

ACBL MANAGEMENT REPORT

Spring 2022

Bridge Services

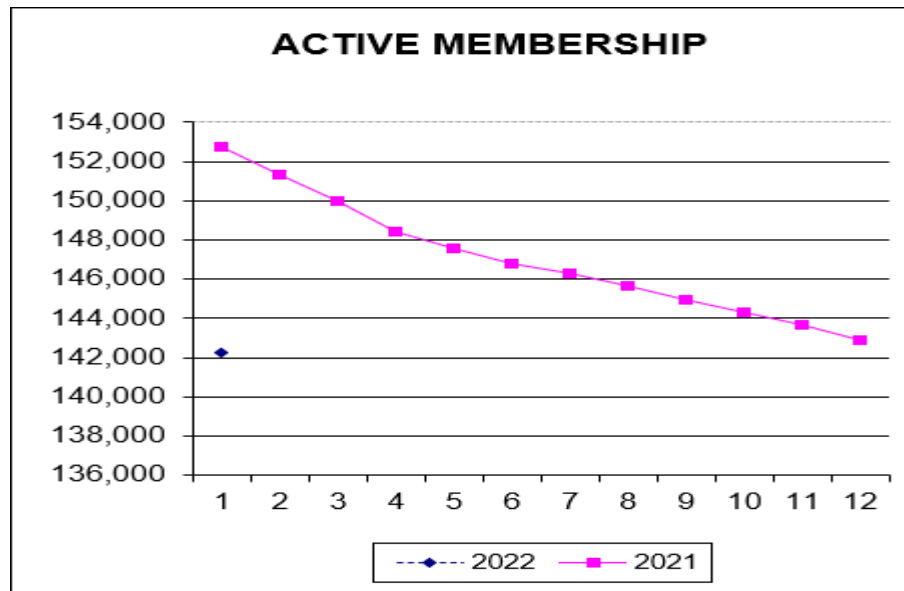
Club and Membership Services

As last reported in Fall 2021, ACBL's membership count has continued to decline slightly each month but the curve has flattened. Total membership is down 6.9% compared to the prior year. Note that the chart below does not include our new Guest Membership Program which includes over 3,000 new Guest Members since September 2020.

Active Membership Statistics

as of Feb 1,-2022

Membership Category	2022	2021	Change	%
Life Masters	44,025	45,967	(1,942)	-4.2%
Non-Life Masters	94,051	102,289	(8,238)	-8.1%
Total Paying Members	138,076	148,256	(10,180)	-6.9%
Active Unpaid LM	4,190	4,508	318	-7.1%
Total Members	142,266	152,764	(10,498)	-6.9%



Factoring in normal seasonal trends, Virtual Club Games' table count was steady through November/December 2021. January saw a large increase due to the overwhelming success of

Silver Linings Week. The table count for Bridge Base Online (BBO) operating as a club was stable, again factoring in seasonal trends. Face-to-face tables had been growing steadily, November being our best month since prior to the pandemic, but the arrival of the Omicron coronavirus variant set us back yet again. Almost 30% fewer clubs ran games in January than had run games in November.

	Monthly Table Count				
	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>
Virtual Clubs	76,474	66,370	59,141	56,203	87,539
F2F Clubs	47,020	51,378	58,487	46,973	41,831
BBO	208,991	215,853	205,080	217,245	243,769
# Clubs running					
F2F games		1,257	1,369	1,359	1,088

The return to in-person play coupled with a large number of new club managers and the long layoff for existing ones has caused the ACBL to experience a large increase in the need for club support over the last few months. In mid-January we reinstated the remote support team to assist in taking calls. This will be monitored going forward, and we will continue to work with the IT Department to improve our tools to better understand times/days where support needs to be increased.

Field Operations

The Field Operations team has not run an online Regional since November 2021, but preparations are well underway for the next one scheduled to be held over the Thursday through Sunday immediately following the Spring '22 NABC.

After a two-year hiatus, the Field Operations team ran a very successful Fall '21 NABC in Austin, TX. While table count was much lighter than pre-pandemic levels, the player experience was excellent for the more than 2,000 players who attended.

The team (including IT and Marketing) successfully ran beta testing of the new online pre-registration app at one Regional held on Hilton Head Island during February. Two further test tournaments are ongoing as of the preparation of this report. Plans are in place to use this application during the Spring '22 NABC for the Regional-rated events only. Entries for NABC and NABC+ events will continue to be sold through BridgeWinners as the ACBL has done for the past several years.

ACBL Tournament Directors continue to provide live help on BBO and online Zoom sessions with players to assist them with playing online.

Meeting Services

Meeting Services Operations

As the ACBL moves forward in support of the return of face-to-face bridge, the ACBL continues to maintain its “safe-return” plan. VOW Digital Health will continue to perform vaccination clearance. For instance, during the upcoming Spring '22 NABC the Meeting Services team will have four Vaccination Verification Stations in place for members to obtain

wristbands after they show their Vow clearance. Additionally, a medic will be on site for medical emergencies.

These vigilant efforts to safely return to face-to-face play proved to be valuable. Only one positive COVID-19 case was reported during the Fall '21 NABC, and one COVID-19 positive direct contact was reported post-event. Contact tracing and communication regarding the positive case was sent to all players who had direct contact during gameplay with the COVID-19 positive individual within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms.

Housing Management

2021 FALL NABC, AUSTIN, TX

While there were challenges during the Fall NABC and new protocols to navigate, overall, the ACBL held a safe, successful event as evidenced by the following:

Total room nights: 6,712

Total tables: 5,256

Total individual players: 2,232

Net profit/(loss): (\$59,397)

While the tournament did experience a moderate loss, ACBL management was incredibly pleased with the outcome. We actively managed to reduce the financial risk by negotiating with the host hotel for no attrition and halving the food and beverage minimum spending commitment. We did experience higher than expected costs related to COVID-19 related safety measures.

Most reservations were booked online:

NEW	E-mail	Fax	Mail	Phone	RLM	MRB	Web	Other	Total
TOTALS	0	0	0	263	144	0	1168	17	1592
% of Total Reservations	0%	0%	0%	17%	9%	0%	73%	1%	

However, when it comes to modifying reservations, most preferred other methods. Cancellations were skewed towards calling in as well.

MODIFIED	Other	Web	Total
TOTALS	877	208	1085
% of Total Reservations	81%	19%	

CANCELLED	Other	Web	Total
TOTALS	363	297	660
% of Total Reservations	55%	45%	

In addition, note the total chargebacks that ConferenceDirect was unable to collect on the ACBL's behalf. This relates to our deposit requirements at the time of booking, and, although we publicized that the charge will be labelled "ConferenceDirect", in several instances members rejected the charge. This was more common when someone booked rooms for others. The \$4,409 number is about half of the total number of chargebacks ConferenceDirect originally received. We are currently gathering data to guide a decision as to whether an adjustment to our Hotel Reservation Cancellation Policy should be made. Following industry standards regarding cancellation fees might be more appropriate. The ACBL's cancellation policy was put in place to prevent members from booking rooms and cancelling at the last

minute and, since its inception, the ACBL has experienced a very low slippage rate (individuals canceling last minute or not showing up) compared to other similar events. The cost involved with the inability to collect is something to be mindful of, and a decision will be made soon.

DESCRIPTION	RATE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Housing Services			
Housing Management Surcharge (for falling under 7000 room nights)	\$7,236.04	1	\$7,236.04
Onsite Services	\$0.00	5	\$0.00
Reimbursable Expenses	\$902.72	1	\$902.72
Total Housing Services Cost			\$8,138.76
Deposit Collection			
5% Processing Fee Per Deposit Collected	\$310,050.18	5%	\$15,502.51
Chargebacks Unable to be Collected	\$4,409.97	1	\$4,409.97
Total Deposit Collection Cost			\$19,912.48
Refunds due to ACBL			
Cancellation charges (minus 5% for ConferenceDirect)	-\$21,876.07	1	-\$21,876.07
Revenue share (15%)	-\$6,175.17	1	-\$6,175.17
Amount Due to ACBL			-\$28,051.24
Grand Total			\$0.00

2022 SPRING NABC, RENO, NV

Historically the ACBL has experienced a very high room night pick-up in Reno. Due to the low group room rate at the host hotels, The Row, even with COVID-19 concerns remaining, bookings have been strong – 9,021 total room nights reserved as of February 16. This number includes staff, and the sharp uptick in the pick-up shows when staff were added into the room block.



2022 SUMMER NABC, PROVIDENCE, RI

Room night pick-up for the Summer NABC up was at 3,478 as of February 16, 2022.



2022 FALL NABC, PHOENIX, AZ

Patron member room blocks for the Fall NABC are scheduled to open Tuesday, March 22. General membership room blocks are scheduled to open Tuesday, May 24.

Future NABC Locations

The NABC Site Selection Committee recently has begun working through recommendations to bring to the Board for additional site selection decisions for Summer 2026 and Spring 2027. After local leadership approvals of the committee’s top choices, ConferenceDirect will immediately begin the RFP process. Although the Meeting Planning team was hoping to present options during the Spring Board meetings, it is not possible at this time. Timelines to present options to the Board following careful considerations and site visits will be forthcoming.

Finance

As ACBL continues to navigate through the coronavirus pandemic, it had yet another positive and successful year. The change in net assets from operations was a gain of \$2.17 million, \$1.4 million more than originally budgeted. Fortunately, face-to-face game play gained momentum through the first in-person NABC (in November) since the start of the pandemic.

The main contributors to the higher than budgeted results were the revenue increase of approximately \$1.5 million from government assistance through the Employee Retention Credit and a decrease in expenses in Marketing totaling \$602,000, Field Operations totaling \$652,000 (mainly due to no online game fees), Accounting totaling \$132,000, and Information Technology totaling \$180,000. Club sanction fees were within budget and tournament fees were \$1.6 million below budget. Non-operating gains increased the total 2021 gain to \$2.63 million as a result of the \$377,000 market value increase in the investment

portfolio, a pension liability decrease of \$306,000, and the lack of necessity to pay out the \$221,000 budgeted legal settlements during 2021.

Capital expenditures for 2021 totaled \$9,000, a decrease of \$43,000 from the \$52,000 spent in 2020. ACBL's net operating cash increased by \$924,000, ending the year at \$5.5 million. Investment reserves ended the year \$377,000 higher at \$8.1 million.

ACBL management presented a 2022 fiscal year budget during the November 2021 Board meeting that was approved. That 2022 budget projected a net loss of \$858,000 mainly due to investment in information technology initiatives. Capital expenditures are budgeted at \$10,000 with no major expenditures planned.

The field work for the 2021 ACBL audit has been completed, and the report will soon be completed as well. The audited financial statements will be presented at the Audit Committee meeting during the March 2022 Board meeting. There were no significant issues reported as a result of the audit. The 2021 audits of the ACBL Charity Foundation and the ACBL Educational Foundation are expected to be completed by mid-March. The IRS Form 990 returns for all three entities are currently being prepared.

Human Resources

Staffing

HEADCOUNT

Headquarters – 55 full time employees

Field – 18 full time, 119 part time, and one previously full time Tournament Director remains on furlough

Turnover in 2021 – 11.22% (10 Tournament Directors and 14 headquarters employees of which 12 retired, 10 left for other opportunities, one was involuntary terminated, and one was deceased)

NEW HIRES AND PROMOTIONS

Josh Restuccio, IT Development Manager, joined the ACBL on November 22, 2021. Josh is an experienced software engineer and manager. He has a bachelor's degree in Computer Science. Josh reports to Susie Cordell.

Jamil Abdelfattah, Software Developer, joined the ACBL on December 27, 2021. He brings several years of development experience to the team. Jamil reports to Josh Restuccio.

Matt Turner joined the ACBL on January 17, 2022. Matt is a Software Developer and reports to Josh Restuccio. Matt is a University of Kentucky graduate, earning his bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Mathematics and his master's degree in Computer Science.

Josie Yesmunt joined the ACBL on February 28, 2022 as a Business Analyst. Josie's experience includes analysis, testing, and quality assurance. Josie earned her BBA in Supply Chain Management from the University of Toledo. She reports to Cayce Read.

Jeff Edelstein joined the ACBL on January 17, 2022 as Assistant National Recorder, reporting to Robb Gordon. Jeff earned his law degree from Florida State University Law School. He is an Emerald Life Master and won the North American Pairs in 2019.

Blakely Meyers joined the ACBL on February 21, 2022. She is our Education Program Manager. Reporting to Stephanie Threlkeld, Blakely will coordinate learning programs, including the Online Teacher Workshop and virtual program ACBL Intro to Bridge. Blakely brings to the ACBL experience in instructional design, desktop publishing, graphic design, performance consulting, and project management.

Christina Goldsby, Meeting Services Coordinator, also joined the ACBL on February 21, 2022. Christina will provide valuable administrative support in Meeting Services and will assist with various events at NABCs. Christina reports to Sara Beth Raab.

OPEN POSITIONS

Service Desk Support Specialist

Employee Benefits

For 2022, Cigna will continue as the ACBL's provider of medical, dental, and vision benefits, and the plans will not change. Medical insurance premiums will increase by 5% (lower than the U.S. average increase of 7.8%) while dental and vision insurance premiums will not change. The ACBL currently has 63 employees who are eligible to enroll in benefits.

Information Technology

Application Development Projects

MARKETING AND MEMBER SERVICES

The IT Department delivered multiple changes to the WordPress Content Management System (acbl.org) to increase its speed/performance, updated the ACBL's firewall rules to cut down on cyber-attacks, upgraded Amazon Web Services (AWS) for better site performance, created new load balancing rules to enable better site performance, and modified access to better enable Google Analytics. This update is still in process.

BRIDGE OPERATIONS/TOURNAMENTS

Working with the Bridge Operations and Marketing teams, IT has been developing the Registration application to enable ACBL members to register and pay for upcoming face-to-face tournaments. We released Phase 1 in January as planned and delivered it to the Hilton Head Regional in February. ACBL staff was onsite to demonstrate and assist members with their online registration. Over the course of the tournament, 23 members used the application. We will continue this slow rollout with the Manatee Regional where Marketing will share

information electronically (but no staff will be on site to push trial of the application). In addition to the Manatee Regional, we will be rolling it out during the Oregon Trail Regional. We have a list of requirements for the upcoming Spring '21 NABC as well as specs for future releases of the application.

The IT Department made improvements to the Masterpoint Engine special events calendar, allowing for queueing of special events months in advance. In addition, IT fixed AWS scaling rules to handle additional load more efficiently. We created new application workflows to process large games files previously restricted due to maximum file size limitations.

OPERATIONS SUPPORT

The IT Department continued its support of online bridge play, supporting clubs and tournaments, members, and employees by researching and resolving issues. Examples of issues researched and resolved since November include Braintree payment process for storing credit card information when a customer had a preexisting information stored on Braintree; adjusting scheduled accounting jobs to run later in the day; troubleshooting and resolving masterpoint® issues; resolving club result database connection timeouts that resulted in my.acbl.org/club-results being inaccessible; troubleshooting BBO games and reprocessing; and troubleshooting issues with TourneyTrax errors, etc.

Business Intelligence

DATA WAREHOUSE

The IT Department has added several new tables to the Data Warehouse to support advanced reporting and record auditing. We have continued the development of the database to support the new Registration application, adding all of the new objects and logic to support the new requirements. We have finished the pipeline to support the automated updating of that database from the TRAX data sources. In addition to that, we have added the functionality to calculate “My Next Rank” as well as upcoming tournament opportunities for ACBL members to earn masterpoints. That logic will be implemented in the MyACBL application this Spring which will replace the broken logic currently there.

ANALYTICS/VISUALIZATIONS

Working with the Field Operations teams, the IT Department developed Tableau workbooks for reporting on the daily GNT club games and publishing the list of qualifiers. We have developed an initial dashboard to support the release of the Registration application and give valuable insights to our Tournament Directors and Field Operations teams on how members are registering for events and managing their existing registrations.

REPORT MIGRATION

The IT Department is continuing the monumental effort to migrate the reporting from the old AS400 platform. We are actively working on building the pipeline to be able to deliver reports and graphics through email distributions as well as building the triggering and scheduling elements to be able to deliver these emails in a purely automated manner.

Infrastructure Projects and Support

TELEPHONY CLOUD

The IT Department rolled out the Call Center application to Member and Club Services, allowing for member calls to be answered directly, including the “press zero” function. In addition, IT rolled out the Call Center application to Club Support which consists of Tournament Directors in the field answering calls for club issues and questions.

SUPPORTING BOD/ADVISORY COUNCIL

The IT Department designed and implemented the new email configuration in support of the transition from District Director to Regional Director. We also continued to work with the Administrative Coordinator to determine a long-term strategy for Board meetings and voting on motions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The IT Department continued performing weekly maintenance and monthly operating system and cyber security updates, continually monitoring and managing data backups, performing break/fix, and resolving issues. Also, we continue to work collaboratively with the IT Development team in support of production and infrastructure related issues.

TD SUPPORT

We have been supporting the return to in-person play by bringing Tournament Directors back into the ACBL domain and providing new hardware purchases and configuration or updates to existing devices.

IT SERVICE DESK

We provided direct support to ACBL employees, both at headquarters and in the field and both remotely and locally. The staff also supported the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council and, occasionally, ACBL members. The preparation for return to in-person play, the Fall '21 NABC, and the return of employees to headquarters, along with substantial employee turnover, have put a strain on the Service Desk operations but, overall, the IT Department has been successful in managing support issues.

NABC

The IT Department provided substantial support for the successful Fall '21 NABC and is preparing for the Spring '22 NABC.

Resources

NEW EMPLOYEES

The IT Department onboarded new employee Josh Restuccio as the Development Manager. The ACBL also hired and onboarded two new software developers, Jamil Abdelfattah and Matt Turner. The onboarding of new IT employees entails introducing them to all the myriad of applications and technologies that ACBL utilizes, as well as integrating those persons into our business processes. Their onboarding phase is complete, and they are working on support tickets and driving new projects.

Currently, IT has openings for an Infrastructure Service Desk Support Specialist and a Business Analyst. We have extended an offer (that was accepted during the preparation of this report) to a candidate for the Business Analyst position who will focus on gathering and defining business functional requirements and turning those functional requirements into technical specs that allow the Development Team to focus on delivering to the business need. This will allow the IT Department to work more efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our business. We are starting the process of interviewing for the Infrastructure Service Desk Support Specialist.

VENDOR PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

The current vendor partnership with CodeMotion has been working very effectively. This vendor has helped in the development of the Registration application. Vendor Chetu has been ineffective, and we are preparing to end this relationship as we evaluate and explore opportunities with another third party vendor, Escola S.A., a Polish corporation. We believe this partnership can be more effective as Escola's provided resource, Marcin Wasłowicz, has much needed bridge experience.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT (IT TOOLS)

We implemented Jira Service Desk to keep up with non-project related issues. This enables the IT Department to have one place for all information on service desk issues as well as project related items being worked. This tool continues to help the team become more effective, efficient, and collaborative and will allow us to also work with vendors within the same tool.

We also created Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) for project/support tickets. This workflow is controlled by Jira. A project infrastructure was also created to organize tickets for reporting projects/support efforts.

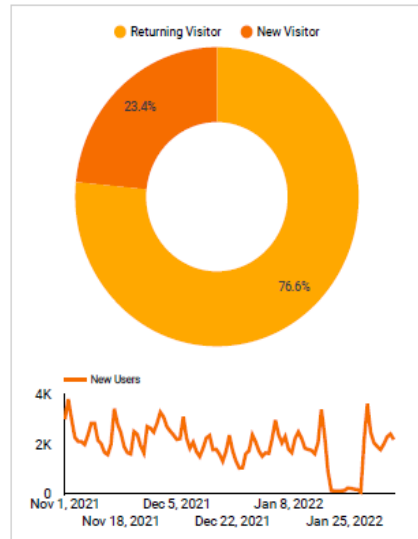
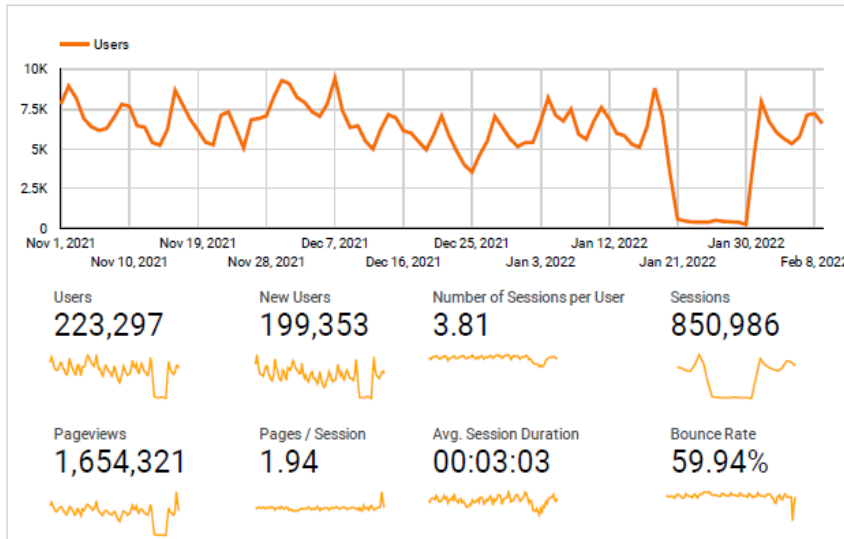
Marketing

Digital Marketing Efforts

ACBL WEBSITE

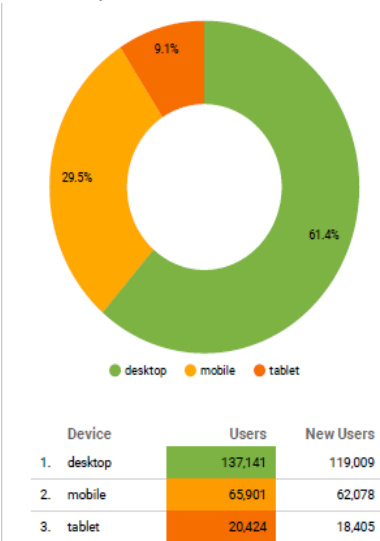
Metrics for the website remain consistent and strong across the board. Page and content refinements are ongoing based on business owner and member feedback. Our top performing pages continue to be Just Play Bridge, Home, Play Bridge, Upcoming Events, and Learn. We have also identified key usage times, such as 4:00-6:00 p.m. CST on Tuesdays when the It's Your Call email is distributed. The traffic is almost four times higher than other times of the week. We are exploring targeted advertising for upcoming events or other initiatives in conjunction with that post.

NOV. 1-JAN. 14

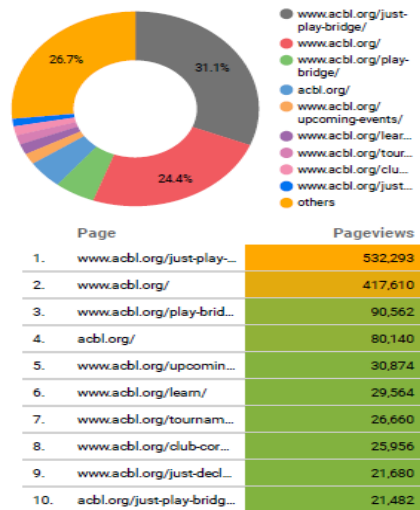


Note: The dip from Jan. 21-Jan. 30 was due to a caching plugin issue on the site.

Users by Device



Top Pages



Top Searches

convention card	302
stac	231
convention	193
acbl	147
acblscore	130
conventions	121
club results	114
just play bridge	113
live	107
tournaments	99

EMAIL MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

In 2021, a total of 652 email campaigns were sent (not including automated emails), averaging 2.5 per day. The average open rate was 44%, and the average click-through rate was 4.5%.

Due to Apple's software update at the end of 2021, measurements of open rates will become somewhat inflated. After completing an audit, it appears that, for the ACBL's audience, this will be an increase of 10%-15%. Still, the open rate remains a good tool for comparison among campaigns. The click-through rate measurement was not affected by the Apple software update.

From January 1 through February 10, 2022, 89 email campaigns have been sent (not including automated emails), averaging three per day. The average open rate was 53%, and the average click-through rate was 3%. Recent industry benchmarks showed that nonprofits have an average 26% open rate and 2.7% click-through rate (compared to the leisure industry's 17.7% and 2%, respectively, metrics previously used), so the ACBL remains ahead in both measurements.

Two new email design templates were created to modernize the look and feel of ACBL emails as well as to improve their readability. All other email templates were updated.

A special email campaign to lapsed members was created and launched in early February to approximately 22,000 former ACBL members. The open rate for this email was 40%, and the click-through rate was 2.5%. A total of 423 lapsed members renewed from February 1 to 13 compared to fewer than 300 during the month of January. Follow-up communications have been planned.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The ACBL continues to utilize multiple social media platforms (primarily **Facebook** but also **Instagram** and **Twitter**) to engage with current members and others interested in bridge.

As of February 2022, the ACBL **Facebook** page had 11,350 followers, a 6% increase since February 2021. In an average week, posts reach more than 7,000 people. We have expanded the ACBL's **Facebook** content to make it more engaging and frequent.

Twitter posts are similar to **Facebook** posts but are tailored to fit the platform. Additionally, the tool is used to promote bridge to media outlets. As of February 2022, the ACBL's **Twitter** account had 3,672 followers, a 21% increase since February 2021.

The team has continued to grow the ACBL's **Instagram** page as well. Posts range from member-submitted photos to promotions of upcoming online events and more. The use of hashtags (such as #playbridge, #bridge, or #cardgame) continues to be refined. As of February 2022, ACBL's **Instagram** account had 1,792 followers, a 13% increase since February 2021.

Public Relations

Memphis firm Obsidian Public Relations continued to assist with several campaigns, including the ACBL brand refresh, the new website, social media, ACBL Intro to Bridge, and media relations.

Based on feedback from the Teacher Roundtable and Unit/Districts, the Marketing team developed instructional materials and an agency-led webinar on **Facebook** ad creation and deployment during November. The webinar was well received. The recording and supporting materials are posted on the Marketing page [here](#).

Spring '22 NABC communication, safety protocols, and press-releases are being drafted for publication. Public relations initiatives are being implemented for all 2022 NABCs.

ACBL Intro to Bridge **Facebook** ads continue. They have been refined to target lookalike audiences and to include new messaging and graphics. Ads are running to support the different sections of Intro to Bridge classes.

We continue monitoring and following up with local and national media opportunities.

Creative Services

Creative Services has completed the final steps of rebranding the website, templates for internal communications (PowerPoint, letterhead, etc.), and templates for external communications (designs for automated emails and regularly occurring emails). To implement this, we have been working cross-functionally with other departments. Additionally, the corresponding brand guide was finished and distributed internally and to key external stakeholders. The brand guide and logo suite can be found on the [website here](#).

Email signatures for all ACBL staff have been created and added universally so that all email signatures are cohesive. The signatures include contact information with the new branding coupled with a promotional banner that changes monthly.

Much work has been done to update NABC signage, first for the Fall '21 NABC and in an expanded capacity for the Spring '22 NABC. The Marketing team has worked with Meeting Services to overhaul signage for increased visibility, including pop-up banners, directional signage, booths, and more. The new signage is more consistent across the board with colorized event titles to match the schedule. New name tags, including ribbons to signify roles, and masks for staff, Tournament Directors, and Board members were also created for the Fall'21 NABC. They will continue to be provided going forward.

For both social media and email marketing we have been adding animation and GIFs to further engagement with our content.

We have also worked closely with the Bridge Bulletin to fine tune its design for features, recurring content, magazine covers, and the general layout as it transitions design duties back in-house.

Guest Membership Program

We continue promoting Guest Memberships with over 2,800 Guest Members coming through the program. We currently have 460 active Guest Members. We launched the \$29 first-year annual membership fee promotion on February 15 and have successfully converted 1,054 Guest Members to full ACBL membership. This promotion will continue to be offered and is automatically sent to Guest Members in a lead-up to the expiration of their trial membership term.

Guest Members continue to receive monthly reminders regarding the date the online Bridge Bulletin is available as well as highlights on effectively utilizing their ACBL membership. Emails about Guest Membership are also being sent to prospects, including Just Play Bridge players and non-members who have downloaded the older Learn to Play Bridge software.

Recruitment Incentives

ACBL's Recruiter Incentives Program pays teachers and club managers \$10 when someone joins and \$10 each year when they renew for years two and three. In 2021 the ACBL remitted \$22,500 in recruiter bonuses to club managers and teachers. In addition, 2021 fourth quarter incentive payments totaling \$4,500 were paid in January.

Cooperative Advertising Program

The Cooperative Advertising Program (CAP) reimburses 50% of the cost of an ad campaign up to a maximum \$500 reimbursement per campaign promoting bridge lessons and/or newcomer programs. In 2021, the ACBL reimbursed \$10,423 under CAP. This was much less than the amount reimbursed in a usual year due to the lack of in-person teaching programs and club games resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. Ad campaign approvals have recently begun to increase as more clubs have started to reopen. Through the first week of February, \$2,561 in reimbursements have been processed.

Alzheimer's Association Partnership

In 2021, about 300 Units and clubs raised \$917,000 for the Alzheimer's Association's The Longest Day® fundraiser, bringing the cumulative total raised by the ACBL to \$7.8 million for Alzheimer's patient care and research. In 2022, all Virtual Club Games held the weekend of June 18 and 19 will be considered The Longest Day® games, and the sanction fees will be donated to the Alzheimer's Association. Clubs that have gone back to face-to-face play will be able to choose any day during the week of June 19 through 26 to hold their events and offer upgraded games. The Marketing team is also working with the Alzheimer's Association to schedule later this year informational webinars about the latest scientific research and caregiver/patient support opportunities for ACBL members.

Education

ACBL Intro to Bridge

In 2021, in consultation with Patty Tucker's Bridge With Patty LLC, the ACBL created a new online course for beginners called ACBL Intro to Bridge. The course is comprised of ten lessons (once a week for ten weeks), each 90-minutes long. Classes are highly interactive with students getting virtual "cards" in their hands very soon into the first class. As part of the course, students are given 90 days of free access to the Shark Bridge app that can be used to practice specific lesson hands between classes. Students receive automated emails both before and after each class. They include recordings of the class, practice handouts, and the Shark Bridge codes to access practice hands.

Three teachers in addition to Patty Tucker have been trained to teach the course, and, to date, 30 courses including the pilot have been taken by over 1,300 students.

Toward the end of the course, students are encouraged to sign up for ACBL Guest Membership and are given access to a private **Facebook** group exclusive to graduates of the program. Students use this group to ask bridge questions and connect with other graduates to schedule bridge games. To date almost 200 students have joined the group. By the end of the course, students should feel comfortable in a 0-5 masterpoint game and/or receiving further instruction from local or online bridge teachers. They are encouraged to find teachers in their local area, using the Find-a-Teacher search, or to connect with one of the teachers on the

online teacher list to continue their bridge journey. The ACBL has also surveyed club managers and teachers to compile a list of in-person and online games for 0-5 and 0-20 masterpoint players. The list can be found on the Learn page of the website and is shared with all Guest Members and ACBL Intro to Bridge graduates.

When surveyed after the class, 89% of respondents strongly agree that they would recommend the course to their friends and family, 56% definitely plan to take more lessons (and 34% probably will), while 76% prefer online over in-person lessons.

Ten courses are currently on the schedule for March and April 2022, and additional rounds will be offered quarterly.

Online Teacher Certification Program

The ACBL, with support from the ACBL Educational Foundation, developed the ACBL Online Teacher Certification Workshop that was launched in August 2020. This workshop focuses on how to use online tools in the most effective and engaging way to teach bridge online as well as teaching best practices that will apply when face-to-face classes resume. Similar to the in-person Best Practices Workshop, the online program is highly interactive for the participants and stresses limiting “teacher talking” time in favor of active student participation. In 2021, the ACBL held eight workshops for 102 teachers with 60 participants earning a certification. Since the program began, 205 teachers have gone through the program, and 125 have earned certification. The course continues to be offered quarterly.

Best Practices Teacher Certification Program

The Best Practices Teacher Certification Program returned at the Fall ‘21 NABC with eight teachers earning certification. This workshop was rolled out in early 2018 to replace the previous Teacher Accreditation Program (TAP). It focuses on training teachers how to teach rather than what to teach.

Certification is not guaranteed, and proficiency assessments are offered after each workshop to allow participants to earn the Best Practices Teacher Certification. Best Practices teachers receive a gold pin, exclusive marketing materials, and highlights in the Find-a-Teacher search results on ACBL’s website.

Workshops are held at the three NABCs, the Gatlinburg Regional, and when requested by clubs, Units, or Districts. One was held in January during the Houston Regional, and we expect a few more to be added in 2022 as Unit and District interest grows.

School Bridge Program

Programs	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall
College	15	29	3	20	15	29	9	4	1	3	6	
High	20	11	11	29	20	11	6	0	0	1	1	
Middle	32	43	57	68	32	43	10	0	3	4	1	
Elementary	66	47	14	99	66	47	30	1	4	1	1	
Total	263		309		225		60		17			

Teacher Stipends	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
US	\$46,686	\$43,950	\$33,300	\$15,050	\$4,200	
Canada	\$27,665	\$20,650	\$14,000	\$4,550	\$350	
Total	\$74,351	\$64,600	\$47,300	\$19,600	\$4,550	

In 2020, the ACBL experienced a 60% drop in the number of students participating in its school bridge program. COVID-19 closures hit right around spring break, and most students did not return to their schools or bridge classes during the spring or fall semesters. As of February 2022, we have had one school bridge material order so far. The ACBL Educational Foundation is funding an online Youth bridge program that the Marketing team hopes will translate into more school bridge participants in the future.

College Programs

Thanks to a generous grant from the ACBL Educational Foundation, the ACBL can support student bridge clubs and coaches with stipends and bridge supplies. The coronavirus pandemic hit the college program hard and, with many schools going to remote learning, many clubs did not meet. College students seem to really miss the face-to-face social aspect of bridge, and the Marketing team has seen a reduction in the number of students playing in the daily online tournaments on BBO. Fall of 2021 saw the return of in-person instruction for most colleges and universities, and some programs began to bounce back. Ten schools submitted semester reports, and nine applied for and received stipends.

Through a partnership with BBO, college students have access to the College Bridge Online (CBO) Club, a free and exclusive online bridge club which offers daily individual practice tournaments, free robot rental, and bi-monthly special tournaments with masterpoint prizes. Since the tournaments began in October 2017, CBO members have logged over 122,500 individual entries, over one million boards, and over 13 million tricks.

The ACBL and the ACBL Educational Foundation are awarding travel packages to six teams and 12 pairs to travel to Providence to compete in the Summer Bridge Bowl team and pair events July 21-23. The online team tournaments will be held February 27 and April 3, each awarding three team travel packages. A pairs participation event, awarding six pair packages, is scheduled to begin on March 15. A stratified pairs tournament, which will award six pair packages, is scheduled for April 10.

2021 Youth NABC

The next in-person Youth NABC will be held July 21-23 in Providence. There will be games for both beginning and more advanced Juniors under age 20 with cardrunk, open pair, and team events. Youth have two opportunities to play each day, free lunches for participants, and a closing reception for players and their family. Participation is free, but the players must be ACBL members. While the coronavirus pandemic has taken its toll on the school bridge program, the Marketing team is hoping that some of the Education Foundation's BridgeWhiz students will want to try in-person bridge. Registration is open, and Juniors registering before June 15 will get a t-shirt and book bag. Information can be found at acbl.org/ynabc.

Lifelong Learning

The ACBL is an officially recognized Osher Lifelong Learning Institute curriculum resource, but we also support bridge through several other unassociated lifelong learning programs. Though in-person continuing education declined during the coronavirus pandemic, as of February 2022, Marketing has sent out material to support ten programs this year. We expect that number to increase as more schools return to normal schedules.

Editorial

In the January, February, and March 2022 issues of the Bridge Bulletin, the editors have featured stories on promotion of the Spring '22 NABC; coverage of the Fall '21 NABC; interviews with 2022 President Joann Glasson, Honorary Member of the Year George Jacobs, Volunteer Members of the Year Ann Romeo and Al Bender, Barry Crane Top 500 winner Mark Itabashi, and retiring Goodwill Committee Chair Sandy DeMartino; Bridge Hall of Fame inductees/candidates; the new ACBL Convention Card; and ACBL Educational Foundation promos and news. The April issue will include the annual winners from the Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney masterpoint races as well as the initial coverage of the Summer '22 NABC which will be featured on the cover.

An ongoing service interruption to ACBL members living in Bermuda has been addressed by using an international airmail option. Back issues have been mailed to the club in Bermuda using Federal Express. The previous carrier is providing a substantial refund for failure to deliver.

NABC photographer Francesca Canali will return for the Summer '22 NABC. A written agreement is being prepared to formalize her services.

Editor Chip Dombrowski is assembling the Reno Restaurant Guide and Pre-Bulletin.

Office of National Recorder

The National Recorder Robb Gordon, Assistant National Recorder Jeff Edelstein, and Administrative Coordinator Sabrina Goley, who is involved in disciplinary matters, comprises the Office of National Recorder. TD Nancy Strachan (D2) manages Player Memo files. Rob Maier (D4) helps prepare evidence for the Online Ethical Oversight Committee (OEOC). The office continues to provide phone and email support to members, District officials involved in the disciplinary process, and the national disciplinary committees.

910 Player Memos were logged during 2021. This includes 10 Player Memos from the Fall '21 NABC. This represents a low for a NABC since September 2017. While part of this may be due to the lower attendance, the Fall '18 NABC held in Honolulu, another lightly attended NABC, generated 34 Player Memos.

There has been high turnover among Investigators – this is a function where burnout is understandable. Strong volunteers have recently been added.

Disciplinary hearings slowed down at the end of 2021 and early 2022, partly due to holidays and partly due to a timeout to better train our volunteer Advocates.

Live tournaments are resuming around the ACBL. We are developing training for District Recorders and disciplinary officials and expect to roll out that training during the second quarter of 2022.

Whenever warranted, the Office of National Recorder, through the ACBL website and/or the BridgeWinners site, makes information available to help ACBL members understand the process and the state of matters as relates to ethics issues.

PLAYER MEMO REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021														
	2018 Spring	2018 Summer	2018 Fall	2018	2018	2019 Spring	2019 Summer	2019 Fall	2019	2019	2020	2021 Fall	2021	2021
	NABC	NABC	NABC	Non-NABC	TOTAL	NABC	NABC	NABC	Non-NABC	Total	Total	NABC	Non-NABC	YTD Total
Total Player Memos Reported*	41	40	32	212	325	38	34	22	184	278	1091	10	900	910
Conduct	13	15	14	92	134	8	12	8	59	87	62	5	47	52
Bridge Related	17	14	9	37	77	17	19	7	56	99	410	3	318	321
Ethics	7	11	10	84	112	18	8	7	84	117	571	2	428	430
Other	6	0	2	8	16	2	1	0	13	16	72	1	60	61
Number of Player Memos Handled By:														
Unit Recorder	N/A	N/A	N/A	55	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	36	36	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PM resulted in Charges brought by Uni	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
District Recorder	N/A	N/A	N/A	86	86	N/A	N/A	N/A	78	78	25	N/A	2	2
PM resulted in Charges brought by Dist	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	6	5	N/A	0	0
National Recorder	41	40	32	53	166	38	34	22	51	145	1002	10	654	654
PM resulted in Charges brought by Mgr	0	4	0	2	6	2	1	0	12	15	50	0	19	19
PM resulted in Charges brought by DIC	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	N/A	1	N/A	1
Other (Filed or Club Matter)	N/A	N/A	N/A	18	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	19	64	N/A	76	10
Player Memo Sent to ACC	2	6	2	17	27	5	3	6	21	35	12	N/A	N/A	0
Key:														
PM = Player Memo														
* Player Memos reported may fall into more than one category														

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS AS OF JANUARY 31, 2022								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Appeals and Charges Committee	13	8	7	8	22	23	0	
Automatic Review	6	5	2	3	7	10	0	
Automatic Review and Appeal	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Appeal	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	
Request for CDR 9.2 Hearing	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	
Negotiated Resolution	0	0	1	1	15	13	0	
Request for Readmission	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	
Violation of Discipline	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	
National Committees	5	10	10	9	12	11	1	
ACBL Disciplinary Committee	1	5	6 ^(a)	4 ^(b)	2	1	0	
ACBL Management	0	4	4	0	1	1	0	
Ethical Oversight Committee	3	0	0	3	1	0	0	
NABC Tournament Conduct Committee	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	
Online Ethical Oversight Committee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	8	1	
District Appellate Committee	6	0	1	1	1	0	0	
District Disciplinary Committee	20	11	20	16	6	0	0	
Unit Disciplinary Committee	16	8	14 ^(c)	8 ^(d)	1	N/A	N/A	
District Disciplinary Committee	4	2	5	8	5 ^(e)	0	0	
Tournament Disciplinary Committee	0	1	1	0	N/A	0	0	
Endnotes:								
^(a) Three were resolved by Negotiated Resolutions.								
^(b) (2) Negotiated Resolution, (1) Review of Recommended Additional Discipline, (1) Standard Hearing								
^(c) Two hearings were appeals of club barrings.								
^(d) One hearing was appeal of club barring.								
^(e) One resolved by Negotiated Resolution.								
Cases in progress (Charge Letters, Notice of Hearing and/or Appeal Received):								
ACBL Management	1	NR						
Appeals and Charges	1	Automatic Review						
Online Ethical Oversight Committee	0							
Recorder Complaints	13							

Other Notes

Any anomaly in the number of matters handled by the Appeals & Charges Committee relates to the delegation of ethics-related Negotiated Resolutions to that committee, rather than the body that would have heard the matter.

The Pending Recorder Complaints does not include those Recorder Complaints that are being prepared.