

*Improving the lives of women and girls
 through programs leading to social
 and economic empowerment.*

## Soroptimist International of the Americas

**Baby Boomers: Communicating and Marketing Soroptimist**

Worldwide, Baby Boomers—those born between 1946-1964—number 450 million! The sheer size of this group makes them an ideal target market for Soroptimist. Because Baby Boomers want to be involved in community projects, are goal oriented, enjoy team building and working collaboratively, Soroptimist could be a great fit for them.

Baby Boomers are very demanding consumers—they are the first generation to grow up with multi-media marketing and they want to be associated with a winning brand. Our brand reflects everything associated with Soroptimist, from its members and leadership to our mission and core values. Since our programs are one of the primarily ways we define and maintain our brand, clubs should participate in our signature Dream Programs. The Live Your Dream Award and Dream It Be It are a true testament to what Soroptimist stands for and what it strives to do: empower women and girls. Our clubs are another reflection on our brand, therefore, it’s essential for clubs to maintain a healthy atmosphere and truly reflect we who are: women at their best, helping other women to be their best.

Check out these other tips to communicate and market Soroptimist successfully to Baby Boomers:

Before marketing to new members, it is important for a club to gauge its attractiveness to prospects by performing an assessment, or “health check.” Just as we sometimes take our own health for granted, clubs also tend to take their health for granted. An assessment can provide invaluable insights into a club’s health by identifying strengths and weaknesses—and opportunities for improvement. A sample club assessment is available in the membership section of the members area of www.soroptimist.org.\*

Direct mail and face-to-face/in-person interaction are the preferred methods of communicating with this group. However, after making initial contact, the phone is a great way to connect and follow-up with Baby Boomers, as they value the “human connection.”

Although this generation once said “don’t trust anyone over 30,” now that they are beyond that age, they do not want to be called or considered “old” or “elderly.” Baby Boomers do not necessarily want to be young, but want to be thought of as youthful.

Clubs will need to be flexible in order to appeal to Baby Boomers. Soroptimist may be one of many activities Baby Boomers will make time for in their lives. Make reasonable adjustments so they can participate in your club.

Baby Boomers are known as knowledge seekers, and more and more are online every day. That means they are searching to find out more about Soroptimist and your local club. Make sure your club’s website is up-to-date and visually pleasing. Need to modernize your website or create one? Try using the Website Templates for Clubs available at www.soroptimist.org.\*

Facebook is the social media of choice for Baby Boomers. 70% of online Baby Boomers have a Facebook account! Create and regularly post to your club’s Facebook page. In need of content? “Share” posts from SIA and LiveYourDream.org’s Facebook pages. Information, interesting facts, photographs, and videos relevant to Soroptimist and our mission are posted daily.

Is someone checking your club’s email address? This is another vital link between your club and prospective members. With approximately 1,800 visits to our website every day, it’s important that the prospective Baby Boomers have a way to connect with your club at the local level. After the in-person interaction and telephone, email is another way Baby Boomers will use to connect with your club. Instructions for accessing and using the club email are available at www.soroptimist.org.\*

Values are important to Boomers. It’s what they want when they join, keeps them coming back, and is the “what’s in it for me” piece of the puzzle. Baby Boomers look for personal value in their commitments so it’s important to show the value of membership! Potential Baby Boomer members have told us their top value is friendship and fellowship—so make sure members are committed to a friendly, warm and welcoming environment that reflects the spirit of Soroptimist.

Other top values in order of importance for this group were networking, being with other like-minded women, personal connection to the mission, and volunteer opportunities. Show these values by:

* Turning your “recruitment” events into “networking” opportunities.
* Honoring a woman with a Live Your Dream Award.
* Participating in Dream It Be It.
* Inviting prospects to join in hands-on projects and events.

Be prepared to answer questions—Baby Boomers aren’t afraid to ask and make inquiries before making a commitment. Craft messages that show prospective members how they can benefit from belonging to a specific club—utilize the top values noted previously. Believe in what you’re “selling” and be enthusiastic when conveying your club’s value proposition because people want to be part of a dynamic group.

Baby Boomers have told us the number one reason they are interested in joining Soroptimist is to help improve the lives of women and girls. Again, it’s important to showcase how your club does that—through the Live Your Dream Awards, Dream It Be It, and other women- and girl- focused projects your club participates in within the community.

Other top reasons Boomers stated for wanting to join (in order of importance): to provide education opportunities for women (Live Your Dream Awards!), to meet people in their community, to mentor girls (Dream It, Be It!) and to participate in trafficking awareness. In your messaging, emphasize how your club addresses these issues.

Potential Soroptimist Baby Boomer members who inquired about joining but did not do so said the number one reason why was because no one from the club ever contacted them after they initially expressed interest. This is an easy fix! Simply follow-up on all leads—give a call or send an email to potential Baby Boomer members. Give them a day or two to respond if you need to leave a message—but follow-up again. Let them know they are important from day one by demonstrating you are interested in telling them more about Soroptimist and having them join! Quality and customer service are very important to Baby Boomers.

Posting information in print publications (newspapers, community newsletters, etc.) is an effective way to reach Baby Boomers. Flyers and brochures are additional print material tools you can use to recruit Baby Boomers. Drop them off at places like libraries and doctor’s offices. Find flyers and the Soroptimist club brochure at www.soroptimist.org.\*

Volunteering for Baby Boomers is a way to spend their time doing what they want and when they want. It’s a chance to utilize and apply their skills while also giving in to interests they may not have had the time to pursue previously. Baby Boomers want to stay active and don’t necessarily want to join to passively sit in weekly meetings. Use the Capacity Inventory resource available at www.soroptimist.org\* to find out a potential member’s skills and interests. Then you can direct her to committees and projects she’ll enjoy, and introduce her to members that may be able to train her or learn something new from her!

Target such places as 55+ living communities for potential members—or even charter a new club in that community’s neighborhood. As they age, Baby Boomers anticipate remaining busy and having a lively retirement. Also, connect with groups like the local chapter of the Red Hat Society or AARP to find active Baby Boomers to join or participant in mutually beneficial programs or projects.

Teamwork appeals to Baby Boomers so show how members collaborate with each other and other community groups to make changes locally and globally. Consider adding a short teambuilding exercise to your meetings to build and demonstrate camaraderie to current and potential Baby Boomer members.

Baby Boomers like to be coaches and mentors—sharing their life experiences makes them an asset to your club. Coordinating a Dream It Be It program, for instance, is an excellent way to engage both current and potential Baby Boomer members.

Use LiveYourDream.org to appeal to Baby Boomers and engage them in Soroptimist. The “Your Dream” section offers featured blog posts, words of wisdom, quick tips and fun quotes for personal growth and inspiration. These resources appeal to their thirst for knowledge and personal fulfillment. Also make sure to ask potentials to sign up at LiveYourDream.org regardless of whether they become Soroptimist members. Being a LYD.org supporter will keep them connected to the SIA mission.

Finally, take note of the following examples of marketing messages that appeal to Baby Boomer audiences:

* “Life is a continuing journey with never-ending opportunities to learn, give and grow.”
* “Everyone has something to offer. How can you put your skills to work?”
* “Everyone needs to be needed. We need you.”
* “Your experience, wisdom and talent are needed and valued.”
* “We can help you find an outlet for your skills and experiences ”

(Wilson & Steele, 2002).

**\*Need help finding the resources on www.soroptimist.org? Contact headquarters at siahq@soroptimist.org or call 215-893-9000.**

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