



ILLINOIS SWIMMING Business Plan

2009-2012

The mission of Illinois Swimming is to govern in a fiscally responsible manner in accordance with USA Swimming and Illinois Swimming by-laws and rules and regulations; to support the growth and development of our membership through educational initiatives, financial assistance and program development at all levels; promote the sport, athletes and membership to achieve excellence in swimming.

INTRODUCTION

To further expand upon the Strategic Plan that has been discussed and presented to the membership by the Illinois Swimming Board of Directors, I am submitting this plan as another roadmap for this organization to guide us as we move forward within this next quadrennial period. This plan is intended to help Illinois Swimming become an even more successful organization with a commitment to excellence and to the achievement of results. Our organizational culture should be one in which we are always striving to improve, to find solutions to problems which we encounter, acknowledge and appreciate our past, and be determined to reach new heights in the future.

This business plan is constructed on the foundation of 30 years of steady growth and with the sense of incorporating a changing paradigm of how we will move forward. With a membership of over 16,000 athletes, Illinois Swimming is one of the largest Local Swim Committees within our National Governing Body-USA Swimming. We need to continually evaluate and improve existing programs and services and look to add new activities that will help to advance our objectives, purpose and mission.

As a non-profit membership organization we have an obligation as stated in the opening line of our mission statement to govern in a fiscally responsible manner. We need to manage our finances carefully and protect the financial interests of our membership and Illinois Swimming. Over the years as our membership has grown so too has our annual operating budget. With a strategic plan to seek new sources of revenue our financial position should continue to improve and these new revenue sources will have a positive economic impact on our organization by the end of the quadrennial.

This presentation has been designed to be simple and straight-forward so that it will be an easy-to-follow and useful tool. It should also be noted that this is a “living document” in that as issues and events occur, which may not have been addressed, we will be able to react to them in the best interests of our membership

Respectfully submitted,

Peter N. Kozura
Executive Director

CORE OBJECTIVES

To borrow from USA Swimming's mission to grow and strengthen the sport of swimming and the core objectives of USA Swimming:

Build the Base – USA Swimming seeks to expand its membership and reach in order to engage as many people as possible in the sport of swimming. This too is a core objective of Illinois Swimming. In addition to expand the membership we need to also ensure retention of our existing membership

Promote the Sport – USA Swimming seeks to promote all aspects of the sport in order to generate as much positive public recognition as possible that in turn will lead to increased participation in everything from water safety and learn-to-swim programs to competitive swimming for lifetime fitness. As an addition to the objectives of USA Swimming, Illinois Swimming seeks to further extol the virtues of swimming and celebrate the accomplishments of our athletes on a local and regional level.

Achieve Sustained Competitive Success – USA Swimming seeks to continue the rich tradition of performance success at the highest levels of international competition, especially at the Olympic Games. Illinois Swimming too seeks to achieve success at the highest levels of competition but also must provide programs and incentives for the athletes who compete locally so that they may achieve and reach their individual successes and goals.

Facility Development – Illinois Swimming, with the continued help and support of the USA Swimming Facility Development department, needs to continue to educate, pursue and solicit groups, clubs, municipal organizations, park districts and others, the expressed objective of future facility construction.

CULTURAL VALUES

USA Swimming has committed to conducting themselves according to the following attitudes and philosophies. As a member of the USA family, and with their permission, I have listed, and made additions to these values, to be used as a guideline for Illinois Swimming staff and Board of Directors.

1. We embrace the responsibilities of leadership.
2. We will strive for excellence in everything we do.
3. We will act with integrity, honesty and openness.
4. We will be service-oriented with our members, business partners and each other.
5. We will engage in disciplined planning, and not be afraid to act intuitively to confront challenges and seize opportunities.
6. We will identify clear priorities and allocate our time and resources accordingly.
7. We will hold ourselves and each other accountable.
8. We will be open to questions and maintain a willingness to change.
9. We will exhibit an entrepreneurial spirit, and enthusiasm for growth, and a positive “can do” attitude.
10. We will hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards of professionalism and ethical behavior.
11. We will make decisions and work with the overriding priority of doing what is best in the interests of our membership as a whole.
12. We will make sound and responsible fiscal decisions.

MAJOR PRIORITIES FOR 2009-201

1) BUILD.....INCREASE MEMBERSHIP.....RETAIN

Goal: USA Swimming goal to increase membership by at least 20% by 2012.

Illinois Swimming goal to be a little bit more conservative based on past membership increases and decreases, increase membership 15% by 2012.

Addendum 1 shows progression of membership for Illinois Swimming, along with four other LSC's. This analysis shows that during the last quadrennial period Illinois Swimming membership grew by 10.1%. This is in line comparatively with the four other LSC's. Further, Addendum 2 which was compiled by Doug Lennox provides a look forward based on monthly membership figures. Projecting to 2012 with these compilations shows an membership expectation from 2008 final figures of 16,144 to a 2012 figure of 18,326 or a 13.5% increase.

Key Strategies:

- Begin assessment process of club capacities. Implement plans to provide opportunities for new athletes to begin their swimming pursuits by providing alternative clubs and programs so as not to lose these athletes to other sports endeavors.
- Develop recruiting and information materials to further increase awareness of Illinois Swimming clubs and programming initiatives. Create a distribution list which includes, but is not limited to, park districts, high schools and other educational related entities (i.e. community education programs), swimming pool supply businesses, swim stores, etc.
- Continue to further the relationship with Chicago Park District and World Sport/Chicago. Intent is to be a collaborative partner in creating, developing and implementing a Chicago *Make a Splash* program. This will provide a pipeline for athletes to learn to swim and then move into competitive swim programs. Additionally we need to continue and furthering our involvement with World Sport/Chicago and Chicago Park District to target outreach memberships within Chicago.
- Non athlete membership growth and retention. Continue to further Officials training clinics with the goal to have a minimum of one currently registered Referee within each club that hosts meets. Spring and Fall clinic programs have proven to be successful thus far. Create incentive program for officials for retention and advancement to Referee status. Currently there are 29 clubs that do not have a registered official, of the remaining 87 clubs that do have officials- 38 do not have a referee within their ranks.
- Work towards inclusion of disability swimmers into Illinois Swimming programming efforts.

2) PROMOTE...GROW COMMERCIAL RELEVANCE & VIABILITY

Goal: Illinois Swimming seeks to increase positive public recognition of our sport and our respective members (athletes, coaches, non-athlete members); attract corporate partners and increase Illinois Swimming revenues.

Key Strategies:

- Ongoing pursuit of corporate partners for Title Sponsorship of Championship Meets; Official Status for corporate partners as secondary corporate involvement and program specific sponsorships (i.e. existing programs-Annual Athlete Recognition Banquet; new program development – scholarship program, clinic programs, etc). Continue utilization and ongoing research amongst membership contacts. Additional “cold calling” to potential partners that have demographic match and/or involvement in sports, primarily amateur and youth sports.
- Continue pursuit and enhancing of relationships with media contacts as well as with individual club’s for media worthy content. Consideration for free-lance media relations person to work on project basis.
- Pursue opportunities to provide web casting and/or “live streaming” of Championship Meets
- Work towards being able to communicate to entirety of membership electronically to enhance efficient and timely communication.
- Creation of Illinois Swimming Speakers Bureau to consist of Olympians and other former and present athletes that have competed on National Level.
- Further our direct involvement with USA Swimming resources to provide membership with more pertinent seminars throughout the year. Case in point, the “Mini Build a Pool” was very well received and it is these types of programs we need to enhance and bring forth to our membership. Additionally, strive to further improve mechanisms for distribution and communication of USA Swimming programs and other club and LSC related resources.
- Provide for clinics and other programs that are geared for athletes that may not be “AAA” swimmers.
- Continue to provide and seek methods for improving content and timeliness of web site as a principle means of communicating to our membership.
- Creation of “membership specific” surveys to gather information and ideas from our membership (i.e. survey geared towards our membership as a whole, another geared towards coaches only, another geared towards officials and another geared towards club administrators, Board members, etc).
- Pursue possibility of “tie-in” opportunities with other non-for-profit organizations. Primarily cause-related organizations (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and others).

3) *ACHIEVE.....SUSTAIN COMPETITIVE SUCCESS*

Goal: We seek to have more athletes who have current Illinois Swimming status or were Illinois Swimming athletes throughout their Age Group and Senior years, attain National Level times. 2012 London Games-goal of 4 Olympians that “matriculated” through the Illinois Swimming ranks- in 2008 we had two Olympians; 2012 US Olympic Trials- goal of 50 Illinois Swimming athletes competing- in 2008 we had 32 athletes that competed; a progression that will see an increase of “x %” athletes with National Level times.

Key Strategies:

- Create an “on schedule” meet format that is geared towards progressiveness to the Illinois Swimming Championships and ultimately to the National Level schedule.
- Support continual Coaches Education programming. Provide incentives for coaches to gain further National exposure (volunteering at National events, mentor program with coaches that are attending National events, etc)
- Support and enhance (through additional Club Support funding) competitive opportunities for athletes with National Level times.
- Help create a high level Senior collegiate program mirroring Wolverine, Longhorn, etc.
- Conduct additional camps. Establish several different “tracks” (i.e. specialized camps for “AAA” athletes, camps for lower level athletes that may be on the cusp, etc)
- Create opportunities for additional out of state clinics, camps and competitions.
- Work towards creating additional and new “Open Water” competitions. Additionally, establish open water camps and clinics.
- Creation of several different levels of “Illinois All Stars” to compete in events in some of the more competitive LSC’s (SoCal, Atlanta, SoFlorida, MidAtlantic, etc) as well as the possibility of an international competition.
- Provide with USA Swimming resources an annual Meet Management seminar which would help clubs in essential administrative, logistic , operations of successfully conducting a meet.
- Continue and further the partnership of Illinois Swimming and all Championship Meet hosts. Pursue additional clubs to entertain possibility of hosting Championship meets via communications from staff, Age Group and Senior Chairs, the respective committees and Board members. To further open the possibilities of smaller and less experienced clubs, suggest that one Senior Meet per year (either long course or short course) be “overseen” by Illinois Swimming with several clubs brought together to provide volunteers and get hands-on experience. Illinois Swimming would work with a selected work force of administrative personnel and meet directors to oversee key components of meet operations. This would provide valuable experience lessons for these clubs and also provide an economic opportunity to clubs that are otherwise not included in this process.

4) FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Facilitate and support in any way possible the development of new aquatic facility projects with the ultimate goal of new 50 meter facilities construction.

Key Strategies:

- Ongoing information dissemination to club's regarding USA Facilities Development capabilities and resources. Continuation of an annual "Mini Build a Pool conference for Illinois Swimming clubs.
- Ongoing conversations with Chicago 2016, World Sport/Chicago and Chicago Park District regarding facility projects and legacy programming. In the event Chicago is not awarded the Games, conversation continues with Chicago Park District and City of Chicago.
- Ongoing conversations with current facilities and future plans for renovations.
- Continue dialogue with developers that have background in sports venues, amusement parks and municipal recreation projects. Additional extension of above to municipalities and school districts and park districts.

5) INTERNAL.....IMPROVING ILLINOIS SWIMMING EFFECTIVENESS

Goal: Seek to become more effective and efficient in providing service, programs and resources to our membership.

- As stated earlier, explore technological capabilities for one on one electronic communication to our membership.
- Improve communication in a timely and complete dissemination of Board business (i.e. posting of Board minutes and all accompanying reports as well as HOD business)
- Effective and timely utilization of web site as a communication tool.
- Creation of mentoring and succession plan for Board members. Establishment of required training program for Board members.
- Utilization of at-large Board member status.
- Budget provision for new office telephone system which would allow for additional line(s), individual voice mail capabilities, etc.
- Future budget provisions to either add an additional part-time person or create existing part-time position into full-time position.
- Further establish and enhance relationship with IHSA. Continue internal communications within administrative personnel. Pursue inclusion of coaches within defined areas of Illinois Swimming Coach related programs.