Moving from Meetup to Heylo: A Leader's Guide

Every day, more and more community leaders are choosing to move off Meetup to deliver a better experience for their members. Meetup has made the experience harder for members — unwanted ads inside groups, paywalls to see who's attending, and forced subscriptions just to participate. **Heylo is building with community leaders to make it easier to bring your people together.**

This guide is for groups moving from Meetup to Heylo, based on what's worked for leaders who've already made the switch. For more, see our general onboarding best practices.

First: The Reality Check You Need

Meetup groups typically have a huge number of people who are "in the group" but haven't attended or engaged in months (or ever). **Heylo focuses on managing your active community and avoiding this climbing number.** In fact, Heylo archives members who are inactive for 90 days, keeping your community lean and real.

One leader who ran a group for 9 years on Meetup put it perfectly:
"Expect an initial drop 'in total members', but know that your active members will follow."

Translation: You're not losing your community. You're losing the dead weight.

Set Up Your Heylo Group

Before you start migrating your members, make sure your Heylo group is ready to receive them. If you haven't already, take a few minutes to:

- Set up your Heylo group
- Choose if your group is private or public
- Set auto approval or manual approval for new members
- Customize your group profile
- Add events to your calendar

Once that's done, you're ready to move your members to Heylo.

The Migration Strategy That Actually Works

Despite what you might think, a gradual transition between platforms does not work well. Leaders who tried to run both platforms simultaneously found it created confusion and killed engagement. Here's what works:

1. Start With Inviting Your Core Team

Don't invite everyone at once. Share your Heylo link first with your co-organizers, volunteers, and most engaged members. Ask them to jump into chats, share photos, and get comfortable with the platform. This early activity warms up the space and gives you advocates who can help answer questions when the full group arrives.

2. Pick a Date and Make Heylo the Source of Truth

Choose a date when Heylo becomes your primary platform and commit to it. From this date forward, RSVPs, check-ins, and conversations happen on Heylo only — avoid running active chats and accepting check-ins on two platforms at once, as it splits engagement and kills momentum. A great way to make the shift feel natural is to tie it to a big upcoming event and use that moment as the official handoff your whole community can rally around.

3. Make It Impossible to Miss on Meetup

Plaster your Heylo link everywhere. Create a final standing event with **"OFFICIAL SIGN UP ON HEYLO"** in the title, put your Heylo link at the very top of the description, and keep it live temporarily to catch stragglers.

4. Say It In Person

Don't underestimate this one. If you host IRL events, a quick announcement and a QR code builds buy-in faster than any message ever will.

5. Make an Announcement on Social Media

On Instagram or other platforms, add your Custom Heylo Group Link to your bio, create a post announcing the move (Heylo has Canva templates) and pin it to your profile.

Extra Tips

If you have WhatsApp or another chat app, turn on announcements-only and send a final message letting members know you're moving to Heylo, with your link included. This keeps the old channel from staying active while people are still finding their way over.

Host a Demo for Your Members
"Having a demo day really helped with buy-in," one leader shared. Either host a live event showing how Heylo works or record a quick video walkthrough.

The Biggest Mistakes We See

1. **Trying to run multiple platforms at once.**
   Keeping Meetup, WhatsApp, email, and Heylo active creates confusion. Members don't know where to RSVP or engage, so participation drops. One clear source of truth drives way higher engagement.

2. **Not setting a hard transition date.**
   Slow rollouts kill momentum. Groups that move everyone over at once — and officially stop using Meetup — see a much cleaner transition and a spike in early engagement.

3. **Over-explaining instead of being clear.**
   Members skim. Put the most important info at the top, use bold text and bullets, and keep it short. Clear > thorough every time.

If You Have an Email List

If you have an email list of your members, we can Import your members into Heylo.

But let's address the elephant in the room first: Meetup doesn't let you export your members' email addresses anymore.

Unless you're on Meetup Pro (and even then, members must RSVP *and* consent to share their email), you can't just grab a list and import it. This has been a major pain point for organizers trying to leave.

If you have **any member contact info** (even partial lists), you have two options.

Option 1: Heylo support can import your members

Best if you have more than name + email.

If you have additional member data (emergency contacts, phone numbers, renewal dates, etc.), send your list to support@heylo.com. The Heylo team will run a custom import and email each member a personalized, one-time invite link. When they join, all their info is pre-filled automatically.

Option 2: Copy + paste the emails into Heylo

Best if you only have an email list.

Paste your member emails directly into Heylo to send personalized invites in bulk. Fast and simple.

Good to know

Members imported using either method will receive event notifications and blasts.

If they don't join within **90 days**, they're marked as inactive.

Why Leaders Say It's Worth It

After all the challenges, here's what keeps people on Heylo:

"It's night and day once you have people at an event and are building connections and community around it."

"You all have somehow made a complex app with lots of capabilities into a really easy to use piece of tech."

"I left Meetup a year ago after ten years organizing an outdoor group. It's sad really, all the confusion in this space. I am really thankful for Heylo at this point."

And from a leader whose group made the switch:**"Our group made the switch in August and people love Heylo. For us, I'd say the biggest difference is the lower barrier to entry for both our Ambassadors (event planners) and event participants/users."**

You're Not Alone

Heylo is **leader-first.** There's an entire community of organizers from around the world who've made this transition and are happy to help: Join the Heylo Leaders Community

They give input that drives the product forward. Your feedback shapes the platform.

Need help with your migration? A Heylo team member is available to assist at no cost. Reach out via support chat in Heylo or email support@heylo.com.

Sample FAQs to Share With Your Members

Copy and paste these to answer common questions:

What's Heylo and why are we moving?
Heylo is a group platform that helps organize our events, communications, and benefits. It's the best way to see our full upcoming events calendar and connect with other members. Heylo is used by the top clubs and communities around the world.

Do I have to download an app?
Nope! You can use Heylo from your computer, mobile app, or phone browser. We have our own dedicated space on Heylo, so you'll only get communications from our group.

What if I have questions?
Every member has a direct line to the Heylo team. Message a real person via Support Chat in Heylo or email support@heylo.com.

More FAQs here.

Ready to make the move?

Get started with Heylo or reach out to support@heylo.com for migration help.