

Recruiting Participants

By John A. Blair

One of the greatest challenges facing a Surname Project Administrator is recruiting participants. One of the most frequently asked questions is “how do I get the word out to those that might be interested in joining my Surname Project? There are ways that you might use to “advertise” your project which I will address in a minute, but first I’d like to discuss a key element of almost all successful Surname Projects and a key element in recruiting participants. This element is a **website**.

A Website

In order to recruit participants you must be able to explain your DNA project. A website is the best way to do this. It provides an easy way to:

1. State the objective(s) of the project
2. Communicate the benefits of participating
3. Identify the Lines being tested
4. Provide enough family history information so participants can identify their line
5. Identify Lines where participants are needed
6. Motivates people to participate

A website lets you provide all the information on your project in detail and allows you do so only once.

I use mine to recruit participants and have forms so they can apply online and provide their pedigree chart and other information. In addition to being a great recruiting tool you can also use your website to present and explain test results in the context of genealogy.

My website is <http://blairgenealogy.com/dna/>. If you decide to set up a website you are welcome to use anything from my website that you feel will make your work easier. That includes the forms and any language you think will help. Much of what is on my site is bits and pieces of information from other sites, that I have copied, pasted, combined, rearranged, etc. The only pages on my DNA website that are restricted from use are "DNA 101: Y-Chromosome Testing" and "Marker Analysis". I welcome links to these pages, but they may not be copied or displayed on any other website.

Where Can I Get a Website?

Almost all internet service providers (ISPs) provide free websites for their customers. Some even provide simple tools to develop your website. The biggest problem with setting up a website with your ISP is that if you change your ISP you lose your website and have to start over again. The website address you gave to everyone is no longer valid and you will have to find and tell everyone your new address.

There are many sites on the internet that provide free website hosting. The problem with most of these “free” sites is the advertising and pop-ups that visitors must endure when they visit your site. Listed below are just some of the sites that provide free website hosting:

- RootsWeb Freepages (<http://accounts.rootsweb.com/>)
- Angelfire (<http://angelfire.lycos.com/>)
- Tripod (<http://www.tripod.lycos.com/>)
- Yahoo! GeoCities (<http://geocities.yahoo.com/home/>)

World Families Network (<http://www.worldfamilies.net/>) offers a free 6 page website for DNA Surname Projects. There are certain requirements associated with this offer.

Family Tree DNA offers a free website for their Surname Project Administrators. One problem associated with a FTDNA website is that it is a DNA testing company and using your website address in some forums and mailing lists may get you banned from the list (see below).

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Finally, for those who are a bit more adventurous (or vain), there is the option to establish your own domain name and a full service internet hosting service. There are a number of advantages to this including name recognition, a shorter web address, and complete control over your website, usually with fair more features available from free sources. My domain name is blairgenealogy.com. Type in "Blair" and "genealogy" (without the quotes) into almost any search engine and you will almost always find my website on the first page of results. My website address at rootsweb (a free site) is <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~jablair/> (don't bother going there to it only take you back to "real" site). With my own domain name my address is <http://blairgenealogy.com>.

The two drawbacks to your own domain name and a full service internet hosting service are: 1) it's not free and 2) you have know at least a little bit about web design.

How do you find potential participants?

There are several possible resources available for Surname Project Administrator to find potential participants. Some Administrators may find all or most of these resources applicable while other Administrators may not be so fortunate. I'm listing these resource in the order that I found them most useful to the Blair DNA Project.

Genealogical Surname Societies/Organizations/Family Associations - Many surnames have Genealogical Societies/Organizations or Family Associations associated with them. If your surname has such a society, this could be your most valuable resource. If such an organization exists, join it and solicit their support and endorsement. I work with the Blair Society for Genealogical Research and the Clan Blair Society. Both of these organizations endorse and support the project. Both organizations actively publicize the project in their newsletters and on their websites and encourage their membership to participate. One of the organizations has even established a sizable DNA fund to support the project. The majority of my participants were recruited through these two societies.

Rootsweb Surname Mailing Lists – Rootsweb.com (<http://lists.rootsweb.com/>) has thousands genealogy surname mailing lists. If there is mailing list for your surname you *may* be able to use it to publicize your project. I say "*may*" because many of these lists allow posts on the subject of DNA while many do not. If there is a list for your surname I highly recommend you do the following:

Search the archives of the list for the subject "DNA". See if there have been any postings on DNA and what the reaction on the list was. Was there any discussion on the subject? Did any of the members see interested in DNA? Did any list members express strong opinions against DNA? Most importantly – Did the list administrator express any strong opinions one way or the other on the subject of DNA? Doing this search may give you some idea how the list members and list administrator might react if you use the list to publicize your DNA project. One very important point to remember – these mailing lists are not a democracy; the list administrator is god and what he/she says goes.

Browse the archives of the list for the last 3 or 4 months. See what topics are being discussed. Is there anything being discussed or questions being asked that you have knowledge of or may be able to answer? Make of note of these so you can add to the discussion.

Join the list, but DO NOT make any mention of your DNA project yet. If you found any discussions or questions when you browsed the list, provide what information you have. If there were no discussions to which you could contribute, provide information on your own line(s) of research. Ask questions about your line(s). The objective is to become a member of the list, not some outsider using the list for your own agenda. The more you can contribute to the list, the more likely you are to get a positive response when you bring up the subject of your DNA project. After a few weeks and a number of postings you should be ready for the next step.

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Post the information on your DNA project. Before discussing what to post there are a couple of things you **DO NOT** want to post to the mailing list:

DO NOT mention prices. In general this is a violation of Rootsweb policy and most list administrators will at a minimum moderate you and possibly ban you from the list.

DO NOT mention the testing company you are using or provide a direct link to the company. This may be viewed as a commercial enterprise which is also prohibited by Rootsweb.

DO NOT cross post the same message to multiple lists.

You should post general information about your DNA project:

Briefly explain what DNA testing is all about and what it can do to further genealogical research.

Briefly explain what DNA tests you will be using, i.e., the Y-DNA test or the mtDNA test.

If you are just using the Y-DNA test, briefly explain how women can participate through male family members.

Do not try to go into too much detail on the mailing list.

If you have set up a website provide the address and let them know they can find all the project details on your website.

If you do not have a website give them your email address and ask them to contact you off the list.

After you're initial posting watch the reaction of the list administrator and the list subscribers. If the list administrator does not object to your initial posting and there are general questions to the list concerning the project, answer them on the list. But do not discuss PRICE or specific testing companies on the list. Either refer these questions to your website or answer them off list.

If the list administrator has not objected to these postings, follow up every 3 or 4 months with a brief project update and refer list members to your website or email address off list.

Some project managers who use these mailing lists recommend that you contact the list administrator and get their approval before you first introduce your DNA project. I have mixed feelings about this. If you have followed all the steps outlined above, have made meaningful contributions to the list and are in fact a "true member" of the list and there is no policy against the discussion of DNA, I would simply post my DNA project.

I use the BLAIR-L@rootsweb.com mailing list to get the word out. There may also be such a list for your surname.

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Query Boards (Surname Forums) - Ancestry.com/RootsWeb.com (<http://boards.ancestry.com/>) and Genealogy.com (<http://genforum.genealogy.com/>) both have surname forums. Both can be a valuable way to publicize your DNA project.

Ancestry.com/RootsWeb.com are the same forum, both run by RootsWeb which is owned by Ancestry.com. These forums can be troublesome because many forum administrator will remove any postings pertaining to DNA or move them to a separate DNA forum. A bigger problem is that anyone can complain about a DNA posting and it will also be removed or moved. Follow the same rules above for posting to the rootsweb mailing lists. Stress the point that DNA testing is tool for genealogical research and can help connect researchers to a common ancestor. You do not want to sound like an advertisement.

Genealogy.com surnames forums seem to be much friendlier to DNA postings, but I would still recommend the same procedures as for rootsweb.

Create Your Own Mailing List – Unfortunately for many surnames there are no Genealogical/Historic Societies/Organizations/ Family Associations, Mailing Lists, or Surname Forums. And even if there are, you may not get the support from the administrators to use them. In this case you will have develop your own mailing list. There are many ways to develop such a list.

- If there is a surname mailing list or query board (surname forum) but the administrator bans DNA postings you can gather email address from these sources.
- If they do not exist start with those who you have had contact with in the past regarding your family history research. Don't eliminate the females - they may have a brother or father whom they could ask to participate. Asking for help finding a genetic representative for their family is one approach that often works well.
- You may find additional potential participants by searching the internet. Use “google” or other search engines to search for your surname. For best results include both your surname and the word genealogy.
- *Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA* (April 4, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 3) lists the following sites on the internet to look for those interested in genealogy and whom are researching your surname:
 - Ancestry.com Research Registry: <http://www.ancestry.com/share/research/main.htm>
 - Guild of One Name Studies: <http://www.one-name.org/register.shtml>
 - Rootsweb Surname list: <http://rsl.rootsweb.com/#search>
 - Genforum: <http://genforum.genealogy.com/>
 - Ancestry World Tree: <http://Ancestry.com/trees/main.htm?lf=m>
 - Ancestry message boards: <http://Ancestry.com/share/main.htm?lf=m>
 - Family History Societies for the British Isles: <http://www.genuki.org.uk/search/>
 - Jewish Genealogy: <http://www.jewishgen.org>And also, from the main page of Genuki, go to the County where your surname occurs: <http://www.genuki.org.uk/>
- If you have a genealogical website and if you have a guestbook on your website, this can be the most valuable source of email addresses and potential participants for your surname project.

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- If all else fails you can try online email directories and telephone books. I used Internet Address Finder (<http://www.iaf.net/>) and Yahoo People Finder (<http://people.yahoo.com/>) to find the email addresses of all Blairs. The search resulted in over 2,200 addresses. I emailed all of them explaining the project. The biggest problem with this approach is it is VERY time consuming and the vast majority of the addresses are BAD. I bounced about 1,700 messages. With most email programs you have limit the number of addresses you send to all one time, so this method is probably more work than it's worth.

The initial contact email/letter should have the following components:

- why are you writing
- generate interest in family history
- how they can help: share information
- the DNA Project: objectives and results
- look forward to hearing from them
- **ask for a referral** to the family genealogist

Other ways to recruit participants that I have seen mentioned but have not tried are:

Reunions

Advertise in local papers

Attachment 1

Articles from *Facts & Genes* from Family Tree DNA

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Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

FTDNA puts out a newsletter which contains tips on how to recruit participants. You can view back issues of these newsletters at http://www.familytreedna.com/facts_genes.asp?act=past. I have included most of the articles on recruiting participants here. FTDNA encourages the circulation of "Facts & Genes" by newsletters and lists providing that you credit the author, include our copyright information (Copyright 2005, Family Tree DNA), and cite "Facts & Genes" (http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp) as the source.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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August 18, 2002 Volume 1, Issue 2

Managing a Genetic Genealogy Project: Getting Participants

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Now that you have registered your Surname Project at Family Tree DNA, the next step is to sign up participants. Here are some suggestions.

1. Jump start your project

The easiest way to jump start your Surname Project, and to get others interested in participating, is to find the first two participants. Participants must be direct male descendants, since the Y chromosome is passed from father to son. If you are a direct male descendent, you are 50% of the way to jump starting your Surname Project. You need to find one other participant.

Most likely you have had contact with others with your Surname during the course of your family history research. One course of action is to select a few of those contacts and write them a letter or email about your project, and ask them to participate as the genetic representative for their line or family.

If you get a second participant from this group - you have achieved your jump start for your Surname Project, and you are ready to sign up more participants. If you were unable to get a second participant, expand your contacts until you do.

2. Recruiting Participants

Now that you have jump started your project, recruiting participants becomes easier. You might want to revise your letter or email to include information that testing has begun with genetic representatives from two families/lines, to determine if they are related. Including a brief family history of these two families/lines often stimulates interest.

Develop a list of potential participants to whom you will send an email or letter. Start with those who you have had contact with in the past regarding your family history research. Don't eliminate the females - they may have a brother or father whom they could ask to participate. Asking for help finding a genetic representative for their family is one approach that often works well.

Expand your list of potential participants to include all those researching your surname. You can find these additional potential participants from searching the net. When you expand your list to include all those with your surname, online email directories and telephone books are useful.

3. Getting the Word out

If your surname has an association, be sure to notify the association regarding the project. Send them a brief explanation of the project that they could post on a web site or put in a newsletter.

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Post news about your project to any appropriate mailing lists and posting sites on the Internet.

4. Stake a Claim with a web site

A web site is not required for a successful Surname Project, but may help potential participants find your project. There are many sites where you can create a web site for free, and many have tools which make it quick and easy to create a web site.

Start with a simple site, telling people about the project. Once you start getting results back for the participants, you can easily add a chart and other information to the site.

5. Extra, Extra - read all about it

Once you start getting results back for participants, you now have Genetic Genealogy News for your web site, your project participants, and others interested in your Surname family history. You might consider creating a short Newsletter about the project and the results to date, and email this newsletter to the participants, your list of potential participants and any one with interest in your family history. Be sure to include a paragraph with a request for participants.

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September 26, 2002 Volume 1, Issue 3

Establishing testing objectives also makes it easier to recruit participants. Most people want to know the 5 "w's" when asked to do something: who, what, where, when, why. By establishing objectives, you have answers for their questions. People also tend to get involved when they understand the goal, and how it affects them.

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October 25, 2002 Volume 1, Issue 4

Recruiting Participants

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The value of DNA testing comes from comparing your results to others. Whether you are an individual interested in what DNA testing can do for your Family History research, or you are part of a Surname Project, you want others to test to be able to compare the results. The objectives you have set determines who are the ideal participants. In the last issue of the newsletter, we covered setting objectives. The objective(s) could be to determine who is related, or to prove or disprove the research, or to prove or disprove a theory.

Once you have set your objectives, and determined who would be the best test participants, it is time to approach others to see if they will participate. When you ask others to participate, you probably want to present your objective in a framework they can easily understand. Often, the less technical the presentation, the easier it will be for others to understand. You probably learned a lot about DNA testing to set up your Surname Project. Your participants probably aren't interested in a PHD in DNA - they want to know what DNA testing can do for them or for their research. Try to avoid using technical terms when possible. 80 year old Uncle Albert is more likely to participate to solve a Family History research brick wall, compared to asking him to participate to uncover his marker results and possible mutations. Words can scare people. A word like mutation can be introduced later after results are received, assuming that the term is explained, but in the initial presentation it could possibly make people uneasy.

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When you make your request to others for them to participate, you will probably have more success if you make your presentation in the participant's framework. For Family History research, you might want to put your request in terms of the shared family history or possible connection, and your objective. For example:

Do you remember that Aunt Mildred mentioned ...

We both had ancestors with the same surname in Flint, Michigan in the 1830's...

If you are recruiting participants for a Surname Project, the focus of your presentation is usually your objective. For example:

We are testing all the Lines with the XYZ Surname to determine ...

The key issue for the potential participant is "what will it do for them?" The ideal prospect is interested in Family History and the objectives should either interest them or help them with their Family History research. Some people will participate to help others, but most people need to see the benefit to them. A benefit could even be feeling important by being a participant, or by making a contribution to research of their family or Surname. The benefits to the participant and the objectives should both be covered in the request to participate.

Whether you will be making a request to participate on the phone or by correspondence, such as email or a letter, start by making a list of the benefits to the participant. Thinking about the participants' perspective will enable you to develop a list of benefits that relate to the participant.

With your list of benefits and your objectives, you are now ready to draft a request to participate. A model to follow is shown below:

Introduction: brief, non technical

Objectives: in their framework

Benefits: from their perspective

Request participation: need their help

When you review your draft, read it from the potential participant's perspective. Can they understand? Will they be motivated to participate? In addition, review your draft for the following two points:

1. The technical presentation and terms are the minimum required
2. Have you covered who, what, where, when, why

If you are female, and utilizing Y Chromosome testing for your Family History research or are a Group Administrator, your task of getting started is more difficult. You can't test yourself to start your project. You are 100% dependent on finding someone to be the first participant. Depending on your family, this can be easy or difficult. Perhaps you have several brothers and your father is living, so you have a wide range of choices for who you can approach. Perhaps your only possible participant for your objective is an estranged brother, making your task more difficult. In the case of an estranged male who is required for your project, consider asking some one close to him to request his participation.

The above model can also be applied to web sites.

Setting Expectations:

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It is important to set expectations when you ask others to participate. These expectations are set when the objectives and benefits are communicated. Consider the two different examples below:

1. We will be able to tell if we are related.

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2. The result of the test is a string of 12 numbers. If your result matches mine, we had a common ancestor. The result will not tell us the specific ancestor, but we can then focus our research to find the common ancestor.

In the first example, too much is left to the readers imagination. Those who are not knowledgeable about DNA testing have room to fill in assumptions.

Here are two more examples:

1. DNA testing will solve our research brick wall.
2. By participating, we will find out if our two ancestors are related and an approximate time frame for the common ancestor. If they are both related, we may want to focus our research efforts on ABC County, to try to find the connection.

Expectations are also set when you answer questions, and/or have a dialog with a prospective participant. It is important to not over state what the testing will do for them. The testing will not identify a specific ancestor or provide an exact date. DNA testing combined with Family History research could identify the specific ancestor.

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November 21, 2002 Volume 1, Issue 5

Recruiting Participants: 5 Action Items

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Are you wondering why the XYZ surname project has over 50 participants, and you only have 6 participant so far? Do you look at your web site and correspondence, and wonder what is their secret to recruiting participants?

The answer may be that they have a larger population of their surname from which to recruit participants. Your Surname Project may actually have a higher percentage of the surname participating than the project with over 50 participants.

It is common knowledge that Smith is the most frequent surname in the US. The chart below shows the 10 most frequent surnames in the US in the 1990 census. For each surname, the percentage represents the percentage of persons in the US with this surname, and the Rank is the ranking of the surname with 1 being the most frequent. For example, in the chart below, 8 surnames are more frequent than Moore.

Surname % Rank

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SMITH	1.006	1
JOHNSON	0.810	2
WILLIAMS	0.699	3
JONES	0.621	4
BROWN	0.621	5
DAVIS	0.480	6
MILLER	0.424	7
WILSON	0.339	8
MOORE	0.312	9
TAYLOR	0.311	10

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Assume that a person started a Smith Surname project. There are over 2 million Smith's in the US, of which over 1 million would be males. This is quite a few people. If they signed up 50 people, they have only signed up a very very small percentage of the Smith surname.

Compare this to the surname Mumma, which is .001 % of the population, and its Rank is 15,109. There is a much smaller pool of Mumma potential participants. If we look at the surname Norin, their number is so small in the US 1990 census, that it does not even get a result when the 1990 US census Surname Frequency is searched.

You can find out what percentage of the US population holds your surname by going to the US Government census site at:

<http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/freqnames.html>

The site also covers the methodology they used to come up with the percentages and rank for the surnames.

The US population on April 1, 2000 was 281,421,906 people. If you would like a rough idea of the males with your surname in the US, first search the site above to get the percentage for your surname. Multiply that percentage times the population of the 2000 census. In our rough calculation, we will assume that 50% are males, so now divide by 2. This is an estimate of the number of males with your surname. To estimate the number of adult males, multiply by .7. The formula is:

Percentage * 281,421,906 / 2 * .7 = adult males with surname

You can also find out how common your surname is in the UK at the site:

<http://www.taliesin-arlein.net/names/search.php>

There are 269,353 surnames in the UK database, representing 54,412,638 people. This database is provided by the Office of National Statistics of the UK, and gives an actual count of the number of persons for each surname.

These two databases used different methodologies to come up with their results. Rare surnames will not get a search result in the US census site, while they will in the UK site, even if there is only one person with the surname.

Now that you have an idea of the size of your potential prospect pool, lets assume that only 1/3 are interested in genealogy, so you now divide by 3. The end result is a very rough approximation of the number of potential participants available. If you are only using the Internet to find your participants, cut this number in half for the US. Other countries have a smaller percentage of persons on the Internet than the US.

As your first step, you have probably posted your project to as many sites and mailing lists that are applicable and allow such postings. You have probably also put up a web site, even if it is only one page. Most likely you have contacted all those persons whom you had contact with in the past regarding genealogy.

Here are some suggestions to consider to make more people aware of your project:

1. Consult the Directory of Family Associations. If there is a Family Association for your surname, contact them and offer to write an article for their publication about your project.
2. Register your web site with familysearch.org. Everyone searching on your surname at Familysearch.org will find your web site. You must first register yourself with familysearch.org to be able to submit your website for consideration.
3. Visit your local Family History Center, and offer to show the Genealogy by Genetics video to the staff and patrons. This might not find you any participants, but if every Group Administrator takes an hour to do this, then all the Surname Projects might find participants.

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4. Review your web site. It needs to be easy to understand for those not familiar with DNA testing, and clearly present the benefits to the participant. What will they gain from participating? How will it help them in their research? What might the results tell them?

5. Find out if there are any genealogy clubs or organizations in your area, and volunteer to show the video, and answer questions.

DNA testing for genealogy is a new field, and we are all pioneers. Most likely you have learned a lot about the field as a result of your testing. Those of us who have learned about DNA testing and how to interpret the results are aware of the benefits and how the testing can assist us with our genealogy research. The majority of those interested in Family History research most likely aren't aware of Genetic Genealogy. If you volunteer an hour to help your fellow genealogists understand this new tool, and help more people become knowledgeable, all of us will benefit as we seek participants for our testing.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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December 19, 2002 Volume 1, Issue 6

Recruiting Participants: Communicating Results

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As a Group Administrator for a Surname Project, or as the Leader for your Family DNA testing, it is important to communicate the results of testing to both participants and potential participants. Don't forget to keep informing your potential participants about the progress of the project. Quite often, after being informed several times of the results achieved by a DNA Project, potential participants who declined participating in the past, will change their mind.

Therefore, the goals of communicating results are multi-faceted. Your participants have placed their support and trust with you, and you can continue to build this support and trust by keeping them informed of the results of the project. Their support may be invaluable in the future, perhaps for when additional tests are discovered by the scientists, or helping you with research, or helping you to find or convince a potential participant.

Communicating results to the potential participants provides them with a tool to learn about DNA testing, and perhaps helps to overcome their fears, or to see how their participation could benefit the project. Potential participants concerns can often be overcome just by them seeing other people join the project.

It is important to communicate the results in a form that any one can understand, who have no previous knowledge of DNA testing for genealogy. Those whom are Group Administrators and Leaders most likely have learned a lot about DNA testing as well as the terminology. The participants and potential participants are your audience - and most likely do not have the same level of knowledge, and are not that interested in the details. They want to know how the results relate to their Family History. To communicate effectively with your audience, keep the focus of the communication on the interpretation of the results in terms of Family History, and try to use as few technical terms as possible.

One vehicle to communicate results is a web site. Most of you have probably visited quite a few of the DNA Project web sites. How many did you struggle to understand? The mission of communicating results gets lost in the extensive technical explanations. It is understandable that the Group Administrator had become very knowledgeable about DNA testing for Genealogy. The participants and potential participants are not usually that interested in in-depth technical dissertations. The participants want to know the results and what it means to them.

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Maybe it is time to take a critical look at your web site. Does it:

1. State the objective(s) of the project
2. Communicate the benefits of participating
3. Identify the Lines being tested
4. Provide enough family history information so participants can identify their line
5. Present numerical results in a simple chart
6. Present an interpretation of the results in the context of genealogy
7. Identify Lines where participants are needed
8. Has a limited use of technical terms
9. Requires no previous understanding of DNA testing for comprehension
10. Motivates people to participate

It may be difficult for you, as the author, to critically review your web site. You may want to consider asking a friend or relative who has no knowledge of DNA testing for genealogy to review your web site for the above criteria. The more effectively your web site communicates, the more participants you will find.

Another vehicle to communicate your DNA results is in the form of a short newsletter, sent periodically to both participants and potential participants. The objective of your DNA Project newsletter is to keep the participants informed, build their support, and encourage and recruit new participants. You would want to send your DNA Project newsletter to both your participants, and your potential participants.

This DNA Project newsletter could be very short. Most likely you would want to tell the reader about the:

- Project objectives
- Results to date: simple chart
- An interpretation of these results
- Participants needed
- Benefits of participating

The interpretation of results section is where you present the results of the Project in terms of the Family History. You would be answering the question: What do all the numbers mean?

With Email, it is quite easy to build a mailing list of the participants and potential participants. Periodically, you write your DNA news, and Email it. You also may have some participants or potential participants who do not have email, where printing and mailing a few newsletters may benefit you in the future with recruiting needed participants.

Your web site and newsletter should help your participants understand what their results mean to them and how it impacts their Family History. As the Group Administrator, since you can see all the results, you are in the best position to communicate to your participants what it all means. Depending on the size and scope of your project, you may consider a quarterly or more frequent DNA Project newsletter. For those who don't have the time, you could establish your mailing list, and then mail the participants and potential participants whenever the web site is updated with results.

By sending a newsletter or an email announcing that the web site is updated, you are actively communicating about your project instead of relying on potential participants to revisit your DNA project on their own.

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January 31, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 1

Recruiting Participants: Reaching those with your Surname

Recruiting Participants for a Surname Project is an on going process. The number of prospects, or potential participants, varies based on the population of the surname. Of the US adult population, it has been reported in the media that 50% of adults have an interest in Family History/Genealogy, and the media has also reported that Genealogy is the fastest growing hobby in the US. This makes it sound easy to recruit participants for your Surname Project. In reality, some participants may be easy to recruit, and others will be difficult.

There is a segment of those interested in Family History who build their tree from what is "free", such as the IGI [International Genealogical Index], and data they find on the Internet. If they wouldn't part with \$10 or \$20 to order a document to support their research, they are most likely not a good prospect for your Surname Project, unless there are donations to fund their testing.

The key to a successful project is an ongoing effort to recruit participants. Genetic Genealogy is still a new field, and most people aren't even aware that DNA testing for Genealogy exists. Over time, there will be more stories in the media, and more people will become aware of the tool, and what can be accomplished utilizing this tool.

One facet of your role in recruiting participants is to educate them on what DNA testing for genealogy will do for them. This is also called the "benefits" for them from participating. It is important to communicate the benefits to potential participants. They have to have a reason to spend money, such as feeling important, making a contribution to their Family History, getting their DNA preserved for the future, solving a brick wall, finding clues for further research or validating their research. The benefits for each participant may vary, depending on what is important to him.

In your correspondence with potential participants, presenting multiple benefits will assist you in determining which benefit(s) are important to the potential participant. You may get clues to what is important to them from questions they ask. They most likely will not ask questions about benefits that don't interest them. The better understanding you acquire of the benefits that interest the potential participant, the more you can target your message to focus on the benefits important to the potential participant.

By providing multiple benefits of participation in your communication with a potential participant, you will have a higher probability that one or more of the benefits will interest the potential participant.

If you are having difficulty finding potential participants, perhaps because you have a rare surname, and don't find many people with that surname with email addresses, it may be time to contact the rest of the world that is not on the internet. About 50% of the US households have Internet access, and the percentage is lower in other countries. It may be time to consider some snail mail, especially when looking for participants in other countries.

From direct marketing statistics, a mailing to occupant generates a 1 to 4% response rate of those interested in the product. The response rate varies based on the quality of the material the occupant receives. If you mail 100 households with your surname, any response greater than 4 is excellent. This response rate represents those who are interested in further information. From this pool of prospects, some will buy the product now, some later, and some never. These statistics are direct marketing statistics based on all the junk mail you receive. We will use those statistics to represent worse case scenarios.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

To improve response rates, you would "target" your mailing. If you are mailing households with your surname, one approach to "target" the mailing is to focus on those over 55. More people over 55 are interested in genealogy than those under 55. Many libraries have subscriptions to US database services, where you can set criteria to search for those with your surname, and select search criteria such as value of their house, median income, and age. You can also select households in a specific geographic area. You might consider searching on household value, median income, and age and doing a test mailing to 20 or 30 households with your surname. If you have a good response to this selection criteria, then you can mail more households that meet this selection criteria.

To reach others with your surname in other counties, one approach is to "target" your mailing to those locations where you think your ancestors originated. If your letter both covers your project, and requests information about their ancestors, you might be pleasantly surprised by the letters you receive providing you with new information about ancestors with your surname.

Another approach is to write a Letter to the Editor of the local newspaper for areas that has a population of your surname. These letters are often published, and there is no charge. Perhaps you have seen letters to the editor requesting information on someone's ancestors in your local paper. The best approach for your Letter to the Editor is to have a request for information regarding ancestors with your surname, or descendants of those surnames to contact you. Those who reply will be interested in genealogy, and are potential prospects for your Surname Project, plus they might have information to assist you with your research. Your Letter to the Editor could read similar to a Query that is often posted on the Internet. Many newspapers will accept Letters to the Editor by Email, provided that you provide your name and address.

Genealogical Journals and Magazines are another vehicle to reach those without the Internet. Many Genealogical Societies accept Queries from members at no charge, and for a small charge for non-members. Depending on your Surname Project, consider those publications which will reach the potential participants that you are interested in reaching. For example, if you are looking for those with your surname in New York State, consider the organizations for that area, and if your interest is in Ireland, there are different organizations and publications for Ireland.

If you have a high frequency surname, you might consider a small classified ad in a major publication. For the US, consider Everton's, and for the UK, Family Tree Magazine [not to be confused with the magazine for the US with the same name.].

Recruiting participants is an on going process. If one method is not providing the desired results or participants, try another method. As you continue your efforts to find participants, focus on benefits.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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February 27, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 2

Recruiting Participants: Where are they?

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A situation may occur where you need to find a direct descent male to test for a specific family tree or Line. For example, you have tested two immigrants Lines, and can not find a male for the third immigrant. In another situation, for your Surname Project, you are still looking for a male for one of the Lines.

If you are looking for potential participants in the US, you might want to see the distribution of the surname in the 1920 census on a map. Visit the site:

<http://www.last-names.net/>

At this site, enter the surname, and a map will appear which is color coded by state to reflect the number of households with that surname in the 1920 census. The legend for the map shows the quantity range of the surname reflected by each color.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

The legend varies by surname, so be sure to look at the numerical range. States that are dark brown have the highest concentration of the surname. States that are a very pale yellow have no households with that surname.

If you type in Jones, you would find out that all 50 states had Jones households, with the largest concentration in 7 states. For the surname Matte, they are concentrated in one state, and 10 states did not have any Matte households. The surname Greenspan is also concentrated in one state. Some surnames even have patterns on the map that correlate to the initial state where the immigrants arrived, as well as the migration path.

The distribution of the surname in the 1920 census may help you with your research, looking for lost branches, and may indicate states where you are more likely to find today those with your surname.

Another site on the Internet provides maps of the frequency of surnames in the US Census for the years 1850, 1880, 1920 and 1990. The database only contains the top 50,000 names, so less frequent names are not covered. It may be possible to see a migration of the surname with these maps. The web site is:

<http://www.hamrick.com/names/>

If you are unable to find a direct descent male participant for a Line in the US, the Line may have descendants in another country. If your ancestors came from Ireland or the UK, there may be descendants in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa. You may also discover other Lines of your surname in these countries.

For Canada, the whole country is in an online phone book that is easy to search:

<http://www.Canada411.com>

For Australia, the online phone book is much more difficult to use. For each search, you must select a state, and either the major city or outlying areas. Therefore, to search the whole country, and make a list of all those with your surname, you will have to do two searches for each of their 8 states. This takes a small investment of time, but may yield surprising results. The web site is:

<http://www.whitepages.com.au>

New Zealand has a more user-friendly online phone book, where one search covers the whole country. If your surname can also be a first name, you will get those in your results also.

<http://www.whitepages.co.nz>

The South Africa online phone book also searches the whole country, if you select South Africa for the region in the Region selection window. The web site is:

<http://196.15.219.249/>

In you are looking for your surname in the UK, or you have Ireland ancestors where a branch might have migrated to the UK, there are several online phonebooks. For the British Telecom site, go to BT.com, and click on directory inquiries in the menu on the right. This online telephone book requires a location of the first few letters of the postal code. Click on the map on the lower left for help with locations.

Another online phonebook for the UK is: 192.com. This phone book also has the location restriction on the search. The 192.com directory database is licensed from British Telecom. In addition, 192.com has the UK 2001 Electoral Roll, and the Directors Reports online. The Electoral Roll is a very important resource for the UK, where about 38% of the population has unlisted phone numbers, and therefore can not be found in a traditional online phonebook. For example, there are 17 million residential and business phone listings, and 44 million people on the Electoral Roll. The Electoral Roll is the registered voters, so there may be more than one person per household registered.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

You need to register to use 192.com, and you will receive 5 free searches a month. In addition, you can earn free search credits.

For those who are concentrating a search in the UK for their surname, the UK Electoral Roll is available on CD from various vendors. Most of these products will allow a search on surname, and a location is not needed. If it is important to find participants in the UK for your surname, the CD is easy to search and does not need a location specified. To review the products available, search the Internet on "UK Electoral Roll".

Recruiting participants is an ongoing process. If one method is not providing the desired results or participants, try another method. As you continue your efforts to find participants, focus on benefits.

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of these products or sites, and provides the information only to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy in contacting others with their surname.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

April 4, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 3

Recruiting Participants: The Best Prospects

The best potential participants for DNA testing are those who are interested in genealogy, and are researching their family tree or the surname.

Below are some sites on the internet to look for those interested in genealogy and whom are researching your surname:

Ancestry.com Research Registry: <http://www.ancestry.com/share/research/main.htm>

Guild of One Name Studies: <http://www.one-name.org/register.shtml>

Rootsweb Surname list: <http://rsl.rootsweb.com/#search>

Genforum: <http://genforum.genealogy.com/>

Ancestry World Tree: <http://Ancestry.com/trees/main.htm?lfl=m>

Ancestry message boards: <http://Ancestry.com/share/main.htm?lfl=m>

Family History Societies for the British Isles: <http://www.genuki.org.uk/search.html>

Jewish Genealogy: <http://www.jewishgen.org>

And also, from the main page of Genuki, go to the County where your surname occurs:
<http://www.genuki.org.uk/>

In the list above, the Guild of One Name Studies is an often over looked resource. Members of the Guild can register one or more surnames that they are actively researching worldwide. Most of the surnames registered are rare surnames, due to the commitment required by a member to register a surname. A moment to check the online register of surnames might provide a valuable contact.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

For the British Isles, most of the Family History Societies, which usually cover a geographical area, have a register of members surname interests. Many of these lists are online at the Family History Society web site. From the main Genuki address shown above, follow links to the County or Counties where your Surname has existed, to find the Family History Society, and then search their members interest list. Some of the members interests lists can be searched using the first Genuki link above, but many of the Family History Society member's interests pages can only be searched at the Family History Society web site.

Recruiting participants is an ongoing process. If one method is not providing the desired results or participants, try another method. As you continue your efforts to find participants, focus on benefits.

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of these products or sites, and provides the information only to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy in contacting others with their surname.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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April 30, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 4

Recruiting Participants: The Initial Contact

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Regardless of where you find an email address or postal address for a potential participant, the initial contact with the person is the most critical step in the process to recruit a participant. This initial contact will determine whether or not the person responds to your email or letter. The initial contact could also determine or influence whether they participate in your Surname Project.

The best prospective participant is one who has an interest in genealogy. They may be "very" interested in genealogy and actively doing research, or simply be interested in learning more about their family history, and haven't done any research.

Occasionally, you can send one letter/email to a potential participant, and have a participant. In many cases, it will take a dialog, and establishing a common interest, promoting the benefits, and establishing trust and rapport to get a commitment to participate.

The objective of the initial contact email or letter is to get a response and establish a dialog. Often, due to enthusiasm for the Surname Project and a focus on the objective of recruiting participants, the Group Administrator may move too quickly to get a commitment to participate, and therefore lose a potential participant.

Since the objective of the initial contact is to get a response and establish a dialog, the initial contact correspondence should focus on family history. The other objectives of the initial contact are to start building rapport and trust.

Therefore, the initial contact email/letter should have the following components:

- why are you writing
- generate interest in family history
- how they can help: share information
- the DNA Project: objectives and results
- ask for a referral
- Look forward to hearing from them

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

The initial contact can cover each of the above items and also be short. For example, your Surname Project web site might have a whole page about objectives. The objectives could be condensed into a sentence or two. The objective of the initial contact is to get a response, so that you can start a dialog. You do not want to send a novel for the initial contact.

The Editor recently conducted an experiment using different initial contact emails to email addresses found on ICQ and Bigfoot. Based on the source of the email addresses, ICQ and Bigfoot, it was unknown if the contacts have any interest in family history. The Editor selected a Surname Project for the experiment.

The response rate from the initial contact email varied significantly based on the content of the email utilized. Several different emails were drafted. The first step was to send a blank email to all the addresses to remove the obsolete email addresses. The addresses that remained were valid email addresses. The list of valid email addresses was then divided into 3 parts, and each group was sent a different initial contact email.

The results from this experiment:

Group	Response Percentage	% participate from responses
A	50	100
B	10	70
C	0	0

As you can see in the above chart, the content of the email had a definite impact on whether a response was achieved from the initial contact. Keep in mind that the email addresses from ICQ and Bigfoot are simply anyone who registered at that site, and there is no indication of any interest in family history. Each of the three Groups, A, B, and C, consisted of email addresses from both of the sites.

When a response was achieved from the initial contact email, a dialog started. After several rounds of correspondence, either the potential participant offered to participate in the Surname Project or the potential participant was asked to participate. A dialog is still continuing with the contacts in Group B, so the percentage of participation could increase over time.

The email that generated a 50% response rate with 100% of those participating in the Surname Project was short, with a focus on family history and sharing information. The next to the last sentence asked for a referral:

"If you are not interested in genealogy, perhaps you could put me in contact with someone in your family who is interested in family history."

Referrals were received from 25% of the responses. These referrals provided additional valuable contacts that were known to be interested in genealogy. As one young woman in the UK wrote:

"You want to contact my Grandpa. He keeps all the family information. His email is"

The experiment above was conducted on ICQ and Bigfoot email addresses, which have no known interest in genealogy. Emails to persons whom are interested in genealogy should at least have a 50% response rate. In the beginning of a Surname Project, when initial contacts are being made, and the Surname Project is getting participants, the rate of response to the initial contact may not seem important. The importance tends to arise later in the project, after the initial wave of participants has occurred, and specific participants are sought for Lines who have not tested.

One suggestion is to write a standard email, and use this email for all your initial contacts, and track your response rate. If you do not receive an acceptable response rate, review the points above and revise your email, and then track those results.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Recruiting Participants: Getting the Word Out

A fundamental step in recruiting participants is to make people aware that your Surname Project exists. One tool to find those who are interested in family history research of your surname is the mailing lists at Rootsweb.com. To find out if any mailing lists exist for your surname, go to:

<http://lists.rootsweb.com/>

Rootsweb.com has 26,707 mailing lists. These lists are an excellent tool for finding others researching your surname, and to learn about genealogy research. The link above will take you to the directory to all the mailing lists. As you move down the page, you will see the category Surnames. Click on the letter of the alphabet for your surname to see what lists exist. If you find your surname listed, click on the surname to get the page that will tell you how to subscribe to the mailing list. The page for the surname also provides links to browse and search the archives.

As you will see at the Rootsweb.com directory page for the mailing lists, Rootsweb has a wide variety of mailing lists, such as by geographic area, Ethnic origin, and the largest mailing lists, Roots-L for genealogy in general, and Gen-newbie for those who are new to genealogy. Rootsweb also hosts the DNA mailing list, which you will find under Miscellaneous. The list is called GENEALOGY-DNA. The DNA mailing list is an excellent source to expand your knowledge about Genetic Genealogy.

You can post information about your Surname Project to those mailing lists that would apply. The most obvious mailing list is the list for your Surname. You might also consider posting to some of the other lists where you might find participants for your project, such as geographic lists. Most people also post to the Genealogy-DNA list, to make those interested in Genetic Genealogy aware of a project.

Before you post to a mailing list, review your posting to ensure that it does not sound like commercialism. Rootsweb has a policy regarding commercialism on the mailing lists, and the different list administrators implement the policy differently. One way to avoid commercialism is to not include any information about pricing.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

June 2, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 5

Recruiting Participants: The Search

The best potential participants for DNA testing are those who are interested in genealogy, and are researching their family tree or the surname. If you have exhausted all your leads and you have posted to all the mailing lists for those that are researching your surname - now what?

You might want to try some Google searches, at Google.com. A few search examples are shown below. You will get a different quantity of results with each search example. Some may provide too many results which are not relevant, while one of the other searches shown may provide less results, but more relevant results. A lot depends on your surname.

To find those with your surname and an email address, try the following searches:

"surname@"

Replace the word surname with your surname, and be sure to enclose the search string in double quotes as shown.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

"family history" surname @

Replace the word surname with your surname, and be sure to enclose the words family history in double quotes

Genealogy surname @

The @ character is included in the above searches, to limit the results to pages that have an email address. In the first search, you are looking for people with your surname as part of their email address. In the other two searches, you are looking for pages with your surname, and an email address, which may or may not apply to your surname, and the pages relate to family history or genealogy.

You can expand or modify the above searches, or create your own, following a few rules, which are shown below:

Use a plus sign before words which are required to be found.

Use a minus sign before words that you want to be excluded from the search. The minus sign is very useful when searching for a surname that has a common usage or is shared by a celebrity. Examples are Apple and Ford. With Apple, you would want to exclude items like Crisp by preceding it with a minus sign. For Ford, you would want to exclude Harrison Ford, by putting a minus sign before Harrison as part of your search string.

Use quotation marks around two or more words that you want Google to find in exactly that order. For example, by putting the double quotes around "family history", Google will only return results that contain those two words together, in that order. Otherwise, without the double quotes, you would get many sites that have the word family and the word history somewhere on the page.

Use OR to retrieve search results that match any number of words. The default operation for Google is to return results that match all the items you specify in the search string. By using Or, you can increase the number of results. Here is an example:

Genealogy OR "family history" surname @

Here are some examples using the above 4 rules:

+Surname genealogy OR "family Tree" OR "family history"

Recruiting participants is an on going process. If one method is not providing the desired results or participants, try another method. As you continue your efforts to find participants, focus on benefits.

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of these products or sites, and provides the information only to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy in contacting others with their surname.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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July 4, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 6

Recruiting Participants: Getting Started

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If you are female, or you are a male starting a Surname Project for a different surname than your own, you both have a common problem: Who will be the first participant? Males who start Surname Projects for their surname easily solve the problem of the first participant - they take a Y DNA test.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Recruiting the first few participants, when everything is "new" to the Group Administrator, may seem overwhelming. After you have established the objectives for your Surname Project, and entered the Surname Project description at FamilyTreeDNA.com, you may want to set up a simple web site, announcing the project, stating the objectives, and brief information about DNA testing for genealogy.

Your next step is to announce your project, by posting to as many mailing lists and sites that are relevant. Now, you are ready to approach people directly. You might want to think about all the people with whom you have had contact in the past, as you pursued your family history research. Perhaps you have developed relationships, or noticed fellow researchers who were adventuresome, or were the first to try new avenues or techniques. If you need to prioritize your contacts, these people should be first on the list.

It is important to take time to formulate your written correspondence, either an email or a letter. Do not write a novel. For those on email, you can refer them to your web site for additional information. For those who do not have internet access, you could enclose a 1 page summary of your Surname Project with your letter. Your letter or email should cover the following:

- statement as to why you are writing
(suggestion: to share family history information)
- refresh their memory as to the relationship
- announce the Surname Project, and state the objectives
- express enthusiasm about the Surname Project
- Provide a list of benefits for them as a result of participating
- Refer them to the web site or enclosure for further information
- ask for a referral to anyone with your surname interested in family history research
- Close with a call for action: contact you with questions or to participate

This type of format is recommended for those whom you know are interested in genealogy, and with whom you have shared correspondence or a relationship. People who you would contact "cold", whom you have never communicated with before, would require a different approach. To write an initial contact letter or email to people who you do not know, see:

http://www.familytreedna.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=2.4

Recruiting Participants: Beyond Email

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Unfortunately, there is not one master database on the Internet for finding people's email addresses. There are some databases, and typically only a small number of people with email have registered in any of these databases.

If you have searched these databases, which were covered in past issues of the newsletter, and you are still looking to for participants, it is time to consider postal mail. With 59% of the US having Internet access, there is over a 50% chance that the person to whom you send a letter, will answer you by email.

The Internet statistics for other countries vary. The UK also has a high Internet usage, with 57% of the population utilizing the Internet. Iceland exceeds both these rates, with 78% of the population having internet access. If you need to find a participant from the Pitcairn Islands, unfortunately, no one in the population of 47 has Internet access.

To determine the frequency of Internet access for the countries where you want to recruit participants, visit the site shown below. The link exceeds one line, so you will have to copy the link into your browser window.

http://cyberatlas.internet.com/big_picture/geographics/article/0,1323,5911_151151,00.html

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

With the ease of Email communications, it is easy to over look postal mail. Postal mail will often provide a higher level of response and a higher level of participants. People with email are often overwhelmed with emails they can't answer, as well as junk mail. A letter is often viewed as "special" and may be passed around to family members. (Be sure to include a sentence in your letter to ask them to pass you letter on if they are not interested in family history.) Perhaps the person who receives the letter doesn't have email, but their son or daughter does, who will relay communication for them. Some Group Administrators communicate with participants through a son or daughter who prints the email and takes it to their father, and then type the father's response.

Create a form letter that you can use for those with your surname, perhaps by country. For example, you could announce that your Surname Project is now expanding to the UK, due to the success achieved in the US. You simply print multiple copies of the letter, and address envelopes. You can find people with your surname in the US and other countries by searching online phone books. One site, to find almost any online phonebook, is:

<http://www.infobel.com/teldir/>

For an article about writing your initial contact email or letter, see:

http://www.familytreedna.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=2.4

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of these products or sites, and provides the information only to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy in contacting others with their surname.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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August 11, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 7

Recruiting Participants: Overcoming Fear

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The word DNA scares some people. The reason for this fear varies from person to person. They could be afraid that the test will uncover some genetic defect, either known or unknown. They could be afraid that the test will invite some sort of intrusion to their privacy, or uncover some unknown information. They could be afraid that the government will get a copy of their results, or their insurance company, and deny them coverage. They could simply be afraid of the word, since they don't understand what it means.

Lack of knowledge is typically behind fear, and most fears are a function of fear of the unknown. Those of us who have had a Genetic Genealogy DNA test realize that the DNA tests are harmless genealogical tests. To the potential participants, a DNA test could be quite frightening.

It is important to realize that most potential participants will "not" verbalize their fear. Most likely, they will present other objections, when the real issue is fear. Realizing that the objections may be smoke screens, when the true issue is fear, will help you over come the objection. In addition, if you realize that fear is usually an issue for most participants, you can begin addressing the objection with your first communication. Each communication should have an element that addresses the fear.

Fear is addressed by information, not by addressing the fear directly. Telling a potential participant that there is nothing to be afraid of wouldn't work. Educating them, providing relevant information, and portraying the test as a harmless genealogical test will be more effective.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Consider these two approaches:

Approach A: Extract from an email

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We have started a ABC surname DNA project in hopes of finding relationships to other ABC families. Since you have documented your genealogy back to Francis ABC, you could be a tremendous help to others who are trying to find their ancestors. We need DNA participants from the 'reference' ABC lines, like yours.

Samples from the reference lines can be compared to samples from lines that cannot get further back than about 1750-1800, and to lines that originate in Europe much earlier. For example, my line stops at James ABC b abt 1786 NC. I might be descended from Francis ABC of Duxbury, but my DNA test will only tell me that if there is a sample from a known descendent of Francis ABC to compare my sample to.

Participants must be living males with the ABC surname. The sample consists of gently swabbing the inside of the cheek.

We are using Family Tree DNA to perform the test. They have a webpage at:

<http://www.familytreedna.com/>

I hope that you will consider helping us in this endeavor and take a DNA test. If you have any questions please contact me or someone else that you trust in this area.

Approach B: Extract from a letter

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The XYZ Surname Project was established to utilize new scientific discoveries and methodologies to assist us in our Genealogy Research. This new field of utilizing testing for genealogy research is called Genetic Genealogy.

Scientists have discovered that a small portion of the Y chromosome, which is found only in men, is passed from father to son, virtually unchanged. This section of the Y chromosome does "not" have information that defines a person, it simply has some markers which are passed from father to son unchanged, except for a random mutation about ever 500 generations. [Mutation does not signify any thing negative. It is simply a scientific term for a change.]

The test result is a string of 25 numbers, like the results shown for our Project in the chart below. These numbers have value when compared to the results from another male. By comparing the results, you can tell if the two men had a common ancestor, and approximately when the common ancestor occurred.

Our project utilizes this latest technology to determine which Lines of the surnames are related. By determining which Lines are related, we will scientifically prove:

- the number of points of origin of the surnames
- the variants of the surname(s)

We might also be able to identify the location of the origin of the surnames, or at least have clues.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

We have tested 39 people so far in our project, and we are now expanding the project to the UK. A brief description of the project is enclosed with this letter. By testing a small section of DNA, you can determine if two people are related. The result is a string of 25 numbers. A test kit is mailed to you, and you swab the inside of your mouth.

If you pretend for a moment that you know nothing about DNA testing, and read the above two examples, which approach develops trust and confidence, and removes some of the fear of the unknown?

Approach B is from a letter mailed to people out of a phonebook, as the first contact. The approach keeps the presentation simple, instead of technical. The presentation is easy for anyone to understand, and is not threatening or scary. The focus is both educating the prospective participant and explaining the benefits.

Every correspondence with a potential participant should be written with the understanding that fear will be an issue for many of them. By anticipating fear, and addressing this possible objection consistently in all correspondence, you can overcome the objection. For example, even specifying how many people have participated in the project helps overcome fear. When you have a large number of participants, use the figure. The potential participant will think: If others are doing it, then, it must be ok. If you only have a small number of participants, don't mention the count.

Since potential participants will not usually verbalize fear, a price objection is typically the objection they will present instead of the true objection of fear. Determining whether price is a true objection, or a smoke screen, will take some additional correspondence. A price objection could also be based on the benefits not being clear, or the benefits presented are not important to the potential participants.

One approach to determine if a price objection is masking the true objection of fear, is to ask the potential participant:

If I found some sponsors for a portion of the test fee, would you participate?

If fear is an issue, they would either come up with other objections, or not respond at all. If price is the true objection, then you should get a positive response.

If you get a positive response confirming a true price objection, you could look for sponsors, or contribute a small amount yourself. If the potential participant is an older person on a fixed income, a small contribution may be significant to them. Those trying to live on \$700 per month Social Security may not want to eat cat food in order to participate in the project.

Fear is an issue that you will encounter. Plan for fear, by recognizing the existence of fear, and writing all correspondence to anticipate this issue. Address fear by providing knowledge, and minimizing technical terms. Recognize that other objections will be presented by the potential participant, instead of the him/her acknowledging fear. Analyze the objections to determine if fear is an underlying issue. Ask questions, until all the objections are identified. Only then, can you begin to address the concerns of the potential participant.

When the objections are presented to you on a very direct way, such as insurance related questions or other family related issues, Family Tree DNA has a page that can help you with the answers. The page is called: "Testing my DNA? are you nuts?!?" and can be found here:

http://www.familyreedna.com/faq_privacy.html

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

September 11, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 8

Recruiting Participants: Publicize your Project

Participants for your Surname Project either need to find you, or you need to find them. To assist your potential participants in finding you, we recommend that you publicize your Surname Project and your associated web site at Familytreedna.com. Family Tree DNA provides a vehicle for publicizing your Project at our web site. Our web site gets thousands of visitors each day, as people search the internet to find out more about Genetic Genealogy.

If you publicize your project at our web site, interested persons will be directed to your web site.

On your Group Administrator Page(GAP), the first selection is called "Project Profile Page". This selection is where you publicize your project at familytreedna.com.

On your Project Profile Page, be sure to check the box titled: "Show name in Surname Project List?" When you put a checkmark in this box, your Surname Project will appear when ever people do a Surname Project search at familytreedna.com. Visitors to our web site search Surname Projects at:

<http://www.familytreedna.com/surname.asp>

The next step on the Project Profile Page is to give your Surname Project a name. This name is usually the most common surname in your Project, or a short title (2-3 words maximum) with key words describing the Project, such as the geographic area the project covers.

The web site address for your project is then entered on the Project Profile Page. Most Projects have a web site, and we highly recommend that your Project has a web site. A web site provides an opportunity for you to explain your project, and establishes a feeling of credibility with potential participants. There are sites out there that provide free or low cost hosting of a web site. These sites also provide tools for you to quickly and easily create a web site.

The next step is to enter a description of your Project. If you need help with a description, go to the search link shown above. On the Surname Projects page, you will see a count of Surname Project for each letter of the alphabet. Select a letter of the alphabet. You will then go to a page which shows all the Surname Projects for the letter of the alphabet you selected. Select some of the Surname Projects to read, by clicking on their link. After you have read a few, you are probably ready to write your Surname Project description. Simply return to your Project Profile Page.

The last step to publicize your Surname Project at familytreedna.com, is to enter the surnames for your project in the boxes provided below the Project Description. When you are done entering the surnames, simply click update, and Surname Project will be publicized at familytreedna.com

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

October 12, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 9

Recruiting Participants: Cost Justify the Price

In the process of finding participants for your Genetic Genealogy testing, you will encounter what is called a "price objection". The person does not want to participate due to the cost of the test.

Price objections are quite common. Usually it is "not" a true objection, and is a smoke screen for other objections, which are the true objections.

When a price objection is encountered, the next step is to determine whether you are dealing with a true objection or a smoke screen. One question to ask to make this determination is: "If I can find some sponsors to make a donation towards the cost of testing, will you participate"?

The response to this question will start to separate those with a true price objection, and those with other objections. If the answer is "yes", then you are dealing with a price objection. Any other response means that you have not uncovered their true objections. In this case, where the price objection is a smoke screen, the most likely issue is fear. More information about dealing with fear is in a past issue of the newsletter:

http://www.familyreedna.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=2.7

When you have established that you have a true price objection, then you would want to determine which type of price objection you are dealing with. You may have a potential participant who can not afford the testing, or you may have a potential participant who can afford the testing, but does not see the "value".

For a potential participant who wants to participate, and can not afford the costs, then you may want to consider finding sponsors for all or a portion of the cost. Another alternative, is to suggest that the potential participant contact others in their family tree, to find those willing to split the cost of the testing for the potential participant.

When a price objection is based on the situation where the value has not been established, your focus should be on establishing value for the potential participant. Value is established based on what they will get for participating, and what is important to them.

If the potential participant isn't interested in genealogy, and you desperately need their participation to validate your family tree - you don't have much to offer that interests the potential participant, so you may end up needing sponsors for some or all of the cost of testing. When the potential participant isn't interested in family history, the best item you have to offer of "value" is how important they are to the project.

When your potential participant is interested in family history, it is much easier to establish the value. For example, the information provided from participating could result in them saving a significant amount of time. Validating their research most likely would have value. These items of value are subjective, and which are important depends on your potential participant.

A potential participant may not realize what they are spending on their family history research, usually because the expenses are often many small amounts. These small amounts are not very visible, and add up quickly. For example, if they ordered any UK certificates for birth, marriage or death, they most likely paid a minimum of £11.50, which would be approximately \$19.20 US Dollars. Just 5 UK certificates would be the equivalent of a 12 Marker Y DNA test as part of a Surname Project!

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

If the potential participant orders 2 to 3 films at a Family History Center each month, at the end of a year, they have spent the equivalent of a 12 Marker Y DNA test as part of a Surname Project.

A research trip will typically cost more than a Y DNA test.

With many books, CD's of data, and subscription or pay per view online data sites available, it is quite easy to spend the equivalent of a Y DNA test in a short amount of time, and not even realize it. Many times the expenditure on certificates doesn't work out, since the right people weren't found, or a CD could be a disappointment since it was the wrong family.

A Y DNA test provides information that can't be acquired any other way. In addition, the Y DNA test keeps providing information, long after your results are received, as you find others in the future who match, and an email shows up in your inbox, telling you that you have a match.

To overcome a price objection, establish value for the potential participant.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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November 13, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 10

Surname Projects: Getting started with a Web Site

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It is important for a Surname Project to have a web site. The web site is a vehicle to build interest in a Surname Project, to recruit participants, and to keep participants informed about the results for the project. In addition, a web site is critical for building credibility with prospective participants.

We are often asked: Where should I host my web site?

The first criteria that separates the providers of web sites is whether the web sites are hosted for free or there is a charge. If a web site is hosted for free, most of the time there will be banner ads, and often pop up ads. If hosting is provided for a fee, there is typically no advertising.

It may be worth considering paying a small fee for hosting to eliminate the banner ads, and the annoying popup ads. Hosting without advertising can be found for as little as \$6.00 a month. More sophisticated Internet users know from a web site's address when a site is free and will have ads, and many persons in this class of Internet user will not visit those sites.

The second major criteria for selecting a web site are the tools provided by the vendor. These tools may include a site building utility and traffic statistics. A site building utility with templates will make it faster and easier for the novice to build a web site. Traffic statistics tell you who visited your site and what pages they viewed.

There are a wide variety of free and pay hosting vendors. A Google search will return thousands of hits. It can be overwhelming to try to narrow the selections down to those sites which would be the best fit for hosting your Surname Project. Below we cover two possible vendors. Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of these sites, and provides the information only to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy.

A popular free hosting provider for genealogy sites is rootsweb.com. Web pages are written in html. To put a web site at rootsweb.com, you will need to learn some basic html. You can buy a book about writing html, or acquire a program to create html code, called an html editor. There are freeware, shareware, and commercial html editor products available.

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Another hosting vendor for genealogy sites is accessgenealogy.com. To use this site, no knowledge of building a web site is needed. This site provides site building tools, which consists of templates that you fill in with the information that you want to appear on your web page. The site building tools include a guided customization for individuals of varying levels of experience, from beginners needing a step-by-step approach to advanced users. There are web templates where you can select the design and colors for your site. There are also other tools such which allow you to preview and edit your site, as well as traffic statistics. For advanced users, the templates can be replaced with their own html pages.

Accessgenealogy.com provides free hosting with a smaller banner ad and no popup ads, and paid hosting starting at \$6.00 per month on an annual basis. Professional traffic statistics are available.

Both these vendors offer subdomain hosting. This type of hosting is where you do not have a domain name, such as xxxx.com. With subdomain hosting, your site is identified before or after the hosting site such as:

xxxx.accessgenealogy.com
or
rootsweb.com/~websites/xxxx

It is not necessary to have a domain name to have a web site. Many vendors offer subdomain hosting, and some vendors offer both domain and subdomain hosting.

Rootsweb.com hosting can be found at:
<http://accounts.rootsweb.com/>

Accessgenealogy.com hosting can be found at:
<http://signup.accessgenealogy.com/cgi-bin/path/signup?>

If you compare two or more vendors of free hosting services, be sure to evaluate the ads. Popup ads are especially annoying to most people. A single banner ad which is small with no popup ads would be preferred.

Paid hosting is worth considering. Often for a small fee you will receive more tools that will save you time creating and updating your web site.

Many of our customers have experience with a variety of hosting vendors. We would like to hear from you regarding your recommendations for a web hosting vendor, so we can share the results in a future issue of the newsletter. Please send an email to editor@familytreeDNA.com and tell us your preferred vendor and your experience with creating a web site. Your input will help us develop a list of sites to recommend to those creating their first web site.

Recruiting Participants: Finding Male descendents
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Eventually, a Surname Project may encounter a situation where a Line, or family tree doesn't have any living male descendents. This Line can not participate in the Surname Project until a male descendent is found today. Without being able to test every Line, a Surname Project is unable to make conclusions regarding the surname. For example, if all the Lines haven't tested, it would be incorrect to draw conclusions regarding the points of origin for the surname, or to state that all persons with that surname are related.

The key to solving the problem of the lack of a living male descendent for a Line is to research the family tree farther back in time. At each generation is an opportunity to find more males, who may have had male descendents. When you find a male, then trace that branch of the tree forward to today, to see if there are any male descendents living.

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Most often, with enough effort and research, you will be able to find one or more living males today. If you are not having success, make sure that your research is comprehensive. Review your research to insure that all the male descendents have had their branches traced to today. If you have males in the past who have just vanished, many online tools exist today, such as the online census indexes, which may make it easier to find where these males went. When looking for the migrating male, consider possible variant spellings in new locations.

Each generation you go back in your family tree is another opportunity for more male descendents. Eventually you should find a living male descendent.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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December 5, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 11

Recruiting Participants: When None are Living

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In the last issue of Facts & Genes, an article covered how to look for living direct descent males for your family tree, when none are currently known to be living.

If the approach covered in the article fails to find a living direct descent male, we often receive inquiries at FamilyTreeDNA about getting Y DNA off a personal item used by a deceased male, such as their tooth brush, comb, dentures, rings, watchbands, hat bands, pipes, hearing aides, eye glass frames, steering wheel covers, tool handles, etc.

Even though there are labs that specialize in extracting DNA from objects, unfortunately, Y DNA does not survive well on objects. mtDNA typically survives well, as seen by mtDNA analysis of ancient human remains, such as the Iceman. For Y DNA, the odds that any Y DNA for a deceased person will have survived on an object is slim to none, so we do not recommend spending funds at a specialized lab for this endeavor.

This is a reminder that there is no better time than now to get a DNA sample from your living male relatives. When they are gone, so is their DNA, which could prevent your family tree from participating in the future, because there are no other direct descent males. Perhaps you have a few direct descent males who are living, so it doesn't seem a priority to get a sample. You never know if you will have some unusual results in the males that you test in the future, and you desperately need another male participant to solve the puzzle, and none exist.

FamilyTreeDNA provides 25 years of DNA storage at no extra charge. This storage is a tremendous benefit. You can preserve the DNA and have it available for future scientific genetic genealogy discoveries. In addition, your male relatives are making an extremely valuable contribution to your family history, that may out live them.

The DNA samples are stored under a number and surname only, in a locked refrigerator. They are safe and secure and anonymous.

Both our 12 Marker Y DNA test and 25 Marker Y DNA test cost less than the price of storage by vendors who provide DNA Banking Services.

There is no time like the present. You can't count on remembering to get a sample if tragedy strikes with an untimely death. There might also be other hurdles to overcome at that time, such as spousal approval, and getting the test kit there in time.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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December 15, 2003 Volume 2, Issue 12

Recruiting Participants: Explaining DNA Testing

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Group Administrations develop a knowledge about DNA testing for genealogy. This knowledge is important to interpret the results of the testing for the Surname Project.

It is easy for Group Administrators to overwhelm potential participants with knowledge that isn't necessary for them to participate. Plus, the potential participant probably isn't interested in the science, and all the science might scare off or confuse the potential participant.

The key is: keep it simple.

Many Surname Projects successfully recruit participants with a standard set of very basic information. The more information provided to potential participants, which is not necessary, also increases the time spent by both parties, increases the questions, and increases the opportunity for objections by the participant.

A flood of scientific information will not sway a potential participant to participate. On the other hand, it may be so overwhelming, that they don't answer the email.

The four key points to explain DNA testing to a potential participant of a Surname Project are:

1. A small portion of the Y chromosome, found only in men, will be tested. This small portion is passed from father to son.
2. The test results are a string of 25 numbers. (Substitute 12 or 37, depending of the Y DNA test selected). The string of numbers has no value by itself, and does not contain any personal information.
3. The value of the string of numbers is when compared to another person to determine if they are related, and approximately when the common ancestor occurred.
4. Provide an example of 2 results from the Surname Project.

That should be the end of the science lesson for explaining DNA testing to potential participants.

By keeping it simple, the Group Administrator will save time, and avoid overwhelming or confusing people.

The balance of the communication with potential participants should focus on the benefits. It is also important to cover why the potential participant is needed, and how important their participation would be to the Surname Project.

When explaining DNA testing to potential participants, avoid a science lecture. Keep it simple.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

January 22, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 1

Recruiting Participants: The Cost of Genealogy Research

Genealogy is one of those hobbies where a lot of small costs can add up over time. Many of the research guides suggest that you keep an Expense Log, and record all your expenses. I don't know about you, but I started my Expense Log, and quit after about the third item. I had enough record keeping to do, with a Correspondence logs, a Research Log, and entering data in my family tree program. I certainly didn't need an Expense Log.

The benefit of the Expense Log is that it would provide a total for the year of all the small expenses, that add up over time, and often aren't remembered. This information would be very helpful when considering the cost of a DNA test.

In place of an Expense Log, we will look at some of the typical expenses incurred for genealogy. If you add up those expenses that apply to your situation, then you can compare this amount to the cost of a DNA test. A DNA test is a one time expense, which will provide information that can not be determined from any other source - plus, the test will keep providing information. As other participants test, you are sent an email informing you of a match. A DNA test is the only investment you can make in genealogy, that keeps providing a return, year after year. A DNA test will provide new information, as others participate and either match, or don't match. Even when they don't match, you have new information.

A DNA test can also save you time and money, for those that are researching the wrong tree, or the wrong location, or whose research is based on incorrect theories.

The cost of genealogy research is also increasing, as more state and local governments, as well as national governments, see genealogy researchers as a new source of funding for their budget short falls.

Below are some typical expenses relating to genealogy, broken down by category. The figures provided are either from a vendors site, or an estimate, if so noted. All figures are in US Dollars. The calculation from foreign currencies to US Dollar were done with mid-market rates.

Magazines

\$27.00 or more per year for one subscription (estimated)

Books

\$30.00 - \$50.00 or more for one or two books a year

Memberships

\$12-\$100 per year, depending on the organization. One or two or more memberships.

CD Purchase

\$20-\$400 depending on the CD, or whether it is a set such as UK Census or UK Parish records

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OnLine Services

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\$229.00 Ancestry.com: Full year of all subscriptions
\$44.00 OtherDays.com 1 year subscription

Pay per View Sites/ short term subscriptions

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\$8.00 for 72 hours at Otherdays.com
\$.10-.13 each to view items at FamilyHistoryOnline.net
\$9.75 for 300 credits to view items from the Society of Genealogists

Conference

=====
\$10.00 - \$500.00 plus, depending on travel and registration fees

Film Rental at a FHC

=====
\$3.25 - \$3.50 each. At 1 per month, this is \$42.00 per year. At 3 per month, \$126.00

Certificates + Documents

=====
\$27.00 US SSDI For SS-5 [Application for Social Security number] (number known)
\$37.00 US Civil War Pension File
\$14.50 Search + transcript of Old Parish Registers by Scotsorgin.com
\$5.54 For a digital image delivered electronically of a PCC Will
\$18.46 To provide an estimate for the cost of to copy up to 5 documents [PRO]
\$14.77 The minimum postage charge by the PRO to mail copies.
\$15.00-\$25.00 UK BMD certificate: Depends if references are known
\$38.78 Authentication fee, per page [PRO]

Copies

=====
\$.10-\$1.00 each at a FHC, depending on the microfilm printer available
\$2.00 per page, ordered from Salt Lake
\$34.53 per page for A0 paper at the PRO
\$129.65 per color copy per page size A0 [PRO]

Professional Researcher

=====
\$25.00 - \$100.00 per hour, depending on expertise, experience, and country

Research Trip

=====
\$10.00-\$1000.00+ depending whether you go to the local cemetery or another state/country
\$680.00 Example 4 day trip from Atlanta to Tennessee and Virginia.
Gas, vehicle operating cost, hotel, meals, and document copies

Expenditures on genealogy research can quickly add up, and the total is often hidden, since there are usually a lot of small expenses. The list above can be used to refresh your memory, and estimate your genealogy expenses in a year. This expense can then be compared to the cost of a DNA test.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

You can get a Y DNA test for 12 Markers cheaper than a color copy of an A0 piece of paper from the PRO, UK. A DNA test can save you time and money. In addition, the DNA test will continue to provide a return, for years in the future.

Often Group Administrators encounter a price objection from a potential participant. If the potential participant is an active genealogist, one who goes beyond surfing the net, costs are incurred as they pursue their hobby. The potential participant may not realize that all the small costs throughout the year add up to more than the cost of a DNA test. Those on a budget may want to start with the 12 Marker test, and upgrade to the 25 Marker test at a later date. Perhaps some of their genealogy expenses, such as subscriptions or memberships, can be skipped for a year, and the funds applied to the DNA test.

For more information on dealing with a price objection, see the article "Recruiting Participants: Cost Justify the Price". Click on the link below.

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=2.9

To quote one of our customers:

"One trip cost me more than I've spent on the Y DNA 25 marker and the 37 Marker upgrade - and what I found at all of the courthouses, libraries, etc. that I visited, was of minimal real value to my research. DNA testing is much less expensive than research and CAN BE much more valuable."

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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March 3, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 2

Recruiting Participants: The 3rd Time

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Have you ever wondered why you get the same junk mail over and over, even though you haven't bought anything. Or why you get junk mail addressed to occupant?

The organizations that send this postal junk mail to you rely on direct mail marketing statistics. These statistics show that the highest response rate and highest purchase rate occur on the 3 mailing, followed by the 4th mailing. In addition, 1-4% of those mailings addressed to Occupant will result in a purchase.

Other factors are also important, and influence the response rate, such as the presentation of the material, and even the colors used. In addition, there should also be a gap of time between the mailings.

If you have contacted potential participants only once, you are missing an opportunity to recruit participants. The email addresses of the potential participants can be put into a list, and these potential participants contacted on multiple occasions with news about the Surname Project and the results achieved, as well as a request to participate. You could consider contacting these potential participants quarterly, and sending the same material to all those on the list. Your third or fourth mailing should yield additional participants for your Surname Project.

The email you prepare to send to your potential participants should be easy to understand, and nontechnical. Your potential participants are interested in how they will benefit from participating, not a lesson on population genetics. Be sure to cover the benefits for potential participants.

End your email with a "call to action": ask the potential participant to participate.

A balance must be found between communicating to potential participants about the benefits of your Surname Project, and what could be perceived as harrassment. It is critical that your email contains information that might be of interest to the

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

recipient, and that your frequency is no more than quarterly. One format to consider is a newsletter about your Surname Project. Regardless of the format you use, the communication should provide an opportunity for the recipient to discontinue receipt.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

May 6, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 3

Recruiting Participants: State the Benefits

As a Group Administrator, you want participants for your Surname Project. On the other hand, the potential participants want to know what's in it for them. What's in it for them are the benefits, which must be effectively communicated to the potential participants.

As a Group Administrator, you are probably quite interested in family history research, and quite enthusiastic about utilizing DNA testing for genealogy. Most likely, the majority of potential participants may not be as interested in family history research, and may not see the benefits from participation.

A key element to recruiting participants is to identify the benefits and then communicate the benefits.

To define the benefits, try to look at the situation from the potential participants view. Are they interested in family history and actively researching their family history? This is an ideal potential participant. Participation should help them in their family history research. Define what the potential participant will gain by participating. Then use this list in your web site and in communication with potential participants.

Perhaps you need a participant from a Line, and none of the surviving direct descent males are interested in family history, or perhaps their interest is slight. Sponsorship of this participants test may be the easiest route to recruiting them. Otherwise, the benefits for them will be different than those actively researching their family history. The benefits could be: being important, making a contribution, or perhaps finding out their origin, through the Haplogroup component of the Y DNA test. Think about the situation from the potential participants view, and see what benefits come to mind.

It wouldn't be obvious to a potential participant how they will benefit. Genetic Genealogy is new, and most potential participants wouldn't figure out the value of participating on their own. It is up to the Group Administrator to identify and communicate the benefits. What's in it for them?

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

August 25, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 5

Recruiting Participants: The Web Site

A web site is a very important component of a Surname Project, both to recruit participants and to keep participants informed of the progress and results of the project. Family Tree DNA provides a Web Builder Tool that Group Administrators can use to easily create a web site in less than 30 minutes, with no special knowledge required. In addition, the Web Builder Tool automatically incorporates in your web site the results for your participants. The hosting for the web site is provided at no charge.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

If you already have a web site, you can switch to Family Tree DNA, or have a second site hosted at Family Tree DNA. The primary benefit of a web site hosted at Family Tree DNA is that the participants results are automatically updated when new results are posted to your Surname Project. This will save you a significant amount of time. The second benefit is the easy to use Web Builder Tool, which allows you to fill in templates and check boxes to build and update your site.

When you create a web site with the Web Builder Tool, and your Project Profile does "not" already have a web site address, the address for the site, called a URL, is automatically added to your Project Profile. If you already have a web site URL listed in your Project Profile, the web site address for the new web site created with the Web Builder Tool will "not" replace this address. If you have two web sites, one hosted at Family Tree DNA and another web site at a different location, you can decide which site is listed in your Project Profile. Simply change the web site address in your Project Profile to the location preferred.

If you don't yet have a web site for your Surname Project, or you would like to create a second site at Family Tree DNA, a guide is provided below. This might also be a good time for those with a web site to review and update your site, to insure that your site is effectively recruiting participants.

A Surname Project web site has two primary objectives:

1. Recruit participants
2. Report results to participants

To recruit participants, the web site should:

1. establish credibility
2. build trust
3. develop interest in the Surname Project
4. state the benefits of participation
5. provide information about the project
6. state the Surname Project goals and results
6. Request action

Fancy graphics and a variety of colors aren't required to have an effective web site. An easy to follow and well organized web site, that communicates clearly, will achieve these objectives.

Building a web site couldn't be any easier than using the new Web Builder Tool from Family Tree DNA. The Web Builder Tool requires no knowledge about web sites. A template is provided, and boxes to check for selections.

To build a web site for your Surname Project, follow the easy steps covered below. Before you start, write a list of benefits for potential participants. You will review and use this list of benefits as you write your web site.

1. On the Group Administrator Page, at the bottom of the selections, click on the selection: "Family Project Website Setup". To later update your web site, you would also click on this selection.

2. Enter a title for your Surname Project.

This title will typically be one or more of the major surnames in your project, followed by the words Surname Project.

3. Project Background

Write a short description about the history of the project. As you consider what to cover, consider items that will establish credibility and interest. This section could include, depending on the Surname Project: when the project started, the number of participants, countries where participants are located, major family lines tested, and other items of interest. You can also cover benefits from participation in this section.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

4. Project Goals

State the objectives of the Surname Project, starting with the most important objective. Cover the objectives in order of most important to least important. The objectives should be clear, easy to understand, and generate interest. These goals should interest and benefit potential participants.

5. Project Results

Summarize the results for the Surname Project, starting with the most important. Keep in mind that potential participants will probably not be familiar with the project, so don't overwhelm them with technical terms, or very specific situations that may not apply to them. The Project Results section is a key element to establishing credibility and generating interest. Technical terms do not generate interest, especially when the reader most likely has no idea what the terms mean, such as Haplogroup or Haplotype. Where technical terms are required to communicate with participants in the Surname Project, write the first half of the Project Results section for the potential participant, and the second half for the participants in the Surname Project. Be sure to state the benefits that have been achieved from the Project Results. These benefits could even include finding out Lines are not related, so research time and expenses aren't wasted pursuing false connections.

6. Project News

The Project News section will be placed at the top of the web page generated, after the title for the Surname Project. This will be the first item read at your web site. It is very important that the first sentence or first few sentences generate interest, and perhaps excitement.

Every project has news, even if you are just getting started. Getting started is news, new participants is news, discoveries and clues is news, as well as specific results.

You may want to plan to update your Project News section once a month, or when a significant event occurs. It will only take a few moments of your time. Potential participants may take several visits to your web site before contacting you. You can stimulate their interest and generate excitement with your news.

7. Check some boxes.

The next step for your web site is to decide what items are displayed, by checking boxes. The selections are self explanatory. One of the selections is whether participants surnames will be displayed in the results section of your web site. I would think that everyone would check this box. Participant results wouldn't have much value without surname, and the surname isn't enough to identify a person, so privacy isn't an issue.

8. Give your web site a name.

A web site needs an address. Your web site will be hosted at familytreeDNA.com/public/xxxx where xxxx is the name you provide. The site name can not have spaces. A short easy name is sufficient, such as the primary surname in your project.

9. Click Submit.

The next step is to click "Submit" at the bottom of the page, and the Web Builder Tool will build your web site. The Web Builder Tool will also access your participants test results in the Family Tree DNA database, and display those results on your web site.

10. Review your web site

After you click "Submit", you will return to a page that gives you the option of viewing your web site or returning to your Group Administrator Page. If you right click on "access your web site", to open your web site in a new window, and then in the original window click on Group Administrator Page, and then Family Web Site, you can have your web site open in one window for viewing, and the Web Builder Tool open in another window for updating. If you take this approach of two windows open at once, every time you update your site in the Web Tool Builder Tool window, and click "Submit", be sure to click Refresh or Reload in the window where you view your web site. Refresh or Reload will load the latest version of your web site.

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As you review your web site, try to look at the web site from the eyes of a potential participant. Is the web site inviting? Will the web site interest them and not intimidate them with technical terms? Is the web site easy to understand, and are the benefits of participating clear? Did you provide a method for the potential participant to contact you, such as listing your email?

Does your web site include a request for action, to either contact the Group Administrator for additional information, or did you include a Join Link for them to click to participate? You can put the request for action at either the end of the Project News section, or at the end of the Project Results section. The latter is probably a better choice, because the potential participant will have more information at this point.

At the end of the Project Results section, which will appear right before the results for the participants are displayed, it is recommended that you include the following sentence:

If you are using Netscape, and the project results below are blank, you will need to upgrade your browser or switch to Explorer to view the results.

11. Make others aware of your web site

You now have a web site, and can share the address with others, whether in email communications, letters, or posting to mailing lists. You can copy the web site address from either the Address bar of your browser when you are viewing your web site, or from the Web Builder Tool page at FamilytreeDNA.com.

A web site is an important component of a Surname Project, to recruit participants, and to keep participants informed about the progress of the project. Family Tree DNA provides the hosting for your web site at no charge, and the easy to use Web Builder Tool.

If you don't already have a web site, try the Web Builder Tool today. If you have a web site, consider moving to the Family Tree DNA Web Builder Tool, which will automatically update your web site when participants results come back from the lab, saving you time.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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October 21, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 6

Recruiting Participants: Posting Announcements

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As a Group Administrator, the first two steps to getting started are to establish the Project Profile for your Surname Project, and then to set up your web site using the Web Builder Tool from Family Tree DNA. For more information on these steps, see the following past issues of the newsletter:

Project Profile:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.2

Setting up Your Web Site:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.5

The next step in establishing your Surname Project is to Post an Announcement about the project to mailing lists, message boards, and forums.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Your posting should be a short, interesting description of your Surname Project. When potential participants find or receive your posting, an interesting posting will motivate the reader to go to your web site for more information. Mailing lists are delivered to an email inbox, and are also archived on the Internet, where they can be searched and viewed at any time. Message boards and forums require the interested party to visit the site.

Posting is a way for others interested in the genealogy of your surname to find out that a Surname Project exists for their surname. DNA testing for genealogy is still new. Participants don't wake up one day, and say "I will go find a Surname Project and take a DNA test today". Most likely, most of the potential participants have limited or no knowledge about Genetic Genealogy, and aren't familiar with the power of this new tool, and what they can accomplish by participating.

You will select mailing lists, message boards, and forums for your posting that are destinations that you expect others with your surname would visit or subscribe. These sites would:

- relate to the surname or variants
- relate to the typical locations where the surname is found: country, county, area, state, city

When you compose the announcement that you will post, keep in mind the following tips:

1. Prepare your posting in a word processor program, so you can spell check your posting.
2. Keep the subject line short, and be sure to include the surname and the word DNA or Surname Project.
3. The posting should be no longer than 3 inches on your screen. Keep the posting short, and motivate the reader to visit your web site.
4. Grab the readers' attention with the first sentence.
5. List the surname and variants included in the project. If you have a long list of variants, list the primary variants. A short list of variants could appear in the subject line.
6. List the primary benefits for a participant.
7. List the primary goals and/or scope of the Surname Project.
8. Provide the web site address for the Surname Project, and optionally also your email address.
9. Minimize the technical information provided and the technical terms used. A participant does not need to become an expert on DNA testing for Genealogy. They only need to know what they will gain by participating.
10. Do "not" mention price.

After composing your Announcement, try to review the draft objectively. Is the subject line short, with at least the primary surname and the words DNA Project? Is the Posting easy to follow and understand? Does the first sentence entice you to read further. If you weren't the Group Administrator, would you want to click on the web site address to learn more?

It is also recommended that you save your Posting in a file on your computer. Saving the posting will make it easy, in the future when your Surname Project starts to have results, and you want to Post an Announcement of major results. You would simply modify your posting file to include the results.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Some mailing lists, message boards, and forums consider a Surname Project to be a commercial activity. If you don't see other postings about Surname Projects, contact the administrator of the mailing list, message board or forum, to confirm that your posting is within the guidelines established.

Be sure to only post your Announcement at relevant mailing lists, message boards, and forums. Indiscriminate posting can alienate list administrators.

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of the products or sites mentioned in the newsletter, and provides the information solely to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy.

Recruiting Participants: The Message

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Recruiting participants is an on going process, and a terrific opportunity to meet others interested in research of your surname. Most people who are interested in Family History research are not knowledgeable about Genetic Genealogy, so they don't come to the conclusion independently that they should have a DNA test. Therefore, recruiting participants involves both making people aware of the benefits of DNA testing for genealogy, and educating them to a level for them to feel comfortable taking this step.

The focus of your recruiting efforts should be on finding people who are interested in family history for your surname, instead of focusing your efforts on finding DNA participants.

The difference between these two approaches will have a long term impact on your Surname Project.

If your focus is on finding people who are interested in the family history of your surname, you will develop a large pool of potential participants. Over time, you can turn many potential participants into participants, and often potential participants can help you find other potential participants.

If your focus is only on finding participants, you will miss others who could turn into participants over time.

Your focus determines the "message" that you will use in your communications to recruit participants. If your message focuses on family history, you will typically get a larger number of responses. If you focus on DNA testing in your message, you will skim off those ready to be participants, but leave behind all those that could be turned into participants over time.

Turning a potential participant into a participant is a process of building trust, identifying benefits, and education. These elements are important to incorporate in your message.

Usually it will take more than one email or posting to create a participant. Occasionally, people will read one of your postings or emails, and immediately participate. As much as all the Group Administrators would wish that this would happen all the time, it will take several more years before it becomes common practice for those who are interested in their family history to start with a DNA test.

In the meantime, recruiting participants is an on going process.

If the focus of your message in your communication with others is about family history research, combined with a short component about DNA testing for Genealogy, you will receive a higher response rate. If you also include or share some family history information that may interest the reader, you should get an even higher response rate.

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Recruiting Participants: Making Contact

After you have established your Project Profile, set up your web site, and posted your announcement, it is time to contact people.

The first people to contact are those that you need to participate from your family tree. Typically, a minimum of two persons are tested to validate the result for your tree. If your family tree spans centuries, or is very broad with lots of branches, you will probably want to test more than two persons. In this case, you would select a person from each of the primary branches. If you are a male with the Surname Project surname, you have your first participant.

Review your family tree and determine those who would be the ideal participants. Perhaps you know these relatives. If you know the people, it will make your first recruiting task a little easier.

When identifying the ideal participants in your family tree, always select the oldest male, if possible. Selecting the oldest male will eliminate any mutations that can be introduced by additional generations, and you will be getting the DNA sample for this male stored for 25 years, so the sample is available for future scientific advances.

Since you will be approaching your relatives, first consider their economic status. As much as they would like to help you with your Surname Project, it may not be possible for them to afford the cost of the test. Most people will feel uncomfortable stating that they can not "afford" to participate, and instead will voice other objections.

A quick way to overcome the economic hurdle, and avoid any potential embarrassment for your relative, is for you to sponsor the tests needed for your family tree. This removes a potential objection, and your focus can then be on securing the participation of the ideal participants.

If your budget does not include sponsoring the participants needed for your family tree, consider soliciting some contributions from other members of your family. Small contributions from several family members can quickly add up to cover the cost of a participant's test. Once you have the sponsorship funds, you are now ready to make contact with your prospective participant.

Before approaching the prospective participant, a little preparation will ensure success, and avoid the situation where the participant gets the test kit, and then doesn't return the test kit.

Think benefits.

How will the participant benefit? Will they be making an important contribution to the family history research of the surname? Is their participation important to validate your result, and therefore establish the result for your family tree? These are all benefits. Other benefits are:

- participating in the latest scientific advance for genealogy
- representing your family tree in your Surname Project
- be one of the first, or the first, in your family to participate

Once you have the benefits identified, you will need to decide if you will call or write the potential participant. This choice is dependent upon your relationship and what you know about the potential participant. Often, people have an easier time with written communication. They can review the communication several times if they don't understand with the first reading. This is especially helpful for older relatives. Having a piece of paper to reference also establishes credibility. Written communication provides an opportunity for you to prepare and polish your communication. The objective of your communication is to lay the foundation so they will agree to participate, as well as then do the test kit and return it. A telephone call may solicit a yes response, because people have trouble saying no, but the test kit could very well not get

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returned. The best approach is to write a letter or email and enclose a one page description of the project. Later, if you do not receive a response, you would follow-up to answer any questions.

One advantage of written communication, in addition to the advantages listed above, is that you can prepare an easy to understand letter/email and a Project Summary, and use these items over and over in future contacts. This will save you a lot of time over the course of the Surname Project.

To prepare your written communication, first prepare the Project Summary. Since you are getting started, your Project Summary will be short. Even if you had a 100 participants, your Project Summary should still be no more than one(1) page.

The Project Summary will cover:

- one or two paragraph summary of Genetic Genealogy
- project objectives
- any results for the Surname Project, such as your result. The value of showing a result is that the potential participant can see that the result is a string of numbers, and this removes much of the fear that the word DNA can invoke. If you don't have any results yet, show a few example results, so that the reader will understand that the test result contains no personal information.

As your Surname Project progresses, you can occasionally update, add participant's results, and improve your Project Summary. Your Project Summary is a document you can enclose with letters, or paste into emails, or attach to emails.

Once the Project Summary is prepared, it is time to write your letter or email. Your letter/email will also form the basis for a standard form letter that you will have and use repetitively, saving you time.

Your letter, which will go to the one or more sponsored potential participants in your family tree, will have the following elements:

- introductory paragraph: why are you writing them. This paragraph should generate interest and excitement
- benefits to participate
- their test kit is sponsored or the cost of participation and any sponsorship available
- reference the enclosed Project Summary for additional information
- request for action: ask them to participate
- How to contact you to get questions answered

Save on your computer both your Project Summary and your letter/email to the potential participants in your family tree. A small revision to this letter/email will result in a form letter/email you can use to approach other potential participants in other family trees or Lines of your surname. The letter/email and Project Summary can also be used if you build a mailing list of email addresses or postal addresses.

Having a form letter/email and Project Summary can save you a lot of time as you recruit participants.

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December 3, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 7

Recruiting Participants: Finding Sponsors

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Sponsors are persons who contribute towards the cost of DNA testing. A sponsor could contribute towards a specific participant or towards a specific family tree, or to the General Fund for a Surname Project, which is then used at the discretion of the Group Administrator to subsidize the cost of testing for participants.

Last month, Family Tree DNA announced that a new selection is now available on the Group Administrators page, called the General Fund. This selection provides a ledger of the transaction for the General Fund, including funds received, and funds allocated towards test kits. Family Tree DNA handles the transactions of collecting and disbursing the funds, and reports the activity on the General Fund page, with the fund balance. The Group Administrator would notify Family Tree DNA regarding the amount to apply to a specific test kit.

The link below provides directions for sponsors and the payment options, such as credit card, PayPal or check.

<http://www.familytreeDNA.com/contribution.html>

This link can be emailed to sponsors or placed on the Surname Project web site.

For Surname Project Web Sites hosted at Family Tree DNA, go to the Web Builder Tool by selecting on your Group Administrator Page "Family Project Website Setup". Towards the bottom of the page, click on the box next to "Display General Fund Donation Link?" A link to the above sponsor page will appear on your web site.

The next issue is how do you make people aware that sponsorship funds are welcome. The key to raising sponsorship funds is to be low key. Here are some approaches:

1. Add to selected correspondence a short paragraph about sponsorship funds, and include the link shown above.
2. Select specific persons and send them a short letter or email explaining sponsorship, and how to contribute.
3. Inform the Family Association for your surname, if one exists, about sponsorship funds and how persons can contribute.
4. If the Surname Project or Family Association publishes a newsletter, ask for the sponsorship program to be included.

One or more of the above approaches can be selected. Which ever approach you select, you would want to repeat the approach, or try a different approach, on a established frequency, such as quarterly.

Soliciting sponsorship funds should be low key.

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December 31, 2004 Volume 3, Issue 8

Recruiting Participants: Building the Prospect Pipe

As a Group Administrator, the first three steps to getting started are to establish the Project Profile for your Surname Project, set up your web site using the Web Builder Tool from Family Tree DNA, and post announcements about your Surname Project. You will then begin to contact others about your Surname Project. The first people you will contact are typically those in your family tree whom you need to participate.

Before contacting others, it is important to consider the message in your communication. It is recommended that you make the focus of your message family history research, and not the DNA Project. This approach will result in a higher response rate, and you will start to develop relationships with other persons researching your surname, who may end up helping you find participants or becoming participants themselves.

For more information on these steps, see the following past issues of the newsletter:

Project Profile:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.2

Setting up Your Web Site:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.5

Post Announcements:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.6

The Message:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.6

Making Contact:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.6

Finding Sponsors:

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.7

The next step is to find other participants for the Surname Project. Participants are created over time from potential participants. Others who are interested in the family history of your surname can also help find and recruit potential participants.

To achieve a steady stream of participants, you would want to build a pool of potential participants, and then communicate about family history and the Surname Project with this pool on a periodic basis. Over time, many of these potential participants will become participants. You will also be constantly adding to the pool, so that as potential participants become participants, you are replacing them with new potential participants.

This process is often referred to as the pipe. Potential participants enter the pipe on one end, and go through a process of education, building trust, and recognizing the benefits of participation. These potential participants travel and reside in the pipe, until they come out on the other end and become a participant. They will travel at different speeds through the process in the pipe. Interest levels will vary, and the financial ability to participate will vary.

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To build your pipe, the first step is to find and identify potential participants, so you can put them in your pipe and begin the process of converting them to a participant. The other type of people to find are those who can help. These would typically be women interested in the family history of your surname, who may have male family members, or they may have contacts with others researching your family history. These other people who can help may also be males who don't have your surname, who are interested in the family history of your surname. For discussion purposes, we will call these people who can help "key influencers".

From your family history research, you have most likely developed a list of contacts. Some of these will be potential participants and others are key influencers. It is important to put each in their appropriate group, so you can tailor your communication to their situation. For those that have email addresses, this is as easy as establishing two email mailing lists.

For those contacts who only have postal mail, you could type two lists with their name and mailing address, one list for each type of contact.

Next, you will want to find more potential participants and key influences to add to your email mailing lists. Here are some approaches to find people.

1. Search the rootsweb mailing lists for your surname and key variants. Review the postings, and determine if the person who posted is a potential participant or key influencer, and add their name and email address to the appropriate mailing list. The older the posting the higher the odds that the email address has changed. A bounced email is a minor bother compared with finding a potential participant.

2. Do the above step for the Ancestry message boards and Genforum.

3. Search Google for your surname. This will return sites that have your surname and perhaps have an email address for a person with your surname. All these sites wouldn't be related to family history. If you find males with your surname and an email address, you would want to collect them for your mailing list, even if family history isn't mentioned.

If you get too many hits when you do a Google search, add the words family history or genealogy to the search criteria. If you still get too many unrelated hits, use Google's advanced search to narrow down the criteria.

3. Search Ancestry.com research registry to see if anyone has registered your surnames. You can search on the main Ancestry.com page, and view the research registry for free. Or use the link below:

<http://www.ancestry.com/share/research/main.htm>

Add these email addresses to your email mailing lists.

4. For the UK, visit the web sites of the Family History Societies for the geographic areas where your surname has resided, and search their Member Interests pages. Add these email addresses or postal addresses to your lists. If a different country is your ancestral country, visit their sites for Family History Societies.

5. For the UK, also try a search on your surname, to see if a member interests come up in the results. At the link below, page down until you find the Genuki Search Engine.

<http://www.genuki.org.uk/contents/>

6. Determine the various countries where those with your surname emigrated, often centuries ago. For example, families from Ireland and England emigrated to Australia and New Zealand. Often persons from England migrated to the Republic of South Africa. Find the genealogy societies for these countries, and search their member interests pages. Don't forget Canada. Persons with ancestors from many countries can be found in Canada.

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Often a Google search will help you find these organizations. For example, a search for Australia Genealogy Society provides many relevant hits.

An online phone book will help you narrow down locations where persons with your surname migrated. For example, checking the Canada phonebook, at link shown below, might show that your surname is only in Ontario, so you would focus your search for genealogy societies to that location.

<http://canada411.com/>

Checking online phonebooks is also valuable to rule out countries where your surname does not appear.

It might also be a good idea to join a genealogy society in your ancestral country, in the location where your surname occurs, and list yourself under member interests. This may provide you with contacts in the future.

There are also sites where you can list your interests without being a member, and you would want to do this for the geographic areas relevant to those with your surname.

You now have two mailing lists, one for potential participants and one for key influencers.

It is now time to compose an email to the potential participants. You probably saved on your computer your letter/email you sent to those in your family tree to find participants. You can consider revising this letter. Another approach is to write a new email, that will perhaps be better, since you now have more experience. Whether you write a new email or revise the email you have, it is important to do this task in a word processor to spell check your email, and to save it for the future.

The subject for the email will be XYZ Family History, where XYZ is the primary surname and variants.

We will assume that you created a Project Summary document for your Surname Project. Your email will make reference to this document that they can request for further information, as well as provide the address (URL) for the Surname Project web site. If you publish a newsletter, you will also want to mention that they can request the newsletter.

The email you create for your mailing list will have the following components:

1. one sentence about how you found them

This helps start to build trust. Here is an example: I found your email address on the internet, and I am writing to you regarding some exciting discoveries about the XYZ surname and the associated family history.

2. One or two paragraphs about family history

3. One paragraph about the Surname Project, focusing on results. If you do not yet have any results, cover the objectives. If you are weak on results, also cover the objectives.

Avoid technical words. Allele, Haplogroup, Haplotype, STR, short tandem repeat - none of these words are going to generate interest. In fact, they will do the opposite.

Compare these two example paragraphs:

The result of testing a small part of the Y chromosome is a string of numbers, and contains no personal information. This result is compared to the result of other males, and those that match or are a close match, are related. An example result is shown below.

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We are testing the STR Markers found on the Y chromosome, and the resulting haplotype is compared, taking into account marker mutation rates.

When the potential participants encounter the second example, they will probably press the delete key!

Group Administrators have learned more about DNA testing and the associated jargon than a participant needs to know, to participate and be happy. Technical terms will alienate potential participants.

The term "genetic finger print" implies a result that identifies an individual - and it is recommended that you do not use this term. The word DNA often invokes enough fear, and there is no reason to increase this fear with the perception that the result can identify a person.

Calling the result a result is sufficient. For example: the result is a string of numbers.

4. If sponsorship funds are available mention this in one sentence.

5. How they can get additional information and questioned answered

You will want to provide options, such as the web site, the Project Summary, a newsletter, and contacting you. One benefit of having one or more documents beyond the web site, such as the Project Summary, is that it establishes credibility.

Your objective with this email is to generate interest and perhaps get a response and start a dialog.

Even those that don't respond may still be interested. You will be emailing the persons on your mailing list on an established frequency, such as quarterly. These future emails will cover results from the Surname Project, any family history research discoveries, and a brief review of the objectives and benefits of participation.

It may take several mailings before you receive a response. Some people will never respond. Others may be quick to respond. It is a function of their level of interest, and your periodic emails should build interest over time.

Once you have drafted, spell checked, and reviewed your email objectively, it can be modified for the key influencers. Be sure to save your email on your computer.

The objective of the email to the key influencers is to make them aware of your interest in family history, develop their interest in the Surname Project, and request their help in providing you with contact information for any males with the surname.

You will also be emailing the key influencers periodically.

One benefit of a quarterly newsletter is that it can be used as the communication vehicle to both potential participants and participants, and it establishes credibility. A newsletter does not need to be longer than a page. It all depends on what you want it to cover. The newsletter could highlight key results and refer people to the web site.

Postings on the Internet have value. Postings rely on others taking action to find the post. Seeking and finding persons using the Internet will fill your pipe faster than waiting for others to find you.

Family Tree DNA does not endorse or sponsor any of the products or sites mentioned in the newsletter, and provides the information solely to assist those interested in Genetic Genealogy.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

February 23, 2005 Volume 4, Issue 1

Recruiting Participants: Web Site of the Month

A web site is a very important component of a Surname Project, both to recruit participants and to keep participants informed of the progress and results of the project. Family Tree DNA provides a Web Builder Tool that Group Administrators can use to easily create a web site in less than 30 minutes, with no special knowledge required. In addition, the Web Builder Tool automatically incorporates in your web site the results for your participants. The hosting for the web site is provided at no charge.

We are frequently asked by our Group Administrators for model web sites created with the Family Tree DNA Web Builder Tool.

If you encounter a web site created using the Web Builder Tool, that is easy to understand and would be an excellent example for Group Administrators, please let us know. Contact the editor at: editor@familytreedna.com.

Building a web site couldn't be any easier than using the Web Builder Tool, from Family Tree DNA. The Web Builder Tool requires no knowledge about web sites. A template is provided, and boxes to check for selections.

A web site is an important component of a Surname Project, to recruit participants, and to keep participants informed about the progress of the project. Family Tree DNA provides the hosting for your web site at no charge, along with the easy to use Web Builder Tool.

If you don't already have a web site, try the Web Builder Tool today. If you have a web site, consider moving to the Family Tree DNA Web Builder Tool, which will automatically update your web site when participants' results come back from the lab, saving you time.

For a Guide to creating a web site, see the following article:

Recruiting Participants: The Web Site

http://www.familytreedna.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=3.5

Recruiting Participants: Terminology

As a Group Administrator, you have invested in an educational process to be knowledgeable about Genetic Genealogy. This process probably included increasing your vocabulary with technical words such as Haplotype, Haplogroup, alleles, and so forth.

The most effective recruiting emails, letters, and web sites use very few or no technical terms.

The key to people buying a technical product is to make the product non-technical for the end user. Technical terms can intimidate people, and gives them an excuse to put off making a decision.

The use of technical terms will slow down the process of recruiting a participant, and some will just go away. You have experience and are comfortable with all the terms. To others, who have never seen the words before, it will feel like they need

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

to take a science word power course before they order a DNA test. Deciding to take a DNA test will then go to the bottom of their list.

As a Group Administrator you are knowledgeable about Genetic Genealogy, and most likely very enthusiastic, since you have seen what DNA testing can do for family history research. Enthusiasm sells - technical words don't. Benefits sell - technical words do the opposite.

If you must use a technical term in your communication, then define any term used in one short and easy to understand sentence.

To increase the effectiveness of your recruiting, reduce or eliminate the technical terms.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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March 28, 2005 Volume 4, Issue 2

Recruiting Participants: Effective Recruiting
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Do you have only a few participants in your Surname Project, and wonder how other Surname Projects have recruited over 50 participants, or even over 100, or over 200?

There are several factors to consider to evaluate the effectiveness of your recruiting techniques.

The first factor is the length of time that your Surname Project has been in existence. The longer your Surname Project has been in existence, the more opportunity there has been to recruit participants. In addition, the longer the time frame, the more recruiting activities that have been performed.

Another factor to consider, which probably has the most significant impact, is the population of the surname. For example, most large Surname Projects have a high frequency surname.

To illustrate how the population of a surname impacts the number of participants, let's look at a high frequency surname, as compared to a low frequency surname. For our example high frequency surname, the population in the US of people with the surname is slightly over 200,000 people. There are also thousands more in other countries.

The low frequency surname has a population in the US and the UK combined, of only 7,000 people.

When you compare the 200 participants out of over 200,000 persons, to 15 participants out of a population of 7,000 for your surname, you have achieved a higher market penetration in the lower frequency surname project. Your recruiting has brought in a higher percentage of the surname population as participants.

If we calculate the effectiveness rate by dividing the number of participants by the population of the surname, we can see the difference between the two projects:

0.2 percent of the population of your surname have participated in your Surname Project
0.1 percent of the high frequency surname have participated.

If you just look at the surface, 15 participants compared to over 100 participants can be discouraging. If you look beyond the surface, your Surname Project is successful. With more time and more recruiting efforts, you can achieve more success.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

Low frequency surnames have a hidden advantage. Low frequency surnames typically have fewer family trees or Lines than a high frequency surname. This makes managing the Surname Project easier. High frequency surnames will have a large number of family trees, and will typically also have multiple points of origin, perhaps in multiple countries. A high frequency surname will have a wide diversity of DNA results, representing multiple points of origin and multiple family trees. These factors can make it more difficult to manage a Surname Project for a high frequency surname.

Low frequency surnames have another advantage. Typically the majority of the population of a low frequency surname is found in specific geographic areas, instead of spread out all over. In this situation, you can target your recruiting efforts. The geographic areas might have family history societies, where you can list your surname interests. Or mailing lists might exist for the geographic area. This targeted marketing approach often provides the opportunity to reach a higher percentage of those with your surname.

To see the success you have achieved, you must look beyond the surface of just a count of participants, and consider the frequency of your surname.

Facts & Genes from Family Tree DNA

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May 11, 2005 Volume 4, Issue 3

Recruiting Participants: Understanding Participants
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As a Group Administrator, you have developed knowledge about DNA testing for genealogy, and you are quite enthusiastic about this new technology. As you embark upon recruiting participants, it is important to understand the feelings and view point of potential participants.

Most likely, your contact with a potential participant about Genetic Genealogy will be their first exposure to this new discipline. Scientific words are often seen as intimidating. It is important to limit or eliminate the use of scientific terms. Avoid intimidating and overwhelming participants by limiting or eliminating the use of scientific terms.

Potential participants can become overwhelmed with information. You can anticipate and manage this situation by only telling them what they need to know to participate. When you answer their questions, try to not expand upon the topic, and cover other aspects that are not relevant to the question. Too much information will overwhelm the potential participant, and often lead to them declining participation.

Most likely the majority of your communication will be by email. Email can come across as very cold and brusque, unless you put some effort into your communication. Take an extra moment to read your email to ensure that your tone is friendly, and the email comes across as warm instead of cold.

It is important to be polite, friendly, warm, and considerate, as well as to thank the potential participant. Find something in each correspondence where you can thank the participant, such as for their time to read your email, or for responding to your email.

The potential participants will come from all different backgrounds, and will have different beliefs, concerns, and fears about DNA testing. Your first objective is to develop rapport. Rapport is critical for the potential participant to honestly share with you their concerns and fears. The potential participant could easily have some preconceived ideas or beliefs that would result in them declining participation. For the Group Administrator to provide information to overcome these concerns, they first need to know the concerns held by the potential participant. Rapport is necessary for the potential participant to share their concerns.

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Trust is another important element of the relationship with the potential participant. You begin to build trust by doing what you say you will do. If you have never had contact with the potential participant before your initial contact for the Surname Project, consider their situation. You are a stranger who wants them to take a DNA test. Be patient, and let the relationship develop at the speed the potential participant is comfortable with.

The potential participant probably isn't sitting in front of their computer 12 hours a day, doing email. They may only check email every few weeks. If you don't get a response right away, wait. Very few emails get lost in cyberspace. Sending another email right away will only alienate the potential prospect.

Everyone likes to feel important, and feeling important is a strong motivator. Convey to the potential participant that their participation is important and that they would be making a contribution to the family history research for their family tree and their surname.

Convey to the potential participant the benefits they will receive from participating.

When a potential participant becomes a participant, be sure to thank them for participating, and re-enforce how important their contribution is to the research of the family tree and surname. Taking this small additional step will typically ensure that the test kit is returned to the vendor.

Contacting potential participants is an excellent opportunity to meet others researching the family history of your surname, and to share information. You will have success recruiting potential participants by applying the approaches in this article.

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July 18, 2005 Volume 4, Issue 4

Recruiting Participants: Finding Potential Participants

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As a result of your family history research, you have probably developed a list of contacts. These contacts are the beginning of a mailing list, and as a Group Administrator, you may want to occasionally send out emails to keep fellow researchers informed about your Surname Project, and also to elicit their participation, or if they are female, their assistance to find a male in their family tree to participate.

You can build a mailing list in your email program, and perhaps quarterly send out an email to all the people on your mailing list. The email doesn't have to be long, and can direct the recipient to the Surname Project web site for further information. In your email, be sure to highlight the key results for the Surname Project, and tell the readers how they can participate and represent their family tree, or how they can help by finding a potential participant to recruit.

There are many sources from which you can add people to your mailing list. For example, perhaps you receive an inquiry about the Surname Project, and they aren't ready yet to participate. Put them on the mailing list. Your quarterly emails will serve as a reminder. In addition, the results you report for the Surname Project may motivate them to participate, or to recruit a participant.

You can also look on the internet for those with your surname and an email address. Using Google advanced search, put the surname in the "all" box, and in the box labeled "at least one" put mailto: email. This search will bring up web sites that contain your surname, and either mailto or email. Mailto is used in html coding to designate an email address. Some of the search result web pages will have people with your surname and an email address. Some web pages will have your surname, but another person's email address.

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If you have a high frequency surname, you probably want to put in the Google search exact phrase box either genealogy or family history. If you don't have a high frequency surname, you can also limit your search results to those interested in family history or genealogy by adding those terms to your search.

By adding the search criteria of genealogy or family history, you will probably find those who have posted about their surname interests or brick walls.

Family History societies in the geographic area where your surname occurs, or has occurred historically, are often an excellent source to find others researching your surname, and participants for your Surname Project.

Many Family History societies have Members Interests pages, where members can post their surname interests. Be sure to check the web sites for all the societies which cover your geographic areas of interest.

If you don't know the geographic area for your surname in other countries, build a Surname Distribution and Population chart. Directions to build a chart are covered in the last issue of Facts and Genes. To read this article, click on the link below:

Surname Distribution and Population

http://www.familytreeDNA.com/facts_genes.asp?act=show&nk=4.3

To find family history societies for a geographic area, search with Google, combining family history with the location. If you do not get the right results, add the word society. For example:

Family history New South Wales

Family history Australia

Family history Staffordshire

For the US and England, if you are uncertain of the major locations for your surname, or haven't had time to break down your Surname Distribution and Population chart by geographic unit such as state or county, try the free mapping tool at Ancestry.com. This tool will map a surname for the UK 1891 Census, and for the US 1920 Census. Look on the map for the concentrations of the surname. The counties or states where there is a concentration of the surname would be an ideal location to find others researching the surname. Look for societies that cover these geographic areas.

To access the Ancestry.com free mapping tool, click on the link below:

Ancestry Family Facts US 1920 Census Map

<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/fact.aspx?fid=7>

Ancestry Family Facts UK 1891 Census Map

<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/fact.aspx?&fid=6>

To see a distribution chart of a surname in Ireland in the mid 1800's, use the link below, search the surname, and then click on the map. There are also extracts from a surname dictionary shown on the first search results page.

Irish Ancestors:

<http://scripts.ireland.com/ancestor/index.cfm>

If you have a low frequency or rare surname, you might find a person researching the surname who belongs to the Guild of One Name Studies. The Guild of One Name Studies is a global family history organization headquartered in London, England. Members are interested in a one name study, which is researching all occurrences of a surname and variant world wide. Only one person can register each surname. Most members have accumulated a large volume of research, and have many contacts around the world.

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The surname researched by a member of the Guild of One Name Studies is not necessarily the same as their surname. Therefore, regardless of the frequency of your surname, you will want to check if any members have your surname.

You can search to see if a surname is being researched or if a Guild member has the surname at the following link:

<http://one-name.org/register.shtml>

Another place to find those with your surname or those researching your surname are mailing lists. You can search Rootsweb and Genforum, looking for persons who hold your surname and have posted.

Building a mailing list in your address book is one tool to help you recruit participants. A quarterly email to all the people on your mailing list will result in more participants.

In your quarterly email, we also suggest that you mention our newsletter, Facts & Genes, and provide the link for a free subscription:

For a free subscription to Facts & Genes:

<http://www.familytreeDNA.com/fgregister.asp>

The newsletter can help turn potential participants into participants, and participants may enjoy learning more about their test results, and the other tests available. In addition, it will encourage participants to upgrade their Y DNA tests when warranted.

The newsletter will also keep your participants informed about advances in Genetic Genealogy and new features on their Personal Page.

Once you have set up a mailing list, you are ready to send an email about family history research for your surname and your Surname Project. You don't need to wait for people to find your postings or web site. You can go find them.

Disclaimer:

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