

Dear Members,

Attached within this document are some suggestions, ideas, and tips to help you run an amazing Synchro de Mayo event. Events may vary in size and scope but that's okay. The most important thing is that we all participate and that we share back what we did via Facebook so that it has the appearance of a large-scale national event.

Facebook allows us to aggregate all the events into one big event. To do so, please post videos, pictures, and any other content you want to share on YOUR OWN Facebook page and TAG Synchro de Mayo. By tagging Synchro de Mayo, all the content will be visible on the Synchro de Mayo page but it will also be available on your page for your entire network to see. This step is key to spreading our event to a mass audience to gain more exposure. To tag Synchro de Mayo, you must have already liked the Synchro de Mayo Facebook page. Then you can tag the video or photo just like you would tag a friend. If you want to tag Synchro de Mayo in a status update or post, you must type "@Synchro de Mayo". The @ symbol will prompt Facebook to know that you want to tag something and it will start suggesting names from your network based on what you type. That's all you have to do. It's that simple!

The biggest benefit to you, as a club, is it provides a fantastic opportunity to bring new members into your program. The trial membership is an easy and affordable way to introduce someone to the sport for a short period of time, like Synchro de Mayo. This is the first step to acquiring new members. To provide a little extra motivation, USA Synchro is awarding prizes to the clubs with the greatest number of trial members registered between May 1st and May 14th. The prizes are as follows:

Place	Prizes
First	\$500 gift card to SwimOutlet.com <i>Sync Or Swim</i> prize pack (includes DVD, tote bag, t-shirt and swim cap)
Second	\$250 gift card to SwimOutlet.com <i>Sync Or Swim</i> prize pack
Third	\$100 gift card to SwimOutlet.com <i>Sync Or Swim</i> prize pack
Honorable Mention	<i>Sync Or Swim</i> prize pack
Honorable Mention	<i>Sync Or Swim</i> prize pack

We hope the attached information is useful. In addition to the content we provide here, we want the Facebook page to be a resource for you to connect with other teams, ask questions, and get advice. So please, between now and the event, do not hesitate to use the page as an open discussion forum to help you make your event the best it can be.

We look forward to seeing you on Facebook!

Sincerely,

The USA Synchro Marketing Committee

EVENT IDEAS

Below are some simple ideas/thought-starters for activities to enhance your event. If you have other ideas please visit us on Facebook and tell us about your idea. You might spur additional creativity and imagination in other clubs.

- Free clinic where they learn basic skills and a quick beginner routine
- Synchro challenge with local personalities (could be a top ranked speed swimmer in your area – it doesn't have to be someone famous)
- Synchro show
- Makeup booth - like face painting only kids get their makeup done like a synchro swimmer, by a synchro swimmer
- Knox Booth - people can ask questions, kids can have their hair knoxed/styled, etc
- Craft table where they can design their own swimsuits with glitter, crayons, sequins, etc
- "My Dream Synchro Routine" (see attached example)
- If you are hosting a meet, have photo ops with competitors (or set up a "photo booth" where people can dress up in head pieces and caps and get their pictures taken - might combine this with Knox and makeup booth).
- Create fun routines and post them on their Facebook page and tag Synchro de Mayo
- Host "bring a friend to practice" day
- Post your favorite synchro YouTube routine on your Facebook page and tag Synchro de Mayo
- Invite swimmers taking lessons to bring friends with them for a day
- Offer participants and community members a free screening of *Sync or Swim* at rec center or local library. Filmmaker Cheryl Furjanic is willing to provide a free DVD to each team that participates.
- Synchro trivia event: "How well do you know synchro?"
- Create your own "see yourself as a synchro swimmer" booth/photo op. If it's of interest, *Sync or Swim* filmmaker Cheryl Furjanic might be able to make a high-resolution downloadable version of this cut-out for teams to download, get printed at Kinkos, mount onto foam core. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/23166402@N06/2786698993/in/set-72157626554638496>

My Dream Synchro Routine

My routine would be a _____

I would swim to _____

I would swim with _____

And my suit would look like this...

HOW TO PULL IN THE COMMUNITY

Now that you have some ideas of what to do during your events, you'll need to drum up some attendance. Below are some basic suggestions for pulling in attendees.

- Have team members (parents and kids alike) wear flowered synchro caps (or team caps) and hand out information around town (outside of popular grocery store, etc). Maybe have them to land drills every 15 minutes. Maybe have some balloons. Bring an iPad and put some footage on it to show people what synchro is like. Make it fun and inviting!
- Complete attached flyer with specific information for your event. Print any size you'd like and post everywhere and anywhere. Target locations where you tend to see lots of families i.e. shopping malls, libraries, fitness centers, day care centers, Gymboree's, Chuck E Cheese's, Starbucks, etc.
- Use elements from flyer template to create a 4x6 note cards to hand out to members, day care, swim lesson students, etc.
- Invite all team members and swim lesson students to bring a friend.
- Invite your co-workers who have young daughters.
- Reach out to local Girl Scout troops, youth groups, country clubs, community centers, schools, PTAs, etc.

BUILDING MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

Getting to Know Your Local Media

Reporters are busy people with tight deadlines. They are constantly walking a fine line between delivering relevant news and selling newspapers/engaging their audience. The best way to build media relationships is to treat them with respect and give them relevant news in a format they can use. Here are some quick relationship-building tips that should help you with your local media.

- 1. Read local papers/watch local news.** Find out what your local reporters are covering and ensure you have the right people on your media list - nothing annoys reporter's more than getting information that does not remotely apply to their beat.
- 2. Recruit the media.** Want to get covered? Actively approach reporters at local papers/media to join your club and/or association as a community advisor or participate as an emcee at synchro events. Leverage these relationships and encourage members of the media to cover Synchro. Our strongest proponents are those who have witnessed synchro firsthand!
- 3. Talk to your members.** Members of your club or association may have connections to the media of which you may not be aware. Don't hesitate to ask around and find out if your members have friends/acquaintances who are reporters. Try to leverage these relationships to get media coverage as well as free ad space or airtime. Every connection helps!
- 4. Make connections.** Contact your local press club, reporters/writers associations and even local journalism schools and provide them with information about synchro. Make sure that the club or association is included as potential spokespeople on local speakers bureau lists and volunteer to speak to these groups about issues regarding Olympic sports, fitness, life-long activities, cross training etc.
- 5. Don't bash reporters.** If a reporter gets the story wrong, send a polite note thanking them for covering you or your issue and diplomatically point out any errors or omissions. Do not send an angry letter to the editor. Remember that it's never wise to make enemies in the media.
- 6. Reward the media.** Create a media award for reporters in your area who have been especially attentive to covering synchro. Make this an annual award and invite reporters to attend or speak - this can help you make friends *and* gain visibility.
- 7. Give them the VIP treatment.** Provide complimentary tickets to synchro events or create personalized invitations for reporters with whom you have a personal relationship. Always remember to send thank you notes to reporters who have provided coverage for your club or association.
- 8. Make sure you provide REAL news.** REAL news is information that is relevant to a media outlet's core audience NOT (unfortunately!) news that is relevant to synchro. Try and put yourself in a reporter's shoes and evaluate whether your synchro news is:
 - Relevant to a large number of people
 - Timely - the topic is already in the news
 - New - it reveals new information, statistics, and facts about an important issue or an interesting spin on an old topic.

MEDIA PITCHING TIPS

Today, reporters and producers find it easier to receive email pitches that quickly outline your story idea and how it might work for their media outlet. Reporters are busy people; you may only have one minute to impress upon them the importance and relevance of your story idea. Be sure to follow up on every pitch to receive feedback from reporters. Use these tips to help you construct a strong, successful pitch.

MAGAZINES

- Consider a magazine's regular columns and features and how your story might fit in a particular section. Once you have identified a section for your story, reach out to the designated reporter with your pitch. If you do not have their contact information, call the magazine and ask who works on that section. Email the reporter with your story idea, which should be straight to the point and should include details of the trend, interview subjects, key statistics and images.
- Keep the reporter's story format in mind. The clearer you make it that your story falls neatly into their section, the more likely they will be to use it.
- Call the reporter to follow up on your proposed story idea the day after you send the email to discuss the story's suitability for that reporter and publication. • Lead time: 4-6 months

NEWSPAPERS

Articles and Columns

- Research past issues and online records to find a reporter who has covered a topic you plan to pitch. Email the reporter with details of your story including the trend, interview subjects, key statistics and images.
- For event coverage, fax a media alert to assignment desks and/or photo desk.

Calendar Listings

- Submit abbreviated media alert featuring who, what, where and when of your event to calendar listings editors.
- Lead time: 1-2 weeks for articles and columns, 2-5 days for calendar listings

BROADCAST

- Invite broadcast media to attend photo/interview opportunities with a media alert that bullets out the who, what, where and when for your event.
- Pitch segment ideas and in-studio appearances with emails to segment producers offering clear details as to the subject of the interview and trend it represents and the deliverables you can provide for the interview, i.e., media worthy spokesperson, key statistics and images.
- Sometimes broadcast interviews will be taped and edited to be more concise, and then aired on a later date.
- Lead time: 1-5 days for an event, 2-4 weeks for a segment

RADIO

- Email program directors to offer your spokesperson as an interview subject on-air to discuss a current fitness trend or fitness need in the community. Your spokesperson should be able to discuss your club or associations coming events/initiatives. Be sure to include details on the topic and the expertise offered by your spokesperson.
- Sometimes radio interviews will be taped and edited to be more concise, and aired on a later date.
- Lead time: 1-5 days for an event, 2-4 weeks for a segment

ONLINE

- Treat online reporters the same as you would newspaper reporters, except know that their deadlines are shorter, and they are able to turn a story around in a shorter period of time.
- Lead time: 1 day-2 weeks

OTHER TIPS

- Following up is the most important part of pitching. Don't be afraid to call a reporter multiple times until you receive a verbal or written confirmation. If they pass, it is still a confirmation that they read and considered your pitch.
- Don't get discouraged! There are many reasons why a reporter may not choose to cover your story, i.e., breaking news, recent coverage of similar topic, etc.
- Be respectful if a reporter tells you they are on deadline. Ask when might be a better time to speak with them about your story idea.

TALKING POINTS FOR SYNCHRO DE MAYO

Whether you are about to speak to a reporter, a parent, or just a potential spectator, you'll want to convey the essential pieces of information in a concise and compelling manor. Here are some talking points to help you do that.

EVENT SPECIFIC:

- Synchro de Mayo is an opportunity for anyone and everyone to learn about, experience, and/or try synchronized swimming.
- Synchro de Mayo week will take place May 1st-6th, with the majority of events occurring on Saturday, May 5th.
- Through Synchro de Mayo, clubs can generate new interest, gain exposure, and potentially increase future membership.
- Everyone gets the chance to be a synchronized swimmer for the day, or to simply observe this wonderful sport.
- More information can be found at [Facebook.com/SynchrodeMayo](https://www.facebook.com/SynchrodeMayo)

GENERAL USA SYNCHRO INFO:

- Synchronized swimming is grace under pressure. It is a demanding sport requiring great strength, endurance, flexibility and exceptional breath control.
- United States Synchronized Swimming (USA Synchro) serves as the National Governing Body for the sport of synchronized swimming
- Synchronized swimming is the only all-female Olympic sport.
- USA Synchro is a membership-based, not-for-profit organization that services the sport from the grassroots level to the National Team.
- The mission statement of USA Synchro is "to provide leadership and resources for the promotion and growth of synchronized swimming, to achieve competitive excellence at all levels and to develop broad based participation."
- For more information, visit <http://www.usasynchro.org>.