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About VantagePoint

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Your Narrative Springboard

by Kristina Mattson-Grimm, CAE



We all have a story. Writing yours comes from understanding and incorporating discoveries along your path. In addition to your individual story, we need to recognize the impact we each have on the fate of our institutions. What will successors say about your organization years from now?

This summer I attended ASAE's 2019 Annual Meeting and WSAE's first Summertime to Shine event. Reflecting on the thought-provoking presentations, these three topics reinforced how industry professionals impact our associations' narrative: foresight, influence and effect.

At ASAE's 2019 Annual Meeting, an interactive dialog on the importance of foresight engaged the audience. The presenter spoke about purposely making decisions to move your association forward favorably and away from the unthinkable. As stewards of the association, board members and executives should be assessing the association's future four to seven years out to react accordingly. By scanning and preparing for unfavorable and unexpected impacts, and evaluating blue oceans, you can steer your organization towards its goals and through the ever-changing landscape.

There was an eye-opening exercise in this session you may want to try with your board and staff. Participants shared three words to describe their board's current direction. Then used six words to describe what the focus needs to be for future boards.

Influencing our organization's direction was also a prevalent topic. Whether you are staff or board, we should value solution seekers and visionaries. Asking questions like 'what problem are you solving' and 'how do you make it unique' directs your actions to meet member needs and to enhance your strategic and scenario planning discussions.

One influence-grabbing topic on the minds of attendees was Artificial Intelligence (AI). Familiar examples, such as Siri, Alexa and chatbots, are regularly used by many. The message: now is the time to understand how it will be incorporated at our organizations.

Finally, do we understand the effect our words and actions have on the bigger picture? Delving into meeting contracts during the first WSAE Summertime to Shine event, we were led to think about how the impression we leave negotiation partners can become a memorable story. Your reputation and future negotiations are based on your ability to compromise and to land on a win-win. Be upfront in RFPs and responses, as well as honest with your parameters.

Everyone's role impacts the organization's narrative. This quote helps paint a picture.

*Your smile is your logo, your personality is your business card,
how you leave others feeling after an experience with you becomes your trademark.*

~Jay Danzie

WSAE drew me in 10 years ago while studying for the CAE exam. The support, the education and the relationships influenced and affected me then as much as they do now. WSAE continues to be committed for many years to come to creating experiences as your home for peer connections and learning. As your Chair this past year, thank you for allowing the entire board, with your help, to write our story with foresight, influence and effect to advance WSAE's narrative. ■



Calendar of Events

See the calendar at www.wsae.org for more information on these events, and to register.

2019 Summit
October 28-29
Potawatomi Hotel and Casino,
Milwaukee

Milwaukee CEO Roundtable
November 21
Moe's Irish Pub, Wauwatosa



**The Successful Mentoring Mindset -
What Mentoring Can Do for You and
Your Association Business**
October 30

Association Storytelling
November 7

**Know Your Worth, and What Drives
Your Pay: Analyzing 2019 Association
Staff Compensation in Michigan**
November 20

Creating Fans, Not Just Clients
December 12

**Fuel Member Engagement with
Feedback - How to Listen at Scale**
December 19

**Practical Cybersecurity for
Association Leaders**
January 8

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Connect to Influence

How to Leverage Relationships for a Lifetime of Career Success by Allison K. Summers

reviewed by Michelle Vetterkind, CAE

No doubt, you've gotten advice on networking throughout your career, and there are countless books available on the topic, but Allison Summers has earned her CEA credential and can speak to associations about the value of networking like no other.

As an association leader I've personally learned that one of the most important traits for success is your ability to leverage relationships. Summer's book had me reminiscing about how networking and relationships have influenced me throughout my career and realizing how networking has only gotten more important in the modern working environment.

THE AUTHOR SHARES HOW TO BUILD YOUR BIG, BOLD AND BRASH CONNECTION WISH LIST AND MAKES IT SEEM EXCITING AND SOMEHOW, NOT QUITE SO DAUNTING.

Summers has an amazing résumé of leading corporations and non-profits and is considered an authority on leveraging relationships. This, along with her association experience and concise writing style, make her book a worthwhile read.

Summers' focus on understanding the value of building your connections sets her apart from other networking resources. She shares secrets and insights to become a super connector and shows readers the human side of connecting so that you can become more authentic, reliable and efficient.

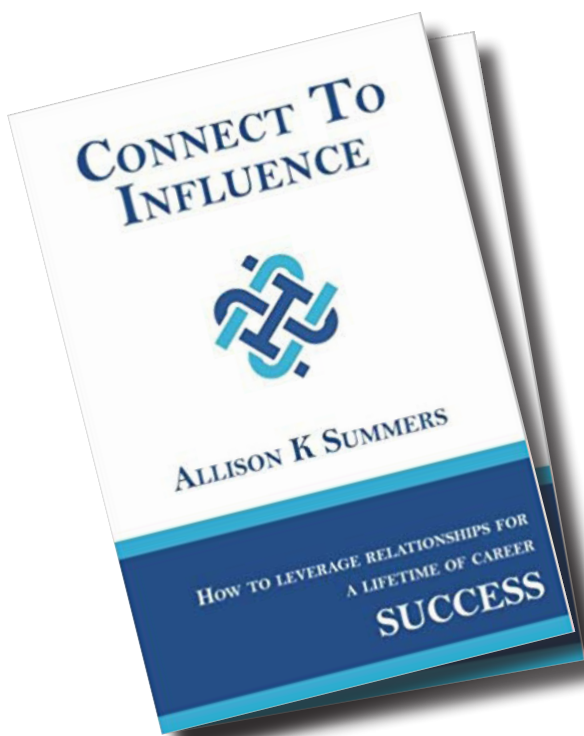
To illustrate the importance of networking, Summers points out that 85 percent of job vacancies are filled by networking. In other words, getting a job with an organization you have no previous contact with is getting increasingly difficult.

In one of many lists in the book, Summers highlights the rewards of making what she calls a *bold* network. Here are a few: extend knowledge, tap shortcuts to resource, gain competitive insights, polish your professional presence and elevate your brand equity in the marketplace.

Summers says you need to take ownership of your brand and make it intentional. To emphasize the point, she shares this quote from Chris Drucker, "Your personal brand is what people say about you when you are not in the room." Her use of meaningful and relevant quotes in this book is extensive.

I often find myself saying to others and to myself that you can't change someone and that you can only change how you view the situation and how to decide to react to it. Summers has a chapter about valuing people in which she writes that you don't have to like someone to create a positive encounter or to connect with him or her. Many people whom I now consider some of my closest friends and colleagues are people I didn't really connect with at first. Summers' advice is sound: Keep an open mind.

Networking and valuing people, of course, relies on your communication skills, which Summers also addresses using this helpful tool: Turn up your CHARMS. If you can



Come to the 2019 WSAE Summit to get your own personal copy of keynote presenter Allison K. Summers' book, thanks to the Wisconsin Dells.

give people an experience that puts them at ease, they will remember you.

- C - Create comfort
- H - Hear with your eyes
- A - Avoid too much self
- R - Relate relevantly
- M - Match styles
- S - Share something of value

She also gives several useful tips on communicating with other generations, cultures and those we may not always see eye-to-eye with.

Summers' book includes charts to help you measure and build both your connective health and connective vision, and to cultivate your community. She says building your network takes planning, time and effort, and that you need to do it before you need it. She also shares how to build your big, bold and brash connection wish list and makes it seem exciting and somehow, not quite so daunting.

Summers is an amazingly concise writer. Her book can be easily skimmed, with many lists and highlights featured at the end of each chapter. I receive many books on leadership and will at least skim all of them, but this is one that I read in complete detail.

While I recommend reading each and every word of this book, there's one chapter you can't miss. In *Avoiding Networking Mistakes*, Summers highlights 21 of the most common networking mistakes people make.

So much of what Summers shares in the book truly resonated with me. Many are my own personal practices, like building an inner circle of positive, energetic people who will believe in you and who will encourage you.

After reading this book, I came away with a renewed excitement for the benefits of networking. It's certainly true that many times it will take a long time to see the benefits of networking, but like a good investment, you will receive your return over time and its value will far exceed what you put in.

Summers' book will give you something new to take away, while reminding you of the common-sense advice that we can all use a reminder of. This book provides advice that *anyone* can benefit from.

Read the book and be sure to attend Allison Summers' session at the upcoming WSAE Summit! ■



Michelle Vetterkind, CAE, is President and CEO at the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, and is a WSAE board member.

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Take Advantage of LinkedIn's Many Opportunities
Chantel Soumis,
LinkedIn Expert and "Brand Sorceress"



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Build Your Personal Brand for Growth

Five key strategies for getting started on LinkedIn

by Chantel Soumis

With over 645 million profiles worldwide, LinkedIn is the number one choice for professionally relevant content, outranking online news sites, Facebook and Twitter. Furthermore, LinkedIn is 277% more effective for B2B sales than Facebook and Twitter, so if you aren't mastering your digital reputation online, you're missing out on endless opportunities.

Through my personal experience with consistent content creation, I was able to launch a successful business with over \$1M in revenue-generating opportunities in just three short months, growing my following from 500 to 25,000 in one year!

We all know that you can't run until you learn how to walk, right? But that also requires trying. And starting, and practicing. So here are my suggestions to get you started in the right direction toward achieving your business goals with a solid LinkedIn strategy.

COMPLETING MANY ELEMENTS OF YOUR PROFILE CAN GET OVERLOOKED BY NEW USERS - AND EVEN EXPERIENCED CREATORS, TOO! HERE ARE SOME QUICK HACKS TO COMPLETE YOUR PROFILE.



Build your brand

Creating a solid social strategy requires a specific voice. *Your* voice. I like to explain it as what you want people to think of when they hear your name? What do you want people to feel or what images do you want to come to mind when people think of you?

To start, first think about your goals. What's your end goal for using LinkedIn? Is it:

- Cultivating direct sales?
- Building brand awareness?
- Generating leads?
- Booking speaking engagements?
- Developing career opportunities?

Once you know the answer to this question, you'll be able to make the most out of your time creating content.

Next, you'll want to discover who your target market is:

- Who are the people that will help you reach your goals?
- Where are they located?
- What topics do they care about?
- Whom do they follow?
- Which influencers in the community do you look up to?

Answering these questions will help you determine topics and hashtags to follow.

Complete your profile

This seems basic, but completing many elements of your profile can get overlooked by new users—and even experienced creators, too! Here are some quick hacks to complete your profile:

Banner image and profile picture. Seems simple, right? Wrong. Professional headshots get 14 times more profile views. It's also important to make sure your image is in full color, and not black and white, so that your image can pop visually in the feed and in comments. Use a color that fits your brand. For example, mine is pink and sunshine yellow.

Your banner image should reflect your goals. For example, my goal is advocacy, so my banner image is of me on stage, speaking to a large audience. One of my favorite examples of a stellar personal brand is Dave Asprey - check out his profile as a great example. His headshot has his brand orange as he sports some active apparel representing his wellness brand. He also has a great summary section which brings me to...

Title, summary and media. Your title is a place to stand out and dazzle. It's important to get creative and express your goals here. Your summary should be unique to your story and include media items such as newspaper and magazine articles, projects, interviews and whatever else helps you stand out.

Experience. Your experience section is important because you can put so many characters into the details of your job description! This is the best place to use those quantitative and qualitative metrics to highlight your expertise. Don't avoid this section—it can be *gold* for lead generation!

Skills and endorsements. Your skills section is important. Not only will it help people searching for users with those skills, but when you apply for positions listed on LinkedIn, your profile is evaluated as a fit for the position based on the skills and education listed on your profile. To evaluate which skills you should add, try searching for a next-level career. For example, if you are a Marketing Coordinator, look for a Marketing Manager position in the LinkedIn Jobs feature. It should have an outline of the skills needed and you can mark those down as skills you have—if, of course, they are relevant to your skillset and background. Next, endorse all of your connections. It's common for most to endorse you back as a thank you. If they send their gratitude, feel free to ask for return endorsements. People love to help!

Recommendations. Speaking of help, the recommendation section is a great place to request previous colleagues and connections that know you well to write a professional review. This establishes trust and credibility to those looking to hire you for a role or project.

Join a campaign

Joining a campaign was the launch of my success. Campaigns are defined as trending hashtags with a theme and are a great way to think of new topics and content worth sharing. For example, three campaigns that come to mind are:

#20DayChallenge. Create content consistently for 20 consecutive days and watch your following soar.

#MyFirstVideo. New to video creation? Make sure to use this hashtag!

#LetsGetHonest. Open up about a topic dear to you that sprinkles in a small amount of vulnerability which helps connect with other professionals.

Connect and engage

Engagement, above all, is the biggest investment you need to make in your online strategy. Just like any social media channel, your activity on other people's content is what drives connection, interest and engagement back to your native content. Get out there and start engaging.

Pro Tip: Engage in your favorite influencer's content. Start responding and creating dialogue in the comments section of their posts. You'll create like-minded connections instantly.

Collaborate

Find like-minded professionals and industry influencers to have a recorded video call or in-person video interview with. In adding professionals to the mix, you're tapping into their growing communities for exposure, too—the foundation for influencer marketing. You can repurpose what is produced and create bite-sized chunks of valuable content that can take you through an entire season of mini-episodes. Another suggestion is to co-author articles together. Then you can share images, videos and posts talking about the article's content and driving traffic—think “upcycling” and you've done it!

Building a personal brand is a tricky feat because it isn't simply a business brand, it's more organic. Most professionals try to niche down so much that they forget to highlight the most strategic, unique traits. Others bite onto too many niches and fade into the noise. Use the strategies outlined above to really amplify your strategy. ■

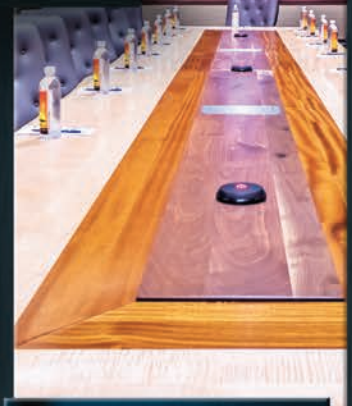
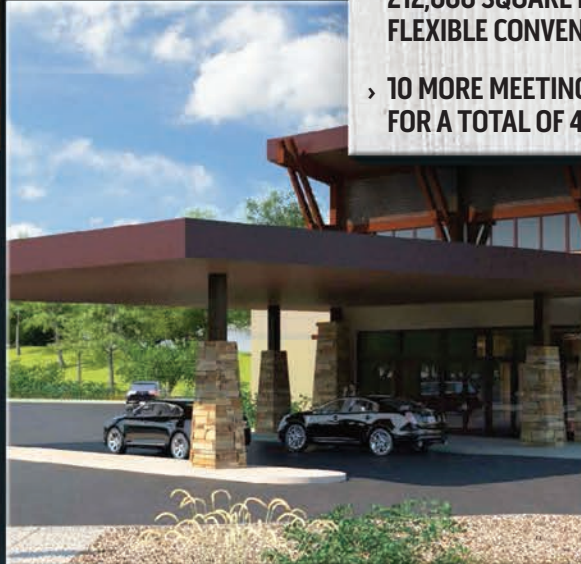
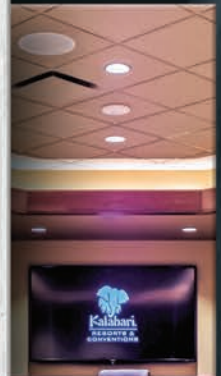
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Chantel Soumis is an inspirational advocate for the differently-abled community and top LinkedIn Creator with over 30k organic followers in one year. Chantel is also the Founder and Creative Director of Stardust Creative LLC, a brand agency focused on embracing differences through personal and corporate branding. She's spoken at VidCon as one of the first LinkedIn video creators as well as at international conferences in LA, London, Dallas, and more. Learn more at ChantelSoumis.com.



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Black Holes, Time Warps, and Storytelling for Associations

by Michael Neelsen and David Neelsen

In 1994, astrophysicist Kip Thorne wrote the book *Black Holes and Time Warps: Einstein's Outrageous Legacy*.

The title of the book sounds daunting. One would assume it to be filled with scientific theories and language that would surely alienate any readers without a degree in astronomy or cosmology. So, Mr. Thorne opened his first chapter with a story.

The story put the reader in the role of captain of a spacecraft commissioned with exploring the black hole called *Hades*. Your mission: study the black hole and radio back your findings.

As your spacecraft approaches the black hole, your sensors detect evidence of the hole's presence. "The atoms of gas that sparsely populate interstellar space, approximately one in each cubic centimeter, are being pulled by the hole's gravity. If something isn't done, your starship too will be sucked in."

Kip Thorne didn't decide to open his book with a story just because it's fun (though it is!). There is very deliberate purpose behind this. By opening with a story where the reader, as spaceship captain, is teetering on the brink of a black hole, he has put the audience in the position of needing to know how the story ends—how the captain maneuvers around the black hole. In essence, the reader is now asking for the science of black holes.

This is the essence of purposeful storytelling. By telling stories, we create a gap—a void—that the audience desperately wants to fill in, and the answer to their call—the thing that will satiate their desperation—is your data, features, messaging, facts, etc.

As leaders of associations, data to demonstrate value to your members is typically not in short supply—or it's available if we seek it. However, the data without providing the gap—that your association's story can fill, will leave your members wanting or uninterested.

In Thorne's book, the power of drama compels the audience to seek out how black holes work in order to find out how the story ends. Without the story, many readers would have a hard time just dryly learning the facts. The story gives the facts meaning—a place of momentary priority in their lives.

As professional storytellers, we spend a lot of time talking about the differences between traditional organizational communications, branding and storytelling. Sometimes it's easier to articulate what storytelling is not.

Storytelling is not:

- A list of features and benefits
- Product specs
- Data
- A mood
- A style
- A sequence of events
- A slice of life
- Your association's messaging

For association executives, storytelling is the art of making your association's data, features, benefits and messaging vital to the lives of your members. This is not a foofoo, soft or intangible thing. It's grounded in a series of straightforward, practical principles and human psychology.



You want your members to care about your message, your member benefits or your insights and industry data, right? Fair enough. Then ask yourself, “When in my day-to-day professional life do I crave information?”

Human beings seek out information when there is a gap of understanding, resources or knowledge that they need to fill. So, as the storytellers of your association, your job is to create that need—a carefully crafted absence of information that begs a solution.

In storytelling, you craft a narrative with a turning point that causes the audience to subconsciously ask for your information. So, what is a turning point?

World-renowned storytelling guru Robert McKee believes there are four components to a turning point:

- Surprise (“Wow! I didn’t expect that to happen!”)
- Curiosity (“Wait... why did that happen?”)
- Insight (“Ahh... that is why it happened. And here is how I can avoid this obstacle in the future.”)
- New Direction (“With this new information, I will take this new action moving forward to make sure I avoid this obstacle in the future.”)

BY TELLING STORIES, WE CREATE A GAP—A VOID—THAT THE AUDIENCE DESPERATELY WANTS TO FILL IN, AND THE ANSWER TO THEIR CALL—THE THING THAT WILL SATIATE THEIR DESPERATION—IS YOUR DATA, FEATURES, MESSAGING, FACTS, ETC.

If we revisit Kip Thorne’s short story, what if in the next moment the starship is sucked into the black hole and everybody on board dies? The reader would first experience surprise. “Whoa! I didn’t expect that to happen!”

The very next thought would be, “Why did that happen?”

And with that question the reader is right where Mr. Thorne wanted them. They are now asking for his scientific theory.

Storytelling in this context can be a major boon for your association’s communications and member relations. For how else do you get your members and prospective members to consciously ask for your information—the features and benefits your association provides? ■



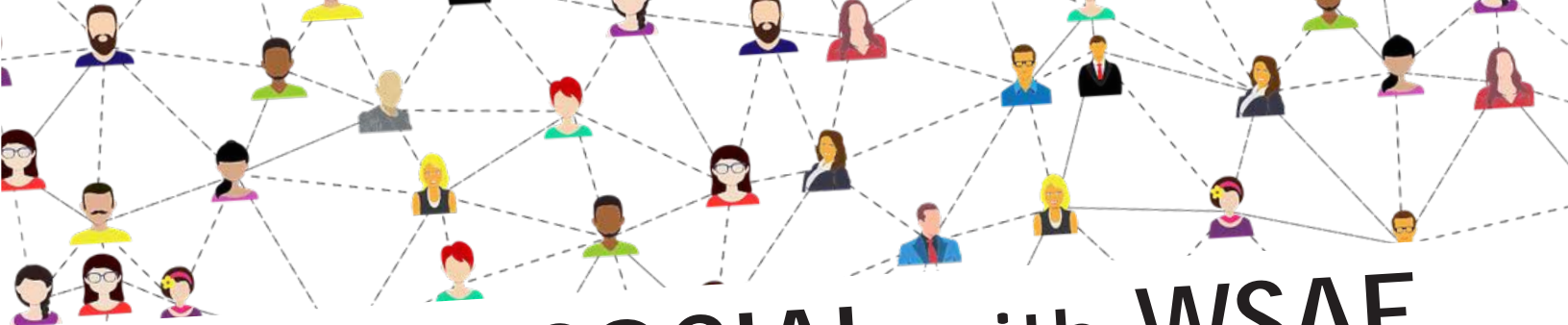
Michael Neelsen and David Neelsen are StoryFirst Media Co-Founders and Lead Storytellers. StoryFirst Media is a Storytelling Consultancy and Video Production Company based in Madison, WI. Contact them through their website at www.storyfirstmedia.com or via telephone (608) 286-3826.



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On your company website, maintain a partner or affiliation page and display hyperlinked logos to each organization you belong to

1. Include a summary of what WSAE is and why you belong to and support it.

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In-Person Member Visits Provide Basis for Membership Growth

Valuable insights more difficult to gain through digital communications

by Patrick Laws



Wisconsin Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (WAMIC) is a trade association representing 61 mutual insurance companies. Our companies have underwritten insurance for Wisconsin residents since as early as 1860. All our member companies are over a century old. So, it should come as no surprise that WAMIC has operated continuously for 106 years. During that century of operation, there have only been four executives of the association.

I served as Chair of the Board from 2013 to 2014. During that year we began the process to develop our strategic business plan. The process included a survey of the membership, reviewing the minutes of three years of Strategic Planning committee meetings and a full-day strategic planning retreat for the Board of Directors. The final plan was completed in 2015 and established 40 SMART goals for the association.

However, 2016 would prove to be a significant year for WAMIC. The third executive of the association retired. Little

THIS SINGLE QUESTION SUDDENLY SHIFTED THE FOCUS FROM THE ASSOCIATION TO OUR MEMBERS. I WAS NO LONGER VISITING TO PROMOTE WAMIC. INSTEAD, I WAS THERE TO HELP MY MEMBERS SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS.

did I know then I would ultimately be responsible for achieving the 40 goals laid out in our strategic business plan. One of those goals was for the association executive to visit each mutual member company. In the last three years, I have visited 56 of my 61 mutual members.

Looking back, I don't think any of us realized just how important that one goal would be for the association and our membership. It was, after all, just one of 40 goals. However, when an organization experiences as much change as ours did, it becomes almost imperative for the new executive to put his or her finger on the pulse of the members.

I started out the visits asking three questions:

1. What are we doing well?
2. What could we do better? and
3. What aren't we doing that we should be doing?

I had good intentions with those questions, but my members struggled to answer them. In retrospect, I think they hindered our conversations rather than facilitated them. After a few visits I settled on a broader and more direct approach:

What keeps you up at night?

This single question suddenly shifted the focus from the association to our members. I was no longer visiting to promote WAMIC. Instead, I was there to help my members solve their problems. That is, after all, what an association is supposed to do, isn't it?

The conversations became far more robust. Our members increasingly began to look to the association for help with their problems. As we were able to provide advice, support and resources, the members began to see more value in their membership. Attendance at our events has increased after years of decreases.

We live in an increasingly digital world where our primary communications strategies emphasize podcasts, webinars, eLearning, social media, apps, texting and email. Despite the diversity of communications methods and tools, we still seem to have an innate desire, perhaps even a need, to connect in-person. In my experience, there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings. Even digital conferencing tools fail to accurately capture the subtle nuances we experience when we sit across a table from each other and talk.

As for me, I have a few more companies left to visit. That doesn't mean I just check that goal off the list and move on. My Board and I fully understand the value of maintaining direct communications with our members.

Digital communication is a powerful and necessary tool for any organization in the 21st century, but it cannot, nor should it, ever replace personal contact. Ultimately, every association is about the members. Meeting with your members at their place of business sends a signal to them that they are important to you. They matter so much that emails and texts just aren't good enough. ■



Patrick Laws is President at Wisconsin Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (WAMIC) and is a WSAE member.

Bonus Membership Engagement Tip

by Patrick Laws

My counterpart in Illinois, Jackie Rakers, has a successful program for her membership that she has graciously allowed me to borrow.

Jackie presents each of her members with a certificate honoring their anniversaries every five years. She arranges to present the certificate either at their board meeting or their annual meeting. Jackie has a group photo taken as she presents the certificate. She then sends the photo with a press release back to the company. I think this is a fantastic way to honor our members while helping them to promote themselves within their communities. ■



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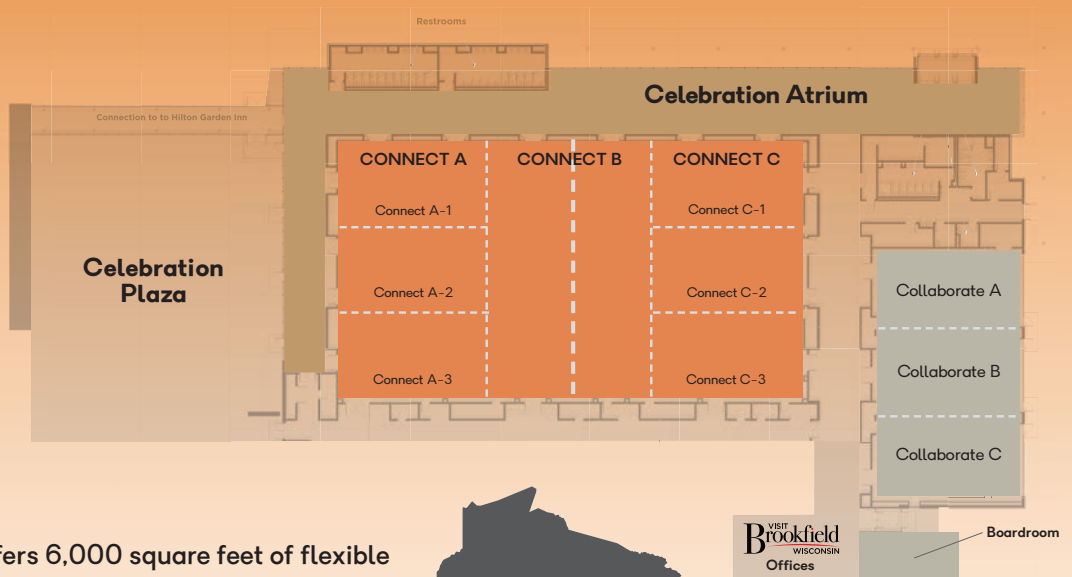
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Keeping Up with the Changing Association Industry

WSAE members address challenges and trends

Three WSAE member association executives weighed in on lessons learned, and speak to what may be in store for associations in the near future.

Featured executives:



Kathy Raab, CAE, CNAP
Executive Director
Metropolitan Builders Association



Brandon Scholz
President & CEO
Wisconsin Grocers Association



Dan Smith
President & CEO
Cooperative Network

What is something new you have learned in 2019?

K. Raab: Accepting a position 80 miles from home has forced me to better focus on time management and work/life balance priorities. Also, the power of local advocacy is stronger and more effective than I have ever experienced.

B. Scholz: I always have a concern about non-dues revenue and learned of a couple of programs in the CEO Roundtable that I had not heard before. That was worth the annual dues we pay!

D. Smith: While our members are from two states and multiple business sectors, they have much more in common than one would suspect. Specifically, finding talented workers, managing new technology and containing benefit program expenses are primary concerns. I am often asked about the challenges of serving such a diverse membership. In the past year, I have come to believe many of us have the same challenges keeping us awake at night.

What do you see as posing a challenge for associations in 2020 and beyond?

K. Raab: The need to embrace, not just incorporate, technology to better connect members and provide ROI on their time and monetary commitments to the association.

B. Scholz: In the retail grocery industry we are seeing a generational change not only with customers, but with the next generation of owners and operators. We need to understand how to reach out to them, on their level and work to instill a sense of need and commitment to the association that they may not have yet developed on their own.

D. Smith: Staying relevant in a constantly changing social, political and economic environment. We must adjust our programs and services to meet the challenges and opportunities our members are facing. Only by doing so can we provide a positive return on their investment as members.

What steps do you plan to take in order to better position yourself to face such a challenge?

K. Raab: I continuously challenge myself to learn alongside my younger colleagues and members.

B. Scholz: Deep-dive, one-on-one discussions with members in this category, industry surveys, and collaboration and discussion with Wisconsin-based associations and like-minded groups across the country.

D. Smith: I feel communication is the key to understanding. We have invested in a full-time Director of Communications, created new messaging platforms and will soon launch a new website. Our members need to hear from us and we need to hear from them. I want our members to know we are advocating for their success in the halls of government and in the public square. Ours is a membership organization and everything we do is designed to return value to our members. Change is the only constant we can count on and we must be engaged, active and committed to our principles in order to navigate the future. ■

Mentorships Allow Growth for Both Parties

Tips from both sides of the mentor relationship

by Jen Brydges and Emily Viles-Monari

It is said that mentorship is the key to career success for young professionals. Mentorship is a two-way street and is the key to career success for both the mentor and mentee as learning and growth should be constant.

From the mentor, Jen Brydges

I am fortunate to have had many life and work experiences, and my favorites are always doing something where I lift others up, help them achieve their goals and be a champion for their success. My first stint as a mentor was as an 8th grade math and language teacher in the 2002. I worked with teens who had received a bad rap for being difficult. After I made it known that they weren't going to shake me and that I was going to be there for them no matter what, they started to open up. I found that they weren't difficult, they were just in need of guidance and support. Those 8th graders taught me patience, as well as how to listen, how to be a better advocate, how to hold people accountable for doing what they said they would and how to have fun while getting the hard work done. Ultimately, they taught me what it meant to be a mentor.

For the last three years, I have been honored to be a mentor to an ambitious young professional who exemplifies a great mentee. If you're looking to be mentored, here are some things to consider:

Be ready, willing and able to grow personally and professionally. Mentorship should be a long-term relationship that doesn't just help you with a task or a project but focuses on growth.

Ask for what you need. Don't assume that your mentor will know what you're looking for or what you may need at any given time. Be willing to ask and then, be willing to receive.

Share your knowledge. Just because you're a mentee, doesn't mean you can't be a mentor. Be willing to share what you know with your mentor and give them feedback on their work. Growth is a two-way street. Additionally, use what you're learning in your mentorship relationship to mentor a peer or a younger colleague.

Take responsibility. Everyone makes mistakes. Everyone. But those that take responsibility for them are always poised to grow and learn.

Be vulnerable. As my favorite author, Brené Brown, notes "to be the person who we long to be—we must again be vulnerable. We must take off the armor, put down the weapons, show up, and let ourselves be seen."

Be passionate. Be excited to try and learn new things. If you are in a profession that you love and want to grow in, exude that. If you're looking for a new adventure, share the things you feel strongly about with your mentor so they can help get you to where you want to go.

THOSE 8TH GRADERS TAUGHT ME PATIENCE, AS WELL AS HOW TO LISTEN, HOW TO BE A BETTER ADVOCATE, HOW TO HOLD PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE FOR DOING WHAT THEY SAID THEY WOULD AND HOW TO HAVE FUN WHILE GETTING THE HARD WORK DONE. ULTIMATELY, THEY TAUGHT ME WHAT IT MEANT TO BE A MENTOR.



From the mentee, Emily Viles-Monari

Like Jen, I've had many life and work experiences and my favorites have always been when someone is willing to step up as my champion and invest time in my professional development.

If you're looking to become a mentor, consider:

Share your knowledge. Your mentee has reached out to you because they respect you and appreciate your industry knowledge, the workforce and maybe even life (I believe a great mentorship transcends your career). Mentees look for mentors who are passionate about their career and eager to share their knowledge.

Make yourself accessible. While mentees understand that you are extremely busy, there is nothing more disheartening than being ghosted or pushed off by a mentor when you reach out for guidance or feedback. Being a good mentor is being available.

Provide honest feedback. A good mentee should be able to take responsibility and constructive criticism. A good mentor knows how to deliver feedback that is direct, honest and constructive. Ultimately, they are willing to give some tough love when it is needed.

Be a cheerleader and champion. Mentees want a mentor who is willing to invest in them and enjoy being part of their success. Be willing to cheer them on and support them through major career achievements, adjustments and growth.

If they are acknowledged for their work (i.e., an award or being asked to give presentation), go to that event. Period. Your mentee will want to share this success with you.

Be vulnerable. I have now stolen two points from Jen, but as she aptly puts, mentorship is a two-way street. I think that one of the biggest keys to a successful mentorship is chemistry. Be vulnerable with your mentee so that they can know you for who you are, and they should return the favor.

The best mentorships happen organically, when both mentor and mentee show up for each other and are honest and vulnerable with one another. The wonderful thing about mentorship is that both parties lift each other up and support each other as they each reach for new heights, professionally and personally. ■



Jen Brydges is an Account Executive at AMPED Association Management and is a WSAE member.



Emily Viles-Monari is Meetings Technology Manager at AMPED Association Management and is a WSAE member.

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The True Secret to Keeping the Best

by Jack Altschuler

The Challenge

At every *Fully Alive Leadership* keynote and workshop I hear leaders complain about the difficulty of finding good people to fill their job openings. There's a skills gap, they tell me. The right people just aren't knocking on their doors.

There's a reason that highly desired workers aren't knocking on their doors, or on yours, either: it's that they don't have to. In this full-employment economy, workers are being courted by organizations who are poaching talent from other associations. Seen from the other side, you are at risk of losing your best people to talent competitors. In fact, your competitors for talent are reaching out to your best people right now.

On top of that, employees are leaving in greater numbers. Voluntary employee departures are double what they were in 2010.¹ In exit interviews, 44% tell their boss they're leaving for more money. However, in 3rd party interviews they 'fess up and more money is cited in only 9% of cases.² Perhaps these people have other motivations for leaving, needs that aren't being met.

The good news is that HR studies lay before us the one key thing—*the true secret*—that is the biggest driver to help you attract and keep your best people: better pay.³

But wait just a second: didn't those 3rd party interviews establish that it's not just about money?

Another study says it's the culture of your organization that matters most⁴.

YOU HAVE TO LEARN WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO [STAFF] AND DELIVER IT. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIGURE THAT OUT, AND IT DOESN'T COME FROM AN HR STUDY. YOU HAVE TO ASK THEM.

Yet another study says it's new and interesting challenges.⁵

The truth is that it really isn't as simple as suggested by claims of *the true secret* because there isn't just one thing and it isn't a secret.

It's complicated

Your A-players are, by definition, very hard to replace, so you truly want them to stay. But your high performers won't stay any longer than necessary if they can't get the leadership they need, so you have to provide that leadership.

The piece of leadership that will serve you best is to recognize that your people are human beings and they want to be treated as such. They are three-dimensional and complex and need you to deal with them with that understanding. That translates to you caring enough to see them as whole human beings.

Yes, you do have to pay wages and benefits that are better than competitive. That's just the ante to be in the game of attracting and keeping the best people. It takes more than that.



1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018.

2 Why Are Workers Quitting Their Jobs in record Numbers? By Roy Maurer for SHRM, December 12, 2018.

3 Better Pay is Top Reason Workers Are Quitting Jobs, by Dana Wilkie for SHRM, January 18, 2018.

4 Culture Is What motivates and Retains Talented Employees, by Betty Thompson for SHRMBlog, November 12, 2018.

5 Job Switchers Seek New Challenges Above All, by Roy Maurer for SHRM, January 30, 2017

You have to learn what's important to them and deliver it. There's only one way to figure that out, and it doesn't come from an HR study. You have to ask them. Here are some ideas for that:

- Ask about their professional aspirations.
- Ask them what they want to tackle next.
- Ask what they need in order to do their best work.
- Find out about their lives beyond your walls.
- Ask them about their ideas for improvement in your association.

About that last point—their hands are on things yours aren't on, so they may know things that you can't know. They just might have some really good ideas. Besides, asking what they think says that you respect them. People like to be respected.

What will you do?

It's about staff members getting the message that you care enough about them to focus on them and their welfare.

Key Point: If you want your people to invest in you, first you have to invest in them.

In an HR study about what's most motivating to Millennials, one respondent captured perfectly a critical need

of an entire generation. She wrote, "I want my boss to take an interest in my professional development."⁶ Could it be any plainer?

Step up your efforts to get to know your people and what's important to them. Never imagine that they think the same way you do, because they aren't you. That means that you really don't know what's important to them.

So, ask. Treat them as they want to be treated.

That's as close to *the true secret* as you can get. ■

6 Gen Y: Part II – Gen Y Opinions and Perspectives on Workplace Culture and Their Top Employers of Choice. CareerEdge Organization, 2010



Jack Altschuler is the Chief Alive Officer of Fully Alive Leadership. He delivers keynote presentations and workshops focused on employee engagement and the timely topic of attracting and keeping your best people. He can be contacted via email at Jack@FullyAliveLeadership.com or through his website at www.FullyAliveLeadership.com.

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Tap into the Full Potential of Your Online Conference Materials

by Tracy Grzybowski

Online content of all kinds is more prevalent and important than ever before because the way we consume information is changing. And that has impacted how associations provide content to attendees of their annual meetings. Your attendees now expect online access to content, for instance, and associations now know that in order to meet the needs of their members, they must deliver online conference content in addition to printed materials.

Too often, though, digital delivery is thought of as merely an electronic version of printed materials. But there is an opportunity to do much more. Online content doesn't have to be redundant with its printed counterpart. Viewing content is only the beginning of what digital tools can do to add value for your attendees, sponsors and association.

Putting conference content online can take many forms, from a list of PDFs on a page of your association's main website to a digital archive of all content—not just conference materials, but also publications, directories and more.

For our purposes, the term 'online conference materials' refers to content from an association's annual meeting, available on an organized, searchable website.

Engaging attendees – Before

Attendee engagement is more than a conference buzzword, and it probably always has been for you. An association's ultimate goal for its annual meeting is to foster an atmosphere of learning and enjoyment, which contributes to member retention and regular attendance at future meetings.

When done right, engagement begins long before the attendees arrive at the meeting venue. Online content can play an important role in building excitement before the conference, setting the stage for a better on-site experience.

How can online conference materials help you achieve better engagement? Here are a few ideas:

Entice people to register for the annual meeting. Members who haven't decided whether to attend your annual meeting can look at conference materials online to get a clear idea of the information that will be presented. The opportunity to read abstracts and handouts ahead of time may whet the appetites of potential attendees more than a simple save-the-date email.

Offer snippets of content instead of just a short description. When considering how they'll spend their time at the conference, attendees need more than a single-paragraph description of a session. Include an excerpt of the abstract or presentation to give them a better idea of what to expect.

Send an exclusive video of the keynote speaker to early-bird registrants. Do you wish more attendees registered early? Most meeting planners do. Besides offering a price break, give an extra incentive to respond quickly—an exclusive video of the keynote speaker giving a similar presentation to the one they'll see at your annual meeting.

Ask session speakers to record a 30-second promo video to boost excitement. To build excitement for all potential attendees, ask your session speakers to supply a short video of content their presentation will cover. Speakers should welcome the chance to boost interest in their session.

Engaging attendees – During

It's important to keep attendee satisfaction high once they arrive at the conference. If they don't have a good experience on-site, they're less likely to return in the future, and your association depends on an active membership and the non-dues revenue that comes with it.

Keep these considerations in mind to engage attendees using online content during the conference:

Help your attendees come prepared. Your attendees will get more out of a session if they come ready to participate in a discussion. Encourage them to access materials ahead of time to familiarize themselves with the content. Taking the opportunity to digest new concepts beforehand helps to cement the learning when it's presented in the session.

Give access to materials on-site. Attendees want to be able to refer to handouts during an annual meeting, using their mobile devices. During a session, they can look up the abstract that's being presented. If a speaker runs out of paper handouts, an attendee is just a few taps away from that information.

Not all experiences with online content is positive, however. When members view online conference materials before or after a conference, they often access the content on a desktop or laptop. Once they arrive at the venue, the

device of choice is usually a smartphone or a tablet, and sometimes that means the text is hard to read and the site is difficult to navigate.

A website built with responsive design makes it easier to access and read the same content on a smaller device. Keep this in mind as you work towards putting your content online. Attendees want to bring conference materials with them in whatever format they prefer—smartphone, tablet or laptop—without sacrificing usability.

Enable note-taking. It's not just for paper anymore! Many content platforms offer note-taking capabilities. When attendees take advantage of this tool, they can turn online conference materials into their own personal reference guide, full of information that's helpful and relevant to them.

Engaging attendees – After

The new concepts attendees learn at the conference shouldn't be left at the venue, and neither should the content. Online access to materials keeps the content fresh in attendees' minds, long after they have returned to the office.

Give attendees the opportunity to take a deeper dive. To take the information they learned at a conference from just an interesting discussion point to a practice they can incorporate in their daily work, most people need to review the content multiple times. Online conference materials make subsequent access quick and easy.

Robust search capabilities help attendees find the presentations they want to revisit. Keyword search is a good place to start, but there are more sophisticated options to explore: full-text and faceted.

Full-text search combs through more than simply the keywords and other information assigned to the page—it takes a comprehensive look at the entire document. If the user remembers a specific term that a speaker presented, a full-text search can find it in the abstract or paper.

Faceted search allows users to winnow down the results by category, track or other important factors. By narrowing the pool of papers that fit certain criteria, attendees can find the information they need.

Online conference materials give attendees the opportunity to take a second look at a presentation they saw and want to learn more about, as well as read papers from sessions they couldn't attend. With the benefit of better search capabilities, reviewing the material is easier and more convenient.

Encourage members to build a personal library. Many members display—and sometimes refer to—printed proceedings from years past on their office bookshelves. Oth-

ers see value in an online version of this library, with some additional benefits, including greater portability and more comprehensive search.

Attendees can use online conference materials to build a personal library of association content that's most relevant to them, even from sessions they weren't able to attend at the conference. When note-taking is available, they can do even more to make the content their own.

Your association may decide to take the next step with online content—creating a complete digital archive of all past, current and future conference content. You can continue to leverage the great content from previous conferences—it doesn't have to die when the meeting is over. A digital archive preserves the long-term value of this educational content.

Because the content is already organized and set up in an online content hub, the transition to a digital archive is less cumbersome than it is when starting from print or a USB.

Increase visibility

Increasing your visibility online is an important component of expanding your association's reach. Many potential members begin looking for a professional resource through an online search engine. Is your association well represented online? How can your online conference materials help your association improve its ranking so you can reach more members of the industry?

Make it easier to find your association content online. Putting conference materials online increases your search engine optimization (SEO). In other words, it's easier for professionals in your industry to find your associa-

AN ASSOCIATION'S ULTIMATE GOAL FOR ITS ANNUAL MEETING IS TO FOSTER AN ATMOSPHERE OF LEARNING AND ENJOYMENT, WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO MEMBER RETENTION AND REGULAR ATTENDANCE AT FUTURE MEETINGS.



tion content in a general online search when your conference materials are posted online. This is true even if those materials are restricted to members only. Content that requires credentials or payment to view can still be indexed by search engines.

Incorporate sharing to build a professional community. Growing a professional community is often part of an association's mission, and networking is often cited as a top reason to attend a conference by attendees. Clearly, fostering connection among like-minded people is important to an association's identity.

We live in a world made larger by technological advances. Communities exist outside of a physical space, and sharing information with colleagues can happen online even more easily than it does in person.

Social media has contributed to this larger professional community, and your members may already be sharing association content with their colleagues. Encourage them to do so by incorporating sharing tools, like a "forward to a friend" button in your emails and social widgets on your website so members can instantly post to LinkedIn and Twitter. Using email or social media to connect professionals with high-quality, exclusive content can earn your association not just increased visibility, but potentially additional members as well.

Promote other programs. Collaborate with other departments in your association—training, publications and membership benefits, for example—and use your online conference materials to promote their initiatives. Attendees make good use of the site before, during and after the annual meeting, but conference content doesn't have to be the only information shared on the website.

Advertise a training course on the site, complete with a coupon code for a registration discount. Promote the latest issues of the journal or ask members to contact the association with any changes in contact information for an upcoming version of the member directory. The possibilities are endless. Reach out to other association staff to make the most of your time in front of members (who are in front of their computers).

Manage access to online association content. Some associations prefer to keep their high-quality, exclusive content under wraps, while others see it as their mission to share the information with the intellectual community at large. Whether your association chooses to go with either of those options or something in between, there are many ways to help you meet your goals.

These three options both keep your online content safe and also increase your association's reach.

1. **Digital rights management (DRM)**

- **What it is:** DRM is a method of restricting access to copyrighted digital materials.

- **How it works:** DRM assigns control of the use of digital content to a computer program—not an individual user.
- **How to use it:** DRM offers a solid safeguard against unauthorized use. To lock down content tightly, go with DRM.

2. **Watermarking**

- **What it is:** Watermarking stamps a digital file with copyright information, plus date, time, and username.
- **How it works:** Content remains visible underneath the faint stamp, but it's clear that the file was intended for just one user.
- **How to use it:** Watermarking is a compromise between DRM and no protection at all. Use it for protection with little impact on usability.

3. **Subscription management**

- **What it is:** Users receive access to content and sign in to an online content hub to view it.
- **How it works:** Access is typically included in the price of registration to a meeting or membership. Associations can also charge for access to content by non-attendees.
- **How to use it:** Generate non-dues revenue by offering access to association content—conference, training and/or publications.

Track and measure

The more data you have, the better you're able to make well-informed decisions for the future. Online sites incorporate analytics tracking, which gives you the opportunity to monitor key metrics, such as clicks, views and downloads.

Armed with this information, you can steer the planning committee towards topics that attendees find most interesting. Say a particular session had lower-than-expected attendance at the conference, but the highest number of abstract downloads among the entire pool of content available. The head-count from the conference doesn't tell the whole story—turns out, many people were interested. If you have both metrics available, you understand the impact that the topic had on attendees.

Conclusion

People are living more and more of their lives online these days, and your association's annual meeting is just one more example. This is a great opportunity to get in front of your members more often and engage them more fully. Your association also benefits from the increased use of online conference content to increase its visibility.

That's why it's important to include digital delivery in your overall conference content strategy. In this information age, online access to materials is considered not just a nice-to-have, but an essential. To compete with free, readily available resources available to professionals in your field, your association needs to set itself apart with conference content that's not just exclusive and thoroughly vetted, but also convenient to access online.

To make the most of your online conference materials, leverage them throughout your annual meeting's entire lifespan—before, during and after. Increase the visibility of your association by making creative use of your online conference materials to build membership and cross-promote other programs. Consider selling subscriptions to your event content to generate non-dues revenue. When you consider a comprehensive digital strategy, online conference materials will help you meet your conference objectives and drive your association's mission. ■



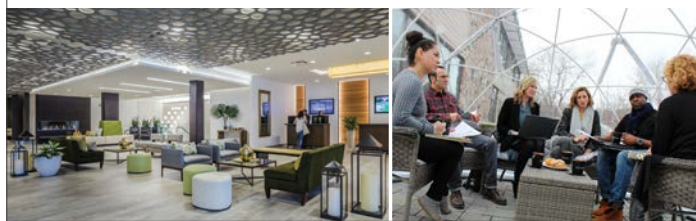
Tracy Grzybowski is Director of Marketing at Omnipress, a WSAE member. Omnipress conference content services give meeting planners a streamlined experience from start to finish. More info: www.omnipress.com.



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Ashtin Neuschaefer, CAE

Director of Administration, Executive Director, Inc

How did you end up working in associations?

Like many association professionals, I fell into this career after a few other careers in completely different fields. Thankfully, I had friends at EDI. They have always enjoyed what they do, and encouraged me to consider a career in associations, as well.

What are some of your professional strengths?

My strengths include communication, listening and coaching. I also have the ability to see and work within the big picture, while helping others consider big-picture factors that others may not easily see.

Why did you decide to pursue your CAE?

I'm a huge advocate of lifelong learning, so this naturally fits with that aspect of my personality. I also hope to find myself in the C-Suite one day. This feels like an excellent way to prepare for that role and help prove my readiness.

What does achieving your CAE mean to you?

Relief! All joking aside, it makes me feel closer to the association executive community and helps build my confidence as I prepare for someday holding a position in the C-Suite.

Tell us a little bit about your current position, and what aspects of it you enjoy the most.

My current role is Director of Administration with the Scoliosis Research Society. In this role, I work closely with our leadership and Executive Director on the governance of the Society, while also managing several of our programs and initiatives. I really enjoy the governance and

CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN PREP SESSIONS THAT ARE SPECIFICALLY GEARED TOWARDS THE CAE TEST. I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT IF I HADN'T DONE THE TWO PREP COURSES, I WOULD NOT HAVE TRULY BEEN PREPARED TO PASS THE TEST, NOR WOULD I FEEL I TRULY EMBODY THE KNOWLEDGE OF A CAE.

leadership that comes with my role, as well as the ability to have a grasp on the Society as a whole. I am also really lucky to work for a phenomenal Society that has allowed me to build wonderful professional relationships with individuals not in association management.

What is something you hope to learn from WSAE/get out of your WSAE membership in the next 12 months?

First and foremost, I hope to get more involved. I've spent a lot of time focusing on CAE, building my position with my society and my personal life, but now it's time to focus on being more involved in the greater association world. I also look forward to the future ethics training so I can cross that off my renewal checklist.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work, in your spare time?

I spend a lot of time chasing a very active three-year-old around. It's some of the most fun times of my day. The developmental changes that they go through at this age are incredible to witness.

What advice do you have for a colleague considering studying for their CAE?

Take a long hard look at why you want to get your CAE. It is a process that you need to be fully invested in. Once you've made that decision, outline a plan to obtain your credits. In my opinion, it is perhaps most important to consider participating in prep sessions that are specifically geared towards the CAE test (for example, what is available through Michigan Society of Association Executives). I can honestly say that if I hadn't done the two prep courses, I would not have truly been prepared to pass the test, nor would I feel I truly embody the knowledge of a CAE. ■

IOM Winter Institute Scholarships Available

WSAE is proud to continue our partnership with Institute for Organization Management, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's professional development program for non-profit executives, and offer four \$500 partial tuition scholarships to one of Institute's 2020 sites. The four scholarships, available to our members, will be awarded to students attending Institute for the first time to assist with enrollment fees and cannot be combined with any other Institute scholarships. Please note, this can be combined with the Premier Investor Discount (PID) and/or Group Rate.

For almost 100 years, Institute has educated association, chamber and other nonprofit leaders across the country through its national program, highly rated curriculum and high-caliber instructors. Thousands of executives have attended Institute sites across the country to strengthen their management skills, learn industry best practices, and gain a broad national per-

spective from peers. Institute has helped them build stronger organizations, become stronger business advocates, and better serve their members. In addition, you will earn points towards your CCE or CAE as Institute's curriculum is directly tied to the bodies of knowledge of both industry certifications.

Upon completion of the Institute program, graduates receive the IOM recognition which allows them to use the letters "IOM" in public mention and professional correspondence. The IOM recognition signifies the completion of 96 hours of course instruction in nonprofit management and commitment to the industry.

If you are interested in this scholarship opportunity, contact Michelle Czosek, at mczoek@wsae.org by **November 15, 2020**. For more information about Institute's curriculum, sites and dates, visit the Institute website (<https://institute.uschamber.com/>). ■

CAE Online Preparation Courses Available

WSAE, through partnership with the Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE), is offering CAE preparation courses that incorporate study guides, reading comprehension questions, flashcards and practice tests. With three different courses, there is an option to fit everyone.

Options available:

- **Full Course.** Ideal for individuals new to the CAE.
- **Concentrated.** Ideal for ASAE Immersion Program participants or those that have started the CAE process.
- **Cram Session.** Ideal for individuals that have previously taken the course or exam.

In addition to CAE prep courses, MSAE also offers a virtual prep course to prepare for the CMP examination. MSAE is offering their Member Rate to WSAE members, which represents a \$100 savings. Also, please ensure that you notify MSAE of your WSAE membership—WSAE receives 10%! Register online at www.msae.org or contact MSAE at (517) 332-6723. ■



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The Big Dance: Meetings Contracts that Make you Look Like a Hero

July 25, 2019
Hilton Garden Inn Madison ■ Sun Prairie

In July, WSAE held its inaugural mid-year education program with speaker Janeé Pelletier, MBA, CMP, DES. Janeé presented valuable information and tried-and-true tips for negotiating contracts. It was an energetic and highly interactive morning. Almost 70 association professionals attended. ■



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Impact Association Management welcomes the National Plant Board

Impact Association Management (Impact) is excited to announce the signing of the National Plant Board (NPB) as their newest client.

"After an extensive search the NPB chose Impact to manage our organization based on their flexibility, use of technology and ability to connect with our culture. The NPB is looking forward to working with Impact to tap into their expertise while keeping us organized and able to quickly respond to our constituents," shares NPB's President, Ann Gibbs. ■



Jen Brydges named one of forty under 40

Jen Brydges is a 2019 recipient of the prestigious Forty Under 40 Award from Association Forum of Chicago and USAE Weekly Newspaper.

As an association executive with AMPED Association Management, Brydges is the managing director for the Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ACTRIMS), associate managing director for the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) and executive director of the Society for Research on Adolescence. She also leads consulting and strategic planning sessions for a variety of associations and organizations.

Additionally, Brydges serves on the boards of the Junior League of Madison and the Madison Area Down Syndrome Society, and is a former elected official for the Rock County Board of Supervisors. Her volunteer service extends throughout the community: the Junior League of Madison's All Dressed Up program; Cherokee Middle School Partnership Program; Ronald McDonald House dinner program; Youth Leadership programming; MADSS: World Down Syndrome Day programming; Parent Mentor for the Down Syndrome Awareness Walk committee; Parent Advocate for the National Down Syndrome Society; and a contributing writer to Madison Mom's Blog. She is also a graduate of the Leadership Greater Madison civic leadership program.

The Forty Under 40 Award is given to 40 accomplished association or non-profit professionals who are under the age of 40, demonstrate high potential for continued success in leadership roles and exhibit a strong passion for - and commitment to - the association management and nonprofit industries.

Brydges and her fellow recipients will receive their awards at a private ceremony in Chicago on December 16, 2019. Learn more about the Forty Under 40 Awards at <https://www.associationforum.org/aboutaf/fortyunder40>. ■

AMPED Association Management selected to manage new clients

AMPED Association Management, an accredited full-service association management company with offices in Middleton, WI; Metro Washington, DC; and Glenwood Springs, CO, has been selected by APTA Geriatrics to manage their operations.

APTA Geriatrics is one of the largest sections of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), with over 5,500 members dedicated to the field of geriatric therapy and the empowerment of adults to move, engage and live well.

AMPED's Christina McCoy, CAE will serve as Executive Director for APTA Geriatrics.

APTA Geriatrics President Greg Hartley, PT, DPT said he is excited to be working with AMPED. "AMPED brings a diverse, energetic and experienced staff devoted to association management. Their expertise will help APTA Geriatrics improve its efficiencies and its reach. We are looking forward to this change, our growth and a rewarding member experience."

AMPED has also been selected by Leadership California to manage their operations. Leadership California, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) organization, boasts a network of more than 1,700 women leaders and more than 3,000 supporters dedicated to advancing the leadership role of women in California.

"As a company owned and managed primarily by women, we are excited for this opportunity to utilize our extensive experience and past success in support of other women leaders," said AMPED President and Owner Lynda J. Patterson, FASAE, CAE. "With three AMPED offices and staff around the country, we have consistently proven our ability to manage clients regardless of where our talented team members are physically located."

"We're excited to work alongside Dr. Margie Wheeler to help Leadership California meet and exceed its mission of increasing the representation and influence of diverse women leaders across California and beyond," Patterson added.

Leadership California President Dr. Margie Wheeler agreed that AMPED is ideally positioned to help her organization grow. "AMPED will help Leadership California expand its support, programming and influence on behalf of our impressive network of women leaders," she said. ■

Brag a little bit!

Let us help spread your good news - Send your news to Kristin at kmcguine@wsae.org, and we will include it in future issues of *VantagePoint* magazine. Please note that there is no additional cost to this promotion - It is included as a benefit of your WSAE membership. ■

As of September 15, 2019

"Destination Madison Awards" celebrate hospitality and tourism excellence in Dane County

Destination Madison hosted more than 200 of Dane County's top hospitality professionals and their supporters to honor the men and women whose hard work provides visitors with an outstanding Madison experience. Destination Madison hosted the annual Destination Madison Awards (DMAs) to celebrate the greater Madison area's tourism successes as well as those people and businesses who play a vital role in the hospitality and tourism industry.

"Our organization works hard to bring meetings, events and individuals to Madison all year round, but it is the extraordinary efforts of the city's hospitality organizations and individuals that result in exceptional visitor experiences," remarked Deb Archer, President and CEO of Destination Madison. "The people that work in our restaurants, hotels, museums and attractions elevate Madison into a stronger community that visitors rave about and return to."

In 2018, visitors spent more than \$1.3 billion in Dane County. That money supported more than 22,000 local people working in jobs related to tourism or the hospitality industry. ■



Dane County's top hospitality and tourism professionals were honored at the Destination Madison Awards on Tuesday, June 25. From left to right: Julianne Lind (Sales & Events Manager at The Madison Club - Rising Star Award), Carolyn Kosabucki (Hospitality Management Student at Madison College - Rising Star Student Award), Aureliano Montes (General Manager at Canteen - Front Line Service Award), Rita Kelliher (Retired President, Madison Festivals, Inc. - Distinguished Achievement Award), Kevin Henry (CEO of Food Fight Restaurant Group - Shining Star Award for organizations), Musab Naji (Chief Engineer at Hampton Inn of Madison - East Towne Mall - Behind the Scenes Service Award), Roberta Sladky (Director of Olbrich Botanical Gardens - Shining Star Award for organizations), Deb Archer (President and CEO of Destination Madison); Photo credit: Focal Flame Photography

- Derek Allen**, Associated General Contractors of Wisconsin
- Amanda Armitage**, Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- Casey Ausloos**, Green Bay Packers
- Bruce Barchus**, Wisconsin REALTORS Association
- Amanda Bates**, Wisconsin EMS Association
- Marilyne Bouteiller**, St. James Hotel
- Alicia Buttchen**, First Business Bank
- Pat Cavanaugh**, Green Bay Packers
- Justus Collins**, Omnipress
- Alan DeYoung**, Wisconsin EMS Association
- Angie Diedrich**, Wisconsin Housing Alliance
- Anna Douangphachanh, CMP**, Executive Director, Inc
- April Egloff**, Teneo Hospitality Group
- Sarah Gibson, CSP**, National Speakers Association of Wisconsin
- Mark Grapentine**, Wisconsin Hospital Association
- Darcy Griswold**, Menomonee Falls Hotel
- Tina Hallis, PhD**, National Speakers Association of Wisconsin
- Angela Jellum**, Hotel Northland
- Brittany Korth**, Visit Milwaukee
- Terry Kotsakis**, First Business Bank
- Heather Lesko**, Executive Director, Inc
- Cheri Neal, MM, ACC**, National Speakers Association of Wisconsin
- Jenna Nelson**, Crowne Plaza Milwaukee West
- Allie Oakley**, Executive Director, Inc
- Keri Paige**, Great Wolf Lodge
- Diana Pathammavong**, Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants
- Julie Patten**, Wisconsin Housing Alliance
- Kim Preston**, First Business Bank
- Tera A. Sagen**, The Ingleside Hotel
- Leslie Sargent**, Tourism Toronto
- Amalia Schroeder**, Plumbing Mechanical Sheet Metal Contractors' Alliance
- Lane Schwartz**, Executive Director, Inc
- Adam Theisen**, Wisconsin EMS Association
- Rebecca Tripp**, Executive Director, Inc
- Derrick Van Mell**, The Center for Management Terms and Practices
- Melissa Versnik**, The Payroll Company
- Kirsten Lee Villegas**, Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association
- Anette Wisniewski**, Wisconsin EMS Association
- Julie Wood, MS**, National Speakers Association of Wisconsin
- Susan Young, MSA**, National Speakers Association of Wisconsin



Keeping It Simple

by Michelle Czosek, CAE



Last week I read an article on association membership that contained a direct quote from a member of one association that said: *“My company’s growth in the last ten years is a direct result of its participation in this association. The people I met at my first meeting in 2009 are considered friends today. Some have become customers, but many others have helped me network and grow my business in ways that I couldn’t do myself.”*

When I read this quote, it struck me that it sums up what every association executive director wants to hear about the organization they serve. Substitute the word association in a couple of places and it sums up what I hope our members will say about WSAE. Every day the other WSAE staff members and I look for and discuss ways that we can directly impact the way we serve our members that will, in turn, impact the way you serve your members and grow your organizations.

I recently attended an event called Solutions Day put on by .orgCommunity which was comprised of sessions led by both association executives and industry supplier partners. Quality education combined with networking opportunities will grow relationships with my peers and lead to discussion and solutions for our members. The organizers challenged us to think about what we would do differently *tomorrow* as a result of what was learned at the event. It helped me focus on what I heard that I could take back and apply directly to WSAE.

One presentation that hit home focused on making things simple for our customers. There was discussion of improving the purchase pathway for customers and simplifying customer decisions to increase the likelihood of a purchase. In order to do this, there needs to be some rethinking of strategies, capabilities and customer expectations. There are so many companies that we can look to for models of simplicity—think Costco, Netflix, Amazon—to imitate. When I think of these companies, and I’ve spent my fair share of both time and dollars with all three, it really does hit home that my interaction with them is one thing—simple.

I took pictures of two quotes that I’ll refer to as reminders when things seem to be getting a little more complicated than they need to be.

“Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it’s worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.”

—Steve Jobs

“If you have more than three priorities, you have no priorities.”

When I review the new WSAE strategic plan, I appreciate the simplicity of a plan that can be boiled down to a one-page overview that shows exactly what WSAE hopes to achieve as we move forward. The three areas of membership growth, CEO influence and education will be our focus through the year 2022. I appreciate the foresight of the board to know that focusing on too many things will not allow the organization to move forward in a thoughtful manner.

With another WSAE Summit wrapping up in a few weeks, it’s time to focus on 2020 and a new WSAE membership year. As I say every year, I hope when you receive your dues renewal, you’ll take a moment to reflect on what you’ve received from your membership in WSAE as well as what you’ve given back.

WSAE is your organization so let us know what you want to see in 2020 and what we can provide that will give you even more return on your membership investment. Consider not only what you need from us, but how you can get engaged in 2020.

Please feel free to contact me or any WSAE staff member with questions or suggestions. We’d love to hear from you! ■

Michelle

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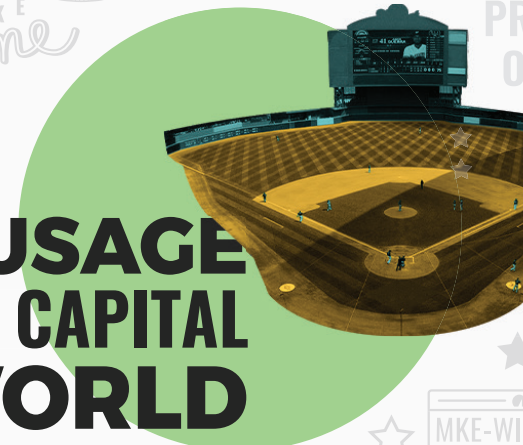
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