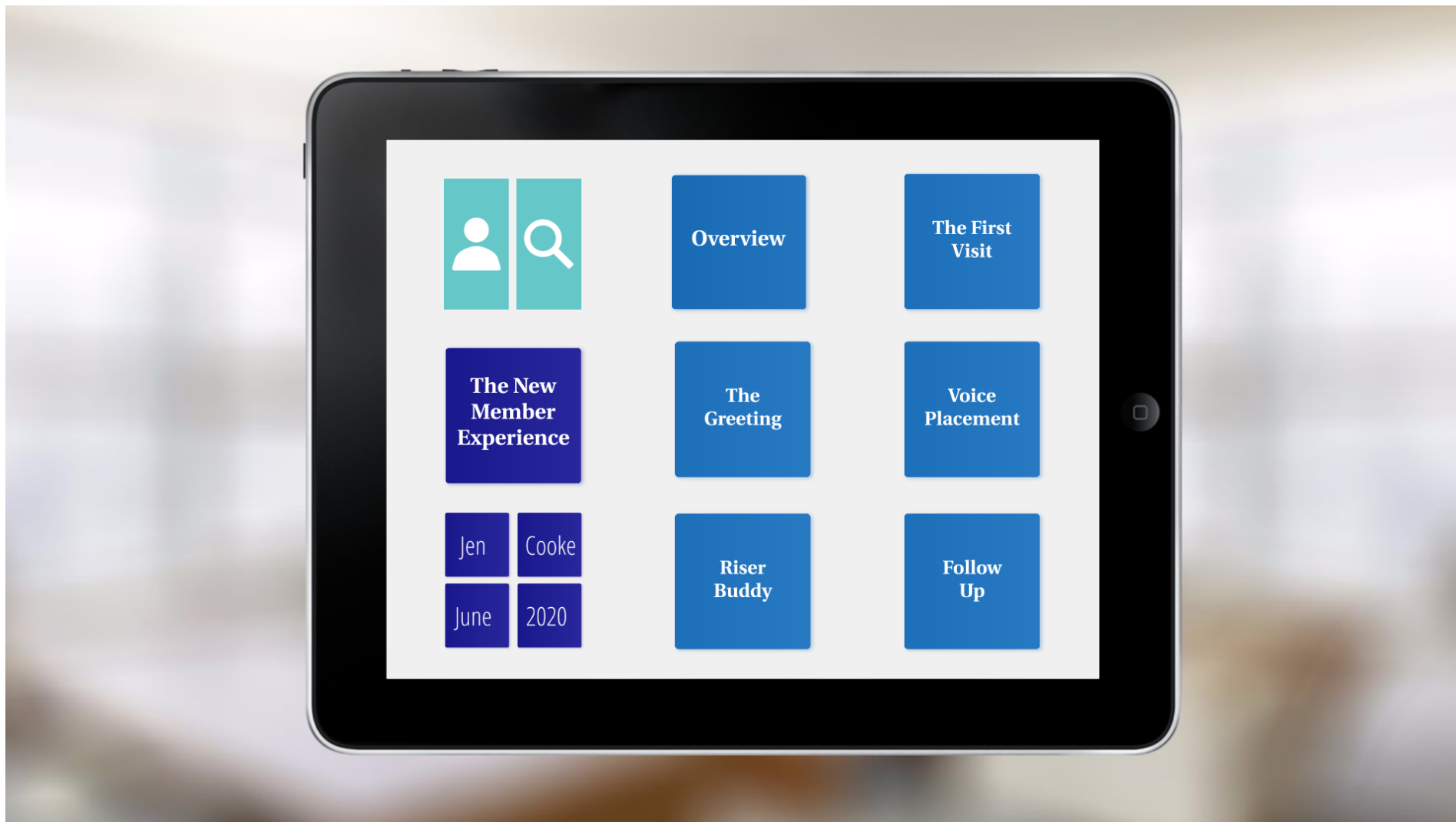


The New Member Experience

Many times, you know when a new member is coming. They are a friend/family member of someone already on the risers, or they have reached out via Facebook, MeetUp, or the chorus webpage.

Occasionally, a new member will come, unannounced, having researched one of the many information sources available about your chapter and easily finding where to be and when, due to your stellar marketing.

Either way, the Membership Team and general membership should be ready. Materials, greeters, and riser buddies should always be available and ready to go to make that new member feel as comfortable as possible on the first night of their barbershop “career”!



First Impressions . . .

When a new member walks through the door, they should experience the following:

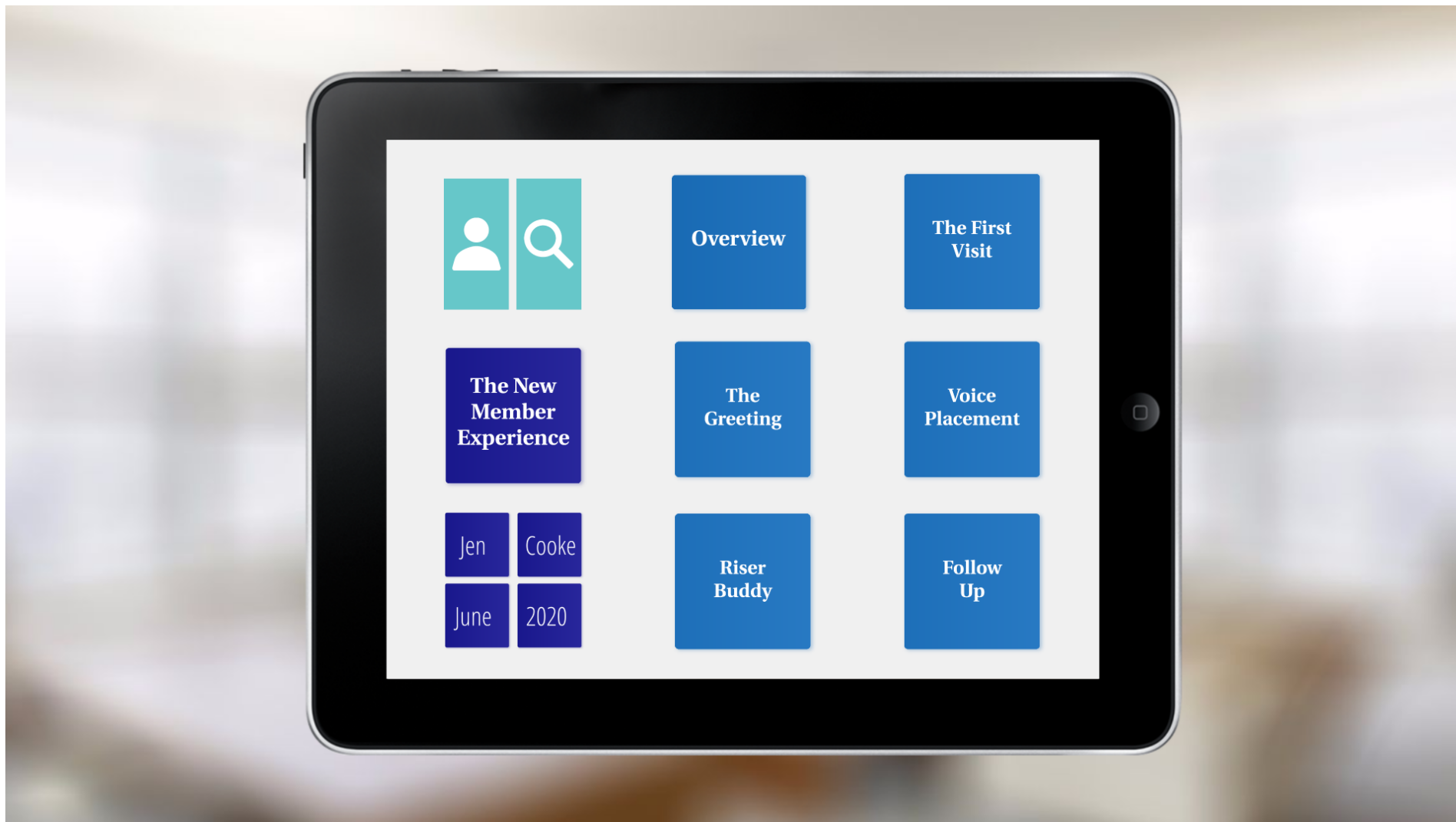
- A cheerful greeting from the designated membership team person. The rest of the members should feel free to greet the potential member, as well, without overwhelming them.
- Face-to-face conversation with the director, whether it be through voice placement or a simple chat to make the potential member feel they have a connection with leadership.
- Rudimentary voice placement, and a recommended voice part for the evening.
- A knowledgeable, positive riser buddy who sings the same part and is helpful and personable.
- Time to ask questions, give feedback, and learn more about how to become a member.
- Follow up at the end of the rehearsal by a member of the Membership team and the director.



Virtually . . .

- On Zoom, the new guest should be greeted by name and welcomed. The membership team lead and director should be spotlighted for recognition.
- Face-to-face conversation with the director, through a breakout room. Voice placement should also happen during this time, with music leadership taking over rehearsal until the director and new member return (messages can be sent to the breakout room as needed).
- Guest can connect with a riser buddy through private chat, where they can ask questions, and the riser buddy can check on the guest periodically.
- During education or business, create a breakout room for the guest(s) and member team.
- Director personally acknowledges the guests, by name, at the end of rehearsal.





The Greeting

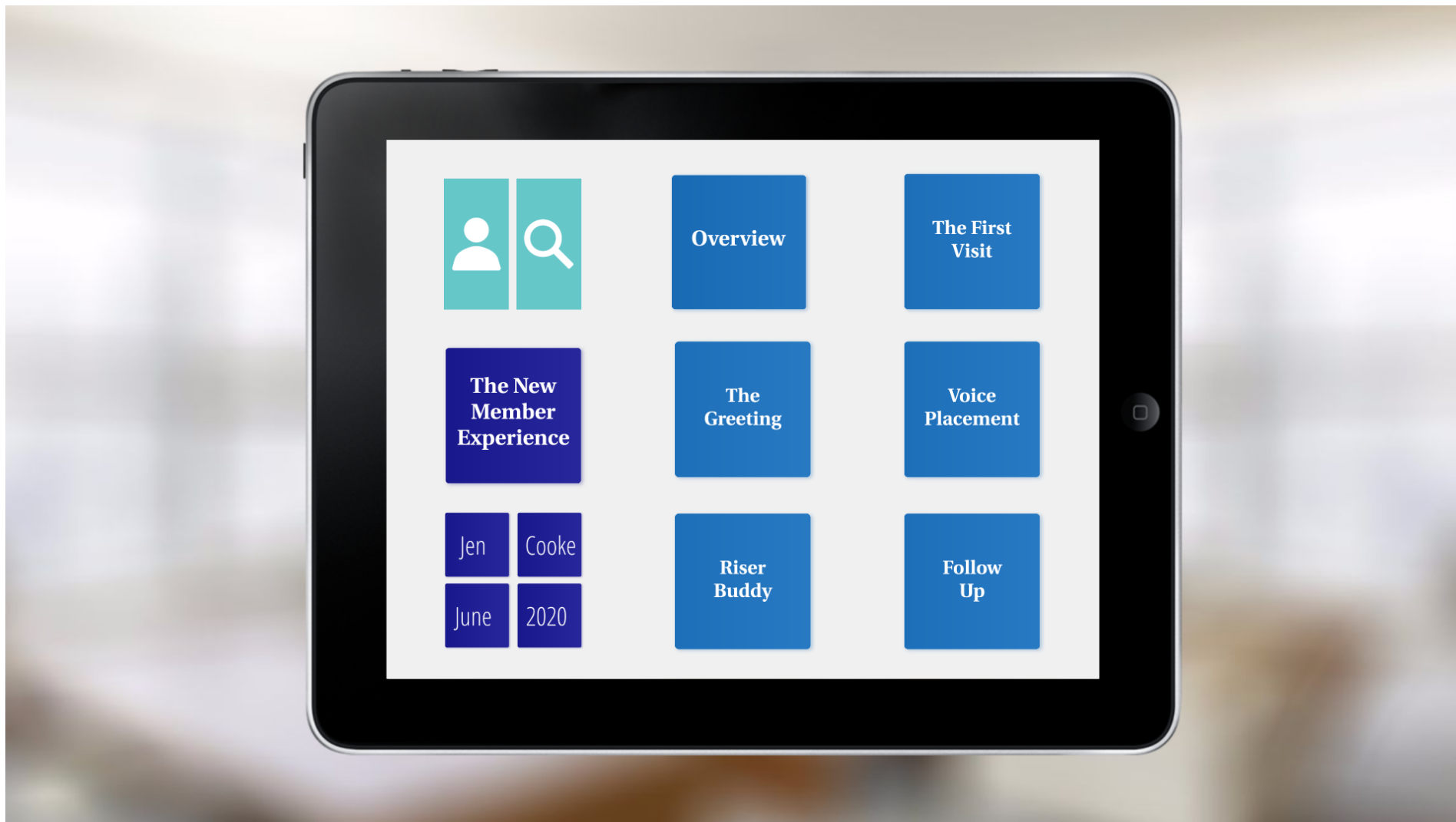
- Does everyone in the chorus know where to direct a new member? Designated greeters should always be present and known.
- The greeter should welcome the potential new member, ask their name, and find out how they learned about the chorus.
- There should be a sign-in sheet for all visitors that includes contact information.
- The greeter then introduces the potential new member to the director and the person who will be voice placing (if applicable)
- The greeter waits until voice placement is over and then assists the visitor by learning who the riser buddy is, procuring a guest book, and escorting her to the risers.



Virtually . . .

- If a member notices a new guest, they should chat privately with the director and membership team lead to make sure they know.
- If there is a designated greeter, they can use the chat to welcome the member and ask any pertinent questions.
- A sign-in sheet can be created with Google forms, sharing the link in the chat for new guests.
- For new guests, voice placement can be done in a separate breakout room during warmups or social time.
- There should be a built-in time during rehearsals for the membership team or greeter to introduce guests.
- Sheet music can be shared via screen share or other designated method.





Voice Placement

Conducted by a music team member or the director.

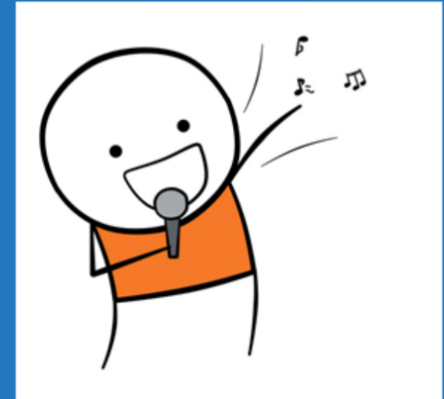
Simple voice exercise or well-known song

Include conversation in which the guest can outline their vocal background

Short explanation of the barbershop art form

Positive and realistic feedback

Results in suggested voice part during the rehearsal, along with a riser buddy assignment



Voice Placement

Music Team

- Can spend more time with the potential member
- Can give a more extensive voice placement
- Must be trained in how to effectively voice place
- Must give detailed information to the director

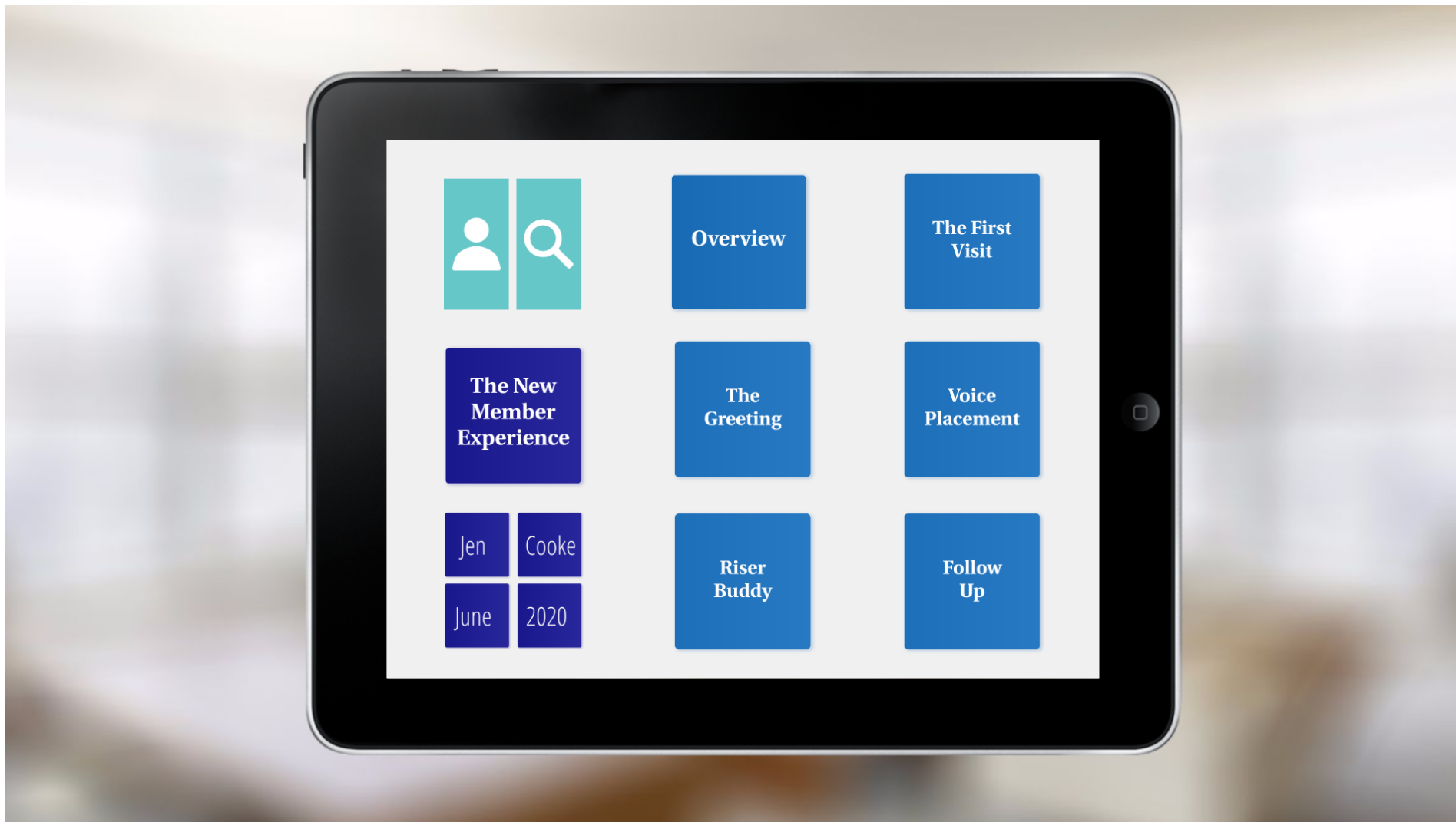
Director

- Can make an immediate connection with the potential new member
- Must have a warm-up team in place to keep rehearsal running smoothly
- Makes the visitor feel valued
- Can assess strengths and weaknesses to inform where to place on risers

Virtually . . .

- Breakout room with MT member or director
- Need strong leadership to conduct rehearsal if director is voice placing
- Director can screen share to briefly discuss barbershop art form, how to read the music, etc.
- When returning to rehearsal, the director can use chat to privately contact membership team, riser buddy, and new guest.
- Alternately, a breakout room could be used to introduce guest and riser buddy and explain how they can ask questions during rehearsal.
- Chorus needs a procedure for providing/sharing sheet music with guests during rehearsal time.





The Riser Buddy

Riser Buddies should be . . .

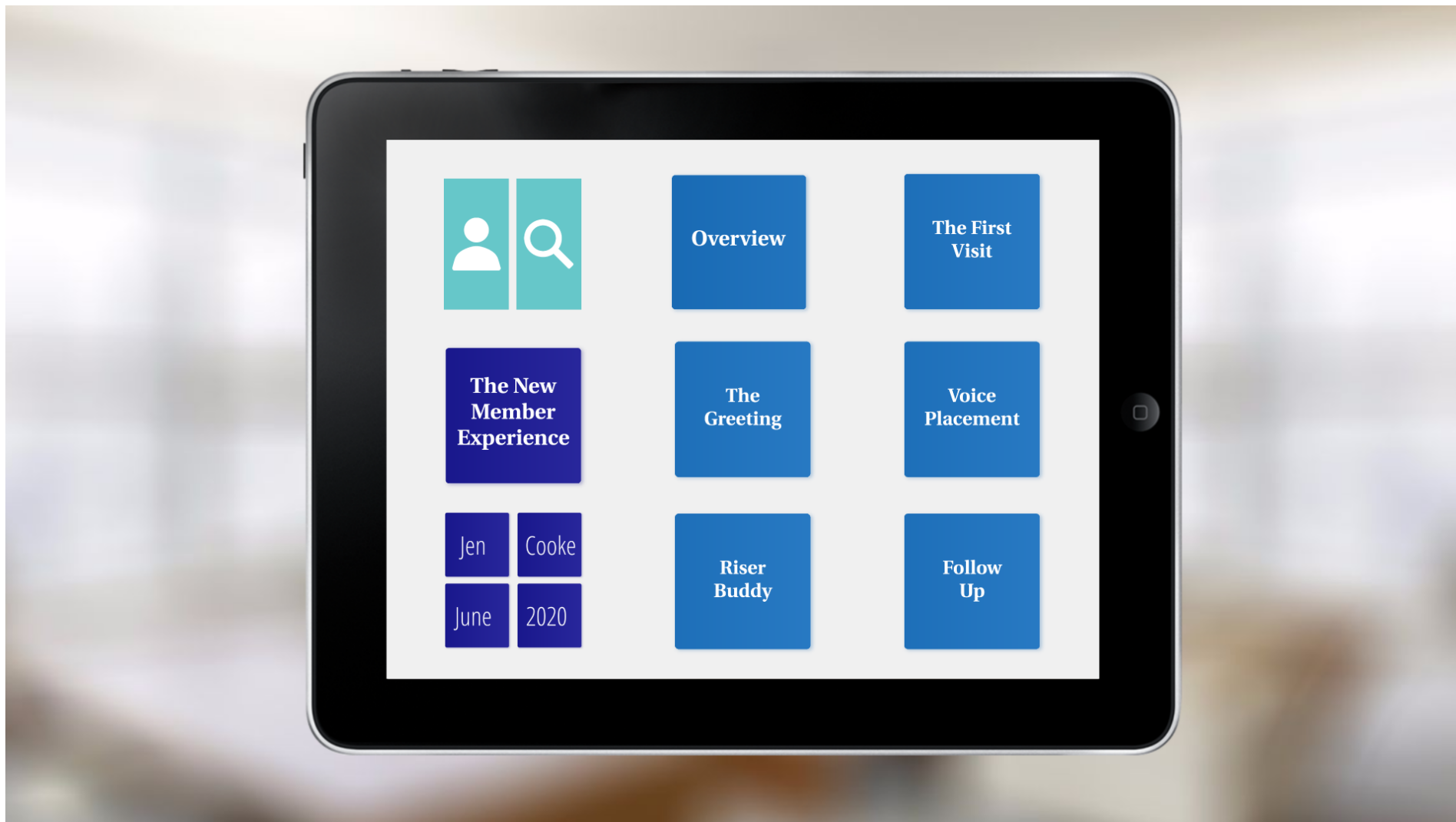
- Pre-determined for each voice part and trained on a regular basis
- Relatively strong, accurate singers with musical/barbershop knowledge
- Knowledgeable about the schedule for a new member for each rehearsal
- Energetic and positive, but not overwhelming
- Able to contact the director with potential problems or questions during rehearsal -- the guest's "voice" during rehearsal time



Virtually . . .

- Rehearsal buddy should meet with guest either through private chat or breakout room prior to the guest joining rehearsal
- The riser buddy should "check in," via chat, with their guest several times during the course of rehearsal
- Director should be more aware of the guests, as well, since the riser buddies can't guide their singing. This may include playing more part-alone tracks, more explanation of terms, etc.
- The director should also be in contact with buddies on private chat, when necessary.





Follow Up

Plan for them to come back! Give the potential members all the materials they need to return the following week:

- Website Info
- Audition Materials
- Contact information for the Membership Liaison and the Director
- Follow-up email or phone call
- First/second visit packets (as applicable)

If the chorus goes out after rehearsal, invite her to come along.



Virtually . . .

- Make sure all guest materials are available in digital format, so that they can be emailed to guests.
- On the sign-in sheet, determine the best mode of communication for each guest and use it.
- Make sure the digital audition process is well-thought-out and clearly communicated to each guest.
- Invite the guest to any online social events that may be scheduled outside of regular rehearsal time.



For Discussion

- What is your current new member protocol?
- How can you adapt that protocol to create a positive virtual experience for the potential new member?
- What issues/advantages are unique to your chorus, and how can you use these to make the new member experience memorable?
- What are your concrete “next steps” to refine the potential new member experience in your chapter?



