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2019 Strategic Planning Priority Settings

2016-2019 Strategic Plan and Annual Priorities

2017-2018 Strategic Planning Priorities (final)

2017-2018 Strategic Planning Priorities (ranked brainstorm)

2017-2018 Strategic Planning Priorities (full brainstorm)

2016-2017 Strategic Planning Priorities Recap

2018 Voice of the Profession Survey Responses

2018 Future of the Courts - Ten Things to Know

Preparing Tomorrow's Public Service

2018 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report

What Can You Do to Attract Next-Gen Attendees?

Association Membership Trends

2016 – 2019
STRATEGIC PLAN AND ANNUAL PRIORITIES

National Association for Court Management

June 2016

NACM

Strengthening Court Professionals

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Letter from NACM Leadership

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is our pleasure to present the National Association for Court Management's (NACM) Strategic Plan for 2016–2019.

The Strategic Plan is the product of an inclusive and interactive yearlong planning process which empowered NACM to craft a measurable blueprint for the future. This plan serves as a bold and forward-thinking approach to *refining* our mission, *actualizing* our core values, and *articulating* our vision for the future.

The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan affirms the importance of four (4) priorities upon which NACM will focus: membership, education and resources, advocacy, and association governance and sustainability. These priorities build upon NACM's past successes and demonstrate the willingness to accept new challenges and opportunities that will strengthen the profession of court management for years to come. As we have evolved as an organization, so have our intentions to be more transparent, member-focused, and committed to effective governance. Recognizing emerging trends, this plan seeks to operationalize NACM's fundamental mission to be a *voice* for court professionals and an effective resource to the court community at large.

We want to thank the more than 200 court management professionals across the country who dedicated time and feedback in the development of this plan. There is still much work to be done. As we move forward together, the continued interest and engagement of our members and stakeholders are of vital importance. As a Board, we hope that you will examine the Strategic Plan as an actionable roadmap which compels you to remain engaged and invested in NACM's future as the premier organization for the profession of court management.

Acknowledgements

The Strategic Plan was largely developed by the NACM Board of Directors and the Strategic Plan Workgroup. A number of individuals devoted countless hours to the planning process:

2015-2016 Board of Directors

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Members: Lyn Malloy
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Mark Dalton   Dawn Palermo
Renee Danser   Tracy Schatza
Jude Del Preore   Dexter Thomas
Stephanie Hess   Patti Tobias
Bob James   Chelle Uecker
Greg Lambard   Mark Weinberg

2015 Strategic Planning Survey and Online Focus Groups:

Thanks to representatives from each of NACM's permanent and standing committees, Past Presidents' Committee, Early Career Professionals Committee, and new NACM Members for participating in the planning process.

Special Thanks:

NACM extends a special thanks to Mary McQueen, President of the National Center for State Court (NCSC) and all of the NCSC's staff for their support and direction throughout the planning process. In addition, we would like to offer a special sentiment of thanks to Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey for sharing her wealth of experience and invaluable leadership in the creation of NACM's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

2016-2019 Strategic Plan

June, 2016

Section 1: Overview

The NACM Board of Directors is pleased to present NACM's updated 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan, which was developed with input from many court management professionals from across the county, lays out strategic priorities for NACM, and a roadmap for continuing to serve members and lead and advance the court management profession. The Board is excited to work with the membership and its partners on these important priorities and looks forward to sharing progress and accomplishments in the coming years.

NACM began the strategic planning process in the fall of 2015 and completed this Strategic Plan in early 2016. Facilitated by Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., the process included a thoughtful examination of relevant trends, emerging issues, strengths and weaknesses of NACM, and opportunities and threats facing the profession and the Association (see the Appendices for details).

With input from over 200 court management professionals through online focus groups and a strategic planning survey in the fall of 2015, the Board refreshed its mission and vision statements, identified core values, identified four key strategic focus areas, and developed comprehensive strategies for making continued changes and improvements. It also identified annual priorities, which will be reviewed and updated each year.

The Strategic Plan includes:

1. Revised mission and vision statements and newly developed core values;
2. Strategic focus areas, goals, and strategies; and
3. Strategic projects/initiatives.

The Board also evaluated and refined its implementation approach. It includes assigning strategic initiatives to specific permanent and standing committees or newly formed strategic action teams; refining the membership and leadership of the teams; clarifying roles and expectations of committee chairs, team leaders, and members; and using new tools and templates to guide the work on the strategic initiatives and report on the progress and accomplishments.

New Tagline

Strengthening court professionals

Mission of NACM

NACM is a member organization dedicated to educating court professionals, providing community, sharing information, and advocating on important court and justice system topics.

Vision of NACM

NACM will be a preferred source for education and innovative practices and a leading voice for the court management profession.

Core Values of NACM

Core values are fundamental beliefs that guide behavior and action. NACM's core values encompass basic principles for guiding NACM's performance as well as its internal and external relationships. NACM is the *VOICE* of the profession and succeeds by:

*V*ision – providing strategic focus on the advancement of the field of court administration
*O*rganization – leading the Association in the pursuit of collective goals
*I*mplementation – taking action and following-through on strategic priorities
*C*ommunication – engaging the court community and justice partners
*E*thics – demonstrating integrity and adhering to the highest ethical standards

Section 3: Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), Goals, and Strategies

  Overview of Trends Analysis. The Board, with the assistance of nearly 50 court professionals that participated in the online focus group sessions, reviewed a variety of relevant external and internal trends. External trends included social/demographic, economic, policy/political, technological and justice system. Association benchmarks from a national study[1] were also reviewed. Finally, internal trends of NACM, such as membership and conference attendance, were analyzed.

  The trends analysis was revealing. Below is a brief summary of the implications of the trends on NACM. (See Appendix A for complete details.) In the future, NACM must:

1. Stay abreast of current, complex, and emerging issues/topics facing courts;
2. Be aware of the changing workforce;
3. Adapt its services and products/resources to meet the changing needs of members/potential members and the court management profession;
4. Continue to develop and better use technology to reach and engage members and deliver products and services;
5. Continue to increase, retain, and engage members;
6. Continue to be a strong leader for the profession; and
7. Be nimble and responsive.

  Overview of Organizational Assessment. The Board, with the assistance of over 125 active and new NACM members, completed a comprehensive organizational assessment as part of the planning process. It included a 2015 Strategic Planning Survey as well as a critical analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This analysis was instrumental in assisting the Board in identifying new SFAs and setting priorities for the coming years. (See Appendix B for a summary of the 2015 Strategic Planning Survey and additional details)

  Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), Targets, and Strategies. The Board identified the following four SFAs, informed by the data and information mentioned above. Each SFA is fundamentally important to NACM's short and long-term success. Below are brief descriptions, goals and strategies for making continued improvements.

  NACM's annual strategic projects in each of these areas are presented in Section 4.

Strategic Focus Areas
(2016)

1. Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement
2. Education and Resources Provided by NACM
3. Advocacy for the Profession
4. Association Governance and Sustainability

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[1] Marketing General, Inc., Annual Marketing Benchmarking Report (2015).

SFA #1: Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement

Description

NACM is a member organization serving court professionals and the court management profession. To remain a vibrant and leading organization, NACM must attract new members and retain and engage existing members. NACM is committed to strengthening these efforts in the future. Per the 2015 Strategic Planning Survey, suggestions included:

1. Improve membership data/information (e.g., demographics, numbers);
2. Clearly define and communicate the value of membership (e.g., ROI);
3. Reach out to new, diverse, and untapped groups and geographical regions;
4. Welcome and orient new members more effectively (e.g., strengthen "onboarding program");
5. Promote and enhance networking opportunities and build community;
6. Use a variety of methods to connect and communicate with members; and
7. Involve and engage members in the work of NACM.

Goals/Targets and Strategies

GOAL 1: NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.

Strategies:
    a. Assess and respond to the needs and interests of members.
    a. Improve and track membership data/information and other metrics.
    b. Define and communicate the value of membership.
    c. Reach out to new, diverse, and untapped groups and geographical regions.
    d. Work with other groups to reach court professionals and educate about NACM.
    e. Strengthen practices for welcoming and orienting new members.
    f. Promote the court professional community.
    g. Enhance networking opportunities.
    h. Implement other innovative recruitment and retention methods and practices.

GOAL 2: NACM will increase opportunities for members to get involved and be active.

Strategies:
    a. Communicate and promote opportunities for involvement.
    b. Implement other innovative engagement methods and practices.

See the next section of the Strategic Plan for a list of NACM's annual initiatives for this SFA.

SFA #2: Education and Resources Provided by NACM

Description

NACM provides an array of educational programs and resources. NACM also produces informational and reference materials that advance the profession and educate others about courts. Examples include educational conferences, webinars, the Court Manager and Court Express, the Core® and related curriculum, the National Agenda, and other publications and guides on best practices.

Enhancing member benefits and increasing the overall value of belonging to the Association are high priorities for NACM. NACM also is committed to producing resources (e.g., guides, tool kits, the Core® curriculum, best practices, and trends in courts) that will strengthen court and justice system performance and serve the profession. Suggestions provided (responses from the 2015 Strategic Planning Survey) for enhancing educational programming, services, and resources include:

1. Assess the needs and interests of court professionals generally and members specifically.
2. Add new educational programming, services, and resources to meet current and emerging needs.
3. Evaluate and enhance existing member services and resources.
4. Enhance and add services that will add value for members and potential members.
5. Continue to strengthen educational programming.
6. Compile information and share best practices.
7. Anticipate and be a thought-leader on hot topics, emerging issues, and promising practices

Goals/Targets and Strategies:

GOAL 1: NACM will increase attendance at, and participation in, its educational activities.

Strategies:
    a. Evaluate and continuously improve educational programming.
    b. Provide educational programming on the Core®, hot topics, and emerging issues.
    c. Expand educational offerings to meet needs and interests of diverse membership segments.
    d. Promote high-quality diverse faculty.
    e. Be strategic and intentional when selecting conference locations.
    f. Use technology/alternative delivery methods to expand access to or participation in educational activities.
    g. Partner with other organizations to increase participation in educational events.

GOAL 2: NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues.

Strategies:
    a. Evaluate and improve existing resources.
    b. Develop new resources and informational materials to improve court administration and court/justice system performance.
    c. Be a thought-leader and produce resources/reference materials on hot topics, emerging, issues, and promising practices.
    d. Market/communicate the availability of resources.

e. Increase accessibility to resources/informational materials.

See the next section of the Strategic Plan for a list of NACM's annual initiatives for this SFA.

SFA #3: Advocacy for the Profession

Description

The court management profession plays a vital role in the administration of justice. Like other judicial and legal organizations committed to building trust and confidence in the judicial branch, NACM is in a singular and prominent position to be the voice for the court management profession and provide a unique perspective on court operations and innovative practices. NACM is dedicated to promoting, advancing, and advocating for the profession. Being a voice for the profession includes:

1. Providing education about courts, court and judicial branch issues, and the profession.
2. Being a spokesperson contributing to national policies and the national agenda.
3. Identifying and leading on key issues pertinent to courts and the judicial branch.
4. Collaborating with other organizations and associations committed to promoting justice and building trust and confidence in courts.
5. Strengthening existing, and forming new, partnerships to promote and advance the profession.

Goals/Targets and Strategies:

GOAL 1: NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management profession.

Strategies:
    a. Pursue and participate in opportunities to educate about, and promote, the profession.
    b. Reach out to policy-makers to educate about the needs and important issues facing courts and the profession.
    c. Take a position and make recommendations on matters of importance.
    d. Develop advocacy resources and reference materials.
    e. Use innovative methods for acting on behalf of the profession.
    f. Educate and enhance relationships and communication with judges, judge organizations, and judicial/legal communities.
    g. Highlight contributions to improved court/judicial branch performance.

See the next section of the Strategic Plan for a list of NACM's annual initiatives for this SFA.

SFA #4: Association Governance

Description

The governance structure of NACM must be responsive and effective to enable the Board to lead and act on behalf of the Association, members, and the profession. The Board is committed to ensuring that NACM's leadership:

1. Is representative and diverse.
2. Is able to respond quickly to needs/demands.
3. Is strategic and intentional in its actions.
4. Is structured and organized to manage the daily business of the Association as well as achieve

long-term goals and strategic priorities.
5. Clearly defines, shares, and balances the workload across committees and work groups.
6. Is stable and consistent in its governance activities as individuals in positions of leadership rotate.
7. Has adequate secretariat support services.

Goals/Targets and Strategies

GOAL 1: NACM's governance is representative, responsive, and effective.

Strategies:
a. Improve the process for recruiting diverse, skilled, and enthusiastic Board and committee members
b. Orient, develop, and nurture board and committee members
c. Strengthen the cohesiveness and collaboration of the Board
d. Evaluate, improve, and align Board processes, procedures and practices with operational and strategic priorities.
e. Improve and realign committee structure and workload
f. Form project teams to achieve long range goals and strategic priorities

See the next section of the Strategic Plan for a list of NACM's annual initiatives for this SFA.

Section 4: Annual Strategic Projects

This Section presents NACM's annual strategic initiatives and/or priority projects. It will be updated annually when NACM establishes new strategic priorities.

Strategic Focus Area #1:

Strategic Focus Area #1: Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	
2016-2017 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee Responsible**
1. Conduct recruitment campaign targeting states with low membership	Membership Committee
2. Launch new onboarding process/program for new members	Membership Committee
3. Develop recommendations and action plan for improving data collection and tracking of key NACM metrics (such as demographics of NACM membership, tracking other vital data/metrics – start with those related to strategic projects)	Membership Committee
4. Enhance materials that communicate the value of membership and return on investment	Membership Committee

Strategic Focus Area #2:

Strategic Focus Area #2: Education and Resources Provided by NACM	
2016-2017 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee Responsible**
1. Improve NACM website – Phase 1: Evaluate and report on the function, purpose and use of NACM's website	Communications Committee
2. Evaluate and make recommendations for improving/updating NACM's existing resources	Communications Committee
3. Provide or conduct a web-based educational program each quarter	Communications Committee

Strategic Focus Area #3:

Strategic Focus Area #3: Advocacy for the Profession	
2016 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee Responsible**
1. Develop, present and institutionalize a State of Court Management address	Governance Committee
2. Develop an "Importance of the Court Management Profession" paper	Governance Committee
3. Develop a communication strategy to include media engagement	Governance Committee

Strategic Focus Area #4:

Strategic Focus Area #4: Association Governance and Sustainability	
2016-2017 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee Responsible**
1. Develop and implement an improved Board Orientation Program/Process	Board
2. Strengthen committee/team structure to align with strategic priorities	Board

Section 5: Implementation Approach

NACM has a long history of using committees to work on special projects and conduct the business of the Association. As the Board prepares to begin working on its new Strategic Plan, it also is refining the implementation approach.

First, the Board will critically review the charge and expectations of its four standing committees. Refinements will be made as needed to the membership, size, and expectations of these committees.

Second, the Board will assign the annual strategic projects to an existing committee or a newly formed strategic action team. Each committee or team will have a chair/team leader to guide and facilitate the work on assigned strategic projects. As needed, a small number of people will be recruited and assigned to work on the strategic projects. The strategic action teams will be given a clear charge, expectations, and timeline for completing their project(s) (e.g., 12 months). The action teams will be encouraged to complete an Implementation or Action Plan for their respective project(s) laying out the tasks, timeline, and assignments. The Implementation Plan will serve as a roadmap for completing the project.

Third, the strategic action teams/committees will report their progress regularly to NACM's leadership using a simple reporting form and/or by participating in meetings/conference calls. The status of the strategic projects (e.g., milestones achieved), problems encountered, and next quarter activities will be among the information provided to the Board.

In addition to the above, the Board will recalibrate the timing of identifying and beginning work on its strategic projects with the election of new board members and its fall meeting. The first year's strategic projects were identified at a strategic planning session combined with the mid-year meeting (February). However, future strategic projects may be identified at the Board's fall meeting when time can be set aside to think and plan strategically for NACM and so work on the strategic projects can begin earlier in the election cycle.

Finally, NACM's strategic plan is expected to guide the Board's work and priorities for 3-4 years. It will be reviewed and updated annually (as needed). NACM's strategic plan will be overhauled when conditions and priorities change or at the end of 3-4 years, whichever comes first. Each year the Board will identify and celebrate accomplishments on the strategic projects for the past year and establish new strategic projects consistent with the goals and objectives for coming year. This continuous cycle will ensure the Board has its eye on the long term and strategic priorities and makes measured progress each year toward its long range goals.

Appendices

Many internal and external trends were reviewed and analyzed as part of the strategic planning process. Social/demographic, economic, policy/political, technological, and justice system trends were among those reviewed. Also reviewed were national association benchmarks and internal trends of NACM such as membership and conference attendance. Finally, the implications of the trends for NACM were identified.

The five online focus group sessions were instrumental in completing the trends analysis and identifying implications for NACM. [2] Nearly 50 court professionals from across the US participated in the focus group sessions, which were conducted in September 2015. Below are:

1. A list of external trends affecting NACM and the projected future implications for NACM;
2. NACM membership and conference attendance trends; and
3. Benchmarks from a national study of membership associations.

External Trends and Implications for NACM

The list of trends below is believed to be most relevant to NACM. That is, the list below is NOT exhaustive, but rather represents the trends believed to be most relevant to court managers, the court management profession, and ultimately NACM in the coming years. Following the list of trends is a summary of implications for NACM as identified and discussed during the online focus group sessions and a strategic planning session conducted with the NACM Board in November of 2015.

Social/Demographic Trends:
1. Aging population and workforce
2. Shifting and mobile population
3. Shortage of workers in some industries
4. Increasing competition for skilled/talented workers
5. Increasing service demands/expectations of the public (e.g., 24/7, over the Internet, faster services, consumers are more informed)
6. Changing work and life style choices (e.g., working virtually, work/life balance, increasing desire for flexible hours)
7. Explosion in the use of social media and networking as a way to maintain connections, communicate, and do business
8. Increasing awareness of environmental issues and push for "going green"

Economic:
9. Slow economic recovery
10. Stagnating public sector budgets
11. Declining unemployment rates
12. Growing gap between wealthy and persons living in poverty
13. Increasing cost of education – increasing debt

Policy/Political:
14. Continued polarization and gridlock among the major political parties
15. Declining or stagnating state and local budgets; depleted reserves
16. Continued scrutiny on how public tax dollars are spent

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[2] The five focus groups were with: (1) Past Presidents; (2) committee chairs and vice chairs; (3) committee members; (4) early career professionals; and (5) new NACM members.

17. Continuing debate and focus on hot topics/pressing issues – same sex marriage, legalization of marijuana, human trafficking, immigration reform, health care reform, etc.
18. Increasing pressure to consolidate and/or regionalize services
19. Increase in legislation for specific crimes and unfunded mandates
20. Growing tension between increasing expectations for government solutions and the call for less government involvement in personal lives

Technological:
21. Continuing wireless revolution and rapidly developing telecommunications/information technology
22. Increasing inability to unplug, tune out, or turn off
23. Growing divide between "digital natives" (the youngest generation) and everyone else
24. Expectation/demand for 24x7 access and services (e.g., e-everything, easy access from anywhere at any time)
25. More distance learning and virtual/video-conferencing meetings – changing delivery systems and models
26. Continued need for, and progress in, networking and sharing of appropriate information
27. Increasing/continued threat of cyber attacks
28. Increasing focus on privacy rights – concerns about sensitive data

Court/Justice System:
29. Declining/stagnating funding at state and local levels
30. Changing composition of court users
31. Increasing and changing caseloads/workloads (e.g., increase in some case types, decrease in other case types, increasing need for litigant assistance, more fee waiver requests)
32. Increasing needs of litigants (e.g., self-represented litigants, reasonable accommodations for participation, mental health issues, substance abuse)
33. Increasing need for language access and services (e.g., information in multiple languages, interpreter and translator services)
34. Increasing numbers of specialty courts (e.g., drug, mental health, veterans, etc.)
35. Increasing emphasis on procedural justice/fairness – and improving the appearance of fairness
36. Declining number of jury trials (in some jurisdictions)
37. Increase in the use of alternative/innovative methods of dispute resolution (e.g., mediation, arbitration, restorative justice)
38. Increasing use of evidence-based/promising practices to achieve more effective outcomes
39. Increasing need/demand for the use of technology to enhance access and enable doing business remotely/electronically
40. Increase in paperless systems/digital records
41. Declining trust and confidence in the justice/judicial system – increasing conflict/divide among races
42. Graying workforce, especially among administrators/managers; lack of "ready-now" successors
43. Difficulty recruiting people who want to make a career of court management and leadership
44. Fewer degree programs educating young people about courts and court management; more programs focusing on criminal justice – probation, law enforcement, etc.
45. Increasing numbers of professional knowledge workers and fewer administrative/clerical workers
46. Growing emphasis on employee engagement and maintaining a satisfying work environment as a way to enhance performance and retain skilled workers

47. Declining court infrastructure (e.g., facilities, technology, equipment, security)
48. Increasing collaboration among justice system partners to address system-wide issues
49. Re-examination of judicial branch governance structures at the state and local levels; changing roles of administrators/judges
50. Continued scrutiny and criticism of the judicial branch generally; growing interest and scrutiny from the press
51. Criminal justice system reform (e.g., pre-trial practices, moving people from prison to jails)

Implications for NACM

The trends listed above (and others) will affect courts in many ways. To identify the potential effects for NACM, it is critically important to extend beyond the implications of the trends on courts. Specifically, it is important to consider the effects of the trends on NACM's members, the profession as a whole, and ultimately on the Association. Doing so will ensure the discussion is focused on what NACM can do to proactively shape, and respond effectively to, the many trends.

Below is a summary of potential implications for NACM as discussed in the online focus groups –
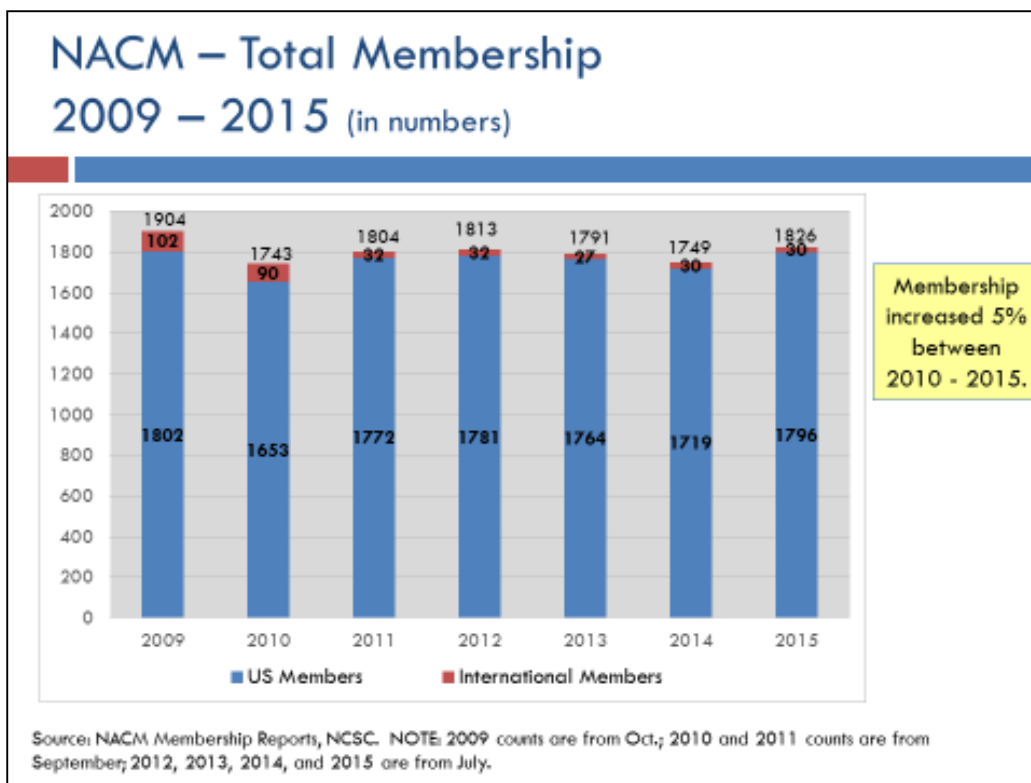
1. NACM must stay abreast of current, complex, and emerging issues/topics facing courts. To remain relevant, NACM must remain close to, on top of, and lead around complex issues facing courts. Examples of issues include: increasing public and court user expectations, growing and changing needs of court users, delivering more and better services with existing or declining budgets, changing caseloads, resolving complex legal issues, implementing innovative programs and services; keeping pace with rapidly changing technology, operating in a challenging political climate, recruiting and retaining skilled staff, resolving cases in a fair and timely manner, and building the public's trust and confidence to name a few. NACM must keep its pulse on and continually provide the court management profession with information, education, and resources to anticipate, respond to, and solve these complex and changing issues.

2. NACM must be aware of the changing workforce. The composition of the workforce is changing. For the first time in history, five generations are (or will be) working side by side, adding complexities to managing and leading effectively. Additionally, the workforce is aging. Many court managers are eligible to retire now or soon. Courts will be vulnerable unless they are developing the next generation of court managers and proactively preparing for succession. Developing future leaders and managers and being aware of and responsive to the contemporary workforce are critically important.

3. NACM must adapt its services and products/resources to meet the changing needs of members/ potential members and the court management profession. To remain relevant and viable, NACM must adapt its services and products in response to changing times and emerging needs. NACM must continuously improve, expand, and modify services to meet the needs of the court management profession, members, and potential members. For example, it is important for NACM to: provide educational programs, resource materials, and publications on the Core and hot topics; share best practices; track trends; etc. NACM will need to clearly define itself and establish priorities so it is able to: (1) retain and grow membership by meeting identified needs and interests and/or (2) target products and services to NACM's diverse and changing membership (e.g., from various states and countries, different size courts, different ages, races, and ethnicities, etc.)

4. NACM must continue to develop and better use technology to reach and engage new members and deliver products and services. A technological revolution is underway; it will continue in the

future. Changes and advances are occurring at breakneck speed. NACM must develop and better use technology (e.g., webinars, live streaming, the website, electronic communication, social media, etc.) to enhance services and engage members. NACM's products and services can be more accessible – real time, electronic formats, 24X7 access – to members and potential members by fully using and integrating technology into the fabric of NACM. Forming and expanding partnerships and pursuing new strategies are needed.
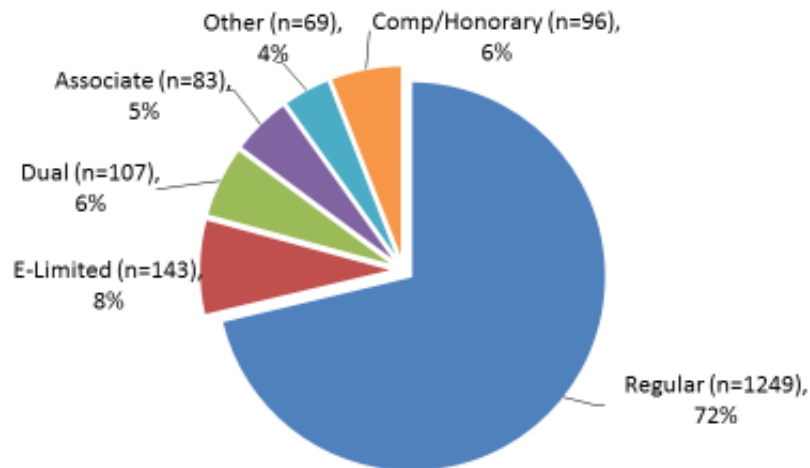
5. <u>NACM must continue to grow and retain membership.</u> As a professional association serving members and the court management profession, NACM's lifeline is in growing and retaining its members. It will need to critically assess and explore ways to increase and retain members. Specifically, NACM will need effective and innovative marketing strategies to attract new members. It also will need effective and innovating retention strategies. This includes ensuring membership is affordable, providing and demonstrating value (i.e., return on investment), developing effective and compelling messages, using multiple media, and forming and/or leveraging partnerships. Finally, NACM will need to improve data collection and analysis. It will need to be able to capture and extract relevant data to establish a baseline, measure progress on initiatives, evaluate membership trends, etc.

6. <u>NACM must continue to be a strong leader for the profession.</u> NACM is positioned to be a strong leader – voice of and advocate for – the court management profession. By leveraging its relationships, partnerships, and collaborative values, NACM can fill a leadership void and be a unifier of voices for members, the profession, and important issues facing courts (e.g., budget/ funding issues, purpose of courts, building public trust and confidence, etc.). It also can educate others on topics important to the profession and courts.

7. <u>NACM must be nimble and responsive.</u> The Association must be able to respond quickly to changing times and emerging issues. NACM's governance structure (e.g., Board, committees, etc.) and policy making and business practices must promote agility and responsiveness in order to effectively lead and advocate for the profession, courts, and members. The Board must continue to recruit and train effective, innovative leaders who have a passion for and are committed to improving the profession and the Association.

NACM Membership and Conference Attendance Trends

Below are membership and conference attendance trends of NACM – 2009 - 2015.

NACM – Total Membership 2009 – 2015 (in numbers)

Membership increased 5% between 2010 - 2015.

Year	US Members	International Members	Total
2009	1802	102	1904
2010	1653	90	1743
2011	1772	32	1804
2012	1781	32	1813
2013	1764	27	1791
2014	1719	30	1749
2015	1796	30	1826

Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC. NOTE: 2009 counts are from Oct.; 2010 and 2011 counts are from September; 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 are from July.

NACM Membership – By Type of Membership
July 2015 (in percentages; n=1747)

Other (n=69), 4%
Comp/Honorary (n=96), 6%
Associate (n=83), 5%
Dual (n=107), 6%
E-Limited (n=143), 8%
Regular (n=1249), 72%

Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

NACM Membership – By Gender
October 2015 (in percentages; n=1734)

Unreported/NA (n=19), 1%
Males (n=633), 37%
Females (n=1082), 62%
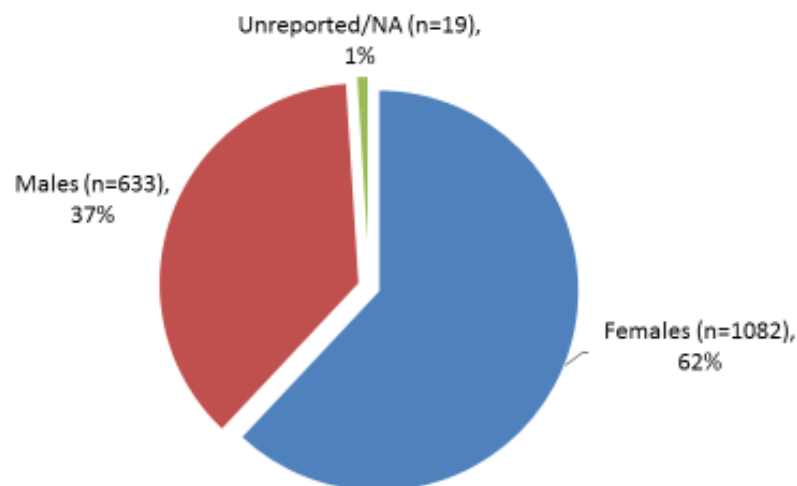
Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

NACM – Total Conference Attendance - Annual and Mid-Year Conferences Combined - 2009 – 2015[1] (in numbers)
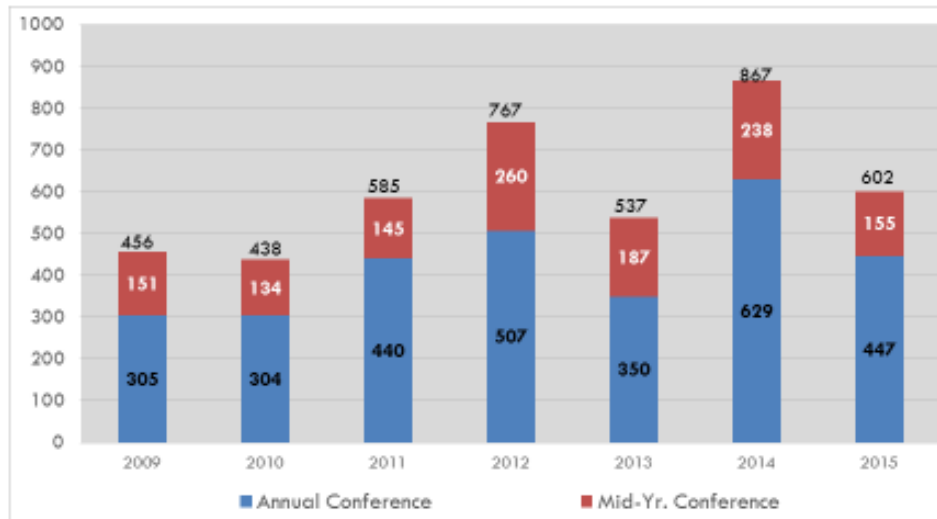
1 Includes only paid and non-paid registrations. Speakers and exhibitor staff are excluded from the counts.
Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC.

NACM – Annual Conference Attendance[1]
2009 – 2015 (in numbers)
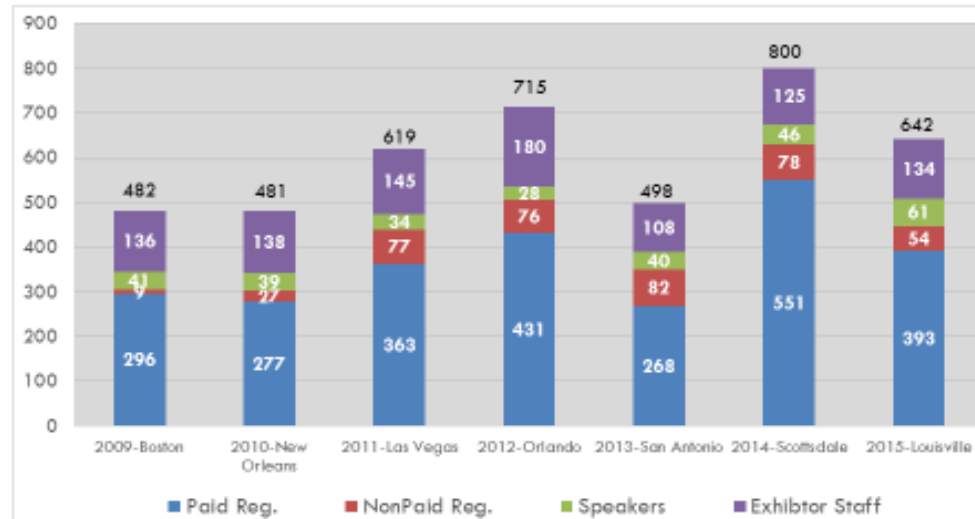
1 Includes all conference attendees – paid registrations, non-paid registrations, speakers, and exhibitor staff.
Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC.

NACM – Mid-Year Conference Attendance[1]
2009 – 2015 (in numbers)
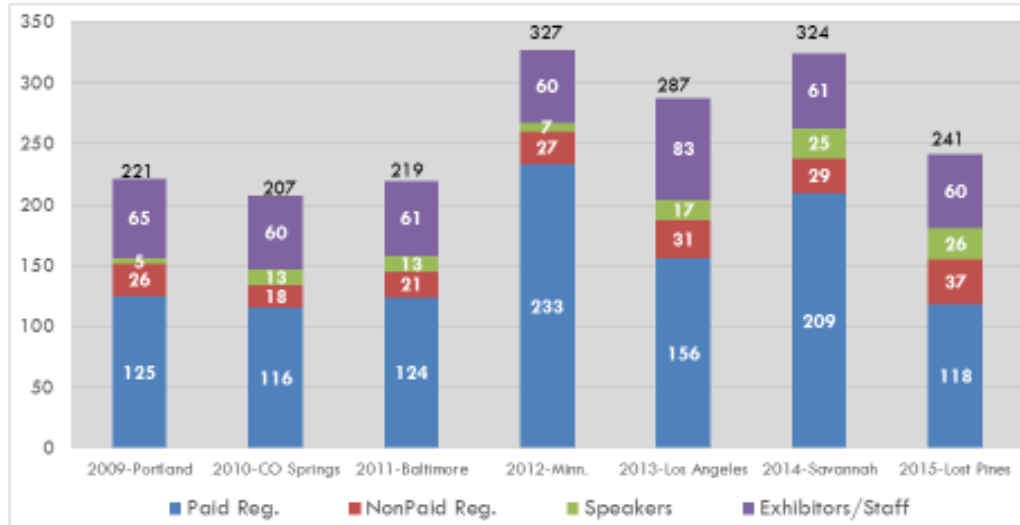
1 Includes all conference attendees – paid registrations, non-paid registrations, speakers, and exhibitor staff.
Source: NACM Membership Reports, NCSC.

National Association Trends and Benchmarks

Below are association trends and/or benchmarks from national studies.[3]

Membership trends – Past Year:

1. In 2015, 47% of individual member associations experienced an increase in membership. (26% experienced a decrease in membership and 25% remained the same). In 2014, 53% reported membership growth.
2. The average (mean) percent increase in membership over the past year for individual member associations was 7%. The median percent increase was 5% over the past year. (Note: median represents the midpoint where half are above and half are below).
3. Of the individual member associations that increased membership, 64% increased membership by 1-5% over the past year; 22% increased membership by 6-10%.

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[3] The trends/benchmarks presented in this section are from two leading sources: (1) Marketing General, Inc. and (2) American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). Marketing General, Inc. produces annual Marketing Benchmarking Reports of individual membership, trade, and combination associations for purposes of evaluating marketing strategies and tactics.

<u>Membership Trends – Past 5 Years:</u>

4. Over the past 5 years, 50% of individual associations reported growth in membership (and 31% reported a decline in membership).
5. The average (mean) increase in membership for individual member associations over the past 5 years was 24%. The median percent increase was 15%.

<u>Two Primary Components of Membership Growth – Member Acquisition and Member Renewal</u>

Member Acquisition.

6. From 2014-2015, 44% of individual member associations experienced an increase in newly acquired members.
7. The average (mean) increase in newly acquired members was 11%. The median percent increase for newly acquired members was 6%.

Member Renewal/Retention.

8. From 2014-2015, only 21% of individual member associations reported an increase in renewal rates/member retention (45% remained the same and 24% reported a decrease).
9. The average (mean) increase in member renewal rates was 7%. The median percent increase in member renewal rates was 3%.

<u>Overall Membership Renewal Rates</u>

10. The average (mean) *overall membership* renewal rate for individual member associations was 79%. The median overall membership renewal rate was 82%.
11. The average (mean) renewal rate for *first year members* was 64%. The median renewal rate for first year members was 65%.
12. According to the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), the average retention rate of professional associations is 82-90%.

Finally, below are:

- Biggest challenges for growing membership;
- Strategies for creating brand awareness;
- Recruitment strategies that yield the most new members;
- Reasons why people join associations and why they fail to renew;
- How associations use social media; and
- Biggest concerns of associations.

Biggest Challenges for Growing Membership[1]
(in order of priority)

1. Difficulty in communicating value

2. Difficulty attracting and/or maintaining younger members

3. Competitive Associations/sources of information

4. Declining member/employer budgets

5. Tie: Insufficient staff, membership too diverse, economy/cost of membership

	2015: Annual Dues
Average	$320
Median	$193
Most	$100-$149

[1] Marketing General, Inc., 2015 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report. Statistics reported are for individual member associations.

Creating Brand Awareness and Effective Recruitment/Marketing Channels[1] (in order of priority)

Top Ways for Creating Brand Awareness:

1. Email

2. Association Website

3. Word of mouth recommendations

4. Direct Mail

5. Association sponsored social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

Recruitment Strategies that Yield Most New Members:

1. Word of mouth recommendations

2. Email[2]

3. Direct Mail[2]

4. Association Website

5. Cross-sell to non-members who attend conferences, etc.

[1] Marketing General, Inc., 2015 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report. Reported for individual member assocs.
[2] Email and direct mail are the top marketing strategies for renewals and are most effective for reinstating lapsed members.

Reasons for Joining Associations and Failure to Renew[1] (in order of priority)

Reasons for Joining:

1. Networking
2. Continuing Education
3. Access to specialized/ current information
4. Advocacy

Reasons for Failing to Renew:

1. Employer won't pay/ stopped paying dues
2. Left profession
3. Lack of engagement with organization
4. Perceived value: could not justify membership cost with ROI

[1] Marketing General, Inc., 2015 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report. Information reported is for individual member associations.

Social Media[1]

☐ Social Media Used:
- 91% use Facebook
- 87% - Twitter
- 60% - LinkedIn
- 56% - YouTube.

☐ Purpose:
- Provide association news
- Promote association events

[1] Marketing General, Inc., 2015 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report.

Biggest Concerns:[1]
(not in priority order)

- Attracting and retaining members
- Challenges to revenue sources
- Creating new ways to add value to membership
- Lack of data/stats
- Developing an effective membership development strategy
- Remaining relevant
- Aging membership

[1] Marketing General, Inc., 2015 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report.

This section presents a summary of the 2015 Strategic Planning Survey. Also presented below is a summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified by the Board at the November (2015) strategic planning session.

Overview

The purpose of the 2015 Strategic Planning Survey was to gather input for use by NACM's Board in updating NACM's Strategic Plan. The survey results were used to help shape the future direction, goals, and strategic priorities of NACM. The survey was administered in August 2015 by Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht, CEO of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc. The survey was sent to 280 people including Board members, committee members, past presidents, early career professionals, state association leaders, and other court leaders. 125 people completed the survey (a 45% response rate).

Questions asked on the survey included:

1. Identify the two biggest challenges or emerging issues facing Court/Justice Systems in the next 3-5 years;
2. Identify the two biggest challenges or emerging issues facing the Court Management Profession in the next 3-5 years;
3. List the 3 greatest strengths of NACM;
4. Provide top 2 suggestions for what NACM should do in the next few years to enhance effectiveness, relevance, and/or overall success; and
5. Additional comments/suggestions.

Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of respondents are provided in the following charts – by survey group, by position, and by years in the Court Management Profession.

Respondent Demographics – By Survey Groups
(in percentages; n=125)

Other Court Leaders (n=7), 6%
State Association Leaders (n=15), 12%
Early Career Professionals (n=18), 14%
Past Presidents (n=17), 14%
Board Members (n=13), 10%
Committee Members (n=55), 44%
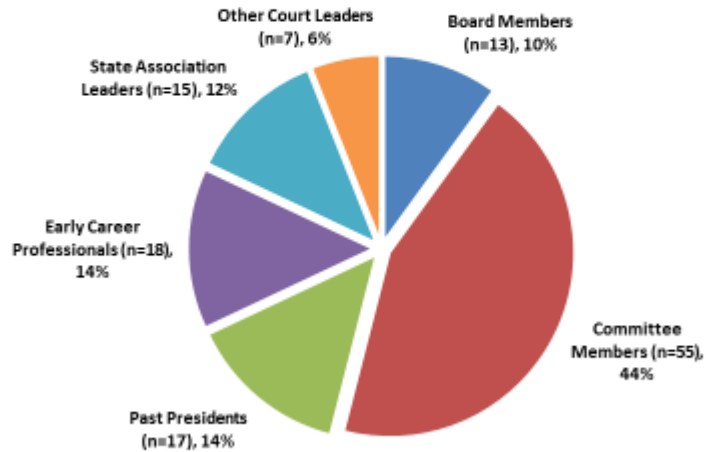
Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Respondent Demographics – By Position
(in percentages; n=125)

Other (n=24), 19%
Admin/IT (n=3), 2%
Dir/Mgr/Sup. (n=26), 21%
Judge (n=2), 2%
Deputy Ct. Admin. (n=13), 10%
Court Admin./Clerk (n=57), 46%
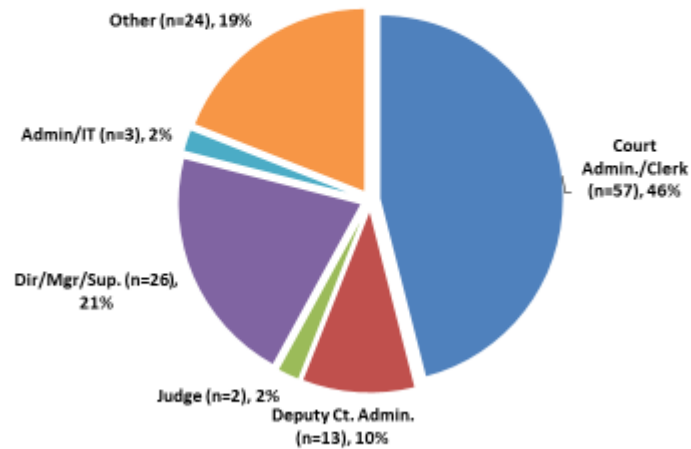
Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Respondent Demographics – By Years in Court Management Profession (in percentages; n=125)

Did not answer (n=6), 5%

<5 years (n=8), 6%

5-10 years (n=21), 17%

11-15 years (n=21), 17%

16-20 years (n=17), 14%

21-25 years (n=13), 10%

26 or more years (n=39), 31%

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.
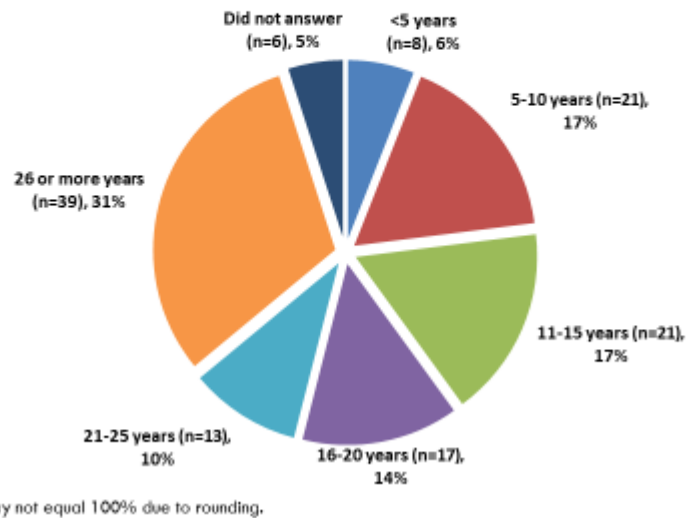
Summary of Results/Findings:

Q1: Biggest challenges/emerging issues facing Court/Justice Systems.

Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues facing Court/Justice Systems in the next 3-5 Years (rank order by most frequently mentioned)

Categories[1]	In Rank Order (n=279)	% of Responses
Keeping Pace with/Using Technology; Cyber Security	1	21%
Having Adequate Funding/Resources	2	18%
Improving Access/Meeting Changing and Increasing Service Needs	3	12%
Declining Public Perception/Declining Trust and Confidence in the Courts/Justice System	4 (tie)	9%
Keeping Abreast of and Responding to Trends and Changing Public Expectations	4 (tie)	9%

1 Examples of comments in each of these categories are provided on the next slide.

Note: this was a multiple response question. Percentages are computed based on the number of responses, not respondents (n=279).

"Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues" facing Court/Justice Systems in the next 3-5 Years – Examples

	Examples of Comments
Keeping Pace with & Using Technology/Cyber Security	• Affording and using existing and new technologies; need effective case mgt. systems; system integration; sharing data; keeping up with technological innovations; securing data/information.
Having Adequate Funding/Resources	• Inadequate or stagnant funding; budget cuts; lack of resources; lack funding to meet growing and changing service needs.
Improving Access/Meeting Changing and Increasing Service Needs	• Providing equal access to all; meeting needs of court users (e.g., self represented, elderly, non-English speaking, etc.); increasing online access/ability to do business remotely.
Declining Public Perception/ Erosion of Trust and Confidence in the Courts	• Declining image of the courts/justice system; the effect of high profile cases on courts nationally; disconnect between law enf. and courts; public lacks knowledge/doesn't understand the courts.
Keeping Abreast of/ Responding to Trends & Changing Public Expectations	• Difficult to stay abreast of and respond to trends (e.g., aging population, social media, technology); inability to keep pace with changing public expectations (e.g., online access, e-business, 24x7 services).
Miscellaneous/Other	• Judicial Branch Independence; non-partisan judges; specialty Courts; providing needed treatment; implementing evidence-based practices; leadership/governance; demonstrating outcomes; communication/collaboration with external partners; criminal justice system reform; jail overcrowding; legislation.

Q2: Biggest challenges/emerging issues facing the Court Management Profession in the next 3-5 years.

Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues facing the Court Mgt. Profession in the next 3-5 Years (rank order by most frequently mentioned)

Categories[1]	In Rank Order (n=255)	% of Responses
Staffing/Workforce Issues	1	41%
Keeping Pace With/Using Technology and Cyber Security	2	13%
Having Adequate Funding/Resources	3 (tie)	11%
Diminishing Importance of/Threats to the Profession	3 (tie)	11%
Timely Resolution/Effective Caseflow Management/Changing Caseloads	5	4%

1 Examples of comments in each of these categories are provided on the next slide.

Note: this was a multiple response question. Percentages are computed based on the number of responses, not respondents (n=255).

Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues facing the Court Mgt. Profession – Examples

	Examples of Comments
Staffing/Workforce Issues	• Ensuring quality judges/staff; ability to recruit/retain skilled staff; inflexible/antiquated work policies; need for more training and dev.; need to manage a multi-generational workforce; developing next generation of leaders/succession planning in response to impending retirements; pay/compensation issues; change management; lack of mentoring.
Keeping Pace With/ Using Technology and Cyber Security	• Inability to implement existing/new technologies to support court functions/increase efficiency; how to improve virtual access; insufficient security.
Having Adequate Funding/ Resources	• Inadequate budgets; lack funding to provide/expand services to meet growing needs; insufficient funds to provide adequate infrastructure (technology, facilities, security); low staffing levels.
Diminishing Importance of/ Threats to the Profession	• Lack of knowledge of ct. admin. as a profession; lack of respect for the prof. role of court admin.; conflicting/overlapping roles/respon. between judges and court admin.; educating judges on role and value of prof. ct. administrators.
Timely Resolution/ Changing Caseloads	• Need to refocus on timely resolution/effective caseflow mgt. practices; need to be able to respond to and manage changing caseloads
Miscellaneous/Other	• Increasing access; meeting service needs; declining public perception/ trust and confidence in the courts; leadership/governance; changing public expectations; responding to trends; judicial branch independence.

Q3: Greatest strengths of NACM.

Greatest Strengths of NACM
(rank order by most frequently mentioned)

Categories[1]	In Rank Order (n=347)	% of Responses
Conferences/Education/Training/Professional Development	1	26%
Networking Opportunities	2	18%
Resources and Products	3 (tie)	12%
Forum for Information Exchange/Discussion	3 (tie)	12%
Board/Strong and Inclusive Leadership	5 (tie)	7%
A Voice/Advocate for the Profession	5 (tie)	7%

1 Examples of comments in each of these categories are provided on the next slide.

Note: this was a multiple response question. Percentages are computed based on the number of responses, not respondents (n=347).

Greatest Strengths of NACM
(rank order by most frequently mentioned)

	Examples of Comments
Conferences/Education/ Training/Professional Dev.	• Great confs./education; valuable content; professional dev. on relevant topics; annual and mid-year confs.; excellent training.
Networking Opportunities	• Great forum for collaborating/connecting with peers; networking with other professionals; great opportunities for networking.
Resources and Products	• Core competencies; National Agenda; guides; information on best practices; information/resources on website.
Forum for Information Exchange/Discussion	• Information sharing; forum to share/discuss best practices, trends, emerging issues, etc. with peers; forum to discuss national issues/discover better approaches to ct. administration.
Board/Strong and Inclusive Leadership	• Active, committed, innovative, forward-thinking, inspirational Board; leadership; very inclusive; encourages new participation.
A Voice/Advocate for the Profession	• NACM grows/sustains/promotes the profession; encourages professional development; promotes changes in the profession; speaks on behalf of trial courts; helps court professionals; represents court mgt. at national level; voice for the profession.
Miscellaneous/Other	• Publications; quality reputation; a unifier; brings groups together; provides leadership opportunities; partners and reaches out to others; facilitates communication.

Q4: Suggested changes/improvements to remain relevant, effective, and successful.

Suggested Changes and Improvements
(rank order by most frequently mentioned)

Categories[1]	In Rank Order (n=233)	% of Responses
Provide New and Different Services/Options	1	16%
Use Technology/Website to Deliver Education/ Services	2 (tie)	15%
Increase/Retain/Target Membership	2 (tie)	15%
Engage/Involve/Communicate with Members	4	12%
More Products/Resources	5	10%

1 Examples of comments in each of these categories are provided on the next slide.

Note: this was a multiple response question. Percentages are computed based on the number of responses, not respondents (n=233).

Suggested Changes and Improvements
(rank order by most frequently mentioned)

	Examples of Comments
Provide New and Different Services/ Options	• More distance learning, virtual confs., online webinars; provide quality education in variety of formats; offer CEs for education; expand programming; shorter reg. conferences; provide targeted programming.
Use Technology/Website to Deliver Educ./Services	• Online webinars; virtual conferences; more resources/information on website; produce videos; more fully use technology to add value.
Increase/Retain/Target Membership	• Increase membership options (e.g., courts, states); develop targeted recruitment/engagement strategies; recruit new people to profession; target Federal Judiciary, rural/small courts, middle mgrs., court leaders, AOC leadership; create NACM ambassadors; maintain affordable dues.
Engage/Involve/Communicate with Members	• Increase engagement through webinars; solicit input from members; collaborate/communicate with members; seek new ways to hear from members; more outreach; use social media.
More Products/Resources	• Provide more info/resources on best practices; produce more Guides/resources on important/emerging topics (e.g., employee handbooks, COOPs, trends, white papers, research, blogs); provide more information relevant to state courts.
Miscellaneous/Other	• Demonstrate value of profession and role of professional administrator; improve judge/administrator relations; continue/ improve confs./educ. programs; recruit & train Board members; dev. strong leaders; lead the prof. build partnerships; increase networking; provide discussion forums.

Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

In addition to the survey findings, Board members added the following strengths and weaknesses/areas for improvement, opportunities, and threats pursuant to a discussion at the November 2015 strategic planning session.

Strengths	Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement
1. Board of Directors is dedicated and open to new ideas; Board is more diverse and representative 2. Structure is well-defined structure – Board member seats, committees 3. Secretariat services of/access to NCSC 4. Board is fiscally prudent/responsible; has reserves 5. Increasing use of technology – live streaming, webinars, etc. 6. Resources/publications are available electronically 7. Social media presence/engagement 8. Educational programs 9. Publications, Guides, and other resources – Court Manager, Core Curriculum, National Agenda, etc. 10. Mentor program 11. Networking/involvement through conferences 12. Opportunities to be involved in Committees 13. Programming for/engagement of early career professionals 14. Forms partnerships and is a unifier/collaborator in the profession 15. Taking more of a leadership position on important issues 16. Input is solicited and valued	1. Difficult recruiting Board Members 2. Division of workload among, and meaningful work on, Committees 3. Overlapping/out of date committee charges 4. Lack of available and useful data/information – financials, member statistics, etc. 5. Dependent on grants 6. Increasing costs 7. Need to attract new, retain existing, and engage more members 8. Need to define, enhance, and communicate the range of services/value of membership 9. Difficult to stay up with/ahead of technology – apps 10. Website is out of date; need more resources on website 11. Need to strengthen social media presence/activities 12. Need to enhance mentor program 13. Advocacy role needs more definition/direction 14. NACM is overly cautious on taking positions on important issues 15. Need to expand partnerships (with non-traditional partners such as private sector)

Opportunities	Threats
1. Increase membership 2. Reach untapped markets/conduct targeted marketing (younger professionals, specific states/regions) 3. Increase membership engagement – tap new potential, expand role of different groups (ECP, Past Presidents, etc.) 4. Strengthen/reinvent NACM – structure, image, brand, reputation 5. Expand/enhance products/resources 6. Greater use of technology 7. Increase collaboration/expand partnerships 8. Educate court leaders/others	1. Changing demographics/needs of court workforce 2. Aging membership/inability to recruit and retain new and/or younger members 3. Lack of meaningful engagement of members 4. Budget constraints/lack of funding/increased competition for limited resources 5. Inability to communicate/demonstrate return on investment 6. Slow or unwillingness to change/being stuck in tradition 7. Burnout of NACM Leadership 8. De-valuing the court management profession 9. Diminishing understanding of 3 branches of government 10. Declining trust and confidence in courts 11. Emergence of competing organizations/partners

National Association *for* **Court Management**
Strengthening Court Professionals

Annual Strategic Projects 2017-2018

This Section presents NACM's annual strategic initiatives and/or priority projects. It will be updated annually when NACM establishes new strategic priorities.

Strategic Focus Area #1: Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	
2017-2018 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee**
1. Increase membership recruitment and participation on committees.	All Chairs and board
2. Engage state association leaders: encourage membership on other committees, recognize leaders present at annual meeting, maximize dual memberships.	State Associations Subcommittee & President
3. Develop recommendations and action plan for improving data collection and tracking of key NACM metrics: demographics of NACM membership, tracking other vital data/metrics.	Membership Committee
4. Launch off-boarding process: former Board, former committee members, etc.	Past President & Committee Chairs

Strategic Focus Area #2: Education and Resources Provided by NACM	
2017-2018 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee**
1. Implement website improvements	Website Subcommittee
2. Include conference topics that address: Local state association priorities, webinars, hot topics, topics for different types/levels of the courts, ethics track, CORE track, soft skills, strategic partner priorities.	Conference Development Committee
3. Expand educational opportunities: podcasts, blogs, webinars, short video trainings, conference recordings, SJI projects mini summits/events, etc..	Communications Committee

Strategic Focus Area #3: Advocacy for the Profession	
2017-2018 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee**
1. Develop, present and institutionalize a State of Court Management address.	Governance Committee
2. Develop outreach on the importance of the profession.	Governance Committee
3. Develop purpose for courts/leaders to utilize resolutions	Governance Committee

Strategic Focus Area #4: Association Governance and Sustainability	
2017-2018 Strategic Projects	**Lead Person/Committee**
1. Institutionalize strategic planning and linkage to budget as part of annual conference Board meeting	Board
2. Assess committee structure including developing new Education Committee.	Board
3. Assess need for a marketing plan and/or survey tool.	Board

2017-2018 Strategic Planning Priorities

Ranked Priorities

SFA #1: Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement

GOAL 1: NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.

1) Develop meaningful member metrics   [Membership]
2) Update NACM promotional materials and videos   [Membership]
3) Focus on new member recruitment   [Membership]
4) Review membership structure   [Membership/Board]

GOAL 2: NACM will increase opportunities for members to get involved and be active.

1) Promote member benefits   [Membership]
2) Engage State Association leaders   [State Associations]
3) Listen to what members are saying in surveys, etc.   [Membership/Communications]
4) Engage members in committees   [ALL]
5) Expand use of social media   [Communications]
6) Engage webinar participants   [Communications
7) Seek non-member attendees at conferences and follow-up   [Membership]
8) More/Consistent outreach to non-renewals   [Membership]
9) Better use of Conference App   [Education]
10) Lower cost of attendance at conferences   [Education]
11) Rethink business meeting schedule at annual conference   [Education/Board]
12) Engage in scholarship fundraising   [Membership]
13) Training/Materials to law schools   [Membership]
14) More member-written articles   [Communications]
15) Develop off-boarding process   [Board]
16) Increase social, family events/discounts at conferences   [Education]

SFA #2: Education and Resources Provided by NACM

GOAL 1: NACM will increase attendance at, and participation in, its educational activities.

1) Strengthen partnerships   [Board]
2) Develop one-time mini summits/events   [Education]
3) (Re)Assess curriculum needs and evaluate resources   [Education/Core]
4) Better use of guides and topic selection   [Education/Communications]
5) Identify conference topics   [Education]
6) Assess conference strategies   [Education]
7) Identify and network special interests at conferences   [Education]
8) Plan to increase conference attendance in future years   [Education]
9) Post conference attendee list for continued networking   [Education]

GOAL 2: NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues.

    1) Website improvements   [Communications]
    2) Expand use of technology   [All]
    3) Focus on speaker development   [Education]
    4) Court Manager improvements   [Communications]
    5) Seek out SJI project grants   [Board/Treasurer]
    6) Conference development   [Education]
    7) Core development   [Core]
    8) Court Express improvements   [Communications]
    9) Consider certification options   [Education]
    10) Model Code of Conduct   [Governance]

SFA #3: Advocacy for the Profession

GOAL 1: NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management profession.

    1) State of the Profession   [Governance]
    2) Develop communication strategy for advocacy efforts   [Governance/Board]
    3) Outreach on importance of profession   [Governance/Membership]
    4) Develop "think tank" to give input on trending issues   [Board]
    5) Collaborate with Partners   [Board]
    6) Resolutions with purpose and reflect NACM's goals   [Governance]
    7) Tooklit for media engagement   [Governance]
    8) Whitepaper   [Board]

SFA #4: Association Governance

GOAL 1: NACM's governance is representative, responsive, and effective.

    1) Strategic Planning priorities review and discussion at each annual conference   [Board]
    2) Re(Assess) partnerships and what NACM gets out of them   [Board]
    3) Evaluate budget in terms of Strategic Priorities investment   [Board/Treasurer]
    4) Review Board committee structure   [Board]
    5) Create/Pay for a marketing plan   [Board]
    6) Purchase and develop a survey tool   [Communications]
    7) Board orientation process   [Board]
    8) Scholarship sustainability and marketing   [Membership]
    9) Thank you notes to committee members for service   [Committee Chairs]
    10) Letters to chief judges or court executive   [Board]
    11) Board members engage exhibitors   [Board]

_____

2017-2018 Strategic Planning Priorities

SFA #1: Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement

GOAL 1: NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.

- Develop meaningful member metrics (5)
  - Update ECP metrics and better tracking on new website (2)
  - Create an annual report of membership (positions, years of service, etc.)
  - Devise strategic demographic data capture (2)
- Update NACM promotional materials and videos
  - Determine Return on Investment for membership (2)
- Focus on new member recruitment
  - Student members (4)
    - Reinstate graduate student scholarship
  - States/regions with low membership (2)
  - States/regions of upcoming conferences
  - Judges
  - Tribal members
  - Dual membership programs
  - Target by state structure
  - Webinar outreach to non-member attendees (2)
  - Cross-promotion with other organizations (American Society of Criminology, etc.)
- Review membership structure (ECP, retirees, etc.)

GOAL 2: NACM will increase opportunities for members to get involved and be active.

- Develop off-boarding process (5)
  - List retirees in *Court Manager*, thank you letter for service, recommend successor, etc.
- Engage State Association leaders (9)
  - Develop topics for discussion
  - Get leaders on committees
  - Send speakers/materials to state association events and get on their agenda
  - Recognize leaders/associations present at annual meeting
  - Expand dual memberships
- Better use of Conference App (2)
  - Gamify to promote networking and social events
  - App Guru at conferences
- Expand use of social media (3)
  - Promote committees
  - Connected Communities and Blogs
- Engage webinar participants (3)
  - Polls, links to NACM materials, etc.
  - Membership info at end of all webinars

- o Note opportunities for continued engagement (Conferences, blogs, etc.)
- Rethink business meeting schedule at annual conference
- Promote member benefits
- Training/Materials to law schools
- More/Consistent outreach to non-renewals
- Connect/Expand committee involvement
- Lower cost of attendance at conferences
- Engage members in committees (10+)
  - o Promote with social media
  - o SIG Sessions
  - o State leaders on committees
  - o Highlight in *Court Express*
  - o Better info on committees and how to join
  - o Market with dual members
- Listen to what members are saying in surveys, evaluations, etc.
- Increase social, family events/discounts at conferences
- More member-written articles in *Court Manager* and *Court Express*
- Engage in scholarship fundraising
- Seek out non-member attendees at conferences and follow-up

SFA #2: Education and Resources Provided by NACM

GOAL 1: NACM will increase attendance at, and participation in, its educational activities.

- (Re)Assess curriculum needs and evaluate resources (2)
- Plan to increase conference attendance in future years
- Post conference attendee list for continued networking
- Develop one-time mini summits/events (2)
  - o Strategic planning
  - o Emergency preparedness
- Strengthen partnerships (2) – NAPCO, COSCA, NAJSE
- Better use of guides and topic selection
- Identify and network special interests at conferences (3)
  - o Focus groups, use of conference app, table discussions, etc.
- Identify conference topics (6)
  - o Work with local state association for priorities
  - o Coordinate with webinars
  - o Note trending/hot topics
  - o Education for different types/levels for court employees (ECP, first time managers, etc.)
- Assess conference strategies (3)
  - o Diversity of speakers
  - o Repeating of sessions
  - o Frequency of topics
  - o Faculty development workshops
  - o Understanding of adult learning, session types, etc.

GOAL 2: NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues.

- Seek out SJI project grants
- Focus on speaker development (3)
  - Ask speakers to do follow-up article
  - Online/conference Toastmasters
- Website improvements (5)
  - Searchable keywords and meta tags to elevate web presence
  - Compile and share website stats with Board/Committees
  - Improve access to knowledge-base and resources on site
  - Assess needs of member to focus site layout to meet most common interactions
  - Remove outdated guides and materials
- Expand use of technology (7)
  - Regularly scheduled podcasts
  - Blogs – blog of the month, link *Court Manager* articles in threads
  - More webinars
  - Short videos with related materials for local training use
  - Promote conference recordings
- *Court Manager* improvements (3)
  - Add ECP column
  - Assess what is needed in it
  - Develop index of articles, topics, authors, etc.
- *Court Express* improvements
  - Highlight ways to get involved
- Consider certification options (2)
- Conference development (9)
  - Multi-year education plan
  - Ethics track
  - Core track
  - Basic soft skills on management and leadership
  - Strategic partnerships with collaboration partners
  - Use Core curricula more
- Core development
  - Encourage and track use of Core curricula
  - Better identification of Core topics at conferences
- Model Code of Conduct – develop materials and webinar once updated

SFA #3: Advocacy for the Profession

GOAL 1: NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management profession.

- State of the Profession (6)
    - Annual address and report on the state of the profession
- Develop communication strategy for advocacy efforts
- Develop "think tank" to give input on trending issues
- Tooklit for media engagement
- Resolutions (3) – need purpose and reflect NACM's goals
- Whitepaper
- Collaborate with Partners (3) – joint statements, trending issues
- Outreach on importance of profession (7)
    - Career focus at schools
    - Toolkit for citizen academies and similar programs
    - Seek out clerks, judges, etc.

SFA #4: Association Governance

GOAL 1: NACM's governance is representative, responsive, and effective.

- Review Board committee structure
    - New Education Committee
    - Role of Finance Committee
- Scholarship sustainability and marketing
- Board orientation process
    - Educate incoming committee chairs on purpose and responsibilities
- Re(Assess) partnerships and what NACM gets out of them
- Strategic Planning priorities review and discussion at each annual conference
- Purchase and develop a survey tool
- Create/Pay for a marketing plan
- Thank you notes to committee members for service
- Letters to chief judges or court executive citing importance of staff involvement on committees
- Evaluate budget in terms of Strategic Priorities investment
- Board members engage exhibitors (2)
    - Walk the exhibit floor
    - Develop Return on Investment materials

Strategic Planning Report Form – 2016-2017

Strategic Focus Area	Goal	Strategic Project	Project Status	Responsible Committee
Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.	Reach out to new, diverse, and untapped groups and geographical regions. & Implement other innovative recruitment and retention methods and practices.	Committee member Leesa McNeil concluded her study and a new capability of LinkedIn was uncovered. Board Approved $500 a month campaign initiative for July-November 2017	Membership
Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	NACM will increase opportunities for members to get involved and be active	Launch new onboarding process/program for new members	Initial contact with Registered Creative on campaigns. Current NACM site does not support the infrastructure for a cohesive automated onboarding experience. This item will be carried into 2017-18.	Membership
Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.	Develop recommendations and action plan for improving data collection and tracking of key NACM metrics	NACM hired a consultant to review the website as a whole. This review included an in-depth look at membership metrics and lack thereof. A discussion on a plan to move forward is pending and should include a system to help with data collection.	Membership
Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	NACM's membership will be more diverse and representative of the court profession.	Enhance materials that communicate the value of membership and return on investment	Janet Reid drafted a Value of Membership document. The Committee used this to assist in redesigning the membership brochure	Membership

Strategic Focus Area	Goal	Strategic Project	Project Status	Responsible Committee
Membership – Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement	NACM will increase opportunities for members to get involved and be active	Implement other innovative engagement methods and practices. (Early Career Professionals spotlight)	ECP offered a member spotlight in the *Court Express*	Membership
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues.	Improve NACM website – Phase 1: Evaluate and report on the function, purpose and use of NACM's website	Board contracted to have an external evaluation and review of the website. Report has been received for review by the Board.	Communications
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM will increase attendance at, and participation in, its educational activities.	Evaluate and make recommendations for improving/updating NACM's existing resources	Participation increased for both the 2017 Midyear and Annual conference. A sub-committee is meeting regularly to plan transition to the electronic version of *The Court Manager* to increase usage	Communications
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues.	Provide or conduct a web-based educational program each quarter	The first webinar for 2017 was on LGBTQ awareness and the second one was on Emergency Preparedness. Both webinars a success as the registration exceeded 100 participants. Paying for GoToWebinar services only when there is a webinar and cancelling in between webinars has been cost effective. A third webinar on Court Administration is scheduled for September 2017. Electronic Guide Court Administrator guide update went out last Fall and. Domestic Violence will go out this Fall. Social	Communications

Strategic Focus Area	Goal	Strategic Project	Project Status	Responsible Committee
			media updates are done regularly.	
Association Governance	Evaluate, improve, and align Board processes, procedures and practices with operational and strategic priorities.	Early Career Professionals Scholarship Sustainability Plan	The Committee created a sustainability model for scholarships, which was reviewed and approved by the Board. The Secretary/Treasurer and Association Manager identified funding to support this effort. The plan is active and will continue in 2018.	Finance
Association Governance	Evaluate, improve, and align Board processes, procedures and practices with operational and strategic priorities.	Whistle Blower Policy Management	The Committee met with NCSC and NACM president to include a clause in contractual agreement with NCSC to cover any reported misconduct and the notification process to follow.	Finance
Association Governance	Evaluate, improve, and align Board processes, procedures and practices with operational and strategic priorities.	Review of the Association's Audit process	Board accepted a proposal to institute an industry standard three-year audit cycle. The operations manual has been updated to reflect this change. A tentative policy on the role and responsibilities of an audit committee has been created for Board review.	Finance
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues	Curricula download survey	A survey has been created and is operational.	CORE
Education and	NACM's	Curricula review process	Forming small work groups. The first	CORE

Strategic Focus Area	Goal	Strategic Project	Project Status	Responsible Committee
Resources Provided by NACM	informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues		workgroup for caseflow and workflow has started its work and will complete its review in the near future. The next group will be formed to review the budget and fiscal management competency.	
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues	Creation of presentations on the CORE competencies to include on the website.	Most original curricula authors have agreed to create presentations. As they are developed and approved by the committee they are placed on the website, under resources.	CORE
Education and Resources Provided by NACM	NACM's informational resources and materials will be easily accessible, useful and reflective of emerging issues	Rollout Core Educational Sessions	Two new competencies will be presented at the July 2017 conference, making a total of eight that have been presented at conferences.	CORE
Advocacy for the Profession	NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management profession.	Develop, present and institutionalize a State of Court Management address	The inaugural address will be given on the Thursday Business Meeting at the annual conference.	Governance
Advocacy for the Profession	NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management	Develop an "Importance of the Court Management Profession" paper	The State of the Profession address will be tweaked for an article to follow in the next *Court Manager*. The project will continue in to the next year.	Governance

Strategic Focus Area	Goal	Strategic Project	Project Status	Responsible Committee
	profession.			
Advocacy for the Profession	NACM will be an influential and respected voice on behalf of courts and the court management profession.	Develop a communication strategy to include media engagement	Resolution process being amended to include specific communication outreach. Communication on other strategic priorities on hold pending drafts and further discussion See also articles/updates in Court Express, Court Manager, etc.	Governance
Association Governance	NACM's governance is representative, responsive, and effective.	Develop and implement an improved Board Orientation Program/Process	The Board Resource Guide is updated annually by incoming President, regular New Board Members conference calls, creation of Board mentorship by assigning "buddies", Revised Operations Manual appendices summary to also identify committee responsibilities.	Board
Association Governance	NACM's governance is representative, responsive, and effective.	Strengthen committee/team structure to align with strategic priorities	Committee Progress Reports now track Strategic Plan project status. Each committee reviews SP and priorities at beginning of year and self-identifies issues to address.	Board

Submitted by: Greg Lambard & T.J. BeMent

Date: 6/27/17

Please tell us what you think NACM should be saying about the topics you rated as "strongly agree" or "agree.

General Statements

- There really isn't a "voice" for the court as a body of work. Each jurisdiction is designated to speak for themselves. Unfortunately, because of how different we all operate, anyone that does speak up differs from another court and then we look disorganized.
- These are issues that the courts need to be ahead of instead of reacting to. Reacting to the issues causes courts to have to "scramble" instead of planning ahead and being ready.
- In general I do think we need to be very careful to honor a distinction between sort of a technical/public service advocacy (like assisting self-represented litigants) and political and public policy issues, current political footballs like the elimination of monetary bail. Support the courts, support our public service delivery, but we ought not to become position-advocates in current political and public policy debates.
- Pay Attention. Listen to what your local courts are telling you is important about this.
- I have always considered NCSC and COSCA to be the advocacy arm of the state courts on a national level. I perhaps erroneously see NACM as an association dedicated to the development of its members. I am leery of NACM perhaps arriving at a different outcome than COSCA and NCSC and how that could put employees in jeopardy if they are advocating something not in alignment with their jurisdiction's position. I would want to understand more about whether NACM would coordinate and collaborate with those organizations.
- These are all topics that NACM should be involved in the conversation. Courts are always being asked to do more with less resources and courthouses have become targets of society's anger as a result.
- I think lobbying should be related to court administration issues not policy decisions.
- First, I still don't know what this survey means by "advocate on." Against monetary bail? For it? How about "advocating" on the abortion bypass cases and petitions (where minors can get abortions without parental consent or notification with a court order)? Oh no, we'd never touch that one! (and I would agree). I mention that hot-button issue as an example to illustrate the danger of becoming policy advocates in current political or subjective public policy debates. NACM is exists for the courts and the profession, not as an advocacy or lobbying organization. If we become political or policy advocates, then we've forgotten our mission and purpose and will probably lose a good chunk of our membership.

I.   **Position Papers / Full Policy Statements / Resolutions**
   a.   NACM should develop position papers similar to CCJ/COSCA on important issues that in turn can be utilized by members when confronting these issues in home states. Develop position papers for state associations and bar association partners
   b.   Fines and fees and monetary bail - NACM should emphasize the role of the court to work toward FAIR justice and eliminate influences of bias, balancing budgets through

fines, and fear of retaliation from governments that interfere with independence of the court (both for judges and court administrators and staff)

c. It seems like there has been such a strong focus on generational shifts that courts are moving away from the importance of courts due process and providing access to justice. Redirect or refocus the issues we're experiencing today based on the original foundation of the justice system while providing more information to public. The Judicial Branch/Courts are to interpret the laws and apply the laws. Instead we have transitioned into more of a rehabilitation process for all case types.

d. Promote the betterment of fair and equitable access to justice

e. For example regarding budget pressures; advocacy could be towards a standard budget for the Courts/Justice system. A balance to that would be third party auditors to check how the Court's are using funds and if they are completing the goals, projects, etc.

f. My only question on any that I disagree with is whether NACM should be involved in "social" issues. Those that directly affect court operations should be our focus.

g. As managers, we are responsible not only for the implementation of programs in these areas, but also for the unity of the Courts. As a national association, we are able to help the courts unity in addressing these new areas in the field of law and justice. When the public observes the unity of the court, the strength of the judicial branch remains.

h. These are important factors that are or will influence court practices. Court leaders need to be conversant on them, know how and where they create influence and culture impacts, and how to leverage or manage them.

i. Our courts need clear guidance on the appropriate use of interpreters for LEP and ADA in both court-managed and court-ordered services.

j. Please educate and advocate for the need for 1) court reform and modernizing courts to better serve the needs of the public who are using the courts or who choose not to use them because they are too costly/slow/complicated. We cannot afford to do things the way we have always done them. We have to be modern and flexible and deliver case dispositions in a way that satisfied public expectations while never compromising the right to due process.

k. We know these topics are the causes du jour, but putting court administrators in the policy driving seat can create rifts in the local judiciary that topics like self represented litigants and technology would not.

l. My recommendation is that NACM should be on the proactive side of informing necessary parties of the impact these topics have on how cases are adjudicated.

II. **Highlight of stats, trends, issues…**
   a. providing stats, trends and info gathered from other courts and the public.
   b. Problems Courts faces today
   c. How to effectively assist courts and court personnel in handling each of the issues currently pressing the courts.
   d. Other topics like generation issues, public confidence, technology, etc.; these issues would need more exposure.

e. NACM should be speaking about "pre-trial" reform issues including the use of non-monetary bail, wherever appropriate, and "reasonable" fines, fees and costs (i.e. the court should not act as an income generator when it comes to fines, fees and costs), and the importance of access to our courts (i.e. language, technology, cultural issues etc.).

f. The effect these issues have on the structure and operation of the court system.

g. Meetings about the subjects

h. Courts need sufficient funds not only for court security on the grounds of the court but also cyber attacks. We have to be proactive during in this technology world.

i. I have appreciated having NACM as a resource for information on National trends

j. Educate on what research shows. It may show therapeutic courts are of limited value in certain cases.

k. Courts must be on the forefront of cultural awareness.

III. **Court Express Articles / Brief Statements of Policy**

a. An increase in what NACM believes will help Courts move forward and for the information to be a part of the Court newsletters or some method for all employees to be aware.

IV. **Collection of Best Practices / Success Stories / Lessons Learned**

a. Discussion of Best Practices. Also identify the resources to help courts with some of these issues if any are available.

b. NACM should continue to assist by doing research to support and drive decisions that courts can rely on and adapt to help drive decisions at the local level.

c. identify resources

d. We should be advocates to understand how our members manage these services and handle the processes to ensure effectiveness, efficacy and transparency. Once this information is obtained NACM can then establish a standard for best practices or as a bench mark measurement for court performance reporting on these best practices.

e. Courts need NACM to be an effective partner in assisting in determining best practices to address the issues targeted.

f. Help the courts solve problems

g. Solutions, resources and an exchange of ideas across the country of what is working/is not working.

h. Provide relevant data that objectively shows why continued improvements in those areas fundamentally improve justice and the ethical and appropriate use of public resources.

i. Best practices in each area, research driven solutions, and supporting change.

j. Different courts are so diverse, it would be nice to have some consistency

k. Many of these topics center around the same idea of public confidence in the courts, which is ultimately the most important. Without it, we may find a time in the future where the public will find a way to privatize the work we do.

l.   Assist courts with ways to better operations for increased public confidence and trust in courts.

V.   **Training / Public information / Discussions**

a.   I believe that NACM should provide information and training for all its members so as to make sure that we remain up to date.

b.   The importance of explaining the needs of courts today and the purpose of why we do what we do in our profession. There is a sense of unimportantance in courts out there and I believe this is why the court is seen in such a unclear and confusing light to the general public and city/state administrators that make decisions that may and most of the time do effect the way we do our job.

c.   appear in national forums

d.   join NCSC in projects and conferences

e.   Lead discussion on various topics

i.   What are ways we can challenge traditional views of court communication/public interaction and reach a wider audience?

ii.   how can we integrate some of the "private sector perks" into our business model?

iii.   funding cannot come on the backs of the very people who can least afford it and most need court access.

iv.   I think that we should be focused on racial equity, not just cultural awareness or language access. There are inequitable results in our courts and we should look at how to end this inequity.

v.   Restorative courts. Rather than make crime the government's problem, make it the community's problem. Get more communities involved in holding the offender accountable and make the victim and the community whole again.

vi.   Assisting the court systems in navigating through the issues. Court costs have had some law suits filed. If you can't charge court costs, how do you fund the court? How do you work with your key stakeholders to develop a funding plan?

vii.   if an individual commits a crime what recourse does the court have? We are losing the ability to make people obey the laws of our communities.

f.   communications sent to non-NACM members.

g.   Continue to facilitate networking and open communication among members.

h.   Education of external customers & partners on the impact each of these are having on the courts.

i.   assist on creating a media relationship conveying separation from other branches of government.

j.   I think it is critical that people understand these 8 areas of concern and the complexity of each one, and the impact they have on the Court and its ability to provide access to justice for all.

k.   These issues should be addressed frequently and openly so that the citizens are educated and knowledgeable.

l. Generational shift in customers is defined by social media and the "Yelp" affect of good or bad rating - one bad comment multiplies 10 times vs the affect of a good comment. Cultural awareness and language access is still a big problem in our courts. Bench cards, classes are not getting the message to our judges and court staff.   Public confidence in the courts is getting worse - not better. Judges giving goofy sentences affects all judges in all courts, in all states. Social media makes these infrequent events go viral and the impression it leaves is awful.

m. Cultural awareness: The state of affairs in this country is appalling. There is a need for understanding inclusivity verses diversity, as this impacts court services (hiring and customer service, etc).

n. Technology: Ensure the courts understand the importance of budget development in an effort to support ever evolving technology to service clientele efficiently, accurately and timely.

o. Generational shift: We speak a lot on the differences; however, it is just as important to educate on how best to work with the different groups in the workplace, what the courts can offer to improve employee retention, but also interacting with the customers of these various generations.

p. Problem Solving Courts: The purpose, dismantle the perception that the courts is engaging in social services and new trends in Problem Solving Courts.

q. Court Security: Based upon the temperature of mass tragedies in business offices across the United States, how does the court obtain the necessary resources and manpower to keep visitors and employees safe.

r. Court Security is a responsibility of the courts, the judicial branch and cannot be the responsibility of the local Sheriff or Law Enforcement.

s. Budget, public confidence, social media, NACM should provide leadership on related issues and reinforce definitions (especially those which are changing)

t. Citizen awareness and knowledge of court process.

u. NACM should be educating the public and courts on the evidenced based best practices and furtherance of the country's democracy, including separation of powers.

v. Explain in laymen's terms the importance of the independence of the judicial branch and how the independence of the judicial branch is threatened by fiscal politics.

w. Courts should listen to their administrators and judges need to work with their Clerk not against them.

x. All topics relate directly to public trust and confidence in modern courts. Promoting the value of court should be NACM's mission.

y. Need to explain to the public the constraints of the court. The court system is complicated and most consumers don't understand the system or why things take a while to reconcile.

z. Develop training tools for implementation and advocate for issues relative to maintaining funding for court operations

aa. Courts need to rebuild confidence and connection to the communities they serve.

VI. **Advocacy**

a. NACM should advocate for more education on the three branches of government. I have encountered open hostility to the judicial branch on behalf of the legislative and executive branches, as well as a complete lack of understanding of courts in general on behalf of an increasingly non-lawyer legislature. Even the general public has a minimal understanding of the third branch of government and our purposes and responsibilities.

b. NACM could help us advocate for these [security] resources and acknowledge that this is a huge issue affecting our court.

c. NACM needs to look to the roots of court administration when considering priorities for the profession and for courts. All the "new" purposes are great once the original purposes and responsibilities are consistently met. Too many jurisdictions have caseloads that are too large and staffing too small to deliver on those purposes on a consistent basis. This is the area that NACM should, with CCJ, COSCA, and state/local associations, advocate.

d. The courts are taking a hit in the media (similar to other branches of the government). Most ethics would prevent employees from taking stands on issues but NACM could be a voice for judges/court administrators/clerks. The other topics I agree with, I just think NACM is a good source for education for members more so than as an actual advocate with legislative bodies.

e. Advocating for more court involvement in these areas.

f. advocate for better building security

g. That these issues impact courts and the delivery of court services, and there is a fiscal impact on courts.

h. NACM should advocate for issues that the courts have some level of control over. We can do nothing about the budget or how fines and fees are distributed.

i. Ensure collection/enforcement of fines/fees is an executive branch function. Ensure fines and fees are reasonably related to the case at issue, are not enacted or increased for the sole purpose of raising revenue and are reasonable relative to a minimum wage earner. Eliminate monetary bail.

j. Education on the importance of the judicial branch being supported through general funds in lieu of fees and grants is vital to the future of the branch.

k. NACM should be advocates for the most fair and just position

l. Advocating for equal access and inclusion for all parties involved.

m. Fines and Fees: For state and county courts, support fee waivers and clearly define criteria for a waiver as well as collections process/options.

n. Budget Pressures: How to move/prepare state AOC to advocate stronger for sufficient funding from the governor of the state, as the counties and grants are always struggling for realistic operational needs.

o. Advocate for ways for courts to be more transparent and less bogged down in bureaucracy. Justice should be swift for all those who seek it.

p. Regarding language access and access for SRL's, NACM should be advocating for funding for resources and raising awareness as to challenges.

q. Budget: A solution can be found by allocating a certain, unchangeable percentage of the budget each year and the branch can create its own reserves (untouchable by other branches) to prepare for budget downturns.

r. The courts are Judicial and should NOT have the city/county trying to tell them how to budget the revenue that the courts make for them.\ The court has no real voice in the legislative process. NACM can on behalf of the court lobby for these important issues.

Where are Courts Going in the Next Ten Years?
Ten Things to Know

The Future
NEXT EXIT ➚

Phillip Knox and Peter C. Kiefer
August 26, 2018

The Surveys

What the future holds is one of the most thought about questions for any court. We deal with it, we plan for it, occasionally we rail against it, but we ignore the future at our peril. Here, we summarized the best thinking of over 1,200[1] court professionals who looked at 170 different scenarios of possible futures. Additionally, we have focused on Millennial respondents, comparing their assessments with those of the overall group.

Seven surveys conducted over six years have sought to answer the question: what is the most likely future for courts? By assessing the probability of various scenarios occurring within the next ten years (then averaging those results), we have developed expert estimates of what the future holds for courts. The assessments are labeled *Highly Likely, Likely, Maybe, Unlikely*, or *Improbable* based on average assessment categories.

For an in-depth look at many scenarios, we invite you to go to the https://www.Courtleader.net website. Janet Cornell hosts the site where we have posted several "thought pieces" on *The Future of the Courts* page. The full set of survey results are also attached to this email.

No. 10: Courts Adopting SmartForm Apps

We first surveyed respondents in 2014 on courts adopting intelligent form (SmartForms) apps; it was assessed as Highly Likely. In 2018 respondents again assessed it as Highly Likely. SmartForm apps can be an important factor in providing self-represented litigants greater access to the courts.

Theme	Overall Group
Almost All Courts Use Intelligent Forms ("SmartForms") Applications	**Highly Likely**

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that courts adopting SmartForms in the next ten years was *Highly Likely*.

No. 9: Nonprofit Groups Offer Grants to Courts

In 2016, respondents assessed that nonprofit groups had a 50-50 chance of offering grants to courts in the next ten years. In 2018, respondents again assessed it as having a 50-50 chance. Since 2016 some courts have reported benefiting from grants by nonprofits, which could come with specific expectations for courts. As court administrators are pressed to continue delivering essential services despite tightening budgets, alternative funding sources could well be considered.

Theme	Overall Group
Nonprofit Groups Offer Grants to Courts	*Maybe*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that nonprofits offering grants to courts had a *50–50 Chance* of occurring in the next ten years.

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[1]The Spring 2013 survey received 234 responses, 31 were Millennials; the Summer 2013 survey received 212 responses, 31 were Millennials; the 2014 survey received 508 responses, 58 were Millennials; the 2015 survey received 494 responses, 49 were Millennials; the 2016 survey received 369 responses, 42 were Millennials; the 2017 survey received 391 responses, 38 were Millennials; the latest 2018 survey received 352 responses, 47 were Millennials.

No. 8: Cases Will Continue to Become More Complex

First surveyed in the Spring of 2013, respondents assessed as Likely that cases will continue becoming more complex; in 2018 respondents again assessed it as Likely. The task of managing these increasingly complex cases will fall to court administrators who will have to employ a multi-faceted approach to keep cases moving, including judicial workflow.

Theme	Overall Group
Case Complexity Will Increase	*Likely*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that it is *Likely* that case complexity will increase in the next ten years.

No. 7: The Public Turns More to Ways Outside of Courts for Satisfaction

In 2018 respondents assessed the possibility of citizens turning to methods outside of courts to deal with their disputes as having a 50-50 Chance. The advent of social media which offers ways (e.g., trolling, or doxxing) to publicly "shame" individuals by those who lack the finances to make filing a civil suit practical, and some online dispute resolution services, which provide mediation services even before filing a court case, makes the court administrator's job more difficult as he or she helps their court maintain public trust and confidence in the courts.

Theme	Overall Group
Public Turns to Ways Outside of Courts for Satisfaction	*Maybe*

Millennials agreed with the overall group assessment that the public turning to ways outside of the courts for satisfaction had a *50-50 Chance* of occurring in the next ten years.

No. 6: Courts Expand Their Role to Adapt to the Aging Demographic

Respondents assessed as Likely that courts will have to start new programs to address issues involving the elderly in the 2016 survey. As the community ages, court administrators will be tested to find ways to provide full and equal access to courts for such special populations as the elderly.

Theme	Overall Group
Courts Adopt to the Aging Demographic	*Likely*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that it is *Likely* that courts will expand their role to address an increasingly elderly population.

No. 5: Governance Issues Continue to Challenge Courts

This scenario appeared in the Winter-Spring 2014 survey; unclear role definitions, relationships, and assignments of responsibilities between court administrators and leadership judges will continue to dog courts for the next ten years. Respondents assessed it as Likely. This is a significant issue for court administrators as effective governance is critical to ensuring accountability of our courts.

Theme	Overall Group
Governance Issues Will Continue to Challenge Courts	*Likely*

Millennial respondents thought that the governance issues continually challenging courts was less probable than the overall group, assessing it as having only a *50-50 Chance* in the next ten years.

No. 4: Courts Maintain Their Records in the Cloud (or its Successor)

Part of the 2018 survey, this scenario forecasted that courts would maintain their records electronically in the cloud and have dedicated organizations administer the data in this manner. Respondents assessed it as Likely. As courts turn to "e-everything," court administrators will be called upon to deal with this innovative method of records management.

Theme	Overall Group
Courts Maintain Their Records in the Cloud	*Likely*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that it is *Likely* courts will maintain their records in the cloud.

No. 3: Records Management, including eFiling, Use Blockchain Technology

In 2018 respondents thought it Likely that courts will maintain their records using blockchain technology (or its successor) to guarantee the authenticity of records and data without the need for extensive and expensive outside auditing. Di Graski and Paul Embly provide a good explanation of how blockchain technology works, discuss its implications for courts, and mention that government agencies such as the Cook County, Illinois Records of Deeds are now experimenting with it.[i] Blockchain will require more sophisticated contracts with organizations dedicated to administering this data. Court administrators will have to become even more experienced in sound business practices which will then drive technological efforts.

Theme	Overall Group
Records Management including eFiling, Will Use Blockchain Technology	*Likely*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that it is *Likely* that courts will use blockchain technology in the next ten years.

No. 2: Courts Will Lose Most of Their Organizational Memory

Respondents assessed courts losing their organizational memory as Likely in 2013, and assessed it again as Likely in 2018. Court administrators will need to address this challenge as courts need sound succession planning and smooth transfer of institutional knowledge to ensure continued success.

Theme	Overall Group
Courts Lose Most of Their Organizational Memory	*Likely*

Interestingly, millennial respondents did not think courts losing their organizational memory was as likely as the overall group, assessing it as having only a *50-50 Chance*.

No. 1: Legislatures and the Executive Continue to Drive Judicial Policy

Surveyed in the Winter-Spring of 2014, respondents assessed legislative and executive mandates continuing to drive judicial policy as Likely. Court administrators overseeing increasingly complex and diverse organizations will be pushed to use all their organizational skills.

Theme	Overall Group
Legislatures and the Executive Continue to Drive Judicial Policy Decisions	*Likely*

Millennial respondents agreed with the overall group assessment that it is *Likely* that legislatures and the Executive will continue driving judicial policy decisions.

We're gearing up for our 2019 survey and want to hear what you think should be in that survey. Also, let us know of anyone who might be interested in participating in the next survey. Send your emails to futureofcourts@gmail.com.

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[i] Di Graski and Paul Embly, "When Might Blockchain Appear in Your Court?", *Trends in State Courts, 2018 Annual Publication.*
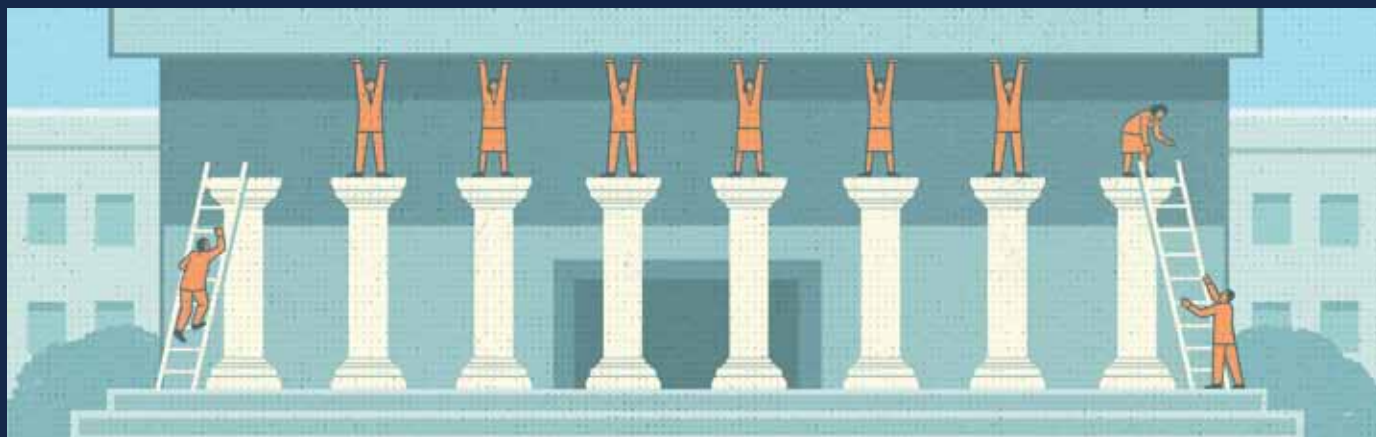
Preparing Tomorrow's Public Service

WHAT THE NEXT
GENERATION NEEDS

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This publication is the product of the Volcker Alliance. It is an important goal of the Alliance to produce reports that contain ideas, proposals, and recommendations for dealing with persistent governance problems in new ways based on independent research and analysis supporting constructive solutions. To stimulate this process and maintain project independence to make such conclusions and recommendations as they deem to be appropriate, these Alliance projects are commissioned to proceed without the requirement of approval of their conclusions and recommendations by the board of directors collectively or by individual members of the board of directors.

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE advances effective management of government to achieve results that matter to citizens. The nonpartisan Alliance works toward that objective by partnering with other organizations—academic, business, governmental, and public interest—to strengthen professional education for public service, conduct needed research on government performance, and improve the efficiency and accountability of governmental organization at the federal, state, and local levels.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AT ALL LEVELS face management challenges of immense scale and complexity. In the decades ahead, these challenges will continue to grow as the nation confronts a wave of retiring career government professionals. Building and maintaining a highly capable public service that stands ready and able to effectively carry out public policies at all levels of government has never been more critical. Toward that end, the Volcker Alliance has undertaken this study to explore the skills and competencies most needed to prepare the next generation of great public servants. We hope that it will prove a catalyst for action at all levels of government.

The mission of the Volcker Alliance is to advance effective management of government to achieve results that matter to citizens. A core element of effective government is a highly skilled public workforce with capacities that are matched to the challenges identified by policymakers and are important to the public. In collaboration with experts from higher education, government agencies, professional associations, and other civic organizations, the Volcker Alliance set out to develop a study seeking to strengthen the public service by shedding light on two critical questions:

1. What skills and competencies do rising government leaders believe are most important for effectiveness in their jobs today and in the future?
2. What educational and professional development programs can help them as they prepare for leadership in government?

A unique contribution of this report is the input, through focus groups and a survey, of nearly 1,000 rising leaders from all levels of government who reflected on the capabilities most critical to their work and how they prefer to learn. This information is paired with interviews of senior experts in government and educational institutions to explore current leaders' perspectives on how we can best prepare for the future. We hope this study advances an important conversation about how we can continue to uphold America's public service legacy.

Section I explains the background of the Alliance's work in building a capable public service and the purpose of the study. It describes the increasingly complex conditions of the public sector, as well as the importance of retaining and developing top talent. It also provides a broad overview of the study and explains this report's distinct contribution.

Section II presents actionable recommendations for government agencies, government

professional associations, and higher education and training institutions. Stakeholders are encouraged to help rising leaders join networks of peers and find mentors, while paying better attention to burnout and development opportunities aimed specifically at promoting resilience. Agency and professional association leaders are encouraged to codevelop assessments of public service motivation and leadership aptitude, as well as career-stage learning rubrics that can be developed to help supervisors guide rising leaders on a successful career path. Educational institutions and training providers are also urged to incorporate more field-based components into curricula and partner with government and professional associations to develop scalable professional education offerings that align with the priority competency areas.

Section III provides the study's key findings from the survey of rising government managers. It begins with an overview of the survey questions and objectives. It explores rising leaders' positive disposition to government service and the emphasis that they place on interpersonal leadership strengths. In addition, this section details rising leaders' learning and professional development preferences for both content and format.

Section IV begins with an overview of the importance of interpersonal skills and then examines insights into competency areas in greater detail. The five competency areas that compose our taxonomy are:

1. Managing your team and yourself
2. Responding to the public
3. Navigating the broader environment
4. Data and technology skills
5. Business acumen

The discussion of each competency area includes the central takeaway and a description of the key learning drawn from the study's focus groups, survey, and interviews.

Section V describes the characteristics of professional development approaches that study participants believe can best help rising leaders succeed in cultivating the competencies discussed in Section IV. The importance of networked learning and personal support via communities of peers and mentors is discussed. The section also considers approaches centered on collective problem-solving and the importance of career-stage development.

Section VI highlights some examples of professional development programs that incorporate one or more of the themes featured in the report. The list is drawn from the recommendations of advisers, experts, and survey respondents.

Section VII details the study approach and methodology. It defines the stakeholder

groups referred to throughout the report and describes each of the four phases of work: Defining research questions with Alliance advisers; Focus groups with rising government leaders; Survey research with rising government leaders; and Gathering senior subject matter experts' perspectives on meeting education and training needs. Section VII also provides the demographics for survey respondents.

We hope that this report provides valuable information and insights into how to best support the next generation of government leaders and amplifies the voices of those already calling for more attention to this issue. We invite and encourage government leaders, professional associations, education and training institutions, and other stakeholders to engage with our findings and to share their feedback with the Alliance team.

THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE

I. INTRODUCTION

Study Background and Purpose

The Volcker Alliance advances effective management of government to achieve results that matter to citizens. To support this mission, the Alliance partners with others to help build a highly capable public service that is ready and able to carry out public policies at all levels of government.

This study, *Preparing Tomorrow's Public Service*, is a contribution to a far-ranging conversation about developing and retaining top talent in government service as the sector becomes increasingly complex and challenging. In the Alliance's ongoing collaborations with universities, government agencies, professional associations, and civil society organizations, discussions continually turn to supporting the needs of rising government leaders who operate amid that complexity.

Because of its concern about the professional competencies of those who will assume leadership in government over the next decades, the Alliance selected and consulted a group of advisers from government, higher education, and government partnership organizations (Appendix A) to reflect on a constellation of conditions shaping the public service landscape. Those conditions include:

- The government workforce is undergoing a rapid generational transition, with nearly one-third of federal career employees eligible for retirement by the end of the decade.[1] Similar demographic concerns have made recruitment and retention the top priorities for state and local governments in recent years[2] and have led the National Association of State Personnel Executives to identify "aggressively acquiring, retaining, motivating and rewarding talent" as one of its top five priorities.[3]

- Dramatic increases in the scale and complexity of government's responsibilities have not been matched by growth in its managerial resources, especially at the federal level.[4] A recent survey of Senior Executive Service (SES) employees found that only 50 percent of SES leaders across federal agencies believe that their agency considers how future workforce trends impact their work,[5] while the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports that technological advances have not kept pace with needs.[6]

- The career civil service remains essential for effective governance, but current civil service models may not sufficiently motivate or measure the performance of career government professionals. The National Academy of Public Administration concluded

that the current "human capital system actually hinders the ability of federal depart-
ments and agencies to recruit, develop, and retain top talent."[7]

Despite concerns about these challenges, the Volcker Alliance and its project advisers
share another conviction: that federal, state, and local government has many highly effective
leaders, and it is important to support their preparation and growth however possible. This
commitment to support is both genuine—motivated by respect and admiration for the work
of younger public servants—and highly practical. In his work on the conditions of American
governance, Donald Kettl says that "many of the tasks of twenty-first century government,
especially its critical coordination challenges, are at their core people-based challenges. Solv-
ing them will require skilled managers who can negotiate the constantly shifting forces of
the administrative systems."[8]

As employers and educators of rising government leaders, Alliance advisers contribute
significantly to the success and effectiveness of the vital government management workforce
through training and development efforts. This study aims to enrich those efforts by seeking
the perspective of rising leaders themselves on what it takes to do good work in government
today. Because of the generational shift occurring in government, Alliance advisers agree that
data and insights from the rising generation of leaders would be fresh and valuable contribu-
tions as the profession looks to its future.

This study hopes to spark productive conversation and inform the development of edu-
cation and training support by asking two key questions:

1. What skills and competencies do rising government leaders believe are most important
   for effectiveness in their jobs today and in the future?
2. What educational and professional development programs can help them as they
   prepare for leadership in government?

The study does not seek to create an authoritative taxonomy of competencies needed
for government management or to detail the specific content or applications of these skills.
These are the important responsibilities of human capital specialists in government who
design competency standards for their workforces and of the senior leaders who oversee the
work of their agencies. Nor is the project designed to comprehensively survey the landscape of
professional development offerings for public servants or to shape degree curricula at schools
of government and public policy, a responsibility undertaken by the Network of Schools of
Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration.

Rather, through this project the Alliance and its advisers aim to understand from the

perspective of rising government leaders across federal, state, and local sectors those competencies that best enable them to effectively accomplish the work of government. Based on this understanding, the study seeks to provide insight into how agencies, professional associations, and educational institutions can support rising leaders in developing the competencies that will matter most for effective practice in the coming decade.

This Report's Contribution

This report begins with a set of recommendations for stakeholders, including government agencies, professional associations, and higher education and training institutions. The recommendations draw on a set of key findings, which are highlighted in the next section. The findings delineate the core competencies that rising leaders identified as most important for effectiveness in government. A closer examination of each competency area follows, as well as insights and examples from government and education experts about professional development opportunities that help develop the individual skills.

The conclusions reflect the everyday constraints of making do with limited resources and relying on interpersonal skills to effect progress in government. Rising leaders believed that there should be investments in technology overhauls, new human capital management approaches, and comprehensive training and development programs to support them in their jobs. But rising leaders are realists. Pending these unlikely organizational transfusions, they lead by collaborating, being resourceful, and motivating their teams. Similarly, the professional development approaches that rising leaders and experts identified as most valuable draw on the energy and creativity of the rising leaders themselves. These approaches bring them together for networked learning, which provides opportunities for them to expand their professional circles, find fellowship, develop leadership strengths, and develop practical solutions for the problems they tackle daily in the course of making government function.

The report ends with a description of the study approach, which sets up a dialogue between the perspectives of senior experts in government and education and those of the broad population of rising government leaders working at the federal, state, and local levels. It details the qualitative and quantitative research approach conducted with these constituencies.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE ENCOURAGES all interested stakeholders—including government agencies, professional associations, and higher education and training institutions—to engage with the study findings in full, and it welcomes opportunities for dialogue about how all groups can contribute to the success and effectiveness of rising government leaders. The following ideas for action are grounded in this study's findings and are drawn from the insights of its many focus group participants, survey respondents, and expert interviews.

For Government Agencies and Government Professional Associations

1. **Assist rising leaders in building and joining networks, including those outside their agencies and functional silos.** Networks provide support and leadership development opportunities for rising leaders and, just as importantly, build government capacity as participants codevelop approaches for tackling shared challenges.

2. **Be attentive to burnout and promote professional development opportunities to cultivate resilience.** Agencies must promote and support a culture of continuous learning and development and drive culture change in which employee training is viewed as an investment as opposed to a cost.

3. **Capitalize on the sense of duty and public service ethos of talented young leaders by leveraging assessments to measure public service motivation and leadership aptitude.** Rising government leaders are motivated by mission, and tapping into that motivation can support perseverance. Leadership assessments can help agencies ensure that those entering supervisory or managerial ranks are able to succeed.

4. **Consider how to scale fellows programs to reach more rising leaders.** The curricula and co-learning opportunities afforded by what have generally been small, selective programs and face-to-face requirements can be effectively extended through technology-enabled modes attractive to the larger rising leader population. Agencies must incorporate these programs into comprehensive talent management strategies to ensure that fellows are not merely returning to their old jobs with their same old duties.

5. **Develop career-stage learning rubrics to guide rising leaders as they pursue professional development.** Senior agency and association leaders can join to make recommendations for skills and strengths rising leaders should develop as they advance

to progressive levels of responsibility.

6. **Implement mentoring and coaching programs.** These programs are a valued, effective, and low-cost means to support leaders at all levels in their professional development.

For Higher Education and Training Institutions

1. **Incorporate more field-based content into graduate programs.** Rising government leaders wish that field-based components such as mock negotiations, team-based assignments with assigned roles that reflect typical roles in government, and course work that reflects the interdependencies and overlapping domains in real-world public service had been stronger aspects of their graduate education.

2. **Consider how to deliver learning and skills development aligned to career stages.** Rising leaders develop needs for new leadership competencies and advanced skills as they progress in their careers, which in turn create opportunities for degree programs to offer post-degree courses and experiences (included in the degree program to amplify lifetime degree value or sold as low-cost add-on components).

3. **Facilitate network development and mentoring through alumni communities.** These communities are natural sources of the networks and mentoring relationships that rising leaders value.

4. **Support campus communities of practice for students intending to work in government.** Current students considering government can unite to reinforce their commitment to public service and orient to the world of practice through interacting with alumni and other practitioners.

5. **Partner with government agencies and associations to develop scalable professional education offerings, especially certificate programs, aligned with the priority competency areas.** Schools bring assets of mature-learning technology platforms and pedagogical expertise to partnerships with government. Rising leaders value certificate programs, which about one-third intend to obtain. Learnings from this study may be able to inform the design of these programs, which can be codeveloped and distributed through partnerships with government agencies and professional associations.

III. KEY FINDINGS

Survey Questions and Objectives

A survey conducted with rising government leaders across the country is a cornerstone of this study, providing detailed data representing the voices of those charged with addressing the practical challenges of public service. The Alliance team brings the concerns and expectations of expert advisers, as well as the rich insights of rising leaders gained in focus groups, to the design of the survey and its content areas.

The survey was designed to achieve several objectives:

- Evaluate the importance of professional competencies relative to their importance for effectiveness in government.
- Understand rising government leaders' preferences about professional development.
- Record insights from rising government leaders about professional challenges, advice for peers, and learning interests.

To meet study goals, it was important that the survey was completed by a diverse set of respondents from a variety of regions, government levels, and educational experiences. The Alliance team invited the many professional associations and alumni relations offices in its network to distribute the survey electronically to their member lists. A list of groups that chose to participate in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

In consultation with the advisory committee, the Alliance team developed the following list of competency areas to be tested in the survey. Each competency area included a set of specific skills that rising leaders deploy to achieve effectiveness in that area. This list reflects learning from the focus groups as well as adviser interviews.

COMPETENCY AREAS SURVEYED

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPETENCY AREAS	
MANAGING YOUR TEAM AND YOURSELF • Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated • Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisors • Persevering in the face of adverse situations **RESPONDING TO THE PUBLIC** • Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public • Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices • Honing your message for the public	**NAVIGATING THE BROADER ENVIRONMENT** • Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities • Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment • Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively

COMPETENCY AREAS SURVEYED (continued)

GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY AREAS	
DATA AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS • Proficiency with basic quantitative analysis • Keeping up to date on research and technology innovations relevant to your work • Advancing data-based decision-making • Proficiency in collecting and cleaning data • Creating data visualizations • Advanced data analytics	BUSINESS ACUMEN • Budgetary/financial management acumen • Project and timeline management skills • Effective written communication • Effective oral communication • Negotiation skills

Assessing the Competency Areas

Survey respondents consider themselves to be successfully advancing in government service, and the majority indicate that they have support from peers and mentors.

POSITIVE DISPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Agree or Strongly agree) on a 5-point scale.

I intend to continue in government for the long term.	75%
I have a trusted community of peers.	74%
I am making good progress reaching professional aspirations.	71%
I have a trusted mentor in government.	63%

n=893

Rising government leaders reinforce the importance of leading and interacting with other people for effectiveness in their roles. When asked to allocate ten points among competency areas, survey respondents give strongest emphasis to "managing your team and yourself."

Detailed ratings of skills under the competency areas similarly bear out the importance of interpersonal leadership strengths. Along with the business acumen skills of effective oral and written communication and project management, the most valued skills involve influencing others and

PRIORITIZING THE COMPETENCY AREAS

Please allocate 10 points among the following categories of skills and abilities to indicate which areas you believe are most crucial for success in a public service role like yours.

Managing your team and yourself	2.5
Responding to the public	2.0
Data and technology skills	1.9
Business acumen	1.8
Navigating the broader environment	1.8

n=909

SKILLS IN PUBLIC SECTOR COMPETENCY AREAS

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated	86%
Persevering in the face of adverse situations	85%
Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisor(s)	85%
Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public	81%
Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment	79%
Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively	77%
Honing your message for the public	77%
Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities	71%
Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices	70%
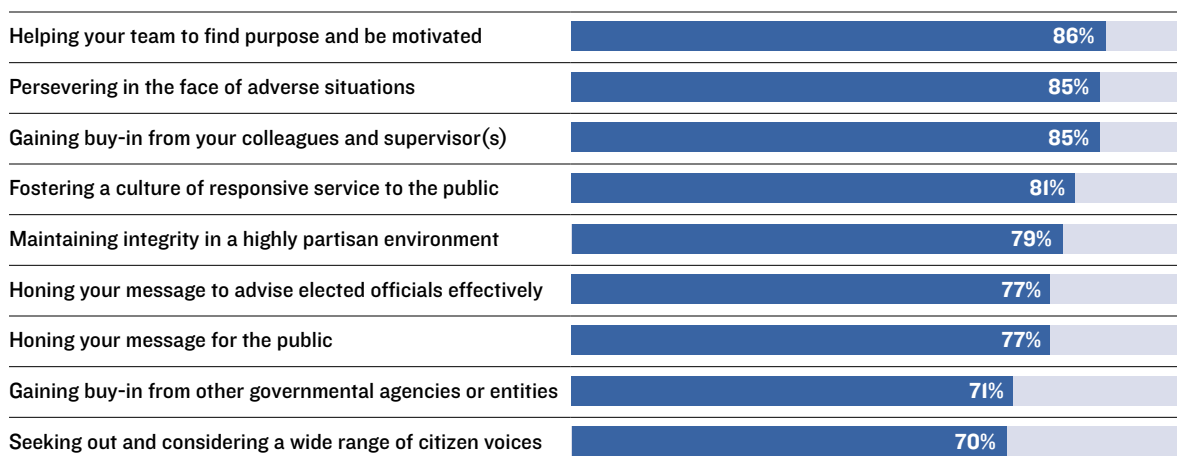
n=920

SKILLS IN GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY AREAS

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Effective oral communication	91%
Project and timeline management	88%
Effective written communication	87%
Budgetary/financial management acumen	78%
Negotiation skills	77%
Keeping up to date on work-related research/tech	72%
Advancing data-based decision-making	71%
Proficiency with basic quantitative analysis	71%
Creating data visualizations	67%
Proficiency in collecting and cleaning data	64%
Advanced data analytics	57%
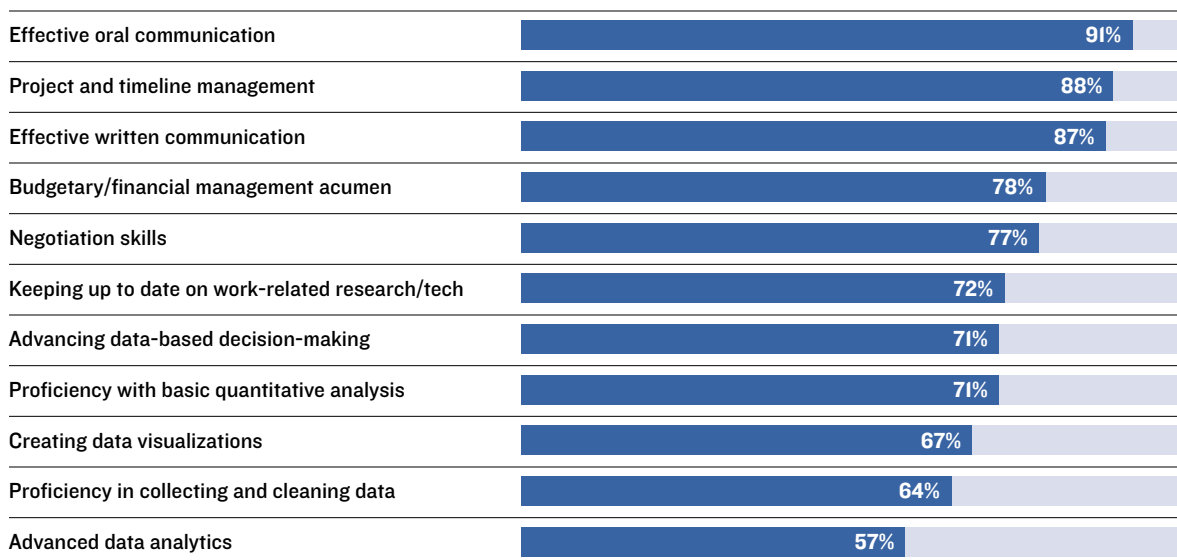
n=921

sustaining personal resilience in challenging circumstances.

The most experienced rising leaders surveyed—those with sixteen to twenty years in government—are especially likely to prioritize skills needed to head departments and agencies and assume public-facing leadership. This is consistent with growing responsibilities and increasing public engagement as promising leaders advance in their career.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS MOST IMPORTANT TO EXPERIENCED MANAGERS (survey respondents with 16 to 20 years in government)

Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Honing your message for the public	89%
Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively	88%
Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment	86%
Budgetary/financial management	85%
Negotiation skills	84%
Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices	83%

n=92

Learning and Professional Development Preferences

Rising government leaders value professional development. Their preferences suggest a market for continual, structured, and robust learning, as well as for more adhoc peer-to-peer networking and mentoring. While some respondents report that they intend to earn a certificate (35 percent) or degree (25 percent) to further their careers in public service, many more are interested in shorter-form development opportunities. Three-quarters of survey respondents report an intention to participate in professional development programs, and half wish that they had access to more relevant offerings. State-level rising leaders appear to be less satisfied with the availability of relevant offerings than peers in federal and local government.

When considering their preferred format for professional development opportunities, respondents appreciate more inten-

STRONG DEMAND FOR RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ...

Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Agree or Strongly agree) on a 5-point scale.

I am planning to undertake professional development in the future.

74%

... WITH ESPECIALLY STRONG DEMAND AT STATE LEVEL

Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Agree or Strongly agree) on a 5-point scale.

I wish I had access to professional development opportunities (workshop, professional community, mentorship program) that were more relevant to me.

OVERALL	51%
LOCAL	42%
STATE	72%
FEDERAL	54%
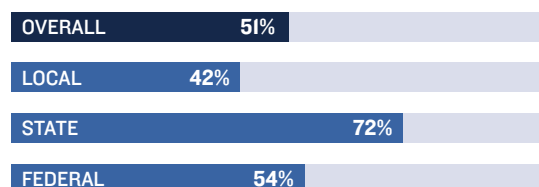
Local n=475, State n=158, Federal n=257

sive options such as executive coaching and multisession courses. Strong interest in mentorship programs and networking communities equally reveal the important value assigned to peer learning.

Rising leaders in the survey prefer to participate in professional development in a setting away from the workplace. More than half are open to online participation. Many focus group respondents express particular appreciation for professional development opportunities outside their department and away from their day-to-day responsibilities that allow them to focus on the opportunity at hand and build relationships with other leaders in different departments.

The following sections of this report further explore survey learning about competency areas and professional development needs in the context of insights provided by advisers and rising government leaders.

PREFERRED FORMAT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Which of the following types of professional development would you most like to take part in? (Select up to three.)

Executive coaching	45%
Multisession course	44%
Mentorship program	42%
Hands-on workshop	40%
Networking community	37%
Rotational program	37%
Single-day presentation	26%
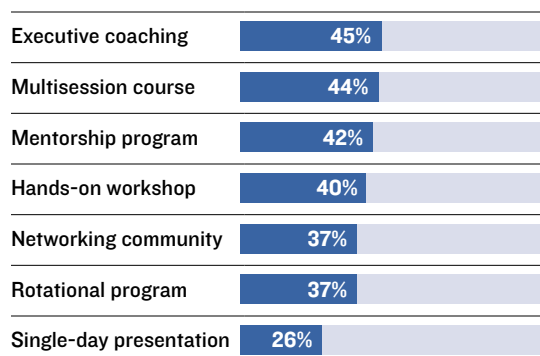
n=894

PREFERRED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS

In what setting would you prefer to engage in professional development? (Select all that apply.)

At an off-site location (not at my workplace)	67%
Online	55%
In my workplace	46%
At a university	43%
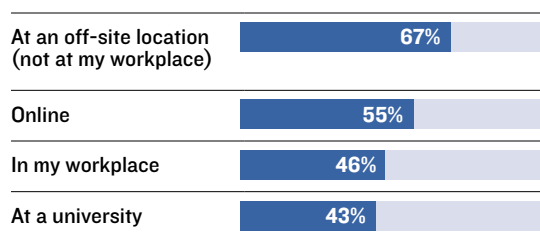
n=888

IV. THE COMPETENCY AREAS IN FOCUS

Overview: The Importance of Interpersonal Skills

This study's findings should inspire confidence about the future of the public service. They show that rising government leaders are committed (75 percent of survey respondents expect to stay in government for the long term) and motivated (71 percent believe they are making good progress in fulfilling their professional aspirations).

> *"Working in the government is complicated business. The founders' system of checks and balances [is] both brilliant—and frustrating. You have to avoid the stereotype of the typical government worker and find ways to be creative and exceptional."* — **RISING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)**

Even more important, rising leaders understand the personal responsibility they bear for making government work. Findings reveal that rising leaders share convictions about what enables high performance and consistently emphasize the importance of personal capacity for leadership. Of course, personal strengths are not the only needed competencies. Foundational business and data-based decision-making skills are important, as they would be for any management workforce. So too is an understanding of how government works in practice—gained through formal education, personal experience, and advice and knowledge shared by peers and mentors. But above all, rising leaders assert that interpersonal effectiveness and personal resilience—commonly labeled "soft skills"—are essential for effectiveness in public service.

Given the urgent focus on technology and data in workforce development circles, it may appear counterintuitive or even naive that rising leaders consider soft skills to be of greatest importance. Indeed, many Alliance advisers expected rising leaders to clamor for data and business management skills to help address broad organizational and operational challenges. But while thought leaders interviewed for the study tend to focus on systemic issues, rising leaders on the ground are much more concerned with the everyday realities of making progress in environments shaped by scarce resources and challenged staff morale. Viewed from the rising leader's perspective, interpersonal leadership supplies the vital energy that fuels government today.

Human capital leaders in government agree. "Because the nature of government has

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL SKILLS

In your opinion, how important are the following skills in a public service role like yours?

1 = Not at all important, **5** = Very important   **1** ■ **2** ■ **3** ■ **4** ■ **5** ■   Percentage of 4 and 5 responses ▨

(n=920)

	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	
Managing your team and yourself										
Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated										86%
Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisors										85%
Persevering in the face of adverse situations										85%
Responding to the public										
Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public										81%
Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices										70%
Honing your message for the public										77%
Navigating the broader environment										
Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities										71%
Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment										79%
Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively										77%
Data and technology skills										
Proficiency with basic quantitative analysis										71%
Keeping up to date on research and technology innovations relevant to your work										72%
Advancing data-based decision-making										71%
Proficiency in collecting and cleaning data										64%
Creating data visualizations										67%
Advanced data analytics										57%
Business acumen										
Budgetary/financial management acumen										78%
Project and timeline management skills										88%
Effective written communication										87%
Effective oral communication										91%
Negotiation skills										77%

shifted, governing through influence and collaboration is the way we're doing the work," said Sydney Heimbrock, assistant director of the Center for Leadership Development at the US Office of Personnel Management. "In theory, if we are continuing to find government institutions critically underfunded, then it is equally important for someone in management to know how to analyze data as well as to lead people across sectors."

> *"I need to know how things work technically on spreadsheets, but the skills I need are working on teams, being able to work with people, being able to work in different layers of bureaucracy, and being able to adjust myself and my expectations."*
>
> **— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (NYC FOCUS GROUP)**

The following sections examine in more detail the competency areas that rising leaders rely on to be effective in government.

A. Managing Your Team and Yourself

The Takeaway

Rising government leaders thrive by mobilizing their teams' best energies, building partnerships when faced with complex challenges, and seeking to continually reinforce their own resilience and sense of purpose.

Key Learning

Skills in the "managing your team and yourself" competency area emerge at the top of the list as rising government leaders in the focus groups and survey emphasize succeeding through mobilizing their teams and forging partnerships across departments. "Helping your team find purpose and motivation" (86 percent top-rated) is among the five most important skills identified in the survey, followed closely by "gaining buy-in from colleagues and supervisors" (85 percent top-rated) and "persevering in the face of adverse situations" (85 percent

MANAGING YOUR TEAM AND YOURSELF

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated	86%
Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisor(s)	85%
Persevering in the face of adverse situations	85%

n=920

top-rated). In their commentary, managers describe conditions where their staff members operate amid conflicting public expectations, policy-bound and resource-strapped agencies, and challenged morale. Often managers are supervising employees who have been working in government significantly longer than themselves.

Today's rising leaders are often leading from the side, "managing up," and seeking common ground with supervisees of all ages and experience levels who bring diverse backgrounds and values. For that reason, they emphasize the need to relate to people by understanding their experiences and perspectives. For rising leaders, supervising others is less about promoting a big vision or promising change than it is about evoking the best from staff over the long haul. Similarly, partnerships with peers and senior leaders across the organization rely on finding shared goals and developing joint projects that combine efforts and resources for greater impact.

> *"It's servant leadership in government, about empowering people to succeed. To lead you have to listen and respect people's values and ideas, and understand why folks are working in government to begin with."*
>
> **— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (SEATTLE FOCUS GROUP)**

> *"People who lack flexibility and emotional intelligence make it difficult for government to undergo change or any type of innovation."*
>
> **— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (DC FOCUS GROUP)**

Considering the fortitude that rising leaders say is required, it is perhaps not surprising that "persevering through adversity" (85 percent top-rated) is ranked one of the five most important skills for government service.

> *"Times in government can be tough and often your work will feel thankless. Sometimes you will have to reframe your thinking about being in government to find meaning in your work. Sometimes you will have to do this on a daily basis to keep yourself motivated. Sometimes it will be very difficult and roadblocks will seem insurmountable. But your work is important and the people we serve deserve—and need—your best efforts. And always remember that the grass isn't necessarily greener in the private sector; there are challenges there too."*
>
> **— RISING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)**

Where does that personal resilience, the ability to persevere through adversity, come from? In initial conversations with senior academic and government leaders, some suggest that these qualities are intrinsic and that the sector must focus on recruiting individuals with the leadership qualities, public service motivation, and stamina to succeed in government. In the words of one SES member: "It's difficult to teach resiliency but easier to identify who has it and who doesn't."

Today's rising leaders are more comfortable with the idea that they can develop resilience like a muscle, particularly through fellowship with peers and guidance from mentors. Education innovators agreed that resilience can be developed. "Challenges deliver leadership life lessons," said Julia Minson, assistant professor of public policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "Back in the day, we looked for people who were good at managing through challenges and promoted them. Now we believe we can get everybody to be more effective."

B. Responding to the Public

The Takeaway

Effective rising government leaders welcome the opportunity to engage with the diverse constituencies they serve and are attuned to new expectations for communications and transparency. This generation of leaders can be in a teaching role for their organizations in developing new approaches to responding to the public.

Key Learning

"Responding to the public" is the second-highest-rated competency area tested in the survey, and fostering a culture of responsive service is of particular significance.

Survey findings reinforce the importance of responsiveness to the public, particularly for rising leaders at the state and local level, reflecting the immediacy of their contact with constituents. Our focus group respondents indicate that being responsive to the public can

RESPONDING TO THE PUBLIC

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public	81%
Honing your message for the public	77%
Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices	70%

n=920

sometimes be challenging, but they report an understanding that it is a core responsibility of civil servants in a democratic society. Perhaps because they serve smaller constituencies, rising leaders in state and local government allocate more points to this competency area than do those in federal government.

MORE IMPORTANT AT STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS

Share of 10 points allocated as "crucial to success in a public service role" by rising leaders at each level of government.

	Federal	State	Local
Responding to the public	1.6	1.9	2.2

n=909

Asked about how they learn or cultivate skills of responsiveness to the public, rising government leaders often refer to intrinsic public service motivations—their interest in learning about and helping citizens and communities. They underscore the importance and value of recruiting people into government who share this characteristic. People generally agree that these motivations, which are innate in some people, can also be cultivated with quality professional development and good leadership from skilled supervisors. The growing demographic diversity of many US communities requires that rising leaders be open-minded and empathetic to a range of citizen concerns. Responding to them draws on the same qualities that rising leaders leverage as they seek to motivate their teams and sustain personal resilience.

> *"You need to be interested and willing to learn about the people you're serving.
> … For me it's all 2 million people in King County. And you need to be willing to
> build relationships in cultures that are not your own."*
>
> **— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (SEATTLE FOCUS GROUP)**

> *"Personally, I feel the greatest satisfaction when I can provide great customer
> service or educate a resident about what we are doing and why we are doing it.
> I'm doing everything I can to change the perception that government workers
> don't care or that it's just a redtape-filled bureaucratic agency. For me, it's all
> about changing how people perceive government."*
>
> **— RISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)**

Of course, responsiveness goes beyond bringing a positive and engaging attitude to citizen concerns and service expectations. Here, Alliance advisers recognize that millennials may be better prepared than their elders to address emerging needs, particularly with

respect to digital engagement and service. "Social media and digital technologies are increasing expectations of transparency and quicker outcomes—like citizens would expect from a private entity," said Sharon Minnich, secretary of the Office of Administration for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sydney Heimbrock at the US Office of Personnel Management is optimistic in considering the fit between community needs from government and this generation of leaders. "There is a huge opportunity, a seismic shift in managers' and leaders' awareness that business as usual doesn't work," she said. "People coming into the government workforce now are more attuned to the social dimension of everything we do. Digital natives find it natural to go and talk to citizens online. That opens up new approaches to democracy."

C. Navigating the Broader Environment

The Takeaway

The government sector presents complex and unique management dynamics that are mastered through experience and with guidance from others. Rising government leaders prize opportunities to continuously learn more about how to effect change in the broader environment.

Key Learning

Skills related to navigating the broader environment are critical for all government leaders, and they gain importance as leaders advance and take on responsibility for managing and representing their departments inside and outside of government.

While this competency area is developed over the life of a career, participants in the study recognized that it is never too early to learn as much as possible about how government works in practice. "Instead of thinking of government as a crazy place that turns over all the time, we need to spend more time teaching people how to navigate the system," said Terry

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NAVIGATING THE BROADER ENVIRONMENT

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment	79%
Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively	77%
Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities	71%

n=920

Gerton, president of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and former deputy assistant secretary for policy at the US Labor Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service. "We need to give people back their sense of agency and knowledge of how to do their jobs. It's an empowering discussion about how the government works."

Senior leaders in government are inclined to believe that navigating the broader environment is a competency area that can and should be more formally taught. Richard Spires, who has held senior roles at both the IRS and the Department of Homeland Security, asserted that "there is specialized training that government managers should go through about how government works and how things get done. The 'rules of the road' really are different in government." In Spires's view, the responsibility to provide this training belongs to the agencies, and rising leaders shouldn't have to figure things out on their own. "This is about organizational maturity," he said. "It's not on the individual; it's on the agency."

Universities can also play a more effective role in providing learning from the field, according to study respondents. While three-quarters of rising government leaders with a master's degree (from any discipline) consider their degree education to be valuable preparation for their government work, many wish that elements of field-derived learning had been stronger in their program.

The chart below shows a range of learning activities and content areas that government managers wish had been emphasized more in their degree programs. Several of these— including team-based assignments with roles that reflect ones typically held in government, mock negotiations, and coursework reflecting "real world public service"—reinforce needs expressed throughout the project for new graduates to be better attuned to the complex reali-

MASTER'S GRADUATES LOOK BACK

Which of the following do you wish had been a stronger part of your graduate education? (Top five selected.)

Mock negotiations	46%
Team-based assignments with assigned roles that reflect typical roles in government	42%
Analytics/data modeling	40%
Course work that reflects the interdependencies and overlapping domains in real-world public service	39%
Instructors with recent practitioner experience	32%
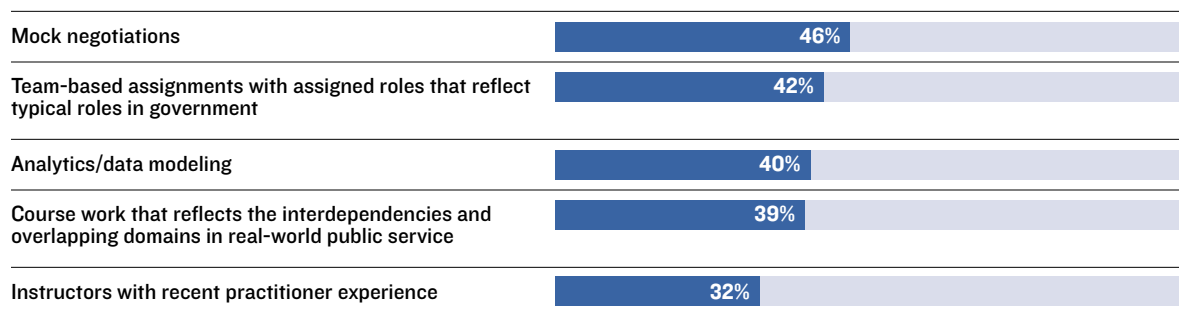
n=578

ties of government life when they hit the ground. Their favored professional development approaches reflect these preferences and are built on integrating instruction by experienced practitioners with peer-to-peer learning.

> *"Build your network of contacts. When in doubt, always reach out to others in the field to see how they have handled a similar situation. Don't try to reinvent the wheel. Someone somewhere has come across a similar situation before and will have advice on how to (or how not to) handle it."*
>
> — **RISING STATE GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)**

D. Data and Technology Skills

The Takeaway

Though government has a critical need for advanced data science and technology, many rising leaders are likely to be in roles where data and technology skills are less consequential than devising practical solutions to more immediate needs.

Key Learning

Technology transformation and its associated costs, risks, and opportunities are a common concern in government. Government experts are particularly concerned about the slow pace of adoption. The GAO has estimated that 75 percent of the federal government's technology budget goes to maintaining legacy systems and only 25 percent to "development, modernization and enhancement."[9]

Considering the alarms sounded by experts about the government's technology challenges, it is notable that none of the data and technology skill sets tested in the survey receive top importance ratings. As an example, "advanced data analytics"—the management science often described as transforming the private sector—is considered relatively important by only slightly more than half of respondents (57 percent).

> *"Being data literate helped me make insights others weren't. It stopped being useful quickly though, because so little policy work relies on generating new data or modeling. From my experience, most of public service was about managing up, staying crafty, and identifying opportunities to make a difference."*
>
> — **RISING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)**

DATA AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Keeping up to date on work-related research/tech	72%
Advancing data-based decision-making	71%
Proficiency with basic quantitative analysis	71%
Creating data visualizations	67%
Proficiency in collecting and cleaning data	64%
Advanced data analytics	57%
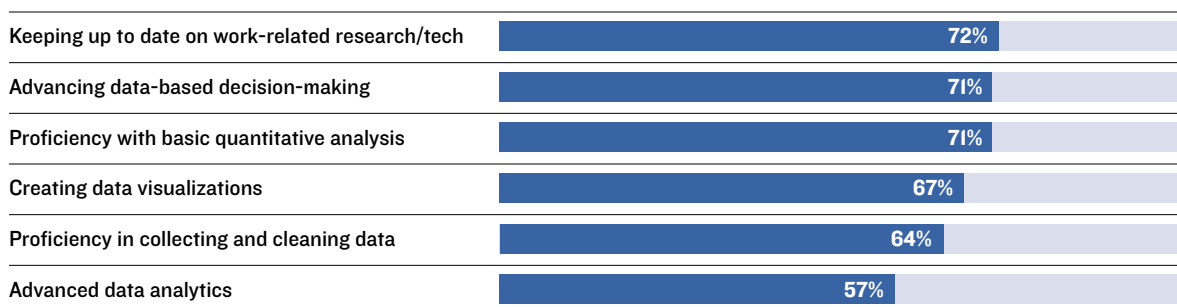
n=921

Why don't data and technology skills rate higher in importance in the survey? Ari Lightman, professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, gathers government chief information officers for training to become "fast followers" in adopting tech sector approaches. But Lightman said changing political scenarios and insufficient resources usually intervene and limit managers' ability to implement better technology processes.

The survey also shows greater importance given to "lighter touch" uses of data, such as making data-informed decisions, than to sophisticated technical skills such as cleaning data sets and conducting advanced analytics. This may suggest that while most leaders need solid familiarity with data's interpretive aspects, a relatively smaller portion of this management cohort needs the most nuanced and sophisticated skills.

Others who have occupied senior government seats confirm the everyday constraints. "The fact is that IT systems in government were designed in the '80s," said Terry Gerton of NAPA. "Young people always want to go around the system, but managers need to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of how these legacy systems work because they generate the information you manage with."

Of all the competency areas, the data and technology category may reveal the most pronounced gap between structural needs and practical realities. Over two-thirds of government managers with a master's degree indicate that analytics and data modeling had been part of their graduate education, which suggests that a substantial portion of the government management workforce brings data skills. But these abilities may languish in environments where legacy infrastructure limits the potential to collect and analyze quality data. Similarly,

legacy systems may limit opportunities to deploy technology skills to advance governance and serve citizens.

E. Business Acumen

The Takeaway

Effective rising government leaders rely on communications and project management skills, and as they gain seniority they must add skills necessary for defending and advancing departmental aims. This finding seems consistent with professional expectations in the private and nonprofit sectors as well.

Key Learning

Rising leaders in the study reinforce that they need business acumen to be effective in government. In this competency area, they assign ratings of top importance to oral communication, project management, and written communications skills. In fact, effective oral communication and project management capacity are the most highly rated skills across all twenty skills in the five competency areas.

BUSINESS ACUMEN

In your opinion, how important are the following abilities in a public service role like yours?
Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Effective oral communication	91%
Project and timeline management	88%
Effective written communication	87%
Budgetary/financial management acumen	78%
Negotiation skills	77%
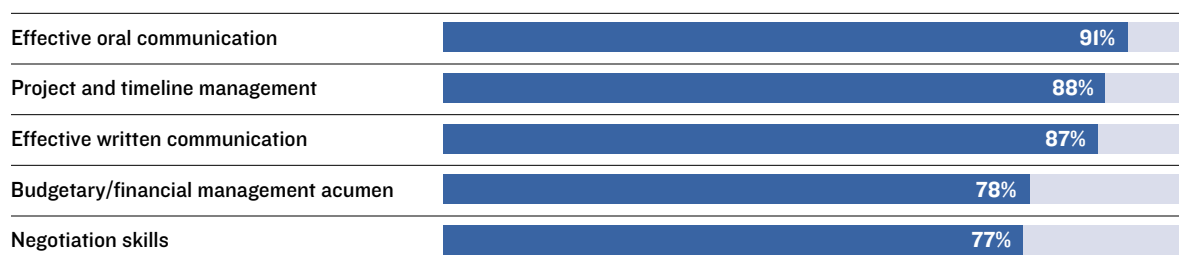
n=921

When it comes to management competencies, the survey reveals that rising government leaders must develop a more advanced tool kit as they progress in their careers. The most experienced leaders—those with sixteen to twenty years in government—rate skills and strengths needed to head departments and agencies and assume public-facing leadership as very important. These skills include financial management and negotiation, necessary for the work of defending and advancing department and agency-level aims.

Alliance advisers emphasize the importance of management skills for those in govern-

ment charged with successfully executing projects and leading teams in conditions of distributed authority. Federal government leaders put slightly more emphasis on business acumen. Some speculate that the scale of outsourcing and contracting at the federal level places a premium on this skill.

Dustin Brown leads performance and personnel management as the deputy assistant director for management in the US Office of Management and Budget. His key hiring priorities align with this section's findings. "I'm not looking for 'just policy' people but for folks who have the business acumen and project management skills important for this sector," Brown said.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS MOST IMPORTANT TO EXPERIENCED LEADERS (survey respondents with 16 to 20 years in government)

Percentage of respondents rating statements 4 or 5 (Important or Very important) on a 5-point scale.

Budgetary/financial management	85%
Negotiation skills	84%

n=92

SLIGHTLY HIGHER AT FEDERAL LEVEL

Share of 10 points allocated as "crucial to success in a public service role" by respondents at various levels of government.

	Federal	State	Local
Business acumen	2.0	1.8	1.8

n=909

"For the types of problems government is trying to solve, and the way in which the government is deployed, we need managers that implement changes across sectors."

Study findings suggest that rising government leaders are eager to develop their business acumen. About a third of rising leaders in the survey are considering earning a certificate to further their career in public service. Many are considering obtaining management credentials such as the Project Management Professional (PMP) or International City/County Management Association Credentialed Manager (ICMA-CM), or certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

V. SUPPORTING COMPETENCIES THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ARMED WITH FINDINGS about the competencies rising government leaders believe are most important for professional practice and their preferences for how they want to learn, the Alliance team conducted advisory committee sessions and interviews with experts in professional development and education innovation. In keeping with the study's focus on supporting a broad base of government managers, conversations with experts centered on approaches that could enable wide participation and lower barriers to access for those with fewer resources.

Following are key characteristics of professional development approaches that study participants believe can help rising government leaders succeed in cultivating competencies for effectiveness.

Networked Learning

Leadership development built on professional networks is well-suited to government, where widening one's circle of potential partners and learning from peers about "how to get things done" build the core competencies needed for effectiveness. Rising government leaders in the study continually returned to the value of learning with and from peers—in effect, crowd-sourcing ideas and practices with others who share similar challenges.

Focus group participants described effective learning experiences gained at professional association meetings, alumni events, and conferences; in work training sessions; and through task forces and online communities. In fact, the focus groups for this study often concluded with participants networking informally and asking one another for contact information. The rising government leaders who completed the survey were identified from lists of many thousands provided by professional and alumni associations—essentially the record-keepers of networks.

Professional development approaches that create opportunities for wider participation through leveraging networks also make sense considering resource constraints in government. Rising government leaders certainly value significant employer investments in their careers. Many study participants laud fellows programs, in which agencies select cohorts of high-potential leaders for structured educational and leadership development curricula delivered over an extended period and usually in face-to-face sessions. Today, however, few agencies have sufficient resources to expand such programs, which tend to be expensive. Training and

development funds are easy targets for budget cuts,[10] and senior leaders in federal government often cite a lack of funding to explain why development needs are unmet.[11]

Far from being a consolation prize, networked learning is viewed by many experts as an adaptive contemporary model reflecting the way management is practiced. For instance, professional development innovators at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) describe conditions of scarce resources, distributed authority, and complex interdependencies as common in many sectors. They promote a new paradigm for professional development focused not on individual leaders but on networks of people who collectively share responsibility for unlocking leadership potential and effectiveness in their organizations.

Nick Petrie of CCL says that in many organizations and sectors, the question has changed from how to identify high-potential individuals to how "to spread leadership capacity throughout the organization and democratize leadership."[12]

"I think being able to network through a large group of people is extremely helpful. You are selling yourself but I don't feel like its disingenuous. I have a mission and if you are able to speak to your mission, that's going to help with building a broad network and make you better at your job."

— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (NYC FOCUS GROUP)

Personal Support

On a personal level, networks and mentoring relationships offer fellowship and support that help nurture resilience. Focus group participants frequently highlighted this benefit, and the study's survey findings reinforce these effects. Rising government leaders with a mentor (63 percent of respondents) and those with a community of peers (74 percent of respondents) were significantly more likely to report that they were meeting their career goals. Causality

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SUPPORT STRUCTURES ENABLE CAREER PROGRESS

Among those with a trusted mentor,	Among those with a trusted community of peers,
83%	**79**%
agreed or strongly agreed that they are meeting their career goals compared with **51**% of those without a trusted mentor.	agreed or strongly agreed that they are meeting their career goals compared with **51**% of those without a trusted community of peers.

must be attributed with caution, however, as it is also possible that those with mentors or a community of peers began with more confidence or received positive feedback from mentors or peers that has led them to believe they are meeting their goals when they might be falling short.

Effective mentoring programs are not necessarily formal or highly structured, but they do rely on systems that enable rising leaders to find and connect with senior leaders. Some government agencies are incorporating networking tools into their internal communications systems and giving greater emphasis to mentoring in their human capital management approaches. Schools of public affairs are encouraging and creating systems for alumni mentoring communities and leveraging digital platforms, such as LinkedIn, that enable alumni to connect. Professional associations have been at the forefront of establishing mentoring networks, some examples of which follow in Section VI.

"My favorite professional development experience was a one-on-one coaching opportunity with a past Director of a local government organization. Previously, I had not wished to attain a Director level position, but after speaking with this mentor and being able to ask questions about some of the hesitations I had, I worked through why I was holding myself back."

— RISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)

"I participated in two free mentoring programs. The relationships I developed through these programs kept me in government when I was nearly ready to leave for the private sector."

— RISING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEADER (SURVEY RESPONDENT)

"In the program I did we were away from the office; it's a much more relaxed setting. It's not fake and you don't feel guarded. It's more about learning from others' experiences. You can share experiences and they don't necessarily have to be savory. Over time, you constantly need to revisit and refresh your skills, seek some validation that your style and challenges are similar to others. … These experiences help people identify what does work."

— RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (AUSTIN FOCUS GROUP)

Collective Problem-Solving

Many of the professional development programs recommended by advisers and experts have participants work together on shared problems, needs, or scenarios. Problem- or project-centered approaches produce practical value—good ideas for solutions to shared issues challenging government managers and agencies—while enabling participants to develop their own leadership skills.

David Altman of the Center for Creative Leadership stressed the multiple benefits of "learning while doing" leadership development: "When we ask leaders to reflect on the experiences they had that were influential in their development they tell us 10 percent of lessons learned comes from programs, 20 percent comes from social learning, and 70 percent comes from the school of hard knocks. You want to build approaches that allow people to put something into practice and reflect on it."

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has launched the Next Generation Task Force, an innovative professional development program that unlocks the creative capital of its young government managers in just this way. One of the goals of the state's Office of Administration is to reposition government service as a meaningful profession—to "rebrand government" as Sharon Minnich, who leads the office, put it. Inspired by the energy and ideas of the rising leaders she works with, Minnich and her team established a task force that has young managers crowdsourcing ideas for communicating the value and relevance of government service.

The task force was established to address the need of attracting young people to government service while providing fellowship and helping participants build leadership capabilities and a statewide network. By creating videos, holding public outreach events, providing recommendations to senior officers, and sharing best management practices, task force members are at the forefront of a campaign to demonstrate that the state government is open to new ideas, responsive to citizen concerns, and a great place for young people to make a difference.

Career-Stage Development

Study findings emphasize that rising leaders develop additional competency needs as they advance in their careers and assume responsibility for working across senior organizational levels and implementing the agenda of their departments. Recognizing the importance of career-stage development, government agencies and higher education institutions are looking at how to convey relevant skills when managers need them. Jon Nehlsen, associate dean at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, said

program leaders at his school are considering how to provide this "just-in-time" learning. "There are inflection points in a public service career, and the skills you need at each are different," Nehlsen said. "Degree programs have tended to focus on the things you need to get the job and also on what you will need as you advance in five to ten years, but it may make more sense to get that learning when you need it."

> *"At certain points in your career you're going to need different things. The Air Force is good at this. They give you the experiential training and the leadership pieces and it's throughout your career. They also send you out to public policy schools at appropriate stages."* — **RISING GOVERNMENT LEADER (AUSTIN FOCUS GROUP)**

VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EXAMPLES

THE PROGRAMS LISTED BELOW incorporate one or more of the professional development themes and are included as exemplars of these themes in action. Drawn from the recommendations of advisers, experts, and survey respondents, the programs are aimed at rising managers (rather than senior executives), provide relatively broad access often aided by technology, and are open to interested participants (although applications may be required to determine eligibility). The list is not intended to be comprehensive but illustrative.

The Volcker Alliance welcomes the opportunity to collect additional examples of programs.

ALLIANCE FOR INNOVATION, INNOVATION ACADEMY Offered in an online format, this program gathers cohorts of up to twelve people (from one organization or several entities) to gain leadership skills by tackling shared scenarios and needs. Participants are assigned a team mentor and attend nine interactive virtual sessions delivered monthly.
https://transformgov.org/innovation-academy-virtual-program

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Leadership Programs

COMMONWEALTH MENTORING PROGRAM The program is designed to mentor employees via voluntary career guidance, networking and leadership development, and the transfer of institutional knowledge. Mentees attend five sessions over the program's eight-month duration.
Email *ra-mentoringprogram@pa.gov* for more information.

EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM This ten-month program uses the Seven Pillars of Leadership model to develop character and leadership skills. Participants meet one full day each month. Each participant's supervisor meets with that person regularly throughout the process and attends designated sessions with the participant.
Email *ra-elp@pa.gov* for more information.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE LDI provides professional development opportunities for commonwealth employees who demonstrate leadership potential and the ability to succeed in positions of greater responsibility within Pennsylvania government. Each LDI class participates in monthly sessions between March and October.
http://www.hrm.oa.pa.gov/training-development/Development/Pages/default.aspx

NEXT GENERATION TASK FORCE This ongoing task force is directed by young government manag-

ers, who initiate projects and outreach to help attract millennials to government service and inspire trust in government among Pennsylvania citizens.
http://www.hrm.oa.pa.gov/Pages/Contact-Us.aspx

GOVLOOP, NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM This is a government-wide virtual training program to develop and empower the next generation of government leaders. Program participants are matched with a mentor based on the executive core qualifications and the mentee's specific action plan. Over the six-month program, participants engage in a series of online training sessions focused on leadership, development, and career advancement.
https://go.govloop.com/Leadership-program-overview.html

Harvard Kennedy School of Government Leadership Programs

EMERGING LEADERS This executive education program brings together Harvard faculty and an international cohort of rising professionals from the US and abroad for an empower-ing and energizing week of learning. Participants gain the skills and strategic framework necessary to capitalize on opportunities and overcome obstacles, returning home inspired to execute change.
https://www.hks.harvard.edu/educational-programs/executive-education/emerging-leaders
LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY This one-week program requires participants to be actively engaged on several levels—in the classroom, in small groups, and in individual reflection. Participants explore a wide range of leadership strategies and new ways of exercising leader-ship, whether in a position of authority or as one member of a group.
https://www.hks.harvard.edu/educational-programs/executive-education/leadership-21st-century

International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Early Career Leadership Programs

EMERGING LEADERS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM This is a two-year program intended to build knowledge, skills, and abilities in the basic management and technical areas that managers need to be successful. A coach is provided for each enrollee, and activities include monthly teleseminars with credentialed senior managers or public administration professors.
https://icma.org/emerging-leaders-development-program
LOCAL GOVERNMENT 101 ONLINE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM This program focuses on leadership, manage-

ment, service delivery, budgeting, and human resources. Taught by experienced managers and experts, it imparts real-life experiences, best practices, and reliable advice in the areas most important to a manager's day-to-day role.

https://icma.org/local-government-101-online-certificate-program

ICMA COACHING PROGRAM WEBINARS Live coaching webinars with experts include interactive polling, Q&A sessions, and open discussion about matters affecting local governments. Topics include entrepreneurial solutions, creating a culture of cultivating talent, taking smart risks, and recovering from setbacks.

https://icma.org/icma-coaching-program-webinars

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM), **LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) CERTIFICATE PROGRAM** Provided through OPM's Center for Leadership Development, this program offers five career-stage certificates, each completed in three to five face-to-face courses. They are designed to help federal leaders assess their leadership effectiveness, gain core knowledge, and develop critical skills for success.

https://cldcentral.usalearning.net/mod/page/view.php?id=249

REBECCA RYAN, **FUTURIST CAMP** Leadership development experts guide participants through an intensive camp experience and six months of virtual collaboration. Participants apply learned futurist techniques and scenario-planning to a project in their own work environment.

https://www.picatic.com/futuristcamp2018

YOUNG GOVERNMENT LEADERS (YGL) AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES ASSOCIATION (SEA), **MENTORSHIP PROGRAM** This effort pairs YGL members with SEA members, providing a confidential advisory relationship and broader exposure outside the young manager's immediate organizational context.

http://younggov.org/get-involved/mentoring/

YOUNG GOVERNMENT LEADERS AND GOVLOOP, **NEXT GENERATION OF GOVERNMENT TRAINING SUMMIT** This two-day annual Summit in Washington, DC, brings together both emerging leaders and seasoned managers in federal, state, and local government to inspire innovation and provide training and leadership opportunities. Formats include breakout sessions, keynote speeches, and networking receptions.

https://www.nextgengovt.com/summit-overview

VII. STUDY APPROACH

Key Stakeholders

The Volcker Alliance partnered with Huron Consulting Group and an advisory committee made up of senior leaders from government, academia, and public service associations for this study.

Key stakeholder groups referred to throughout the report:

ALLIANCE TEAM The staff of the Volcker Alliance and Huron Consulting Group who designed and managed the study.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE The advisers from government, educational institutions, and government partnership organizations who provided guidance to the Alliance team over the course of its work. The committee met in three sessions to help define questions for inquiry and interpret study learning. Committee members also recommended individuals for participation as interviewees and focus group members. The advisory committee was not convened as an official approval body and not asked to endorse study findings or recommendations.

RISING GOVERNMENT LEADERS Individuals employed in government at the federal, state, and local levels responsible for managing people, projects, and budgets. This study focused on "rising" leaders who had been working in government for less than fifteen years. The majority of rising leaders had been promoted one or more times in the past five years.

SENIOR SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS Senior representatives from educational organizations, government agencies, and associations who shared expert perspectives on the roles and needs of government leadership, as well as on education and training to meet those needs. These individuals shared opinions and insights gained from the field and did not participate as official representatives of their organizations.

A complete list of advisory committee members and other experts interviewed for the study appears in Appendix A, along with a list of the Volcker Alliance staff who led this initiative and the Huron staff who supported this work. We are indebted to the associations and organizations, also listed, that distributed the survey to their members.

Detailed Study Approach

The study was conducted through four phases of work.

Phase I: Defining Research Questions with Alliance Advisers

DETAILED STUDY APPROACH

PHASE I: Fall 2016	
Defining research questions with Alliance advisers	Interviews (14) with leaders in government, academia, and other public service organizations. The advisory committee was convened to refine the study objectives and design.
PHASE II: Winter 2017	
Focus groups with rising government leaders	Focus groups (four groups, 41 total participants) with high-performing rising leaders in New York City; Washington, DC; Austin, Texas; and Seattle.
PHASE III: Spring-Summer 2017	
Survey research with rising government leaders	Survey (925 completed responses) of federal, state, and local government leaders, primarily recruited through professional associations and schools of public affairs. The advisory committee convened in the spring to discuss the early findings and a final time in the summer for additional feedback on the full survey results.
PHASE IV: Summer-Fall 2017	
Gathering senior subject matter experts' perspectives on meeting education and training needs	Interviews (13) with public sector leaders, educators, and innovation experts to consider ways to best meet education and development needs identified through the research with rising government leaders.

In Phase I, the Alliance team conducted interviews with senior leaders in government and education, a subset of whom joined the study's advisory committee, to define the most valuable objectives for the study and to guide project design. These first-phase discussions were wide ranging, reflecting advisers' diverse concerns with systemic issues facing government and associated challenges in attracting, recruiting, and retaining top talent for the public sector.

Because the starting field of inquiry was broad and included the aim of being relevant at the federal, state, and local levels, the Alliance team worked with advisers to refine study parameters to provide a distinctive and discrete contribution. Advisers agreed that a focus on hearing directly from the rising generation of public servants who are poised to take on senior leadership in the coming decades, followed by consultation with senior leaders to interpret and validate needs, would provide added value to the current knowledge base.

As the Volcker Alliance's mission is to promote effective government and to provide more actionable findings and recommendations, the study population was further narrowed to those rising leaders who work in government in a strictly defined manner—characterized by one adviser as those with "an eagle on their paycheck." This choice was not intended to discount the important contributions of professionals who participate in public service through other means. Advisers from universities, for instance, noted that schools of public affairs prepare graduates for a wide range of public service environments and that at many schools a declining percentage of graduates join government service. But all advisers agreed that this cohort of rising leaders is especially critical to ensuring effective government.

Study advisers contributed guidance to the Volcker team as it prepared to conduct focus

groups with rising leaders. They recommended several competency areas for exploration, including leadership and team building, data and business management, global and financial literacy, policy acumen, and negotiation.

Phase II: Focus Groups with Rising Government Leaders

In Phase II the Alliance team conducted focus groups with rising government leaders in New York City; Washington, DC; Austin, Texas; and Seattle. Each group comprised individuals in management roles with five to fifteen years' experience in federal, state, or local government service. Participants were recommended by colleagues and Alliance advisers as "rising stars" who were advancing in government service and likely to hold senior leadership positions in the future. The focus group discussions were conducted over dinner in environments where participants could speak freely and confidentially about their careers in government service.

In the focus groups, participants were asked to reflect on the characteristics and practices that enabled them to be successful in government service, in terms of managing projects and teams and of accomplishing their department's goals. As discussed in the prior sections, participants in all four cities strongly prioritized the role of interpersonal strengths and "earned experience" in being effective at work, emphasizing these along with communications skills over other functional skill sets, including data and financial management. Reflecting on professional development and education options they had already or wanted to access, focus group participants most valued opportunities to engage with peers and codevelop solutions to shared needs in the practice of government.

Phase III: Evaluating Competencies Through Survey Research with Rising Government Leaders

To learn more about the competencies and educational offerings valuable for government service, the project included a national survey of early-to-midcareer federal, state, and local government managers. Huron Consulting Group's market research practice administered the survey. Respondents were recruited via distribution lists shared by the following professional associations and schools of public affairs.

Partner Organizations for Survey

ACT-IAC (American Council for Technology and Industry Advisory Council)
Courtesy of Casey Harris

Blacks in Government

Courtesy of Christian Blackman and Herschel Bowens

Emerging Leaders in Local Government

Courtesy of Kirsten Wyatt

National Forum for Black Public Administrators

Courtesy of Marcia Conner

Young Government Leaders

Courtesy of Kevin Richman

The Illinois City/County Management Association

Courtesy of Dawn Peters

Urban Management Assistants of North Texas

Courtesy of Caitlan Smelley

Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University

Courtesy of Jon Nehlsen

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas

Courtesy of Angela Evans

Respondents first answered a short series of screening questions to confirm survey eligibility. Respondents were required to have at least two and no more than twenty years' experience in government and to currently have a job in federal, state, or local government that included managerial responsibilities, such as the management of people, budgets, or time-bound projects. Respondents who had left their government positions within the last two years but met all the criteria were also permitted to complete the survey.

The survey had two primary content areas. First, respondents were asked to evaluate the relative importance of a list of broad competency areas and related skill sets that had been developed through the focus groups and advisory meetings. Second, they were asked about their preferences for professional development and other education activities to support their effectiveness at work.

The demographics of our survey respondents reasonably resemble that of the federal workforce, which is largely managerial.[13] It would be difficult to separate managerial and nonmanagerial functions and aggregate data across states and localities; therefore, federal data serves as a proxy, although our data also includes respondents at the state and local level. We did not reweight the data for analysis.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING THE SURVEY

925

All respondents have management responsibilities that require managing people, budgets, or time-bound projects.

PROMOTED AT LEAST ONCE IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

81%

PROMOTED MORE THAN ONCE IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

42%

LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT

COUNTY / MUNICIPAL / TOWN / OTHER LOCAL

52%

FEDERAL

29%

STATE

17%

OTHER SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES

1%

n=921

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN GOVERNMENT

2-4

20%

5-10

52%

11-15

18%

16-20

10%

n=921

GENDER

MALE	FEMALE
56%	**44%**

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS HOLDING GRADUATE DEGREES

MPA/MPP

44%

MBA

19%

OTHER MASTER'S DEGREE

12%

JD

4%

PHD

2%

n=906

ETHNIC ORIGIN

CAUCASIAN NON-HISPANIC	OTHER
69%	**2%**
AFRICAN AMERICAN	NATIVE AMERICAN
20%	**1%**
ASIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
6%	**1%**
LATINO / HISPANIC	
4%	

n=896

Phase IV: Gathering Senior Subject Matter Experts' Perspectives on Meeting Education and Training Needs

Finally, the Alliance team conducted interviews with educators, government leaders, and innovation experts to consider ways to best meet education and development needs identified through the research with rising government leaders. These experts helped interpret findings from the survey research and focus groups, and shared examples of professional development approaches and programs they had successfully implemented in their organizations. There was significant synergy among interviewed experts regarding effective development practices; in particular, experts emphasized the value of networked and peer-to-peer learning, as well as career-stage development models. These approaches and recommendations are described in previous sections of the report.

APPENDIX A: STUDY PARTICIPANTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THIS REPORT WAS MADE POSSIBLE by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Volcker Alliance is grateful for the participation of the following advisers and experts, as well as the rising leaders who joined our focus groups and responded to our survey.

Advisory Committee Members

Jason Briefel	Executive Director, Senior Executives Association
Karl Brooks	Program Director, Executive Master in Public Leadership Program, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin
Suzanne Cooper	Academic Dean for Teaching and Curriculum, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Dan Chenok	Executive Director, IBM Center for the Business of Government
Kevin Desouza	Professor, College of Public Service and Community Solutions, Arizona State University
Elizabeth Kellar	Director of Public Policy, ICMA; Senior Fellow, Center for State and Local Government Excellence
Laurel McFarland	Executive Director, Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration
J. Christopher Mihm	Managing Director for Strategic Issues, US Government Accountability Office
Sharon Minnich	Secretary, Office of Administration, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Jon Nehlsen	Associate Dean and Professor, Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University

Focus Group Participants

Alex Adams	Department of Transportation, King County, Washington
Lea-Suzanne Avila	US General Services Administration
Eric Bachhuber	US Government Accountability Office
Julissa Baez	New York City Department of Small Business Services

Danielle Bartz	Mayor's Office, City of Houston
Derek Belt	King County, Washington
David Bray	Federal Communications Commission
John Burchill	US General Services Administration
Sharon Carney	Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, Washington, DC
Elizabeth Fischer Laurie	US Department of Health and Human Services
Vangie Garcia	City of Bellevue, Washington
Julian Glover	US Air Force
Sandy Guzman	Office of Texas State Sen. Kirk Watson
Kasea Hamar	US Government Accountability Office
Angel Ip	US Environmental Protection Agency
Ashley Kelmore	Department of Public Health, Seattle and King County, Washington
Christian Laurence	US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General
Catherine Lee	New York City Department of Education
Lewis Leff	City of Austin, Texas
Stephanie McDonald	Central Health, political subdivision of the state of Texas
Kathy Nyland	Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle
Yemi Odutola	Federal Emergency Management Agency/US Department of Homeland Security
Kimberly Olivares	City of Austin, Texas
Ellen Pepin	Seattle Public Utilities
Jennifer Quereau	Legislative Budget Board, State of Texas
Chelsea Rainier	US Department of Homeland Security
Gregory Rivera	US Air Force
Adriana Rojas	University of Texas at Austin
Patrick Sisk	Securities Exchange Commission
Mike Skorny	US General Services Administration
Gretchen Snoey	US Government Accountability Office
Marcus Stubblefield	King County Executive Office, Washington
Ben Thurgood	City of Tacoma, Washington
Andrew Vernon	US Department of Veterans Affairs

Kimberly Womble	US Department of Agriculture
Shammara Wright	New York City Center for Economic Opportunity

Note: Five participants chose to remain anonymous.

Senior Subject Matter Experts

David Altman	Chief Operating Officer, Center for Creative Leadership
Dustin Brown	Deputy Assistant Director for Management, US Office of Management and Budget
Nijah Fudge	West Regional Director, Alliance for Innovation
Terry Gerton	President, National Academy of Public Administration
Sydney Heimbrock	Assistant Director, Center for Leadership Development, US Office of Personnel Management
Rebecca Hunter	Commissioner, Department of Human Resources, State of Tennessee
Donald Kettl	Professor, School of Public Policy, University of Maryland
Ari Lightman	Professor, Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University
Ray Limon	Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer, US Department of the Interior
Julia Minson	Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Rebecca Ryan	Founder, Futurist Camp
Richard Spires	Chief Executive Officer, Learning Tree International
Paul Stoltz	Chief Executive Officer, PEAK Learning

Partner Organizations for Survey

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Courtesy of Casey Harris

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Courtesy of Kirsten Wyatt

National Forum for Black Public Administrators

Courtesy of Marcia Conner

Young Government Leaders

Courtesy of Kevin Richman

The Illinois City/County Management Association

Courtesy of Dawn Peters

Urban Management Assistants of North Texas

Courtesy of Caitlan Smelley

Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University

Courtesy of Jon Nehlsen

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas

Courtesy of Angela Evans

The Volcker Alliance Team

Maggie Mello	Associate Director
Peter Morrissey	Senior Associate
Pradeep Nair	Former Director
Thomas W. Ross	President

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Preparing Tomorrow's Public Service Survey

The format of the questions presented in the survey software (Qualtrics) differs slightly from the print version here.

Section headings, question numbers, and bracketed notes were for the study team's use and did not appear to respondents completing the survey online. For questions with multiple answer choices, the order of the answers was randomized to eliminate order bias.

Greeting and screening questions

Welcome and thank you for taking part!

With your input, we seek to understand the essential skills and competencies required of effective public managers and to identify educational options that may support individuals in these roles.

The study is being conducted by the Volcker Alliance, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose mission is to address the challenge of effective implementation of public policy and to help rebuild public trust in government. Our partner, Huron, is administering the survey and hosting it on our behalf.

In appreciation of your time, we will send you a $5 Amazon.com gift card or make a $5 charitable donation after you complete the survey.

First, we have a couple of questions to see if this survey is applicable to you.

1. **Please select the option that best describes you.**
   I currently work in ...
   ○ Federal government
   ○ State government
   ○ County/municipal/town/other local government
   ○ Other government service in the United States (please specify)
   ○ None of the above
   [*Follow-up question for those who selected None of the above or Other government service on the first question*]
   Have you worked in any of the following areas in the past two years?

○ Federal government

○ State government

○ County/municipal/town/other local government

○ Other government service in the United States (please specify)

○ None of the above [*Respondents will be thanked and will not continue in the survey.*]

2. Please select all that apply.

In my current role, I ...

[*For those not currently working government:* "**In my most recent government role, I ...**"]

○ Manage budgets

○ Manage people

○ Manage time-bound projects

○ None of the above [*Respondents will be thanked and will not continue in the survey.*]

3. How many years have you worked in government (at any level)?

○ Less than 2 [*Respondents will be thanked and will not continue in the survey.*]

○ 2-4

○ 5-10

○ 11-15

○ 16-20

○ 21+ [*Respondents will be thanked and will not continue in the survey.*]

Most essential skills

Great! You qualify for this study. When your responses to all questions are submitted, you will have the option to choose a $5 Amazon gift card or charitable donation.

The purpose of this study is to better understand the skills and preparation needed to succeed as a managerial public servant.

Public servants face many systemic challenges. While we cannot erase these challenges, our project ultimately aims to help better equip managerial public servants to reach their goals.

[*The direction below appeared for those survey respondents who indicated they are not currently working in government per Question 1.*]

In the following questions, when we ask about a "public service role like yours," please think about your most recent role in government.

4. **In your opinion, how important are the following skills in a public service role like yours?**
   Scale: 1 Not at all important to 5 Very important

   Business acumen
   a. Budgetary/financial management acumen
   b. Project and timeline management skills
   c. Effective written communication
   d. Effective oral communication
   e. Negotiation skills

   Data and technology skills
   f. Proficiency with basic quantitative analysis
   g. Advanced data analytics
   h. Keeping up to date on research and technology innovations relevant to your work
   i. Creating data visualizations
   j. Advancing data-based decision-making
   k. Proficiency in collecting and cleaning data

5. **In your opinion, how important are the following skills in a public service role like yours?**
   Scale: 1 Not at all important to 5 Very important

   Navigating the broader environment
   a. Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities
   b. Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively
   c. Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment

   Managing your team and yourself
   d. Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated

e. Persevering in the face of adverse situations

f. Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisor(s)

Responding to the public

g. Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices

h. Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public

i. Honing your message for the public

Are there other skills or abilities you believe are important in a public service role like yours?

6. **Please allocate 10 points among the following categories of skills and abilities to indicate which areas you believe are most crucial for success in a public service role like yours.**

Business acumen	
Data and technology skills	
Navigating the broader environment	
Managing your team and yourself	
Responding to the public	
Other (please specify)	
	(Sum to 10)

7. **Thinking ahead to the year 2025, which skills do you believe will be most essential in government service broadly?**
   Please drag and drop up to 5.
   Five most essential skills/abilities in government service

Budgetary/financial management acumen	
Project management skills	
Effective written communication	
Effective oral communication	
Negotiation skills	

Basic proficiency with quantitative analysis	
Advanced data analytics	
Keeping up to date on new technology relevant to your work	
Creating data visualizations	
Advancing data-based decision-making	
Gaining buy-in from other governmental agencies or entities	
Honing your message to advise elected officials effectively	
Maintaining integrity in a highly partisan environment	
Helping your team to find purpose and be motivated	
Persevering in the face of adverse situations	
Gaining buy-in from your colleagues and supervisor(s)	
Seeking out and considering a wide range of citizen voices	
Fostering a culture of responsive service to the public	
Honing your message for the public	
Other (please specify)	

[*Not asked of those not currently working in government.*]

8. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Scale: 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree

a. I have a trusting relationship with a community of peers who also work in government.

b. I have a trusted mentor who also works in government.

c. I intend to continue working in government for the long term.

d. I feel I am making good progress in reaching my professional aspirations.

[*Question shown to current and recent federal employees only.*]

9. The US Office of Personnel Management has identified five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs), which are used by many departments and agencies in hiring and promoting. Please indicate how important you believe each of these ECQs are in a public service leadership role.

Scale: 1 Not at all important to 5 Very important

a. Leading Change: bring about strategic change, both within and outside the orga-

nization, to meet organizational goals

b. Leading People: lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals

c. Results Driven: meet organizational goals and customer expectations

d. Business Acumen: manage human, financial, and information resources strategically

e. Building Coalitions: build coalitions internally and with other agencies, state and local governments, organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations

Educational look back

10. Have you earned any of the following degrees? Please select all that apply.
- ○ Bachelor's degree
- ○ MPA/MPP (Master of Public Administration/Public Policy)
- ○ MBA
- ○ Other master's degree (please specify)
- ○ JD
- ○ PhD (please specify field)
- ○ None of the above

11. Overall, how valuable was your education in preparing you for your work in government?
Scale: 1 No value to 5 Very valuable

12. What was the most valuable aspect of your education in preparing you for your work in government?

[*Asked of those who earned a master's degree.*]

13. Which of the following were a part of your graduate education? Please select all that apply.
- ○ Case studies
- ○ Mock negotiations

○ Course work that reflects the interdependencies and overlapping domains in real-world public service

○ Team-based assignments (with no assigned roles)

○ Team-based assignments with assigned roles that reflect typical roles in government

○ Capstone or client-based project

○ Internship

○ Brief/memo writing assignments

○ Analytics/data modeling

○ Instructors with recent practitioner experience

○ Other (please specify)

[*Asked of those who earned a master's degree.*]

14. Which of the following do you wish had been a stronger part of your graduate education?

○ Case studies

○ Mock negotiations

○ Course work that reflects the interdependencies and overlapping domains in real-world public service

○ Team-based assignments (with no assigned roles)

○ Team-based assignments with assigned roles that reflect typical roles in government

○ Capstone or client-based project

○ Internship

○ Brief/memo writing assignments

○ Analytics/data modeling

○ Instructors with recent practitioner experience

○ Other (please specify)

Professional development look back

[*This section not asked of those not currently working in government.*]

15. To further your career in government service, which of the following types of

professional development have you taken part in?

○ Mentorship program

○ Executive coaching

○ Hands-on workshop

○ Single-day presentation

○ Ongoing course

○ Networking community

○ Rotational program

○ Other (please specify)

○ None of the above

16. **How recently have you participated in a professional development program?**

○ In the past year

○ 1-2 years ago

○ 2-4 years ago

○ 5+ years ago

○ Never

17. **Thinking of the best professional development you have experienced, how valuable was it?**

Scale: 1 No value to 5 Very valuable

[*For those who selected 5 on the previous question.*]

18. **Please tell us more about this experience. What was the topic and format?**

Educational and professional development look forward

[*This section not asked of those not currently working in government.*]

19. **Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following state-ments.**

Scale: 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree

To further my career in government service …

a. I am planning to earn a graduate degree in the future (please specify degree).

b. I am planning to earn a certificate or other credential in the future, but not earn a degree (please specify the credential).

c. I am planning to undertake professional development of some kind (workshop, professional community, mentorship program, etc.) in the future.

d. I wish that universities offered a degree, certificate, or other credential that was more relevant to me.

e. I wish that I had access to professional development opportunities (workshop, professional community, mentorship program, etc.) that are more relevant to me.

[*Asked of those who selected 3 or higher on statements d. or e. on previous question.*]

20. As you consider continuing your education/professional development, what subject areas are most relevant to you?

21. Which of the following types of professional development would you most like to take part in? Please select up to three.
- ○ Mentorship program
- ○ Executive coaching
- ○ Hands-on workshop
- ○ Single-day presentation
- ○ Ongoing course
- ○ Networking community
- ○ Rotational program
- ○ Other (please specify)
- ○ None of the above

22. In what setting would you prefer to engage in professional development? Please select all that apply.
- ○ In my workplace
- ○ At a university
- ○ At an off-site location (not at my workplace)
- ○ Online
- ○ Other (please specify)

Demographics

23. Which of the following certifications, if any, do you hold?
- ○ Contracting (FAC-C)
- ○ Contracting Officer's Representative (FAC-COR)
- ○ Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM)
- ○ Project Management Professional (PMP)
- ○ Other (please specify)

24. How many times have you been promoted in the past 5 years?
- ○ 0
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3+

25. What is your gender?
- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Other/prefer not to say

26. Are you a veteran of the US Armed Forces?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No

27. What do you consider to be your ethnic origin? Please select all that apply.
- ○ African American
- ○ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ○ Caucasian non-Hispanic
- ○ Latino/Hispanic
- ○ Native American
- ○ Other (please specify)
- ○ I prefer not to say

28. What words of wisdom would you offer someone who has just entered government service and wants to make a difference?

[*Opt-in to gift card or charitable donation*]
[*Opt-in to Volcker Alliance mailing list and notification when report is ready*]

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts with us!

THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE

STAFF OF THE VOLCKER ALLIANCE

ENDNOTES

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10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

2018 **MEMBERSHIP MARKETING BENCHMARKING REPORT**

WWW.**MARKETINGGENERAL**.COM

SUPERVISED BY:

Tony Rossell
Senior Vice President

Adina Wasserman, PhD
Director of Research

Matt Kerr, MA
Market Research Manager

MARKETING GENERAL
I N C O R P O R A T E D™

Dear Colleague,

This is the 10th year for Marketing General Incorporated's **Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report.** You have in front of you an incomparable marketing research tool!

After 10 years and all of the ensuing changes in the world of membership associations and organizations, this is as longitudinal a report as can be found anywhere on the strategies and tactics that membership organizations from the US and from around the world use to recruit new members, engage and renew those members, and reinstate lapsed members.

This year, 821 unique associations participated in the survey including Individual Member Associations, Trade Associations, and Associations combining characteristics of both. My thanks to all of them.

As always, in addition to the pages of actual survey results, it is really worth reading the answers to the open-ended questions. This is where our respondents share their thoughts and professional experiences with membership growth, member satisfaction, their most popular benefits, payment plans, how and when they raise their dues, and what keeps them up at night.
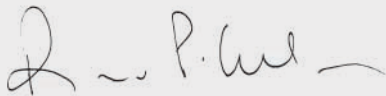
How have the *Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report* findings changed over the last ten years? After the drastic declines in membership in 2009 and 2010, the trend is certainly more positive. Membership organizations now pretty consistently report year-over-year growth.

While communication methods and best practices have certainly changed over the past ten years, each type of organization has adopted those changes to best meet their goals and objectives.

This report represents the combined efforts of our research and creative teams, individually listed on the back cover. All of us at MGI hope that this report helps you gain increased knowledge and understanding of this ever-evolving profession of ours that knits together people and communities around the world.

Call me, email me, or contact MGI through our website with any questions, thoughts, comments, and suggestions on this or future reports.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Whelan, CDM
President, Marketing General Incorporated
Rick@MarketingGeneral.com
703.706.0350
www.MarketingGeneral.com

> "I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination."   *- Jimmy Dean*

We are pleased to present the 2018 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report.

This is the TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION of this research, so it is a great opportunity to look back over the ten years to see how membership marketing for associations has both remained constant and has changed.

The theme of this tenth anniversary edition highlights the evolution in how associations go to market as they seek to recruit and retain members and how remarkably associations have adapted to changes to remain strong and vibrant. In fact, the data over the years highlights that association membership continues to show growth and staying power.

2018 REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR'S DATA

Results show an uptick in the percentage of associations reporting increases in membership over the past year (48% vs. 46% in 2017). Similar to 2017 findings, only 25% of associations report declines in membership in the past year, and about one-quarter report no change (26%).

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE IN PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 819)	**Individual** (n = 379)	**Trade** (n = 241)	**Combination** (n = 199)
Increased	48%	47%	52%	44%
Decreased	25%	29%	19%	24%
Remained the same	26%	23%	28%	30%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	3%

For associations reporting increases in membership over the past year, **the median increase is a very respectable 5%.**

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 379)	Individual (n = 174)	Trade (n = 122)	Combination (n = 83)
Mean % Increased*	8%	8%	6%	9%
Median % Increased	5%	5%	5%	5%
Increased 1% to 5%	59%	57%	62%	57%
Increased 6% to 10%	21%	19%	23%	24%
Increased 11% to 50%	20%	24%	15%	18%
Increased more than 50%	1%	1%	-	1%

Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

Additionally, **more than half of all associations report increases in membership totals over the past five years (53%)**. Trade associations are most likely to report increases (56%), compared to IMOs (52%) and combination associations (51%).

CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST FIVE YEARS				
	Total (n = 809)	Individual (n = 373)	Trade (n = 239)	Combination (n = 197)
Increased	53%	52%	56%	51%
Decreased	29%	31%	23%	31%
Remained the same	14%	13%	18%	12%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%	7%

QUICK STAT

NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT continues to be the driver for growth in membership counts.

At 47%, almost half of associations also report increases in new member acquisition over the past year. Only 12% of associations indicate their new member acquisitions have declined in the past year, and 35% indicate there is no change in their new member acquisition numbers. New member recruitment continues to be the driver for growth in membership counts.

CHANGE IN NEW MEMBER ACQUISITION OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 785)	Individual (n = 367)	Trade (n = 228)	Combination (n = 190)
Increased	47%	45%	50%	45%
Decreased	12%	13%	12%	10%
Remained the same	35%	34%	34%	37%
Not sure	7%	8%	4%	8%

The median renewal rate reported this year is 84%, and 68% of associations report renewal rates of 80% or higher. At 89%, trade associations have the highest median renewal rate. IMOs and combination associations have similar renewal rates; both show renewal rates around 80%

OVERALL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL RATE				
	Total (n = 649)	Individual (n = 283)	Trade (n = 202)	Combination (n = 164)
Mean	81%	78%	88%	78%
Median	84%	80%	89%	81%

Finally, we continue to see the benefits of associations that effectively reach out to younger members. Associations with increases in their one-year membership and five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to have a higher percentage of millennial members. IMOs reporting declines in their membership over the past five years are significantly more apt to report a higher percentage of Baby Boomer members.

A DECADE OF MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

In looking back over data from the last ten years, it is significant to note that the 2018 key membership statistics mirror the resiliency that associations have reported over this period, perhaps challenging those who have prophesized the imminent demise of the association membership model.

	MEMBERSHIP CHANGE IN PAST YEAR (TREND)			
	Increased	Decreased	Remained the same	Not sure
2018	48%	25%	26%	2%
2017	46%	25%	28%	1%
2016	49%	22%	27%	1%
2015	46%	24%	28%	2%
2014	53%	27%	16%	4%
2013	52%	31%	16%	1%
2012	52%	29%	16%	3%
2011	49%	34%	16%	2%
2010	36%	48%	14%	3%
2009	45%	35%	16%	N/A

With the exception of the latent impact caused by the economic downturn of the Great Recession, the trend of associations reporting an increase in membership counts has been remarkably consistent over the past ten years. Around half of associations show solid membership growth during this period.

	CHANGE IN MEMBER RENEWAL RATE OVER PAST YEAR (TREND)			
	Increased	Decreased	Remained the same	Not sure
2018	27%	24%	42%	7%
2017	25%	23%	44%	8%
2016	24%	26%	44%	6%
2015	22%	24%	44%	9%
2014	31%	27%	36%	7%
2013	35%	31%	30%	4%
2012	36%	22%	33%	10%
2011	32%	24%	37%	7%
2010	21%	44%	27%	8%
2009	22%	31%	39%	N/A

Similarly, a large proportion of associations have reported very stable renewal rates over the past ten years. Again with the exception of the years around the Great Recession, associations have reported that their renewal rates have either "remained the same" or "increased" over the past ten years.

CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP MARKETING METHODS

Even with the stable growth in membership counts and the maintenance of membership renewals, the methodology and focus of how associations have accomplished their goals has evolved and changed over the past ten years. The channels that associations use in membership recruitment and engagement show the most significant change. Payment options have become more sophisticated and automated. But sadly, despite more computing power than ever, the use of data and data analysis has shown almost no forward movement over the last number of years.

Here are some of the MAJOR CHANGES associations have put in place in their membership marketing efforts.

- In 2009, 46% of participants said that direct mail was the most effective membership recruitment channel. By 2018, **word-of-mouth recommendations, email marketing, and promotions to/at your association's conferences or trade shows are affirmed as the most effective recruitment techniques**. Direct mail is cited only by individual membership associations as one of the top three recruitment channels.

- **One recruitment channel that has seen recent growth in reported effectiveness is paid digital marketing.** For 2018, 17% of individual membership associations and 12% of all participants consider digital marketing to be one of their most effective channels for acquiring new members. The associations that use digital marketing effectively note that paid Facebook advertising and remarketing (using Facebook, AdRoll, Google) are the most effective methods (68% and 49%, respectively). This digital channel was almost invisible in our research until 2015.

- When it comes to fulfilling new memberships, for 2018, only **44% of associations report sending a mailed welcome kit to onboard new members**. This is down from 51% in 2017 and significantly down from 83% ten years ago in 2009. Also in 2009, 53% of associations mailed a membership card or certificate to onboard new members, and in our latest research this has declined at a somewhat slower pace to 43% of associations.

- Overall, **association executives are most likely to say that members join to network with others in their field** (58%), and learn best practices in their profession (26%). In 2009, the top reason to join was access to specialized information. To learn best practices in the profession was the fifth reason given for joining in our 2009 research with only 8% offering this reason.

- **There now appears to be a deeper understanding of membership retention than in the past.** In 2009, the top reasons cited for non-renewal were membership dues were too expensive and the employer was no longer paying dues. For 2018, lack of engagement with the organization is the most commonly cited reason for non-renewal. In fact, 37% of associations list this as a top reason, and the majority of associations (62%) report that they have a tactical plan to increase member engagement.

Over half of **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATIONS** report increases in participation in the following areas: public social media (73%), private social network (59%), young professional program (54%), attendance of their webinars (52%).

❚ **By 2018, Facebook and Twitter are almost ubiquitous as the most popular social media platforms used across each type of association.** Facebook is officially used now by 93% of associations, and Twitter is used by 89% of associations. This compares to 75% of associations using the Facebook platform in 2010 and only 66% of associations using Twitter in 2010. At the same time, associations offering listservs have dropped from 24% in 2010 to only 9% in 2018.

❚ In our 2010 research, only 22% of associations reported offering automatic annual credit card renewals. This payment method has expanded over the years. **Automatic annual credit card renewals are especially popular among IMOs,** with 45% making this option available.

❚ Associations' use of **Automatic Annual Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) with renewals has increased** over the years from 10% in 2010 to 17% in 2018.

❚ In 2009, 17% of associations used a Fax as part of their renewal efforts. By 2018, **only 1% of respondents report that a Fax was a top renewal marketing channel**.

❚ **The length of time associations continue to reach out to lapsed members with reinstatement efforts has expanded.** In 2009, 21% of associations said that they "continue indefinitely to contact lapsed members," and by 2018, this has increased to 33% of associations.

❚ Finally, although we do not have longitudinal data in this area, it appears that the ways that members engage with an association are shifting. When asked the engagement opportunities that associations report as increasing over the past year, over half of individual membership **associations report increases in participation** in the following areas: in their public social media (73%), in a private social network (59%), in their young professional program (54%), and in attendance of their webinars (52%).

❚ On the other hand, the **engagement activities that have shown the least increase** over the past year for individual membership associations include volunteering with the association (36%), the use of career services (32%), the purchase or maintaining of insurance through the organization (27%), and book or directory purchases (27%).

There are some membership practices that have NOT SEEN SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE over the last number of years.

❚ Even with increased computing power over the years, one area that has shown remarkably little improvement is the types of analysis done by associations to measure the effectiveness of membership marketing campaigns. When comparing data from 2012 to 2018, **the level of data analysis reported shows very little improvement**. Conducting membership marketing response rate analysis has only increased slightly from 49% to 51%. Lifetime value analysis of a member's economic contribution to the association has declined from 16% to 10%. And computer matchback analysis to evaluate responses by comparing new members to the prospect database has declined from 15% to only 10%.

❚ **Associations also continue to report the desire to reach out to acquire younger members.** However, in 2011, 18% of associations offered a young professional new to the industry membership category. The same percentage of associations (18%) report offering this category in 2018.

The *Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report* is made possible by the faithful contributions of hundreds of associations that provide their data, comments, and guidance each year. We want to warmly thank each association that has participated this year and over the ten year life of this research.

As you review this year's report, please feel free to contact the authors with your questions and feedback. Additionally, if your organization is facing challenges with your membership marketing efforts and needs assistance, Marketing General Incorporated has a staff of experts that can provide you with guidance. Our contact information appears on the back cover of this report.

INTRODUCTION

SURVEY OBJECTIVE

For the tenth consecutive year, MGI has conducted its annual Membership Marketing Benchmarking Survey. As in past years, the report highlights the strategies and tactics that membership organizations find most useful in recruitment, engagement, renewal, and reinstatement of members.

Each year, we review the questions from the previous survey to ensure that the content we provide is relevant and on trend. We evaluate the usefulness and success of questions and determine which will be removed, what questions will be added, and which will be retained for further analysis. Additionally, we always include some suggested questions offered by previous survey participants.

METHODOLOGY

The 2018 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Survey was conducted online. It was launched on January 8, 2018, and remained open until February 19, 2018. Email invitations were sent to association executives who subscribe to MGI's monthly newsletter, the *Tipster*; had downloaded the 2017 Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report; MGI webinar registrants from 2015 to 2017; or had completed any survey from 2015 to 2017. A link to the survey was also available on the MGI social media sites. Finally, those who requested to participate but had not been included on any of the lists were sent a link to the survey.

RESPONSE RATE

Email invitations were sent to 18,577 individuals. Of those, 1,703 emails bounced, bringing the total to 16,874. A total of 689 executives completed the survey and 254 partially completed the survey, totaling 943 participants. The response rate is approximately 6%.

ANALYSES

Our practice is to include only one response per association, so as to not duplicate data. If more than one person from an association completes the survey, we use the data that was most complete, and/or the data from the individuals whose responsibilities most closely relate to membership marketing. We require that each association or company name be provided for this reason. If no association name or company is included, the data is not used. Net duplicate association submissions, a total of 821 unique associations participated in the current research.

REPORT LAYOUT

The data in this report will be segmented by type of association: Individual Membership Organization (IMO), Trade Association (Trade), or association with a combination of both individual and organizational types of membership (Combination). A total segment will be included in all charts and tables to show data relevant to all associations.

We are continuing our inclusion of the Participant Comment Highlights, which provide verbatim insights and recommendations shared by participants in the survey.

THE SECTIONS INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT ARE:

SECTION 1:
Association Statistics

SECTION 2:
Member Recruitment (Acquisition)

SECTION 3:
Member Engagement

SECTION 4:
Member Renewal and Reinstatement (Retention)

SECTION 5:
Challenges and Goals

SECTION 6:
Dues and Membership Structure

SECTION 7:
Marketing Tools
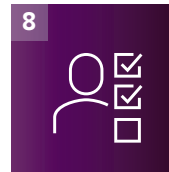
SECTION 8:
The Demographics of Your Association

SECTION 9:
Words of Wisdom

ASSOCIATION STATISTICS

How has your membership changed in the past one year period?

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE IN PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 819)	Individual (n = 379)	Trade (n = 241)	Combination (n = 199)
Increased	48%	47%	52%	44%
Decreased	25%	29%	19%	24%
Remained the same	26%	23%	28%	30%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	3%

▌ Results show an uptick in the percentage of associations reporting increases in membership over the past year (48% vs. 46% in 2017). Similar to 2017 findings, 25% of associations report declines in membership in the past year, and about one-quarter report no change (26%).

▌ More than half of trade associations report increases in membership over the past year (52%), compared to 47% of IMOs and 44% of combination associations. Combination associations are the most likely to report no change in membership (30%), while IMOs are the most likely to indicate a loss of membership over the past year (29%).

▌ Associations showing increases in membership over the past five years, as well as increases in new members and increases in renewals are significantly more likely to also report increases in overall membership in the past year. Conversely, those associations reporting declines in membership over the past year are significantly more likely to also report declines in new members over the past year, declines in overall membership over the past five years, and declines in member renewals.

▌ New member renewal rates are also correlated with membership over the past year. Associations reporting new member renewal rates of 80% or higher are significantly more likely to report increases in overall membership numbers in the past year, while those with renewal rates less than 80% are significantly more apt to report declines in membership over the past year.

▌ Additionally, the larger IMOs (over 5,000 individual members) are significantly more likely to report declines in membership numbers over the past year while smaller IMOs (fewer than 5,000 individual members) are more apt to report no change in overall membership.

QUICK STAT

For associations reporting **INCREASES IN MEMBERSHIP** over the past year, the median increase is 5%.

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PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 379)	Individual (n = 174)	Trade (n = 122)	Combination (n = 83)
Mean % Increased*	8%	8%	6%	9%
Median % Increased	5%	5%	5%	5%
Increased 1% to 5%	59%	57%	62%	57%
Increased 6% to 10%	21%	19%	23%	24%
Increased 11% to 50%	20%	24%	15%	18%
Increased more than 50%	1%	1%	-	1%

Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

▌ For associations reporting increases in membership over the past year, the median increase is 5%, mirroring findings from 2017. More than half of all associations report increases of 1% to 5% (59%).

▌ Trade associations are more likely than IMOs or combination associations to report increases in this percentage range (62%). About one-quarter of trade and combination associations report increases of 6% to 10% (23% and 24%, respectively), and one-quarter of IMOs report increases of more than 10% (25%).

PERCENTAGE DECREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 192)	Individual (n = 101)	Trade (n = 45)	Combination (n = 46)
Mean % Decreased*	6%	5%	5%	7%
Median % Decreased	4%	4%	3%	4%
Decreased 1% to 5%	68%	68%	73%	63%
Decreased 6% to 10%	20%	22%	18%	17%
Decreased 11% to 50%	12%	10%	9%	20%
Decreased more than 50%	-	-	-	-

Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

▌ Of the associations reporting declines in membership over the past year, the median loss is 4%, a slight decrease from 2017 (5%). More than two-thirds of these associations indicate losses in membership over the past year of 1% to 5% (68%).

▌ About three-quarters of trade associations describe declines of 1% to 5% (73%), a higher percentage than both IMOs and combination associations. IMOs are more likely than other types of associations to report declines of 6% to 10% (22%), while 20% of combination associations have declines of more than 10%, an increase from the previous year's findings (15% in 2017).

Over the past five years, how has the total percentage of your membership changed?

CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST FIVE YEARS				
	Total (n = 809)	Individual (n = 373)	Trade (n = 239)	Combination (n = 197)
Increased	53%	52%	56%	51%
Decreased	29%	31%	23%	31%
Remained the same	14%	13%	18%	12%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%	7%

❚ More than half of all associations report increases in membership totals over the past five years (53%). Trade associations are most likely to report increases (56%), compared to IMOs (52%) and combination associations (51%). These percentages, however, represent increases across the board compared to 2017.

❚ Almost three in ten associations report declines in their five-year membership numbers (29%). IMOs and combination associations are more likely to report declines (31% each) compared to trade associations (23%).

❚ Associations reporting increases in their membership over the past five years are significantly more likely to report increases in their one-year membership numbers, new members over the past year, and overall renewals over the past year. Similarly, those associations reporting declines in their five-year membership are significantly more likely to show reductions in their overall membership, their new members, and their overall renewals over the past year.

❚ Furthermore, associations reporting increases in their membership over the past five years are also significantly more likely have increases in new member renewal rates at or above 80%, while conversely, those associations reporting declines in their five-year membership are more likely to report new member renewal rates under 80%.

❚ Operating budgets also correlate with membership. Associations reporting increases in their membership over the past five years are significantly more likely to have the largest operating budgets ($20 million or more), while those reporting declines in membership over the past five years tend to have budgets under $20 million.

QUICK STAT

ASSOCIATIONS REPORTING INCREASES in their membership over the past 5 years are significantly more likely to have the largest operating budgets ($20 million or more).

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST FIVE YEARS				
	Total (n = 408)	Individual (n = 186)	Trade (n = 127)	Combination (n = 95)
Mean % Increased*	24%	25%	20%	27%
Median % Increased	12%	12%	10%	14%
Increased 1% to 5%	25%	26%	24%	22%
Increased 6% to 10%	22%	19%	28%	20%
Increased 11% to 50%	44%	44%	39%	48%
Increased more than 50%	10%	10%	10%	10%

*Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

▌ Over the past five years, associations report a median membership growth of 12%, down from 13% in 2017. One-quarter of associations report increases of up to 5% (25%), while 22% report growth of 6% to 10% over the past five years. The largest proportion of associations, however, report growth of 11% to 50% over the past five years (44%).

▌ Combination associations have the highest median growth over the past five years (14%), compared to 12% for IMOs and 10% for trade organizations. Combination associations are also the most likely to report increases of over 10% (58%). Trade organizations are the most likely to report increases of 6% to 10% (28%).

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS ASSOCIATION STATISTICS

Why do you believe your membership has INCREASED in the past five years?

▌ Due to expanding membership in other markets. (IMO)

▌ Dues rate reduction, aggressive membership marketing (direct mail, email & online). (IMO)

▌ I think we have done a great job of reaching out to new, younger people in the profession including offering a new Young Professionals discount. (IMO)

▌ Industry growth/recovery. Active promotion of membership from association and membership. (Trade)

▌ More money spent on acquisition. (IMO)

▌ New membership model, healthy industry. (Trade)

▌ New membership structure and way of counting members. (Combination)

▌ Stronger digital presence and online offerings. Growth in certification customers (offering more certifications and word-of-mouth) which leads to a growth in membership. (IMO)

▌ Targeted marketing, enhanced value proposition based on quantitative survey feedback. (IMO)

▌ Targeted membership campaigns. More aggressive marketing and enhanced member benefits. (Trade)

▌ The economy has improved for our industry. (Trade)

▌ The overall size of the market has increased. While we are not keeping pace with the size of market, it still naturally translates into more members. (IMO)

▌ We have increased our marketing efforts to better explain the value of membership. (Trade)

▌ We moved from a one-year calendar-based membership to anniversary date and offering either one or two year membership options. (IMO)

PERCENTAGE DECREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OVER PAST FIVE YEARS				
	Total (n = 215)	Individual (n = 106)	Trade (n = 51)	Combination (n = 58)
Mean % Decreased*	12%	12%	13%	12%
Median % Decreased	9%	9%	10%	9%
Decreased 1% to 5%	33%	36%	24%	34%
Decreased 6% to 10%	29%	25%	33%	33%
Decreased 11% to 50%	39%	40%	43%	33%
Decreased more than 50%	-	-	-	-

*Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

❚ For associations reporting declines in membership over the past five years, the median decrease is 9%, down from 10% in 2017. One-third of associations reporting losses indicate their membership over the past five years has dropped by up to 5% (33%), while 29% report declines of 6% to 10%. However, the largest proportion of associations reporting declines in membership report losses in membership of over 10% (39%). This represents an increase from the 2017 results (37%).

❚ Compared to 2017, a higher percentage of all types of associations report losses of more than 10%. Trade associations are most likely to report the highest level of declines (43% reporting losses over 10% vs. 36% in 2017), while combination associations are least likely to report declines at that level (33% vs. 37% in 2017). 40% of IMOs report losses of more than 10% compared to 38% in 2017. IMOs are more likely than other types of associations to indicate losses over the past five years of up to 5% (36%).

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS ASSOCIATION STATISTICS

Why do you believe your membership has DECREASED in the past five years?

❚ Corporate consolidations, people leaving the industry or retiring, lack of interest in membership due to financial/economic constraints, our relevancy needing to be improved, which we have been doing over the last 5 years. (Combination)

❚ Fewer young people joining societies. A trend in universities to stop paying for professional memberships. Also, we have switched database CRM/AMS systems for the second time since 2010. (IMO)

❚ Increased availability of information and resources online (no longer needing to belong to an association to access education and support for our industry) and perhaps a changing view of the need for a professional membership affiliation. (IMO)

❚ Industry consolidation; free-rider problems; lack of perceived value; increase in dues during a downward economic cycle in agriculture. (Trade)

❚ Lack of awareness of the association. Too many other associations competing for the same members. Lack of understanding of the value of membership (which is incumbent upon us to convey). (Combination)

❚ Members are retiring in droves, and new students are not entering the field at rates to keep pace with retirements. (IMO)

❚ Merger and acquisition activity/business closures would account for most of it. (Trade)

❚ More competition from social networking and free professional development and niche organizations. (IMO)

- Poor data management. Poor engagement with members. (Combination)
- Poor IT infrastructure. (IMO)
- The Leadership was infighting, and members were not being engaged, no events/no benefits to joining. (Combination)
- There was nobody dedicated to recruitment consistently. Aging demographic with not enough members brought in to replace deceased members. (IMO)
- Until last year there was no one in membership

only - several people had parts of membership but it wasn't being given enough attention. Renewal notices were not consistently sent, no recruitment, etc. (Combination)
- We're experiencing decline as a result of communication and campaign fatigue. I also believe a lot of the resources we charge for are available elsewhere for free. (Combination)
- Wish we knew. Doing more than ever to renew and reinstate members, but numbers continue to decline. (IMO)

What tools are you using to reverse the decline in membership?

- 6 acquisition mailings annually. Online lead generation to drastically increase prospect pool. Beefing up tangible benefits that are attractive to current and recently retired federal employees. Email and online advertising to promote webinars (register ad join). (IMO)
- Developed a new onboarding and first-year membership plan, ramping up engagement strategies, evaluating current benefits and introducing new benefits, reviewing sales strategies, reaching out to members more frequently to ensure we have the proper contact engaged, and developing strategies to work with younger demographics. (Trade)
- Direct mail; email marketing; partnerships. (IMO)
- Expanding into new markets. (Trade)
- Focus on member onboarding. Trying to create better incentives for members to maintain continuous memberships rather than only paying dues when they are attending a meeting and utilize the member discount. (Combination)
- Focusing on younger newer members and students. Rewarding the long term members. Offering monthly payment of membership fees. (Combination)
- Lapsed member outreach, early renewal programs. (IMO)
- Marketing Automation, New CRM and website, inside sales. (IMO)
- Marketing, Marketing, Marketing. (IMO)
- More aggressive new membership recruitment. (Trade)

- More digital marketing to coincide with Direct Mail, revamping renewal emails, restructuring benefits. (Combination)
- Redefining value. More emphasis on younger generations. (IMO)
- Reorganized the department and hired the correct people. (Trade)
- Researching allied health professionals who could also be interested in membership. Expanding internationally. Expanding our base. (IMO)
- Strategic planning with Association expert. Adding relevant members-only benefits. Investing in Marketing Professional. Invested in survey. (Trade)
- Telemarketing, email, direct mail, welcome calls, surveying, value added benefits, community platform. (IMO)
- We are looking at new membership category to add new prospects to our membership recruitment pool. (IMO)
- We are, for the first time, deep-diving into the data on our members that we have in our CRM database and online -- what events they come to, how many years they are a patron before they join, how many years a member before they lapse, how they engage with us on Facebook, what emails they respond best to...everything. We hope that by looking more at how our members behave, we'll be able to better tailor our join and renew messages to stop the (very) leaky bucket and attract new members. (IMO)

In the past one year, how has your new member acquisition changed?

CHANGE IN NEW MEMBER ACQUISITION OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 785)	Individual (n = 367)	Trade (n = 228)	Combination (n = 190)
Increased	47%	45%	50%	45%
Decreased	12%	13%	12%	10%
Remained the same	35%	34%	34%	37%
Not sure	7%	8%	4%	8%

▌ Almost half of associations report increases in new members over the past year, an increase from 2017 (47% vs. 45% in 2017). Only 12% of associations indicate their new member acquisitions have declined in the past year, and 35% indicate there is no change in their new member acquisition numbers.

▌ Trade associations are most likely to report increases in new members (50%), compared to 45% of both IMOs and combination associations. While these results represent increases for both trade and combination associations since 2017, the findings indicate a decline in new members for IMOs since 2017 (45% vs. 47% in 2017). IMOs are the most likely to report declines in new members (13%), with combination associations the least likely (10%).

▌ Associations reporting increases in new member acquisitions over the past year are significantly more likely to also report increases in the overall membership over the past year and the past five years. They are also significantly more likely to report increases in the overall renewal rates. Conversely, those associations reporting decreases in new members are significantly more apt to report declines in their one-year and five-year membership numbers, as well as their overall renewal rates.

QUICK STAT

Those associations reporting **DECREASES IN NEW MEMBERS** are significantly more apt to report declines in their one-year and five-year membership numbers, as well as their overall renewal rates.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN NEW MEMBER ACQUISITION OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 331)	Individual (n = 153)	Trade (n = 101)	Combination (n = 77)
Mean % Increased*	13%	14%	12%	12%
Median % Increased	6%	5%	6%	6%
Increased 1% to 5%	48%	49%	47%	47%
Increased 6% to 10%	23%	19%	24%	30%
Increased 11% to 50%	25%	28%	26%	20%
Increased more than 50%	4%	4%	4%	4%

*Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

▌ Overall, the percentage of increases in new members has declined since 2017, with a median percentage increase of 6%, down from 8% in 2017. Associations reporting increases are most likely to report increases of up to 5% (48%), up from 44% in 2017. IMOs are more likely to report increases of only 1% to 5% (49%) compared to trade and combination associations (47% each). The percentage of trade and combination associations reporting increases at this low level, however, has increased since 2017 (47% vs. 44% in 2017 for trade associations and 47% vs. 35% in 2017 for combination associations).

▌ Close to three in ten associations report increases of more than 10% in new members over the past year (29%), a decline from 2017 (38%). Fewer associations of all types report increases in new members at the highest levels: 32% of IMOs report increases over 10% compared to 38% in 2017; 30% of trade associations report increases of new members over 10% compared to 35% in 2017; 24% of combination associations report increases of new members over 10% compared to 43% in 2017.

PERCENTAGE DECREASE IN NEW MEMBER ACQUISITION OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 89)	Individual (n = 43)	Trade (n = 27)	Combination (n = 19)
Mean % Decreased*	13%	12%	14%	15%
Median % Decreased	8%	8%	7%	11%
Decreased 1% to 5%	38%	40%	37%	37%
Decreased 6% to 10%	21%	28%	19%	11%
Decreased 11% to 50%	39%	33%	41%	53%
Decreased more than 50%	1%	-	4%	-

*Means are influenced by high and low numbers in the data set.

▌ The median decline in new members over the past year is 8%, mirroring findings from 2017. Overall, 40% of associations report declines in new members of more than 10%. Unlike 2017, IMOs are more likely to report declines of only 1% to 5% (40% vs. 32% in 2017), while combination associations are less likely to have kept declines at this lower level (37% vs. 46 % in 2017).

▌ Trade and combination associations are significantly more likely than IMOs to have declines in new members over 10% (45% and 53%, respectively vs. 33% for IMOs). Additionally, a higher percentage of trade and combination associations show declines at this level compared to 2017 (45% of trade associations vs. 40% in 2017; 53% of combination associations vs. 39% in 2017).

ACROSS ALL ASSOCIATIONS, more than one-quarter of associations report that their member renewal rate has increased over the past year (27%).

In the past one year, how has your member renewal rate changed?

CHANGE IN MEMBER RENEWAL RATE OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total **(n =774)**	**Individual** **(n = 361)**	**Trade** **(n = 224)**	**Combination** **(n = 189)**
Increased	27%	28%	26%	28%
Decreased	24%	26%	21%	22%
Remained the same	42%	38%	48%	43%
Not sure	7%	8%	5%	7%

▌ Across all associations, more than one-quarter of associations report that their member renewal rate has increased over the past year (27%), while slightly fewer associations report a depressed renewal rate (24%). Compared to 2017, a higher percentage of associations are reporting increases in renewal rates (27% vs. 25% in 2017). IMOs and combination associations are most likely to report increases in renewal rates (28% each, vs. 26% for trade associations).

▌ Most associations, however, indicate no change in their overall renewal rate (42%). Trade associations are most likely to report no change in renewals (48%), compared to combination associations (43%) and IMOs (38%). About two in ten trade and combination associations report drops in renewal rates (21% and 22%, respectively), while 26% of IMOs report declines.

▌ Associations reporting increases in their membership over the past year, and the past five years, are significantly more likely to report increases in their renewal rates, while those reporting declines in their one-year and five-year membership numbers, as well as their new member acquisitions are significantly more likely to report drops in their renewal rates.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MEMBER RENEWAL RATE OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 199)	Individual (n = 96)	Trade (n = 55)	Combination (n = 48)
Mean % Increased*	8%	10%	5%	8%
Median % Increased	4%	3%	3%	4%
Increased 1% to 5%	67%	66%	71%	65%
Increased 6% to 10%	19%	16%	20%	23%
Increased 11 to 50%	12%	14%	9%	10%
Increased more than 50%	3%	5%	-	2%

*Means are influenced by high or low numbers in the data set.

▌ For associations reporting increases in member renewal rates, the median increase is 4%. Two-thirds of associations report increases in their renewals of up to 5%, (67%), with trade associations most likely to report increases in this percentage range (71%). Approximately 19% of associations reporting increases in renewals indicate an increase of 6% to 10%, and 15% report increases of over 10%. This represents an increase in the highest levels compared to the previous research (15% vs. 13% in 2017).

▌ IMOs are most likely to report increases of more than 10% (19%) compared to trade and combination associations (9% and 12%, respectively). The percentage of IMOs reporting increases over 10% has shown an impressive uptick since 2017 (19% vs. 12% in 2017).

PERCENTAGE DECREASE IN MEMBER RENEWAL RATE OVER PAST YEAR				
	Total (n = 170)	Individual (n = 87)	Trade (n = 45)	Combination (n = 38)
Mean % Decreased*	6%	6%	6%	6%
Median % Decreased	4%	3%	4%	4%
Decreased 1% to 5%	70%	69%	73%	69%
Decreased 6% to 10%	19%	19%	20%	18%
Decreased 11% to 50%	10%	10%	7%	13%
Decreased more than 50%	1%	1%	-	-

*Means are influenced by high or low numbers in the data set.

▌ Of the associations reporting decreases in their overall renewal rates, 70% indicate drops of up to 5%, and 19% report declines of 6% to 10%. Only 11% of associations report declines in their overall renewal rates of more than 10%. Compared to findings from 2017, fewer associations across the board report declines of up to 5%.

▌ Trade associations are most likely to report renewal rate declines of up to 5% (73%), compared to IMOs and combination associations (69% each). But trade associations are also least likely to report declines of more than 10% (7%) compared to IMOs (11%) and combination associations (13%). Compared to results from 2017, trade associations are less likely to report drops in renewal rates over 10% (7% vs. 14% in 2017) and combination associations are more likely to report drops over 10% (13% vs. 9% in 2017).

What is your overall membership renewal rate?

OVERALL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL RATE				
	Total (n = 649)	Individual (n = 283)	Trade (n = 202)	Combination (n = 164)
Mean	81%	78%	88%	78%
Median	84%	80%	89%	81%

▌ Echoing findings from 2017, the median renewal rate is 84%, and 68% of associations report renewal rates of 80% or higher. At 89%, trade associations have the highest median renewal rate. IMOs and combination associations have similar renewal rates; both show renewal rates around 80%.

▌ Trade associations are most likely to report renewals of 80% or more compared to IMOs and combination associations (91% vs. 57% for IMOS and 59% for combination associations).

▌ Associations with increases or no change in membership over the past year are significantly more likely to report renewal rates of 80% or higher. Similarly, associations with new member renewals at or above 60% are significantly more likely to report overall renewal at 80% or higher.

▌ Trade and combination associations with at least 100 company/group members are significantly more likely to have renewal rates of 80% or more. Small IMOs or combination associations (up to 1,000 individual members) are most likely to have overall renewal rates at or above 80%.

What is your renewal rate for first year members?

RENEWAL RATE FOR FIRST-YEAR MEMBERS				
	Total (n = 466)	Individual (n = 197)	Trade (n = 156)	Combination (n = 113)
Mean	70%	63%	81%	67%
Median	70%	62%	85%	66%

▌ The median renewal rate for new members is 70%, down from 74% in 2017. Trade associations have the highest new member renewal rates (85%), compared to combination associations (66%) and IMOs (62%).

▌ Associations with overall renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely to have new member renewals over 80% as well. Similarly, associations with increases in membership over the past year, increases in membership over the past five years, and increases in new members are significantly more likely to report new member renewals at 80% or higher.

▌ Large IMOs and combination associations (over 5,000 individual members) are significantly more likely to report new member renewals of less than 60%, while the smallest associations (up to 1,000 individual members) are significantly more likely to report new member renewals of 80% or more.

Please indicate what percentage of your membership belongs to each of following generation groups.

GENERATION GROUPS	
	Individual (n =222)
Generation Z (born 1996 or later)	6%
Millennial (born 1980 to 1995)	19%
Generation X (born 1965 to 1979)	29%
Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964)	36%
Born 1945 or earlier	11%

▮ Similar to findings from 2017, Baby Boomers make up the largest percentage of membership in IMOs (36% vs. 39% in 2017). Findings show a slight increase in Millennial members (19% vs. 17% in 2017) and in Generation Z members (6% vs. 4% in 2017).

▮ Associations with increases in their one-year membership and five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to have a higher percentage of millennial members. IMOs reporting declines in their membership over the past five years are significantly more apt to report a higher percentage of Baby Boomer members.

▮ IMOs with operating budgets less than $20 million are significantly more likely to have a higher percentage of Baby Boomers compared to associations with more than $20 million in their operating budget.

QUICK STAT

ASSOCIATIONS WITH INCREASES in their one-year membership and five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to have a higher percentage of millennial members.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Which recruitment marketing channels get your organization the most new members? You may select up to five answer choices.

CHANNELS THAT GET MOST NEW MEMBERS				
	Total (n = 708)	Individual (n =318)	Trade (n = 215)	Combination (n = 175)
Word-of-mouth recommendations	67%	66%	63%	74%
Email	61%	65%	56%	63%
Promotion to/at your own conferences/trade shows	34%	30%	41%	33%
Cross-sell to non-members who buy your products or attend your conferences	29%	23%	37%	30%
Direct mail	26%	31%	20%	23%
Local events/meetings	26%	25%	27%	26%
Association-sponsored events	25%	25%	25%	24%
Personal sales calls	20%	8%	39%	19%
Chapters	19%	26%	10%	17%
Exhibiting at other conferences	18%	16%	23%	17%
Advertising in your own publications	12%	12%	14%	10%
Free membership offered with a non-member meeting registration	12%	18%	3%	12%
Paid online digital marketing	12%	17%	4%	11%
Public relations	11%	8%	18%	10%
Accreditation promotion	9%	10%	7%	7%
Content marketing (white papers)	7%	6%	8%	9%
Telemarketing	5%	7%	3%	3%
Advertising in outside publications	4%	5%	3%	3%
Radio or TV	1%	2%	1%	1%
Other	13%	13%	11%	15%

QUICK STAT

12% of participants consider **DIGITAL MARKETING** to be one of the most effective channels for acquiring new members.

▎ Overall, word-of mouth recommendations, email, and promotions to/at your association's conferences or trade shows garner the most new members.

▎ For trade and combination associations, the three most effective means for acquiring new members is the same. However, for IMOs, direct mail is a slightly more effective channel than promotion to/at conferences.

▎ For associations with renewal rates of 80% or higher, personal sales calls tend to be significantly more effective (26% vs. 10% of associations with renewal rates below 80%). Additionally, associations showing increases in their five-year change in membership indicate that promotion to/at conferences is significantly more effective in recruiting new members compared to those reporting declines (37% vs. 28%).

▎ Associations with increases in their renewal rates are significantly more likely to find email a highly effective recruitment tool compared to associations reporting declines in renewals (68% vs. 62%).

▎ Word-of-mouth recommendations become less effective as the number of individual members increases, or the operating budget decreases. Direct mail, however, becomes more effective as the number of individual members and group/company members increases. It is also positively correlated to operating budget, such that the effectiveness of direct mail increases as the operating budget increases.

▎ Email and promotions at conferences also improve in recruiting new members as the operating budget increases. Using chapters as a recruitment vehicle becomes more effective as the number of individual members increases as well.

Which of the following digital advertising channels provide the most new members? (Check all that apply.)

DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS THAT GET MOST NEW MEMBERS				
	Total (n = 83)	Individual (n =54)	Trade (n = 9)	Combination (n = 20)
Facebook Paid Advertising	68%	72%	56%	60%
Remarketing (Facebook, AdRoll, or Google)	49%	44%	56%	60%
Search engine optimization (SEO)	40%	41%	67%	25%
Search engine ads (pay-per-click)	40%	39%	44%	40%
Paid banners on other websites	24%	35%	-	5%
Lead generation content marketing (White Papers)	22%	22%	33%	15%
LinkedIn Paid Advertising	21%	15%	33%	30%

❙ 12% of participants consider digital marketing to be one of the most effective channels for acquiring new members. The associations that use digital marketing effectively indicate that paid Facebook advertising and remarketing (Facebook, AdRoll, Google) are the most effective methods (68% and 49%, respectively).

❙ For 72% of IMOs using digital marketing, paid Facebook ads are the most effective. However, 67% of trade organizations using digital marketing consider search engine optimization (SEO) to be the most effective channel. An equal percentage of combination association executives rate paid Facebook ads and remarketing as highly effective (60% each).

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How effective are the following offers for recruiting new members?

EFFECTIVENESS OF OFFERS FOR RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS (VERY EFFECTIVE/EFFECTIVE)				
	Total	Individual	Trade	Combination
Conference or convention discount	59%	61%	55%	59%
Dues discount for first year	56%	59%	54%	50%
Additional months free (e.g., 15 months for the price of 12)	44%	47%	41%	43%
Monthly or quarterly installment dues	41%	46%	37%	35%
Product discount, coupons, or voucher	39%	38%	36%	44%
Multiple-year dues discount	37%	40%	29%	35%
Free trial	30%	36%	20%	30%
Free gifts or premiums	28%	36%	18%	22%
Member-referral incentives (given to members)	28%	35%	24%	20%
No risk/dues back guarantee (refundable dues)	23%	20%	32%	15%
Drawing or contests	19%	25%	12%	9%

▌ The most effective recruitment offers (very effective + effective) include conference/convention discounts (59%), dues discount for the first year (56%), and additional months free—15 months for the cost of 12 (44%). For IMOs and trade organizations, the top three remain the same, however, for combination associations, product discounts, coupons, or vouchers are slightly more effective than additional months (44% vs. 43%).

▌ Associations reporting increases in their five-year membership are significantly more likely to use conference/convention discounts, compared to those reporting declines (64% vs. 51%). Moreover,

associations reporting renewal rates of 80% or higher are more likely to indicate additional months as an effective recruitment tool (47% vs. 37%).

▌ Large IMOs (20,000 or more individual members) are significantly less inclined to consider conference or convention discounts an effective channel for member recruitment compared to smaller associations. Associations with the largest operating budgets ($20 million or more) are significantly more inclined to choose free gifts or premiums as an effective means of recruitment (39%) compared to associations with smaller operating budgets.

What do you believe are the top three reasons members join your organization?

TOP REASONS MEMBERS JOIN ORGANIZATION				
	Total (n = 683)	**Individual (n =310)**	**Trade (n = 205)**	**Combination (n = 168)**
Networking with others in the field	**58%**	**48%**	**64%**	**67%**
Learning best practices in their profession	**26%**	20%	29%	**32%**
Attending conferences/trade shows	**25%**	22%	**30%**	23%
Accessing specialized and/or current information	**25%**	21%	**30%**	24%
Supporting the mission of the association	23%	**27%**	19%	21%
Supporting advocacy	21%	16%	**32%**	16%
Obtaining discounts on product or meeting purchases	20%	22%	14%	**25%**
Advancing their career	17%	**23%**	5%	18%
Accessing association publications	15%	**23%**	6%	12%
Purchasing continuing education	14%	17%	10%	14%
Gaining or maintaining professional certification	12%	17%	7%	11%
Receiving recognition or prestige by belonging to the association	11%	13%	9%	10%
Accessing industry thought leaders	10%	6%	16%	11%
Accessing industry benchmark studies	5%	1%	11%	3%
Using affinity programs (insurance, rental cars, retail discounts, etc.)	4%	4%	7%	2%
Accessing the job board	1%	1%	-	2%
Other	8%	10%	8%	5%
Not sure	<1%	<1%	-	-

Overall, association executives are most likely to say that members join to network with others in their field (58%), and learn best practices in their profession (26%). This is also true for combination associations. However, executives from IMOs feel that members are more likely to join to support the mission of the association (27%), and executives of trade organization indicate members join to support the advocacy efforts conducted on behalf of the profession represented (32%).

The differences between IMOs, trade organizations, and combination associations continue. Almost one-quarter of executives from IMOs report that members join to advance their career and/or access the association publications (23% each). One in three trade organization executives indicate that members are highly likely to join to attend conferences/trade shows and/or to access specialized and current information (30% each). One-quarter of executives from combination associations report that members join to obtain discounts on product or meeting purchases (25%).

Associations with new member renewal rates below 80% are significantly more likely to indicate that members join to obtain discounts on product and meeting purchases, to access association publications, and to gain or maintain professional certification.

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Describe an acquisition or recruitment strategy that your association has employed that has been very successful, and/or from which you learned something valuable.

15 months of membership for the first 12 months with the option to cancel after the first three months and owe nothing. (Trade)

Abandoned online application follow up - we target cart abandoners with a series of three follow up e-mails, let rest for 6-9 months, and then roll into our direct outreach content series. (IMO)

Annual conference discount includes 1 year of membership. (Combination)

Increase student membership through graduate level schools and offering to waive application fee for their students. (IMO)

Lead generation. A coordinated effort when procuring lists. (IMO)

Member referral program: we asked members to refer other professionals who would benefit from the membership. The first year of the program we offered a $50 discount on the renewal for the member and a $50 off membership to the new member. We also added a draw at the end of the year so all members who referred someone would get a chance to win prizes. The members referred others, but we noticed that they were not interested in the prizes at all and were moderately interested in the discount. We learned that our members might refer others simply because they get value from the membership and are more than happy to talk to others about it. We are now pushing to improve the value proposition and the communication of the membership benefits to members. (Combination)

Multi-year discounts have been huge for us. It has to be a significant discount to generate significant interest, but when you consider the number of people you don't have to run through the renewal cycle over and over (while losing many of them), it's worth it. (IMO)

▌One of most successful new-member acquisitions is waiving the $65 initiation fee for the first year. That helps reduce some of the "sticker shock" when a new member joins online and sees what the final cost of membership will be. (IMO)

▌Our Board came together to determine our new vision statement and tagline. Building their 'elevator speech' and knowing what's important to prospective members. Communicating "What's in it for them" through several promotional platforms including a new website, new association logo/brand, new membership information brochure, member-only benefits, social media, etc. (Combination)

▌Personal calls are the best. For us, each institution has a different stakeholder so one-on-one communications makes the biggest difference. (Trade)

▌Refer a friend with incentive to win Apple Smart Watch or Amazon Echo. (Combination)

▌We are a part of a list exchange service with other similar organizations. We offer memberships to new members, at whatever cost they choose to pay. (IMO)

▌We did a three-part campaign with informational videos on an upcoming tough subject. We released the videos on YouTube each week and sent an email to our non-member lead group with the chance to watch the video. Each video had between 3,000-8,000 views each. This was great exposure and information sharing for us. The content we sent was really of interest, and with a bit of time and effort, we provided a glimpse into the valuable resources we offer members. (Combination)

▌We have been testing special offers of 1/2 off membership the first year. It doubles our return on mailings. Now we are watching how those folks renew. (IMO)

▌We have found that re-targeting ads have been most successful for us from an ROI point of view. We re-target them to download a white paper. (IMO)

▌We have tested a 15-months-for-the-price-of-12 against a straight $15 discount. Even though the former promotion is worth more to the member, the $15 dollars-off promo is much more successful. It appears to be the "immediacy" effect that makes this the offer to beat. (IMO)

▌We highlight important, high-profile advocacy work and leverage it to demonstrate our powerful and unique role within the industry. Data points work well in these instances. For example, "8,000 members signed on to our community letter that was sent to Congress. Join us in the fight to protect the interests of..." (Trade)

▌We offer a free 3-month membership (individual) to people attending our conferences for the first time. The conversion rate has been high. (Combination)

▌We send 3 direct mail pieces a year and have started to pair each campaign with Facebook ads targeting our internal segments. This has helped expand the reach of each campaign. (Combination)

▌We went back to some direct mail outreach. We found success in sending an application that was already filled out with the information we had on the prospective member. All they had to do was pay (update info). (Trade)

▌We've created a new Institutional Membership option which replaces the previous per-member fee structure with a flat fee based on the size of the organization. This is driving increased revenues and engagement (i.e, more individual members per organization, while actually decreasing the per-member cost to the organization). (Combination)

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Do you have a tactical plan to increase engagement?

Legend:
- Total (n = 674)
- Individual (n = 303)
- Trade (n = 204)
- Combination (n = 167)

Yes: 62%, 62%, 69%, 55%
No: 30%, 28%, 25%, 38%
Not sure: 8%, 11%, 6%, 7%
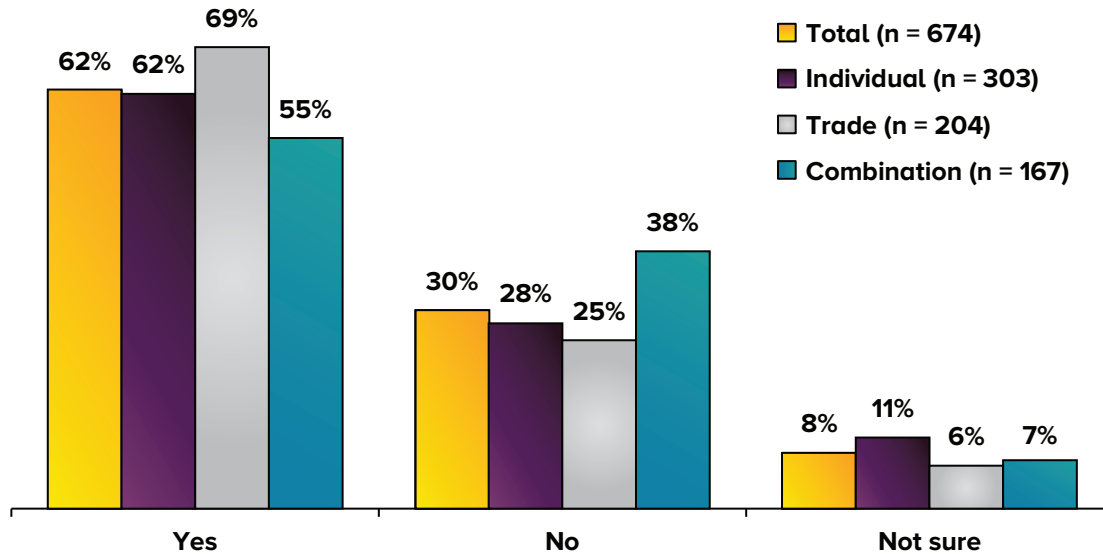
- The majority of associations have a strategic initiative to increase engagement (62%).

- Trade associations are significantly more likely to have a strategic initiative (69%).

- IMOs with more than 1,000 members are significantly more likely to have a strategic

initiative to increase engagement than smaller organizations (63% vs. 46%).

- Organizations with an operating budget of $1 million or more are significantly more likely to have a tactical plan than those with a smaller budget (64% vs. 51%).

QUICK STAT

Only 44% of associations **SEND A MAILED WELCOME KIT**; down from 51% last year and 83% in 2009.

Which of the following communication methods do you use to help onboard or engage new members in the association? (Check all that apply.)

COMMUNICATION METHODS TO ONBOARD NEW MEMBERS				
	Total (n = 664)	Individual (n = 301)	Trade (n = 200)	Combination (n = 163)
Email welcome	79%	77%	82%	78%
Opportunity to create a membership profile	45%	42%	42%	53%
Mailed welcome kit	44%	43%	44%	45%
Membership card or certificate	43%	55%	25%	42%
Invite to use members-only website sections	41%	37%	50%	38%
Emailed welcome kit	34%	31%	40%	34%
New-member engagement email series	33%	38%	28%	31%
Invite to follow/like association's social media (public or private) page(s)	31%	32%	29%	31%
Invitation to join the online community	31%	31%	29%	33%
Volunteer or staff welcome phone call	27%	16%	45%	27%
In-person new-member reception or orientation	26%	21%	35%	23%
Invitation to volunteer	26%	26%	25%	26%
New-member survey	18%	20%	11%	24%
Invite to chapter meeting	16%	19%	14%	14%
New-member newsletter (mail or electronic)	13%	14%	11%	13%
New-member webinars	12%	8%	18%	14%
New-member gift (e.g., gift card, calendar, or notepad)	11%	11%	12%	10%
Special new-member discounts on purchases	10%	11%	14%	5%
Custom new-member renewal series	10%	11%	6%	12%
Telemarketing welcome phone call	9%	9%	12%	8%
Chapter welcome phone call	9%	9%	9%	9%
Invite to download mobile apps	6%	7%	4%	6%
Early or 'at-birth' renewal	3%	2%	4%	3%
Text messaging specific to new members	2%	2%	1%	1%
Other	5%	3%	8%	6%
No special communication	2%	3%	3%	-

▌ An email welcome is the most common method used to help onboard or engage new members.

▌ An opportunity to create a membership profile is a distant second choice method, while mailed welcome kits are the third most popular method.

▌ Only 44% of associations send a mailed welcome kit; down from 51% last year and 83% in 2009.

▌ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely to extend an invitation to use members-only website sections (45% vs. 33%).

▌ Associations with an operating budget of $20 million or more are significantly more likely to mail out a welcome kit to new members compared to associations with operating budgets less than $20 million.

Do you offer certification(s)?

Legend:
- Total (n = 666)
- Individual (n = 301)
- Trade (n = 201)
- Combination (n = 164)

Yes
- Total: 37%
- Individual: 31%
- Trade: 40%
- Combination: 43%

No
- Total: 63%
- Individual: 69%
- Trade: 60%
- Combination: 57%
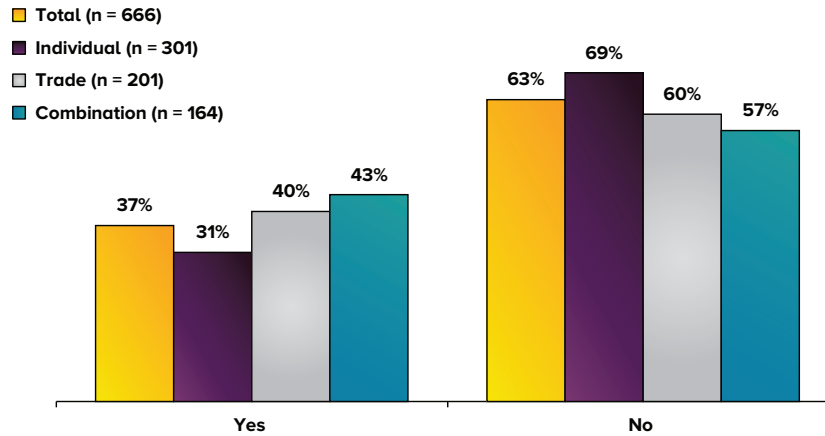
▌ 37% of associations offer certification, consistent with 2017 and up from 35% in 2016.

▌ 43% of combination associations offer certification, compared to 31% of IMOs and 40% of trade associations.

▌ Large trade associations are significantly more likely to offer certification. 48% of those with

500+ members offer certification, compared to 34% of all smaller trade associations.

▌ Offering certification has a positive effect on renewal rates. 43% of associations that saw a renewal increase also offer certification. Only 34% of those that saw a decrease in renewals offer certification.

Does your certification(s) require renewal?

Legend:
- Total (n = 245)
- Individual (n = 94)
- Trade (n = 80)
- Combination (n = 71)

Yes
- Total: 65%
- Individual: 67%
- Trade: 63%
- Combination: 65%

No
- Total: 31%
- Individual: 30%
- Trade: 33%
- Combination: 30%

Not Sure
- Total: 5%
- Individual: 3%
- Trade: 5%
- Combination: 6%
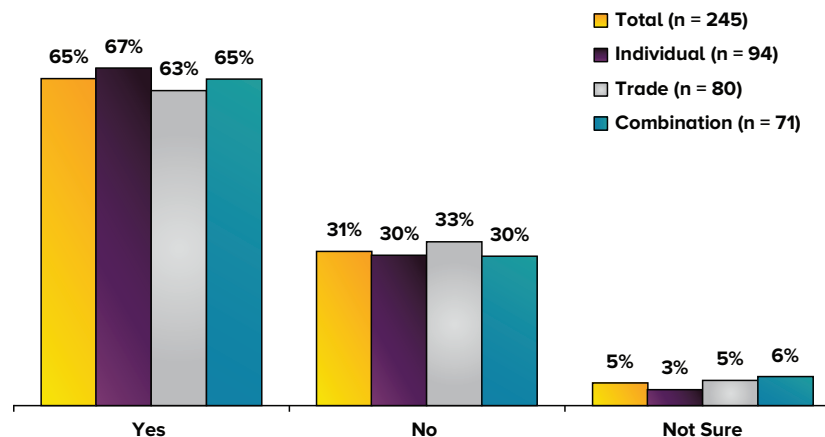
▌ Nearly two-thirds of organizations offering certification require a renewal.

▌ Organizations seeing a one-year membership increase are significantly more likely to require

certification renewal than those that see no change (69% vs. 53%).

▌ IMOs – those with more than 1,000 members – are more likely than smaller IMOs to require certification renewal (69% vs. 53%).

What is your overall renewal rate for certificants?

RENEWAL RATE FOR CERTIFICANTS				
	Total (n = 73)	Individual (n = 30)	Trade (n = 18)	Combination (n = 19)
Mean	77%	82%	81%	61%
Median	84%	88%	83%	59%

▌ The median renewal rate for certificants is 84%.

▌ Those associations seeing one-year and five-year increases in membership also see higher certificant renewal rates than those associations that experienced decreases.

- Associations experiencing a one-year increase saw 84% of certificant renewals

compared to 78% among those with a decreasing membership.

- Associations with a five-year increase in membership had an 86% certificant renewal rate compared to 72% among associations with a five-year declining membership rate.

Is continuing education required to maintain certification?

Legend: Total (n = 241), Individual (n = 92), Trade (n = 79), Combination (n = 70)

Yes: 62%, 69%, 49%, 67%
No: 32%, 28%, 43%, 26%
Not Sure: 6%, 3%, 8%, 7%
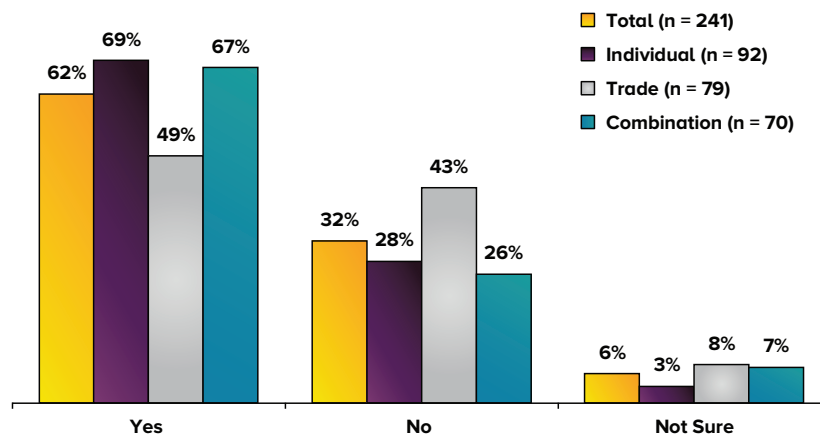
▌ Significantly fewer trade organizations require continuing education to maintain certification (49% vs. 69% for IMOs and 67% for combination associations).

▌ Associations experiencing a renewal rate of less than 80% are significantly more likely than those with higher renewal rates to require continuing education for certification (71% vs. 56%).

▌ Organizations seeing declining membership rates are more likely to require continuing education to maintain certification.

- Among organizations with a one-year decrease, 70% required continuing education compared to only 60% among those that saw an increase in membership and 59% of those whose membership remained steady.

- Five-year membership rates also saw the same trends. Among those with a decrease, 70% required continuing education, while only 60% of those with increasing or steady rates required continuing education.

In the past fiscal year, how has member engagement and participation changed within each of the following areas?

Please indicate N/A if a particular item is not offered or not relevant to your association.

Total

Category	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Participation in your public social network	70%	29%	1%
Participation in your young professional program	60%	33%	8%
Participation in your private social network	57%	39%	4%
Attendance of webinars	53%	41%	7%
Number of visits to members-only section of website	52%	47%	2%
Donations to your association foundation or PAC	51%	38%	11%
Number of members who acquire or maintain a certification with your organization	51%	38%	11%
Attendance at your professional development meetings	51%	41%	9%
Attendance at your annual conference/trade show	50%	36%	14%
Participation in your mentoring program	47%	45%	8%
Number of membership upgrades	42%	54%	4%
Use of career services (e.g., Career Center)	38%	54%	8%
Purchase or maintain insurance through your organization	36%	55%	9%
Volunteerism with your organization	35%	60%	6%
Non-dues product purchases (other than previously checked)	34%	58%	8%
Non-dues service purchases (other than previously checked)	33%	59%	8%
Book or directory purchases	21%	55%	24%

■ Increased   □ Stayed the same   ■ Decreased

▌ 70% of all associations saw an increase in participation in their public social network. The use of private social networks continues to decrease slightly. Only 57% of associations saw an increase, down from 60% in 2017 and 63% in 2016.

▌ Fewer associations (53%) saw an increase in webinar attendance, down from 56% in 2017 and 60% in 2016.

Individual

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Participation in your public social network	73%	25%	2%
Participation in your young professional program	54%	36%	11%
Participation in your private social network	59%	35%	6%
Attendance of webinars	52%	39%	8%
Number of visits to members-only section of website	53%	46%	1%
Donations to your association foundation or PAC	51%	38%	11%
Number of members who acquire or maintain a certification with your organization	53%	34%	13%
Attendance at your professional development meetings	47%	41%	12%
Attendance at your annual conference/trade show	47%	38%	16%
Participation in your mentoring program	44%	47%	8%
Number of membership upgrades	45%	51%	4%
Use of career services (e.g., Career Center)	32%	60%	8%
Purchase or maintain insurance through your organization	27%	63%	11%
Volunteerism with your organization	36%	60%	4%
Non-dues product purchases (other than previously checked)	32%	58%	10%
Non-dues service purchases (other than previously checked)	23%	67%	11%
Book or directory purchases	27%	48%	25%

■ Increased ☐ Stayed the same ■ Decreased

▌ Only 14% of all associations saw a decrease in attendance at their annual conference/trade show. This is an improvement from 2017, when 15% of associations indicated a decrease.

▌ 61% of all associations with a five-year membership increase also saw growth in attendance at their annual conference/trade show last year. This compares to 33% among those who have a five-year decrease in membership.

Trade

Metric	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Participation in your public social network	69%	31%	
Participation in your young professional program	67%	30%	3%
Participation in your private social network	57%	42%	1%
Attendance of webinars	52%	42%	6%
Number of visits to members-only section of website	54%	43%	3%
Donations to your association foundation or PAC	52%	34%	13%
Number of members who acquire or maintain a certification with your organization	54%	35%	11%
Attendance at your professional development meetings	56%	39%	5%
Attendance at your annual conference/trade show	51%	36%	14%
Participation in your mentoring program	49%	46%	5%
Number of membership upgrades	36%	58%	6%
Use of career services (e.g., Career Center)	50%	40%	10%
Purchase or maintain insurance through your organization	38%	53%	9%
Volunteerism with your organization	42%	52%	6%
Non-dues product purchases (other than previously checked)	41%	51%	9%
Non-dues service purchases (other than previously checked)	50%	45%	5%
Book or directory purchases	15%	64%	21%

■ Increased ☐ Stayed the same ■ Decreased

▍56% of trade associations and 50% of combination associations saw attendance growth in professional development meetings.

▍IMOs saw slower growth, with only 47% seeing an increase in attendance at professional development meetings in the past year; this was a marked improvement over 2017 (40%).

Combination

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Participation in your public social network	67%	32%	1%
Participation in your young professional program	64%	30%	6%
Participation in your private social network	54%	41%	5%
Attendance of webinars	54%	41%	4%
Number of visits to members-only section of website	45%	52%	3%
Donations to your association foundation or PAC	52%	40%	9%
Number of members who acquire or maintain a certification with your...	45%	47%	8%
Attendance at your professional development meetings	50%	43%	7%
Attendance at your annual conference/trade show	53%	33%	14%
Participation in your mentoring program	50%	39%	11%
Number of membership upgrades	42%	54%	4%
Use of career services (e.g., Career Center)	40%	53%	7%
Purchase or maintain insurance through your organization	56%	38%	6%
Volunteerism with your organization	23%	68%	9%
Non-dues product purchases (other than previously checked)	31%	64%	5%
Non-dues service purchases (other than previously checked)	28%	65%	7%
Book or directory purchases	17%	61%	23%

■ Increased　□ Stayed the same　■ Decreased

▌ 58% of all associations that experienced increased new member growth in the past year also saw an increase in attendance at their annual conference/trade show. Only 37% of those with negative growth and 44% with no new member growth saw increased attendance.

What service do you use for your online community?

ONLINE COMMUNITY SERVICE				
	Total (n = 627)	Individual (n = 279)	Trade (n = 191)	Combination (n = 157)
Higher Logic	25%	29%	19%	26%
YourMembership (YM)	6%	5%	6%	10%
Socious	1%	1%	2%	1%
Small World Community	1%	1%	-	1%
Kavi Workspace	<1%	-	1%	-
Causeway	<1%	-	1%	-
MemberFuse	<1%	<1%	-	-
Pathable	<1%	<1%	-	-
Other	20%	22%	17%	21%
We don't offer an online community	46%	42%	55%	41%

▌ 46% of associations do not offer an online community.

▌ At 55%, trade associations are significantly more likely not to provide an online community. Only 42% of IMOs and 41% of combination associations forego an online community.

Which social media does your organization officially use? (Check all that apply.)

SOCIAL MEDIA USED BY ASSOCIATIONS				
	Total (n = 650)	Individual (n = 293)	Trade (n = 195)	Combination (n = 162)
Facebook	93%	95%	88%	95%
Twitter	89%	89%	88%	90%
LinkedIn (Public)	69%	63%	74%	74%
YouTube	60%	60%	61%	60%
Instagram	40%	49%	28%	38%
LinkedIn (Association Members Only)	34%	33%	32%	38%
Association Blog	21%	18%	19%	30%
Pinterest	13%	15%	8%	15%
Association Listserv	9%	10%	5%	13%
Flickr	9%	9%	9%	7%
Google +	9%	9%	5%	12%
Private Association Social Network	7%	8%	5%	8%
Other (please specify)	4%	4%	5%	4%
None-we don't use social media	1%	1%	1%	-

▌ Facebook and Twitter are the most popular social media platforms across each type of association.

▌ Facebook has rebounded to 93% overall, after having dropped from 91% to 89% in 2016.

▌ LinkedIn (public) has increased two points to 69%, and Instagram has continued to climb steadily, increasing eight points to 40%.

▌ Facebook is significantly more popular among IMOs and combination associations (95%) than among trade associations (88%).
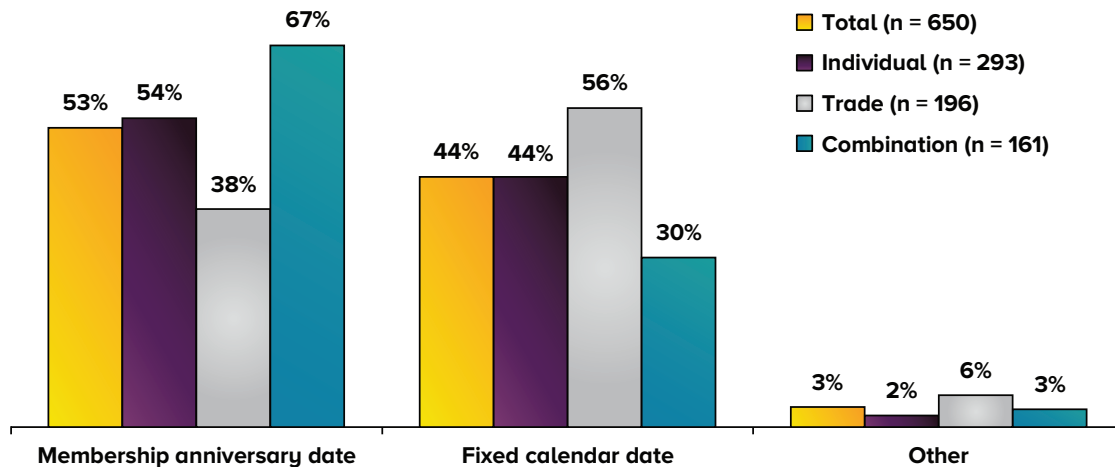
PARTICIPANT COMMENTS MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

How do you measure the effectiveness of your engagement strategy?

- A/B testing. Activity scoring. Relevance rating. Response rates. Click throughs. (Combination)

- By how many members participate in our members-only online community, join committees, and step up into chapter leadership roles. (IMO)

- By the number of memberships retained at the end of the billing cycle. (Combination)

- Comparing churn and total membership numbers with previous years. (IMO)

- First year retention, online community involvement, first year member satisfaction survey. (IMO)

- Google analytics. (Combination)

- KPIs include downloads of content, webinar registrations, website interactions, email interactions, and social media interactions. (IMO)

- Member login, content usage. (IMO)

- Not very well. We try to plot responses from each engagement effort. (Trade)

- Open rates and click through rates. (Combination)

- Participation rates in our services and offerings, as well as revenue in those areas. (Combination)

- Retention rate. (Combination)

- Track engagement using a membership dashboard, then surfacing each company's involvement over the past three years in key categories, providing an average of their industry peers in that category. They can then see, at a glance, whether they are above or below average. (Trade)

- Ultimately based on retention rate. We use open and click rates to measure effectiveness of individual engagement tactics. (IMO)

- We are just beginning to undertake this and have no results as of yet. (Combination)

- We assign an engagement score and also review email open rates, downloads of resources made available, etc. We routinely conduct surveys to measure member satisfaction and use of benefits. (IMO)

- We have a series of "early engagement" automated messages, for which we track open rates, click rates, and conversion rates. We are also tracking the following standard metrics (overall and by segment):

  - Donation rate (% of members who make donations)

  - Volunteer rate (% of members who volunteer)

  - Registration rate (% of members who register for our events and webinars)

  - Conversion rate for 1st-year free members

  - Renewal rate (Combination)

- We measure engagement in a few ways - website traffic, community participation, webinar registrations, volunteer signups, and event participation. (Combination)

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MEMBER RENEWAL AND REINSTATEMENT

Is membership renewal based on a fixed calendar date for all members or an anniversary date from the start of the membership?

Legend:
- Total (n = 650)
- Individual (n = 293)
- Trade (n = 196)
- Combination (n = 161)

Membership anniversary date: 53%, 54%, 38%, 67%
Fixed calendar date: 44%, 44%, 56%, 30%
Other: 3%, 2%, 6%, 3%

- 53% of associations base the membership renewal on the anniversary date, while 44% choose a fixed calendar date. This represents a one-point increase in using the anniversary date, while the fixed calendar date remains constant.

- Trade associations are significantly more likely to use a fixed calendar date (56% vs. 44% for IMOs and 30% for combination associations).

- IMOs and combination associations are significantly more likely to use a membership anniversary date (54% and 67%, respectively, vs. 38% for trade associations).

- 48% of associations with a new member renewal rate of 60% or higher renew members on a fixed calendar date. Associations with a new member renewal rate of less than 60% overwhelmingly use the member anniversary date (76%).

QUICK STAT

Associations with an 80% or **HIGHER RENEWAL RATE** are significantly more likely to offer a grace period (88% vs. 79%).

After a membership expires, how long is your association's grace period for accessing member benefits?

LENGTH OF GRACE PERIOD				
	Total (n = 417)	Individual (n = 191)	Trade (n = 129)	Combination (n = 97)
One month	21%	26%	9%	26%
2 to 3 months	48%	44%	54%	49%
6 months	12%	9%	19%	6%
One year	2%	2%	5%	1%
More than a year	1%	1%	-	1%
We don't offer a grace period	17%	18%	13%	18%

▌ Most associations offer a grace period; only 17% do not (down from 20% in 2017).

▌ 69% of associations offer a grace period of up to three months; 48% offer a grace period of 2 to 3 months.

▌ Trade associations are significantly more likely to offer a grace period (87% vs. 82% for IMOs and 83% of combination associations).

▌ Associations with an 80% or higher renewal rate are significantly more likely to offer a grace period (88% vs. 79%).

LENGTH OF GRACE PERIOD BY RENEWAL RATE (IMOs)			
	Total (n = 173)	LT 80% (n = 75)	80%+ (n = 98)
One month	27%	35%	20%
2 to 3 months	45%	40%	48%
4 to 6 months	9%	1%	14%
7 to 12	2%	-	3%
More than a year	-	-	-
We don't offer a grace period	18%	24%	14%

▌ IMOs with an 80% or higher renewal rate are much more likely to offer a grace period. 85% offer a grace period, while only 76% of those with lower renewal rates offer one.

▌ IMOs with less than an 80% renewal rate are more likely to halt the grace period after one month than those with an 80% or higher renewal rate (35% vs. 20%).

When do you start the renewal effort?

START RENEWAL EFFORT				
	Total (n = 646)	Individual (n = 290)	Trade (n = 196)	Combination (n = 160)
Immediately after welcoming	6%	5%	9%	4%
Prior to 6 months before expiration	4%	3%	7%	2%
At 6 months prior to expiration	3%	2%	7%	1%
5 months prior to expiration	3%	3%	2%	2%
4 months prior to expiration	11%	13%	8%	11%
3 months prior to expiration	40%	42%	28%	51%
2 months prior to expiration	17%	18%	17%	15%
1 month prior to expiration	10%	9%	11%	10%
The month of expiration	5%	4%	7%	3%
Not sure	2%	1%	5%	1%

- 67% of associations begin their renewal efforts at least three months prior to expiration, with the three-month mark being the most popular start time (40%).

- Associations with a renewal rate less than 80% are significantly more likely to wait until the 3 month mark to begin (50% vs. 36%).

- Trade associations are more likely to get an early start on renewal efforts. 33% start before the three-month mark, while 27% of IMOs and 20% of combination associations begin efforts that early.

- 31% of associations with renewal rates at 80% or higher start their renewal efforts inside of three months, while only 25% of associations with lower renewal rates wait that long to begin.

When do you end renewal efforts (stop renewal contacts to the member)?

END RENEWAL EFFORTS				
	Total (n = 644)	Individual (n = 289)	Trade (n = 195)	Combination (n = 160)
At the month of expiration	3%	4%	3%	1%
1 month after expiration	11%	15%	6%	12%
2 months after expiration	11%	11%	7%	15%
3 months after expiration	21%	17%	24%	25%
4 months after expiration	8%	7%	9%	7%
5 months after expiration	3%	4%	2%	3%
6 months after expiration	13%	11%	16%	12%
More than 6 months after expiration	9%	10%	8%	8%
We don't stop contact	20%	22%	22%	16%
Not sure	2%	1%	3%	2%

- 46% of associations end renewal efforts within three months after expiration.

- 20% do not stop contact with lapsed members, down from 23% in 2016.

- 58% of associations with renewal rates of less than 80% give up renewal efforts by the third month after expiration. By comparison, only 42% of associations with higher renewal rates give up that soon.

Which of the following marketing channels generate the most membership renewals? You may select up to three choices.

TOP MARKETING CHANNELS FOR RENEWALS				
	Total (n = 633)	Individual (n = 286)	Trade (n = 191)	Combination (n = 156)
Email marketing	78%	84%	66%	80%
Mail	51%	61%	38%	51%
Staff phone calls	37%	18%	59%	44%
Peer member contacts	18%	15%	23%	16%
Telemarketing	9%	14%	5%	6%
Board phone calls	7%	4%	13%	6%
Chapter phone calls	5%	6%	3%	6%
Employer contacts	4%	1%	6%	6%
Magazine cover wraps	3%	4%	-	5%
Social media contacts	2%	2%	1%	3%
Online digital ads	2%	2%	-	4%
Texting	1%	1%	1%	1%
Fax	1%	-	1%	1%
Renewal app for mobile devices	<1%	-	-	1%
Other	7%	6%	9%	5%

▌ In total, 78% of associations indicate that email marketing is the most effective marketing channel for renewals.

▌ All three membership types indicate that email marketing is the most effective marketing channel for renewals (84% for IMOs; 66% for trade associations; 80% for combination associations).

▌ Overall, mail is the second most effective channel (51%) and staff phone calls are the third most effective (37%).

▌ Trade associations, however, prefer staff phone calls to mail (59% vs. 38%).

▌ Mail is a more popular marketing method among larger associations. 78% of IMOs with 20,000 or more members use mail for renewal efforts, while only 40% with 1,000 or fewer members use mail.

▌ Among associations with an 80% renewal rate or higher, 43% say staff phone calls yield the most membership renewals. Among those with lower renewal rates, only 23% cite staff phone calls.

Do you offer any of the following renewal options? (Check all that apply.)

TOP RENEWAL OPTIONS				
	Total (n = 406)	Individual (n = 208)	Trade (n = 99)	Combination (n = 99)
Installment renewal payments (monthly, quarterly)	37%	32%	63%	21%
Multi-year renewals	36%	43%	14%	42%
Automatic annual credit card renewal	35%	45%	18%	30%
Lifetime membership	24%	34%	4%	23%
Renewal bill-me	21%	13%	31%	26%
Automatic annual Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) renewals	17%	16%	20%	15%
Early-renewal discounts	17%	15%	18%	18%
Gift or premiums for renewal	7%	11%	1%	5%

▌ Automatic annual credit card renewals are significantly more popular among IMOs (45%) and combination associations (30%) than trade associations (18%).

▌ Trade associations are significantly more likely to offer installment renewal payments (63% vs. 32% for IMOs and 21% for combination associations). This marks a return to 2016 levels when 64% of trade associations offered installment renewal payments.

▌ Multi-year renewals are popular offerings among IMOs and combination associations (43% and 42%, respectively).

▌ Associations with 80% or higher renewal rates are significantly more likely to offer installment renewal payment plans (47% vs. 23%).

▌ Associations with renewal rates below 80% are significantly more likely to offer automatic annual credit card renewal (43% vs. 32%).

TOP 3 RENEWAL OPTIONS BY SIZE: INDIVIDUAL			
Up to 1,000 (n = 56)	1,001 to 5,000 (n = 97)	5,001 to LT 20,000 (n = 73)	20,000+ (n = 81)
1. Installment payments	1. Multi-year renewal	1. Multi-year renewal	1. Automatic credit card renewal
2. Automatic credit card renewal	2. Automatic credit card renewal	2. Automatic credit card renewal	2. Multi-year renewal
3. Bill-me	3 (tie). Lifetime membership	3. Lifetime membership	3. Lifetime membership
	3 (tie). Installment payments		

TOP 3 RENEWAL OPTIONS BY SIZE: TRADE		
Up to 100 (n = 32)	101 to LT 500 (n = 63)	500+ (n = 103)
1. Installment payments	1. Bill-me	1. Installment payments
2. Multi-year renewal	2. Installment payments	2. Automatic annual credit card renewal
3 (tie). Automatic EFT renewal	3. Multi-year renewal	3 (tie). Bill-me
3 (tie). Bill-me		3 (tie). Multi-year renewal

▌ Automatic credit card renewals are popular across organizations of many different sizes. 35% of all associations use this renewal feature, up from 29% in 2016.

▌ Automatic credit card renewals are becoming more common, appearing in the top three of all organization sizes, while installment payments, bill-me plans, and multi-year renewals are among the top three for all sizes of trade associations.

What do you believe are the top reasons members DO NOT renew their membership in your organization? You may select up to three choices.

TOP REASONS FOR NOT RENEWING MEMBERSHIP				
	Total (n = 639)	Individual (n = 284)	Trade (n = 195)	Combination (n = 160)
Lack of engagement with the organization	37%	28%	50%	36%
Could not justify membership costs with any significant ROI	28%	20%	43%	25%
Budget cuts/economic hardship of company	24%	9%	46%	25%
Left the field, industry, or profession	24%	27%	16%	29%
Lack of value	23%	28%	22%	16%
Employer won't pay or stopped paying dues	23%	26%	5%	38%
Forgot to renew	21%	28%	9%	23%
Too expensive	20%	25%	17%	14%
Company closed or merged	16%	<1%	43%	11%
Retirement	14%	21%	3%	16%
Student memberships do not convert to full memberships	10%	15%	1%	13%
Can get materials from other members/other sources	9%	10%	8%	8%
Lack of relevance	7%	6%	8%	8%
Disappointment with the benefits/services	6%	7%	6%	4%
Moved	5%	8%	1%	6%
Lost job	3%	5%	1%	4%
Switch to competitor	3%	5%	2%	3%
Young professional memberships do not convert to full memberships	3%	6%	-	1%
Disagree with advocacy position of the association	2%	2%	3%	3%
Poor customer service	1%	<1%	2%	1%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	6%	7%	6%	6%

▎ Lack of engagement with the organization is the most commonly-cited reason for non-renewal. 37% of associations list this as a top reason, consistent with 2017 and up from 33% in 2016.

▎ Among trade associations, 50% cite lack of engagement as the most common reason for non-renewal. This is up from 40% in 2016.

▎ Among IMOs, 26% cite employers not paying dues for their employees as a major factor for non-renewal; this is down from 37% in 2017.

▎ 43% of trade associations say that members could not justify membership costs with any significant ROI; this is significantly higher than IMOs (20%) and combination associations (25%).

▎ 28% of IMOs and 23% of combination associations say members simply forget to renew.

After a membership lapses or expires, how long do you continue to contact the members to invite them to reinstate their membership?

CONTACT AFTER MEMBERSHIP LAPSE OR EXPIRATION				
	Total (n = 636)	Individual (n = 285)	Trade (n = 192)	Combination (n = 159)
We don't contact lapsed members	12%	12%	13%	11%
1 year after expiration	18%	17%	17%	20%
2 years after expiration	10%	10%	8%	14%
3 years after expiration	8%	11%	6%	5%
4 to 5 years after expiration	5%	9%	2%	1%
6 or more years after expiration	2%	4%	1%	1%
We continue indefinitely to contact lapsed members	33%	28%	38%	37%
Not sure	6%	5%	7%	7%
Other	7%	6%	9%	6%

❙ A third of all associations continue to contact lapsed members indefinitely.

❙ Trade and combination associations are more likely to continue indefinite contact with lapsed members (38% and 37%, respectively vs. 28% for IMOs).

❙ Other than associations that contact lapsed members indefinitely, most associations do not go beyond three years. 18% of associations make contact for only one year, another 10% for a second year, and another 8% for a third year.

❙ 12% of associations make no contact at all with lapsed members, up from 10% in 2017.

What channel generates the most reinstated lapsed members?
Please select up to two answer choices

TOP CHANNEL FOR REINSTATING LAPSED MEMBERS				
	Total (n =581)	Individual (n = 264)	Trade (n = 175)	Combination (n = 142)
Email	68%	73%	58%	73%
Direct mail	34%	44%	19%	35%
Phone	33%	21%	52%	31%
Social media	3%	3%	3%	1%
Online digital ads	1%	2%	-	-
Text	<1%	<1%	-	-
Other	11%	8%	21%	6%

❙ At 68%, email is the channel that generates the most reinstated lapsed members.

❙ Among trade associations, phone is the second most popular channel for reinstating lapsed members (52%).

❙ Direct mail is the second most successful channel for reinstatements among IMOs (44%) and combination associations (35%).

How has the budget changed from last year for each of the following marketing programs?

BUDGET CHANGE FOR MARKETING PROGRAMS IN PAST YEAR* TOTAL			
	Increased	**Stayed the Same**	**Decreased**
Email	**42%**	53%	3%
Paid online digital advertising	32%	19%	3%
Promotion to/at your own conferences/trade shows	27%	54%	4%
Association-sponsored events	26%	42%	3%
Local events/meetings	25%	43%	4%
Personal sales calls (not telemarketing)	23%	33%	4%
Direct mail	22%	47%	**10%**
Public relations	21%	39%	3%
Exhibiting at other conferences	20%	38%	8%
Content marketing/white papers	17%	30%	3%
Advertising in your own publications	16%	**57%**	4%
Chapter support	12%	34%	3%
Member referral program	12%	28%	4%
Advertising in outside publications	12%	30%	6%
Telemarketing (not personal sales calls)	9%	15%	4%
Texting	4%	10%	1%
Radio or TV	2%	11%	1%

* Did Not Use not shown

▌ 42% of associations increased spending on email marketing programs in the past year, while 10% of associations decreased spending on direct mail campaigns.

▌ 12% of IMOs decreased their direct mail campaign spending, while only 8% of trade and combination associations did the same.

.PARTICIPANT COMMENTS **MEMBER RENEWAL AND REINSTATEMENT**

Describe an engagement or retention strategy that your association has employed that has been very successful, and/or from which you learned something valuable.

▌ Abandoned Cart emails to anyone who did not complete their membership dues purchase. (Combination)

▌ As part of the onboarding process, we detail to new members the various ways they can become engaged. Each year before renewal time, we look at engagement by each member, and if the member is not engaged in at least two ways, we contact the member by email and phone to make the member aware of other methods of engagement they might find beneficial. Then, with the renewal notices, we thank each member for their engagement, and detail what that engagement has been over the past year. (Trade)

▌ Courtesy calls about membership being lapsed. (Trade)

▌ Direct mail post card campaign - playful, colorful, engaging post card campaign with familiar tone - low pressure - multiple ways to contact us. (Trade)

▌ In years that we have a dues increase, we offer early renewal to take advantage of the current rate before it's raised. (Combination)

▌ None...we're looking for this kind of help! (IMO)

▌ Offering a corporate membership package has been hugely beneficial for us. Previously we only offered individual membership and there was a lot of confusion about the benefits and value for money, plus a lot of resources were used to facilitate renewals (many phone calls, emails, etc., for one renewal). (Combination)

▌ Our CEO or board chair makes a phone call to those we know would like to remain engaged but have yet to renew. In many cases, they need to work out a discount or hardship program. (Trade)

▌ Our members are located around the world.

Having a personalized or regional approach works great where the member is interacting with someone they know or who is familiar with their background, culture and perspective. (IMO)

▌ Reading surveys of membership experience while member is still active has provided insight into problems that can be rectified prior to membership lapse. If we're proactive in searching for concerns and addressing them ASAP, in many cases we can salvage membership. (IMO)

▌ Text message to mobile followed by an email and then phone call. (IMO)

▌ The more contact points the better. Renewals often come from persistence and regular reminders. (Combination)

▌ Waive reinstatement fee and offer additional discounts on continuing education courses. (IMO)

▌ We developed a three year membership engagement strategy for new members. The objective is to develop a relationship with the new member and fulfill any of their needs so they see the benefit of the membership and learn to use it. We start by contacting the member at the moment their membership is activated, then continue regularly to contact them to see how they are doing, if they need anything and if they are satisfied with their membership. (Combination)

▌ We recently reviewed our renewal letters, making them more compelling. We added in the "cost per day" to make the dues for individuals seem more reasonable. (Combination)

▌ We segment the direct mail by expire year so we can measure how each year performs. (IMO)

▌ When we stopped our mail campaigns, we had a significant drop in the number of renewals. (Trade)

CHALLENGES AND GOALS

What are your organization's biggest <u>internal</u> challenges to growing membership? Please select up to three responses.

BIGGEST INTERNAL CHALLENGES TO GROWING MEMBERSHIP				
	Total (n = 625)	Individual (n = 283)	Trade (n = 187)	Combination (n = 155)
Difficulty in communicating value or benefits	35%	31%	40%	36%
Insufficient staff	35%	31%	40%	35%
Difficulty in proving ROI	22%	15%	34%	21%
Membership too diverse, difficulty meeting needs of different segments	22%	22%	23%	20%
Difficulty attracting and/or maintaining younger members	19%	27%	9%	18%
Difficulty identifying/contacting prospects	19%	18%	22%	15%
Insufficient budget	18%	17%	14%	25%
Lack of a strategy or plan	17%	17%	14%	20%
Inadequate association management database	15%	16%	12%	17%
Difficulty in converting student memberships to regular memberships	13%	21%	--	14%
Weak product or service offerings	12%	16%	8%	10%
Lack of marketing expertise	11%	9%	16%	10%
Lack of integration between national and chapters	9%	11%	7%	8%
Inadequate research to understand market	8%	8%	8%	9%
Misalignment of goals between board and executive staff	5%	6%	4%	6%
Other	8%	6%	9%	8%

▌ The top internal challenges overall, and for all types of associations, include difficulty in communicating value or benefits (35%), and insufficient staff (35%). These top internal challenges echo those from 2017, with a larger percentage of associations mentioning insufficient staff as a top challenge (35% vs. 30% in 2017).

▌ Trade organizations and combination associations find it challenging to prove ROI (34% and 21%, respectively), while IMOs struggle with attracting and/or maintaining younger members (27%).

▌ Associations reporting declines in their one-year and five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to indicate they are challenged by attracting and maintaining younger members. Associations showing increases in one-year and five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to struggle with converting student members to regular memberships.

▌ Compared to associations with budgets of $20 million or more, smaller associations are significantly more likely to struggle with insufficient staff, insufficient budget, lack of a strategy or plan, and lack of marketing expertise. The larger associations are significantly more challenged by their very diverse memberships, and struggle to meet the needs of their varied member segments.

- Association size is correlated to specific challenges as well. Associations with fewer than 5,000 individual members are more likely to struggle with insufficient staff and insufficient budget, while larger associations (more than 5,000 individual members) are significantly more challenged in

attracting and maintaining their young members. Large trade associations (over 500 members) are significantly more challenged in communicating the value or benefits of their association compared to smaller trade associations.

What are your organization's biggest <u>external</u> challenges to growing membership? Please select no more than two responses.

BIGGEST EXTERNAL CHALLENGES TO GROWING MEMBERSHIP				
	Total (n = 624)	Individual (n = 282)	Trade (n = 188)	Combination (n = 154)
Competitive association(s) or sources of information	33%	40%	25%	29%
Perception of the association and/or its culture (i.e., old boy's network, not specialized enough, etc.)	27%	30%	20%	29%
Economy/cost of membership	26%	27%	29%	21%
Lack of brand awareness	26%	28%	22%	27%
Declining member/employer budgets	24%	20%	22%	32%
Industry consolidation/industry shrinkage	20%	11%	37%	14%
Changing demographics of industry/fewer young people in industry	12%	15%	6%	16%
Market saturation	8%	7%	10%	8%
Other	6%	6%	7%	7%

- The biggest external challenges include competitive associations or sources of information (33%), and the perception of the association itself and/or its culture (27%). Compared to the findings from 2017, competition from other associations takes over the top spot, replacing the economy/cost of membership as the biggest external challenge to membership. Similarly, the perception of the association (e.g., old boy's network, not specialized enough) is now considered the second biggest challenge to membership, rising from the fifth spot in 2017, and increasing from 24% to 27%. The economy/cost of membership drops to the third biggest external challenge, with 26% of associations citing it as a top challenge, compared to 31% in 2017.

- IMOs consider competitive associations and association image to be top challenges, while

trade associations rate industry consolidation/shrinkage (37%) and the economy/cost of membership (29%) to be their biggest external challenges to membership. Combination associations first rank declining member/employer budgets as their top external challenge (32%), and then consider competition and association perception as additional challenges to membership (29% each).

- For associations with increases in their membership over the past year and the past five years, competitive associations or other sources of information are a top external challenge.

- Associations with renewal rates below 80% are significantly more likely to rate competitive associations (40%) and lack of brand awareness (33%) as top challenges compared to

associations with higher renewal rates.

▐ Associations reporting declines in their five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to struggle with the perception of the association (34%) and/or declining

member/employer budgets (30%).

▐ Findings also reveal that as an association's operating budget increases, it tends to struggle more with economic/cost of membership issues, but less with brand awareness issues.

What are your association's top membership goals?
You may select up to two choices.

ASSOCIATIONS' TOP GOALS				
	Total (n = 630)	Individual (n = 284)	Trade (n = 189)	Combination (n = 157)
Increasing member engagement	50%	49%	54%	47%
Increasing membership retention	46%	52%	40%	45%
Increasing membership acquisition	44%	43%	45%	44%
Increasing non-dues revenue from members (attendance at conferences, purchase of services/education, etc.)	17%	14%	18%	20%
Increase understanding of member needs	15%	16%	17%	12%
Increasing dues revenue	15%	11%	17%	19%
Increasing member diversity	8%	11%	5%	5%
Maintaining the status quo	1%	<1%	1%	3%
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%

▐ Similar to findings from 2017, participating association executives report that increasing member engagement (50%) and increasing member retention (46%) are top association goals this year. Also mirroring last year's results, IMOs and combination associations consider increasing member engagement and member retention to be the top association goals, while trade associations consider membership acquisition to be a higher priority than member retention.

▐ Associations with member renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely to consider increasing non-dues revenue from members and increasing member diversity to be higher priorities compared to associations with lower renewal rates. Additionally, those with renewal rates under 80% are significantly more likely to report that increasing membership retention is a top association goal.

▐ Similarly, associations reporting declines in membership over the past year, as well as

declines in renewals overall, are more likely to indicate that member retention is a top priority compared to associations showing increases or no change in their overall renewal rates or one-year membership numbers.

▐ Moreover, associations reporting declines in their five-year membership numbers and their new members are significantly more apt to consider increasing membership acquisition to be a top goal. Conversely, associations reporting increases in their membership over the past year and the past five years are significantly more likely to focus on increasing their understanding of member needs as a top priority.

▐ Associations with new member renewals below 80% are significantly more likely to report increasing member retention as a top association goal. Trade or combination associations with more than 100 group/company members are significantly more inclined to indicate that membership acquisition is a top priority.

What are the most significant data challenges your association faces?
(Check all that apply.)

DATA CHALLENGES				
	Total (n = 558)	Individual (n = 259)	Trade (n = 160)	Combination (n = 139)
Lack of marketing results tracking and analysis reporting	51%	53%	46%	52%
Inadequate membership dashboards and reporting tools	48%	52%	47%	43%
Poor data hygiene and accuracy	39%	38%	42%	40%
Lack of skilled data professionals to manage and work with our organization's data	39%	42%	32%	42%
Lack of ability to model and segment members and customers	38%	41%	33%	40%
Lack of demographic or firmographic data on members/customers	36%	38%	28%	45%
Decentralized data/lack of a centralized database for member, customer, and prospect data	25%	26%	26%	21%
Lack of ability to import/export new data points and/or data sources.	24%	26%	25%	19%
Other	7%	7%	6%	9%

❙ Lack of marketing results tracking and analysis reporting (51%) and inadequate membership dashboards and reporting tools (48%) are the two most significant data challenges facing associations.

❙ IMOs and combination associations are significantly more likely to lack demographic or firmographic data on members/customers (38% for IMOs and 45% for combination associations vs. 28% for trade associations).

❙ Associations seeing a five-year decrease in membership are significantly more likely to report poor data hygiene and accuracy (47% vs. 35% seeing an increase and 32% experiencing no change).

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS CHALLENGES AND GOALS

What are your organization's marketing strengths?

- A good, sound membership strategy with the financial resources (and leadership support) to implement. (IMO)

- Cleaned up list to improve our open and click rates and decrease unsubscribe rate. Emails are not too often to be annoying, and we include video to make them more interesting. (IMO)

- Consistent outreach to members and non-members. (Combination)

- Digital marketing. (Trade)

- Digital marketing, creative design, integrated campaigns. (IMO)

- Highly organized, output is at incredibly high level, understanding of members' challenges. (IMO)

- Innovative campaigns, engaged volunteers, relevant content. (Trade)

- Large database of those in the profession. (IMO)

- Member data is very detailed, which allows for more accurate target campaigns. (Trade)

- Mobile responsive website and email design. Large database of contacts to do general blast emails. (IMO)

- New focus on digital and content marketing. (Combination)

- Our board is very engaged and in touch with the real world. (IMO)

- Our social media voice is targeted, authentic, and on-brand. We have a strong sense of what our brand is and who our audience is. (IMO)

- Our targeted audience is small enough that we are able to reach out directly by email and phone and get to know people personally. (Trade)

- Social Media Utilization, Marketing Automation, good creative, compelling content. (IMO)

- Talented staff and good diversity of marketing tools to use. (IMO)

- We are very good at measuring results and ROI. (Trade)

- We have a very strong marketing calendar which allows us to plan effectively with little to no overlap. (Combination)

- We just started working with a company to bring us to the next level! (Trade)

- We've been focusing on testing and data so that we can be sure we're making data driven decisions. This has helped gain support from the board. (IMO)

What are your organization's marketing weaknesses?

- CRM Database Management, Performance Measurement and campaign evaluation. (IMO)

- Data spread across multiple databases. Poor website. (IMO)

- Lack a clear marketing plan. (Trade)

- Lack of cohesive messaging and value proposition. Understaffed. (IMO)

- Lack of new benefits to promote; lack of agility, sometimes, to roll out new programs. (IMO)

- Lack of new contacts/leads for our database. (IMO)

- Marketing reach, identifying potential members not in our database, funding, time, website. (IMO)

- Need monthly installments and a way to save CC info. Better CRM. Better integration with email vendor. (IMO)

- No plan, no different market channels - only email. (Trade)

- Perception that organization serves certain membership constituencies over others. Therefore, lack of relevance to some. (Trade)

- Poor database, overcoming reputational issues from a prior administration. (Trade)

- Relying on institutional knowledge, which is based on anecdote and not on data. (IMO)

- Too many silos in our organization. Everyone markets their own products and services without coordination. (Combination)

- Very diverse body of members in terms of professional responsibilities, budgets, and needs. Hard to reach everybody. (Combination)

- We do not do a good job of telling our story, why it's important to be a part of this organization. (Combination)

- We have a tendency to inundate our members with too many emails, which decreases the open rate. (Trade)

- We have good plans, but we rarely have the bandwidth to do all of the activities we want to. (Trade)

- We have nothing to market, no marketing budget, and have not prioritized staff time to market. (Combination)

- We need a strategy and a vision. (IMO)

- We still send too many emails. (IMO)

QUICK STAT

Lack of marketing results tracking and analysis reporting (51%) and inadequate membership dashboards and reporting tools (48%) are the two most **SIGNIFICANT DATA CHALLENGES** facing associations.

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

What membership categories does your association offer?
(Check all that apply.)

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES OFFERED				
	Total (n = 609)	Individual (n = 277)	Trade (n = 181)	Combination (n = 151)
Individual Basic	56%	73%	9%	80%
Student	54%	73%	11%	70%
Company/Institutional/Organization	50%	11%	86%	79%
Retired	44%	61%	12%	52%
Associate	38%	34%	45%	37%
Affiliate	27%	26%	29%	25%
Lifetime	26%	35%	8%	32%
Honorary	25%	30%	13%	29%
International	24%	30%	16%	23%
Young Professional (those new to the profession/industry)	18%	26%	6%	20%
Multi-year	17%	24%	3%	22%
Academic	17%	16%	10%	26%
Vendor/Supplier	12%	6%	19%	15%
Transitioning student/Recent graduate	11%	17%	1%	13%
Government/Public sector	11%	7%	16%	13%
Non-profit	11%	4%	17%	14%
Unemployed	10%	12%	2%	17%
Group (multiple individuals)	10%	9%	4%	19%
Individual Plus (added benefits to basic membership)	9%	11%	3%	12%
Military	8%	12%	1%	8%
Online only (paperless)	7%	11%	1%	7%
Family	6%	11%	1%	3%
Consultant	5%	2%	8%	7%
Freemium (no-cost membership)	3%	4%	3%	2%
Publications only	3%	3%	2%	3%
Other	11%	16%	9%	4%

▌ The top membership categories are individual basic (56%), student (54%), and company/institutional/organization (50%).

▌ 61% of IMOs offer retired memberships.

▌ Student memberships are offered by a majority of IMOs (73%) and combination organizations (70%).

▌ Those organizations experiencing an 80% or higher renewal rate are significantly more likely to offer a company/institutional/ organization membership than those that do not (59% vs. 35%).

▌ Associations with operating budgets of $5 million or higher are more likely to offer student memberships than those with lower operating budgets (58% vs. 50%).

▌ Associations with an 80% or higher renewal rate are significantly more likely to offer associate memberships (43% vs. 30%).

What percentage of your members are students?
If you are unsure, check not sure.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP			
	Total (n = 290)	Individual (n = 182)	Combination (n = 94)
Mean	13%	15%	11%
Median	8%	10%	7%
0%	2%	3%	1%
1% to 10%	56%	48%	68%
11% to 20%	19%	23%	15%
21% to 30%	13%	15%	10%
31% to 40%	5%	5%	5%
41% to 50%	2%	3%	1%
51% to 60%	1%	2%	-
61% to 70%	-	-	-
71% to 80%	-	-	-
81% to 90%	-	-	-
91% to 100%	<1%	1%	-

▌ On average, 13% of all memberships are student memberships.

▌ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely to have 10% or less of their membership as student members (65% vs. 51%).

▌ IMOs with 5,000 or fewer members are significantly more likely to have a smaller percentage (10% or less) as student members than larger IMOs (67% vs. 49%).

What percentage of your student memberships ultimately convert to full memberships? If you are unsure, check not sure.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT TO FULL MEMBERSHIP CONVERSION			
	Total (n = 143)	Individual (n = 99)	Combination (n = 41)
Mean	24%	26%	18%
Median	14%	19%	9%
0%	6%	4%	10%
1% to 10%	42%	40%	46%
11% to 20%	9%	10%	7%
21% to 30%	13%	13%	15%
31% to 40%	9%	8%	12%
41% to 50%	8%	8%	5%
51% to 60%	4%	4%	2%
61% to 70%	4%	5%	-
71% to 80%	4%	4%	2%
81% to 90%	1%	2%	-
91% to 100%	1%	1%	-

- On average, 24% of student memberships convert to full memberships. This is down from 29% in 2017.

- Trade organizations are much more likely to convert student memberships to full memberships (42% vs. 26% of IMOs and 18% of combination associations).

- IMOs are more likely to convert more than 10% of student memberships to full memberships (56% vs. 45%).

QUICK STAT

STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS are offered by a majority of IMOs (73%) and combination organizations (70%).

On average, how much are your basic annual membership dues?

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES STRUCTURE				
	Total (n = 600)	Individual (n = 272)	Trade (n = 177)	Combination (n = 151)
We have a sliding scale	34%	16%	**66%**	31%
Basic dues	**66%**	**84%**	35%	**69%**

BASIC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES				
	Total (n = 390)	Individual (n = 229)	Trade (n = 59)	Combination (n = 102)
Under $50	8%	12%	2%	4%
$50 to $99	13%	15%	3%	15%
$100 to $149	15%	15%	7%	21%
$150 to $199	10%	11%	5%	10%
$200 to $299	**18%**	**19%**	9%	**23%**
$300 to $399	9%	10%	5%	11%
$400 to $499	6%	7%	5%	5%
$500 to $749	9%	7%	17%	8%
$750 to $999	3%	1%	9%	2%
$1000 and over	9%	4%	**39%**	3%
Mean	$932	$315	$4,455	$281
Median	$212	$175	$645	$199

▌ Nearly two-thirds (66%) of associations use basic dues for their membership structure.

▌ Trade associations (66%) are significantly more likely than IMOs (16%) and combination associations (31%) to use a sliding scale for membership dues.

▌ The median basic annual membership dues are $212, though for trade associations that figure triples to $645.

▌ Those associations that have renewal rates of 80% or higher are significantly more likely to have a sliding scale (45%) than those that have a lower renewal rate (16%).

▌ Only 22% of associations with less than a 60% new member renewal rate have a sliding scale; among associations with an 80% new member renewal rate, 51% have a sliding scale.

How often does your association raise membership dues?

MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE				
	Total (n = 613)	Individual (n = 279)	Trade (n = 184)	Combination (n = 150)
Annually	25%	19%	34%	23%
Every other year	5%	6%	4%	6%
As needed	52%	57%	44%	53%
Other	10%	11%	9%	11%
Never	8%	7%	9%	8%

❙ Half of all associations (52%) raise membership dues as necessary, with another 25% raising it on an annual basis.

❙ Associations with renewal rates of 80% or higher are significantly more likely to raise membership dues annually (30%) compared to those with lower renewal rates (14%).

❙ At 34%, trade associations are significantly more likely to raise membership dues annually than IMOs or combination associations (19% and 23%, respectively).

❙ 8% of associations never raise membership dues.

What was the average percentage of your last membership dues increase across all membership categories? If you are unsure, check not sure.

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP DUES				
	Total (n = 450)	Individual (n = 209)	Trade (n = 133)	Combination (n = 108)
Mean	8%	9%	6%	8%
Median	5%	5%	3%	5%
1% to 10%	75%	71%	81%	76%
11% to 20%	12%	14%	8%	11%
21% to 30%	5%	7%	3%	4%
31% to 40%	2%	1%	2%	2%
41% to 50%	1%	2%	-	-
51% to 60%	<1%	1%	-	1%
61% to 70%	<1%	1%	-	-
71% to 80%	<1%	-	1%	-
81% to 90%	<1%	-	-	1%
91% to 100%	<1%	1%	-	-

❙ The mean percentage increase for all associations is 8%, while the median increase is 5%.

❙ The overwhelming majority of dues increases were 10% or less.

❙ Associations with an 80% or higher renewal rate are significantly more likely (83%) to have increases of 10% or less; only 71% of those with lower renewal rates have increases of 10% or less.

Associations with an 80% or higher **RENEWAL RATE** are more likely (57%) not to have chapters than those with lower renewal rates (49%).

How would you describe your membership dues structure?

MEMBERSHIP DUES STRUCTURE				
	Total (n = 616)	Individual (n = 279)	Trade (n = 184)	Combination (n = 153)
Everyone pays the same membership dues	21%	30%	8%	20%
The membership dues are based on certain attributes (i.e., qualifications, experience, company size, revenue, geography, etc.)	51%	38%	76%	46%
The membership dues are based on a tiered structure of increasing benefits	12%	13%	7%	16%
The membership dues are based on member-selected benefits they want to receive (à la carte)	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	15%	18%	8%	16%

▌ More than half of associations have dues based on certain attributes, such as qualifications, experience, company size, revenue, and geography (51%).

▌ Basing dues on certain attributes is significantly more likely for trade associations (76%) than for IMOs (38%) or combination associations (46%).

▌ IMOs and combination associations are significantly more likely to have the same dues for everyone (30% for IMOs and 20% for combination associations vs. 8% for trade associations).

▌ Associations with renewal rates of 80% or higher are significantly more likely to base membership dues on certain attributes (60%); among those with renewal rates less than 80%, only 38% base membership dues on specified attributes.

▌ Associations experiencing new member renewal rates of 80% or more are significantly more likely to base membership dues on certain attributes (68% vs. 45% for lower new member renewal rates).

What is your membership dues based on?

BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP DUES	
	Trade (n = 177)
Number of employees in member organization	9%
Annual revenue of member organization	46%
Dues are the same for all members	11%
Other	35%

▎ Nearly half of trade associations (46%) base membership dues on the annual revenue of member organizations.

▎ Trade associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are more likely to base dues on the annual revenue of the organization (48% vs. 36% for associations with lower rates).

Does your association have chapters?

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP				
	Total (n = 613)	Individual (n = 278)	Trade (n = 183)	Combination (n = 152)
Yes, chapter membership is optional	25%	29%	16%	30%
Yes, chapter membership is mandatory	17%	26%	7%	15%
No	54%	41%	73%	54%
Our organization is a chapter	4%	4%	4%	2%

▎ A majority of associations (54%) do not have chapters. Among trade associations, 73% do not have chapters.

▎ IMOs are more likely (26%) to have mandatory chapter membership than trade associations (7%) or combination associations (15%).

▎ 29% of IMOs and 30% of combination associations are significantly more likely to have optional chapter memberships; only 16% of trade associations have optional chapter memberships.

▎ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are more likely (57%) not to have chapters than those with lower renewal rates (49%).

Are there separate dues for chapters?

SEPARATE DUES FOR CHAPTERS				
	Total (n = 281)	Individual (n = 162)	Trade (n = 49)	Combination (n = 70)
Yes, chapter dues are a separate rate	52%	57%	47%	46%
No, overall and chapter dues are combined	48%	43%	53%	54%

❙ A majority of associations that have chapters have separate dues (52%).

❙ IMOs are more likely to have separate chapter dues than trade or combination associations (57% vs. 47% and 46%, respectively).

Who sets the chapter dues?

SETTING SEPARATE DUES FOR CHAPTERS				
	Total (n = 145)	Individual (n = 90)	Trade (n = 23)	Combination (n = 32)
The national organization	10%	6%	22%	16%
The chapter	90%	94%	78%	84%

❙ Most chapters set their own dues (90%).

❙ 94% of IMO chapters set their own dues, compared to 78% of trade associations and 84% of combination associations.

Are chapter dues the same for all chapters or do they vary?

DUES BY CHAPTER				
	Total (n = 147)	Individual (n = 92)	Trade (n = 23)	Combination (n = 32)
Same for all chapters	8%	5%	17%	9%
Vary by chapter	92%	95%	83%	91%

❙ Because chapters tend to set their own dues, the chapter dues tend to vary. Only 8% of associations with chapters have a consistent dues rate.

❙ Associations with consistent dues for chapters are significantly more likely to experience a renewal rate increase.

MARKETING TOOLS

What is your organization's annual operating budget?

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET				
	Total (n = 620)	Individual (n = 281)	Trade (n = 186)	Combination (n = 153)
Up to $1 million	20%	17%	19%	26%
$1 million to $4.9 million	36%	35%	38%	36%
$5 million to $9.9 million	18%	17%	19%	17%
$10 million to $19.9 million	13%	14%	12%	12%
$20 million to $50 million	9%	11%	9%	6%
More than $50 million	5%	6%	4%	3%

▌ 36% of associations have an annual operating budget of $1 million to $4.9 million.

▌ The median operating budget for IMOs is $2.8 million, $2.5 million for trade organizations, and $2.1 million for combination associations.

▌ IMOs are more likely to have an operating budget of $20 million or more (16% vs. 11% for all other associations).

▌ Operating budgets have no effect on new member renewal rates. Organizations with a less than 60% new member renewal rate have a median operating budget of $3.2 million; those with a new member renewal rate of 80% or more have a smaller median operating budget of $2.4 million.

How compelling is your association's value proposition to members?

VALUE PROPOSITION STATEMENT				
	Total (n = 587)	Individual (n = 267)	Trade (n = 179)	Combination (n = 141)
Very compelling	11%	10%	15%	8%
Compelling	39%	40%	43%	35%
Somewhat compelling	41%	39%	39%	48%
Not very compelling	8%	11%	3%	9%
Not at all compelling	1%	1%	1%	1%

▌ Only half of associations believe they have a compelling or very compelling value proposition.

▌ Trade associations are more likely to feel their value proposition is compelling/very compelling (57% vs. 49% for IMOs and 43% for combination associations)

▌ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely than those with lower renewal rates to have a compelling/very compelling value proposition (54% vs. 39%).

How many employees does your association have?

EMPLOYEES (MEDIAN)				
	Total	Individual	Trade	Combination
Total full-time permanent staff	19	23	17	15
Total temporary or contract staff	3	3	3	3
Total staff in membership department	3	3	3	2

▍ The average association has 19 full-time employees, with 3 employees in the membership department.

▍ IMOs are more likely to have more employees (23) than trade or combination associations.

▍ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% have more full-time employees than those with a lower renewal rate (21 vs. 16) and have more staff in the membership department (3 vs. 2).

EMPLOYEES BY ASSOCIATION SIZE: INDIVIDUAL (MEDIAN)				
	Up to 1,000	1,001 to 5,000	5,001 to LT 20,000	20,000+
Total full-time permanent staff	6	8	29	88
Total temporary or contract staff	3	3	2	5
Total staff in membership department	2	2	3	6

EMPLOYEES BY ASSOCIATION SIZE: TRADE (MEDIAN)			
	Up to 100	101 to LT 500	500+
Total full-time permanent staff	7	10	24
Total temporary or contract staff	3	2	3
Total staff in membership department	2	2	3

▍ Larger IMOs and trade associations have more full-time and membership department staff at all levels of employees.

▍ The largest associations also have more staff in their membership departments.

▍ Smaller associations are significantly more likely to have only one employee—or none at all—in the membership department.

QUICK STAT

Associations with an **80% OR HIGHER RENEWAL RATE** are significantly more likely than those with lower renewal rates to have a compelling/very compelling value proposition (54% vs. 39%).

What types of analysis do you use to measure the effectiveness of your membership marketing campaigns? (Check all that apply.)

TYPES OF ANALYSIS USED TO MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEMBERSHIP MARKETING CAMPAIGNS				
	Total (n = 603)	Individual (n = 272)	Trade (n = 180)	Combination (n = 151)
Response rate analysis	51%	56%	42%	54%
Source code or Keycode capture and analysis	33%	42%	17%	35%
A/B split marketing tests	32%	39%	19%	33%
Return on Investment (ROI)	30%	39%	17%	29%
Cost of acquisition	17%	21%	8%	22%
Data mining/modeling	12%	17%	6%	11%
Lifetime value analysis	10%	14%	6%	10%
Computer matchback to prospect database	10%	15%	2%	10%
Net return after servicing costs	6%	7%	2%	7%
Other	2%	2%	3%	1%
None	29%	22%	40%	27%

▌ Half of associations use response rate analysis to measure the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns (51%). One-third of associations use source code or keycode capture and analysis and/or A/B split marketing tests to measure campaign effectiveness (33% and 32%, respectively).

▌ 40% of trade associations do not measure marketing effectiveness, a rate significantly higher than for either IMOs or combination associations.

▌ Source code or keycode capture analysis is the second-most commonly used metric for IMOs and combination associations. Trade associations are more likely to use A/B split testing over keycode capture analysis.

▌ Return on Investment (ROI) is another popular means of analysis used primarily by IMOs and combination associations.

Do you divide your membership into different segments for marketing purposes? If so, which of the following best describes your approach to segmentation? (Check all that apply.)

TYPES OF SEGMENTS USED FOR MARKETING				
	Total (n = 608)	Individual (n = 276)	Trade (n = 180)	Combination (n = 152)
Membership level/type	55%	59%	47%	60%
Demographic-based	32%	38%	20%	34%
Job/occupation-based	29%	34%	22%	29%
Model-driven personas	9%	11%	4%	10%
Other	8%	7%	12%	7%
Our organization does not use segmentation	22%	22%	24%	20%

▎ 55% of associations use membership level/ type segmentation for marketing purposes. It is the most widely used method for all membership models.

▎ 9% of associations, predominantly IMOs and combination associations, use model-driven personas.

▎ 22% of associations do not use any type of segmentation.

QUICK STAT

ONLINE DIGITAL PLATFORMS are most commonly used for marketing annual conferences/trade shows (79%) and for membership marketing (68%).

Please indicate if you use online digital advertising platforms (e.g., paid Facebook, LinkedIn, AdRoll ads) to market membership or any of the following events/products. (Check all that apply.)

ONLINE DIGITAL ADVERTISING				
	Total (n = 455)	Individual (n = 213)	Trade (n = 130)	Combination (n = 112)
Annual conference/trade show	79%	76%	88%	77%
Membership	68%	78%	46%	74%
Professional development meetings/programs	46%	44%	44%	54%
Publications	41%	42%	35%	47%
Webinars	40%	37%	40%	48%
Volunteer opportunities within your organization	22%	30%	10%	22%
Donations to your association foundation or PAC	20%	26%	14%	18%
Participation in your mentoring program	8%	10%	4%	10%
Other non-dues product or service purchases (other than previously checked)	14%	16%	10%	13%

▌ Online digital platforms are most commonly used for marketing annual conferences/trade shows (79%) and for membership marketing (68%).

▌ Trade associations are significantly more likely to use online digital platforms to market annual conferences/trade shows than either IMOs or combination associations (88% vs. 76% and 77%, respectively).

▌ Associations with renewal rates at or above 80% are significantly more likely to use online digital platforms to market their annual conference/trade show (82% vs. 74% for associations with lower renewal rates).

How has the personalization in your member communications changed over the past year?

PERSONALIZATION OF MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS				
	Total (n =611)	Individual (n = 276)	Trade (n = 183)	Combination (n = 152)
Increased	55%	55%	57%	53%
Decreased	3%	3%	2%	3%
Remained the same	41%	41%	39%	43%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%	2%

❚ A majority of associations have increased the personalization of their member communications over the past year (55%).

❚ Associations with renewal rates of 80% or higher are significantly more likely to have increased the personalization of member communications (60% vs. 49%).

Are you using marketing automation to send personalized emails/content to members, customers, and/or prospects?

MARKETING AUTOMATION				
	Total (n = 611)	Individual (n = 277)	Trade (n = 183)	Combination (n = 151)
Yes	49%	51%	43%	54%
No	45%	45%	46%	42%
Not sure	6%	4%	11%	3%

❚ Almost half of associations are using marketing automation to send personalized emails and content.

❚ 55% of associations experiencing a new member increase have used marketing automation to send personalized content. This is significantly higher than associations that show no change (46%) or a decrease in new members (39%).

On average, how many emails does a member receive from your association in any given week? If you are unsure, check not sure.

EMAILS PER WEEK				
	Total (n = 566)	Individual (n = 259)	Trade (n = 165)	Combination (n = 142)
0	1%	<1%	2%	1%
1	17%	20%	14%	16%
2	20%	22%	16%	20%
3	23%	21%	23%	26%
4	6%	4%	9%	6%
5	18%	16%	21%	19%
6	2%	3%	2%	-
7	4%	3%	4%	6%
8	1%	1%	2%	1%
9	<1%	-	1%	1%
10 or more	8%	10%	7%	5%
Mean	4	4	4	4
Median	3	2	3	2

❙ Members receive, on average, four emails per week from an association (median = 3). Close to one-quarter of associations indicate their members receive three emails per week (23%). Most trade and combination associations also report that their members receive about three emails per week (23% and 26%, respectively). IMOs, however, report that members typically receive two emails per week (22%). Of note is that 10% of IMOs indicate that their members receive ten or more emails per week.

❙ Small IMOs, with up to 1,000 individual members, are significantly more likely to send only one email per week, compared to IMOs with more than 1,000 members. Similarly, associations with operating budgets of less than $5 million are significantly more apt to send only one email per week compared to those with larger operating budgets. In fact, associations with operating budgets of $5 million or more tend to send five emails per week.

What is your average open rate (percentage) on the following types of emails? If you are unsure, check not sure.

AVERAGE OPEN RATE FOR EMAILS				
	Total	Individual	Trade	Combination
Membership renewal campaigns	40%	39%	44%	38%
Meetings/conferences marketing	31%	32%	32%	29%
Association news/newsletters	31%	33%	28%	29%
Professional development program marketing	28%	31%	28%	26%
Membership acquisition campaigns	21%	23%	19%	18%

▌ Open rates, for all association types, is highest for membership renewal campaign emails. Trade associations boast the highest percentage open rate for these emails (44%). Association executives indicate that 31% of emails pertaining to meetings/conference marketing and association news/newsletters are opened.

▌ Associations with the smallest operating budgets (up to $1 million) claim significantly higher open rates for almost all of the different types of emails. Similarly, associations with fewer than 5,000 individual members have significantly higher open rates on all types of emails except membership acquisition campaigns.

QUICK STAT

Associations reporting declines in their one-year membership numbers and declines in their five-year membership numbers are significantly more likely to indicate they are **CHALLENGED BY ATTRACTING AND MAINTAINING YOUNGER MEMBERS**.

Compared to the findings from 2017, competition from other associations takes over the top spot, replacing the economy/cost of membership as the **BIGGEST EXTERNAL CHALLENGE TO MEMBERSHIP**.

What is your average click-through rate (percentage) on the following types of emails? If you are unsure, check not sure.

AVERAGE CLICK-THROUGH RATE FOR EMAILS				
	Total	**Individual**	**Trade**	**Combination**
Membership renewal campaigns	23%	23%	27%	19%
Meetings/conferences marketing	19%	19%	20%	17%
Association news/newsletters	18%	19%	18%	16%
Professional development program marketing	18%	20%	17%	15%
Membership acquisition campaigns	12%	14%	11%	9%

▌ Associations report the highest click-through rates for membership renewal campaigns (23%). This is the highest for all types of associations, but especially for trade associations (27%). Membership acquisition campaigns have the lowest click-through rates (12%).

▌ Associations with renewal rates of 80% or higher have significantly higher click-through rates for membership renewal campaign emails and association news/newsletter emails, compared to associations with lower renewal rates. Furthermore, associations with increases or no change in new members over the past year also have significantly higher click-through rates for association news/newsletters emails than do associations with declines in new members over the past year.

▌ Associations reporting increases in membership over the past year, and the past five years, have significantly higher click-through rates on meeting/conference marketing emails and professional development marketing emails compared to associations reporting declines in membership. Results also indicate that associations with new member renewal rates at or above 80% have significantly higher click-through rates for all of the different types of emails.

ASSOCIATION DEMOGRAPHICS

What best describes your association's industry?

Industry	Percentage
Healthcare	20%
Professional Services (white collar)	16%
Education	13%
Research/Science	5%
Manufacturing	4%
Arts/Cultural/Historical	4%
Finance/Accounting/Banking	4%
Professional Services (blue collar)	4%
Building/Construction	3%
Government	3%
Engineering	3%
Hobby/Enthusiast/Sports	3%
Travel/Hospitality	3%
Energy/Water/Power/Utility	2%
Chamber of Commerce	2%
Real Estate	2%
Retail/Consumer Products	2%
Agriculture	2%
Environmental	2%
Philanthropic	2%
Automotive	1%
Religion	1%
Publishing	<1%

▌ In line with previous years, the most represented industries include healthcare (20%; up from 18% in 2017), white-collar professional services (16%), and education (13%; up from 11% in 2017).

n = 821

How many paid members are in your association?

NUMBER OF PAID INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS			
	Total (n = 580)	Individual (n = 381)	Combination (n = 199)
Up to 1,000	21%	13%	37%
1,001 - 5,000	30%	28%	33%
5,001 - 19,999	24%	28%	18%
20,000 or more	25%	31%	13%

▌ In total, 30% of IMOs and combination associations have between 1,000 and 5,000 individual members, an increase from 2017 (26%). About one-quarter of IMOs and combination associations have between 5,000 and 20,000 individual members, or more than 20,000 individual members (24% and 25%, respectively).

▌ IMOs by themselves are most likely to report 20,000 individual members or more (31%), while combination associations are most likely to report having up to 1,000 individual members (37%).

NUMBER OF PAID COMPANY/GROUP MEMBERS			
	Total (n = 440)	Trade (n = 241)	Combination (n = 199)
Up to 100	15%	12%	19%
101-499	32%	30%	35%
500+	53%	59%	46%

▌ Overall, more than half of trade and combination associations report over 500 company or group members (53%). Close to six in ten trade associations report more than 500 company or group members (59%, up from 52% in 2017), while 46% of combination associations report over 500 company or group members.

▌ Compared to findings from 2017, fewer combination associations report 100 or less company/group members (19% vs. 24% in 2017). There is a corresponding increase in the percentage of combination associations reporting 101-499 company/group members (35%, up from 30% in 2017).

WORDS OF WISDOM: PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

If you could freely say anything to your members, what would you say?

- Engage more! Use us more! (Trade)

- I know you're busy but just pay a little attention. (Combination)

- Let us know what we can provide to you that you are not getting elsewhere and let me know how I can help you. (IMO)

- Please log in and update your profile. We use that data to make sure we're making the most of our marketing and outreach efforts and to prevent unnecessary/irrelevant communications from overloading your inbox. Tell us what you need! We think we're doing a pretty good job, but feedback keeps us on the right course. (Combination)

- Read the information we provide, it answers all your questions. (IMO)

- Renew the first time we send you a notice and check your record. We've added more fields, SIG's and specialty areas to serve you better. (IMO)

- Respect your association staff and recognize they work hard on your behalf. (Trade)

- Thank you. I'm so proud of you. (IMO)

- The Board has a role, the membership has a role, and the staff has a role. Let's partner together to find solutions that work for all parties. (Trade)

- The dues you pay are minimal compared to most associations. (Combination)

- What can we do better? (Combination)

- Your passion inspires me daily. (Combination)

With regard to your association, what keeps you up at night?

- Aging out of our membership, not enough younger members to offset them. Declining industry. (IMO)

- Continuing to run on a deficit budget. (IMO)

- Data hygiene and implementation of the member management software. (IMO)

- Data quality, retention, and acquisition goals which make for a great sound bite "10,000 by 2020" but are not realistic. (IMO)

- Declining membership numbers and the retirement of Baby Boomers. (IMO)

- Defining our value proposition. Do we have one? (Trade)

- Excessively poor communications, absent board members, key board member leadership extremely difficult to reach, lack of focus and cohesive direction for association and staff, overall poor leadership. (IMO)

- Financial viability going forward. Adapting to new needs of a changing landscape in our members' industry. (media) (Trade)

- How to simplify and restructure our membership offerings and how to mine all the data we collect with a limited staff. (Combination)

- Low open rates to emails which force us to use more direct mail and phone calls to make member contact. (Trade)

- Membership recruitment and retention numbers. (Trade)

- Mergers and acquisitions within our industry. (Trade)

- My superiors lack of empathy and ability to see the customers' view. (Trade)

- Our financials. Hard to start new initiatives when you don't have funding to support it. We are looking at other ways to better position ourselves and to leverage free or inexpensive tools to our advantage. (Combination)

- Our industry is quickly changing, and we are doing nothing to help our members plan, prepare, or adapt. (Combination)

- Our membership model is out of date, and the path to changing it will not be easy. (IMO)

- Restructuring the member model - what benefits need to be added? Will this turn around membership? 5 year declines in membership. (Combination)

- Technology changes and competitive landscape that will alter the future of our industry. (Trade)

- The amount of manual processing that our team has to do in order to renew memberships, and the lack of a clearly defined value proposition. Additionally, the fact that our web site and technologies are years behind the current market. (Combination)

- The amount we have invested in our IT systems, and the amount of time we still spend doing things manually. (IMO)

- The disconnect between chapters and national. (IMO)

- The staff culture is poor, and the Board is sheltered from it. (IMO)

- The workload. High revenue goals to achieve, and not enough staff to perform successfully. (Combination)

- Too many projects, not enough time. And I want to do them all. (IMO)

- Velocity of retirements and inexperienced new entrants. (IMO)

- We are attempting to implement a new AMS, e-marketing platform, marketing automation, automatic unsubscribes, member engagement planning, bidding a new website developer and host, and launching all within the next 7 months. (Combination)

- What could I be doing better for the profession? (Combination)

If there was one hurdle you could remove to make your association run smoother, what would it be?

- Ability to pay higher salaries and offer more robust benefits. (IMO)

- Add experienced professionals in membership and marketing to staff. (IMO)

- Attitudes and egos. I've always said, when personalities become more important than the mission, it is the beginning of the end of the mission. (Trade)

- Change the attitude if we build it they will come to let's build something people want. (IMO)

- Cost of dues. I'd reduce them and I feel I'd have less people on the fence about dropping, joining or have issues recruiting. (Trade)

- Creating a membership marketing plan and sticking to it. (IMO)

- Disenfranchised staff keeps the organization focus away from important strategies and more into culture. (IMO)

- Find more and better trained staff. (Trade)

- Having a state-of-the-art membership database full of clean data and a well-trained staff to work with it. (Trade)

- Inability to create new products and services that meet the needs of our changing markets or attract new markets. (IMO)

- Lack of adequate staffing in Marketing and Membership areas. (IMO)

- Micromanaging of our Board. (IMO)

- More emphasis on utilizing member data to make decisions, coming from the top down. We have the information, and the capability, but this needs to be more widely spread throughout the culture. More emphasis on using targeted digital marketing to acquire new members, and the budget commitment to hire a solid digital agency. (IMO)

- More staff and better long term planning to create cohesive marketing strategies for acquisition and member retention. (Combination)

- More staff to perform administrative processes; more money spent on marketing. (Combination)

- Move from paper based membership forms to paperless forms. (IMO)

- Much more integrated and automated membership renewals, payments and processing. (Trade)

- Require that local chapter members be members of the national organization so we have a unified database and voice. (IMO)

- Stop running the organization in silos. (Trade)

- The glacial pace it takes to make decisions. (IMO)

- The inherent conflict of interest by an organization with silos by chapter. (IMO)

- Turn back the clock on our CRM/AMS conversion and take a whole lot more time testing before deploying into production. (IMO)

In your own words, what are the most important or successful lessons you have learned in the area of membership marketing?

- A catchy subject line goes a long way. (Trade)

- Always test, never assume. (IMO)

- Be creative - try something new. Remember it's not about what you like or respond to - it's about your members. (IMO)

- Begin renewal efforts immediately. Make members' experience personal. (Trade)

- Data is king. The more we know about prospects and members (needs, wants, behaviors, actions), the more effectively we can acquire, engage, and retain them. As long as we have the help of very skilled data analysts. (IMO)

- Direct Mail is still king. Track as much as you can. Test. (IMO)

- Don't be afraid to test. (IMO)

- Engage emotion in the value proposition. (Combination)

- Free trials and comped registration fees go a long way in engaging new or apprehensive potential members. (Trade)

- If you never ask them to join, they won't join. (Combination)

- It cannot be an afterthought. If your value proposition is not compelling, no amount of fancy marketing will matter. (Combination)

- Keep trying things until you find what works. (Combination)

- Lowering the price (i.e., offering a promotion code) isn't always enough to generate joins and/or renewals. The value proposition must always be strong. (IMO)

- Measure ROI. (IMO)

- Measure your results with lifetime value of the member. It's the primary metric. (Trade)

❚ Membership is not a sprint. It's a long process that needs constant attention. (IMO)

❚ Messages/communications have to be frequent and through a variety of channels (email, social media, newsletter). (Combination)

❚ Never stop marketing. Keep contacting them until they ask you to stop. (IMO)

❚ Personalization is the key to successful marketing campaigns. (Combination)

❚ Segmenting is key. Long gone are the days of sending the same message to everyone. (IMO)

❚ Social media is not a direct acquisition tool. (IMO)

❚ Targeting and timeliness are key. Tell the right people what they need to know when they need to know it. (Combination)

❚ The database is everything. (Combination)

❚ There is no silver bullet. You just have to keep at it with every tool you have. (Combination)

❚ There is no single answer to membership marketing but a multi-level approach. Not every outreach will click with every member or potential member. Membership marketing is a journey and not a destination. (Trade)

❚ Track everything. Statistics are our friends. (Combination)

❚ Understand the wants/needs of members and provide programming to enhance member experiences. (Combination)

❚ Unless they're dead, never give up any former member as lost. (Combination)

❚ Use a diverse range of communication methods to increase your chances of reaching people. (Trade)

❚ When times are tough, marketing should not be cut, it should be expanded. (Trade)

❚ You can't improve something if you don't measure it. (Combination)

❚ You need to invest resources to get results. (IMO)

In your professional opinion, how do you think associations will change or evolve to maintain their relevance over the next decade?

❚ As a membership organization, do we follow what our members want, or act more as an industry association and lead our members to where we think the industry is going? With increasing competition from all sides, we have to be two steps ahead of the game to stay relevant. (Trade)

❚ Associations will most likely increase ways to be more accessible and portable, either by using popular social media, mobile apps, texting, etc. (IMO)

❚ Content curation will be huge for professional associations like mine. With a vast amount of information and news available, our members will look to us as a reliable source and filter for the most important information. I also wonder if American associations in general will place greater emphasis on advocacy, given our changing political climate. (IMO)

❚ Curating the conversation and the information to bring out only the best and most useful and separating out inaccuracies. Continuing to create community (in the broader sense than online communities). Being bolder in offering leadership development opportunities and calling out the opportunities that are already there. (IMO)

❚ Diversify membership options - meet the people where they want to be. (IMO)

❚ Find ways to involve younger members in the ways that they want, not the way associations think they want. (IMO)

❚ I believe there will always be associations - it's imperative to convey your importance. (Combination)

▎I feel that associations may need to evolve into offering more à la carte options, because the one-size-fits-all model is going by the wayside. (Trade)

▎I think Artificial Intelligence and the sophistication of social networks will have a profound effect on associations' relevance. (Trade)

▎I think associations will continue to use technology to improve how we market to and communicate with members and customers in more relevant ways. (Trade)

▎I think there will be more consolidation and only the strong will survive if they continue to increase value. (Combination)

▎I think there will be more mergers of "like" organizations. (Trade)

▎Increase the speed to new technology adoption. (Combination)

▎Increasing use of digital tools. (Combination)

▎Like associations always have, they adapt to their members' needs and industry changes. (Combination)

▎Micro-membership payments - more pay as you use options. (Combination)

▎More electronic delivery of meetings, education, etc. (IMO)

▎More focus on training and certification. (Trade)

▎Professional associations must resolve an issue or a problem for their members. Need to find a niche that is relevant to the members, and which is also aligned with the association's mission. (Combination)

▎Provide members with education that they need to maintain their credentials. (IMO)

▎Smarter and more nimble. They will do a better job of determining what they do best - things that they can do that their members can't. (Trade)

▎Still need to have the personal touch but with a lot more technology. (IMO)

▎Telecommuting will increase, meetings will become more virtual, and the offices will become more quiet. (Combination)

▎They must become more digitally adept and quicker to market with new programs and services. They will still have a role as a convener for the profession, but that may not always mean it will be via a face-to-face meeting. (IMO)

▎To stay relevant, I think associations are going to have to move away from budgets based solely on dues revenue and find new revenue streams that also bring benefit to members and the industry overall. (Combination)

▎We are living in a world of technology and instant information. We need to evolve to keep up with this or we won't remain relevant. We can't keep doing business as usual - sending out lengthy emails/newsletters, expecting people to come to us and search through a wealth of information to find what they want. We need information that they can digest in a minute or so and easily access. We also need to give them what they are looking for - content and information tailored to them, especially in the Amazon era that we live in, the tools to better perform their jobs, and resources to advance in their careers (e.g., mentors, continuing education). (Combination)

TONY ROSSELL*, Senior Vice President*

Tony Rossell is Senior Vice President of Marketing General Incorporated in Alexandria, VA. A frequent writer and speaker on membership marketing topics, he is a contributing author to two books, *Membership Marketing* (ASAE 2000) and *Membership Essentials* (ASAE 2016). He also writes the "Membership Marketing Blog" and has over 30 years of experience in helping organizations grow their membership.

Tony can be reached at 703.706.0360 or at Tony@MarketingGeneral.com.

ADINA W. WASSERMAN, PhD*, Director of Research*

Adina W. Wasserman, PhD, is Director of Research at Marketing General Incorporated. Dr. Wasserman is renowned for pioneering the concept of Indispensability Measurement for associations. In addition, she has created engagement measurements including the Customer Relationship Index and the Communications Effectiveness Index. She earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and completed her Master's and PhD in social psychology at Florida State University.

Adina can be reached at 703.706.0373 or at AWasserman@MarketingGeneral.com.

MATT KERR, MA*, Market Research Manager*

Matt Kerr is a Market Research Analyst at Marketing General Incorporated. He has more than 10 years' experience in market research and analysis. Before joining MGI, he worked in the consumer and non-profit market research sector, leading numerous research projects for Fortune 500 companies and globally-recognized non-profit organizations. He earned his undergraduate degree at Kenyon College and his Master's degree at the University of Arkansas.

Matt can be reached at 703.706.0364 or at MKerr@MarketingGeneral.com.

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WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ATTRACT NEXT-GEN ATTENDEES?

BY SAMANTHA WHITEHORNE / OCT 18, 2018

(Cecilie_Arcurs/E+/Getty Images Plus)

Your industry's young professionals are looking to learn and grow. To serve that interest, your association needs to offer education that appeals not only to them, but also to their managers—who may have the last word on whether they attend.

All this week here on AssociationsNow.com, we've been publishing guest blog posts written by members of ASAE's young professionals community. They've covered a range of topics, from member engagement and communications to how associations can go about preparing for next-gen members.

They've all been thoughtful and full of great ideas for associations to consider. But as I was reading Tuesday's post—"Say Yes to Developing Next-Gen Professionals" by Natasha Bethea, senior manager of membership recruitment and retention at the Association for Psychological Science—I couldn't help but think of the

significant role that an association's meetings and learning teams play in this area.

Bethea makes the case that "training and education should not just be a benefit for more seasoned employees, but it should also be available to next-gen professionals as well." She urges managers of next-gen professionals to make sure they get the opportunity to attend trainings and conferences.

But with eager next-gen members rising through the ranks, it's up to associations to make sure they are offering learning opportunities that not only appeal to these young professionals but that also get the approval of their managers. So, what should associations be doing to make that happen?

The first is to offer education at your conferences that both has value to them in their current role but also helps prepare them for the roles they see themselves having in five or 10 years. Also consider more interactive sessions that allow next-gen attendees to work together to solve problems or tour local industry-related facilities to enhance their knowledge of best practices. This will help create conversation, rather than having presenters just push information at them—something all your attendees will like. You could also consider hosting a young professionals program, as the Construction Specifications Institute did at its CONSTRUCT conference earlier this month.

Second, make sure that these future leaders are also getting face time with more seasoned professionals and industry leaders. While a young professionals content track is helpful and allows them to get to know their peers, it's also important that they get a chance to meet the leaders who hold roles they may aspire to be in one day. While a networking reception is a casual way to do this, another is to host a formal mentoring or conference buddy program at your meeting. Or consider hosting a dine-around one evening, where five or six next-gen professionals get to share a meal and chat with an industry leader.

Finally, your organization may want to find a way to incentivize managers to send their next-gen employees to your conferences. For instance, you could offer free registration to a young professional if their supervisor is attending, or you can have a reduced or discounted registration fee for those under a certain age. Some associations also offer conference scholarships that cover registration, travel, and other incidentals for next-gen attendees.

What are you doing to attract young professionals to your meetings and conferences? Please share in the comments.

Association membership trends

By **Octavio Peralta** - November 2, 2017

I'd like to share with you this time key results of researches by the American Society of A
examined the changing nature of association membership.

Over the last 10 years, ASAE and the ASAE Foundation conducted studies that explored
associations do to continue to attract and retain members, and how these engagement st
studies, such as "The Decision to Join," "The Decision to Volunteer," "Exploring the Futu
Member Commitment," indicate the following key drivers for membership success:

Meet members where they are—Many associations are trying to meet the demands o
membership options, offering individuals the ability to select what is most relevant to the
In "Innovations in Membership Engagement: A Benchmarking Study," researchers found
customize benefits to match needs and interests. One association changed its benefits st
benefits they wanted, which led to the doubling of both its membership and
number of chapters.

Involvement alters perspective—"The Decision to Volunteer" study confirmed that
engaged members of their associations. Volunteers are also more likely to promote memb
the value that volunteering provides to the individual and to the organization by creating
members to get involved. Associations that find they often have the same people in the r
recruiting members in different career and life phases to serve on boards and committees
individual interests and serve as low-commitment opportunities for
first-time volunteers.

Curated content—Now that the Internet makes volumes of content available with just
the primary source of professional information for their members. One challenge in the l
available, however, is that it can be difficult to identify the most reliable and relevant con

In "Exploring the Future of Membership," researchers found that through curation, assoc
the wheat from the chaff," pointing members to the resources they can use
to do their jobs.

Value remains key—While ways people engage with associations are shifting, the bene
choice. In "The Decision to Join," association members and non-members assessed the ir
benefits of membership to their decision to join an association. Specific individual benefi
information on one's field and professional development opportunities—were rated highe
including promotion of the field, the creation and maintenance of standards and codes of
than personal benefits. Delivering on both individual and whole-field benefits will encour

Members and potential members believe in the value of association work, but static mod
appeal to their needs. By making adjustments to reflect their communities' interests, asso
offer to engage current and future members.

The column contributor, Octavio "Bobby" Peralta, is concurrently the secretary-general of the Associa
the Pacific and the CEO and founder of
the PCAAE. The PCAAE is holding the Associations Summit 5 and the "Ang Susi" Awards 2017 or
Convention Center.

E-mail inquiries@adfiap.org for more details.

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Octavio Peralta