

Recruiting New Workers as Union Members

**A FRAMEWORK FOR HOW UNIONS
CAN COMMUNICATE WITH *and* JOIN UP
WORKERS IN THE NEW ECONOMY**

by Alex White

The Challenge

Business
shifting costs &
risks to workers

Workers
increasingly
in **precarious**
forms of work

Often in jobs
that they don't
see as a **career**

Unaware of
unions... or

View unions as
old fashioned,
and therefore...

Not **relevant**
& **don't join**
unions



Responding to the challenge

**UNDERSTANDING
WORKERS IN NEW
ECONOMY**

**UNDERSTANDING
THE
“COMPETITION”**

**WHAT ARE THE
LEVERS?**

**THE FUTURE
(IS DIGITAL)**

Understanding your audience

Don't get all fancy. Start with need.

Workers in new economy have same desire for respect, dignity at work, a living wage, fulfilling jobs.

Demographics. Changes style & channel, not substance.

Age, culture, race, geography, gender

Relevance is key.

Not homogenous.

Personalise.

Positioning unions

**POSITIONING IS ABOUT WHERE YOUR UNION SITS IN THE MIND OF THE POTENTIAL MEMBER.
WITHOUT KNOWING YOUR POSITIONING, COMMUNICATION WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT.**

PROMISE	VISIBILITY	DELIVERY	LEVERAGE
<p>What is the clear, simple, unique promise that unions have for workers?</p> <p><i>Hard (cheap)</i></p>	<p>Awareness of the promise</p> <p>What channels are most appropriate?</p> <p><i>Easy (expensive)</i></p>	<p>Can or do unions actually deliver on the promise?</p> <p><i>Campaign successes</i></p> <p><i>Organising</i></p> <p><i>Bargaining</i></p> <p><i>Servicing</i></p>	<p>Realise: loyalty (activism, volunteering, delegates)</p> <p>Extension: trust outside of workplace issues (elections?)</p> <p><i>Key to growth</i></p>

Positioning unions

WHAT IS YOUR PROMISE?

What is your unique promise?

Unique commitment you make to members. Both external (new members) & internal (organisers, activists)

Is your promise widely known?

Are all your staff internally able to explain in a sentence or two what your “promise” is?

Can you deliver on your promise?

Don't make promises you can't keep.

Are you resourcing the right areas to deliver? What does your budget say?

Positioning unions

DEFINE A CHOICE

Contrast

Action vs inaction

Join vs not join

Respect vs disrespect

Simple

Can you sum it up in eight words?

Verb, target, outcome that is measurable.

Bold

Controversy emboldens and energises supporters, promotes advocacy.

Understanding Your Competition

UNIONS FACE LOTS OF (UNCONVENTIONAL) COMPETITION

- › HR departments
- › Managers, supervisors
- › Co-workers, friends, family
- › Generous delegates!
- › The government
- › The Internet

IN MARKET

CONSIDERATION

DIRECT

In immediate
consideration

POTENTIAL

Considered,
but not in
market

INDIRECT

In market,
but not
considered at
first

INCIPIENT

Not
considered,
not in market
(disruptive)

Incipient Threats

**The Internet is
disruptive**

**In other service
sectors, has lowered
costs, decreased
profits, removed
barriers to entry**

**E.g. RocketLawyer,
Coursera**

Why Unions Should Care

DISINTERMEDIATION

Allows people to bypass traditional role of unions as gatekeepers of industrial information

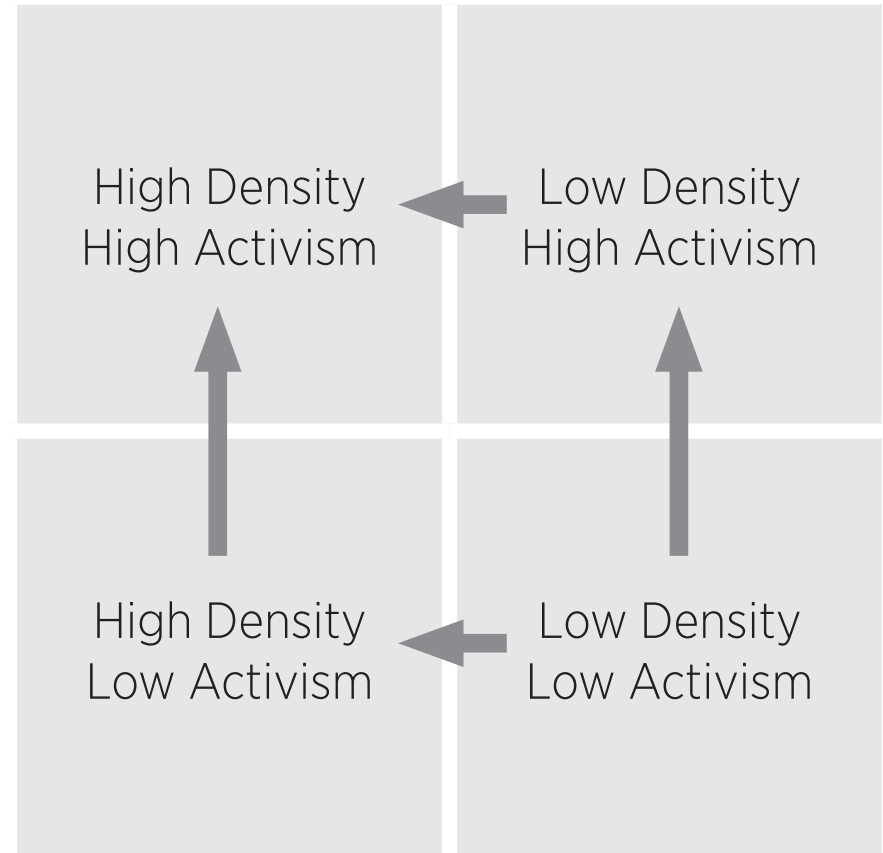
PRICING

Nothing beats free Expectations about customised pricing options

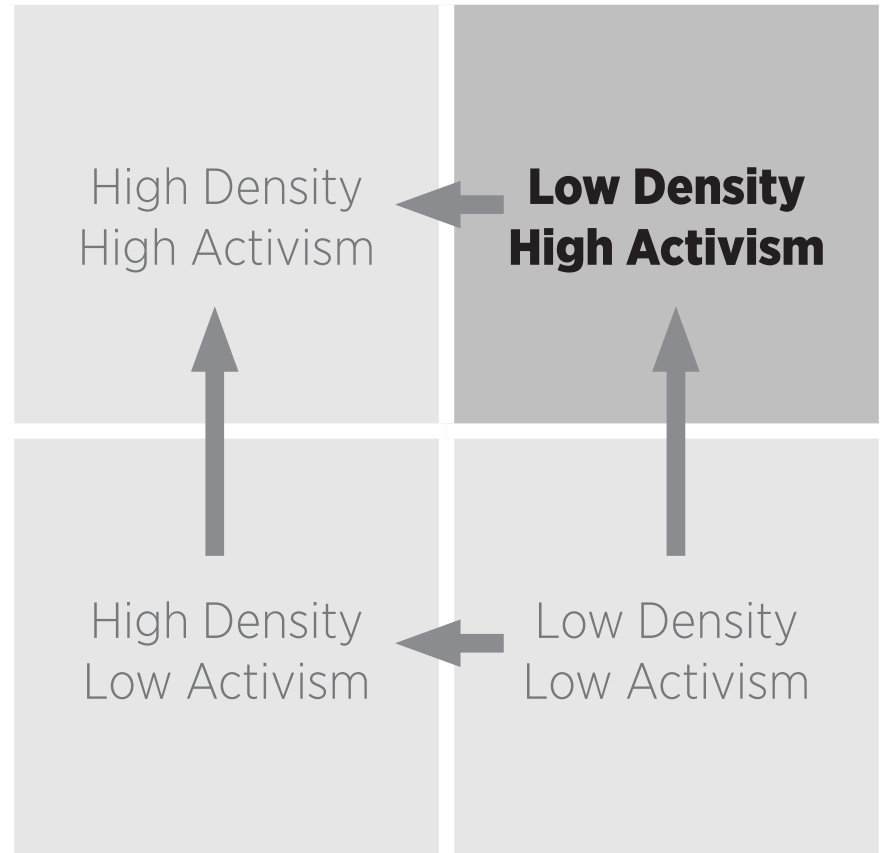
INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

Search means potential members can “shop around” for advice

Who should you target first?



Who should you target first?



3 Iron Laws of Communication

Get into the mind ("get noticed")

Balance between "reach" and
"richness"
(engagement & participation)

Get top of mind ("be relevant")

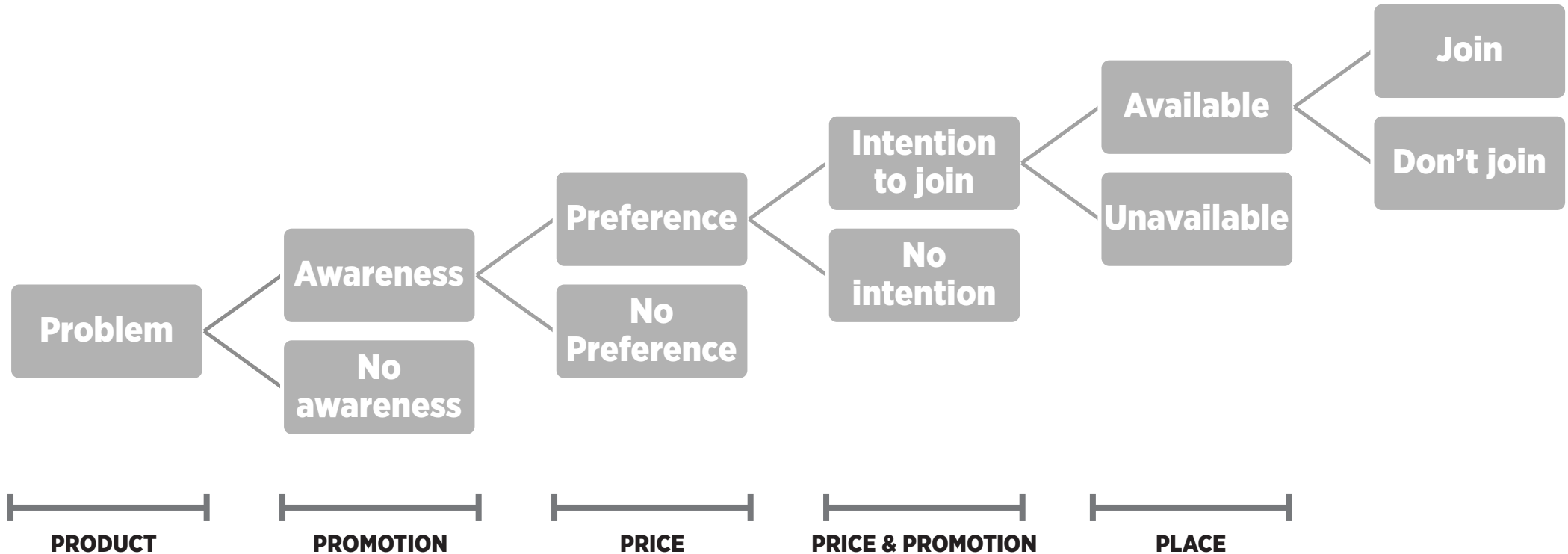
Distinctive relevance with audience
& need
(functional and symbolic)

Be consistent ("repetition")

Coherence, specificity across all
touch points

(multiple messages create
aversion, dissonance and inhibitory
signals)

Intervention Points



Intervention Points

PRODUCT

What actually is membership?

PRICE

Different sensitivities.
Includes social cost/
benefit, risk to job,
etc.

PROMOTION

Normal integrated
comms

PLACE

Where & how can
they join?

Loyalty as growth driver

NET PROMOTERS

Promoters and detractors.
Snapshot & trend data.
Actionable.

COST OF RECRUITMENT

How much does it cost to sign up a new member?
Life-time value?

RETENTION VS. RECRUITMENT

Loyalty drives retention.
10% improvement in retention can increase member contribution by up to 200%.

The Future is Digital

**ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS IS A LOT MORE IMPORTANT
THAN YOU THINK.**

92% Aussies online.

62% use email daily.

68% of those use a mobile device.

**90% of media interaction is screen-
based.**

81% dual-screen media consumption.

Opportunities for Unions

Media can now be finely targeted

Media buying is much cheaper for a given audience

Behaviour based

Removes guess work

Fast and easy to deploy digital assets.

Audio/visual still (more?) important