



## 2025 Club Leaders' Perspectives

# Maximizing Club Value: Measuring, Communicating, and Aligning Strategic Priorities

Club leaders and their teams create value for their members but often face challenges in measuring and effectively communicating it. Clubs can help members recognize the benefits they receive by prioritizing effective communication and aligning outcomes to strategic priorities.

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### Key Insights

- Club leaders are more confident in creating member value than in measuring and communicating it, missing key opportunities to share their impact across stakeholder groups.
- A key opportunity to improve value-based insights is to measure club progress against strategic priorities and objectives.
- Clubs can improve their value perception by prioritizing member communication, aligning KPIs to strategic priorities, and establishing a structured reporting plan.

### Improving Value Perceptions

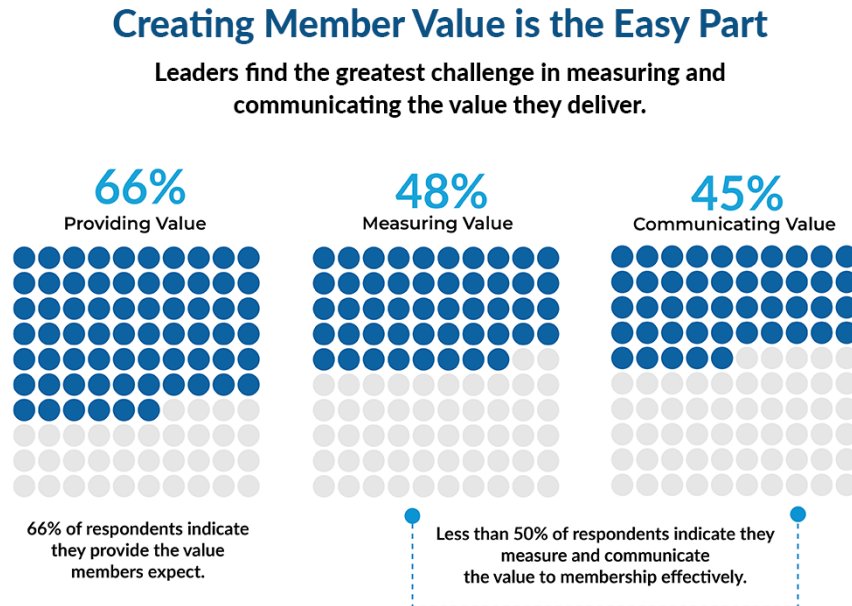
Club leaders face an important challenge: although 66% are confident in creating value for their members, only 35% feel effective at communicating that value. This notable communication gap can result in missed opportunities for engagement and member satisfaction. But how can leaders address this issue?

Results from the Club Leaders' Perspectives (CLP) research, conducted in collaboration with the Club Management Association of America (CMAA), examine these challenges. This article offers strategies and insights to help club leaders quantify and articulate the value created in the club, improving members' understanding of and appreciation for the benefits they receive.

## Providing Member Value

Private clubs often allocate significant resources—time, money, and attention—to creating member value; however, extending this effort to include a deliberate plan for measuring and communicating that value is often missed. Results presented in Figure 1 from the 2025 CLP research indicate that while two-thirds believe their club provides the value members expect, only 48% and 45% believe they do a good job of measuring and communicating that value to members, respectively.

**Figure 1. Creating, Measuring, and Communicating Value**



Note: Respondents were asked to rate their effectiveness in providing, measuring, and communicating membership value on a scale of 1 (very ineffective) to 5 (very effective). The percentage of those who selected either 4 or 5 is reported above.

But why emphasize the delivery and measurement of member value? When neglected, clubs miss an opportunity to showcase how high-profile capital projects and operational tactics can generate value and support the execution of strategic priorities. They also contribute to the club's success by establishing clear metrics for communicating successes and challenges. Ultimately, providing value-focused information to members helps ensure transparency regarding efforts to enhance member understanding and engagement.

**Lack of Member Understanding.** Club leaders face the challenge of delivering quality experiences while also ensuring members understand the value they are receiving. Respondents were asked to rank 23 attributes regarding members not understanding the value they receive, to know where leaders find challenges. Figure 2 shows that leaders perceive the leading disconnect is in areas fundamental for providing experiences and not actual experiences. These areas include ongoing facility maintenance and upkeep, increased employee compensation, and the growing number of employees necessary to maintain service levels. Concerns also exist in key experiential elements of many clubs – dining and golf – suggesting that members' views do not necessarily consider the efforts and resources needed to provide these experiences.

Figure 2. Concerns Over Member Value Perceptions

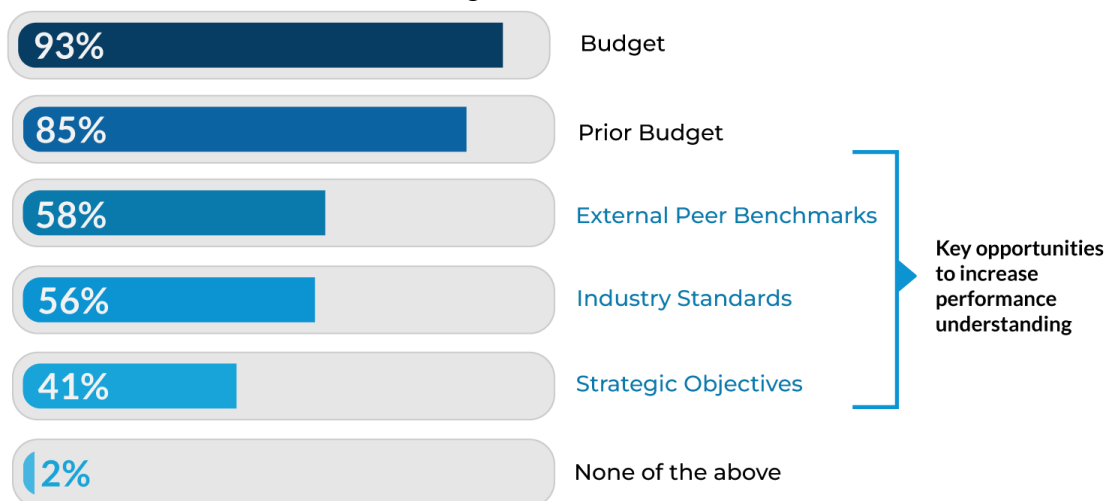


Note: Respondents were asked to select and rank the top five features, services, or operational factors they believe contribute most to members not fully understanding the value of their membership. Using our proprietary Strategic Priority Metric, we identified the top concerns based on a 100-point scale, where higher scores indicate greater concern. The remaining 17 items accounted for 33% of the total importance.

## Aligning Strategy with Measurement

Delivering, measuring, and communicating value is inherently tied to a club's overall strategy. Therefore, decisions regarding desired service levels, amenities, and facility conditions should closely align with the club's strategic priorities and objectives. However, there is room for improvement in the methods used for monitoring success, as shown in Figure 3. Results show that while most clubs compare their results to budget (93%) and prior periods (85%), far fewer consider other points of comparison that may add meaningful context to performance such as industry standards (56%), external peer benchmarks (58%), and strategic objectives (41%).

Figure 3. Methods Used to Measure Club Progress



Note: Respondents were asked to select how the club compares metrics when evaluating results. Leaders selected as many options as applicable, so the sum of the above options does not equal 100%.

**Impacts of a Strategic Plan.** Considering the range of methods used to track progress, mainly when clubs miss an opportunity to track progress toward strategic goals, it is important to understand how this affects the ability to demonstrate the value provided to members. Figure 4 illustrates this effect by showing the change in tracking financial and non-financial value creation metrics based on whether a club actively uses its strategic plan to measure success.

**Figure 4. Influence of Strategic Plan on Value Metrics**

Member Communication Considerations	% Measure (No Plan)	% Measure (Active Plan)	Strategic Plan Impact <sup>1</sup>
<i>Financial Metrics</i>			
Profitability Metrics	46%	63%	+17%
Cost Metrics	48%	64%	+16%
Customer-centric Metrics	20%	44%	+24%
<i>Non-Financial Metrics</i>			
Service-specific Metrics	32%	61%	+29%
Efficiency Metrics	20%	41%	+21%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked to select which metrics are currently measured at their club. The differences in the use of value-creating financial and non-financial measurements were determined by comparing the regular use of these metrics between clubs that actively align results with a strategic plan and those that don't.

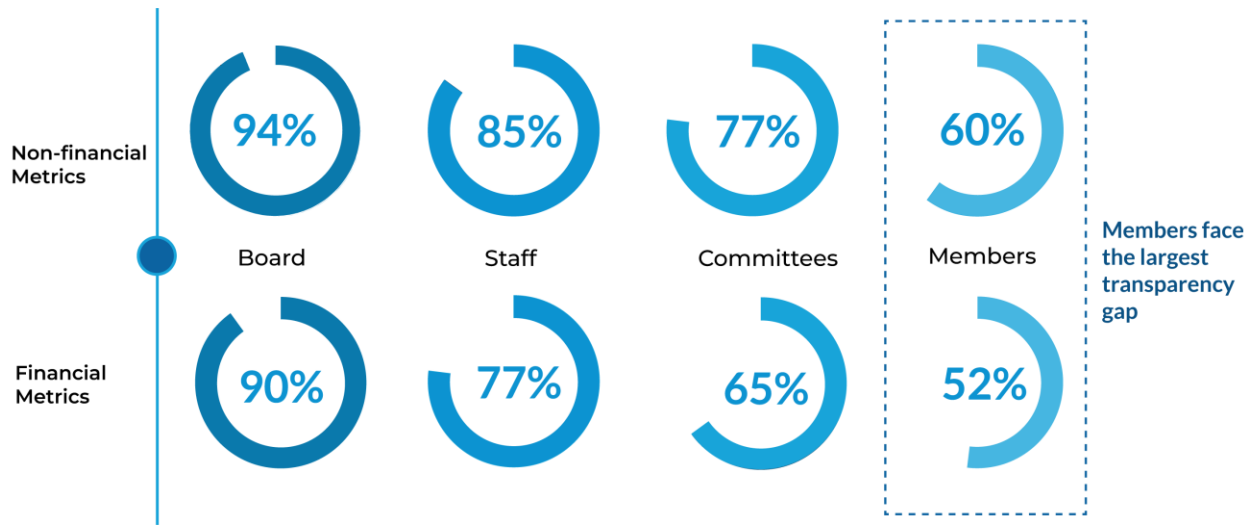
Results show clubs that actively compare results to their strategic plan have significantly more insight into the value they provide members. The collection and calculation of both financial (an average increase of 19%) and non-financial data (average increase of 25%) were more frequent in clubs with a strategic plan. These results demonstrate that having a strategic plan where outcomes are measured can help ensure a club has actionable insights into the value created for its members.

Having an active strategic plan means more than simply working towards a future vision for the club; it also helps clarify specific strategic goals and objectives necessary to create desired member value.

## Effective Club Communication

Research indicates that club leaders observe significant variance in data reporting to key stakeholder groups. Figure 5 shows this unevenness, with boards receiving comprehensive reporting while members receive significantly less information. This gap in transparency is evident as only 60% of clubs provide members with non-financial updates, and just 52% provide financial insights.

Figure 5. Metric Reporting to Key Stakeholder Groups



Note: Respondents were asked to report which audiences they report both financial and nonfinancial metrics to. Leaders selected as many options as applicable, so the sum of the above options does not equal 100%.

**Tailoring Communication.** Clubs can tailor communication to different stakeholder groups to facilitate a more informed membership. Boards are already well-informed with financial and non-financial metrics, as they should be. Members may benefit from more operational and experiential data, such as improvements in staffing, member satisfaction, and utilization statistics. Effectively reporting these metrics by highlighting tangible components of the experience that most impact member value creation can preemptively address member concerns and bridge perception gaps with information.

“While responses show that clubs compare results to the budget and prior periods, one of the greatest missed opportunities is to compare outcomes to strategic objectives, industry standards, and relevant peer benchmarks.”

- Liz McDowell, Director

### Club Leaders Opportunity

Leaders can customize their messaging strategy for various stakeholder groups to improve how a club communicates its value to members. This ensures that members are well-informed about operational and experiential enhancements. Clubs can also focus on the following:

1. **Prioritize Member Communication on Value:** Leaders can enhance engagement and satisfaction by aligning communication strategies with member priorities and elevating transparency. Prioritizing effective communication as a core strategic tenet will build trust and reinforce the value of membership.

2. **Develop and Connect KPIs to Strategic Priorities:** Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) directly linked to the club's strategic priorities. This ensures that value creation is measured and monitored in the most relevant and critical areas.
3. **Create a Collection and Reporting Plan:** Implement structured methods for collecting data (e.g., surveys, internal financial/non-financial metrics, external benchmarks) and reporting results to members. Define clear standards and targets for success and integrate these efforts into a tailored reporting plan for key stakeholders.
4. **Adopt a Quality-Over-Quantity Approach:** Select benchmarks that provide meaningful context by comparing performance to more outcome-relevant and historical data. Utilize varying benchmarks for factors such as amenity composition, revenue levels, and membership size to ensure the comparisons are as relevant as possible.

Clarifying the connection between operational decisions, such as staffing levels and operational investments, and strategic decisions, including competitive market position and pricing strategy, can justify the strategic investment of club resources. This clarity helps members understand and appreciate these investments, even when they are not immediately evident.

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