Dear Members,

Within this document are some suggestions, ideas, and tips to help you run an amazing USA Synchro de Mayo event this year. There are a few things that make this year’s USA Synchro de Mayo event even more unique than the past celebrations and the following are just a few of the reasons we want to make this one even bigger and better.

- USA Synchro De Mayo began in 2012 and designated May as USA Synchro’s Official Synchronized Swimming Month. Let’s celebrate!
- Consider leveraging the USOC’s free materials for Olympic Day that occurs in June for pre-promotional events for your club and the sport in May.

Our goals for USA Synchro de Mayo remain the same and are the first steps to growing your team and ultimately our sport, which are to:

1. Maximize exposure for our sport during a key time frame – the start of the age group and international competition season, season-end watershows and celebrations.
2. Generate trial memberships before summer recreation programs kick off and teams start up in the fall.
3. Leverage USA Synchro de Mayo as a way to launch your recruiting efforts for the upcoming season.

Synchro de Mayo events may vary in size and scope but that’s okay. The most important thing is that we all participate.

In addition to the content we provide within this guide, we’d love the Facebook page to be a resource for you to connect with other teams, ask questions, and get advice. So please, between now and your event, do not hesitate to use the page as an open forum to help make your event the best it can be. We can amplify our exposure in an effective and inexpensive way, using the social media tools already within our reach. If you are not comfortable in the social media arena, the committee is here to help you, and, of course, many of our swimmers are so savvy in this medium that they are practically experts!

What follows are some ideas for easy, effective event execution. We hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us. We look forward to celebrating with you!

Sincerely,

The USA Synchro Marketing Committee
EVENT IDEAS

Below are some simple ideas/thought-starters for activities to enhance your USA Synchro de Mayo event. If you have other ideas, please visit us on Facebook and tell us about your idea.

- Free clinic where basic skills are taught and a quick beginner routine is learned
- 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 knoxedstyled, etc.
- Craft table where they can design their own swimsuits with glitter, crayons, sequins, etc.
- “My Dream Synchro Routine” (see attached example at the end of this document)
- 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
- Create fun routines and post them on their Facebook page and be sure to tag USA Synchro de Mayo
- Host “bring a friend to practice” day or “bring a friend to lessons day”
- Post your favorite synchro YouTube routine on your Facebook page and tag USA Synchro
- Synchro trivia event: “How well do you know synchro?”

HOW TO PULL IN THE COMMUNITY

Now that you have some ideas of what to do during your USA Synchro de Mayo event, 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 team caps or competition suits and hand out information around town (outside of popular grocery store, etc.). Maybe have them do land drills every 15 minutes. Maybe have some balloons. Bring an iPad and play some footage to show people what synchro is like. Make it fun and inviting!
- Complete provided 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 card 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 children.
- Reach out to local Girl Scout troops, youth groups, country clubs, community centers, schools, YMCAs, PTAs, etc.
- Use the provided press release template. Complete all sections and then submit to local media outlets (see “Building Media Relationships” and “Media Pitching Tips” below for more information).
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.

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 a reporter more than getting information that does not remotely apply to their beat.

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!

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 advertisement space or airtime. Every connection helps!

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.

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.

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.

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.

Make sure you provide REAL news. REAL news is information that is relevant to a media outlet’s core audience and is 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 who, what, where and when for your event.
- Pitch segment ideas and in-studio appearances by sending 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 association’s upcoming 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 even 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 USA SYNCHRO DE MAYO

Whether you are about to speak to a reporter, a parent, or a potential spectator, you’ll want to convey the essential pieces of information about USA Synchro de Mayo in a concise and compelling manner. Here are some talking points to help you do that.

EVENT SPECIFIC:
- USA Synchro de Mayo is National Synchronized Swimming Month. It is an opportunity for anyone and everyone to learn about, experience, and/or try synchronized swimming.
- Events will take place throughout the month of May.
- Through USA 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 http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Synchronized-Swimming/Membership/Membership-Programs/USA-Synchro-de-Mayo (or you can promote your club’s website)

GENERAL USA SYNCHRO INFO:
- Synchronized swimming is grace under pressure. It is a demanding sport requiring great strength, endurance, flexibility and exceptional breath control.
- USA Synchro serves as the National Governing Body for the sport of synchronized swimming recognized by the United States Olympic Committee.
- Synchronized swimming is the only all-female sport in the Olympic Games.
- USA Synchro is a membership-based, not-for-profit organization that services the sport from the grassroots level to the National Teams to the Olympic Team.
- The vision: “Synchronized Swimming, the sport that combines gymnastics, dance and swimming, will be the choice for aspiring athletes and prepare them for a lifetime of leadership within the sport and community.”
- The mission statement: “USA Synchro unites, promotes, and inspires athletes to return to the Olympic podium by 2024.”
- For more information, visit http://www.usasynchro.org.
SHARING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Below are a few quick tips to leverage social media for your USA Synchro de Mayo event.

1. Tagging:
   a. Any content you post on Facebook should be posted on your page, but you should “tag” USA Synchro. This will allow it to also be seen by all who follow USA Synchro. To tag USA Synchro, you must have already liked the USA Synchro Facebook page. Then you can tag a post, video, or photo just like you would tag a friend. If you want to tag USA Synchro in a status update or post, you must type “@USASynchro”. 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. You can also tag specific friends in your pictures and posts to capture their attention and leverage your personal network more.
   b. Similarly, on Twitter you can tag USA Synchro by placing a period in front of the @ symbol when you mention USA Synchro. This will enable all of your followers to see USA Synchro and what you are saying.

2. Hashtags:
   a. Hashtags originated on Twitter but they can be used across Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram to track a topic. For our event, the hashtag will be #USASynchrodeMayo and including this in all tweets, posts or other content will drive more awareness for our event.

Younger swimmers now are spending a lot of time on Instagram (in some cases they are actually spending more time there than on Facebook). Twitter is great for real time information like live updates from a competition while Instagram is really centered on photo sharing. If these platforms are new to you, simply ask your swimmers for guidance.

Follow USA Synchro on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @USASynchro
My Dream Synchro Routine

My routine would be a ________________________________

I would swim to ________________________________

I would swim with ________________________________

And my suit would look like this...