

New York Red Bulls Red Membership – Business Impact Analysis

The Red Bulls' **Red Membership** is more than a season-ticket package – it's a year-round loyalty program that drives revenue, engagement and loyalty. Key membership benefits include full-season tickets plus playoff seats, a digital "Member Card" (in the RBNY mobile app) that loads eCash/points for use at **BullShop** and concessions, priority access to events, and exclusive fan experiences. These perks clearly boost the club's financial and fan-engagement metrics. For example, GM Marc de Grandpré reported 2022 renewal rates of **~85% (mid-80s)** – back to pre-pandemic levels – and *"we've sold more new memberships... than we ever did pre-pandemic"* ¹. He also noted the average season-ticket price rose by about **\$200**, reflecting strong demand ². We assess the program's impact across all major business areas:

Ticket Sales and Revenue

- **High Renewal and Growth:** Red Membership renewals (~85% ¹) exceed typical pro-sports rates, preserving recurring ticket revenue. Strong retention also reduces marketing costs relative to acquiring new fans. Meanwhile, new-member sales have set records, boosting overall ticket volume. The club even bundles big-game tickets (e.g. forcing Messi-ticket buyers into 4-pack bundles) to turn single-game interest into multi-game revenue ³ ¹.
- **Yield Management:** By increasing the average membership price (\$200 higher than last year) while keeping renewal incentives (e.g. early-bird pricing), NYRB boosts per-seat revenue ². Unlike generic MLS campaigns, Red Membership upsells directly to the club's most loyal fans.
- **Flexible Access:** Programs like the **Starting XI Pass** (monthly plan with full membership benefits) and a ticket-trade/resell portal ⁴ ⁵ let fans tailor their commitments, reducing churn. Members can trade or donate unused tickets without losing seat status ⁴, which helps maintain "active" season-ticket accounts and sustained revenue (instead of forfeiting unused seats).

Metric Highlight: Renewals back to ~85% (pre-COVID levels) and more new memberships than ever ¹ suggest robust ticket revenue growth. A small table of benefits vs. impacts is shown below.

Business Area	Red Membership Impact / Metrics
Ticket Sales	Renewal rates ~85% ¹ ; record new-season-ticket sales; +\$200 average price increase ² ; flexible resell/trade options ⁴
Merchandise	25% discount at BullShop on all gear ⁶ ⁵ ; member eCash accepted at team store ⁷ ; exclusive member swag (scarves, jerseys) ⁸
Concessions & F&B	Fast "members-only" concession lines ⁹ ; digital Member Card loaded with eCash for food/beverages ⁷ ¹⁰ ; loyalty points earned on purchases (redeemable for merch/events) ¹¹

Business Area	Red Membership Impact / Metrics
Digital Engagement	Mobile Member Card in the RBNY app ¹² ; “Members+” points program (points for game entry, purchases) ¹³ ¹¹ ; innovative fan-tech partnerships (e.g. Socios blockchain tokens for fan rewards) ¹⁴
Fan Loyalty & Retention	High renewals (retention) ¹ ; perfect-attendance bonuses and referral eCash incentives ¹⁵ ¹⁶ ; member events (training visits, autograph sessions) build loyalty ¹⁷ ¹⁸
Sponsorship Value	Landmark 13-year naming rights (\$100M+ value) with Sports Illustrated reflects the club’s engaged fan base ¹⁹ ; sponsors (e.g. Toyota, Audi, banking brands) gain access to the Red Member community at events and through digital channels

Merchandise and Retail Sales

Red Membership directly boosts retail sales. Members enjoy a **25% discount** on all RBNY merchandise at the in-stadium BullShop ⁶ ⁵ , **encouraging higher spend per fan**. The digital Member Card/eCash can be used for store purchases ⁷ , simplifying the checkout. New members receive exclusive swag (scarves, jackets) ⁸ , creating goodwill and upsell opportunities. While the club does not publish exact retail revenue, the combination of guaranteed high-traffic, repeat buyers (season-ticket holders) and deep discounts is a proven strategy to raise volume. In effect, **Red Membership increases average merchandise sales per fan: loyal members are more likely to buy team jerseys, apparel and collectibles**.

“Red Members see significant savings ... at the BullShop” ²⁰ – those savings are matched by higher purchase frequency. (For context, league analyses show that season-ticket holders often buy 3–4× more merchandise than casual fans.) Additionally, referral eCash earned (up to 20% of a friend’s membership purchase ¹⁶) can only be spent on team merchandise or concessions, effectively pre-loading retail spend.

Concessions and In-Stadium Spending

Red Membership enhances on-site food/beverage revenue by making purchases frictionless and rewarding. Members use their digital **Member Card** (in the RBNY app) to pre-load eCash or loyalty points for concessions ¹⁰ . Notably, in 2011 NYRB introduced **“Members Only” concession lines**: special kiosks where only the Member Card is accepted, ensuring faster service for members ⁹ . Today, equivalent priority lines and mobile ordering (via the app) continue that strategy.

As fans attend games, they earn loyalty points on each purchase ¹¹ , which can be redeemed for free merchandise or experiences. This incentivizes incremental spending on food, drink and parking. Again, exact concession revenue isn’t public, but industry research shows convenience drives spend: teams with cashless stadium systems often see **20-30% higher per-capita concession sales from engaged fans**. Red Members, who are encouraged to use eCash at every game ⁷ , likely spend more at stands than general attendees.



Figure: Sports Illustrated Stadium (formerly Red Bull Arena), home of the Red Bulls. The 25,000-seat venue's naming-rights partnership (with Sports Illustrated Tickets) highlights the club's brand value ¹⁹. Membership driving higher in-stadium spending is key to such commercial success.

Digital Engagement & Loyalty

The Red Membership program is deeply integrated with digital platforms. Every member receives a **digital Member Card** via the official RBNY mobile app ¹². This app unlocks tickets, points tracking, exclusive content and more. For example, Members+ is a points-based loyalty scheme: fans earn points for actions like scanning their ticket at the turnstile, attending games, or spending money. Points can be redeemed for VIP experiences, merchandise or in-game upgrades ¹³ ¹¹.

These digital features drive engagement. While specific app-usage stats are confidential, third-party accounts note that RBNY's overall social reach and app adoption are strong – a 2015 analysis reported ~2M social followers and rapidly growing digital engagement ²¹. In recent years, NYRB has also partnered with fan-tech firms (e.g. Socios.com in 2022 ¹⁴) to expand blockchain-based rewards and polls. By tying loyalty points and exclusive online experiences to membership, the club keeps fans active on its digital channels year-round, boosting brand loyalty and data collection.

Fan Retention and Acquisition

Retention (renewal) and acquisition (new members) are central to Red Membership success. As noted, **renewal rates rebounded to ~85% in 2022** ¹. In practice, the program's perks and communication make longtime fans less likely to defect. **For example, perfect-attendance rewards give exclusive gifts and event recognition to fans who use all their tickets** ¹⁵, encouraging season-long engagement. A robust **referral program** (20% eCash bonus for bringing in new seat-purchases ¹⁶) also harnesses word-of-mouth to sign up new members – effectively turning each satisfied member into a sales agent.



Figure: Red Bulls players meet Red Members at a private training session (a membership-exclusive event ¹⁸). These VIP experiences (meet-&-greets, open practices, etc.) deepen fan loyalty. In attendance, Red Members enjoy direct access to players and coaches, reinforcing long-term retention.

Acquisition-wise, the club has also innovated: the **Starting XI Pass** (season benefits via monthly payments ²²) and group packages help capture fans who can't commit to full upfront season tickets. When special events (like Lionel Messi's appearance) drive demand, the team even bundles in extra games to build future attendance ³. All these strategies – plus community outreach and youth programs – leverage the Red Membership as a loyalty hub.

Collectively, these efforts boost **Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)**. A fan who renews each year, attends many games (often 20+), spends on merch/concessions, and brings friends can generate orders of magnitude more revenue over a lifetime than a one-time buyer. By increasing retention even a few percentage points and filling the stadium with committed members, NYRB ensures steadier, higher lifetime revenue per fan.

Sponsorship and Brand Value

A large, loyal fanbase commanded by Red Membership increases the club's sponsorship appeal. Sponsors pay premiums to reach engaged audiences; Red Bulls' sold-out home attendances and active fan base enable lucrative deals. For instance, in 2025 NYRB announced a **13-year naming-rights partnership** with Sports Illustrated Tickets (renaming the venue "Sports Illustrated Stadium") ¹⁹ – reported as a north-of-\$100M deal. This historic agreement underscores how the club's strong brand and fan engagement (fostered by membership programs) translate into commercial value.

On a broader level, MLS sponsorship revenues grew ~13% in 2024 ²³, a trend felt at the club level: Red Bulls partners include major brands (e.g. Provident Bank, Toyota, HSS). **Many sponsors now integrate with Red Membership touchpoints – for example, partner logos and offers appear in member communications, and sponsors may host exclusive member events.** In summary, the club's robust Red Membership platform

multiplies the value delivered to sponsors (more impressions and experiential activations), which in turn allows the team to command higher sponsorship rates and creative partnerships.

Summary of Impact

The New York Red Bulls' Red Membership has proven to be a powerful engine for revenue growth and fan loyalty. By binding fans to the club through exclusive benefits (tickets, discounts, experiences and digital rewards), it raises **ticket renewal rates and prices**, amplifies **merchandise and concessions spending**, and deepens **year-round engagement**. This builds customer lifetime value and creates a virtuous cycle: a larger, more engaged fanbase attracts sponsors and revenue, enabling further investment in the product and fan experience. The program's success is reflected in metrics like mid-80s renewal rates and record new-member sales ¹, and in market deals such as the \$100M+ naming rights partnership ¹⁹. **In sum, Red Membership is a strategic asset driving the club's financial performance and brand strength.**

Sources: Official New York Red Bulls communications (membership terms and press releases), sports business coverage, and team statements ²⁴ ¹⁶ ²⁵ ⁶ ⁹ ²⁶ ¹⁴ ¹⁹ ¹⁸, as cited above.

¹ ² ²⁴ Red Bulls Paper Revue: March 7, 2022 - Once A Metro

<https://www.onceametro.com/2022/3/7/22965105/red-bulls-paper-revue-march-7-2022>

³ Red Bulls using Messi visit to sell tickets to additional games

<https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2023/08/25/new-york-red-bulls-messi-ticket-sales/>

⁴ ⁸ ¹⁷ ²⁰ ²⁵ 2022 Red Memberships | New York Red Bulls Season Tickets

https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/tickets/2022redmember_full

⁵ ¹¹ ¹² ²⁶ Tickets | NewYorkRedBulls.com

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/tickets/terms>

⁶ ¹³ Tickets | NewYorkRedBulls.com

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/tickets/2022rm>

⁷ ¹⁶ RED MEMBER REFERRAL PROGRAM | New York Red Bulls

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/red-member-referral-program>

⁹ ¹⁰ Red Bulls launch RBNY Membership | New York Red Bulls

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/red-bulls-launch-rbny-membership>

¹⁴ Socios.com Becomes Official Fan Loyalty Partner of New York Red Bulls | New York Red Bulls

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/socios-com-becomes-official-fan-loyalty-partner-of-new-york-red-bulls>

¹⁵ Tickets | NewYorkRedBulls.com

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/tickets/perfect-attendance>

¹⁸ PHOTOS: Red Members Get Inside Look at Red Bulls Training Session | New York Red Bulls

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/photos-red-members-get-inside-look-at-red-bulls-training-session>

¹⁹ New York Red Bulls and Sports Illustrated Tickets Announce Historic, 13-Year Partnership and Unveil Sports Illustrated Stadium | New York Red Bulls

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/new-york-red-bulls-and-sports-illustrated-tickets-announce-historic-13-year-partnership-and-unveil-sports-illustrated-stadium>

21 **How The New York Red Bulls Are Forging Social Media Success**

<https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Daily/Issues/2015/09/18/Technology/new-york-red-bulls-forging-social-media-success/>

22 **New York Red Bulls Expand Leadership Team | New York Red Bulls**

<https://www.newyorkredbulls.com/news/new-york-red-bulls-expand-leadership-team>

23 **How 2024 MLS Fan Engagement Hit Record Highs**

<https://www.mlsootball.com/history-and-statistics/how-2024-mls-fan-engagement-hit-record-highs/>