Blooming in the DESERT | American Public Gardens Association
DEVELOPMENT & MEMBERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

Unlocking the Power Membership Planning: Charting a Path to a Sustainable Future

Mira Zergani
Director of Development
Morris Arboretum & Gardens

Morris Arboretum & Gardens
University of Pennsylvania

Rosie Siemer
Founder + CEO
FIVESEED

FIVESEED

Project Goals

- Assess the membership program and determine benchmarks
- Evaluate gaps and opportunities
- Gain a deeper understanding of how and why members join
- Develop a new membership structure that achieves the Arboretum's objectives for growth and increased efficiency

Steps to Building a Data-driven Membership Program

1. Questions	Determine the key questions we want to answer
2. Purpose	Define the purpose(s) of membership
3. Audit	Assess the membership program
4. Benchmarking	Establish benchmarks for performance
5. Analysis	Explore the membership journey and uncover trends in membership data
6. Survey	Understand audience perceptions, interests, and preferences
7. Forecasting	Measure price sensitivity and prepare sales and revenue projections

STEP 1: Questions

Determine the questions you want to answer

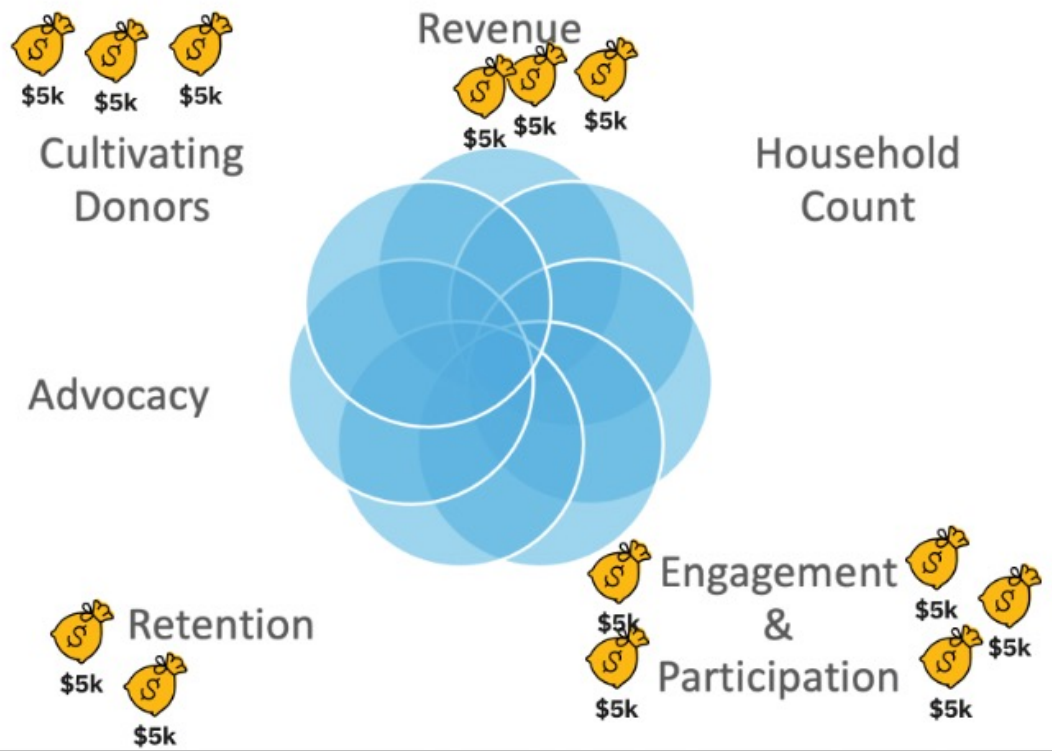
KEY QUESTIONS UNDER ANALYSIS

What are our gaps and opportunities, including benchmarks for performance?	Which benefits do members members value and use most?	How can we improve member retention?	How and why do members join and renew?
On average, how long does it take for a member to make an extra donation?	How can we attract high quality members?	Do members upgrade in an expected way?	What is the cost and profitability of membership?

STEP 2: Purpose

Define the purpose(s) of membership

What is the BIG goal of membership?

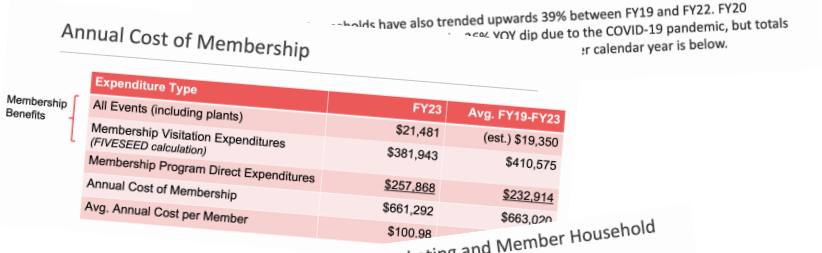


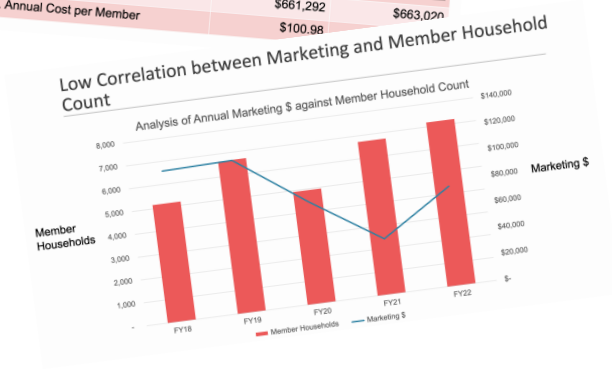
STEP 3: Audit

Assess the membership program

Assessing the Membership Program

- Cost and Profitability
- Budgeting and Staffing
- Acquisition and Lapsed Recapture Strategies
- Renewal Processes and Retention Strategies
- The Member Experience
- Marketing Collateral and Communications
- Fulfillment Processes
- Member Servicing
- Database, Systems, and Reporting





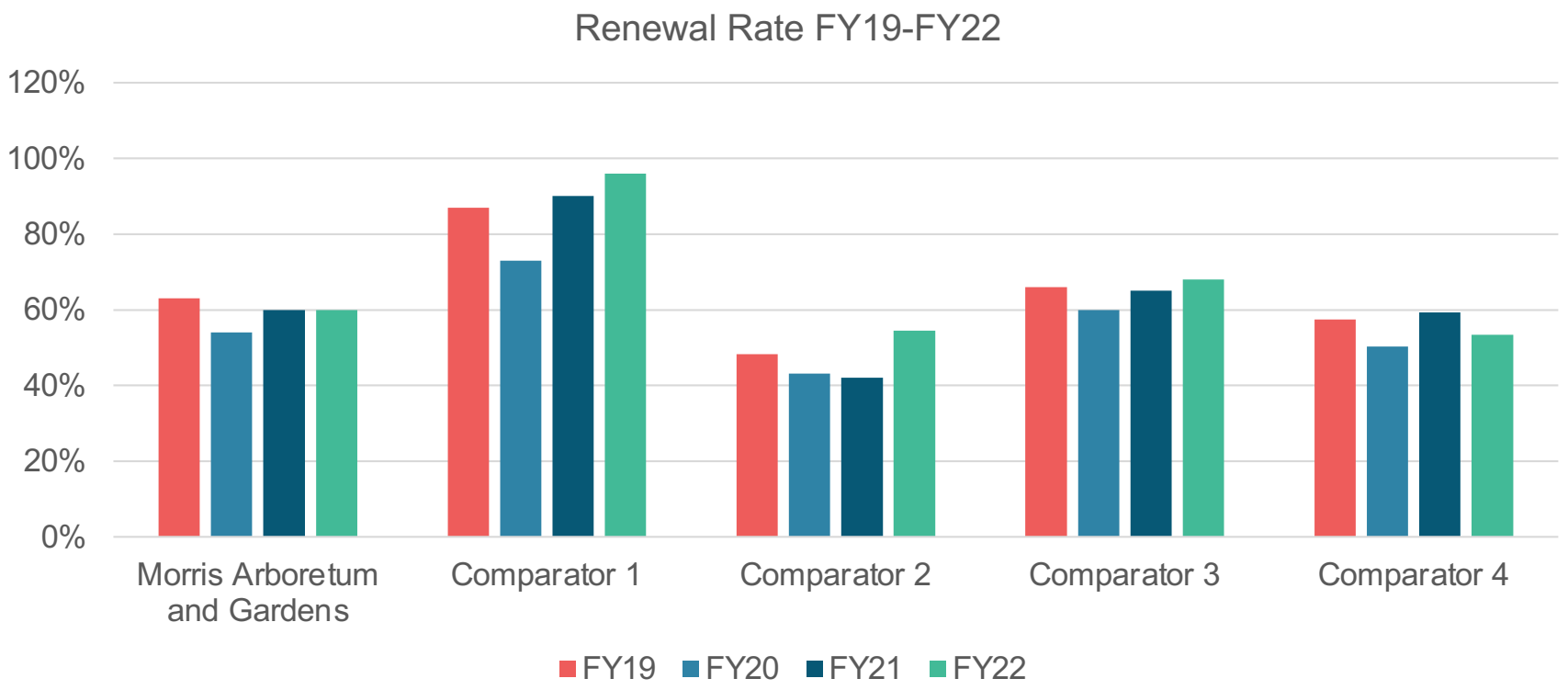
Profitability of Membership

	FY23	Avg. FY19-FY23
Annual Membership Revenue	$748,804	$685,382
Annual Cost of Membership	($661,292)	($663,020)
“Profit” or “(Loss)” of Membership Program	$87,512	$22,362
Member Household Count	*6,549*	*6,414*
Annual Revenue per Member	$114.34	$106.86
Annual Cost per Member	($100.98)	($103.37)
“Profit” or “(Loss)” per Member	**$13.36**	$3.49

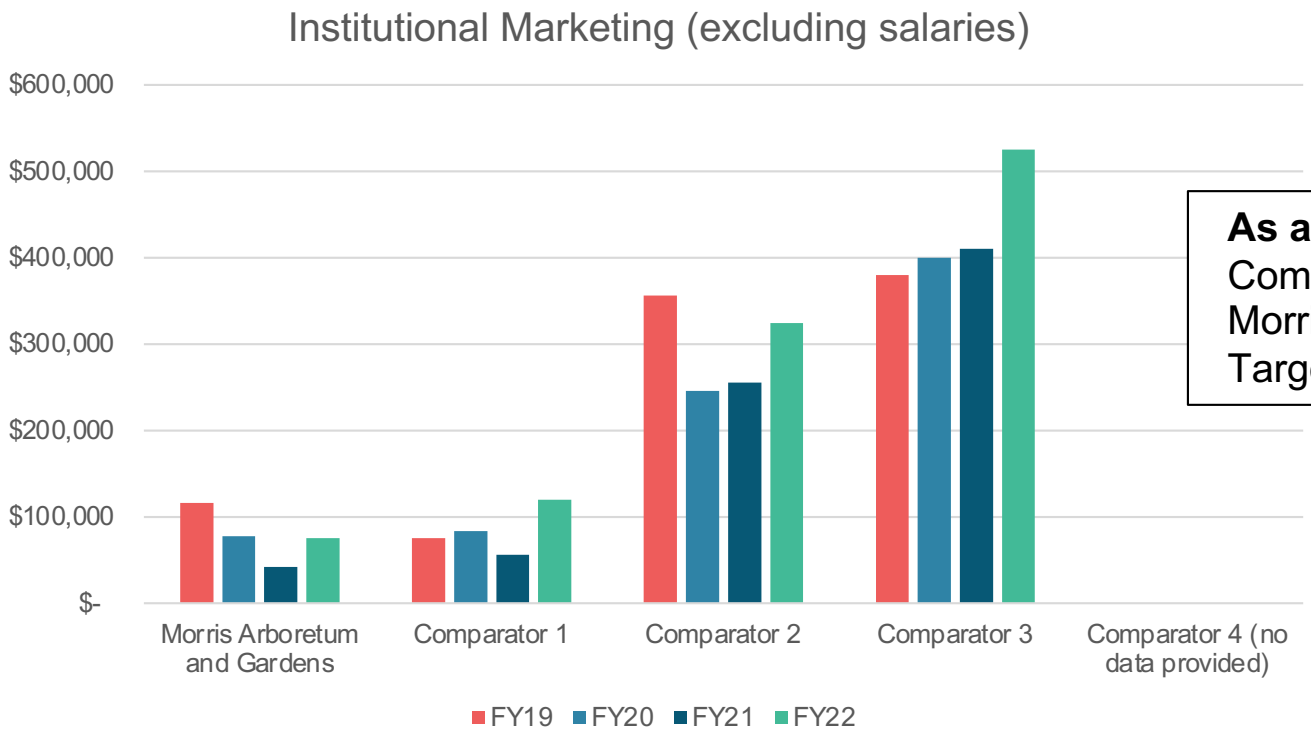
STEP 4: Benchmarking

Establish benchmarks for performance

Comparator Benchmarking

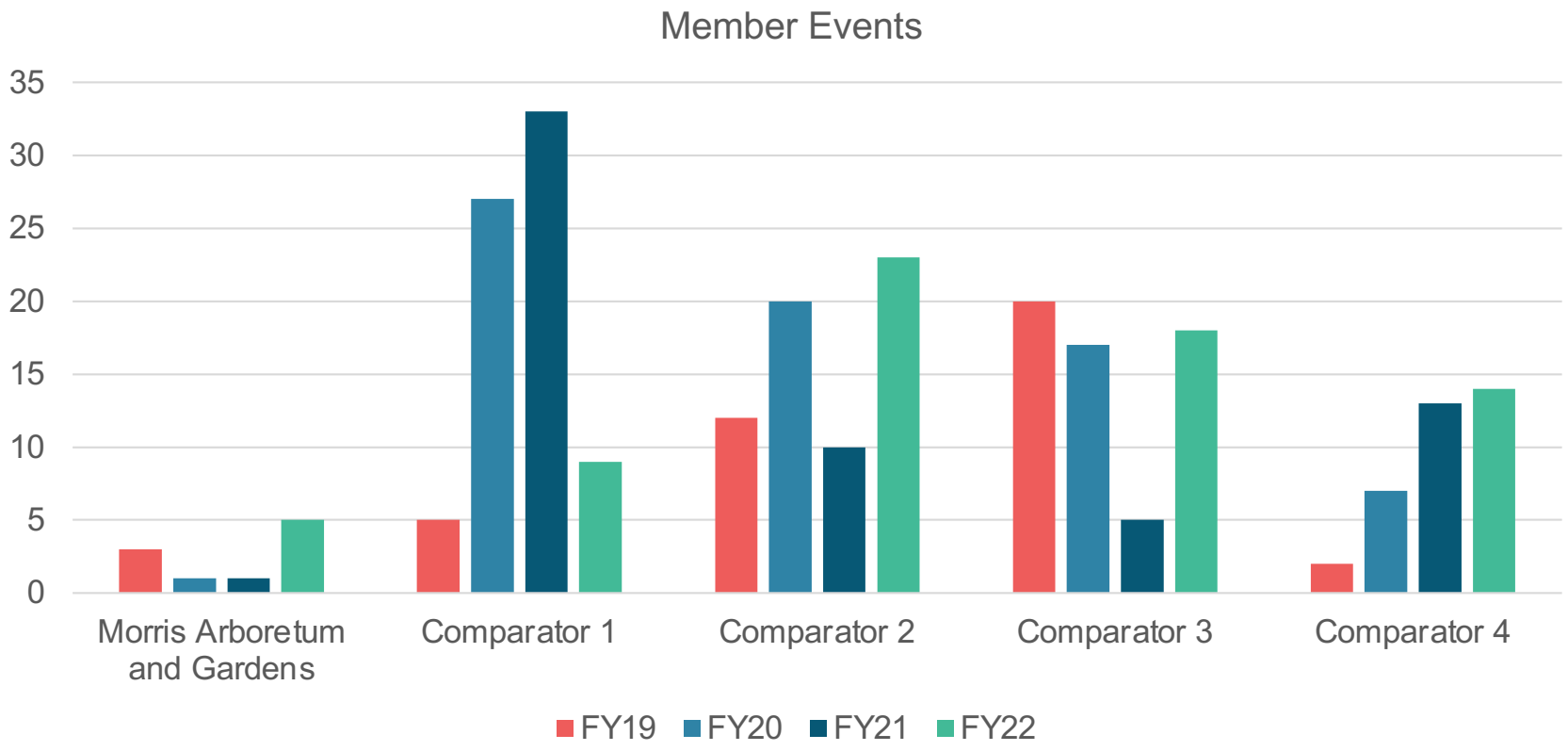


Comparator Benchmarking

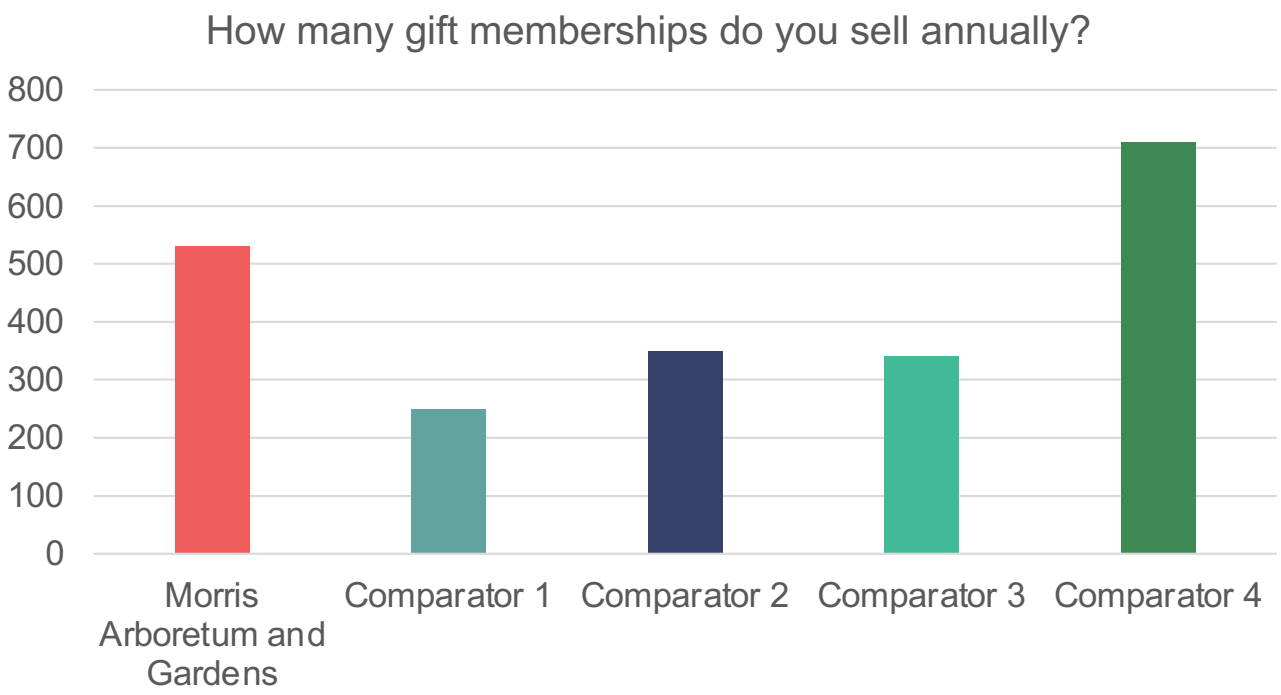


As a % of Earned Revenues
Comparators: 5-7%
Morris: 4%
Target: 12.5%

Comparator Benchmarking



Gift Membership Sales



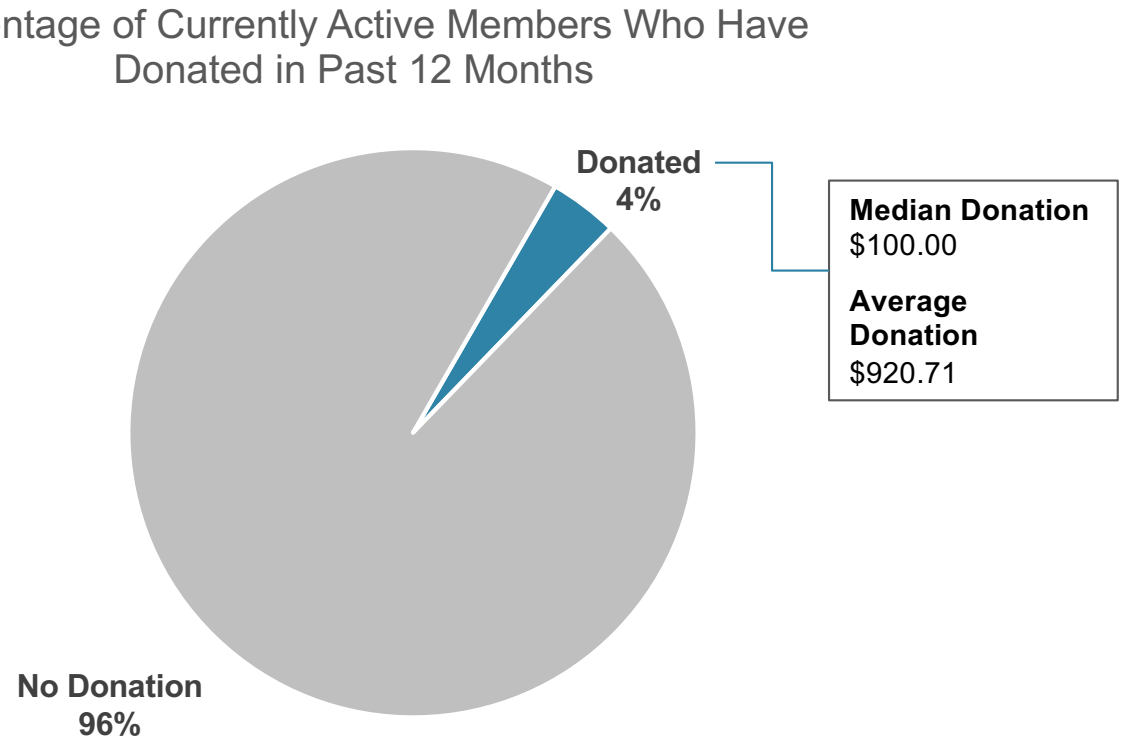
Morris: 7.5%
Industry benchmark: 5%

STEP 5: Analysis

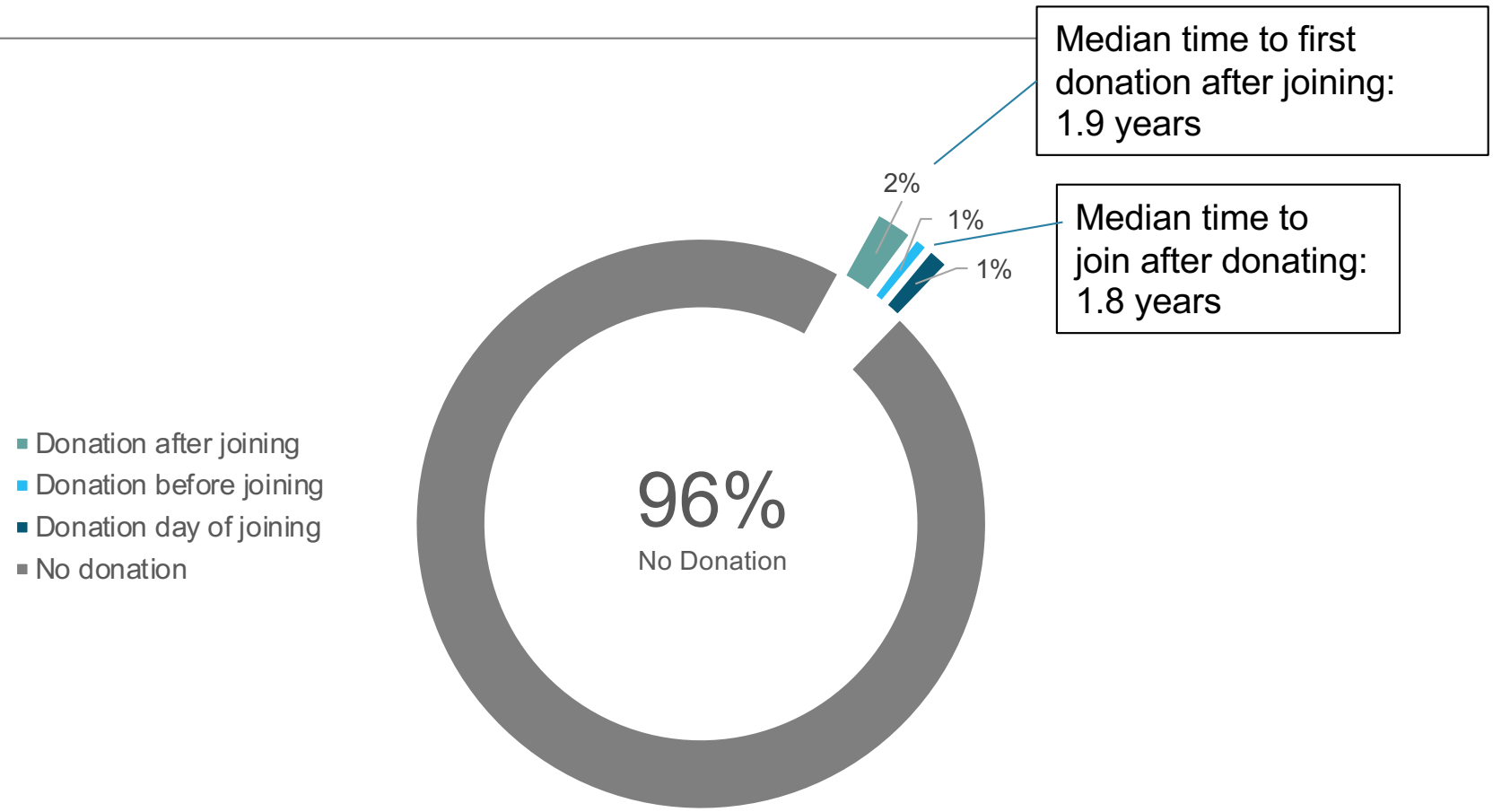
Explore the membership journey and uncover trends in membership data

Percentage Of Current Members Who Donate

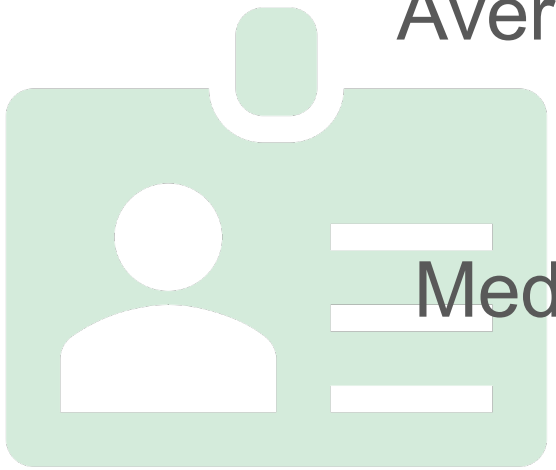
Just 4% of active members have donated in the past 12 months



Donation In Relationship To Join Date



Average Membership Tenure



Average membership tenure:

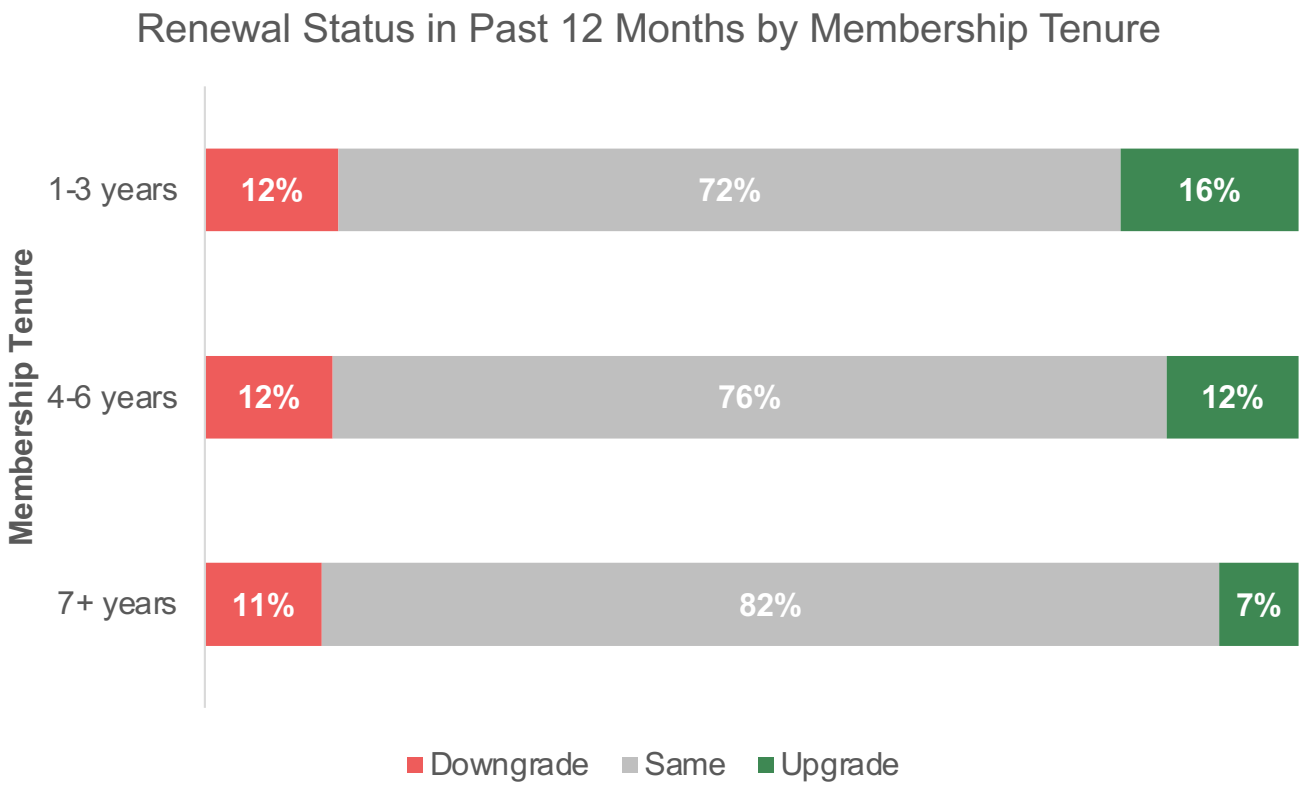
8.8 years

Median membership tenure:

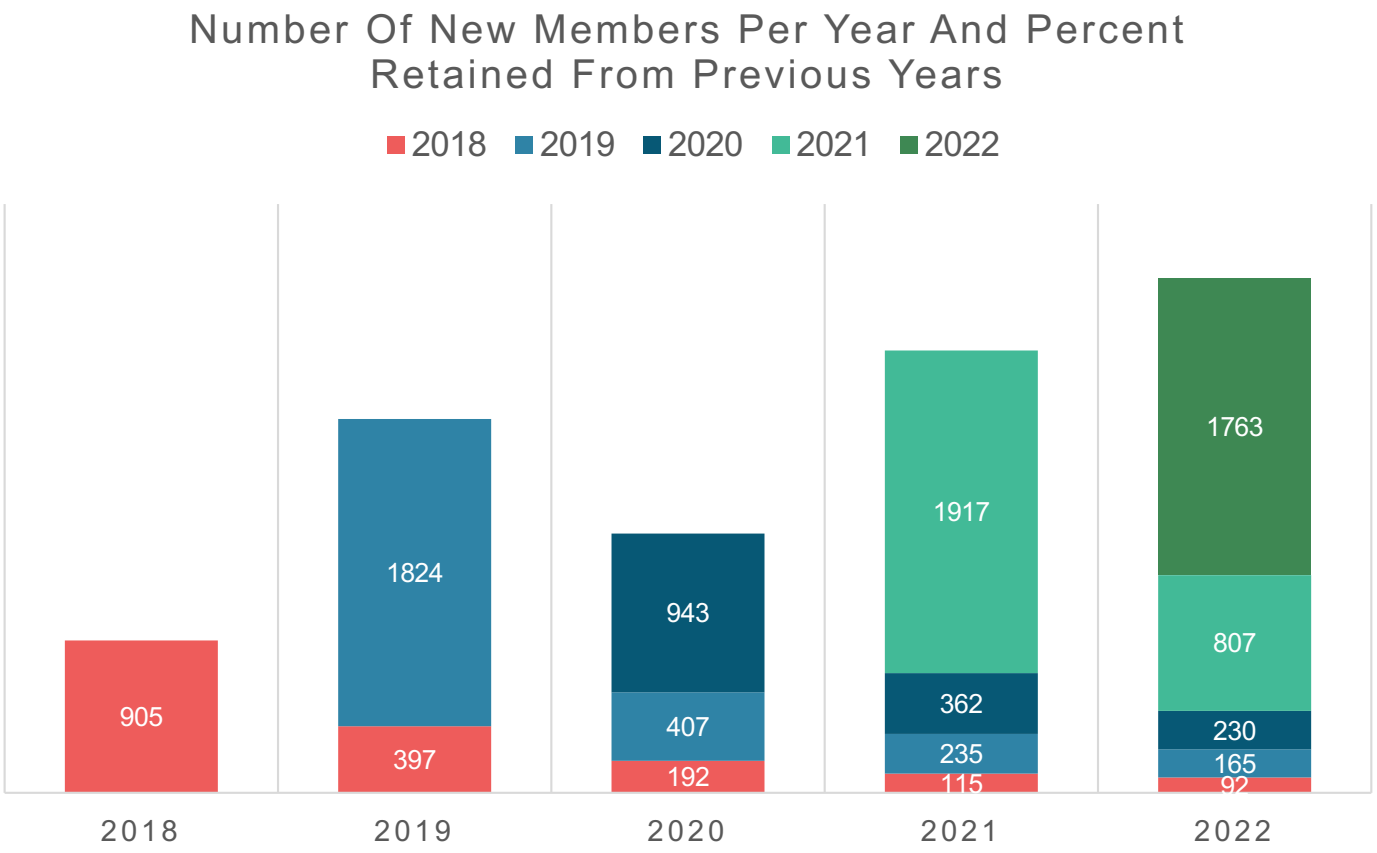
4.9 years

Likelihood to Upgrade

Members within 1-3 years were the most likely to upgrade.



Member Retention

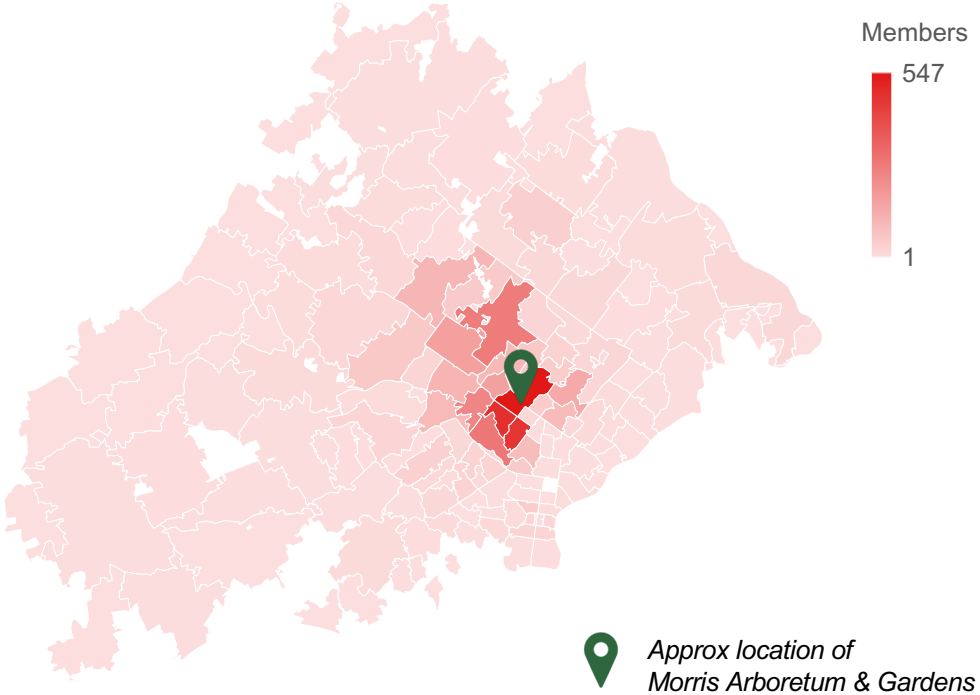


Of those who joined in 2018 (905), 10% were still members in 2022

Member Geographic Range

- 96% of all current members lived in Pennsylvania.
- 94% of all current members resided in the Philadelphia Metro Area.
- The map on the right plots the density of membership counts across the Philadelphia Metro Area. The darker zip codes indicate a greater number of current members.

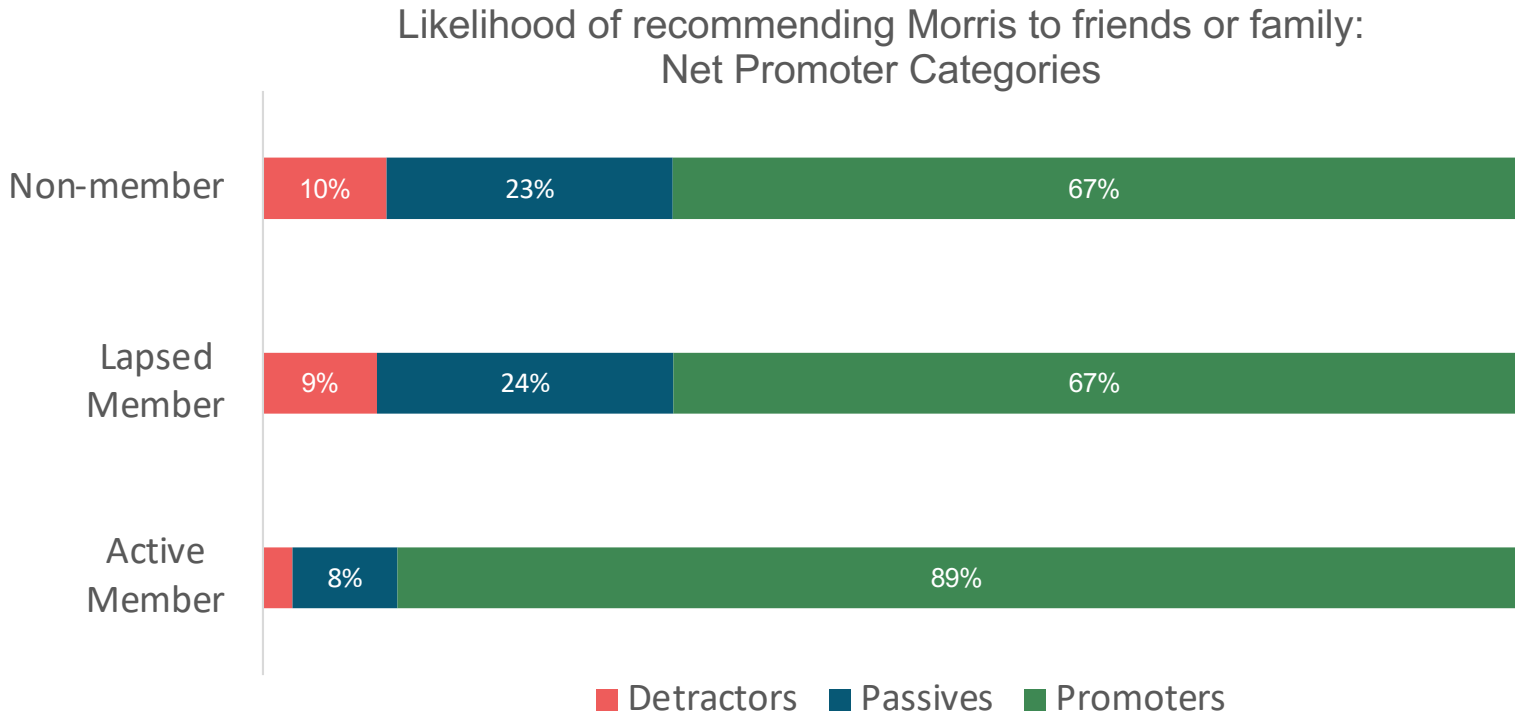
Current Member Counts in Philadelphia Metro Area*



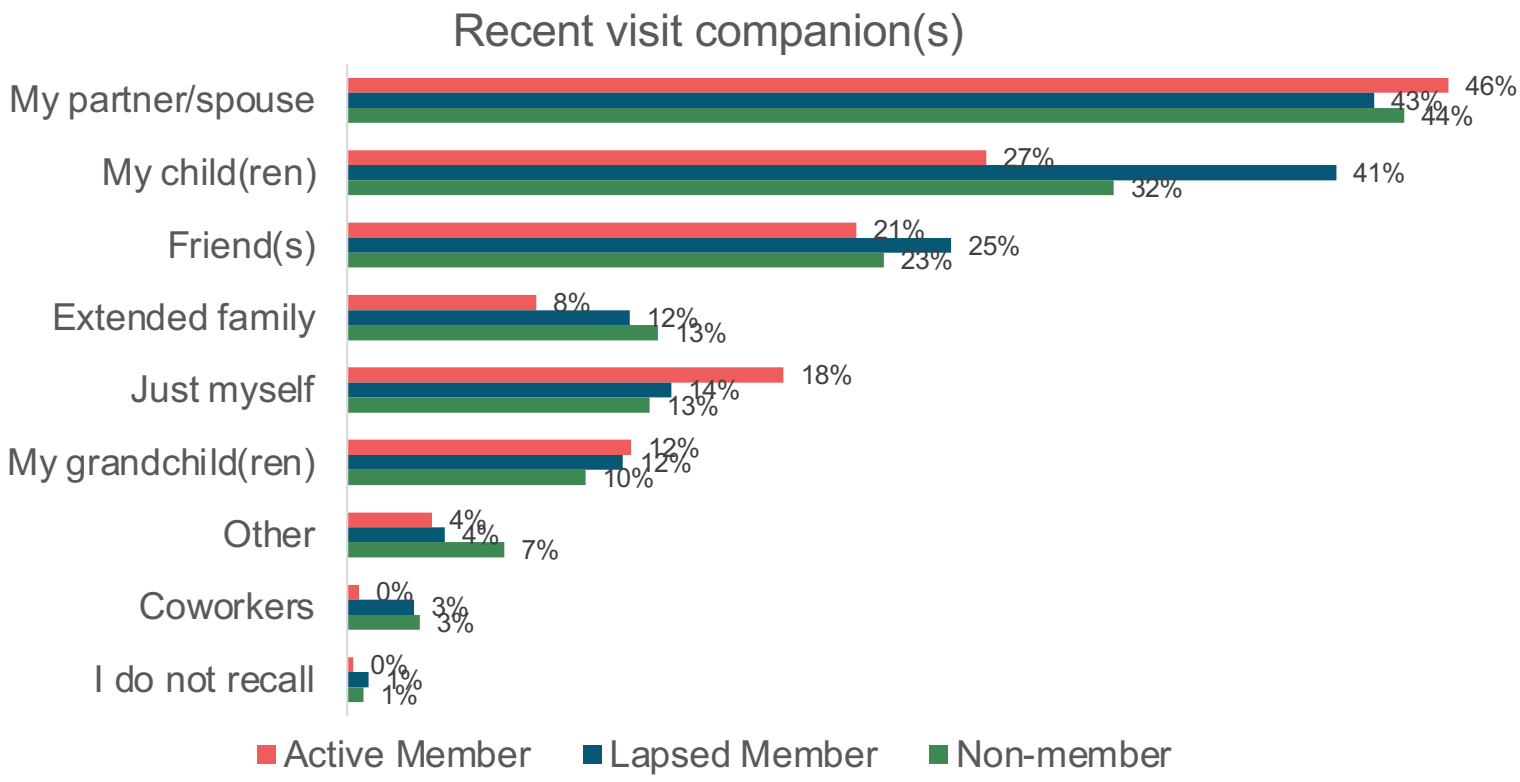
STEP 6: Survey

Understand audience perceptions, interests, and preferences

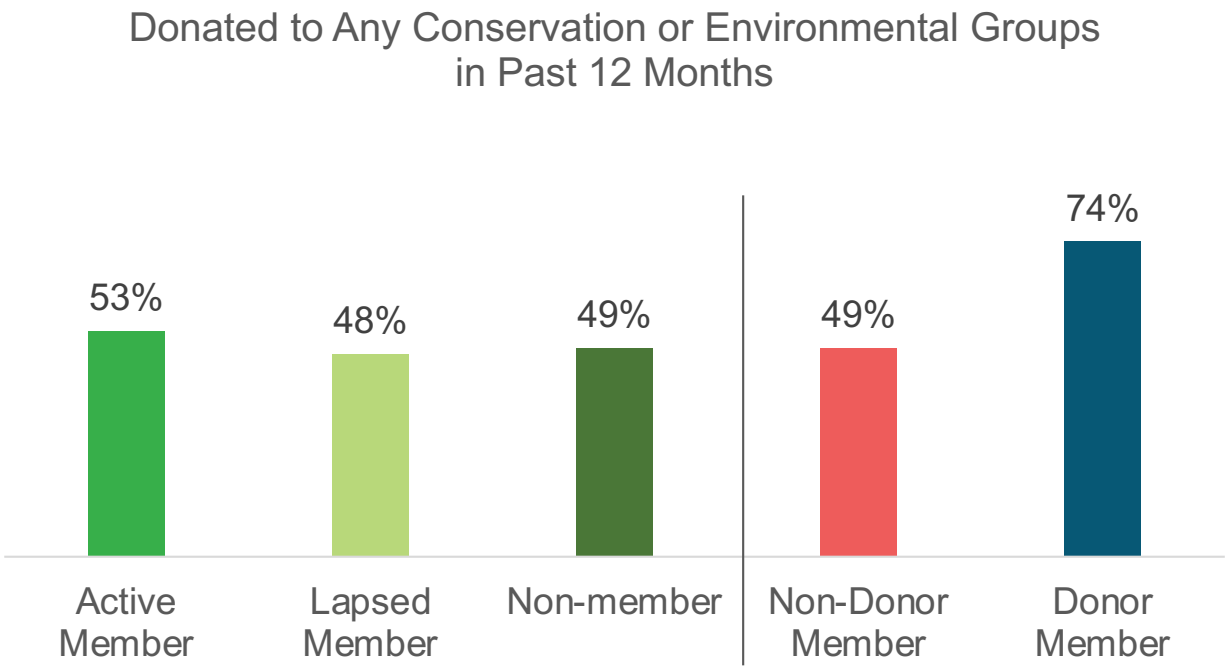
Most Visitors Would Recommend Morris To Friends Or Family



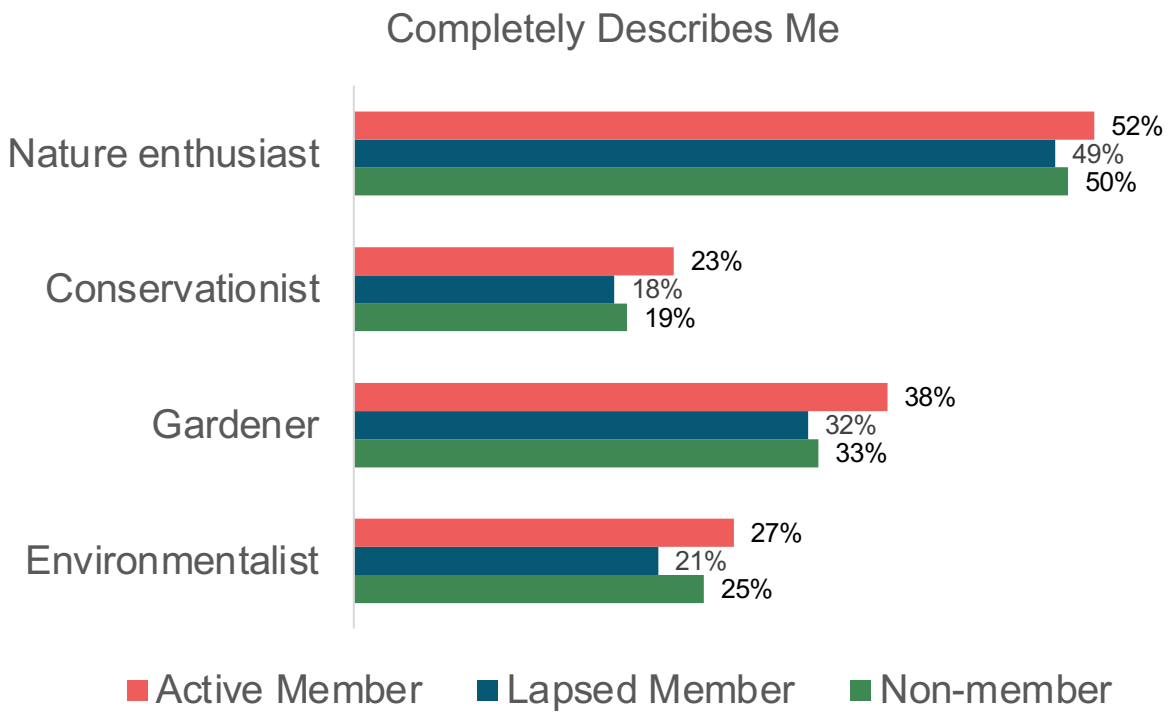
People Most Often Visit With A Partner/Spouse and/or Children



About Half Of Audiences Have Donated To Conservation Or Environmental Groups

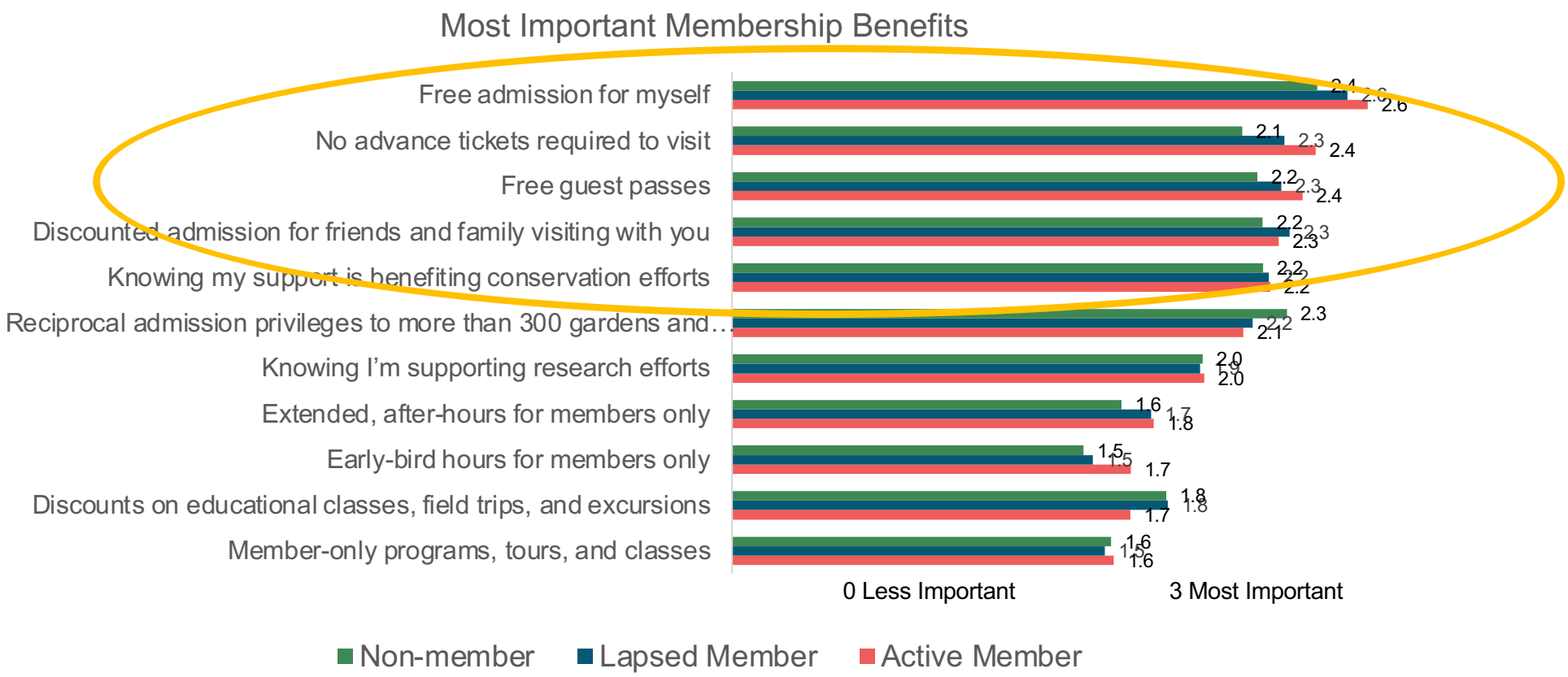


Most Active Members and Non-members Describe Themselves As Nature Enthusiasts



Active members who were more likely to renew their membership were also more likely to identify as all of the tested identities, especially gardener and conservationist.

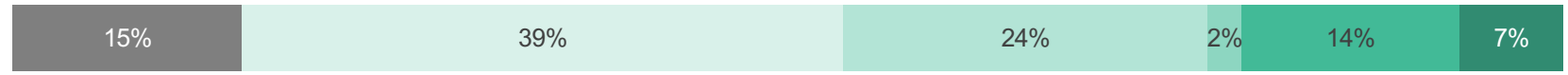
Visitation Benefits Are Seen As The Top Benefits Of Membership



The Member Continuum At Morris

Members on this side of the continuum are using their membership more as a vehicle to visit frequently.

Members on this side of the continuum are using their membership more to support the mission.

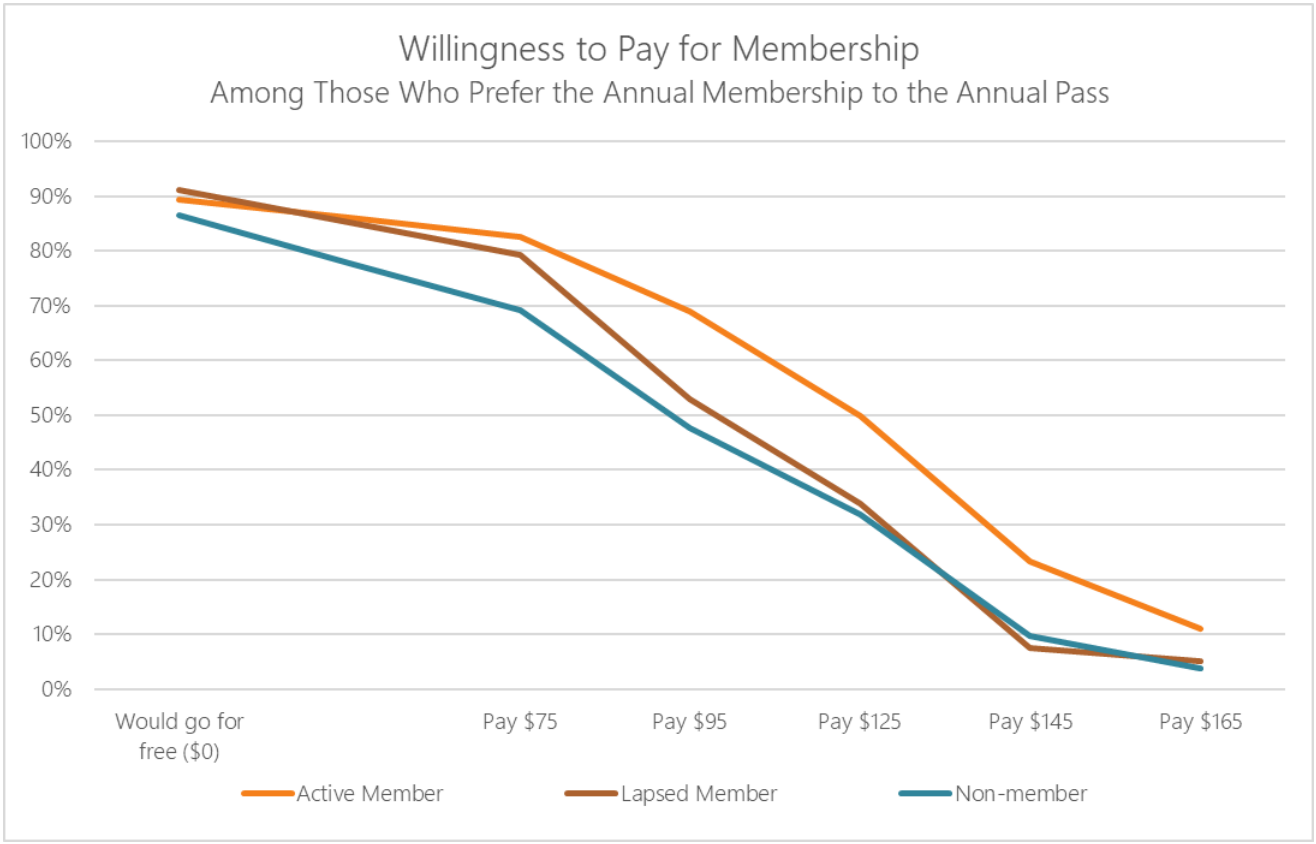


- Member of < 1 year
- Just member of >1 year
- Just member of >1 year who supports mission
- Just member of >1 year who supports mission and mission support is motivating
- Just member of >1 year who supports mission, mission support is motivating, and is likely to renew
- Just member of >1 year who supports mission, mission support is motivating, is likely to renew, and donates

STEP 7: Forecasting

Measure price sensitivity and prepare sales and revenue projections

Active Members Are Less Price Sensitive



Critical Factors for Success

Requirements for Successful Planning

Reporting/Data

Research

Buy In

Stakeholder Input

Outside Consultant

Time

Champion

Thank You!

Mira Zergani
Director of Development
Morris Arboretum & Gardens
mzergani@upenn.edu

Rosie Siemer
Founder + CEO
FIVESEED
rosie@fiveseed.com

Blooming in the DESERT | American Public Gardens Association
DEVELOPMENT & MEMBERSHIP SYMPOSIUM