

Case study



**Royal College
of Physicians**

Background

Founded in 1518, the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) is the oldest medical college in England. Its core mission is to drive improvements in health and healthcare through advocacy, education and research. In 2017, trueology were selected by the RCP's membership team to undertake a series of analytical and strategic projects to inform member communications in support of growth and retention.

The problem

The membership team at the RCP had identified some worrying trends which were beginning to present themselves, namely;

- Increased membership churn
- An annual decline in Fellowship acceptance for the past three years
- A lower market share
- Feedback from members indicating reduced engagement and decreasing satisfaction with value for money

Alarmingly, these trends combined to show that the RCP's growth estimate and membership target would not be reached by 2020.

It was clear that the RCP needed to identify and understand the factors behind these trends. To do this, they needed to understand the needs, expectations and attitudes of their existing membership base and target market, in order to design new and improved methods of acquiring, engaging and retaining members to support growth.

The approach



The first step was to undertake a **detailed analysis of the membership transactional data** held on the existing members, including deep-dive analysis into **retention, usage and value trends**

trueology then designed, built and managed an **online survey exploring the needs, expectations, preferences, motivations and attitudes of existing and lapsed members**



Our analysts then developed a **membership segmentation** and carried out a series of **focus groups** to flesh out the segments and explore members' deeper feelings, attitudes and motivations

The final stage was to bring the segmentation to life through the **development of pen portraits**



Outputs

- **'State of the nation'** – detailed insights of existing members at both a granular and high level
- **Membership segmentation** - based on join motivations, career stage, personal attitudes and the value members assign to specific membership benefits. This could be used for ensuring targeted, timely and relevant messaging to all members
- **Deeper understanding of members** - following the membership survey, trueology were able to deliver insights which included personal motivations and attitudes
- **Pen portraits** – bringing the segmentation to life by going beyond simply describing the segment cohorts and providing specific, detailed guidance for how each segment should be communicated with, what their objections and concerns around joining may be, and how these could be overcome through offers, incentives and communications
- **A toolkit** that could be used by the RCP to aid acquisition and retention targeting and communications, as well as help shape future product development

Results

Ultimately, the analysis and research provided by trueology meant that;

- **The RCP have reversed their membership decline and are in positive growth**
- Importantly, this means that they are back on track to **achieve their membership target by 2020**

The insights identified by trueology are now being fully exploited to **grow and sustain future income** from both current members and those not yet acquired.

trueology have since gone on to complete research and analysis projects for the RCP's Education, Training & CPD Team as well as a programme of research on their QI offering. **Both have enabled these teams to understand their audiences and help shape future product development.**

"Having previously worked with the trueology team whilst at CAMRA, their membership know-how made them an obvious choice to be invited to tender when I joined the RCP.

trueology's expertise in analysis and segmentation coupled with their 'can-do' attitude has given us real insights in to understanding our membership base which will see the college flourish and grow!"

**Jay Norton, Membership Engagement Manager,
the Royal College of Physicians**

