

Membership Focus Groups

Hong Kong Football Club

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Kadence Presentation
MARCH 2019

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Background & methodology



Project background & objectives

Following the membership satisfaction survey conducted in 2018 the HKFC wanted to look deeper into members' responses through conducting focus groups.

Objectives:



Understand the club's value in the eyes of members and their expectations



Explore their views on sport facilities



Explore their views on F&B facilities



Understand their feelings about leadership and how the club is managed



Investigate their preferences in terms of communication



Seek approaches & ideas for enhancement

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

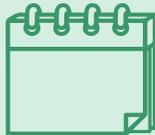
6x focus groups (discussions groups) conducted at Kadence's offices in Hong Kong

5 to 7 members attending each group.
40 total participants over the six groups



FIELDWORK TIMINGS

5th to 7th of March
2019
2x groups per day



LENGTH OF THE DISCUSSION

90 minutes to 2 hours
for each group



DATE	TIME	RESPONDENT TYPE
05/03	6pm	English - long-term members (mix of social & sporting members)
05/03	8pm	English - new members (mix of social & sporting members)
06/03	6pm	Cantonese - mix of social & sporting members
06/03	8pm	English - mix of social & sporting members
07/03	6pm	English - mix of sports
07/03	8pm	English - mix of social & sporting members

RESPONDENTS PROFILE

40 participants

300+ members contacted (incidence rate of around 13%)



68%
Male



32%
Female



34%
Social members



56%
Full members



10%
Other sport membership type

23% Rugby	19% Hockey	16% Soccer	13% Squash
10% Lawn bowls	10% Badminton	6% Tennis	3% Swimming

Feedbacks on the focus groups

How have you found your experience this evening?

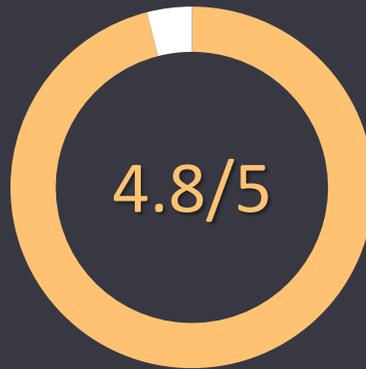


With 1=Very unsatisfactory and 5=Very satisfactory

"I would love to contribute more to improve the Club experience"

"Thanks for the opportunity to feedback"

I felt I could express my opinions and thoughts during this discussion group.



With 1=Totally disagree and 5=Totally agree

"Open, free flow conversation with structure, do this often!"

"Good to be able to discuss freely"

This focus group was a good initiative from Hong Kong Football Club



With 1=Totally disagree and 5=Totally agree

"This was a good idea. Keep it up"

"Should this kind of event be more regular?"

The focus groups were appreciated by HKFC members who felt that they could express their thoughts and feelings during the discussion. The participants were pleased to have been invited and all six groups were very animated.

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Executive summary



Key findings

- Overall, members are very attached to the club and many consider it their “second home”. Consequently, they are very **involved and passionate** when talking about the club.
- It was clear from the discussion groups that the high overall satisfaction score we found in the survey is **driven by the excellence of sport facilities & programs**. Members attest to the fact that HKFC is probably one of the best clubs in Asia for its facilities and are very satisfied on this metric.
- The two major topics of discussion in the focus groups were F&B and communication.
- With F&B, members found the quality and variety of the food not to a level that met their expectations or what they felt a club of such stature should be delivering. This topic is important to them because they are spending a large amount of time in the club.
- When discussing communications many of the members were expressing frustration. They are not necessarily aware of everything that is happening in the club and wish for a **central platform for information** that could provide them all the information they need on events, restaurants, maintenance, renovations, etc.
- They were also asking to be more involved in the club’s direction by giving **their opinion and feedback**, especially on F&B and renovations. Pro-actively establishing **communications** (with townhalls, focus groups, surveys...) would help the club understand members’ needs and make them feel that they are being heard.
- Finally, more **diversity** in the leadership was also raised by members in order for the community to be fully represented.

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General
attitudes &
expectations
towards the
club



Members are extremely attached to the club



A PLACE THAT THEY LOVE AND FEEL PROUD OF

It was clear from the discussions that members are attached to the club. They particularly like the convivial ambiance and the feeling of being part of a community. Several of them told us that they were going 5 times a week or more to the club. They also feel proud to be a member, enjoying the feeling of exclusivity.

"I feel privileged & proud to be a member of the Club"

"The sport community is really nice"



A CRUCIAL PART OF THEIR LIFE

The club is a crucial element of the social, family and business life of most members. Some of them have been to the club since they were kids and consider it as their "second home". Several people even mentioned choosing the location of their apartment based on its proximity to the club.

"My sons have grown up at the football club"

"The Club definitely helped me to settle down and get to know a lot of people in Hong Kong, many of whom I can now call close friends"



STRONG ENGAGEMENT DURING THE FOCUS GROUPS

Consequently, members were extremely involved and passionate during the discussion groups, which shows their engagement to the club

"I want the best for the club"

"Everything I say tonight will come from a position of love for the club"

Satisfaction is driven by the quality of sport facilities

The quality and variety of the sport facilities & programs (for adults and children) is the primary driver to join the club for a large majority of members and remains the reason for their continued engagement. As a result, overall satisfaction for a member is largely driven by the sport facilities and programs offered by the club. Members also appreciate the fact that Hong Kong Football Club promotes sport in Hong Kong and contributes to the community in this way.

“Great facilities, maybe one of the best clubs in Asia for facilities”

“The two main reasons we are members are the fabulous classes for children and the library. We love the range of courses and sports activities for kids.”

“Over half of the squash community in Hong Kong have joined HKFC. The squash facilities are comprehensive”

“The facilities are why we remain members and why we love the club”

“HKFC is one of the clubs in Hong Kong that really promotes sport among the community”

Comparison with other members clubs

Many participants are members of other clubs in Hong Kong and are quick to make comparisons.

Even though Hong Kong Football Club is perceived as one of the most prestigious clubs in Hong Kong and with the best sport facilities, members suggested that it could be inspired and take ideas from other members clubs in the following areas.



F&B

A feeling that other members clubs in Hong Kong offer better value and variety



Online booking

Other members clubs having an online booking system; as opposed to HKFC



Swimming pool & gym

The swimming pool and gym infrastructures from the Marina Club



Hong Kong Club



Hong Kong Jockey Club



Hong Kong Yacht Club



LRC (Ladies' Recreation Club)



Marina Club



Hong Kong Cricket Club



Hong Kong Country Club



Kowloon Cricket Club

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Facilities



Sport facilities

Overall, members are **extremely satisfied** with sport facilities and are appreciative of the high quality of the infrastructure.

“The new hockey pitch is excellent” “The outdoor lawn bowls green is very good, probably the best in Hong Kong” “Soccer facilities are amazing”



A few minor issues raised during the groups below:



BOOKING SYSTEM

There were some issues regarding the various parties making use of the facilities and balancing bookings (e.g. during competitions), but most were sympathetic to the challenges the club faces in this area.

Regarding the booking system, members are asking for an **online booking system** (which is already present in other member clubs). Some also mentioned the fact that booking couldn't be done in-person and they had to call to book even if they were already at the club.

Maintenance

Long “out of service” times for equipment in the gym or on courts was raised (can take up to 3-4 months for some machines to be repaired).



Water leaking

Some members reported water leaking in the squash and badminton courts, as well as on the lawn bowls indoor green.

Lawn bowls indoor

Some members reported that the lawn bowls indoor green is not flat



Lighting

The lighting on the badminton court is not always as good as it could be

Spa, changing rooms, car park & other amenities

Changing rooms

In all groups, changing rooms were mentioned, as being too small and not convenient. In both women's and men's changing rooms, "when the front door is open you can see straight into the room (and see people while they are changing)". Exposed electrical wires in the shower were also mentioned. Finally, more lights in the women's changing room would be more convenient to do their hair and make up.



Sauna & steam rooms

The spa (sauna & steam rooms) was also a key topic during the discussions on facilities. Complaints were made on its size after renovation. Member didn't seem aware of the reason why the sauna and steam rooms have been renovated and were guessing about if there was a solution and if anything would be done about it.

Lockers

Complaints were made on the poor quality/design of the lockers which are breaking easily.



Car park

A few members suggested to have hourly rates for parking slots (to be able to park for a few hours occasionally when they don't use the parking often). There were also complaints on members using the car park for the whole day but not using the club facilities, which generates a lack of park slots for those who want to use the facilities. A very minor topic of the discussions

Non-member use of facilities



Some members complained about non-members entering the club and using Hong Kong Football Club facilities (the changing rooms and showers for example) as their identity was not checked by the staff.

In the mind of members, this means the club is more crowded and it generates more expenses for the members.

The club should explore options for controlling or monitoring access to facilities.

Suggestions for enhancement - Facilities



Booking: Establish an **online booking system** on an HKFC app / website. Allow members to book on the spot (not only by phone)



Changing rooms: Make the changing rooms **more convenient and pleasant** (better quality lockers, add more light in the female changing room, remove the wires, etc.)



Communication: Better **communication on renovation and maintenance** (so that members understand why it's taking a long time). Explain the reasons why the sauna / steam rooms have been renovated to members.



Water leaking & lighting: Solve the **water leaking issue** (and any lighting issue) on the squash & badminton courts, and on the indoor lawn bowls green



Non-members: Explore options for controlling or monitoring access to facilities.



Car park: Install an **hourly rate for car park** for members who need to use the car park for a few hours occasionally

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F&B outlets



Higher expectations regarding F&B

"We don't go to the club for food because food is not outstanding and it is more expensive"

"We have a wonderful club, clubhouse, members but the F&B seriously lacks and it is nowhere close to many of the other social and sports clubs around town"

"We all agree that the sport areas are really good, next step how to improve food?"

"Nothing attracts me about the food so I don't go often, and I live nearby!"

"If the food was better I would go more often and bring friends"

F&B was the first subject of frustration for members.

There was a general agreement that **F&B was performing less well compared to other parameters** (such as sport facilities & programs). Members also had the feeling that **other member clubs in Hong Kong were offering better value and variety** in terms of F&B.

Even though they realize the club is mainly oriented towards sport, they want to see improvements on F&B because they spend a significant amount of time at the club. Several participants mentioned that **they would go more frequently to the club if the food was more attractive.**

They also want to be able to invite their friends or business partners out for lunch and diner. It's not only about the food, but also for the privilege to bring other people to the club and impress them.

Setting up a F&B committee was suggested in several groups.

Quality and value for money

VALUE FOR MONEY IS THE MAIN CONCERN



The complaints from members regarding the quality of the food were mainly centered on a feeling of not getting enough value for money. Indeed, members reported an increase in prices in the last 2-3 years for the same quality or even declining quality of food and ingredients, using cheaper options (chicken mince v chicken thigh).

Many believed that the club management were motivated by achieving improved margins on F&B operations, which was considered the antithesis of how a members club should operate.

"When I first joined the club 6 years ago, F&B prices were good value in comparison to costs outside. While this remains mostly true for alcoholic drinks, food prices are not as cost-effective any more"

"Before I saw value, now I don't" "Again it is value for money...or lack of"

"It's a member's club, it's supposed to be for members, not to make money"



GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY

The products sold at the **Kiosk** (Daily Market) were praised several times. A few members also mentioned that the food at the **Coffee Shop** was good value (compared to the other locations)



COFFEE

Coffee was mentioned by several members as being way too expensive for its quality

"Offering Nespresso coffee at a premium doesn't really cut it"

Variety

In all groups, members felt like there was not enough variety among the food options; within individual restaurants (in the menus), as well as between the different restaurants (not enough differentiation).

"It feels like there is one kitchen for all the restaurants" "It's the same stuff everywhere" "The menus are not changing, we need more rotation on the menus"

Not enough differentiation among the F&B outlets



Not enough variety within individual outlets (in the menus)



Chinese food:

Several members suggested to offer more Chinese / Asian food. In all groups, the lack of a Chinese restaurant was raised, although the interest in having one was not universal
"I find it disappointing that a club in Hong Kong does not have a greater variety of Cantonese / Asian food"



Vegetarian / vegan food:

Members are expecting the club to have menus adapted to a range of needs, and especially vegetarian-friendly options (for themselves or for the people they invite to the club), as well as healthier food options
"I am an active user of the clubs facilities but I hardly dine there as the menus in all the cafes and restaurants in the club do not cater to vegetarians/vegans"



Mixed feelings on buffets:

Even though some members think that the buffets are good value for money, others don't like the concept of unlimited buffets and are worried about the quality of the food and food waste. Several members feel like the club became over reliant on buffets and would like A la carte menus to be expanded

Atmosphere & service

ATMOSPHERE

Overall, members are happy with the atmosphere in the club. Below some specific complaints that were raised during the groups:

Coffee Shop is too noisy

The main complaint on atmosphere was the acoustics of the Coffee Shop. Members found the location too noisy and difficult to have a conversation in.

The Chairman's Bar

Many members mentioned preferring the atmosphere of the "old Chairman's" and believe the bar's character is gone. They find the ambiance in the new bar too cold.

On smoking

Some members wish for specific smoking areas in the club, to avoid being subject of passive smoking. In addition, there is confusion about access to the outdoor space of The Coffee Shop ("is it just a smoking section?")

SERVICE

Overall, service in the different outlets has been praised: *"The staff are welcoming and helpful and it's a pleasure to talk to them"*. Members appreciate the fact that the staff recognize them. Below some complaints that were mentioned:

Shortage of staff

Members think that there's a shortage of staff when it gets busy – and especially during special events; which could have been forecasted and staff added on those occasions.

The staff doesn't always seem properly trained

Although service staff are friendly & pleasant, members feel like they're sometimes not properly supported and trained. They do their best but they are in a system that doesn't work (for instance when it gets too crowded).

An over-dependence on rules

The staff could be also more flexible on rules (i.e. a member having a dinner reservation for 10 people and not being able to take the table until 50% of the party arrived) and more accommodating regarding food choice (i.e. replace one ingredient for another in a dish)



Focus on the Sportsman's Bar

As found in the survey, the Sportsman's Bar is an all-time favorite for its atmosphere, but is lagging in terms of food. With a better quality for price offering it would drive even more traffic.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere is the key strength of the Sportsman's Bar. Members love its outdoor section and don't want the atmosphere and the set-up of the bar to change.

Drinks

Members are very satisfied with the quality and selection of drinks. They appreciate the fact that the drink menu is rotating. The creation of an Happy Hour has been suggested.

Service

Service is generally good, although when it gets busy members have the feeling that there is a shortage of staff (especially for occasions that could have been forecasted; during sports events for example). The buzzer system was not liked.



Non-smoking area

Several members wished that there was a specific non-smoking area, so that they could enjoy the outdoor area with out being subject of passive smoking.

Food

Most members think that the quality for price is not there in terms of food, and also wish for more variety or rotation in the menu (especially healthier food options, as this is the place they go after doing sports). In addition, for some dishes, the quantity served was considered too small.

Suggestions for enhancement - F&B outlets



Variety within menus: Add more **variety or rotate menus** within individual outlets, and especially in the Sportsman's Bar. In particular, **healthier, vegetarian/vegan-friendly** options and more **Asian/Chinese food** were asked for.



Variety among restaurants: Add more **differentiation** among the outlets (e.g. a Chinese restaurant).



Value for money: Standardize margins to ensure members get **good value for money** in terms of F&B.



Service staff: Ensure that there is **enough service staff** during busy times. Make sure that they are **trained** and know what to do in different situations/scenarios.



Ambiance: Make the atmosphere at the new Chairman's Bar **warmer/cozier**. Improve **acoustics** in the Coffee Shop.



Smoking areas: Establish specific smoking areas in the club.

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Leadership & communication



Thoughts on leadership

A perception of a **lack of diversity** on the General Committee was brought up several times. This lack of diversity is seen as being across **ethnicity** (not enough Asian people in the Committee), **gender** (not enough women), and **age** (not enough younger people). In addition, some members feel that some **sport section** such as basketball or netball are being underrepresented.

Members feel that, with more diversity in the leadership, it would fully represent the diversity of the **Hong Kong Football Club community** and would bring different views in decision making.

“For a Club in Hong Kong, there is a real lack of representation of the overall membership in the leadership. This is not at all representative of the diverse membership in the Club”

“The large number of active women volunteers in the club who are the lifeline of many of the sporting groups is overlooked”



Members' participation in decisions

*"HKFC should **involve more members in its decision making process** when it comes to club renovation and food & beverage menus/choices"*

*"I'm **willing to be involved** in the details"*

*"There are moments when the club must actively seek out the input of membership, **don't just put up a poster**"*

*"I think the Club should regularly have more **'Town Hall' meetings** to discuss the bigger issues: renovation/ rental leasing/ and any other major issues"*

- During the groups, several members mentioned their willingness to be more involved in or consulted for the decisions related to the club, and especially regarding renovation and F&B. On important issues that are affecting members, they think that the club should **pro-actively get feedback from the community**. They were longing for more **focus groups & surveys**, and also suggested the organisation of regular **townhalls meetings**.
- They also encouraged the club to consult **experts within the club community, the members themselves**. They mentioned professional cooks (for instance the Head Chef at a prestigious hotel & restaurant chain was said to be a member), dieticians and professionals in developing as examples of experts who could provide their expertise.

"I'm a dietician and nobody asked me about the food in the club"

"I'm a property developer, nobody consulted me on renovations"

Communications at the club



INFORMATION SHARING

During the groups, we observed that members were not always aware of what was happening in the club (e.g. sport events, festive dinners, when the swimming pool is closing, etc.). Communication exists but could be improved.

A central point of communication in the website or in an app that lists (or shows in a calendar) what is happening in the club would help members make the most of their experience with the club.



GIVE MEMBERS OPPORTUNITIES TO FEEDBACK

During the focus groups, a large part of the members expressed their willingness to share their feedbacks and contribute to the club.

A specific section on the website or on an app to send complaints or share feedback on the club facilities, outlets and programs could be an opportunity to engage the community and get direct insights on what could be enhanced in the club.



BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Several members shared the feeling that Hong Kong Football Club felt like a group of different sport sections rather than a club.

“There are very few occasions or opportunities where people (from different sections) can actually get together”.

Communication-wise, each sport section is working in silos. For instance, each section has its own Facebook page which is not affiliated with the club.

Communication on management decisions

It was clear during the groups that members were asking for more **information sharing** from the management, especially regarding finance and future projects. They would like the Committee to be more **transparent** and disclose important information. As they feel they don't have this information, some members don't understand the decisions taken and feel that there is not a strong vision / strategy for the club.

In addition, suggestions or complaints from some members (about the renovation or the F&B for example) **have not been answered**, which intensified the frustrations.

"It should be two way communication and I don't think the Committee engages enough with the members and I don't think the members engage enough with the Committee"

**TWO WAY
COMMUNICATION**



On the 2nd floor renovation:

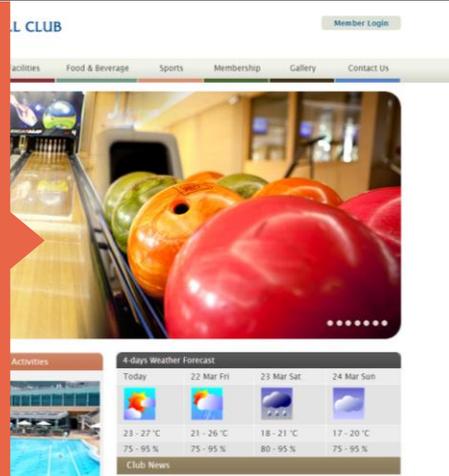
The 2nd floor renovation is an illustration of the extent to how an improved communication could benefit the club. One of the reasons why the club members are so frustrated with the refurbishment is the fact that they felt they **haven't been consulted beforehand**. Getting members' feedback on significant changes like this renovation in a more **pro-active way** would have made them feel like they're part of the decision and that their needs were understood. Putting a sign up was not enough for them, as they wanted to give their opinions at the beginning of the renovation project.

Moreover, explaining the **reasons behind management decisions** would also help patch up complaints. For example, several members did not understand the purpose of the new renovation, or did not know that there were issues with the former mixed sauna/steam rooms.

Communication channels

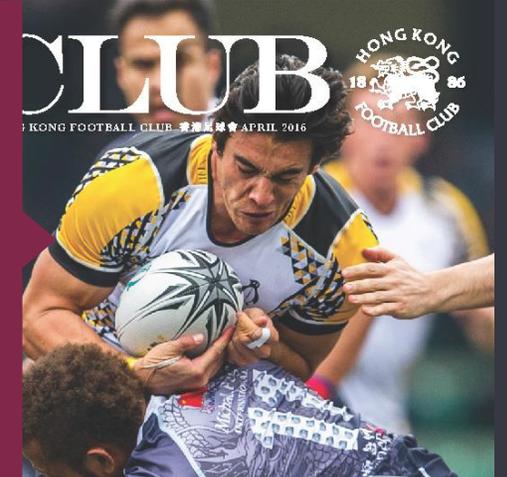
WEBSITE & APP

Members would like to see more **updated information** on what is going on in the club in the website / app, as well as a **booking system** for sport facilities and restaurants. In addition, they would like to be able to consult their data on their **membership** online. The website and/or the app should be the **central point of communication** where they can find all the information they may need.



MAGAZINE

Overall, members **like the magazine**. It was suggested to make it possible to opt out of receiving a hard copy as a more **eco-friendly** option.



EMAILS

In general, members are fine with the volume and frequency of emails. However, they would like to be able to **personalize communication** by opting in and out for being informed on different contents according to their **personal preferences and interests** (e.g. restaurants, swimming pool, specific sport sections, etc.).



SOCIAL MEDIA

When asking if they were following Hong Kong Football Club on social media, members said that they were following the **individual sport sections**. This emphasizes the fact that, communication-wise, each sport section is working in silos.



Suggestions for enhancement - Communication



Two way communication: Engage more with members on important decisions and **encourage feedback** in order to understand their needs and make them feel like they are heard - **townhalls, focus groups, surveys.**



Information sharing: Share **more information about future projects and management** of the club to appease potential frustrations



Community: Organize **events to gather members** from different sport sections (e.g. Club Olympics, quiz night, charity event). Reinforce **communication from the club perspective** (as opposed to communication from the sport sections)



Diversity: Pro-active effort for more **diversity in the leadership** (gender, ethnicity, age, sport section) to make everyone feel like they are being represented.



Club information: Make the website and/or the app the **central point of information**; with updated information on events, restaurants, swimming pool, sports, membership, etc.



Personalization: Personalize communication according to **individual preferences** (e.g. opt in/out for the newsletters)

Membership Focus Groups

Hong Kong Football Club

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For more information please contact:

Todd Davis

Kadence International

t +852 2834 8971

e tdavis@kadence.com

w www.kadence.com