

## The Membership Funnel

The process of marketing Scouting to new prospective members can be envisioned as a funnel, as seen in this diagram. The funnel starts with a wide mouth at the top and gets increasingly smaller as our intended new members travel through it. For too long, we have been concentrating on the bottom section of the funnel, the “Action” phase, where the new members actually join, but recent research shows that we need to concentrate more on the “Awareness” and “Interest” phases to get more new members down to the “Desire” and “Action” (Join) phases.



We are fortunate to have a Marketing Department that has undertaken the job of increasing our brand awareness on a larger, national scale, using such techniques as retargeting, paid social media, paid searches, public relations (PR) and earned media, and influencer contact. **However, there are some methods that we can, and should, enact on a local scale to bring the message of Scouting into our own communities.**

Specifically, we are talking about leveraging social media to educate the public and create an increased awareness of Scouting and its value to youth, families, and the community. Every council, district, and unit should have a public-facing social media account (FaceBook, Instagram, etc.) that is used as a repository of information about them, conforms to the [Youth Protection Guidelines](#), and tells the story of Scouting in the community. The types of activities to be highlighted are far-reaching, from individual achievements and awards to service projects, camping and outdoor activities, and normal friend activities (NFAs), and, of course, recruitment activities that can be geofenced to increase penetration. Photography and videos serve to enhance the reader’s experience. Reference should always be made to [www.BeAScout.org](http://www.BeAScout.org) to make it easy for readers to learn more about Scouting.

Councils are urged to develop practices to educate their members about the uses of social media and embrace their utility. This can also be taken to the next level, with councils making a competition of the process, and awarding prizes to the best (or most) press releases from packs, troops, crews, and districts on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis.

By taking this small step, we can potentially widen the mouth of the funnel and increase awareness in Scouting to the point where we can recruit more youth (and their families) into the program.