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About VantagePoint

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Improving Professionalism

by Michael Theo, CAE

A big part of our jobs as association executives is to help improve the professionalism of our members. Indeed, most of our efforts in the areas of advocacy, education, networking, communications, branding and legal activities are geared toward improving, protecting or promoting member professionalism. Ultimately, the public, consumers and clients our members serve will benefit even more.

One definition of professionalism is *the skill, good judgment and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well.* One author provided the following 10 characteristics of professionalism, which he defined as *how you conduct yourself during your business affairs.* His characteristics included: appearance, demeanor, reliability, competence, ethics, poise, etiquette, correspondences, organizational skills and accountability.

Embedded in this list, and in other definitions of professionalism, are two different but related concepts. One concept, or bucket of issues, is competency. This concept involves the notion of learning and competently performing professional duties. The reverse of this is incompetent practice. Associations spend a great deal of time, not to mention human and financial resources, working with lawmakers and regulators to create state statutes and administrative rules and regulations, as well as to create and enforce industry-specific and association-enforced codes of ethics, all with the purpose to try to improve competent practice of their members' profession.

The second bucket relates not to professional competency but to professional courtesy. This grouping entails the concepts of good manners, politeness and civility, both between members and between members and their customers and clients. While professional courtesy is often as important as professional competency, as associations, we usually spend much more time on the former versus what we spend on the latter. Maybe that should change.

I've been thinking about this subject quite a bit lately, as the leadership of one organization I know has placed a premium on researching how to improve the professionalism of its members. In blue-skying ideas for ways to improve professionalism, members not only voiced support for improving competency through additional state laws and administrative regulations, but also for a wide variety of other ideas, including association-managed education campaigns over multiple years, additional programming that highlights the difference between incompetent, unethical and discourteous practices, and enhancing processes by which both consumers and members can register complaints and seek improvements.

Another association that I'm familiar with, the National Association of REALTORS (NAR), has also been discussing how to enhance professionalism among its membership. After years of discussion and planning, they've come up with a novel concept that might be worth watching. NAR has started a voluntary program to improve professionalism called *Commitment to Excellence*. The program begins with an online self-assess-

Chair's message, continued on page 5

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Calendar of Events

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

Madison CEO Roundtable
July 17
American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry
Madison

Concerts on the Square Social
July 18
Capitol lawn
Madison

ASAE Annual Meeting and Expo
August 18 - 21
Chicago

Wisconsin Reception at ASAE
August 20
Chicago

Executive Exchange
September 12 - 13
Ironworks Hotel
Beloit

Association 101
an Association Forum program
October 3
Milwaukee

2018 Summit
October 29 - 30
Overture Center
Madison

Webinar SERIES

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Match Strategic Planning to Your Budget

by Martin Tirado, CAE

If you've worked in association management for any length of time, at some point you will either lead or be a participant in strategic planning. Despite its challenges and perceived faults, strategic planning is an important process for any organization. You need a plan in place to know where you are going, and strategic planning gives a board of directors and staff leaders the time and energy to get away from some of the oversight and routine business items and focus entirely on strategy. The more the board focuses on strategy, the better.

As a leader in your association's professional staff, does this sound familiar: your well-planned strategic planning meeting turns into a massive shopping list that would leave even the most devout Black Friday shopper envious? The board of directors leaves the strategy meeting with a sense of pride and accomplishment while the professional staff starts looking at each other with expressions of doubt and worry, and a feeling of an upcoming heavy burden among people who are already at capacity with their workloads. As professional staff, we are generally "yes" people. Don't we want to get the diverse opinions of our board to reach a consensus and get to "yes," as well?

AN IMPORTANT PART OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IS DETERMINING WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH CURRENT AND PROJECTED RESOURCES. FOR CHIEF STAFF PROFESSIONALS, THIS IS WHERE YOUR SKILL AND EXPERIENCE AS BOTH A BROKER OF IDEAS AND A SAVVY FINANCIAL MANAGER INTERSECT.

Of course we do. It may not come naturally to many of us, but this is a time when we should encourage our board and volunteer leaders to slow down. I've been in this position many times, and a key concept to communicate in this scenario is patience.

Recently, I worked with a strategic planning facilitator who proactively communicated a message of patience, and here are a few reasons why:

- New ideas, programs and member benefits take time and resources to develop. We do not have staff or money sitting idly, waiting for direction and job duties to be assigned.
- Strategic decisions should be based on good information and data, and may even need to be verified one more time by data. At times, professional staff needs to take recommendations and potential future scenarios and compare them to stakeholder data that wasn't readily available during the strategic planning session.
- Adding new programs can be easy; eliminating programs or sacred cows to make room for new programs can be hard. How prepared is an association to truly make some difficult decisions to eliminate programs?
- Compare your strategy to budget and the budgeting process. Determine where you are in the budget process and what financial resources you may have available to commit to new strategies.

Now you have some time to evaluate. An important part of strategic planning is determining what can be accomplished with current and projected resources. For chief staff professionals, this is where your skill and experience as both a broker of ideas and a savvy financial manager intersect. Here are a few tips, to navigate this process successfully:

Add information to your spreadsheet

In your budget worksheet, add two columns. In the first, provide the percentage that each program area represents compared to the total budget. Do this for both income and expenses. This provides a simple analysis of how much of your budget is allocated to certain program areas. I've used this to both understand and remediate gaps in proper resource allocation, as well as to show what programs are not financially sustaining themselves. In the second column, add what outcome, goal or strategic plan area the budget line is achieving. This column will help you understand what goal or strategy that budget line is allocating resources to.

Use reasonable projections

Requesting additional financial resources for a strategic program should be based on realistic expectations and be reasonably projected. At times, new programs can generate revenue more quickly than programs that are mature. If you're fundraising or conducting development, talk to your key sponsors and stakeholders first to get a sense for their willingness to provide additional financial support. In essence, some financial sources are readily available, others may take multiple years to realize, and the goals in a strategic plan should reflect that.

Staffing considerations

Strategic planning goals should be in alignment with your professional staff structure. If you want to get a bit more analytical, assign a percentage of your staff expenses to your program expenses, such as how much staff cost you out toward meeting and conference, membership, certification programs and others. Do not take this as a time to clean house, think of it more as tidying up. In my experience, this can be a positive activity, giving staff some new responsibilities and projects to work on, keeping job roles fresh and interesting. This provides increased efficiency by allocating more to the goals that matter most to your members.

Strategic planning is a time when patience can pay off. Follow up with data, realistic plan timelines, priority setting and development of a budget to match. This is when expectations are clarified and you turn the strategic plan into a functional process that is achievable. Now you're ready to implement SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) goals. Your board of directors, professional staff, and of course your members, can now start to realize the benefits of your strategic planning. ■

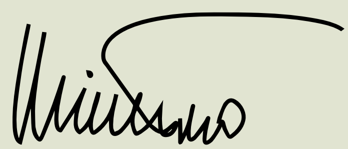
Martin Tirado, CAE, is Chief Executive Officer of the Snow and Ice Management Association, Inc.

Chair's message, continued from page 2

ment of a member's proficiencies in a series of core competencies, dubbed the *C2EX Skills Assessment*, and then creates a customized path for REALTORS to improve themselves, their knowledge and their skills, the *C2EX Journey*. The core competencies tested and measured include ethics, advocacy, technology, data privacy and outstanding customer service. Once the assessment is completed, the journey entails specific *action steps*, which include activities such as attending events or participating in programs to broaden specific skill sets. This is followed by a *learning prospects* phase, which offers formal and informal learning opportunities, such as coursework, webinars or gamified online learning modules. And finally, the *tool bonuses* phase offers specific tools or resources offered by NAR or its partners to assist members in improving specific aspects of their business.

NAR believes this commitment to professionalism will create an acknowledgment in the marketplace that places quantifiable importance on being "C2EX Endorsed" – an importance that consumers will value and pursue.

Whether this approach works or not is yet to be seen, but it's a great example of some of the new ideas associations are either trying, or will be trying, in the years to come in pursuit of their goal to improve the professionalism of their members, the industries they represent and the customers, clients and public which they serve. To all those efforts today and in the future, I say, "Go for it." Trying new ideas, especially in order to advance our industries, is part of what we do as association executives. ■



Cultivate Buy-In and Execution of the Strategic Plan at All Levels

by Dana Murn-Kohal

THE PHRASE *ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE EATS STRATEGY FOR BREAKFAST* RINGS TRUE, BUT BY INVOLVING ALL LEVELS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EXECUTION, YOUR ASSOCIATION IS SETTING ITSELF UP FOR SUCCESS.

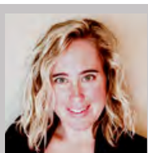
Have you ever worked for a company that had a strategic plan that did not seem to have an impact on your position? Or worse, have you been in a position where you were part of the strategic planning process, the strategic plan was developed and then not reviewed again until the following year?

While the two scenarios I noted above are over simplifications, you would be surprised to learn that 90 percent of companies fail to implement their strategy and reach their goals. One of the biggest challenges facing associations are resources; however, it's imperative to the success of your association to bake the strategic plan into the company culture. When every employee knows how they contribute to the strategic plan, you can identify shortfalls and correct course quickly. To help your association hit the ground running, I've outlined five key elements below to consider as you move from strategic planning to implementation:

1. **Create SMART goal milestones for each strategic initiative.** Once the strategic initiatives are set, be sure to identify clear milestones for each initiative to ensure that they are executed properly. These milestones should be written as Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely (SMART) goals and measured throughout the year. When determining your SMART goals, be sure to note which staff person will be executing the milestone.
2. **Identify at least one individual to champion each strategic initiative.** Identifying an individual to champion the strategic initiative does not mean that they will be doing all the work! This individual will be responsible for providing status updates to the strategic team and ensuring that the implementation plan for that strategy is executed. This individual will also be checking in with other staff who are working on a milestone, that rolls up under that specific strategic initiative.
3. **Set up monthly or bi-monthly strategic team meetings**. This piece is key. Once you've established who will be championing the progress of each strategic initiative, be sure to set up monthly or bi-monthly meetings to bring the strategic initiative champions and senior management together in one room. These meetings should focus on identifying where each strategy is, using a color coding system of green (no issues, will achieve or surpass the goal), yellow (some issues, should achieve the goal) and red (many issues, won't achieve the goal). Be sure to allot enough time in this meeting to discuss the items in red, and how to correct the situation.
4. **Discuss the progress of the plan at each staff meeting**. In my opinion, this piece gets overlooked by organizations. The thought is often that not all staff want to sit through an update on the strategic plan because it does not apply to them. I strongly disagree with this thought process. All staff should be involved in the strategic planning process from day one and should be informed of the progress on a regular basis. Staff should be asking questions and assisting in the brainstorming of ideas on how to achieve the strategic initiatives. Otherwise, the champions of the strategic initiatives begin to develop tunnel vision.

5. **Review the plan annually and make minor adjustments.** Many strategic plans are written for the three- or five-year time frame. Often, once the strategic plan is in place, the thought is not to adjust until the plan is complete. In my opinion, minor adjustments to the plan on an annual basis can help your association set accurate strategic initiatives and milestones for the upcoming year. My suggestion is to get feedback from all levels before reviewing the plan with senior management and the champions of each strategic initiative.

Successful execution of your strategic plan requires attention and resources. Association professionals wear multiple hats and are pulled in many directions. The phrase *organizational culture eats strategy for breakfast* rings true, but by involving all levels of your organization in strategic planning and execution, your association is setting itself up for success. Strategy shouldn't be a once-a-year conversation, it should be part of who you are and what you do, every single day. ■



Dana Murn-Kohal is Membership Manager at the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry.

European Union's General Data Protection Regulation Reaches U.S. Associations

by Adrienne S. Ehrhardt

May 25, 2018, marked the beginning of enforcement for the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), a sweeping revamp of prior EU privacy and cybersecurity laws. The fortuitous timing of the enforcement date in the wake of a steady stream of concerning privacy and cybersecurity revelations and breaches seemed to serve as a prophetic response to these growing issues. Although GDPR is an EU law, it has ripple effects around the world, including in the United States. While the U.S. privacy laws are mostly sectoral, the GDPR's agnostic approach results in broad application across industries and organizations, including associations and non-profit organizations in the United States. Because of the large potential fines of four percent of worldwide revenue or up to €20 million, associations need to be aware of whether GDPR applies to them and if so, what that means.

GDPR WOULD APPLY TO AN ASSOCIATION LOCATED ENTIRELY WITHIN THE UNITED STATES IF IT OFFERS ITS SERVICES, INCLUDING PROVIDING INFORMATIONAL SERVICES AND MEMBER BENEFITS, EVEN IF FREE, TO THOSE IN THE EU. IT WOULD ALSO APPLY TO A U.S. ASSOCIATION IF IT MONITORS THE BEHAVIOR OF THOSE IN THE EU, FOR EXAMPLE, THROUGH ONLINE TRACKING OR RETARGETING OF ONLINE ADS.

GDPR may apply to U.S. associations

GDPR can apply to any type of organization or association, including non-profits. Its broad application depends on the activities of an organization rather than the industry or sector in which the organization sits. The regulation applies generally to "the processing of personal data" with a few exceptions. Personal data broadly includes "any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, culture or social identity of that natural person." Accordingly, any entity that processes any kind of information about an individual that has the direct or indirect capacity to identify a person is subject to the GDPR.

The reach of GDPR is similarly broad. Not only does GDPR apply to those with a physical presence in the EU, but it also applies to entities that do not have a physical presence in the EU but are processing personal data related to that organization's "offering of goods or services, irrespective of whether a payment of the data subject is required, to such data subject in the Union; or … the monitoring of their behavior as far as their behavior takes place within the Union." So, GDPR would apply to an association located entirely within the United States if it offers its services, including providing informational services and member benefits, even if free, to those in the EU. It would also apply to a U.S. association if it monitors the behavior of those in the EU, for example, through online tracking or retargeting of online ads.

Associations are likely to be processors of higher risk data

For some trade associations, the nature of the data they collect may inherently be more likely to be considered high risk and place heightened obligations on them. Collection of "special categories of personal data" is generally considered higher risk. Special categories of personal data include, among other things, "personal data revealing trade union membership." The data collected does not have to specifically identify trade union membership, but rather, if it reveals or suggests that an individual may be part of a trade union, that may be enough to be considered to be among the special categories of personal data for which GDPR requires heightened protections. GDPR actually prohibits an organization from processing special categories of data, except in certain circumstances. Among these are when "processing is carried out in the course of its legitimate activities with appropriate safeguards by a foundation, association or any other not-for-profit body with a political, philosophical, religious or trade union aim and on condition that the processing relates solely to the members or to former members of the body or to persons who have regular contact with it in connection with its purposes and that the personal data are not disclosed outside that body without the consent of the data subjects."

So, when a member organization processes data that reveals trade union association or goals, GDPR limits that processing by, among other things, prohibiting the disclosure of that information outside that organization. In addition, when an organization processes special categories of data on a large scale, the GDPR also imposes additional requirements, including appointing a Data Protection Officer and conducting data protection impact assessments before engaging in the processing of that information using new technologies. Because the security measures employed to protect personal data are based, in part, on the risks of processing data, the processing of special categories of data will also likely require higher standards of protection.

Get your ducks in a row

While some viewed May 25, 2018, as a deadline, it really marked the beginning. GDPR enforcement has just started, and it will continue. Associations should evaluate the applicability of GDPR and take a systematic approach to compliance. Each association should understand the role it plays in the GDPR framework and how it processes EU data subjects' data in order to determine its obligations. ■

Adrienne S. Ehrhardt is Partner and Practice Group Chair, Privacy and Cybersecurity at Michael Best & Friedrich LLP

ASAE Legal Updates

More information about these and other ASAE activities can be found on their website: www.thepowerofa.org.

ASAE sends fringe benefit comments to treasury

On May 24, ASAE delivered a letter to the Treasury Department, which was signed by more than 150 organizations, urging the agency to delay implementation of a provision in the new tax law that taxes transportation and parking benefits provided by many employers.

The fringe benefits provision removes a deduction for employer-provided benefits such as transportation, parking, and on-premises athletic facilities. In meetings with Treasury officials in April, ASAE stressed that the new law disproportionately hurts tax-exempt employers by requiring them to pay a new unrelated business income tax (UBIT) on the value of these benefits. ASAE contends this is a new tax on an expenditure, not a revenue-generating activity. ■

New federal guidelines change the rules around unpaid internships

The Department of Labor approved a new set of guidelines in January that changes the rules regarding what distinguishes interns and employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act. If associations are offering unpaid internships, they have to truly treat their interns as volunteers, which means that they are working without any expectation of compensation, according to Julia E. Judish, special counsel at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, a law firm that advises many associations.

But if "associations pay a small stipend or provide any other monetary benefit other than reimbursement of parking expenses or reimbursement of expenses incurred in providing services, that intern then can no longer be treated as a volunteer," Judish said. "And at that point, the association then needs to ensure that the intern either is paid wages as an employee and is treated as an employee or that that intern passes the Department of Labor internship test." ■

ASAE updates lobbying guidelines

In conjunction with American Associations Day earlier this year, ASAE's Public Policy Committee released an updated version of ASAE's Association Lobbying Guidelines. These guidelines reinforce ethical principles association lobbyists and all association professionals strive to uphold when representing their members before government officials. ■

Turn Dues Increases Into a Teachable Moment Around Your Value Proposition

by Michael Theo, CAE

Increasing membership dues is never a fun thing for association executives. A good association executive should be ever-frugal with the members' dollars. But it is inevitable that there will come a point – or more likely several points – in your career when increasing dues becomes inescapable. While there's no doubt you'll get blow-back from some quarters, dues increases can provide more than just much-needed revenues. It can also provide an opportunity to revisit and reinforce your value proposition. It's kind of a good news/bad news thing.

> DUES-PAYING MEMBERS WANT TO HEAR THE RATIONALE FOR THE DUES INCREASE FROM OTHER DUES-PAYING MEMBERS. IT'S SOMETIMES HARD FOR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES TO ACCEPT, BUT WE SHOULD NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF CREDIBLE "MEMBER MESSENGERS."

I recently went through this experience with the world's largest trade association – the National Association of REALTORS (NAR) – as a member of their Budget and Executive Committees. While it wasn't always clear at the time, the dues increase debate enabled a lot more financial scrutiny by a lot more people, which in and of itself is a healthy thing. But, it also provided a very valuable teachable moment of what we do and why we do it.

At NAR, a dues increase of $30 was being proposed for the 1.3 million REALTOR members across the country, which would bring total annual dues to $150. It was the first proposed dues increase in many years. The additional $35 million in new revenue was targeted for enhanced advocacy-related expenditures, a new program to improve professionalism, a sustainable funding source for electronic transaction platforms and increases to cover building occupancy costs and capital improvements. The proposed budget also included a 2.5% automatic annual dues increase starting in 2020.

At the end of the day, the budget passed along with the associated dues increase; but, the automatic annual dues increase did not.

In retrospect, the debate that transpired – at the board of directors meeting and in the weeks leading up to the meeting via email and social media – was organizationally healthy. I must admit it didn't always seem that way while the debate was being waged, but in hindsight it was advantageous. In deconstructing *why*, there were some important lessons each of us can learn.

The *why* - demonstrating need

It probably goes without saying, but an organization must communicate a clear and compelling need in order to garner widespread member support for an increase in dues. Whether it's a new product, service, a facilities upgrade, deferred cost of living costs or salary changes, the need must be clearly demonstrated and clearly explained.

The *what* and *how* - providing transparency and opportunity

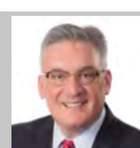
The notion that "most members won't notice a dues increase ,so why put a spotlight on it" is wrong. It's wrong because it lacks transparency and honesty, but it can also appear as if there is something to hide. If a big part of building a cohesive, effective organization is member unity, engagement and support, then obfuscating or otherwise attempting to conceal a dues increase is unwise and irresponsible. On this score the NAR got it right by offering printed materials, a continuously-updated website with an evolving Q&A section, webinars and numerous e-mail updates. Live presentations by the national leadership and key staff executives were also provided at multiple times in multiple meetings. In the end, regardless of whether they supported or opposed the dues increase, no voting director could say they didn't understand the issues or the reasoning.

The *who* - keep it member-driven, in both perception and reality, and be willing to make changes

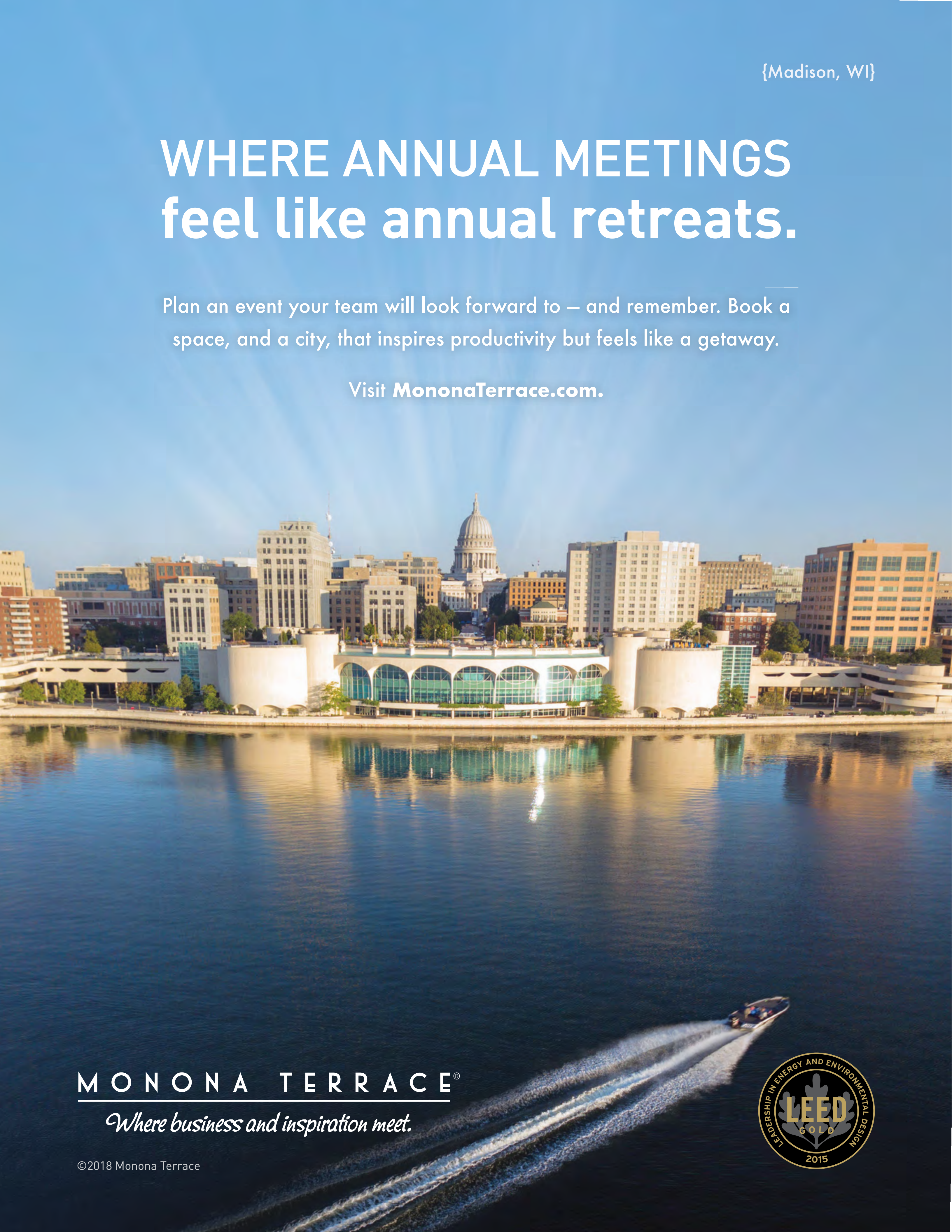
Rank-and-file members want to know that member leaders made the recommendation to raise dues and that they stand behind their proposal. Dues-paying members want to hear the rationale for the dues increase from other dues-paying members. It's sometimes hard for association executives to accept, but we should never underestimate the value of credible "member messengers." Equally important, the organization should be willing to make changes to the proposed plan, if needed. Making changes shows you're listening and open to new ideas. With the NAR debate, it became clear about three-quarters of the way through the discussion that members were more willing to raise the dues for stated purposes, but were unwilling to accept the automatic annual dues escalator. While the logic of accommodating annual cost-of-living increases and avoiding larger, less frequent dues increases had some merit, in the end the members felt this provision avoided rigorous annual budgeting, which should include questioning existing expenditures as much as entertaining new ones.

Teachable moments

Association budgets are about setting priorities and figuring out how to pay for them – balancing the needs of tactical spending and strategic investments. But when increasing dues is necessary, budgets can also be about reconnecting with members and defining (or redefining) the association's value proposition. That proposition involves the benefits, the costs and the values that an organization delivers to its members. If *value* equals benefits minus costs, then every budget, especially budgets that include a dues increase, equals an opportunity to better define your mission in the eyes of your dues-paying members. ■



Michael Theo, CAE, is President and CEO of Wisconsin REALTORS Association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What Does Your Conference Taste Like?

Food for thought for your next event

by Megan Denhardt, CAE

The work associations do touches so many lives, connecting people with ideas. Associations build a stronger economy, enhance job skills, improve systems and structures and strengthen lives.

Did you know that one-third of all Americans are a part of the association community, whether as employees, members or volunteers?

Associations help their members and constituents do their jobs better by providing resources, community, education opportunities, advocacy, thought leadership and support. While all these benefits are hugely valuable, it can be argued that one of the most beneficial pieces of being an association member is attending conferences and events.

Engaged attendees turn into repeat attendees, renewing members, active volunteers, content leaders and advocates for the association. To keep attendees engaged and have them coming back for more, associations must deliver exceptional event experiences. No longer can we lather, rinse and repeat from one year to the next.

HOW CAN WE TRANSFORM THE TYPICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBER INTO AN AVID ATTENDEE, ONE WHO SEES YOUR CONFERENCES AS A MUST-ATTEND EVENT BECAUSE EACH DETAIL IS CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT, PURPOSEFULLY DESIGNED, AND MADE TO FEEL PERSONALIZED AND TAILORED TO EACH PERSON?

We live in a time when memorable experiences are a treasured commodity and a higher value is placed on those experiences over the acquisition of things. We live in a time when life-long learners seek transformative professional development, and individuals crave lasting connections and community. As associations, it is our duty to thoughtfully and purposefully design and deliver our educational conferences and events to better serve our members' needs. Here are some ideas to consider:

Multi-sensory experience

Associations should pay special attention to designing a multi-sensory event experience. Yes, as an event planner it is essential you take into account how the event is seen, heard, felt and even smelled and tasted. Consider this insight from Endless Events: "deciding on how to best feature the senses can be challenging, but it doesn't have to break the bank or offer too many complexities that might jumble the message."

Are you incorporating color and pleasing visuals? Do you offer comfortable seating and places for attendees to gather or reflect? Is there a variety of food offered (both healthy and splurge options)? Are your speakers properly prepared and delivering on their promises?

All these micro decisions go a long way in influencing how the attendee *senses* the conference. Be sure to put some thought into it.

Walk a mile in their shoes

When was the last time someone at your association walked through the entire process of attending your event as a conference attendee? Rather than waiting weeks after the conference has concluded to receive the evaluation results, how about being proactive and truly "be an attendee." This could be a great role for a volunteer or for a staff person who doesn't already have specific responsibilities with respect to the event.

Take everything into account, from receiving the many marketing emails, postcards or brochures, navigating the website and clicking every button searching for the answers, completing the long (and sometimes tedious) registration form, making travel and hotel arrangements, reading all the session materials, downloading the conference app and picking up your badge. These are all pieces of the event experience. How seamless is the process for your attendees? What are you doing to make it easy for them to engage in the experience?

Once you walk in their shoes, you may have a blinding flash of the obvious for any course corrections or modifications that need to be made.

Transform customers into collectors

With today's hyper-awareness of health, fitness and drinking enough water, as well as sustainably caring for the environment, there is no shortage of reusable water bottles out there. They are accessible and affordable. But what do water bottles have to do with association events?

Let me tell you. Back in 2010, Sarah Kauss founded S'well, a water bottle company that had a brilliant idea. Its bottles are not just functional, keeping hot drinks hot and cold drinks cold, but each one doubles as an artistic canvas and form of expression. The hefty price tag of about $25-$45 per bottle may initially seem quite excessive, until you pull back the layers and understand what is truly being offered by these water bottles.

Twice each year, 30 new bottle designs are released. Periodically, other collections are abruptly discontinued. What is happening here? S'well is creating a sense of scarcity among consumers by transforming a simple and functional product into something beautiful, unique and special. In doing so, they turn their typical customer into an avid collector. The average S'well owner purchases more than five bottles, and considers them collector items.

In addition, S'well engages the artistic community, receiving hundreds of designs from artists eager to see the fruits of their labor wrapped around these bottles.

So, how can associations model this profitable multi-million dollar company's idea? How can we transform the typical association member into an avid attendee, one who sees your conferences as a must-attend event because each detail is carefully thought out, purposefully designed, and made to feel personalized and tailored to each person? How can you incorporate the element of scarcity to encourage participation and instill that feeling of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) or Fear of Missed Opportunity?

Be authentic

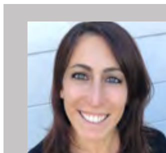
No matter what modifications and improvements you make to your conferences or events, at the essence of it all is authenticity. Does your conference model your association's brand promise? Thinking about your audience and the industry you serve, ask yourself and your meeting team this question: "Why are we holding this conference or event?" And, please be sure the answer is not, "Because we always have."

Go back to the purpose, the *why* behind doing the event. Why is it important to bring people together? What is the goal or outcome you wish to achieve, or service you aim to provide? Basically, be sure you understand why you are bothering to put your conference on in the first place!

I challenge you to ask yourself, your staff, your board, your volunteers and your key stakeholders this same question. Why are you spending significant amounts of time, money and resources to create a multi-day event?

Keep this as your anchor and at the center around which you pivot every decision when designing your event. Define it and communicate it, and consistently create ways to serve that purpose.

I wish you the best of luck as you venture down the road to creating a purposefully and thoughtfully designed conference experience for your members. With the right elements peppered throughout, I am sure you, too, can transform how your organization creates and delivers its next conference so that attendees view it as a must-attend event, a collector's item. The item being not a product, but a service – a repository of memorable experiences that will last a professional lifetime. ■



Megan Denhardt, CAE, is President of The Denhardt Group. She was a featured presenter at the WSAE 2018 Spring Outing.

State Societies of Association Executives 2018 Meetings, Education and Professional Development Survey Report

A group of 12 state societies of association executives collaborated with Whorton Marketing and Research in Las Vegas, Nevada and Event Garde in Kalamazoo, Michigan to conduct a survey of their education, meetings, and professional development activities. The survey was conducted among 1,986 associations during the period of Jan. 25 to Feb. 16. A total of 609 individuals started a survey and 382 completed their survey, for an effective response rate of 19%.

Highlighted Section: Meetings Planned or Held in 2017

- **Meetings:** Participants report a mean of 54 and a median (midpoint) of 16 total meetings planned in 2017. These consisted primarily of digital meetings (mean of 20.2) and half-day face-to-face meetings (mean of 16.8), although the medians of 2 and 3 meant that some organizations sponsor many meetings in these formats, and most organizations sponsor few or none. One-day (mean of 9.2) and multi-day face-to-face meetings (mean of 4.1), and blended learning meetings with both digital and face-to-face components (mean of 3.4) are less common. Only 13% report holding any blended learning meetings, while multi-day (83%), one-day (68%) and half-day face-to-face (68%), and digital meetings (59%) are relatively common.
- **Outsourced Meeting Planning Activities:** While one-third of respondents report not outsourcing any meeting planning activities, 54% outsourced audio/visual activities in 2017. No other service was outsourced by more than 12% with registration services, show sales, marketing, meeting management, and all planning functions outsourced by 4%-7% each. Site selection, expo/trade show management, and housing were outsourced by 10%-12% each.
- **Spending on Compensation for Professional Speakers:** Almost all respondents pay professional speakers, but by range, one-third pay less than $5,000. Many pay more, including $25,000 or more (22%) or between $15,000 up to $25,000 (15%). Another 30% pay between $5,000 to $15,000.

For more findings from this survey, please see the wsae website: www.wsae.org. ■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Strong Awards Program Built on Fun, Flexibility, Competition

by Linda Baun and Kyle Geissler

Radio and television stations from around Wisconsin submitted 1,784 entries to the most recent Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA)'s Awards for Excellence. Nearly 400 broadcasters attended the Awards Gala on May 5.

The awards program wasn't always the largest state broadcast awards program. In 2006, the awards were handed out over a lunch with 586 entries. A new program launched in 2007 with numerous changes, but the key difference was that a committee was formed that would continually reassess the awards program to address fast-moving changes in the broadcasting business.

Veteran broadcasters Lindsay Wood Davis, Broadcast Management Strategies, and Tom Bier, retired general manager of WISC-TV in Madison, spearheaded this new program. It generated more than 800 entries in its first year, an increase of more than 200 in just one year. It's grown every year since then.

The other key change, made to the program in 2007, was the introduction of Station of the Year awards. These awards are given to newsrooms and stations based on a point system. The point system encourages stations to enter as many categories as they can, although there is a limit to the number of submissions allowed in each category.

The Station of the Year award comes with tremendous promotional value and is a source of great pride for stations and employees.

The WBA Awards Committee has 12 members that provide their expertise in the categories of music radio, news and talk radio, television and social media. The guiding principle for the committee is to encourage broadcasters to be the best broadcasters they can be. This often means a focus on community engagement and staying relevant with new technology.

The committee meets after every awards program to review statistics from the most recent program and make changes to keep it fresh and dynamic. The committee is dedicated, hard-working and committed to providing the best of the best in awards programs.

The WBA works very hard to make participation in the awards program as easy as possible. All submissions happen online, using a vendor, BetterBNC, to manage the award submissions and judging. The submission deadline is at midnight and we always have staff available until after midnight to answer any questions.

The WBA partners with other state broadcast associations to help judge the submissions, which has been one of the challenges of an ever-expanding awards program. We are now working with numerous states to help complete the job.

Once the results come back, stations are informed which entries have won a first, second or third place award, but not where they placed. They also don't know which stations also placed in each category, and the Station of the Year awards are also a surprise to all members on the night of the gala. Those awards are handed out at the end of the night.

The Awards Gala itself has become a huge event. The event has been at the Madison Marriott West for many years and draws broadcasters from all over the state. Managers use the gala as a way to reward their teams for a job well done. It's a cost-effective team-building activity. Many people come to the gala who don't attend other WBA events.

And it's fun! A theme is chosen for each gala. Last year was the *Great Gatsby*. This year was the *Kentucky Derby*, playing off the timing of the gala being held on the same afternoon as the famous horse race. Members leapt on the opportunity to find derby-worthy hats and bow ties. A jockey, bugler and rubber horse head mask were also spotted.

A heavy focus is placed on quality video and audio production, décor, food and even the quality of the actual awards given to members. When someone wins an award, they go home with something they're proud to display. Visit most WBA member stations, and you'll very likely notice the WBA awards they proudly display in their lobby.

The #wbagala hashtag gets a lot activity on gala day and the days that follow. This year, the hashtag reached more than 830,000 people. In recent years, we've also added a Snapchat filter and a Facebook livestream of the Station of the Year awards to further expand our reach.

While awards season comes only once a year, we're talking about it year-round. It's important for promotion, but it's also important for stations to be thinking about it throughout the year so they can identify their award-winning work during the course of the year.

Promotion, relevance and hard work will certainly do a lot to strengthen an award program, but much of the WBA's success comes down to quality: quality member services, quality event planning and inspiring members to produce their own quality work that everyone in the association can celebrate.

"The awards show how broadcasters support each other in their public service mission and take pride in their important work," said WBA President and CEO Michelle Vetterkind. "The friendly competition at the awards gala is a great way to celebrate the best in Wisconsin broadcasting. When broadcasters are doing their best work, we all win." ■

Linda Baun is Vice President of Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

Kyle Geissler is Director of Operations and Public Affairs at Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

e-Learning Tips

Five ways webinars can provide value:

1. **Lead generation.** Webinars help grow your audience by facilitating access to different niches and avenues, and through partnerships with different presenters.
2. **Awareness.** Webinars help build awareness of your brand, company, product, services and ideas.
3. **Education.** Webinars provide your audience the ability to ask questions in real-time and can also be recorded for on-demand, self-paced learning.
4. **Interaction.** Webinars allow you to connect with hundreds of people in real time to maximize engagement.
5. **Revenue.** Webinars are a great way to generate non-dues revenue in between face-to-face events.

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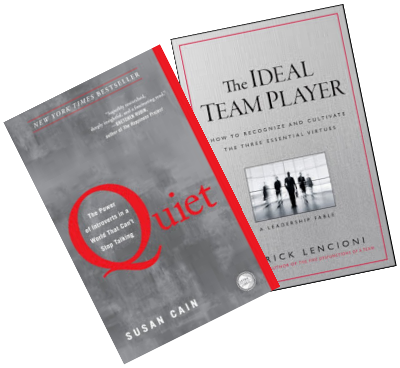
For more tips, please see page 26.

A Page from an Employee Book Club

by Kim Schardin, MBA, CAE



While not your typical Book Club (think food, wine and off-topic chit chat), workplace book clubs are an effective and efficient form of employee development. A book club:

- Gives employees new ideas and shared terminology, which they can apply in the workplace;
- Builds camaraderie and teamwork;
- Provides an opportunity for employees to practice leadership roles such as leading a group discussion;
- Creates an organization that continuously learns and develops.

Milwaukee-based association management company, Executive Director, Inc., started a workplace book club over a year ago. The most recent books discussed have been *The Ideal Team Player* by Patrick Lencioni and *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain.

In his classic book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Patrick Lencioni laid out the group behaviors that destroy teamwork (absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and inattention to results) and provided a foundation for combating them. In *The Ideal Team Player,* he focuses on the individual by revealing three indispensable virtues of an ideal team player.

Lencioni shares the attributes that a real team player possess through the story of Jeff Shanley, a newly-named CEO desperate to save his uncle's company by restoring teamwork to its culture. The team of Jeff and two long-term devoted employees did what you would do—thought about the people they all agreed were good team players and figured out, as best they could, what attributes they could identify as being pertinent to team players. Then they built a culture of hiring and development around those attributes.

With the tale of successfully rebuilding the fictional company still fresh on your mind, Lencioni then provides a framework, along with the tools needed, for identifying, hiring and developing ideal team players in the real world. EDI Book Club members at all levels appreciated this book, and it continues to make an impact on hiring and teambuilding.

In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, Cain calls upon introverted individuals to become leaders and for organizations to provide a conducive environment in which introverted leaders can be successful.

Cain meticulously details and addresses the positive characteristics associated with introverts and the attributes of success, scientific evidence to explain the "rubber band theory" of personality (meaning that we are elastic and can stretch ourselves beyond our innate traits, but only within certain limits), how the extrovert ideal is an American standard not typical in other cultures, and discussion on how to foster traits such as depth and sensitivity.

Cain's *Quiet* may seem contradictory to Lencioni's *Ideal Team Player,* but no one suggests that it would be a good thing to get rid of teamwork or to get rid of group work altogether. However, Cain suggests that our workplaces – and even our culture – are too lopsided.

For example, today's workplace is designed for maximum group interaction, utlizing open-plan offices, where there are no walls and, consequently, very little privacy. Cain notes that the average amount of space per employee has actually shrunk from 500 square feet in the 1970s to 200 square feet today. According to Cain, "we tend to believe that all creativity and all productivity comes from the group, when in fact, there really is a benefit to solitude, and to being able to kind of go off and focus and put your head down."

And doesn't a book club combine the best of both those worlds? Solitary time is taken to focus on the book, your thoughts swirling; then, everyone comes together to share perspectives and participate in a forum that allows for an open exchange of ideas.

The goal of the time away from the cubicle is to encourage stimulating conversations and engage with one another outside daily roles. There's a lot that we can learn from each other and book clubs really enrich the employee experience at your company. ■

Kim Schardin, MBA, CAE, is an Association Executive at Executive Director, Inc.

CAE Online Preparation Courses

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 every level of preparedness.

Options available:

- **Full Course.** Ideal for individuals new to the CAE process.
- **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.

Register online at www.msae.org or contact MSAE at (517) 332-6723. ■

Continuing Education at Your Fingertips

Did you know that in order to apply for the Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation you must complete 100 hours of qualifying professional development? And, did you know that up to 50% of exam and renewal application hours may be completed online, through self-paced programs? WSAE has more than 80 such programs, available at https://elearning.wsae.org. In fact, some of them have been packaged together into bundles, representing up to a 40% discount and savings of nearly $400. Together, the bundles provide a total of 22 CAE and four Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) hours.

Register for these on-demand seminars today to complete your required education hours, preview potential speakers for your events, train new staff or provide development opportunities for existing staff. Programs are available 24/7 from home or office, so steps toward achieving professional success and career advancement can take place when it's most convenient!

If you've been thinking about earning your CAE, but want more information, there's also an online info session about the CAE certification, led by ASAE's senior director of credentialing. This brief overview covers what the CAE certification is, how and why you should attain it, eligibility, the exam and rewards associated with the designation. ■

WSAE Member Benefits

Contact WSAE staff for more information: (608) 310-7850.

Lending Library

Borrow books from WSAE's Lending Library, and get your own byline by writing a book review for *VantagePoint*!

VantagePoint Archives

Access back issues of WSAE's professional publication to learn from seasoned association professionals.

Solutions Network Spokes

Spoke communities in the Connected Community are open, so start learning from and collaborating with peers!

The Connected Community

WSAE's members-only Open Forum is a great place to post questions if you are looking for input, advice and solutions.

Job Search Assistance

Follow WSAE on Twitter to receive alerts on every new career opportunity posted in our Career Headquarters.

Webinar Archives

All WSAE's live webinars are recorded and available on-demand, so if you missed any of interest, it's not too late!

Meeting in Wisconsin?

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Kress Inn

While you're in the Green Bay area, experience our Platinum award-winning, boutique-style Inn, located near the Fox River and within walking distance to many unique shops, restaurants and area attractions. FREE WiFi, FREE Hot Breakfast & FREE Bike rental.

Meeting Rooms: 10 **Sleeping Rooms**: 46 **F&B**: Yes

Contact: Patrick Olejniczak - pat.olejniczak@snc.edu

300 Grant Street, De Pere, WI

800/221-5070 | kressinn.com

MILWAUKEE

Best Western Plus Milwaukee Airport Hotel & Conference Center

NEW LOOK Begins: Summer 2018. Conveniently located just off I-94 and across the street from Gen. Mitchell Int'l Airport. 12,000 sq ft of function space-Perfect setting for Weddings, Association and Corporate Events.

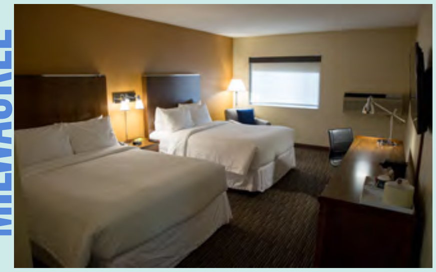
Meeting Rooms: 10 **Sleeping Rooms**: 140 **F&B**: Yes

Contact: Pamela Beaver - pamelabeaver@bwplusmke.com

5105 S. Howell Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

414/769-2100 | bestwesternmilwaukee.com

MILWAUKEE



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Meeting Rooms: 9 **Sleeping Rooms**: 178 **F&B**: Yes

Michelle Koenig - mkoenig@fourpointsmilwaukeeairport.com

5311 S. Howell Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

414/481-2400 | fourpointsmilwaukeeairport.com

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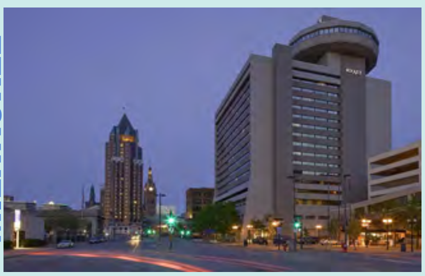

Hyatt Regency Milwaukee

Experience rewards when you hold an event before December 31, 2018. Mention offer code "SPRINGMKE" to Paul Bristow and choose rewards based on total contracted room nights.

Meeting Rooms: 36 **Sleeping Rooms**: 481 **F&B**: Yes

Contact: Paul Bristow - paul.bristow@hyatt.com

333 W. Kilbourn Avenue, Milwaukee

414/276-1234 | milwaukee.regency.hyatt.com

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Meeting Rooms: 4 **Sleeping Rooms**: 69 **F&B**: Yes

Contact: Jen Stough - sales@thepointeresort.com

8269 S. Hwy. 51, Minocqua, WI

715/356-4431 | thepointeresort.com

SHEBOYGAN

Blue Harbor Resort, Spa & Conference Center

Blue Harbor Resort, on Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Coast, is an outstanding setting for Association events and meetings. The Resort features 244 deluxe suites, scenic views, flexible event space and excellent cuisine & service.

Meeting Rooms: 12 **Sleeping Rooms**: 244 **F&B**: Yes

Contact: Sara Kern - sales@blueharborresort.com

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920/457-2554 | BlueHarborResort.com

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WSAE Solutions Network Spokes Continue to Thrive and Grow

by Denise Husenica, CAE

The WSAE Solutions Network continues to be a valuable resource for WSAE members to tap into the knowledge of our own members and seek advice and clarity in areas of expertise.

In the WSAE Solutions Network, topics of interest are called Spokes (think wagon wheel with a hub and spokes that work together). Each Spoke has a leader, or leaders, who brings the interested parties together and facilitates the discussion. The Spokes are meant to spark conversations and convene in-person at WSAE events, online, via conference call, at stand-alone meetings or in this magazine. We encourage everyone to get involved, ask questions and share your expertise.

Active Spokes and Spoke leaders:

Industry Partner	Marin Medema, CMP
Online Education	Mona Johnson, CAE
Membership	Leslie Miller
Marketing	Aaron Manogue, Chad Ritterbusch
Young Professionals	Aaron Manogue, Emily Viles
Fundraising (New)	Lee Wiensch, CMP
Meeting Planners (New)	Michelle Eggert, CMP

During the WSAE Spring Membership Roadshow in February, the Industry Partner, Marketing, Membership, Online Education and Young Professionals Spokes met. Here are a few of the topics discussed during the Industry Partners and Online Education Spokes:

Industry Partners Spoke

- What do Industry Partners need in order to bring more value to their membership;
- Topics of peer to peer questions - hot topics, pressing issues, industry struggles;
- Members-first loyalty program;
- What would Industry Partners like to see at the WSAE Spring Outing and Fall Summit.

Online Education Spoke

- Online learning platforms;
- Association success with online learning platforms;
- Highlight another association that has a robust online learning/education program in place;
- How members can create an online learning program/ system – is there someone that would help us plan out an online learning strategy.

Meeting Planners Spoke

Our newest Spoke, the Meeting Planners Spoke, focuses on best practices for meeting professionals, as well as the challenges faced during the event planning process. This Spoke recently met for the first time, and they discussed ways to augment and enhance meeting planning topics and how to engage others in the field to become involved in WSAE events. The Spoke participants talked at length about the need to find a way to encourage not only association directors, but also meeting professionals, to get involved in WSAE. The group felt strongly that it was important to find ways to build local, reliable relationships and to facilitate networking opportunities within the WSAE meetings professional community. Topics that will be addressed at future meetings include:

- Include half-day training options at WSAE events specific to meeting professionals;
- Develop a Madison/Milwaukee-based meeting planner support group, with sharing of information for best practices locally;
- Research a facilitated QUICK panel with topics handled efficiently (TED Talk formats) to cover exposition management, registration management, room blocks, attrition and best practice to handle certificate distribution.

The Spoke leaders encourage you to get involved. Share your knowledge, while learning from your peers. Let us know what's working in the Spokes and what needs improvement. Collectively, as association executives and industry partners, we live and breathe association work. We are experts in our own right. We have the answers at our fingertips. Together, just as a wagon wheel with spokes and a hub, we can feel confident that the solutions are available. ■

Denise Husenica, CAE, is International Standards Manager at the National Fluid Power Association.

Tips for Making the Most of Your e-Learning Offerings

provided by Blue Sky eLearn

We often profile success stories from the Online Education Network Solutions Spoke in this magazine. Here, we offer tips from Industry Partner member, Blue Sky eLearn. More tips are printed on page 18 of this publication.

Three ways to leverage virtual and live event presentations

1. **Repackaging.** Provide topic packages such as a *Best of* or *Ultimate Guide*, or simply bundle together multiple presentations in the same topic area.
2. **On-demand viewing.** Make recordings available as quickly as possible. Market the content before it even becomes available, and continue to ramp up the content promotion once it has officially gone live.
3. **e-Learning.** Wrap tests, surveys, commenting and additional resources around the recordings for an opportunity to earn CE credits and certificates. Not accredited? You can still offer a certificate of completion that can be tracked and reported.

Five tips to increase webinar registration

1. **Provide a value offer at the time of registration.** Entice your audience to make the buying decision by offering acess to an item that enhances what they'll be learning.
2. **Offer continuing education credits.** Allowing attendees to receive credit for both the live and on-demand webinar gives them flexibility and makes the buying decision easier.
3. **Improve your titles & description.** Get to your point quickly, don't make your audience guess!
4. **Mix it up.** With panel discussions, town hall style meetings, Q&A with the experts, and interviews.
5. **Tap into hot topics.** Move quickly on hot topics that benefit and impact your members, stakeholders and partners.

Six tips to make your e-learning social

1. **Encourage discussion for on-demand learning.** This leads to new ideas and more understanding.
2. **Crowdsource content.** Enable discussions around registration for a virtual event.
3. **Utilize engagement features during virtual events.** Include chat pods, Q&A sessions, polling, and Twitter feeds.
4. **Social media.** Utilize social share buttons and connect your elearning with social media pages.
5. **Enable feedback between instructors and learners.** Allow students to submit assignments and comments to instructors, and then receive feedback and grading.
6. **Integrate your community platform.** Allow users to perform learning activities within a community, utilize Single-Sign-On integrations and be awarded badges.

Five characteristics of millenial e-learners

1. **They are information-hungry.** They are the most educated generation in the U.S. and tend to seek information in short bursts and ignore "noise."
2. **They are social media savvy.** Utilize community-learning, dashboard pages that resemble social media websites, and allow them to leave comments and share feedback.
3. **They are content-seekers.** Material must be fresh and applicable to their jobs. De- liver content in ways that keeps them engaged.
4. **They have short attention spans.** Focus on short and impactful training modules that are under five minutes in length.
5. **They are visual learners.** Ensure your LMS is mobile responsive, has easy acess, and satisfies their visual senses. ■

Blue Sky eLearn provides robust, easy-to-manage solutions for organizations to organize, engage, track and monetize valuable online content. Visit blueskyelearn.com for more information, or contact info@blueskyelearn.com.


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Spring Outing

WSAE

Lake Geneva 2018

May 21 - 22

Visit our Facebook page for more pictures from the 2018 Spring Outing!

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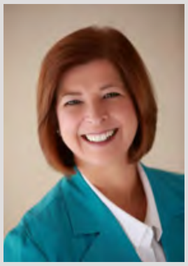
MH Milwaukee Hotel Collection: Milwaukee Marriott Downtown, SpringHill Suites Milwaukee Downtown, The Westin Milwaukee
Janesville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Marshfield Convention & Visitors Bureau
Four Points by Sheraton
Best Western Plus
CORT

Join us at these upcoming events! More info at www.wsae.org.

VISIT Milwaukee names 2018-2019 **Officers and Board of Directors**

Two WSAE members join VISIT Milwaukee board



Kristine Hillmer Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA)

Jim Villa National Association of Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP)

VISIT Milwaukee has announced its officers and Board of Directors for the business year 2018-2019. New to the Board this year are Steve Baas of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (MMAC), Brian Dranzik of General Mitchell International Airport, Dr. Eve Hall of the Milwaukee Urban League, Kristine Hillmer of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA), Tracy Johnson of the Commercial Association of Re altors Wisconsin (CARW), James Kanter of MillerCoors, Greg Marcus of the Marcus Corporation, Gerard Randall, Jr. of Milwaukee Education Partnership, and Jim Villa of the National Association of Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP).

Both Kristine Hillmer and Jim Villa are members of WSAE.

As the image and tourism marketing organization for the greater Milwaukee area, VISIT Milwaukee is responsible for growing our local tourism economy, generating revenues for local business, increasing taxes paid by tourists and growing tourism-related jobs.

Board Directors volunteer their time to assist in providing overall strategic direction to VISIT Milwaukee and by advocating its mission to the community. The Board assists in developing the strategic plan, and helps the organization achieve its goals through participation in committees and Board meetings. ■

GMCVB and Madison Convention Sales Manager Jeff Holcomb donate much-needed barber chair to The Beacon Homeless Day Resource Center

The Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) and Jeff Holcomb, Senior Convention Sales Manager at the GMCVB, have teamed up to purchase a barber chair for The Beacon, a resource center for people experiencing homelessness in Dane County. Coincidentally, the Beacon is located in the GMCVB's former offices.

Holcomb and other GMCVB staffers visited The Beacon this winter to drop off warm clothes collected as part of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's annual Big Bundle Up campaign. During the donation drop, Holcomb noticed a volunteer barber giving a haircut to a homeless man who was sitting in a folding chair. As a longtime sales leader, Holcomb understood the need for the center's clients to look professional when they went out in public to find work. But just as importantly, as the grandson of a barber, Holcomb understood the importance a proper chair can have on the health of the barber. Moved by the scene, he worked with Deb Archer, President and CEO of the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau and Madison Area Sports Commission, to purchase a professional barber chair for the center.

"We are very happy that the GMCVB could contribute to the purchase of a new barber chair for The Beacon," remarked Archer. "It is important that we not only provide support to the groups and individuals who visit Madison each year, but also to those people and organizations who call the city home."

"Getting a haircut is something many of us often take for granted," said Holcomb. "This donation will have a positive impact on the barbers who volunteer their time and services, as well as the many people who utilize resources provided by The Beacon." ■

New VISIT Milwaukee website captures city's random charm

Reimagined digital experience will drive additional tourism dollars to the region

VISIT Milwaukee, the destination marketing organization for Milwaukee, has redefined the city's image for visitors and captured the spirit of Milwaukee's people, neighborhoods, events, and attractions through a new website.

The improved experience expands beyond the meeting planner to the convention attendee as well. A new slot machine style "randomizer" on the homepage provides an entertaining way to discover exciting things to do in the city. A new "My Trip" tool allows visitors to plan their trip to Milwaukee by curating a virtual shopping cart with the unique experiences they find while exploring the site.

"Our research reinforced that people are most interested in visiting cities that spark a passion for discovery and offer the chance to collect unique experiences" said Megan Suardini, vice president of marketing & communications for VISIT Milwaukee. "From the Riverwest 24 to Koz's Mini Bowl, Milwaukee is overflowing with unexpected and charmingly quirky experiences that are unique to our city. We worked with our partner Hanson Dodge to ensure the new website captured this wonderfully random spirit."

"Meeting and events planners are looking for 360-degree photos of unique and unconventional gathering spaces, as well as a mapping function that shows hotel, restaurant, and attraction locations within a neighborhood or in relation to the Wisconsin Center," said Suardini.

In 2017, Milwaukee welcomed over 23 million visitors and the economic impact of tourism was over $5 billion. ■

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As of June 1, 2018

Dale Beaty, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Brad Boycks, Wisconsin Builders Association
Karen Brunow, von Briesen & Roper, s.c.
Kristen Christianson, Credit Union Executives Society
Bree Clarksen, Badger Bay Management Company
Rachel DePouw, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry
Danielle Dyer, Credit Union Executives Society
Sara Dyer, Credit Union Executives Society
Ben Glantz, Hilton Garden Inn Sun Prairie
Melissa Hicks, Mosaic Marketing
Kari Hofer, Wisconsin Hospital Association
Peter Intile, Executive Director, Inc
Sue Irizarry, Hotel Retlaw
Erica Koconis, The Rees Group, Inc
Kelsey Lange, Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Melissa Loth, Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Stephanie Marquis, Wisconsin Hospital Association
Gale Otterson, MDS Association Management
Jodi Lynn Ray, Blue Sky eLearn
Katie Reiser, Wisconsin Restaurant Association
Mara Roberts, AIC, CLU, RHU, REBC, WDA Insurance & Services Corp.
Jennifer Rzepka, CAE, Svinicki Association Management Inc
Daniel Smith, Cooperative Network
Joanna Tacheny, Northern Bay Golf Resort & Marina
Allison Tilque, Badger Bay Management Company
Paul Truess, Audi Club North America
Shane Walsh, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry

Anticipate Future Trends to Maintain Association Relevancy

by Michelle Czosek, CAE

Every time my *VantagePoint* column is due, I admit that I struggle to pick the right topic, and this time was no different. However, thanks to a father who thought it would be funny to sign me up for AARP the second I was eligible, I now have a subscription to a magazine (yes, an actual printed magazine) that contains some great articles. This month in the AARP Bulletin, there was an article, *What's Next – How Your Life Will Get Better in the Coming Years*, that amazed me and got me thinking about things on the horizon that can and will impact the way we do business.

The article was based on interviews with CEOs, professors, futurists, inventors and other forward-thinking individuals. When I read about things that seem far-fetched like micro-hospitals, shirts that will administer CPR (yes, MIT is really working on this), and paying with your car as you go through a drive-through, I tend to shake my head and think *these people are crazy*. Thinking back to the '90s, when I started my first association job, I was using R:Base and typing in commands at a DOS prompt. I had no laptop that followed me home and no cell phone, such as the one that has come to rule my life. If you would have told me then that some of the things we have now were about to become a necessary part of my life, I wouldn't have believed it.

There are so many potential future changes that will impact the way we do business and serve our association members. A few of my favorites on the horizon:

- People traveling in pods through sealed tubes, allowing for more expedient travel. Perhaps we will use this transportation to travel to our meetings and conventions? The ability to travel 100-200 miles per hour with the possibility of going up to 1,000 miles per hour in a transatlantic tube is one possibility.
- The elimination of passwords. Our members will be recognized by their voice, and will apparently begin paying for things with their face. I'm excited to hear thoughts from those involved in association technology on if and when they see this happening, and how they see this impacting us.
- Social media for members only. New regulations impacting social media platforms could lead to subscription-based models. How will this impact our current use of social media in an era where many associations rely on this free and far reaching method of engaging members and potential customers?

Although you won't be able to travel by tube quite yet, I hope you'll join us at two of our upcoming events. Back after a very successful debut year in 2017 is the 2018 Executive Exchange, being held Sept. 12-13 at the Ironworks Hotel in Beloit. This event is designed especially for CEOs and offers an opportunity to participate in interactive sessions presented by Vicki Kampmeier, president, Katalyst Coaching and Consulting; and Ed Paradowski, president, Apache Stainless Equipment Corporation. There will be plenty of time for networking with fellow CEOs and discussing current topics of interest in a confidential setting.

The annual WSAE Summit will take place Oct. 29-30 at The Overture Center in Madison. The Education Program Committee is busy confirming presenters revolving around our theme of *People, Purpose and Passion: Pathway to Success.* Registration opens soon. Don't miss your chance to network with and learn from both industry experts and your peers.

I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming WSAE event! ■

Michelle

Upcoming Events Through WSAE

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

Executive Exchange
September 12-13
Ironworks Hotel
Beloit

The Summit
October 29-30
The Overture Center
Madison

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