

Recruiting Tips

Some Ideas and Experiences from the Gay & Lesbian Square Dance Community

What Works...

Demo when you can

Gay Pride, town parades, street fairs, rodeos, community access cable, fundraisers for other organizations, etc.

Find “crossover” communities

Gay rodeos, C&W bars and dances, “Bear” and Leather events, community centers, churches, etc.

Personal Contact works best

Flyers, posters, etc. don't work very well

Get a name, phone, email address and *follow up!*

Captive audience (e.g., temporary tattoos, balloons) allows you to hook ‘em, get their contact info, and they become a walking, lasting advertisement

Meet & greet events (summer BBQ and intro dance)

“Henzel” plan works! But it's time consuming and expensive.

<http://www.usda.org/pamphlet/P04703.pdf> is a “straightened up” version of the plan google “Henzel plan square dance recruiting” for other info

No Dress Code, Singles & Couples welcome, people learn either/both parts (and learn to switch), Couples encouraged to mix

Coordinate with other area clubs

Be willing to share contact information (“I'm not from around here” is no excuse!)

Joint “new dancer hoedowns” build excitement and community

Synchronized teaching schedule/order so missed classes can be made up elsewhere

Use the Internet

Have a club/class web page – up to date, appealing information

Follow up with emails (cheaper than phone calls!)

Keep class email lists, dinner list, teaching order online, etc.

Google “gay square dance” gives 250,000+ hits

What Doesn't Work...

We tend to recruit from our own friends, gay square dance groups are aging (no longer getting as many 20-somethings)

Experiencing the “Rush to Plus” just like the rest of the world