

## PARTICIPATION vs. MEMBERSHIP

When it comes to sport, numbers matter – the participation (attendance) of each programme, total club membership, and the income at the end of each month. Your numbers tell you how strong your club is and how you can make it stronger. Collecting this information can be used to identify the trends of what's working (to offer participation programmes and tailor membership packages) and where there's room for improvement. This enables you to accurately report on player participation, plan effective member retention strategies and make informed decisions about key club activities.

Research has shown that the traditional membership subscription model is declining in most sports, whilst pay-to-play is becoming the new and dominant way that most people are paying to play. Over the past few years national squash membership has remained relatively stable. This indicates that, as a sport, we are doing an excellent job to create a sense of belonging, foster club identity, facilitate friendships and provide various motivating opportunities so that our people can enjoy squash and 'Love it'.

BUT... Sport New Zealand's new Community Sport Strategy has signalled a change in focus with more emphasis now being placed on participation as opposed to membership. Squash, as a sport, needs to collect information on membership figures and participation statistics to show that:

- Not only are our people committed to the sport and willing to sign up as loyal members; but
- We are also able to continue offering programmes to different markets, including those who are not members so that they can learn to 'Try it' and 'Play it' and eventually 'Love it'.

Capturing all of this activity data will be a time consuming, yet necessary, process. The good news is that it will show us what impact we are making within our communities and will allow us to see how well we are listening to, and giving, what our various customers want and need.

The following highlights the key differences between participation and membership, explains how you can measure each and provides a best-practice example of how the Devoy Squash & Fitness Centre has approached recording both in iSquash.



# PARTICIPATION



More people playing.

Participation is defined as playing squash or a modified version through attending programmes, initiatives and projects. This is usually paid by the individual for every visit / session attended and is measured by counting the total number of people who take part in each programme.

Who our participants typically are:

- Current members
- School students
- Past members
- Prospective members
- Community groups
- Business professionals
- Casual players

What our participants usually take part in:

- Junior programmes
- School programmes
- Beginner programmes
- Women's programmes
- Men's programmes
- Fitness programmes
- Technique and movement programmes
- Holiday / after-school programmes
- Interclub competitions / leagues
- Business House
- Open days / nights
- Casual (pay to) play

Where our squash programmes can be delivered:

- Squash Clubs
- Schools (primary and secondary)
- Community courts
- Multi-sport facilities

Where you can record this information:

iSquash Activity Reporting is an easy- to-use system that makes tracking and reporting on player numbers and programme attendance simple.



**Activity Reporting**

District/Club:

Reporting Period:

Start Date	End Date	Coordinator	Programme / Activity
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>No. of Participants</b>		<b>No. of Sessions Delivered</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Male:</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Female:</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Sessions:</b> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Notes:</b> <input type="text"/>			

# MEMBERSHIP



More people committed.

Traditional membership is defined as playing squash after paying a membership fee to become an affiliated squash club member as a graded or leisure player. This is usually done by the individual paying a pre-defined subscription and is measured by counting the number of fully paid people at the time of reporting (usually at the end of the financial year).

Who our members (graded and leisure) are:

- Senior men
- Senior women
- Junior boys
- Junior girls

What our members usually join to take part in:

- National events
- District tournaments
- Club events
- Team trainings
- Social activities

Where you can record this information:

Every year clubs are required to declare and enter their Annual Return figures into iSquash based on their club membership.



**Annual Return**

Annual Return

Year/Club: \_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

	Declared	Correct
No of Members:	86	86
No of Senior Males:	5	5
No of Senior Females:	5	5
No of Junior Males:	11	11
No of Junior Females:	2	2
No of Graded Players:	54	54
No of Leisure Players:	12	12
Annual Subs Senior:	100	
Annual Subs Junior:	86	
Annual Subs School/Junior:	49	
Annual Subs Tertiary:	120	
Annual Subs Family:	300	
Annual Subs Joint Membership:	480	
Annual Subs Married Couple:	200	
Annual Subs Nil Week:	158	
Annual Subs Casual:	118	
Annual Subs Other Explanation:		

Complete:

An example: Devoy Squash & Fitness Centre, 2015.



### Participation

Programmes	Total number of participants
Women n' Wine	15
Blokes n' Beer	5
Dave Clarke Technical Development	16
Fitness Programme	127
Girls Group Coaching	68
Ladies Group Coaching	87
Mums n' Bubs	4
Doubles Competition	32
Tauranga Girls College	51
Coast Kids Holiday Programme	194
YMCA Holiday Programme	70
Club Holiday Programme	39
Home School Coaching Programme	21
Junior Team League	36
Junior Development Squad	14
Bethlehem College	50
Junior Coaching Programme	121
Junior One Day Tournaments	95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,055</b>

### Membership

Declared Members	Senior Men	Senior Women	Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Graded	Leisure
<b>594</b>	258	144	130	62	229	365

For more details please refer to the

[‘Tauranga Squash Club Case Study: Innovative ways of increasing participation and membership’](#)