

ACC Grass Roots Membership Drive

The ACC Public Relations and Marketing Committee is making the Grass Roots Membership Drive a top priority. This is not just about getting new members to join, it's about raising awareness that the ACC exists. Almost all guests in our club have never even heard of the ACC.

Previously, it was suggested to use the summer months to focus on finding new members. The advantages of a membership drive during the summer include:

1. There's no 2 week limit during the summer. Open your club to all interested players.
2. The new players will have up to 3 months to acclimate to tournament play.
3. Since new players are typically slower players, they will not interfere with season tournament play.
4. By learning tournament play during the summer months, new players won't skew season stats.
5. Club leaders can redirect their efforts to a membership drive in June and July after the regular season business has been taken care of.

The Grass Roots Membership drive now needs to be a year round event. Set a goal for your club to sign at least one new member every month. If every club accomplishes that simple goal, the ACC will see over 2000 new members every year just from the Grass Roots level.

Use the following guidelines to get the word out about the ACC and the Grass Roots program (any cost should be covered by club funds):

1. If your playing location is available at a time other than your regular club time, start having club meetings on a different night to invite new players and people that would like to learn how to play. Call it Beginner's Club, Minor League or Social Cribbage. No membership required, no penalties and no entry fee. Introduce tournament style cribbage to the players that already know how to play. Allow them to play at their own pace; they will speed up with practice. Have club members available to teach the basics and play practice games. Allow discussion of how to set and play the hand. Teach basic strategy. Get them interested enough to join the ACC & Grass Roots.
2. Make it a club rule that guests (who can only play twice during the season) do not pay an entry fee and do not get penalized for rule infractions. Be sure to introduce and welcome all guests and new members to the club before the start of play.
3. Take advantage of Social Networking! Have the club Facebook fanatic create a Facebook Page for your club (As an organization, you can't create a personal page. Instead, create a group page (Click [HERE](#) for more info) from personal page, click on "Create Page" under "Account"). Instead of using the club name (e.g. Podunk Peggers), let's set a standard that every club create their Facebook page name as "ACC Grass Roots #", i.e. ACC Grass Roots 43. Then get your club members with Facebook accounts to "like" it. Once your club members like the club page, all of their friends will also see the page. Local Clubs can like each other. Post your winners after each tournament; also 28 & 29 hands and grand slams. Also post your club members activities in ACC tournaments. The more information you post, the more your club will be seen. Be sure to like the American Cribbage Congress Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/ACC-Grass-Roots-43/176015252436298#!/pages/American-Cribbage-Congress/157568080964146>).
4. If the location where your club plays has a Facebook page, be sure to "like" them. If the location where your club plays has a web page, ask to get your club listed under "Events" for that location.

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5. Think Internet presence. Have the computer geek in your club create a [Yahoo Group](#) or [Google Group](#) for your club (FREE!). This will get your club on the Internet without the required hosting fees for a normal web site. Be sure that your group is listed in the directory so it can easily be found. Use your group to keep your club members informed of recent tournament results, upcoming tournaments (Grass Roots & ACC), and other club information. Be sure to link to the club's facebook page. (IMHO, Google Groups is preferred due to access to [Google Docs](#))
6. More Internet presence. Many local newspapers now offer free classifieds online. Check it out. Also check out [FreeClassifieds.com](#), [Craig's List](#) & [ClassifiedAds.com](#). Be sure to search for other free classified sites in your area.
7. Even more Internet Presence. Check out www.meetup.com to add your Grass Roots club and to find other cribbage players in your area. Also check out Big Tent (<http://www.bigtent.com/>) and GroupSpaces (<http://groupspaces.com/c/welcome>).
8. One more attempt at Internet presence. Check out www.patch.com to see if there is a "local" Patch for your city. If so, add your club to the Events Calendar. The Patch Newsletter is a daily email to all of its subscribers with local news and events. Then blog the activities of your club.
9. Instead of using a personal email address for club business, create a dedicated email account for the club. Then create a signature for that email account with links to the club Facebook page, Google or Yahoo Group, Club Web Site, etc. Then use this email address on ALL advertising materials for the club. The email account will maintain a history of club communications that personal email accounts won't. (IMHO, Google Mail (Gmail) is preferred due to access to [Google Docs](#))
10. Have the club computer geek design a new flyer and/or business cards for the club. Get those out on the street (games stores, hobby shops, bars & taverns). *See RESOURCES below.
11. Man a booth at the local flea market (or state fair). You don't have to sell anything (or sell bottled water labeled with club information just above cost to recover some of the flea market fee), just have some boards, cards & club members ready for play with information to hand out. Request back copies of Cribbage World from David Aiken to be available for handout.
12. Display a banner (or A-Frame/Sandwich sign) outside your club meeting place that is visible to the public during your club meetings and GRRT & GRNT. *See RESOURCES below. The banner/sign should be general so it will still apply if you need to change location. It could be as simple as "Cribbage played here!" or use the standard ACC banner seen at ACC tournaments if your club has one.
13. If your club meets in a restaurant, ask the manager/owner for permission to display a flyer (or a rack of business cards) for your club during open hours. *By the cash register, inside the front door, etc.
14. Contact your local newspaper to find out about getting an article printed about your club. (The smaller papers are usually more receptive to this idea.) Have a 250-300 word article ready for submission. Be sure to ask about specific formatting required for submission.
15. Check with your local newspaper to see if they print a community calendar or a list of social clubs in the area. If so, get your club added.
16. If a local bar, lounge or tavern offers Happy Hour on Friday afternoons, show up with a cribbage board and a deck of cards. Bring the flyers or business cards made in # 10.
17. Ask your local cable company about getting a PSA (Public Service Announcement) for your club on the local city/county information channel.

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18. Check the web sites for your local radio stations, they are known to post PSAs on their web sites.
19. Cribbage used to be a common pastime in the military. Contact local military bases (the few that are still open), ask about getting flyers posted in clubs (enlisted & officer), the commissary, the mess hall, an ad in the base newspaper, etc. Talk to people you know in the military.
20. Rumor has it that firemen play cribbage in their off time. Visit your local fire station.
21. Pull out those flyers that Dwight Christiansen distributed years ago that your club never used. Get those out on the street.
22. Find local cribbage groups that are not affiliated with the ACC and change their minds (see #5 - www.meetup.com).
23. Contact members & guests that you haven't seen in a while.
24. Find some way to reward the club member that signs up the most new members. Have the club buy a nice pair of cribbage pegs or pay the entry fee for the next GRRT or GRNT.
25. Offer cash to members for every 4-5 members they bring in. Not just guests, but people that sign up to be members.
26. Contact Dan Zeisler ([ACC Youth program](#)) about how to teach cribbage to students in your local school district(s). There's a chance you may sign up a parent or 2 (or even a teacher).
27. Go to places of business that know you as a regular customer (Barber shop, Hair Stylist, Nail Salon, Coffee shop, Butcher, etc.) and ask if they'll allow a flyer for your club to be posted.
28. If you live in an area where there is a strong concentration of clubs, don't advertise just your club, advertise ALL of the clubs in your area. Someone in your area may have a relative or friend in close proximity to another club.
29. Refrain from placing flyers under windshield wipers as these normally become litter in the neighborhood.
30. As a group, visit a local retirement home or assisted living facility to play with the residents. They may not be able to join, but word may get back to family members and friends that play cribbage. Or, if there is enough interest in the facility, consider starting a new club for them.
31. If your club normally takes a break during the holidays in December, consider having an unofficial "Family Night" tournament to invite the family members and friends.

Remember, the club director shouldn't be the only person doing all of the work. Ask for volunteers, 1 or 2 should be able to get the job done. Some of the larger clubs have a membership committee or chairman, strictly responsible for getting the word out and bringing in new members. Create a new IT (Information Technology) position on the club board, this person should work on items #3-8.

If you have another method that works, please share it (GRmembershipdrive@gmail.com). The same goes for Resources (below). Being an *Annual* Membership Drive, we need feedback on what works and what doesn't. With your input, this project should improve each year. Thank you for your time and effort in making the ACC and the Grass Roots program bigger and better.

RESOURCES:

Vistaprint.com – [Custom Banners](#), [Business Cards](#), [Bumper Stickers](#) & [Pens](#)
Buildasign.com – [Custom Banners](#) & [Custom Sandwich Board Signs](#)

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Staples.com – [Copy & Print](#) (Business Cards, Letterhead, Postcards, Signs, & Banners)

BannersInVinyl.com – [Custom Banners](#)

GotPrint.com – [Business Cards](#)

Overnightprints.com – [Business Cards](#)

Displays2go.com – [A-Frame Signs](#)

Esigns.com – [Vinyl Banners](#) & [A-Frame & Sandwich Board signs](#)

Buyasignonline.com – [Sidewalk signs & A-Frames](#) & [Custom Banners](#)