



# Promotional Strategy 2015 +

Prepared for  
Ovens and Murray District Swimming Association Inc.



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## 1. Executive Summary

The Ovens and Murray District Swimming Association (OMDSA), founded in 1947 with only seven clubs has grown and now encompasses 15 swimming clubs across NE Victoria and Southern NSW, with over 1000 registered members, a mix of recreational (20%) and competitive swimmers (80%).

The OMDSA aims to:

1. Promote, through it's clubs, the advancement of swimming;
2. Conduct competition between Clubs within the District;
3. Assist schools within the District to conduct swimming events; and
4. Liaise with pool management to ensure the best possible relationship and conditions exist for the conduct of competitive swimming at the pools within the District.

OMDSA aspires to grow membership numbers within the District to 1200 within the next three years and to 1500 within the next ten years.

With the above aims in mind, the OMDSA has invested in looking at ways that promotional activities may be implemented by Clubs to increase membership, participation and ensure long-term sustainability of the Clubs and swimming as a sport within the District.

## 2. Market and Situation Analysis

### OMDSA Overview

- Within the District there are 15 clubs with over 1000 competitive and recreational registered members.
- 80% of members within the District are regular competitive members and 20% recreational swimmers.
- Access to 50m pools is limited with only 3 in Victoria and 3 in New South Wales within the District, however in saying that these are high quality facilities compared to other Districts.
- Clubs within the District do not run 'Learn to Swim' programs; rather they provide the next level of learning and practise in the sport of swimming. They offer specific coaching in technique and skill with a view to provide a challenging and competitive environment combined with an enjoyable and social environment.
- Turnover of membership is high within the District with an annual turnover of approximately 40% each year.

### 3. Market Segmentation and Analysis

According to the latest figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in February 2015, there has been a decrease in the number of Australians participating in sport and physical recreation.

It was reported that walking for exercise is still the most popular physical recreational activity and is the exercise choice for females; whilst for males it is fitness/ gym. The report also indicated that there was a drop in the proportion of people undertaking other activities such as swimming and cycling.

Involvement in organised sport and physical activity generally decreases with age and people aged 15-24 years had the highest rate of involvement in participation.

It is estimated that 60% of all children aged 5 to 14-years participated in at least one organised sport activity outside of school hours. The highest participation rate, 66%, was among the 9-11 age-group and the lowest participation rate, 56%, was among children aged 5-8 years.

Roy Morgan Research, published in March 2015, indicates that swimming is the most common sporting activity in Australia with almost half of all children (48.4%) and 10.1% of adults regularly participating.

On average, children who participated spent five hours per fortnight playing and/or training in organised sport outside of school hours.

Other key findings for Australian children:

- Overall, participation in organised sport was higher among boys (67%) than among girls (54%).
- Among girls the most popular sports were netball, swimming, gymnastics, football (soccer) and basketball. Among boys the most popular sports were football (soccer), swimming, Australian football, basketball and cricket.

## 4. SWOT Analysis

<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased health benefits for participants</li> <li>• Competition environment</li> <li>• Social aspect benefits</li> <li>• Qualified and registered coaches</li> <li>• Access to highly technical officials of the sport</li> <li>• Growth area for the sport</li> <li>• Support from District for Clubs</li> <li>• Support from State Swimming Associations</li> <li>• Enthusiastic and capable Clubs and members</li> <li>• Inclusion Programs</li> <li>• Provision for participants of all age and skill levels</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs not committing to participate in promotional activities</li> <li>• Clubs not committing to participating in membership drives</li> <li>• Lack of facility availability to support additional members</li> <li>• Lack of qualified coaches to provide training and support</li> <li>• Lack of volunteers and officials</li> <li>• High turnover of annual membership</li> <li>• Seasonal sport with lack of indoor facilities</li> <li>• Not working closely with other private swim business' in the area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in membership – both swimmers &amp; non swimmers</li> <li>• Increase in volunteers &amp; officials</li> <li>• Increase in swimming awareness</li> <li>• With increase of membership will be increase in Club \$, providing more opportunities for members</li> <li>• Grants/ funding from local councils to encourage sport participation</li> <li>• With increase in membership numbers, increase in sponsorship opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other sports</li> <li>• Clubs not participating in promotional drive</li> <li>• Clubs not participating in membership drives</li> <li>• Time related issues e.g. lack of volunteers for time constraints</li> <li>• Lack of access to facilities</li> </ul>

## 5. Objectives and Goals

### OMDSA Mission Statement

Provide for the conduct, encouragement, promotion and administration of swimming activities through and by various Clubs for the mutual and collective benefit of the Members.

### Objectives

- Clubs within the District to be more proactive and promote themselves and in turn membership drives.
- OMDSA to assist in the provision of marketing ideas and templates to assist the Clubs.

### Goals

- Increase the membership within the District to 1200 registered members within three years and 1500 within ten years.

## 6. Strategies and Tactics

All marketing and promotional activities need to be efficient, fostering Club activities and opportunities all year around.

Clubs need to provide insights to potential members outlining how participation in swimming can benefit them and meet their immediate needs, particularly for children and teens – these include:

- Provide a program that focuses on fun and enjoyment, not just competition
- Provide a program that is inclusive; promote equal treatment and focuses on fun and participation regardless of skill level and ability;
- Provide a program with flexibility allowing for attendance and time commitment;
- Provide a program, which identifies the potential growth opportunities in swimming, understanding the needs of the individual and their goals.

Swimming can be perceived to be an individual sport – highlighting interclub and regional events and functions supporting more of a team and club environment, which is very appealing to particularly the junior and pre teen participant.

Press releases should be completed and sent to all local media outlets when running Open Days or specific events – before the event and after to report on the results.

## What do Clubs have to offer?

- Tailored training programs to suit all age and skill levels;
- Access to qualified and experienced coaches;
- A competitive environment where all participants are able to perform to the best of their ability;
- Opportunity to further develop stroke development at a pace that the individual can perform to the best of their ability;
- Using swimming as part of a cross training program, highlighting high cardio workout with low impact, with other sports e.g. football, netball, triathletes, gymnastics, martial arts, cycling, dancing and water polo;
- Use of swimming programs in recovery and injury rehabilitation programs;
- Squad swimming for those who wish to further develop their endurance and stroke consistency – this does not mean they have to compete;
- Competition access at all levels – club, interclub, regional, district, inter district, state and national.
- Social environment promoting friendship, fun and fitness.



## School Connections

- Regular advertising by Clubs in local school newsletters, highlighting all that Clubs have to offer, with emphasis on the extension of the 'Learn to Swim' program and the importance of 'Swimming for Life'.
- Bring a Friend Days whereby current members of the club are encouraged to bring a friend (or three!) to try a swim club session on specific dates.
- Membership drives on Regional/ Inter-School Swimming Championships – this could be done by handing out flyers or setting up a Swim Club membership information tent. Where possible, both primary and secondary carnivals, private and public schools.
- Membership drives on school sport carnivals – this could be done by handing out flyers or setting up a Swim Club membership information tent. Where possible, both primary and secondary carnivals, private and public schools.
- Come and Try days on specific allocated days – advertising via school newsletters, local
- Parent Information Sessions run by Qualified Coaches so the information on 'Swimming for Life' can be imparted.
- School holiday carnival relay competitions.
  - Promotion during the school term, encouraging 'friends' to join together to compete in the school holiday program.
  - This is where groups of four 'friends' can compete in a relay type competition.
  - There would be lots of 'fun' style events as well as the standard stroke races.
  - The host Club could undertake membership drives.
  - Parent information sessions should be run outlining the additional benefits, which can be achieved via participation in a structured training and development program.

## Football/ Netball Clubs

- There are over 30 football/ netball clubs located within the District in the following Leagues:
  - Ovens & Murray
  - Ovens/ King
  - Tallangatta
  - Hume & Murray
- Information on all the clubs and contact details may be found on <http://www.omfnl.com.au>.
- As winter sports, preseason usually commences late in the year, early summer; usually two – three training sessions are held per week during this time.
- The pitch/ sell would be that one could be allocated to swimming training with focus on cardio vascular training, low impact training, injury rehabilitation.
- Structured sessions to be incorporated into their preseason training programs over the summer months. This could be done in squads, around the training programs of the development squads or incorporated into these squad trainings.
- Provide a program opportunity to work with the Sports Science Staff & Coaches from the clubs to for an alliance to provide injury rehabilitation and additional training opportunities for those footballers/ netballers who would like to add it to their current training program.
- Options –
  - Alternate training days e.g. netballers on Tuesdays and Footballers on Thursdays.
  - A set day for the footballer/ netballers' train with the Club group.
  - Specialist sessions with a club appointed coach once per month.
  - Individual participants join development squads to train with which are suited to their ability level.
- Football/ Netball Interclub Competition
  - Invite these clubs within the District to participate in an Interclub type relay competition.

- A variety of relay races could be arranged including several 'fun' type races.
- In these Interclub competitions, OMDSA would assist with providing officials, however the host club would be required to assist with the coordination and running of the meet.
- The Club would take the opportunity to market themselves and commit to a membership drive during these events.

### **Triathlon, Martial Arts, Dancing & Water Polo Clubs**

- Offer structured and tailored programs for the additional training requirements for the swim component of these disciplines.
- Clubs could offer specialist sessions on particular training and off-season fitness maintenance programs.
- Interclub Relay Competitions (e.g. triathlon clubs in the area v each other) – as outlined for Football/ Netball Clubs – interclub competitions to encourage the social side of swimming and competition with a fitness component.

## Learn to Swim – Private Business' & Leisure Centre Programs

- It's imperative that Clubs build a strong relationship with those Private and Public Learn to Swim (LTS) programs based in their local area;
- Cross promotion, where possible, advertising LTS programs and highlighting the benefits of the programs available within Swim Clubs.
- Flyers should be distributed to those who are nearly completing their learn to swim programs to outline the next step available in the sport.
- By working with the LTS program groups, hold parent information sessions to encourage their understanding of the importance of swimming in life and highlight the additional social benefits of structured swimming programs post LTS.
- It is important to include a pathway diagram in the information to show the way to becoming a future Olympian – for children this is a very exciting draw card.
- Descriptions such as 'development squad training is designed to provide a smooth transition from learn to swim and prepare the swimmer for competitive swimming' should be used to give parents a better understanding of what the Club is offering as an extension to the LTS program.

## Gym Partnerships

- Clubs are encouraged to form partnerships with local gyms, in particular those who are co-located within the pool facility they use.
- Promotional activities could include:
  - Partnering with the personal trainers to incorporate a swim session via the Club into their training program with their clients;
  - Partnering with the gyms to offer swim coaching as part of their gym programs offered to clients;
  - Incorporating a swim session into cross fit programs offered within the gym;
  - Partnering with the gym and offering a 'swim' training membership with annual gym membership;
- Active membership drives by having a Come and Try swim training session (or three) for gym members only;
- Setting up an information table within gyms during their highest traffic days and times for a week.

## Social Media

- The use of social media these days is increasing all the time. For those aged between 18-65 the highest used social media platform is Facebook at around 73%, followed by Twitter and Instagram.
- OMDSA has 100 followers and all the Clubs within the District has over 1000 followers.
- A no cost way to actively publicise all promotions and provide regular updates on all facets of swimming and Clubs.
- Actively use Facebook to post all flyers and promotions regularly to not only Club pages but the District page as well.
- Post membership drive flyers to Club training venue pages – the training facilities that the Clubs use within the District have over 2000 followers – these will not just be swimmers! Actively promote your club by posting to their pages! You never know who may just look up swimming in your area!

## Recommendations

- All membership drives should be done at Club level with OMDSA providing support as required;
- Only 1-2 major membership drives should be done per year, this ensures all focus is done on these drives and volunteers are not over committed;
- After all membership drives, a post promotion report should be prepared, not only to report on any new members but also include a SWOT analysis and recommendations for future promotions.
- Any promotional plan should be part of an overall Strategic Plan for OMDSA and at Club level.

## Sample Flyers



# BRING A FRIEND

FREE FOR FRIENDS!

Swimming & swim training is so much more fun with friends !

GIRLS – xxx {Date}

BOYS – xxx {Date}

XXX Swim Club invites you to bring a friend (or two) to see what you do and participate in one of your training sessions.

Information session will be held for parent, with a FREE BBQ after

## Xxx Swim Club

Contact Details and Pool Address



# IT'S MORE THAN JUST SWIMMING

First 3 sessions FREE!

It's not all about having fun; there are other great reasons to get your child swimming!

- It keeps your child's heart and lungs healthy, improves strength and flexibility, increases stamina and even improves balance and posture.
- Your child will have plenty of opportunities to make friends and grow in confidence.
- Swimming opens the door to other sports and activities, including: swimming with dolphins, scuba diving, rowing and sailing and even becoming the next Olympic or Paralympic champion!
- It's a skill that once learnt is rarely forgotten and provides challenges – there are even swimming events for those aged over 100.
- You can't always be there. It may save their life one day.

## Xxx Swim Club

Contact Details and Pool Address





# Come & Try

## First 3 sessions FREE!

### **9 Good reasons to ADD swim training to your gym program ...**

1. Heart Helper - swimming provides unparalleled cardiovascular conditioning
2. Balance your build – Swimming builds longer, leaner muscles that compliment the shorter denser muscles that develop from weight training;
3. Cross-training – swimming not only boosts cardiovascular capacity while increasing muscle strength but it also gives your body a break from higher impact activities;
4. Increased flexibility – A heated pool relaxes muscles, increasing flexibility and enabling important stretching;
5. Strengthen your core – Swimming develops core body strength as it utilizes all the body's muscles simultaneously;
6. Endurance – Swimmers are able to swim longer than what they could sustain doing other activities;
7. Adventure – Swimming provides the opportunity to train in and outside, all year round;
8. Social Outlet – Meet new like minded people, with peer motivation and professional coaching; and
9. Weight loss – Consistently swimming strenuously assists with elevating the heart rate and burning calories!

## Xxx Swim Club

Contact Details and Pool Address