pivot & Respond Effectively to COVID-19

The payoff of building a strong team and strong relationships

- Having a staff that was cross-trained across functions in the membership department.
 - Even with a reduced staff, this meant no disruption to the member experience.
- A strong sense of interdepartmental cooperation.
- An established norm of support across departments and programs allowed departments to quickly adapt.
- An established base of low-cost / no-cost benefits made it easy to transition in-person programs to virtual programming for our members.
- Having a staff that was comfortable being uncomfortable.

In Closing...

We understand that COVID and the impact of it is nowhere close to being over. Although many of us are in similar positions, each of our resources and abilities to respond are very different. We wish you all the best.

**Thank you,
Angel & Laura, and the HMNS Employee Team**



Angel DeLeon

adeleon@hmns.org

&

Laura Schneider

lschneider@hmns.org

Houston Museum of Natural Science