

*Developing Your
Bowhunting Organization
to its Full Potential*



A Strategy for the Success of State
and Provincial Bowhunting
Organizations

Start With a Good Foundation



- Integrity
- Open lines of communication
- Accountability to membership
- Relationship with other state sportsman's groups, legislators, DNR and media outlets
- Outreach to the non-hunting community

Integrity



- Be open and honest with membership
- Ensure measures are in place to protect treasury (i.e. two signatures on checks, treasurer's reports published in newsletter)
- Establish and follow clear by-laws
- Be fiscally responsible. Establish an annual operating budget. Use the membership's money wisely.

Maintain an Open Line of Communication with Members

- Publish a quality newsletter at least quarterly that keeps all members informed of ongoing activities and status of the organization
- Consider a 800 phone line
- Establish a well maintained web site
- Annual surveys of membership to determine needs and members opinions
- Consider moving meetings around the state to afford all members the opportunity to be active

Maintain an Open Line of Communication with Members



- Utilize live chat/ web meeting/ teleconferencing if practical
- Encourage chapters/regions in larger states

Accountability to Members



- Remember the organization represents the majority/membership. Your personal views/opinions may differ on occasion.
- Ensure that by-laws allow for members to interact with officers/governing board.
- Be responsive to request from members.

Relationship With Other Sportsman's Groups.

- Realize fellow sportsman's groups may not view bowhunters favorably. We need to change that!
- Be willing to listen to their side of the argument.
- Be prepared to present polite, factual, well thought out counter arguments.
- Let them know you will support them vs. the anti-hunting movement.

Reputation with Legislators.



- Be respectful in all dealings with legislators. Learn what it means to respectfully agree to disagree.
- Make sure they know bowhunters vote!
- Be aware that many legislators know nothing about sport hunting and even less about bowhunting. Be prepared to educate them!

Reputation with Legislators.

- Sponsor a day of bow shooting for them.
- Sponsor a hunt for them along with a catered luncheon. Donate harvested game to pantry (FHFH).
- Be persistent. Keep fine tuning. Sometimes it takes a few years to get an initiative passed into law. That law maker you disagreed with last year may end up as your strongest ally this year.
- Support your state's Legislative Sportsman's Caucus. If you don't have one get one started!!!

Reputation with DNR Officials.

- This is probably the most important relationship for any state/provincial level bowhunting organization
- Again, learn to agree to disagree!
- Learn all you can about the mission of your state's DNR and the way they are funded.
- Offer your support where you can. (i.e. donate mechanical deer, NASP, IBEP classes etc.)
- Understand the agency's mission to represent all user groups.

Reputation with DNR Officials.



- Work hard to represent the bowhunting community. It is vital that your DNR understands the unique role of the bowhunter and that they view bowhunters favorably.

Reputation with Media/Press.

- Develop close relationships with reporters from your local newspapers/TV Stations. Its easy to locate the outdoor writers but also try to get one or two of the mainstream reporters on your list.
- Feed them with newsworthy press releases
 - Your org donates mechanical deer to DNR
 - Your members donate XXX amount of venison
 - Your org sponsors fund raiser for Kid's Camp
 - Your org spearheads effort to bring NASP

Reach Out to Non-Hunting Public

- Engage in high-profile activities that present bowhunting/bowhunters in a good light;
 - Support NASP!!!!
 - Feeding the Hungry/Venison Donations!!!
 - Highway Clean-ups
 - Volunteer at schools/after school archery
 - Set up a youth program
 - Set up your booth at community fairs, etc. to educate the public about bowhunting

Reach Out to Non-Hunting Public



- Sponsor/support events such as 3-D shoots, banquets to benefit worthy causes. (i.e. Camps for Kids with serious illnesses; Benefit4Kids; etc.)
- (NOTE - All of these outreach efforts make great opportunities to get your organization some positive publicity. Work those media contacts!)

Why are all these things so important?



- An efficiently run, goal oriented, well respected and politically influential organization is one that will retain the members it has and make it easier to recruit new ones.

So How Do We Grow the Numbers?

- A strong web presence- Informative and frequently updated web site. Make it easy to join via web. Use PayPal or similar service to allow for credit card use.
- Print up extra copies of newsletter and distribute to sporting good stores, checking stations, etc. for free distribution

So How Do We Grow the Numbers?

- Develop a high quality tri-fold brochure and distribute in the sporting goods stores, etc.
- Advertise in the DNR regulation book handed out with hunting licenses if allowed.
- Advertise in the newsletters of other sportsman's organizations in your area (Many gun hunters also bow hunt).

So How Do We Grow the Numbers?

- Set up a professional looking, eye appealing booth at sportsman's shows in your area. Display plenty of high quality mounts to attract the traffic.
- Offer some sort of members only free raffle. Many folks will sign up just for the chance to win a hunt/bow/tree stand.
- Conduct a membership drive with prizes to the member with highest number of new members brought in.

So How Do We Grow the Numbers?

- Sponsor a target at local archery ranges and have a small sign erected there “This Target sponsored by _____. Call # to join or visit www._____.com”
- Give a T-Shirt, hat or some other gift with varying membership packages.
 - Hat with a one year membership
 - A T-shirt and hat with a 3 year membership
 - An embroidered jacket for a life member.

Wrapping it Up

- Run a sound organization
- Be responsive to members
- Ensure Integrity
- Network with other sportsman's groups, legislators, media and DNR.
- Promote your org with non-hunting public
- Promote the org and recruit new members
- Work to keep the members you already have. They are your best resource!

Good Luck!

– Keep Fighting the Good Fight!