



# Philadelphia Progress Report

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Bahar Gidwani

# Paddling Like Heck

ACBL HQ has been like a duck. Calm on the surface. But underneath the water, we've been paddling like heck!



# Six Areas of Activity

## Grow Membership

And...

- ♠ Help Clubs
- ♠ Help tournaments
- ♠ Improve internal operations
- ♠ Strengthen our organization
- ♠ Support the Board

# Grow Membership

- ♠ Temporary membership.
- ♠ Improving teaching.
- ♠ Testing online marketing.
- ♠ Growing Collegiate bridge.
- ♠ Expanding our presence in Mexico.

# Temporary Membership

- ♥ Teachers add \$5/student incentive.
- ♣ Virtually no complaints in this area.
- ♥ Tournaments collect \$4/session from lapsed regular or temporary members; non-members must join.
- ♣ Concern from TCs re Sectional flyers w/ \$3 price—6 month leeway granted.
- ♣ \$7.99 for ACBL instead of \$4 for multiple sessions? Value of personal info is high.
- ♣ Will \$7.99 deter non-member play?

# Improving Teaching

- ♥ TAP focus is now “how to play bridge” rather than “how to teach bridge.”
  - ♣ Testing in Philadelphia and Gatlinburg.
  - ♣ Formal rollout in Atlanta.
- ♥ Building store for teaching content.
  - ♣ Products from major teaching groups.
  - ♣ Back-end fulfillment by Baron Barclay.
- ♥ Working with ABTA and BBO on testing.
  - ♣ Building TAP and student test rooms.

# Teaching Improvements—New TAP

TEACHER GOAL & STATUS		ACBL OFFERINGS					
Goal	Already TAP Accredited?	Basic Bridge Knowledge Prerequisite (online test)	Teacher Training Options		Best Practices Proficiency Assessment (15 minutes)	Proficiency Coach Prep (1 half-day)	Workshop Leader Prep (1 half-day)
			Bridge Teaching Dynamics Workshop (3 half-days)	Bridge Teaching Dynamics Mini-Workshop (1 half-day)			
Best Practices Certified Teacher	no	Required	Required	N/A	Required	N/A	N/A
	yes	Not Required	Teacher Choice		Required	N/A	N/A
<u>Proficiency Coach</u> (may assess & certify teacher proficiency)	no	Required	Required	N/A	Required	Required	Optional
	yes	Not Required	Required	N/A	Required	Required	Optional
<u>Workshop Leader</u> (may teach teachers)	no	Required	Required	N/A	Required	Optional	Required
	yes	Not Required	Required	N/A	Required	Optional	Required

# Testing Online Marketing

- ♥ Tested four things:
  - ♣ Which words generate impressions?
  - ♣ Which words prompt interest in our ads?
  - ♣ Which ad themes bring the most visitors to our site?
  - ♣ Which ad themes result in more time on our site or requests for information?
- ♥ Spent \$2.3K on a four week test.
- ♥ Paves the way for Facebook ads, etc.



# Theme Results

Theme	Impressions	Clicks	Click-Through Rate	Cost Per Click
Mental fitness	64,606	4,527	7.0%	\$0.22
Learn something new	1,905	101	5.3%	\$0.46
Socialize with others	20,168	884	4.4%	\$0.60
Play a fun game	9,245	423	4.6%	\$0.50

- ♥ Mental Fitness offered the most available impressions and the best click through rate and cost per click.
- ♥ Socialize came in second as far as number of impressions but had the worst click through rate and highest cost per click.
- ♥ Learn something new was promising, but garnered very few impressions.

# Keyword Results

Selected Successful Keywords	Impressions	Clicks	Click-Through Rate	Cost Per Click
Brain exercises	22,368	1,229	5.5%	\$0.26
Brain games	6,029	557	9.2%	\$0.18
Brain games for adults	1,298	145	11.2%	\$0.20
Game night	4,538	288	6.4%	\$0.58
New friends	602	29	4.8%	\$0.30
Bridge online	6,598	325	4.9%	\$0.54

Selected Unsuccessful Keywords	Impressions	Clicks	Click-Through Rate	Cost Per Click
Social bridge	0	0	NA%	\$NA
Rubber bridge	16	0	NA%	\$NA
Alzheimer's prevention	354	12	3.4%	\$0.75
Board games for adults	4,776	114	2.4%	\$0.83

# Keyword Result Comments

- ♥ Brain fitness words worked well. Memory, brain training, brain function all seemed to tie well to bridge.
- ♥ Alzheimer's-related terms seemed hard to get impressions for and were expensive. This may be due to competition from drug advertisers and support sites.
- ♥ Game words seemed to be OK. But, need to be careful when mentioning "adult" or other words that might relate to sex or intimacy themes.
- ♥ Terms directly associated with bridge such as "social bridge" or "rubber bridge" got very few impressions. People don't appear to be searching for these terms.
- ♥ Many click through rates are very high. Normal range for most tests is between 0.5% and 2%. As a result, cost per click is reasonable. Many e-commerce site pay >\$1 per visit.

# Landing Page Results

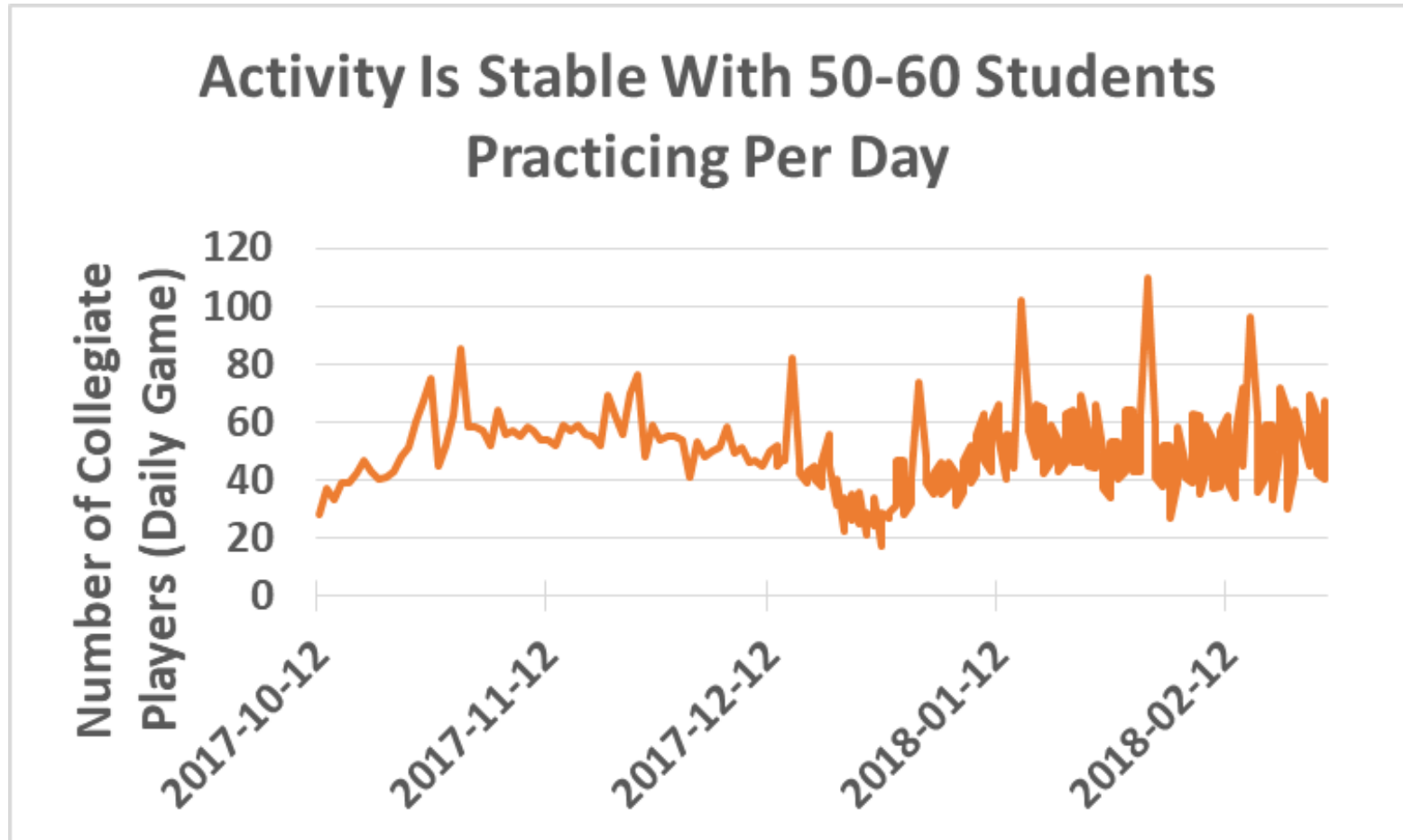
Landing Page	Page Views	Bounce Rate	Session Duration (seconds)	Emails / 000 Views
Mental fitness	3,837	73%	33	8.6
Learn something new	72	40%	144	27.8
Socialize with others	713	80%	35	2.8
Play a fun game	375	58%	122	61.3

- ♥ Mental Fitness had a high bounce rate—visitors left after quickly scanning the landing page. Few visitors volunteered their email information. Socialize had a similar problem.
- ♥ Learn something new and play a fun game had much lower bounce rates. Visitors spent more than two minutes reading the page and volunteered emails at a much higher rate.
- ♥ All durations are good (some sites are <20 seconds).

# Growing Collegiate Bridge

- ♥ Collaboration with Ed. Fnd. and BBO.
  - ♣ Stipend for college coaches.
  - ♣ Cards, books, bidding boxes.
  - ♣ BBO rooms for practice and events.
  - ♣ Paid trips to Atlanta for the finals.
- ♥ 35 college clubs and teams formed.
  - ♣ Up from 15 colleges last year.
  - ♣ 280 students in BBO practice rooms.
  - ♣ Expect 12+ teams to compete in Atlanta.  
10 paid trips: ACBL = 8; Ed. Fnd. = 2.

# College Practice Room Activity



*Should grow as we continue adding teams and move towards qualifying competitions in March.*

# Expand Our Presence in Mexico

- ♥ Only 294 ACBL members in Mexico.
- ♣ Population of Mexico is 127MM vs 36MM in Canada (where we have 17.7K members).
- ♣ More than 60MM Mexicans earn more than \$15K vs \$21MM Canadians.
- ♣ We have 2 units, 14 clubs, 37 weekly games, and run 5 tournaments in Mexico. But we have no local TDs or other employees.

# Our Plan

- ♥ Formed a Mexican subsidiary.
  - ♣ Allows us to have a peso bank account.
  - ♣ Will hire Mexican TDs.
- ♥ Translating materials into Spanish.
  - ♣ Teaching materials from Spain.
  - ♣ Add a Spanish section to ACBL web site.
- ♥ Local TDs can run more events and help train club directors.
- ♥ Will advertise locally in Spanish.



# Member Growth Outlook

- ♠ Existing member fall off continues.  
12.5K lost in 2017 vs 11K new.
- ♠ 7K/yr lapsed recovery can't continue forever. LM change added only 0.4K.
- ♠ Leads from temporary and advertising have to be sent to teachers and clubs.
  - ♦ Can't recruit from HQ.
  - ♦ Must simultaneously upgrade club environment and teaching quality.

# Help Clubs

- ♠ Tested two new tournaments-at-clubs ideas: REACH2 and Big Heart Charity.
- ♠ Working on new co-op ad program.
- ♠ Trying to expand adult-learning programs.
- ♠ After-hours help desk is working well.
- ♠ Conversion to Can\$ is complete.
- ♠ Made progress on certifying ACBLscore replacements.

# REACH2 and Big Heart

- ♥ REACH2 ran six days across 547 clubs.
  - ♣ 3,294 players participated.
  - ♣ \$30 fee raised \$99K. Of this, \$21K went to Districts and \$78K (less 4% for admin) to NBOs.
- ♥ Big Heart ran one day across 144 clubs.
  - ♣ 6,864 players participated in Big Heart clubs. At least 100 other clubs played under regular Charity rules.
  - ♣ \$10 fee raised \$1,440 for Charity Fdn.

# REACH Had a Positive Impact

- ♥ 35% of Clubs reported increased play.
  - ♣ Less increase than with first REACH.
  - ♣ 37% of first REACH players registered for second REACH—some saturation?
  - ♣ 52% felt they got a fair chance to earn points, but 38% didn't.
- ♥ Little effect on other tournaments.
  - ♣ Only 9% of REACH players said they were less likely to play in a future regional.
  - ♣ Only 14% of those who played at Hilton Head might have preferred REACH

# Big Heart Had a Positive Effect

Year	Sanction	Clubs	Tables
2012	Wednesday Evening	124	897.0
2013	Tuesday Evening	116	814.5
2014	Tuesday Afternoon	126	1,310.0
2015	Thursday Morning	61	599.5
2016	Thursday Morning	88	786.5
2017	Thursday Morning	81	810.0
<b>2018</b>	<b>Wednesday Afternoon</b>	<b>144*</b>	<b>1,723.5</b>

\* Only Big Heart clubs—others played regular Charity Game.

- ♣ ~60 clubs will report at month-end.
- ♣ Expect total tables >2,200, ~70% above the top number from the past six years.
- ♣ Total raised for charity ~\$17.5K, up from \$11K in 2017.

# New Club Games Next Steps

- ♥ ACBL is building the technology systems needed to run REACH.
  - ♣ Used TCG systems to date.
  - ♣ Hope to have ACBL systems by August.
- ♥ ACBL can run simpler games until then.
  - ♣ More Big Heart-type games to boost selected club special games.
  - ♣ Limited (single time zone) REACH-style events to try to boost evening and weekend games.

# Propose New Programs

- ♠ Staff plans to start proposing new programs to help clubs.
- ♠ Goal is to encourage positive behavior through training and incentives.
  - ◆ Improved co-op ad programs.
  - ◆ Support for adult learning programs.
  - ◆ Club director training.
  - ◆ Encourage ZT, 0-99 games, teaching, mentoring, and partnership.

# Help Tournaments

- ♠ Launched PurplePass credit card system. Working on online sales.
- ♠ Organized a series of KO tests.
- ♠ Created sample regional schedules.
- ♠ Started reviewing all NABC contracts.
- ♠ Testing tournament table estimator.
- ♠ Certifying new tournament tech.
- ♠ Launching free tournament surveys.
- ♠ Working on NABC sponsors.



# PurplePass Has Proved Popular

- ♥ HQ paid for systems and supervised initial tests. Many benefits:
  - ♣ Members liked using credit cards.
  - ♣ Staff likes less cash handling.
  - ♣ Lines were as short or shorter.
- ♥ HQ subsidized tests across all Districts:
  - ♣ Two tournaments free (HQ pays costs).
  - ♣ 13 tournaments have signed up.
  - ♣ HQ will rent equipment going forward or help Districts buy at a discount.

# Need to Restructure

- ♠ Tournament table counts continue to drop. Last 6 months down 6% vs same months in previous year.
- ♠ HQ-led improvements can only slow down the decline. Need to restructure.
  - ◆ Suggested several methods for driving a restructure.
  - ◆ Need permission to move forward with a mix of plans.

# Improve internal operations

- ♠ Finished Phase I of migration to new Customer Relationship Management and General Ledger systems.
- ♠ Converted to new payroll system.
- ♠ Set probation and termination policies.
- ♠ Strengthened network security. Should soon get PCI certification.
- ♠ Started ergonomic study for HQ staff.
- ♠ Reduced size of NABC Daily Bulletin.
- ♠ Updated COI & Whistleblower policies.

# Benefits of New CRM and G/L?

- ♥ Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) should improve:
  - ♣ Email marketing campaigns.
  - ♣ Tracking of member and prospect activity on our web site.
  - ♣ Depth and quality of reporting.
- ♥ General Ledger (G/L) should help:
  - ♣ Support more electronic funds transfer (fewer paper checks and statements).
  - ♣ Improve budgeting and forecasting.

# Only a Few More Projects

- ♠ Must finish CRM and G/L upgrade (this year) and retire AS400 system.
- ♠ Need to revamp/upgrade web site.
  - ♦ Improve look and feel.
  - ♦ Strengthen search.
  - ♦ Orient towards selling membership and products.
- ♠ Provide better performance feedback to HQ and Field staff.

# Strengthen Our Organization

- ♠ Extended Pianola marketing contract.
- ♠ Supported creation of new WBF ZA.
- ♠ Closed \$50K NBO funding gap.
- ♠ Completed revision of LM rules.
- ♠ Supported volunteer training webinar.
- ♠ Hired PR person, developer, controller.
- ♠ Supported Anti-Cheating Committee.

# Extended Pianola Deal

- ♥ Service extended but price will rise.
  - ♣ 1¢ now per email from 0.5¢.
  - ♣ HQ will continue to pay for District and Unit use through end of July.
- ♥ Will shift to a mix of systems.
  - ♣ HQ can use CRM and pay 0.7¢.
  - ♣ HQ can run some District and Unit emails through CRM at this price.
  - ♣ Districts and Units can use Pianola directly or switch to other systems.

# Focus On Efficiency

- ♠ Need two key hires and staff situation will be stable: second-in-command for field operations and IT project manager.
- ♠ New systems should make it easier to automate tasks and streamline processes.
  - ♦ Phone system can tie to CRM.
  - ♦ More EFT transfers, fewer checks.



# Support the Board

- ♠ Processed second set of Big Ideas.
- ♠ Rolled out paperless meeting test.
- ♠ Delivered Discussion items on:
  - ♦ Tournament reorganization.
  - ♦ Simplify Masterpoints.
  - ♦ Strength-based ratings.
  - ♦ Zero tolerance policy.
  - ♦ District Financial Reporting template.
  - ♦ TD pricing.
  - ♦ Unit Recorders.
- ♠ Contributed to ByLaws revision.

# Big Ideas Showed Different Views

Ranks from the Board Were Different Than Those from Other Parts of Bridge					
(Relative preferences have been converted into an absolute rank order)					
	Club Support Improvement	Online Long-Term Strategy	Patron Plan Improvement	School Bridge	Volunteer Support
Strategy Committee	3	1	5	4	2
Board of Governors	1	3	5	2	4
ACBL Members	1	3	5	2	4

- ♥ Strategy Committee focused on online strategy. BoG and Members are interested in Club Support and School Bridge.
- ♣ Staff will work on all three issues.
- ♣ Delivered online strategy proposal.
- ♣ Working on club and school plans.

# Communication

- ♠ Must continue to work on improving communication between HQ, the Board, the BoG and rest of bridge.
- ♠ HQ has encouraged questions about its plans. But, new programs can be confusing to the field.
- ♠ We need support from the Board and BoG. Please continue to help us clarify our messages and give us feedback.

# Between Now and Atlanta

- ♠ Staff produces specific proposals to implement Board strategy.
- ♠ Proposals include financial estimates and any motions required to change the related codifications.
- ♠ Committee review the plans and improve them.

# In Atlanta

- ♠ Board Committees offer revised versions of Staff plans.
- ♠ Board approves several major new initiatives.
- ♠ After a year of trying to spark innovation, we decide if we are making progress or should change course.