



DESIGN GUIDE · FAN INSIGHT

Designing Each Listening Layer.

How to design the annual benchmark, the seasonal pulse, the always-on micro-feedback, and the qualitative panel. What each one is for, what it should ask, and what good looks like. At professional scale and at volunteer scale.

Each layer plays a different role.
The loop is where the value lives.

Designing Each Listening Layer.

This guide carries the design rules for each of the four listening layers: what to measure once a year, how to keep a pulse tight, the always-on channels and their design rules, and how to run a fan advisory panel that leadership actually attends.

It closes with the scale-down: the same four layers translated to a community club running on volunteer hours. Every layer is liftable on its own; the architecture behind them is in the companion Framework Guide.

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WHO THIS IS FOR

Whoever designs the surveys and runs the sessions: program owners, marketing coordinators, agencies, and at community scale, the committee member who owns the listening.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

One of seven standalone guides drawn from The Fan Insight Playbook (2026 edition), Tiparra's operating manual for the fan relationship. The companion guides are listed at the back. Where this guide cites a statistic, the full citation is in its sources page and in the playbook's Appendix C.

What to measure once a year.

The annual is where you earn the right to be strategic. It needs to do four things well.

01 · TRACK THE HEADLINE METRICS YEAR-ON-YEAR

- Overall satisfaction (5- or 7-point scale, single question)
- Net Promoter Score: "How likely are you to recommend [Club] to a friend or family member?" 0 to 10 scale
- Renewal intent (for members)
- Brand attribute scoring (15 to 20 attributes: modern, traditional, community-focused, ambitious, accessible, and so on)

02 · REFRESH THE SEGMENTATION

Behavioural and attitudinal as well as demographic. Typical sport segments: lifelong loyalists (emotional commitment, attend regardless of performance); performance followers; family attenders; social attenders; digital-only fans; lapsed; emerging. A good segmentation produces 5 to 8 segments, sized, named, with a one-page persona for each.

03 · DIAGNOSE THE JOURNEY

Score each major touchpoint: ticket purchase, pre-match, at the ground, post-match, app, social, retail, customer service, community work. Identify the gap between importance and satisfaction. The biggest gaps are your priority list for the next 12 months.

04 · SURFACE UNMET NEEDS

Open-text questions on what would make them more likely to attend, watch, spend, recommend. AI-assisted analysis is now reliable enough to do this at volume: a 2026 study in Public Opinion Quarterly found leading models' judgements of open-ended survey answers strongly aligned with human assessments. Use it.

Benchmarks exist for this region. Sport NZ's Voice of Participant survey (2025/26, 24,962 participants across 11 sports; playing members, not spectators) measured 84% likely to rejoin their club, 73% feeling they get value for money, and an NPS of +44. That is what a healthy known-member relationship measures like. Treat numbers well under those as a flag, not a norm.

Keep it tight.

A pulse is not a mini-annual. The discipline is to ask only what's moved or what's new.

A good pulse template has three sections:

- **Tracking core (90 seconds).** Three questions you ask every pulse. NPS, overall satisfaction, one renewal or intent question. This is your trend line.
- **Topical module (3 minutes).** Five to eight questions on whatever the focus of this pulse is. Jersey reaction, coach appointment, ticketing change, app launch.
- **Open verbatim (1 minute).** "What's the one thing we should change?" Always.

Keep the audience consistent across pulses if you can. The same panel of fans, surveyed every three months, gives you cleaner trend data than a fresh sample each time.

PRO-TIP · THE SAME THREE AT THE FRONT, EVERY TIME

Resist the urge to vary the tracking-core questions even slightly. A clean year-on-year and pulse-on-pulse trend line is worth more than the marginal extra question you wanted to slip in. Save the new questions for the topical module.

Pulses are the conversation between the big conversations. Keep them short, focused, and on the thing that's actually changed.

The channels.

This is where the program proves its operational value. The principle is one question, one tap, one fix.

TRIGGERED SURVEY EXAMPLES

- **Post-game email** (sent within 24 hours). "How was your matchday?" Single 5-point scale, plus optional "anything we should know?"
- **Post-purchase email** (retail). "How easy was that?" 1 to 5.
- **Post-app session**. "Did the app do what you needed today?" Yes or no, with follow-up if no.
- **Post-customer-service contact**. "How would you rate your experience with our team?"
- **Ground QR codes** (on seatbacks, at the canteen, in concourses). "Quick question: how's your day at the ground so far?" 1 to 5, with an open box.
- **Polls in the club's app**. Light, fun, frequent. "Pick the player of the match", "Which away jersey do you prefer?", "Which home game are you most excited for?"

DESIGN RULES

- Never more than 3 questions per touchpoint. Survicate's 2025 benchmark of 8,392 surveys found median completion of 100% for a single question and 86.8% for two or three, falling to 77.4% at four to six.
- Any score below the threshold (2 or less out of 5) auto-escalates to the relevant team within 24 hours.
- Suppress repeats. No individual fan asked more than once every 30 days.
- Show the result back to the fan where possible. "92% of fans loved the half-time show. Thanks for telling us."

The fan advisory panel.

The single highest-ROI piece of qualitative research a club can run is a recurring fan advisory panel. Done well, it costs little and produces insight that quantitative work cannot.

It is already happening in this market. The Adelaide Crows are recruiting a 10-person Member Engagement Panel that will "hold regular meetings with the Club's senior management and Board Directors".

HOW TO RUN IT

- Recruit 15 to 20 fans across your key segments. Refresh about 25% per year.
- Mix of in-person (at the ground, ideally pre-game) and online sessions.
- Four sessions a year, each 90 minutes, each with a clear theme.
- Pay them. Club-shop vouchers, exclusive experiences, or a token cash incentive. Their time is worth it.
- A senior club figure attends every session: president, GM or CEO. This is non-negotiable. Insight that doesn't reach decision-makers dies.
- Minutes go to the leadership team within 7 days. Actions assigned. Updates fed back to the panel at the next session.

WHAT TO USE IT FOR

- Stress-testing new ideas before launch (jerseys, ticketing changes, ground upgrades).
- Understanding the why behind quant trends.
- Generating language and emotional texture for marketing.
- Building a small group of fan advocates who feel heard.

PRO-TIP · BRING LEADERSHIP INTO THE ROOM, IN PERSON

An hour with twelve real fans changes a president's view of the database more than any quant report ever will. The panel is the cheapest, fastest way to recalibrate executive instinct against fan reality. Use it.

The four layers at a community club.

The architecture reads like it needs a research department. It doesn't. The same four layers run at volunteer scale, and the constraint that matters is volunteer hours, not budget: in the Australian Sports Foundation's most recent club survey (about 3,000 clubs), 63% named not having enough volunteers as their main challenge.

LAYER 1 Annual	One good end-of-season survey. Twenty questions, one evening to build from the companion Template Pack, sent to every member and every junior family. Read the results at a committee meeting, pick three actions.
LAYER 2 Pulse	Three moments a season: pre-season, mid-season, season's end. Five questions each. The tracking core stays identical so the trend line survives committee turnover.
LAYER 3 Always-on	The polls and one-tap questions already in the club's app, plus one "how was Saturday?" message after each home game. If it takes more than a minute to answer, it's too long.
LAYER 4 Qualitative	Four kitchen-table conversations a year: one with long-standing members, one with juniors' parents, one with sponsors, one open invitation. A committee member in the room every time, notes on one page.

The output is a short list of things to fix, a trend line the next committee inherits, and a membership base that has watched the club ask and then act. For a club whose app already carries polls, push and post-game one-taps, the always-on layer is already in every member's pocket.

The community version runs on one volunteer hour a week and the channels the club already has.

SOURCES CITED

Sources cited.

SPORT NEW ZEALAND

Voice of Participant 2025/26, published 11 August 2026: 24,962 participants across 11 sports (playing members, not spectators). Findings cited: 84% likely to rejoin their club; 73% feel they get value for money; NPS of +44. Volunteering: more than one million New Zealanders volunteered to support sport and recreation in 2024 (Sport NZ).

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS FOUNDATION (2023)

Clubs Under Pressure, May 2023, drawing on responses from about 3,000 community clubs: 63% named not having enough volunteers as their main challenge; 18% described themselves as at risk of collapse. The commonly used count of roughly 70,000 community sports clubs in Australia is the ASF's own figure.

LISTENING METHOD (2026)

Survicate, Survey Completion Rate Benchmarks, 9 June 2026 (8,392 surveys, 1,087 organisations). DiGiuseppe and Flynn, Public Opinion Quarterly 90(3), March 2026 (1,400 respondents). Adelaide Football Club, Member Engagement Panel nominations, 2026.



ABOUT THIS SERIES

Designed. Now put it to **work.**

This guide gave each layer its design rules. What the listening surfaces next is predictable: the same eight problems come up at almost every club, and the companion Diagnostic Guide pairs each one with the responses the evidence supports.

WHAT TO READ NEXT

Read Eight Common Fan Problems next, and use its checklist in your next leadership or committee meeting.

COMPANION RESOURCES

00	The Fan Insight Playbook — the full operating manual	OPERATING PLAYBOOK
01	The Case for Knowing Your Fan	STRATEGY BRIEFING
02	The Listening Architecture	FRAMEWORK GUIDE
04	Eight Common Fan Problems	DIAGNOSTIC GUIDE
05	Operating a Fan Insight Program	OPERATIONS GUIDE
06	Fan Insight Templates	TEMPLATE PACK
07	Selling a Fan Insight Program	PITCH GUIDE

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