



## Clean Air Partners

### Proposed Membership Strategy for FY08

#### Overview

More than 600 businesses, organizations and employers throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore regions have supported Clean Air Partners.

As we put together a strategy to drive membership it is important to frame our expectations. With Clean Air Partners' current membership structure, it is unrealistic to rely on membership revenue as a main or even significant source of funding. However, membership can play a very strategic and significant role in helping Clean Air Partners meet its objectives. Clean Air Partners can look at membership as an opportunity to:

- Act as an introduction and relationship-building tool with organizations
- Experience the organization prior to elevating their relationship (such as sponsorships)
- Network and generate leads to other organizations and potential members/sponsors
- Reclaim the hard costs for the materials that go out to each member through membership
- Increase awareness and impact for initiatives such as the Air Quality Forecast, there-by generating larger and more meaningful impacts
- Increase the number of Clean Air Partners' advocates
- Give testimony to the significant number of individuals and organizations who support the mission of Clean Air Partners
- Give testimony to the diverse constituency that endorses and supports the work of Clean Air Partners
- Provide training ground for new organization leadership

As we approach the year ahead it will be important for the organization to re-define the current membership structure while implementing new ideas and strategies to retain existing member organizations. We will also want to recruit and target new organizations to become members while making best use of our limited resources available for recruiting membership. This plan will contain four goals that will have direct and affective tactics for reaching them.

#### Membership Goals for FY08:

- 1) **Increase paid memberships for the Clean Air Partners program**
  - a. Define and develop meaningful membership levels and incentives
  - b. Create targeted outreach list by sector
  - c. Design and implement tactics and incentives for outreach by sector



d. Use incentives to motivate membership

**2) Both maintain existing and grow the number of new participants & organizations receiving the forecasts**

- a. Update current contacts on lists
- b. Implement a direct mail solicitation
- c. Create incentives for companies to distribute forecasts
- d. Include both the website and membership call to action in all media outreach and materials

**3) Extend and expand the participation of each existing member and participant**

- a. Establish new criteria for membership
- b. Provide better tools for implementation, enhance membership kits

**4) Make membership easy and turnkey for those who participate and those who implement**

- a. Revise and review current membership renewal process
- b. Enhance new website functionality to make membership enrollment convenient and easier to manage online
- c. Utilize the new branding and new Clean Air Partners' website for promoting membership

**5) Develop a long-range plan for revenue generation**

- a. Review other models from similar air quality organizations around the country
- b. Include all potential revenue sources for consideration
- c. Set long-term revenue goals and develop plans to achieve them
- d. Consider impacts on organizational structure
- e. Implement a feasibility study

**1) Increase paid memberships for the Clean Air Partners program**

**a) Define and develop meaningful membership levels and incentives:**

In 2004, Clean Air Partners conducted a survey of its membership. The goal of the survey was to gather information from participants regarding their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the Clean Air Partners program. In addition, the survey gathered information to help determine if the current membership fees of \$250 can be increased in order to generate additional revenues.

After further review of the current membership structure, the findings of the participant survey as well as our experience working with Clean Air Partners, PRR recommends refining the membership/participant structure.



Currently our membership consists of the following:

**Participant:** Group, individual or organization that is receiving the forecast but is not paying for membership. Some request materials, some do not; some are groups, some are not.

**Member:** Paid members at the \$250 level. Currently there is little to no difference between the different dollar amounts regarding value to the member and participant. Members receive the forecasts. Some (but not all) request the materials and convey forecasts to their employee base (via email or posters).

The challenge with this tactic is that we MUST keep the delivery of the forecast a free option for whoever wants to receive it. Delivery of the information is at the core of our mission. It is also important to arm as many people as we can with the information so that the organization can further its mission. This strategy addresses providing more value for those who are paying for membership, thereby increasing the value for those who are not paying to step up to a paying member.

#### **New Membership Option Levels & Incentives**

We propose that the new membership structure consist of three levels:

##### **Clean Air Partners Participant – NO COST:**

This is an individual, organization or business that would like to simply receive the Air Quality forecast notifications:

- Air Quality forecast notifications
- Air Quality Action Guide (AQAG) to implement action steps for program within their place of work or home

This is the only responsibility we have to this level of participation.

##### **Clean Air Partners Non-Profit Member \$100**

This is only for non-profit organizations with less than 100 employees. Non-profit members will receive:

- Air Quality forecast notifications
- AQAG to implement action steps for program within their place of work or home
- Organization's name and hyperlink on Clean Air Partner's website
- Membership Kit which includes:
  - Welcome Letter from Executive Director outlining criteria for membership and benefits to being a member of Clean Air Partners
  - Membership enrollment form
  - Time to Renew postcard
  - Banner Ads with the new Clean Air Partner's logo and tagline
- Copy of Clean Air Partners' Brand Guidelines



- Template media materials including: pre-written media release that promotes the organization's partnership with Clean Air Partners, fact sheets on air quality and template newsletter article

### **Clean Air Partners Member \$250:**

A Clean Air Partners Member will receive:

- Air Quality forecast notifications
- AQAG to implement action steps for program within their place of work or home
- Membership Kit which includes:
  - Welcome Letter from Executive Director outlining criteria for membership and benefits to being a member of Clean Air Partners
  - Membership enrollment form and Time to Renew postcard
  - Copy of Clean Air Partners' Brand Guidelines
  - Banner Ads with the new Clean Air Partner's logo and tagline
  - Revised Clean Air Partners brochures and brochure rack(s) for displaying (we will want to include value of brochures and racks to members)
  - Template media materials including: pre-written media release that promotes the organization's partnership with Clean Air Partners, fact sheets on air quality and template newsletter
  - Lobby signs and posters featuring the AQAG for members to display throughout their organization lobby or break room
  - An "end of season" survey form to be returned at the end of summer
- Access to a "members only" section of the Clean Air Partners' website that will house materials that the organization can use to integrate the program into their place of work. Items could include:
  - Newsletter articles
  - Order form for lobby signs and posters featuring the AQAG
  - Template media kit materials (including press release announcing partnership with Clean Air Partners)
  - Key information and contacts to integrate teleworking into their office
  - Other TBD helpful resources
- Use of the Clean Air Partners' logo per logo use guidelines (web site, links, related materials)
- Member's logo will be prominently displayed on Clean Air Partners' website

### **b) Create targeted outreach list by sector for outreach**

A manageable list of sectors for targeted outreach will be developed. PRR will identify what membership level is the desired outcome for each target as well as the best means to implement the outreach. Sector lists could include:

- Large employers throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore region
- Non-Profits and Non-Government Organizations (can include non-profit health organizations or environmental groups)
- Healthcare and Daycare Providers throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore region



- Large Nox & VOC generators – make membership a part of the fine process or receive current list in a timely fashion to approach for membership

**Costs to purchase lists and mail membership packages:**

- Large employers throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore region
  - Employers with 1000+ employees (\$400)
- Hospitals in the DC Metro, Northern Virginia and Baltimore region (\$575)
- Child Daycare and Healthcare providers throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore region (\$800)
  - This includes Healthcare Insurance carriers/providers including insurance companies.
- Large Nox & VOC generators throughout the Metropolitan Washington and Baltimore region
  - Clean Air Partners has this list. No costs needed to purchase additional contacts.

**Total costs for purchasing target lists:** \$1,775 (to be paid for out of PRR's budget)

**Mail house cost:** Approximately \$3,000 (to be paid for out of COG's budget)

**c) Design and implement tactics and incentives for outreach by sector**

Solicitation tactics will then be identified and implemented. These could include:

- Direct mail
- Blast email
- One on one meetings
- Phone solicitation
- Group meeting
- PR outreach
  - Pitch industry trade publications that target violator organizations (dry cleaners, auto body shops, printers, etc) on stories about the benefits of Clean Air Partner's membership
  - Pitch AAA magazine on a pre-written article for spring 07 about the benefits of Clean Air Partner's membership.
  - Pitch business journals in the DC and Baltimore area on stories about Clean Air Partner's employer programs
  - Develop a newsletter article that talks about the benefits of Clean Air Partner's membership and the work that Clean Air Partner's is doing to improve our air and protect public health. This will be available to member organizations

**d) Use incentives to motivate membership**



Incentives can be used in a strategic manner to drive membership throughout each sector group. Incentives could include:

- Discounts off membership:
  - Offer existing members that want to renew annual membership a \$75 discount if they commit to renewing a second year (don't need to pay for two years upfront just need to provide Clean Air Partners with credit card). This will encourage current members who want to commit at the same level as the prior year while pushing them to commit a second year of membership.
  - Offer organizations interested in a two-year commitment a reduced rate off basic membership of \$400. This option does not require annual renewal and gives the organization a \$100 discount off membership.
  - Provide a discount if payment is received by a specific "early bird" date.
  - Entice participants that have already received many of the same benefits as paid members by offering a one-time introduction discount of a tbd amount.
- Create incentives for participants:
  - Does not require annual renewal and gives the organization a \$100 discount off membership.
  - Entice participants that have already received many of the same benefits as paid members by offering a one-time introduction discount of a tbd amount.

## **2. Maintain, as well as grow, the number of participants & organizations receiving the forecasts**

**a) Update current membership/participant list** – to confirm contact information and level of interest. This should be done annually.

**b) Implement a direct mail solicitation** – to identify prospect organizations and create a direct mail invitation to receive the forecasts.

### **c) Create incentives for companies to distribute forecasts**

- Complimentary metro or bus passes for organizations employees paid by Clean Air Partners' sponsorship with WMATA.

### **d) Include membership call to action and website in all media outreach and materials**

- Promote website in all print, radio and transit adverting as well as media outreach efforts.

## **3. Extend and expand the participation of each existing member and participant**

### **a) Establish New Criteria for Membership**



Clean Air Partners needs to maximize the program's visibility and participation by implementing new criteria for membership. These will be small, simple steps that will create visibility for the program while holding each member accountable for promoting air quality throughout their organization.

As part of the benefits of membership, organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Provide Clean Air Partners with current contact information for the organization, including email addresses. Update contact information each year
- Sign membership agreement along with payment
- Sign up to receive materials (brochures, posters and lobby signs)
- Post Clean Air Partners' web banner on organization website
- Alert employees to Code Orange and Red days and distribute the AQAG
- Display lobby signs, Clean Air Partners' brochures and posters throughout organization
- Agree to answer an "end of summer survey" to assess the impact the program has had to their organizations

**b) Provide better tools for implementation - Enhance Membership Kit**

As part of the new branding effort, PRR worked with Clean Air Partners to develop a suite of materials that incorporated the new Clean Air Partners' logo. These materials, which include business cards, letter head, envelopes, folders, and thank you cards, etc., will be useful in developing the new membership kits. Membership kits can include the following materials:

- Welcome Letter from Executive Director outlining criteria for membership and benefits to being a member of Clean Air Partners
- Membership enrollment form
- Banner Ads with the new logo and tagline
- Revised Clean Air Partners' brochures and brochure rack for displaying
- Air Quality Action Guide with new Clean Air Partners' logo
- Template press materials including: pre-written press release that promotes the organization's partnership with Clean Air Partners, fact sheets on air quality and template newsletter
- Lobby signs and posters featuring the AQAG to display throughout their organization lobby or break

The materials for members will be available for download or to order on the "Members Only" section of the Clean Air Partners' website. Members will also be able to download the AQAG from the Clean Air Partners' membership page and set up the 3 Day Air Quality forecast email notifications for their employees.

**4. Make membership easy and turnkey for those who participate and those who implement**

**a) Revise Existing Membership Renewal Process**





Currently Clean Air Partners sends an invoice to organizations that paid for memberships in the past. The organization has the option to renew their annual membership once they've received this invoice. Although the current renewal system is easy to manage, it is not an effective recruitment tool for the following reasons:

- There is no level of effort for follow-up after the invoice is mailed. We are relying on the organization to send back the invoice with payment each year.
- Annual invoices are only sent to past paid members. There is no effort in place to recruit new members or the 600 participants that have supported Clean Air Partners.
- No incentives for existing members to renew their annual membership--which allows the organization to lose interest in membership.
- Only one-year renewal, providing no options for extended membership.
- Constant updating of the Clean Air Partners database every year.

Clean Air Partners will streamline its membership renewal process by making renewal part of the recruitment effort. This can be done by utilizing the new website and the branding materials. Instead of sending out the usual invoice, Clean Air Partners will send a letter from the Executive Director outlining the new membership program and criteria for membership. A bounce back card can be included with the letter, making it more convenient for an organization to send in payment. Clean Air Partners can also include a copy of the annual report from 2007 or a copy of the 10-year anniversary timeline to show the progress of the Clean Air Partners program.

Following distribution of the letter an email blast will be sent to all paid members and participants who have not yet responded encouraging them to renew their membership or sign up to become a member via the Clean Air Partners website. The email will be linked to the new membership webpage.

Follow-up contact will be made with all past members who have still not responded.

#### **b) Enhance Website Functionally to Accommodate Membership Renewal and Registrations**

Clean Air Partners should leverage the new website by building in new functionality that accommodates online membership renewal and registration. As indicated above, PRR recommends sending a blast email to all members (past and current), participants as well as any organization receiving the air quality forecasts. This email will include a link to the membership page on Clean Air Partners' website they can sign up for membership. There will also be a banner ad on the main homepage that will link to a separate membership page to renew and register. Unfortunately since the website will not be able to process credit cards, unless Clean Air Partners uses a third party vendor to take credit card info, the organization will need to sign up for membership and submit their contact information so that Clean Air Partners can call them to take payment via phone (credit cards). The organization can also mail in their payment.

There will also be a system in place where the member can file their credit card with CAP so that they don't have to renew each year, they will just need to fill out an





authorization form to allow CAP to charge their dues to the provided credit card. A receipt and thank you card will be sent to the organization.

The membership page will have two sign in options, which include a membership renewal page and a new member page. These pages are described in further detail below.

**Membership Renewal Page:**

This page is where current members can renew their membership with Clean Air Partners while taking advantage of the three options levels and various lengths of memberships. To renew online, the organization will enter their name in the search file (Depending on functionality, a current member's information will be stored in our online database and can be retrieved during this process). There will be an option to renew a one-year membership of \$250 or to upgrade their membership to a two year or three-year membership with a discount incentive (\$400 for two years and \$1000 for three years). Payment will be taken via the phone once the member fills out the membership agreement form and submits their contact information to Clean Air Partners. An automatic email will be sent to the organization thanking them for signing up for membership with instructions for payment and how to access the "Members Only" section on the membership page.

**New Member Page:**

This page is where new members can sign up to become members. Just like the members who are renewing membership, a new member will have the option to join as a basic, preferred or golden member. They will also have the option to sign up for a one year, two year or three year membership by taking advantage of the reduced rate incentive. In addition, the new member will fill out a membership agreement form which will be located on the new member page and submit their contact information to Clean Air Partners so that a payment can be taken via phone or the new member can send their payment directly to Clean Air Partners.

A username and password will be assigned to each allowing them to access the "Members Only" section of the Membership Page to download the template materials and order select quantities of the brochures, posters, lobby signs, etc.

**6) Develop a long-range plan for revenue generation**

As described above, the current membership and sponsorship programs will not generate the significant revenues needed for Clean Air Partners to more effectively and efficiently accomplish their goals and mission. A program structure and funding review will allow the organization to explore any alternatives available that might better serve its purposes.

**a) Revue other models from around the country for consideration**



Identify other similar organizations and conduct informational interviews to understand their structure and funding mechanisms. Also explore how they evolved from their original inception to their existing form.

**b) All potential revenue sources to be included in consideration**

Clean Air Partners will look at all potential sources of revenue and revenue structures.

**c) Set long-term revenue goals and develop plans to achieve them**

Once the study is complete Clean Air Partners leadership will establish long term revenue goals based on current status and projected structure and market potential analyses.

**d) Impacts on organizational structure will also be considered**

**This approach might also raise the issue of organizational structure.**

Certainly anyone who wants to help the mission of Clean Air Partners should have an opportunity to join with them. However, what is the profile of the perfect board, or committee member? These are questions that all organization must ask itself from time-to-time.

**e) Implement a feasibility study**

Once the vision is in place Clean Air Partners will talk to leaders within the prospect community to seek their feedback and recommendations on if they feel the new vision is feasible and how it might best be implemented. Specific interest from these groups will also be solicited during these meetings.

**Level of Funding Proposed for FY08 is \$15,000.**

- Develop Membership Kit materials (\$10,000). This is in addition to the \$15,000 funded for outreach.
- Execute direct mail campaign
  - Purchase lists for each sector as outlined above (\$2,000)
  - Distribute direct mail via mail house (\$3,000)
- Follow-up with sector and Coordination of Task (\$10,000)
  - This includes trade & newsletter outreach

**Unfunded Membership Initiatives:**

- Develop membership renewal page
- Enhance website functionality to accommodate membership renewal and registrations

**Rollout Timeline**

**April 2007**

- Board approves FY08 membership strategy

**May – June**

- Continue developing membership materials
- Develop prospect target list based on purchased List Service



**July – September**

- Begin initial roll out new membership program to existing data base and new contacts via direct mail.