

## SQUAREUP BC - NEW DANCER SURVEY

A survey of 220 new dancers was undertaken by SquareUpBC in the fall of 2015. The purpose of the survey was to learn how advertising and promotion efforts influenced people to join. Of the 220 new dancers, 92 (42%) were solo dancers. 50% of the 220 people were Baby Boomers (ages 51 to 69); 24% Silent Generation/Traditionalists (70 to 80 years), with the remaining 26% split between 20 to 50 years old.

The following are the results of the promotional elements that influenced new dancer session attendance.

- 2 - Advertisement on Facebook
- 6 - Advertisement on Google when searching
- 19 - Own search of internet
- 5 - Promotional brochure or single page flyer
- 19 - Community calendar announcement in media
- 27 - Advertisement in local newspaper
- 12 - Poster on display
- 0 - Twitter message (tweet)
- 21 - Display of dancing in the community
- 124 - Friend, relative or other person recommended the dancing (52%).

### B.C.'s Westsyde Squares Increase By 29 Dancers in One Year!

Westsyde Squares, central Okanagan, purchased advertising starting late August and sought free media publicity

wherever possible. The club purchased display ads in one of their free local newspapers that had wide distribution. The ad was 3 columns across (about 5") by 7" tall. The first night attracted almost three squares, and resulted in 12 paid-up newcomers for 12 sessions in the West Coast Program at \$120/person. The lesson day and time was Wednesday, 6-7:30 pm (the regular club dancers came at 7:30pm).

In January, 2016 the club purchased newspaper ads again and added paid Facebook ads. Apart from the paid strategy, press releases with photos were sent to the media and every opportunity was exercised to place a community calendar event announcement on radio, TV, newspaper and online websites.

As newcomers came through the door on the first free night, some said they saw it in the paper, some said it was advertised on their Facebook page, and one woman went so far as to exclaim that "it was everywhere!"

Results: 17 dancers joined in January, for a total of 29 new dancers during the 2015-16 dance year. Most influential elements given for attending:

- |                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - Fun with partner/spouse        | - Was away from dancing and missed it |
| - Looking for fun                | - Social aspect                       |
| - Loving dancing & music         | - To meet people                      |
| - Square danced in earlier years | - No crinolines necessary             |
| - Socializing, fun, exercising   |                                       |



Discover a great dance experience.

**FREE SESSION**  
WED., SEPT 9 • 6pm

**Introduction to...  
Today's  
Square  
Dancing**

*with modern music*

- Fun, laughter, fitness
- Great social activity
- Easy as walking
- Lively, young instructor
- Singles welcome
- Casual attire

**Westbank United  
Church Hall • 3672 Brown Rd.**

**FREE PARKING!**

12 exciting sessions follow every Wednesday  
by registration

*Call to say "I'm joining the fun!"*

Ron & Jerry 250-769-5546 • ron\_mcmullen@telus.net  
Lynda 250-763-0084 • lyndabj@shaw.ca

Video: [www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca](http://www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca)  
[www.WestsideDanceFun.info](http://www.WestsideDanceFun.info)

Hosted by: **The Westsyde Squares**

## A LESSON IN MARKETING

In the previous Alberta Chatter issue, a newspaper ad was featured in the article titled "B.C.'s Westsyde Squares Increase by 29 Dancers in One Year!" The newsletter was posted on the CSRDS Pinterest Board titled "Newsletters", and Cornwall's club publicity director inquired if she could use the "poster". Contact was made with Brian Elmer, Chairperson of SQUAREUP B.C. (a marketing initiative of the B.C. Square & Round Dance Federation). Below are excerpts from Brian's email response, containing a lot of practical marketing tips that could be of benefit to all of us in our promotion efforts.

I received an inquiry from you about accessing an advertisement for square dancing that originated in West Kelowna, BC, in the Okanagan Valley. My apologies for this delayed response but it has taken some research to identify the photo source because the ad was created several years back.

**The ad has never been a poster but is actually a "display ad" set up by a local commercial newspaper as part of a paid campaign exceeding \$1,000 in value.** It was never furnished without the local lesson information, so we don't have a version where that section is blank and could be used by other clubs.

**The photograph of a younger couple in a dance pose and looking at the camera is a professional copywritten photo owned by iStock.** That's an online international micro stock photography provider based in Calgary. They furnish some photos online royalty free but the best ones tend to be at a cost. They sell their photos on a "credit" system and the one of the dancing couple costs 3 credits or \$36 CAN. See it online at: <http://www.istockphoto.com/.../happy-couple-enjoying-a-dance->. There are many other similar photos for sale by iStock, including older and younger demographics. I can send you my list if it interests you.

The B.C. Square & Round Dance Federation acquired the rights to use the photo as part of the graphics involved in making a pull-up promotional screen years ago. The "Dance Dance Dance" wording in the background was created by the designer of the screen, Papyrus Printing in Prince George, BC. When the newspaper ad was created for a member club of the B.C. Federation, the two graphics were again combined by the newspaper's graphics & layout department and married with the text for the advertisement. You could purchase the photo from iStock under the "Society" and have a print shop recreate the ad leaving a blank space for the local club information. I'll attach the "Dance" wording in PDF-format which is actually only the upper part of the white background behind the dancers. The print shop has to blend it.

**Note that this ad involved a lot of thought and skillful understanding of "market segmentation:"**

- The heading promises "a great dance experience" and offers a "free session".
- The start time of the instruction is 6 pm which is much more reasonable for working people who don't want recreational activities that run late into the evening (some employees today begin work at 6 am).
- The photo depicts a couple to which the target Baby Boomer demographic, now aged 53 to 71, relates (the Boomers see themselves as up to 20 years younger than they really are). Real people looking like they're enjoying themselves beats out any graphic or artistic rendering. Learn more about demographics from the Callerlab research of years ago. Refer to: <http://www.squaredance.bc.ca/jim-hensley-marketing-seminar>.
- The "Today's Square Dancing" heading moves away from more tired words to imply a current activity.
- The bulleted points stress fun, fitness, socialization, ease of learning and singles being welcome along with casual attire. The club placing the advertising is privileged to have a young instructor (aged 25).

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- The instructional period shown of 12 sessions is inspired by the condensed "West Coast Square Dance Program" developed in British Columbia back in 2012. 25 to 30 two-hour sessions to learn the Mainstream program doesn't sell anymore. Refer to:  
<http://www.westcoastsquaredance.com/index.html>. Callerlab has since developed the Condensed Teaching Method Program of 12 sessions.
- There's a "call-to-action" encouraging interested readers to phone or e-mail to say that they want to join the fun.
- The closing portion of the ad brings reader's attention to the 10-minute promotional video produced for the B.C. Federation called "Dancing Keeps You Young" ([www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca](http://www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca)) and the web page title for the host club is promotional ([www.WestsideDanceFun.info](http://www.WestsideDanceFun.info)) to send readers to an easy-to-remember club web page that's tailored to new dancer prospects
- Also, there was a desire to create a media synergy by having the photo and titling on the pull-up screen be similar to that used in the newspaper advertising.
- Further to media synergy, under the B.C. Federation's SQUAREUPB.C. marketing initiative, we've been running paid advertising on Facebook that utilizes the same dancing couple photo but largely as a mid-shot, picturing them from the waist up. The "landing page" to which interested persons are sent if the ad interests them is:  
[www.SquareDanceFun.info](http://www.SquareDanceFun.info)