

A Balanced Approach to Member Engagement:
Keep Your Members' Attention Through Your Association Communications

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Presentation based on results from the 2018 Association Communications Benchmarking Study

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EVENT MANAGEMENT MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT SERVICES

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Naylor's Association Adviser media brand, combined with our industry-wide benchmarking study, allows us to develop deeper insights to help associations be more effective with their communications.

Over the last seven years, nearly 3,000 senior leaders of North American trade associations, professional societies and association management companies have participated in Association Adviser's Association Communications Benchmarking survey.

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The Benchmarking Study

- Conducted through partnerships with 11 member organizations of the Association Societies Alliance
- Best Practices Score and Report Card provides personalized results and recommendations
- Access to peer-to-peer industry comparisons

2018 numbers:

- 42-question survey campaign: April 2 – May 7
- 435 participants
- \$10 Amazon gift card incentive for those who completed at least 50% of the questions.

<https://communicationsbenchmark.naylor.com>



Agenda At-a-Glance

- Demographics and main survey sections
- Positive highlights
- Key takeaways from the study
- Recommendations and examples
- Wrap up
- Additional resources and Q & A



Demographics

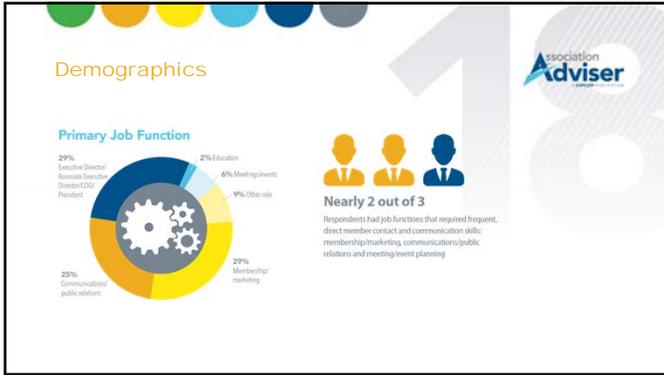


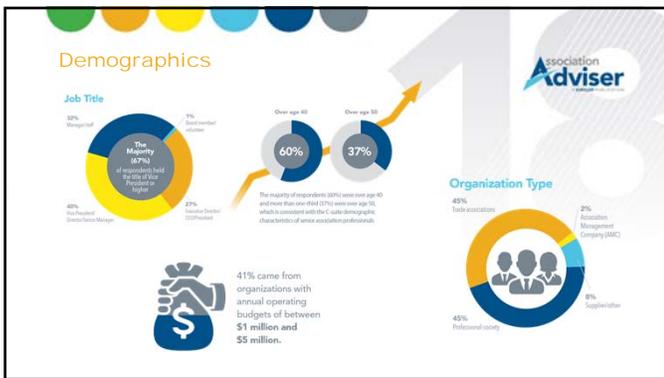
Annual Operating Budget

Don't know	10%
Less than \$1 million	59%
\$1 million to \$5 million	41%
More than \$5 million	20%

100 Different Industries
Respondents came from more than 100 different industries, although these classifications accounted for half (50%) of the response pool.









Reader Engagement

Historically, 4 out of 5 associations report that at least half of their communications are ignored. We attempted to understand why.

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Top Reasons for Declining Reader Engagement

67%	Members imply they are too busy
58%	We don't target/segment as well as we should
45%	Too many competing options for our content
41%	We could better promote communications as a member benefit

Important Takeaways

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- Associations need better and more efficient ways to improve member engagement.
- Associations need to find a balanced approach to technology and traditional channels.
- Associations need to maximize the non-dues revenue generated from their communications.

1 Find better and more efficient ways to keep members engaged.

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Combating information overload and cutting through the clutter made its way back to the #1 spot.

4 out of 5 associations admit that at least half of their communications are being ignored.

2 out of 3 said their members are "too busy" to engage with their communications.



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POLL QUESTION

What do you do to keep members engaged?



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2 Find a balanced approach to technology and traditional channels.

Print member magazine ranked #2 for second year in a row.

Print newsletter and show guide moved into the Top 10.

Top 10 Individual Communication Channels

CHANNEL	Consider very/extremely valuable	Rank 2018	Year-over-year change
Traditional conferences/events	90%	1	-
Member magazine (print)	74%	2	-
Member newsletter	69%	3	-
Webinars	66%	4	-
Leadership development events	62%	5	-
Young professional events	60%	6	A2
Newsletter (print)	57%	7	A10
Facebook	56%	8t	W2
Show guide (print)	56%	8t	A3
Member eZine	55%	10t	-
Private online community	55%	10t	A2



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2 Find a balanced approach to technology and traditional channels.

Portfolio of useful communications continues to expand.

Perceived Value as Very/Extremely Valuable

CHANNEL	% Consider Very/Extremely Valuable	Year-over-year change
Private online communities	55%	A11%
Apps	47%	A10%
Podcasts	40%	A27%
Blogs	36%	A8%
Instagram	26%	A8%
Text messaging	25%	A7%
Snapchat	6%	-



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POLL QUESTION

Who is using print, face-to-face, online and social media at the same time?



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3 Maximize the non-dues revenue generated from your communications.



Nearly half of all associations are struggling with generating non-dues revenue – 45% say it's a serious or significant problem (5% increase from last year).



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POLL QUESTION

Has non-dues revenue increased for you in 2018 or decreased?



How can associations find better and more efficient ways to keep their members engaged?

How can associations balance their messaging to both the traditional and growing non-traditional forms of communication?

What are some ways for associations to increase the NDR generated from their communication vehicles?



RECOMMENDATIONS



Truly understand your members' basic needs, demographics and preferences.

- ▶ Member information in new member and renewal packets
- ▶ Annual member surveys
- ▶ Networking events and luncheons
- ▶ Phone calls and emails





1 Keep members better engaged

Topics Most Important to Members

These are topics according to what associations think their members find important, but are they truly what your members are interested in?

Topic	Rank 2017	Rank 2018
Network with industry peers	1	3
Industry newsletters	4	2a
Career/professional development	2	3v
How to best practice	3	4v
Lobbying/advisory	5	5
Technology	8	6a
Information about products/services	6	7v
Coverage of key industry events	9	8
Member news	10	9a
Programs for young professionals	7	10v
Industry job openings	11	11
Databases for improving job performance	13	12
Succession planning	12	13

1 Keep members better engaged

Ensure your content is valuable and understand what makes content relevant to your members.

84% associations believe they generally create relevant content but only 1 in 5 believe they have a good understanding of their reader, member and advertiser needs.

Relevancy is key!
When we find relevant content, we take time to consume it.

Establish performance metrics and track over time. Look at trends. When you see trends, ask why?

1 Keep members better engaged

Develop a comprehensive and integrated content strategy.

Only 27% of respondents gave themselves a rating of 4 out of 5 when asked how well their communications channels were integrated.

Comprehensive content strategies integrate content across channels to maximize reach.

Top 10 Individual Communication Channels

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Traditional conferences/events	90%	1	-
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1 Keep members better engaged **2** Balance messaging across channels

Work smarter, not harder — Integrate and repurpose!

- Keeps members engaged and happy
- Uses association resources more effectively

The most popular session at your annual event is recorded. You can use this recording to develop and repurpose its content:

- ✓ Webinars
- ✓ Magazine articles
- ✓ Story in your newsletters
- ✓ Posts on social media
- ✓ Discussion topics in your online community



1 Keep members better engaged **2** Balance messaging across channels

Leverage the non-traditional communication channels that work best for your members.

Instagram Graphic appeal and events	Blogs Lots of content
Texting Short messages and reminders	Apps Events and exclusive member-access
Podcasts Content leaders and popular topics	Private Online Community Active members

1 Keep members better engaged **2** Balance messaging across channels

Customize your content and target specific member groups.



57% agree customization is difficult - up from 52% in 2017 and double 23% from when study started in 2011.



Almost half of respondents (47%) said they employ only one overall strategy for communicating with all members.

- Ask what channels members want to consume their content and frequency.
- Look for areas where you can provide content targeted to specific member groups.
- Based on your member make-up, work to find a balance on where you distribute your content - print, digital, social, etc.

1 Keep members better engaged **2** Balance messaging across channels

AGC of America Customization Strategy

More than 20 eNewsletters with content targeted to certain types of member groups or interests.

- Highway
- Subcontractors
- Safety
- Law/Legislation
- Human Resources







Different types of members participate in your association in different ways and the messages they receive should match that.

1 Keep members better engaged

2 Balance messaging across channels

Find resources to deliver a custom member experience.

More than half of associations still say their communication teams feel understaffed.

Why?

- The growth in communication channels
- Technology advancements
- The increased need to integrate and segment



Identify what resources you can use to make your association run smoother and deliver a custom member experience at the same time.

1 Keep members better engaged

2 Balance messaging across channels

Know what resources to use to offload some of the work.

- ✓ Association management system (AMS)
- ✓ Learning management system (LMS)
- ✓ Marketing automation
- ✓ Email marketing system
- ✓ Content management system (CMS)

1 Keep members better engaged 2 Balance messaging across channels

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BOMA Dallas' Renewal Strategy

Other common ways to segment your members:

- ◆ Board member/board alumnus(a) membership
- ◆ For-profit/non-profit affiliation
- ◆ Job role
- ◆ Certification level
- ◆ Chapter affiliation
- ◆ Committee membership
- ◆ Student status
- ◆ Years in industry

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3 Maximize the non-dues revenue generated from your communications.

Nearly half of all associations are struggling with generating non-dues revenue – 46% say it's a serious or significant problem (5% increase from last year).

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Conduct regular assessments.

Ask important questions and identify trends.

- How does your association feel about your non-dues revenue performance?
- In what areas are you performing well?
- What would you say are the factors making you successful?
- Where would you say you're not meeting your expectations?
- What do you think is driving the performance?

Consider the areas we've already discussed:
Relevant content • Integrated content strategies • Customization • Segmentation

3
Maximize your non-dues revenue



Listen to your advertisers.

Only 43% ask their advertisers or sponsors for feedback annually.

Asking your advertiser base about their needs and preferences is just as important as asking your members!

And just like members, customization is key with advertisers, sponsors and exhibitors.

	PLANNING	SALES	MARKETING
ADVERTISERS	✓	✓	✗
MEMBERS	✓	✗	✗
EXHIBITORS	✓	✗	✗

3
Maximize your non-dues revenue



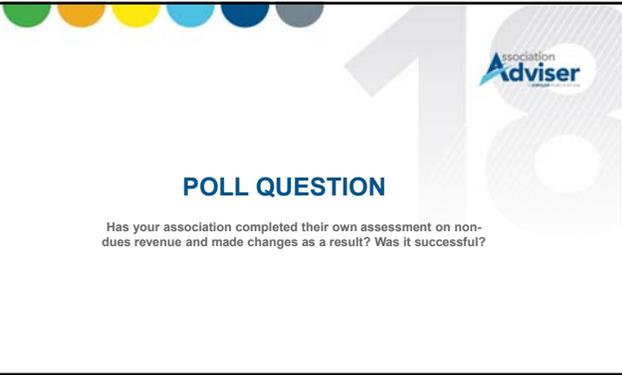

Recognize when you need help.

Does it make sense to find additional resources or technology to improve sales processes, purchases, etc.?

Does it make sense to find industry experts to assist with certain areas of your communications program?

3
Maximize your non-dues revenue



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POLL QUESTION

Has your association completed their own assessment on non-dues revenue and made changes as a result? Was it successful?



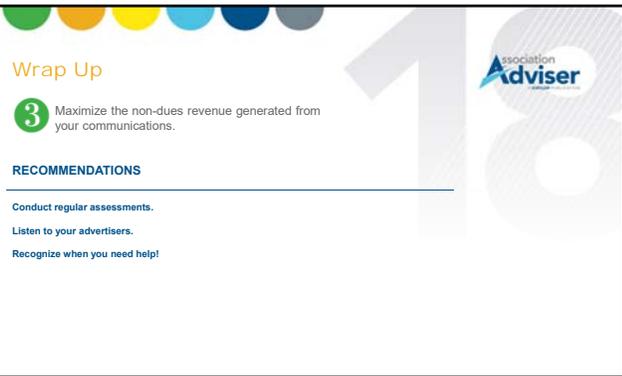
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Wrap Up

- 1 Find better and more efficient ways to keep members engaged.
- 2 Find a balanced approach to messaging in traditional and non-traditional forms of communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Understand your members' basic needs, demographics and preferences.
- Ensure your content is valuable and understand what makes content relevant to your members.
- Develop a comprehensive and integrated content strategy.
- Work smarter, not harder — integrate and repurpose!
- Only leverage the non-traditional communication channels that make sense.
- Customize your content and target specific member groups.
- Find resources to deliver a custom member experience and know when you should offload some of the work.



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Wrap Up

- 3 Maximize the non-dues revenue generated from your communications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct regular assessments.
- Listen to your advertisers.
- Recognize when you need help!

Best Practices Report Card
 Are you an A+ communicator? [Let's review an example](#)



Your Best Practice Scores Are:

Category	My Score	Median Score Range	Best Practice Range
Communications Effectiveness	52%	27% to 40%	85% to 100%
Communications Strategy	76%	45% to 100%	85% to 100%
Online Communications	85%	52% to 100%	85% to 100%
Customer Support	85%	23% to 80%	85% to 100%
Advertising, Sponsorship & Measurement	54%	20% to 44%	85% to 100%

What does my score mean?

- 50% - 60%** **At Risk** - You should take immediate action to improve your score.
- 60% - 70%** **Needs Improvement** - You should take action to improve your score.
- 70% - 80%** **Needs Improvement** - You should take action to improve your score.
- 80% - 90%** **Good** - You are doing well, but there is still room for improvement.
- 90% - 100%** **Excellent** - You are doing very well and are a best practice.

Interested in where you stand?
 The survey is open all year!



Take the survey year-round:

- <https://communicationsbenchmark.naylor.com>
- Compare your performance to your peers using the industry comparison feature
- Review your Personalized Best Practices Score and Report Card

Download the full 2018 report:
www.naylor.com/benchmarking

Find additional communications benchmarking resources:
<http://resource.naylor.com/benchmarking>

Q & A



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