

For grassroots sports clubs juggling around 500 players, parents, and supporters, managing communication effectively is a monumental task. Whether it's last-minute game changes, fundraising appeals, or committee notices, ensuring your messages reach the right people — in the way they prefer — is absolutely essential. Yet, many clubs struggle with subscription bloat, patchy data, and confusing costs in their communication tools. In this post, we'll explore practical strategies for storing **member contact preferences** in one place without breaking the bank or drowning in administrative overhead.

Understanding Why Contact Preferences Matter

Every club wants to keep its community engaged. But blanket mass messaging risks alienating members who might want information through specific channels, or only about certain topics. Collecting and respecting **communications consent** and contact preferences isn't just good manners — it's required under privacy laws like GDPR in many countries.



Aligned contact preferences empower your club to:

- Send relevant updates without over-messaging
- Prevent communication fatigue among volunteers and supporters
- Increase engagement and response rates
- Stay compliant with data privacy regulations
- Reduce opt-outs and complaints

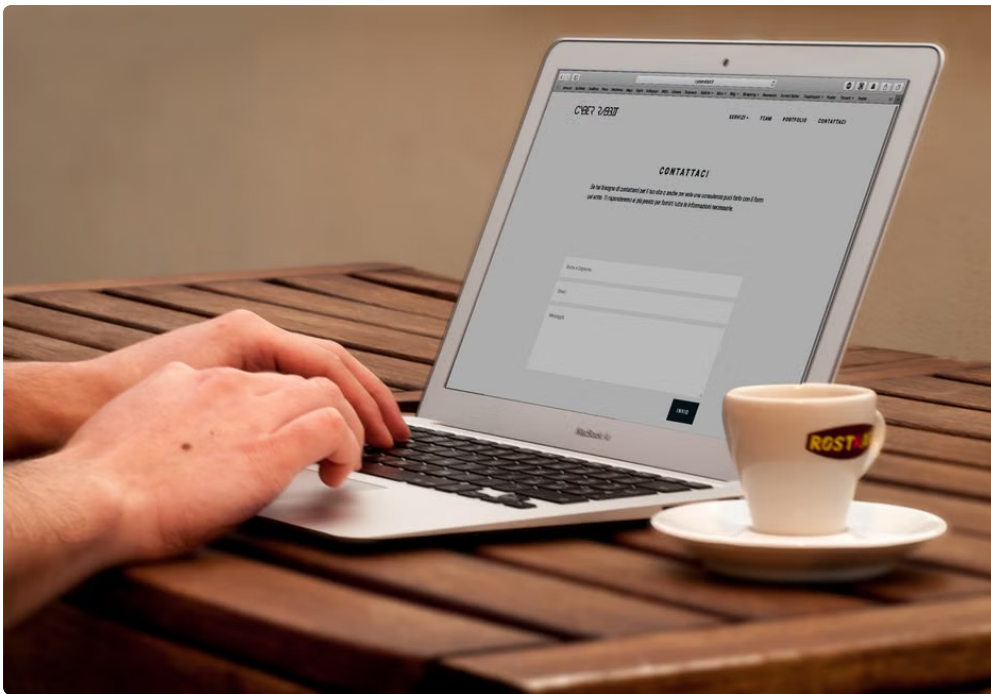
Typical Club Tool Stack and Associated Costs

It's common for grassroots clubs to accumulate multiple software subscriptions over time, often with overlapping features. Here's a rough [Go to this website](#) estimation of typical tools and costs for a club with ~500 members:

Tool Type	Purpose	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost (Per Season)	Typical Pain Points
Sports Registration Platform	forms, registrations, payments	\$50/mo	\$600	Fees per transaction, limited communication options
Email Marketing Software	Bulk emails, newsletters	\$100/mo	\$1,200	Contact limits, tiered pricing, hard to segment by preference

SMS Messaging Service Text alerts, last-minute messages \$25/mo + \$0.05/SMS Varies by usage Costs per message add up fast, no free tier Volunteer Scheduling Tool Rosters and reminders \$20/mo \$240 Separate login, fee for added contacts

Season defined as ~12 months of active club operations



Altogether, these easily total over **\$2,000 per year** just to maintain basic communication channels. Many grassroots clubs find this unsustainable, especially when multiple tools store member data in silos — creating headaches in syncing **contact preferences** and compliance status.

Subscription Bloat: How Clubs End Up Paying Too Much

Subscription bloat creeps in when clubs subscribe to several niche services — each charging monthly fees based on contacts or messages. The problems include:

- **Duplicate storage:** The same member's info exists in multiple systems, sometimes with conflicting contact preferences.
- **Pay-per-contact fees:** Many tools charge by the number of contacts in your database — even if you never message some members.
- **Pay-per-send fees:** Text messaging or email tools often add hidden per-message fees, which inflate costs, especially on game days.
- **Multiple login hurdles:** Communication tasks require logging into each separate tool, slowing down urgent updates.

For example, if you keep all 500 members in your email marketing platform, which costs \$100 monthly, that's \$1,200 per season, even if you only email 150 people regularly. If your SMS tool charges \$0.05 per message and you send 1,000 messages per season, that's another \$50. Multiply this waste by multiple systems, and admin time lost also becomes a hidden cost.

The Pay-Per-Send Messaging vs Monthly Tier Pricing Debate

Two popular pricing models dominate grassroots club communication tools:

1. Monthly Tier Pricing

You pay a fixed monthly amount depending on your number of contacts or allowed sends (emails, SMS, etc.). For example, a tool might charge \$50/mo for up to 500 contacts and 5,000 emails. This model offers predictability but can be expensive if many contacts are inactive or rarely messaged. Also, if you want to keep contacts who have opted out of some messages but remain in the system, you pay for them anyway.

2. Pay-Per-Send Pricing

Only pay for messages sent. An example is \$0.05 per SMS or per automated notification sent. This is ideal for clubs with sporadic messaging needs, especially those relying heavily on SMS. But it can become costly on game days with last-minute reminders sent en masse.

Pro tip: Combine your tools to maintain a master *member database with detailed contact preferences* and export only the active contacts for your monthly tier email campaigns. Use pay-per-send SMS sparingly for urgent alerts filtered based on consent.

Free Forms and Registrations: The First Step to Accurate Preferences

One of the best ways to gather reliable contact preferences from members is integrating registration and consent collection at signup using free or low-cost forms:

- **Google Forms / Microsoft Forms:** Free, easy to set up, but don't scale well for integrations or data management
- **JotForm / Typeform:** Free and paid plans allow conditional logic for granular consents (e.g., "Receive SMS alerts?")
- **Sports-specific registration platforms:** Many include basic consent fields out of the box but watch for contact fees

Design your form with clear, specific questions about communication channels. Example consent checkboxes:

- Email updates about team news
- SMS alerts for fixture changes
- Marketing/promotional messages
- Communications related to volunteering

Collecting this data upfront ensures you start with clean, accurate preferences. Avoid assuming contact channels based on previous years — preferences can change annually.

Best Practices for Storing Contact Preferences in One Place

1. **Use a central member database:** Avoid duplicating contacts across tools. Use a club management software or CRM that supports custom fields for contact preferences and communications consent.
2. **Keep data simple but granular:** Store multiple contact methods (email, phone, social), associated consent for each, and any opt-out flags.
3. **Sync or integrate your tools:** Automate data flows to prevent manual CSV exports/imports, reducing errors and admin load.
4. **Audit contact lists regularly:** Remove duplicates and dead contacts to lower costs with subscription-based tools.

5. **Train committee members and volunteers:** Make sure the people who send messages understand the importance of contact preferences and how to respect them.
6. **Keep records of consent:** For legal compliance, retain timestamped records of received communications consent.

Example: Consolidating Contact Preferences for 500 Members

Imagine your club picks a simple software stack with a powerful central *member database module*, included in an affordable package at \$70/month = \$840 per year. This system allows you to:

- Store all 500 contacts with email, phone, and opt-in fields
- Segment contacts by preference (e.g., SMS opt-in vs email only)
- Send unlimited emails within the tier, reducing cost per active contact
- Use a pay-per-send SMS add-on only for urgent texts
- Integrate registration forms that feed preferences directly into the database

Your communication cost breaks down to:

Cost Item	Details	Cost per Season (12 months)
Central Member Database	+ Email One platform, unlimited emails, 500 contacts	\$840
SMS Messaging	Pay-per-send @ \$0.05/message, estimated 500 messages	\$25
Registration Form	Platform Free tier with registration and consent options	\$0
	Total	\$865

This streamlined approach saves over 50% of your previous distributed tool costs, simplifies contact preference management, and reduces volunteer frustration.

Summary

Effective member communication in grassroots clubs hinges on respecting **contact preferences** and maintaining a single source of truth. Subscription bloat and confusing pricing models can quickly drain precious club funds and volunteer time.

Key takeaways for every club aiming to improve:

- Build your central member database capturing granular consent
- Choose a communication pricing model that fits your usage (monthly tiers + pay-per-send hybrid often works best)
- Use free forms at registration to get clear communications consent upfront
- Regularly clean and audit your contact list to reduce unnecessary subscription fees
- Prioritize tools that integrate or export easily to avoid data silos and extra logins

Doing this well improves engagement, reduces opt-outs, keeps your club compliant, and most importantly, respects your members' wishes. That's the best way to store **member contact preferences in one place**.

Have you tackled contact preference management in your grassroots club? Got tools or tips that worked? Let me know in the comments below!