

WCoMC Members Survey - December 2020 & implications for Company virtual events

Main recommendations:

- 1. Continue to run a wide range of virtual events as part of a broader portfolio of WCoMC offerings, from the purely social through to the purely professional.**
- 2. Continue to produce regular newsletters and emails and target these to appeal to our whole range of members.**
- 3. Charge a nominal fee for events with external costs and speakers.**
- 4. Continue to explore other potential virtual activities which might interest those who prefer smaller group events.**
- 5. Continue to carry out membership surveys on a regular basis to ensure the Company continues to reflect the preferences of its existing and future members.**

The Court of Wardens is asked to endorse these recommendations.

My thanks are extended to those who spent considerable time designing the survey and then analysing the results (John Watson, Bob Harris & Sue Ells) and to all our Members who gave their time to share their views with us by completing the survey.

It is worth highlighting up front some clear successes that the Company has had with virtual events – judging based on participation and informal feedback. At the ‘purely social’ end of the scale¹, the virtual wine tastings have been popular and successful, while at the other end of the spectrum CMCE showcases are similarly popular and successful. “New” events in the middle of the spectrum (such as “My Most Interesting ..”) have attracted sustained audiences.

These successes are due in no small part due to all the work involving in getting up online with Zoom, in preparing for events and then running them smoothly and professionally. You all know who you are. Thanks to you all.

Steve Cant 1W

¹ See below: 3 - Virtual Events Fellowship Spectrum

Background

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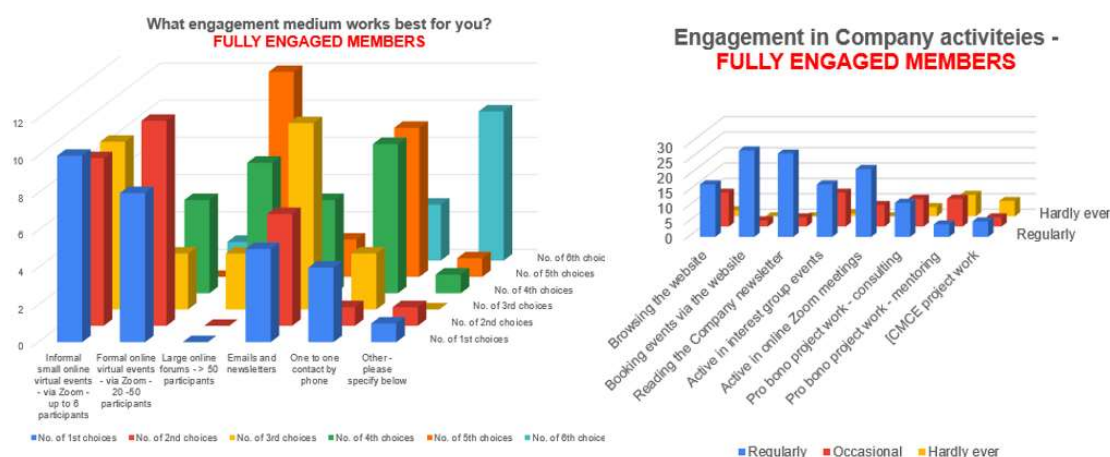
1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide a summary of the finding and conclusions from the survey of Members carried out during December 2020.
- Make specific detailed recommendations to the Wardens about communication and engagement with Members, and development of events in support of our Fellowship and Education objectives

2 Analysis

Detailed factual analysis from the data collected during the survey has been carried out and is contained in a separate spreadsheet. This spreadsheet contains many graphic representations of the data as illustrated below.

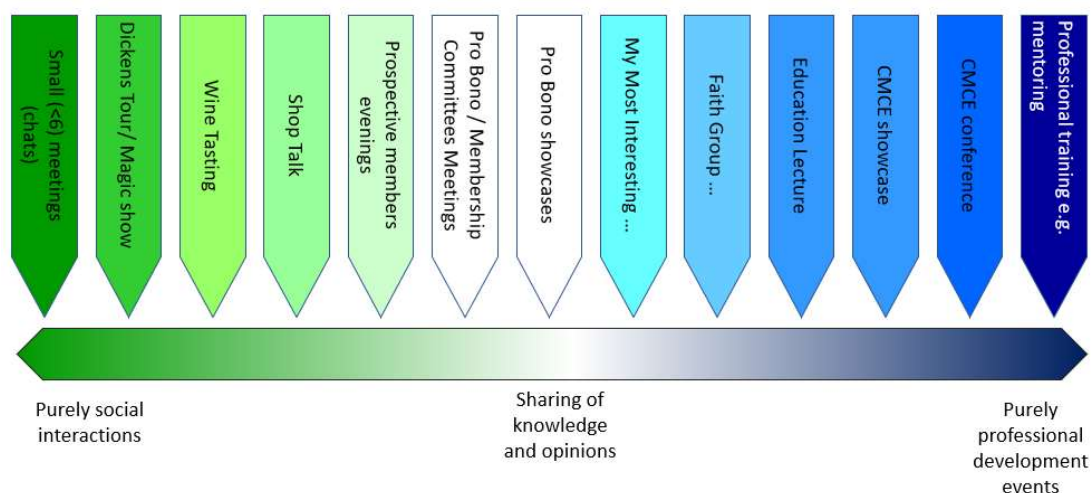


There were 79 responses which represents about 40%. It is not intended to repeat all that analysis here. Instead, this report focuses on broader findings and then sets out the associated conclusions that can be drawn from them. Detailed recommendations, based on these conclusions, then follow in column 3 of the table. The table is split into more general conclusions and recommendations, and those specifically related to virtual events.

3 Virtual Events Fellowship Spectrum

In March 2020 we pivoted away from face-to-face events and, over the following months, developed a rolling programme of virtual events. Although largely driven by COVID, there was also a clear recognition that virtual events appeal to many members as part of our offer, including those who are overseas and those working or living away from the City.

With the benefit of a year’s experience we can now see these events across a spectrum with, at one end, purely social events, and at the other, events that are primarily focused on professional development. This can be represented in the diagram below:



The survey showed an appreciation of the range of events across this spectrum, as shown below.

Q13 – “I have enjoyed the virtual online Company events that I have attended during the past 8 months”	Number agreeing or agreeing strongly about their enjoyment across the spectrum									Total number of responses
	Virtual wine tasting	Shop talk	New members	Formal Company ceremonies	Annual Church Service	Faith Group	Most interesting project	CMCE showcase	Other CMC E	
Fully engaged	15	21	19	21	10	8	22	20	11	147
Partially engaged	8	4	0	8	0	2	2	5	3	32
Not actively engaged	3	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	8
Total number engaged	26	26	20	31	10	11	24	25	14	187

By offering such a wide range of virtual events, The Company is clearly appealing to a range of members.

4 Summary conclusions

The main conclusions from the survey are as follows:

- Overall, respondents are happy with the format, mix and timing of the programme of virtual events that we have been putting on since the first lockdown. While there are a few helpful suggestions to be considered (see below) there is no widely supported view that we are doing anything wrong.
- A significant number of respondents (particularly in the less active groups) observed that they do not have time for, or do not enjoy, virtual events and that they are really looking forward to the return of in-person events.
- In addition to virtual events, many respondents expressed appreciation for the monthly Newsletter and other emails (especially those less actively engaged) sent out to the membership.

- While not unanimous, there was a general view that virtual events should remain free-of-charge unless there was an external speaker or an event cost that needed to be recovered.

5 Broad Recommendations

The specific recommendations emerging from these conclusions are as follows:

- That the respondent population be compared with the full Company membership to gauge the extent to which the emerging profile from the survey is fully representative.
- That, subject to this finding being positive, the Company continues to strive for greater diversity in age and gender.
- That the timings of events are tweaked to make it easier for those in full or part time employment to be fully engaged in Company activities.
- That the volunteers who put forward suggestions that they would be happy to lead be identified and approached with a view to these new initiatives being pursued.

6 Next Steps

The survey results give the Company confidence to continue with its planned programme of events, albeit with a few tweaks. It is helpful to know that the Company is on the right track and to have this substantive feedback from the membership.

This report will be made available to the Court of Assistants and, following that, an article on the results of the survey and these recommendations will be included in the next Company Newsletter.

7 Findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the survey

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
General		
<p>The response rate to the survey was 40%. This is good but there's inevitably a self-selecting bias.</p>	<p>The survey was worthwhile – a valuable analysis of our Membership.</p> <p>Some weaknesses due to self-selection bias</p> <p>More questions emerged after the survey had been issued.</p>	<p>Repeat the survey – possibly annually.</p> <p>Some additional questions could be asked in future – e.g. “Why did you join the Company” and “why have you stayed a member of the Company” to see the extent to which membership is influenced by events, virtual or real life.</p> <p>Wider consultation in the planning stage – especially with the Membership Committee.</p>
<p>Many of the less active group of members do not have time for, or do not enjoy, virtual events.</p>	<p>Virtual events are not the way to engage this group of members but ... see below</p>	<p>Do not try to plug this events gap for this group but continue to engage and inform our less active members.</p> <p>We should not assume that the disengaged are unhappy. Not everyone is sociable, or wants to 'join in'.</p>
<p>Strong appreciation for the monthly Newsletters and other emails</p>	<p>Keep going with the Company Newsletter – and other mass emails - but do not over do it!</p>	<p>Aim for a monthly Newsletter.</p> <p>Ensure that all companywide emails are suited to all groups of Members. – avoid the trap of talking only to the already engaged</p> <p>Ensure all communications are value added and support Fellowship and learning?</p>
<p>General view that virtual events should remain free-of-charge except where external speakers or costs involved.</p>	<p>Charging a reasonable cost-based price is acceptable</p>	<p>Introduce charging for events with external costs and speakers.</p> <p>This has already happened.</p>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Events		
<p>Most members are happy with event format, mix and timing of events. We are offering a broad range of events across a spectrum that runs between purely social to purely professional development.</p>	<p>We aren't doing much wrong but there might be gaps. Virtual events successfully engage overseas members and those living or working away from The City.</p>	<p>Keep going with virtual events at least until real world events are viable. There is a role for virtual events in the longer term and possibly some hybrid events.</p>
<p>There are some gaps across the spectrum:</p>		
<p>There are no small-scale social interactions available for Members generally. Small scale events would seem to be welcomed.</p>	<p>We have seen some small low key social events that we have run have been for special interests (e.g. Pro bono Committee meetings) but nothing more general.</p>	<p>We should at least consider what might be possible in this space. However, it may not be worth worrying about now that the end of lockdown is at least in prospect.</p>
<p>The enjoyment of virtual events has been even more towards the social activities (end of the spectrum) by all categories of Members.</p>	<p>(Not sure what this tells us. All events attract a decent degree of patronage among members – so Members must derive some benefit even if it is not “enjoyment” !)</p>	

