Manage the Business of Swimming Better
Presenter: Tom Fristoe
TeamUnify Knowledge Foundation

- Significant team statistics / trends gathered
- Coach & Admin interaction can improve
- Team needs/issues are largely to same
- Setting expectations is critical

August 2007 - August 2011

1,800+
Swim Team Management Best Practices

- Team Communication Strategies
- Setting Team Expectations
- Selling Your Team Values & Benefits
- Improving Team Performance
- Family & Swimmer Retention Strategies
- Billing Best Practices
- Going Mobile
- Going Social
You’re part of a business that happens to be a swim team
that provides a service that your customers [parents/kids] will expect great service from....
Team Communication

- Steady and relevant email communication is critical to getting membership attention and involvement.
  - News [Swim meet results, upcoming team functions, Etc]
  - Enlist a response from communication [meet declarations and Jobs]

- No Long gaps between email communication.

- Respond quickly to emails that ask questions. Especially those that might be interested in joining your team.

- Track family Interaction [if possible]
  - Frequency of team management technology sign-in’s
  - Email open rates
Setting Team Expectations

- Develop / Document “Team’s Expectations and Rules”.
- Communicate your team expectations often and don’t be afraid to repeat them often.
- Privately publish them to the team website.
- Coaches should know exactly what’s expected of them.
Documented Expectation Ideas

- Coaches give their full attention to swimmers at practice and are off-limits while coaching your child(ren)

- Our team relies on email to communicate with you. Please ensure that we have the correct/best email address to reach you reliably.

- Anticipate that coaches / team Administrators send emails 1X per week – please read them and respond as requested.

- Our team is managed by gracious volunteers that will ask for your help from time-to-time. Please volunteer often.

- We provide a great service and think it’s reasonable to be paid on time.
Selling Your Team Value & Benefits

🔥 Your selling a service. Keep selling & reselling the value and rewards of swimming on your team.

🔥 Leverage America’s Swim Team Content from USA Swimming

🔥 Make your program an exciting, fun and important program.

🔥 Prominently publish the values and benefits on the team website.
Program Benefits Ideas

- Create and develop life skills for your child[ren]
- A fun and safe environment for all ages
- Learn-to-swim and develop confidence
- Breeds healthy, individual competition and encourages teamwork
- Get in shape and stay fit
- Establish better eating habits
- Learn the fine art of hard work and dedication
- Swimming teaches goal setting skills
- Great way to make new friends and lasting friendships
Improving Team Performance

Coaches should be responsible for:
- Messaging to their groups
- Calendars
- Meet entry creation and collaboration

Get the right group of administrators on board and delegate
- Make sure that every board member has a defined job
- Set reporting expectations for each job

Families should be current to have their child[ren] swim. No one should be allowed to swim free. [minus exceptions]

Carefully designate who is responsible for website changes
Retention Strategies Ideas – Have Fun!

- Create scheduled new/events/tasks and communicate them
- Senior swimmers help coach younger kids
- Celebrate birthdays – make them fun!
- Quarterly team meetings
  - Teach parents about swimming
  - Involve parents in understanding time and time standards
  - Review team expectations
- Add news to the team website a minimum of 2-4x per month
- Don’t deactivate accounts each season.
Billing Best Practices – The Basics

- Do not de-activate re-activate accounts each season
- Process dues / other fees electronically. Add fees into dues.
- If you offer dues discounts for multi-swimmer families
  - Max of 5% off for second swimmer
  - Max of 7% off for 3 swimmer families – split discount as desired
  - Max 10% off for 4+ swimmer families – split discount as desired
- No swimmer should swim for free!
- If you discount for paying annually. No more than 10% off.
- Swimmers should not be allowed to swim if dues are not paid.
- Compress billing cycles
Compressed Billing Model

The principal is to collect a year's worth of dues before families/kids stop swimming because they did not qualify for season ending meets.

Monthly payers:

- **Collect 12 months of dues in 9 months**. For example:
  - If monthly dues are $60 per month [$720 annually], collect the $720 in 9 payments or $80 per month

Programs that offer 4 quarterly payments with 5% discount, move them to 3 quarterly payments.

- **Collect 4 quarterly payments in 3 quarterly payments**. For example:
  - 5% less than monthly payer = $685 vs. $720 [annual amount collected]
  - Now Collect $228 for 3 quarterly payments vs $171 for 4 quarterly payments

You’ll see dramatic improvements in cash-flow
Going Mobile

- Own a smart phone. Ton’s of choices.
  - Android and iOS/Apple are great choices for an operating system

- Lean on text messaging to reach kids. Other than Facebook, texting is really the only effective way to reach them

- Take pictures and publish them to your team site as news

- Read and respond to email promptly
Going Social

- Facebook. Facebook. Facebook.

- Create Swim Team Account on Facebook

- Create a Private “Swim Team” Group under this Account
  - Only those that are invited can see inside
  - Create at least one Private Group for your swim team to:
    - Privately share/Add photos, videos, documents
    - Consider adding more than one group. E.g., “Senior Roster Group” or more
    - Facebook has made it easier to target your messages.

- Creating a professional Appearance
  - Main Personal Team Account will be for general promotion
  - Groups for privately communicating to each respective group

- Add news and announcements often

www.teamunify.com