

SPRING
2021

associations

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JENA EBERLY STACK
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
LEGAL NURSE CONSULTANTS

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FOR ASSOCIATION
LEADERSHIP
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ORLANDO IS ENHANCING AMAZING



YOUR NO. 1 DESTINATION FOR HEALTHY MEETINGS

The Orange County Convention Center has earned Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC) STAR™ accreditation and collaborated with health officials to develop a three-pronged Recovery and Resiliency Plan — but that's not the only way Orlando is protecting your attendees.



Orlando International Airport and its onsite Hyatt Regency Orlando have also achieved GBAC Star Accreditation — the gold standard of safe facilities.



Meeting hotels are keeping the health and safety of you and your group top of mind with robust cleanliness procedures that adhere to CDC guidelines.



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Our Value (what we do) ASAE connects great ideas and great people to inspire leadership and achievement within the association community.

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features

“Had we [launched a new course] blindly without any information, we may not have seen such a good result.”
—Jena Eberly Stack

In Search of New Revenue

To help offset financial losses from pandemic-related cancellations, some associations launched new revenue-generating products—and they did it fast. Those that succeeded followed a common formula: identifying a need, listening to members, and responding with speed and flexibility.

BY RASHEEDA CHILDRESS



Blueprint for the Hybrid Office

What will work look like when some employees return to the office and some stay permanently remote? Making plans while aiming at a moving target has not been easy, but associations are putting pieces in place for a revised workplace, perhaps forever changed by the pandemic. Here is a glimpse of what's happening so far.

BY LISA BOYLAN



The Outlook for In-Person Meetings

This year won't bring the complete recovery for face-to-face meetings that many have hoped for. But things are looking up. Associations have learned to be creative, innovative, and safe while bringing attendees together.

BY MARK ATHITAKIS

departments



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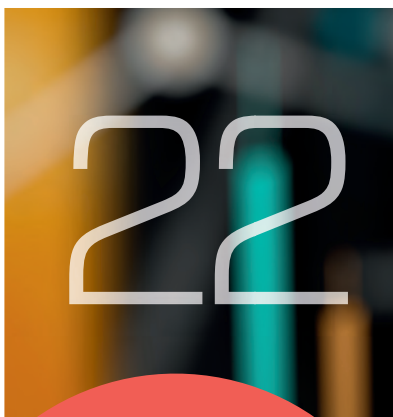
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"We are committed to finding ways to make virtual conference attendance a permanent fixture when in-person meetings resume."
—Sara L. Wood, MBA, CAE, p.16

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Now and the Future

What a difference a year makes. Last spring, COVID-19 came in like a lion and devoured everything in its path: work routines and business plans, conference schedules and comfort zones. And although the pandemic isn't exactly going out like a lamb, it is indeed going out, and all I can say about that is good riddance.

But talk to almost anyone in almost any association about almost any aspect of their work, and you'll hear versions of the same forecast: We'll never go back to the Before Times. There's a lot of that in this issue in association leaders' descriptions of the pandemic's short- and long-term impacts on in-person events, member products and services, and workplace management.

Many of these transformations were a long time coming and were finally pushed over the finish line by the pandemic. Which brings me to *Associations Now*.

The next issue of this magazine, which will be published this summer, will be the last. The decision to sunset ASAE's flagship print publication is the result of long-term trends familiar to publishers everywhere: the rapid pace of information flow, changing reader preferences for content consumption, and an overhaul of the financial model supporting publishing. Digital media channels have introduced innovative ways for advertisers to meet their branding, lead-generation, and content-marketing goals and have presented publishers with opportunities to build sustainable revenue streams. That means sustainable content offerings for readers.

As a journalist trained in the print tradition, I'll be sorry to see the magazine move into retirement. But *Associations Now* isn't going anywhere. Over the past year, we've been experimenting with new digital formats like the Lead2021 package on AssociationsNow.com and the *Associations Now Live* newsmagazine show. We'll continue to greet you in your inbox with *Associations Now Daily News* every weekday morning. And we'll publish in print when that's the best choice for specific content.

So stay tuned, and thanks for reading. Here's to what comes next.

Julie Shoop

Editor-in-Chief

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RECONNECT IN CHARLOTTE

REDISCOVER THE LARGEST CITY IN NORTH CAROLINA

While venues may look the same here in Charlotte, the world has certainly changed. Because of that, health and safety measures have evolved to meet the demands of this challenging time. Charlotte is ready and eager to reconnect with meeting attendees in the 15th largest city in the nation. Planners and attendees will have sound peace of mind and visibly see the commitment being made to maintaining exceptional, health-conscious conditions. All of these detailed measures are being taken on to create a welcoming environment where meeting planners and attendees can do what they do best—execute and experience successful events.



9 CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER



9 CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER

Over the last several months, Charlotte has been busy rewriting protocols to a standard called “We Clean With Care.” In addition to an exhaustive list of rigorous facility processes that have been implemented, the Charlotte Convention Center has received its Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC) STAR™ Facility Accreditation, making it one of the first facilities in North Carolina to earn this distinction.

Often utilized as a proactive measure in hospital settings, the center has also integrated needlepoint bipolar ionization (NPBI) air purification technologies into its HVAC systems as another layer of protection to eliminate and neutralize disease-causing pathogens such as COVID-19. Other best practices include utilizing electrostatic spraying in between events, linen-less meetings table sets and no contact food and beverage protocols.

Explore the Queen City and discover more than 5,600 hotel rooms conveniently located within walking distance of the center, 200-plus unforgettable restaurants to feast from, immersive arts and culture attractions to marvel in, plus professional sporting venues all in sight. Boasting the sixth busiest airport in the nation and centrally located to Interstates 77, 85 and 40, Charlotte is more accessible than ever before.

New in 2021, a \$127 million expansion to the center is set to be completed. Conventions and events will benefit from an additional 50,000 square feet of meeting room and pre-function space, bringing the total square footage to approximately 600,000. The expansion increases the total individual breakout spaces to 54, which includes 50 meeting rooms and the ability to divide the 35,000-square-foot ballroom into four 7,700-square-foot breakout spaces.

Delivering memorable experiences in Charlotte is in the DNA of the city’s welcoming tourism community. And in these uncertain times, that means placing health and safety of the attendees and millions of visitors who travel to the Queen City as the highest priority. Stay safe, take care and welcome back to Charlotte.



9 2021 CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION


CHARLOTTE

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The A List

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NATE WAMBOLD

■ DIRECTOR, MEETINGS AND EVENTS
■ AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
■ ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

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or a backcountry camping
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@jameshamblin, @danjlevy,
@simonsinek, @bbcworld

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Notebooks, Sonos
speaker, water bottle,
wireless earbuds,
Sharpie ultra fine
point markers in every
color imaginable

MY THREE GOALS FOR 2021

1. Prioritize my own
holistic well-being
2. Sustain and
support my tribe
3. Expand my career
toward new and
exciting challenges

MY MEDIA MIX

Podcasts: The Daily,
Armchair Expert

News: *The Economist*,
The Atlantic

Music: Ben Platt, Kygo

TV: *The Great British Bake Off*

IF I WEREN'T DOING THIS, I'D ...

... have gone back to
school—specifically med
school—to become a
trauma surgeon or joined
the military to become a
flight surgeon.

Ask
the
CEO

TOP ASSOCIATION EXECS IN CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS

John L. Lehr, CEO of the Parkinson's Foundation, answers questions from foundation member Lou Eisenbrandt.

What factors influenced your decision to serve as CEO of the Parkinson's Foundation? Do you have a personal connection with Parkinson's Disease?

While I don't have a personal connection to the disease, I am a strong advocate of consolidation in the nonprofit space to better support the communities we serve. The Parkinson's Foundation was born from a merger of two leading disease organizations in 2016. I had prior experience with nonprofit mergers and, as these mergers rarely happen, that makes me a bit of a unicorn in this space. That is one of the reasons I was called upon to serve this organization, and I am humbled to be a part of it.

Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of our challenges has been to address the needs of people living with Parkinson's in rural and less populated areas of the country. How do you see us addressing this issue?

Telemedicine plays a huge role in meeting the needs of people with PD in rural and less populated areas. We recently expanded our groundbreaking genetics research study, PD GENERation: Mapping the Future of Parkinson's Disease, from only in-person sites in select cities to a virtual program where participants can undergo genetic testing and counseling entirely from home. Our research shows that people with PD significantly expanded their use of telemedicine during the pandemic, and we want to continue using virtual platforms after the pandemic ends.



JOHN L. LEHR, CEO OF THE PARKINSON'S FOUNDATION

What factors have assisted you with successfully acquiring needed funds, even during the economic challenges of 2020?

We kept up momentum by staying focused on our mission, which was more critical than ever during a challenging time for people with PD. We communicated frequently with our PD community so we could understand their needs. We shifted to virtual events, and our communications focused on COVID-19 concerns and keeping people engaged virtually through our PD Health@Home programming. Our community joined in and continued to fundraise from home. Additionally, biotech and pharmaceutical partners recognized the promise of our research programs, like PD GENERation, and helped fund them.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

A roundup of new hires and other personnel moves in the association industry

The Government Employees' Benefit Association welcomed **Mona Buckley, MPA, CAE**, as president and CEO.

Tom Donohue, longtime CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, announced his retirement. U.S. Chamber President **Suzanne Clark** will take his place.

Cassandra Matej joined Visit Orlando as president and CEO.



The American Pharmacists Association promoted **Shannon Morrison** to chief financial officer.

Jonathan Halkyard joined MGM Resorts as chief financial officer.

Continued on page 10

“
We kept up momentum by staying focused on our mission, which was more critical than ever during a challenging time for people with PD.

CROWDSOURCE

PURPOSE-DRIVEN VOLUNTEERS

One organization gets systematic about matching volunteers with meaningful tasks

EVEN ASSOCIATIONS THAT

have an easy time attracting volunteers can have a hard time making good use of them. Rather than

dumping eager volunteers into a make-work committee or assigning them to ill-fitting tasks, Compassion and Choices has taken a different path: getting to know its volunteers better and finding more effective ways to take advantage of their individual talents.

C&C, which does advocacy and charitable work around end-of-life care, launched its Executive Volunteer Program in 2016

as a way to improve engagement in its lobbying activities. "Somebody would say, 'I'm happy to talk to my legislator, but I'm also a communications expert' or 'I'm an attorney' or 'I'm a physician. What can I offer you?'" says Sarah Brownstein, executive volunteer program manager at C&C.

Rather than let those volunteers' skills slip away, the program established an interviewing and vetting process to get a better sense of what their skills are, which elements of C&C's work they're best suited to, what experience they have, and why they're passionate about C&C's mission. Because end-of-life care is a sensitive issue, C&C also does an internet scan to see what statements participants

have made on the topic and gauges their social-media reach.

"In order for the program to be effective, we really need to know what makes the volunteers tick, what makes it a meaningful experience for them," Brownstein says. "Otherwise they're not going to stick around."

To date, the program has connected 45 executive volunteers to more than 200 projects, ranging from small-scale efforts like op-ed writing and coaching for C&C staff to more substantive and ongoing work. For instance, one physician volunteer established a protocol to train doctors at a California health system on medical aid in dying. That protocol is now shared with other practitioners around the country.

One reason the program succeeded, Brownstein says, is that it integrates the executive volunteers into the staff's work. Any new internal project at C&C includes a checklist of necessary tasks, and one item on that list is to consider recruiting an appropriate volunteer to assist, rather than hiring consultants or stretching staff resources.

In the process, the Executive Volunteer Program has become a way to strengthen C&C's more traditional volunteer operations, such as board service, fundraising, and development.

"It helps to drive them into other parts of the organization," Brownstein says. "Ultimately, this deepens the commitment that these volunteers have to the organization, which I think is an ongoing challenge for many volunteer programs."

—Mark Athitakis

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Continued from
page 9



Audrey S. Chang, Ph.D., was named chief operations officer of the Alliance of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science Societies.

The National Health Council welcomed **Randall (Randy) L. Rutta** as CEO.

Megan M. Killian, CAE, joined the National Enrolled Agents Association as executive vice president.



The Pulmonary Hypertension Association named **Matt J. Granato, LL.M., MBA**, its new president and CEO.

Amber Bennett was promoted to vice president of marketing and engagement at the American Herbal Products Association.

Raybourn Group International appointed **Wendy King** executive director.

Katie Sweeney was promoted to CEO of the Association of Independent Mortgage Experts.

Karen Williams, president and CEO of Louisville Tourism, will retire at the end of June.



Linda Thomas Brooks was named CEO of the Public Relations Society of America.

Nicole Rogers joined the San Francisco Travel Association as executive vice president.

The National Grain and Feed Association welcomed **Michael J. Seyfert** as president and CEO.

The Arizona Society of CPAs welcomed **Oliver Yandle, JD, CAE**, as its president and CEO.

A VIRTUAL EXPERIMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

How a super-sized event kept its regional feel

WHEN MANY ASSOCIATIONS shifted to virtual meetings in 2020, they discovered that they had a global audience that shared the same concerns across their industries. AVIXA, an association that represents audiovisual professionals, was no different. As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated, it temporarily opened up its education offerings for free worldwide to respond to that shared challenge.

"We were looking at our members who at worst were unemployed and underemployed and needed to reskill, and at best now had time to participate in more education and learning," says AVIXA CEO Dave Labuskes, CAE. "AVIXA wanted to provide something empowering."

But AVIXA is also an organization with regional affiliates around the world that were doing a strong business in regional meetings. So as it looked for ways to acknowledge a universal challenge but preserve a local feel, it tried an experiment in Latin America.

In 2019, AVIXA hosted tradeshow events in Mexico City; Bogota, Colombia; and Sao Paulo, Brazil. In 2020, rather than present the three events virtually, the association rolled them up into a single event, Congreso AVIXA, that targeted professionals across the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world.

Labuskes knew that the demand for such an event was there from both sponsors and potential attendees. "[Sponsors] wanted a place to be able to make their presence known, to reinforce the solutions they had available. We had sponsors asking us for an event before we had the event," he says. "And the community itself was saying, 'We want to be able to gather, and we want to share information.'"

Congreso AVIXA, held across three days last October, featured 43 presentations and speakers from 10 countries. The event was free to attendees. "It was a lot of staff lift, and it was also an enormous coming together of volunteers and subject-matter experts," Labuskes says.

It was certainly a larger and more

geographically diverse event: Drawing nearly 4,500 attendees from 35 countries, it outpaced attendance at all three of the 2019 Latin American conferences combined.

That doesn't change AVIXA's commitment to putting on in-person events when it's safe to do so. Indeed, last September it successfully staged a conference in Beijing with more than 30,000 attendees. But Labuskes sees an opportunity for more virtual global events in the future that can help participants address regional needs—and offer AVIXA a chance to innovate.

"There is an intrinsic overconfidence among North Americans that we're the

biggest and baddest market in the world, we have the most innovation, and we have ways of solving all the problems," he says. "But innovation comes from the absence of resources, and it happens all over the globe. The people that organized this event tapped into platforms we hadn't used and used resources that let us provide a free-to-attend event that brought the community together in a time of need." —M.A.







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POWER OF A

An Investment in Equality

A HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION CONVENES ITS MEMBERS TO ADDRESS AN INDUSTRY GENDER GAP

IN 2016, the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association began taking a close look at gender disparities within its industry. The numbers were eye-opening: Women represented approximately a quarter of senior-level roles at healthcare companies—and less than 5 percent of CEOs.

"It really was very bad," says HBA President and CEO Laurie Cooke, CAE. "But the piece that was worse was that it wasn't changing, year after year."

To address the issue, in late 2018 HBA launched the Gender Parity Collaborative, a consortium of industry leaders with a goal of closing the gender gap in the industry C-suite. The initiative garnered a 2020 Power of A Summit Award from ASAE in the diversity and inclusion category.

In the run-up to the launch, HBA focused on two challenges: how to present itself as a trusted data broker regarding gender and leadership, and how to persuade members to publicly engage with an issue where they'd been performing poorly.

On the data front, the Collaborative partnered with consultancy McKinsey & Co., which helps HBA gather and analyze information from participants but shares only aggregate figures from across the industry. As for engagement, some companies were initially hesitant, arguing that they already had programs designed to support women leaders.

"We used that argument and flipped it on them," Cooke says. "'You're spending all this money and putting all these resources into it—how's that working? Not so good, right?' Our argument was that we could help them leverage their resources much more efficiently."

Collaborative members—16 healthcare and life-sciences companies and nine of the top 20 pharmaceutical companies—sign on for a one-year commitment to the group, which entails a promise from C-suite leaders to share data and take part in meetings. Engaging a range of leaders with different roles is important, Cooke says.

"We really want a mixture of people from the business side of the house, the HR and talent side of the house, and the diversity, equity, inclusion side of the house because when we look at those issues from that cross-functional perspective, we get a different takeaway," she says.

Chief among the Collaborative's initiatives in its first year was addressing the "broken rung" on the leadership ladder that keeps women from making their way to the C-suite.

"Very early in the chain, more men are promoted to manager than women, and after that, then, your talent pool changes, so when you go to move people up you have more men," Cooke says. The problem is particularly acute for women of color.

"We were making an assumption that all women were progressing. But when you pull back the layers of the onion, you saw it was actually more white women."

Cooke is pleased with the baseline successes of the Collaborative's members, which retain senior-level women employees at higher levels than the industry at large. But there's still work to be done.

"The past year has shown that the model is proven," she says. "Now we're saying, 'OK, we know this works. What's possible?'" —**M.A.**



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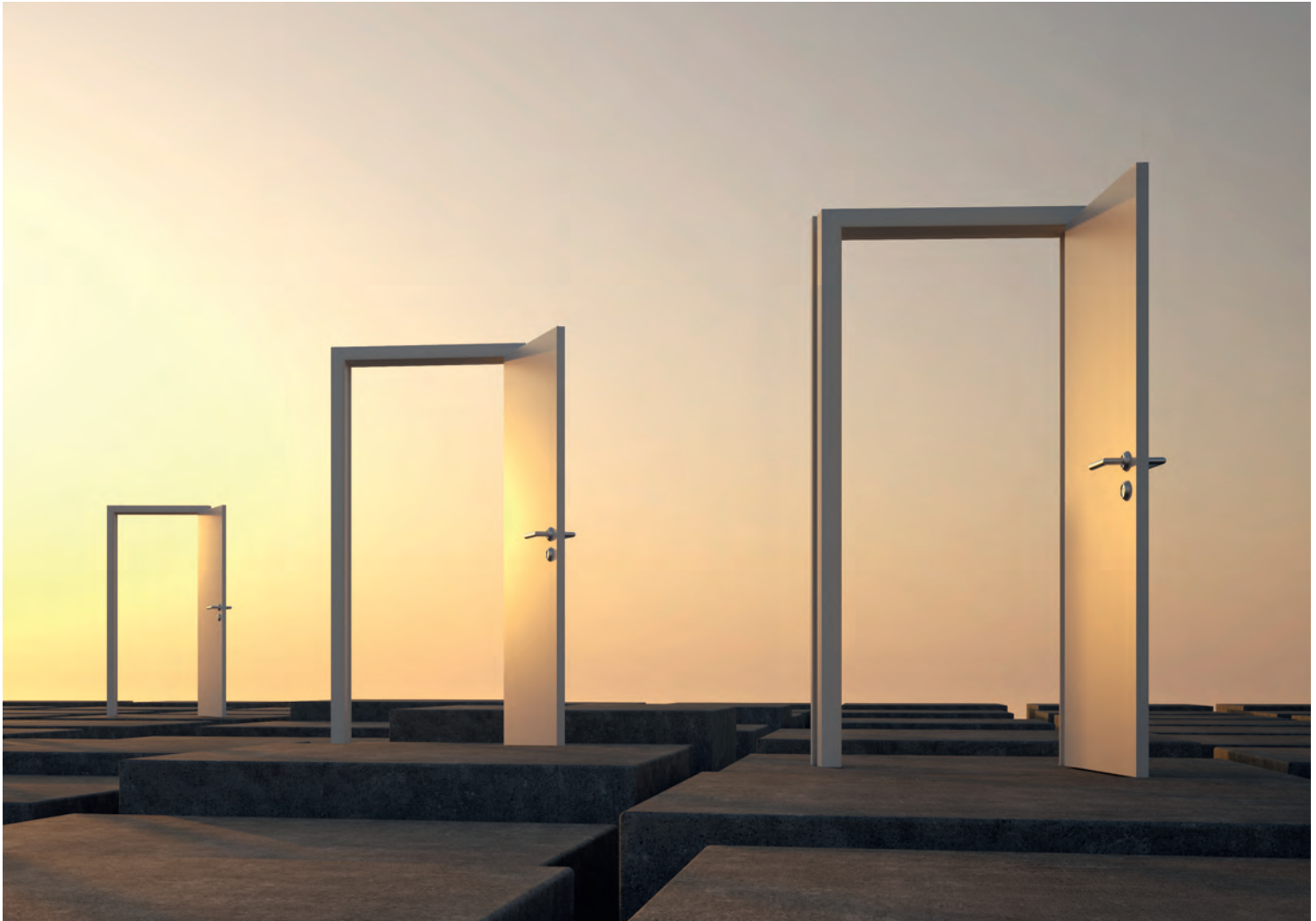
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Leadership



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STRATEGY SESSION

In-House, Outsource, or AMC?

Tips on choosing the right
management option

By Lisa Boylan Jan Reisinger, CAE, has a unique vantage point on a perennial association management question: Is it better to have full staff management, outsource to contractors, or hire an association management company (AMC)? ¶ Reisinger is executive director of the Pennsylvania College of Emergency Physicians, recently installed as its first full-time employee after 40 years of AMC management. Before joining PACEP, she worked for an AMC that managed 37 different client organizations. She had a staff of 23 and served as the executive director for several clients. ¶ In her current position, Reisinger manages a part-time administrative employee and contracts out

PACEP's accounting, IT, graphic design, and social media services. PACEP has been able to save a significant amount of money with this arrangement, she says, and tackle projects the organization has not been able to do in the past.

With that resume, Reisinger has some experience with the "staff versus AMC" question.

"Make sure you have your objectives and what's important to you as an association outlined first," she says. "Once you figure that out, then you're probably ready to begin your conversation."

Questions to consider are: Do you want someone to handle administrative, membership, accounting, communications, and day-to-day operations, or do you need an executive director to strategically run the organization with a lot of board interaction? The decision comes down to your association's specific experience and whether the model you're currently using meets your needs.

AMCs provide associations with a large staff pool and professional turnkey services that handle daily organizational operations. They provide economy of scale with shared systems that are utilized across multiple platforms. On the other hand, AMCs juggle multiple clients at the same time, and clients may sometimes feel like they are not at the top of the list, Reisinger says.

For her own part, what Reisinger realizes from her firsthand experience in both positions is that "there is something unique and special about working with one association."

She acknowledges that it takes time on the front end to launch an office—no matter how small—and get it up and running. But keeping PACEP's staff small and working with contractors means she enjoys flexibility and the ability to customize her options for getting work done.

Ultimately, the best management option is the one that meets the organization's needs. Do you need a strategic leader to oversee all of the organization's operations? Or do you have a strategic board that just needs a good administrator who can get the work done? The former generally calls for a full in-house staff or a hybrid situation like Reisinger's—with one full-time employee and several contractors. If it's the latter, she says, then perhaps an AMC is the way to go.

**CEO
to
CEO**

What new leadership strategy worked for you in 2020 that you plan to use this year—and beyond?



Chris Busky, CAE

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INFECTIOUS DISEASES SOCIETY OF AMERICA
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**

A new leadership skill I employed more in 2020 than ever before is empathy—empathy not only for my staff, but also for our members who are on the front lines treating COVID patients. I've been much more deliberate about staying connected to others, listening intently to their needs, and practicing kindness.



Tammy Dillard-Steels, CAE

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
YOUNG ADULT LIBRARY
SERVICES ASSOCIATION
CHICAGO**

We used multiple new strategies in 2020, such as revenue-based budgeting, modeling a hybrid approach to education by utilizing virtual platforms and localized in-person meetings, and virtual retreats.



Stephen Kaminski

**PRESIDENT AND CEO
NATIONAL PROPANE GAS ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, DC**

Doubling down on compassion. While a leader should always respect all team members, understanding that everyone is dealing with the pandemic in a unique way—and taking action to reflect that—pays dividends in loyalty to the association and work product. For example, providing flexibility on timelines, vacation use, and midday breaks to handle atypical school and dependent needs reflects that I care as much about my staff as I want them to care about our association.



Nancy Donahue Jones, CAE

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
HAWAII REALTORS
HONOLULU**

Our organization changed our governance structure. Our goal was to make the organization flexible, nimble, and proactive. Our first year was 2020. We reduced the board to half its size, implemented term limits throughout the organization, and eliminated both the executive and finance committees. The leadership team meets with me as my advisory team at least twice a month for no more than an hour. Everything is virtual.

3 LESSONS

ROADMAP FOR WHAT'S NEXT

Sara L. Wood, MBA, CAE, has plans for a nimbler future

■ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
■ PUBLIC MEDIA BUSINESS
ASSOCIATION
■ ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

"Associations move slowly" is a myth.

When the pandemic hit, the Public Media Business Association quickly modified its approach and triaged priorities. With a clear directive, a hard deadline, and an absence of needless distractions, we proved extraordinary things could happen. It is possible to move quickly with focused resources. We plan to harness this guiding principle for the future, even when we're not in crisis.

The way forward is not "back to normal."

The other side of the pandemic is not going to look like the world we left behind. We are discussing modifications to proactively meet changing demand and create goals flexible enough to allow us to adapt quickly. We plan to re-evaluate every aspect of the association to make sure it remains relevant and provides what the membership needs for what comes next.

In times of hardship, bring people together.

The pandemic was the catalyst for focusing on underserved membership segments. A new registration structure lowered economic and other barriers for members, which more than doubled our conference attendance and led to more first-time attendees. Now that we have engaged them, we cannot abandon them. We are committed to finding ways to make virtual conference attendance a permanent fixture when in-person meetings resume.

Money & Business



NEW MONEY

Back to Basics

A new course goes virtual and reveals a new revenue source

By Rasheeda Childress The Print Services and Distribution Association knew its members wanted to help those new to their industry gain a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of printing. Hearing that need, the organization designed a course called Print Basics. ¶ “The association wanted to give people who were new to print a quick, deep saturation about all the intricacies of the print industry: everything from color theory to the way to connect different printing methods,” says Matt Bruno, PSDA executive vice president. “It’s quite eclectic, quite diverse, and quite expansive, as you can imagine.”

The program was designed in 2019 and set to launch in the spring of 2020. When the pandemic hit, PSDA saw only one option. “Hearing what our members had been saying for years, we knew there was no way we could not execute this program in 2020,” Bruno says.

While much of the course could readily be converted to virtual, there was a crucial, in-person component that required more thought.

“We were going to do in-person walkthroughs of manufacturing facilities where printing was actually being done—for people who have never seen a large-scale printing press,” Bruno says.

PSDA spent significant effort redesigning the walkthroughs to fit a virtual environment.

“They didn’t get to feel the hum of the machines or see the ink being laid down on paper,” Bruno says.

“What they got instead was a virtual walkthrough while somebody was hand-holding them, but without the loudness and without some of the other concerns of being in the manufacturing facility. From the satisfaction scores, the highest ratings were for these manufacturer walkthroughs.”

While the program had to deal with the realities of being launched during a pandemic, it met its budget and was well received by members, many of whom have been talking up the program to colleagues.

Due to that success, PSDA is offering the program twice this year. The first session uses the virtual framework the group shifted to because of the pandemic. However, Bruno hopes the second session—expected later in the year—can look more like the in-person program originally planned, provided it’s safe.

The program is also helping PSDA find new nondues revenue opportunities. “The virtual walkthroughs were so impactful that we’re in the process of using that model to create a new sponsorship opportunity for our supplier members,” Bruno says. “We can help them learn how to conduct these facility walkthroughs and what the best methodologies are.”

“From the satisfaction scores, the highest ratings were for these manufacturer walkthroughs.”

— Matt Bruno

IDEA BANK



Picturesque Participation

Association photo contest brings fun and an opportunity for education

WHAT’S THE GREAT IDEA? A photo contest showcasing public lands

WHO’S DOING IT? Montana Wilderness Association

WHAT’S INVOLVED? Annually, MWA invites members and nonmembers to submit photographs to its “Picture Wild Montana” contest. “We try to encourage people to submit photos of themselves, their family, and friends enjoying public lands—not just pretty sunsets, because we really want to feature how people enjoy public lands, more so than just beautiful landscapes,” says Keely Damara, communications manager for the association. ¶ The contest is simple to run and creates engagement with MWA members and the public. The organization uses a software solution to make photo collection easy. Enthusiastic members and local media spread the word. When a person submits a photo, they must include not only where it was taken, but also which agency manages the land in the image and whether that land is protected. ¶ “Our members are pretty well educated because we educate them, but the average camper or hiker may not be,” Damara says. “It allows us to politely educate people on the variety of land management agencies and the ways lands are managed.” Entrants are also asked to include what they love about public lands. ¶ To judge the entries—600 this year—MWA takes a first look and narrows the field, before passing the final judging duties to the art director of a state outdoor magazine. The association’s partners, such as local footwear stores, provide prizes for the winners.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING? “People look forward to it every year,” Damara says. “They are always very excited about it. People really love sharing their favorite moments that they’ve experienced exploring our public lands.”—R.C.

THE FIX

MAXIMIZE YOUR VIRTUAL BOARD

Even with a vaccine rolling out, many board meetings will remain virtual in the coming months. **Martha Freeman**, global nonprofit sales leader with Passageways, offers tips to get the most out of a virtual or hybrid board meeting.

How can virtual platforms change board meeting dynamics?

It's really imperative to find a way to engage everyone. Sometimes that means assigning speaking roles or having specific people present. Sometimes that means the board chair is going to have to call on people to make sure they're engaged.

What is a key benefit of using a virtual board management tool?

One of the biggest things we talk about is the meetings need to be shorter. Instead of having live presentations, utilize prerecorded material and upload that into the board packet. A board member can consume that material when it's convenient. That might be while walking the dog in the morning or on the treadmill.

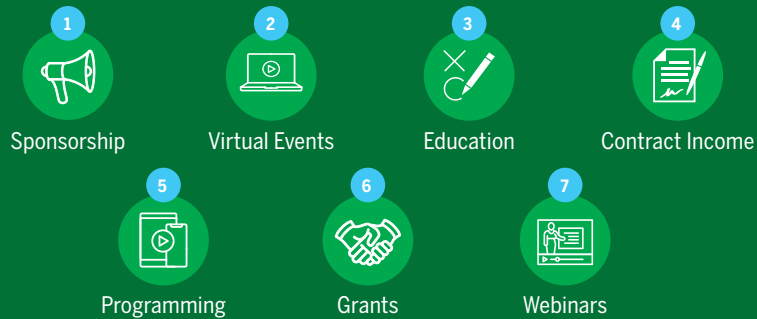
What is an example of how these tools can help a board be more nimble?

One organization used the approval functionality in a tool to approve a Paycheck Protection Program loan application. They needed it approved immediately. The board could actually do it on their phone. That helped ensure their organization would have the funds they would need to continue on during the pandemic. Associations can also sign documents that way. During a pandemic or not, it is very easy to access all the materials, especially when it comes to approval, voting, and e-signatures.

DATA POINT

TOP 7 PANDEMIC MONEymAKERS

The economic downturn caused by the pandemic forced many associations to look for new sources of revenue or squeeze more from existing sources. Where are they finding those dollars? According to a GrowthZone AMS survey, associations earning more than half their income from nondues revenue found the bulk of this income in seven areas last year:



For 2021, the list was the same, except for No. 7, where fundraising replaced webinars.

SOURCE: GrowthZone AMS, 2021 Association Annual Survey Results

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Technology



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TECH MEMO

Ready for Your Close-Up?

Video provides connection, emotion, and authenticity

By Lisa Boylan Video is a content form that delivers a lot of information—and emotion—in a small package. Associations are built around human connections and networking, and now, in a predominantly virtual environment, video has emerged as an important tool for connecting with members in the absence of face-to-face interaction. ¶ “We’re in a world where people don’t trust brands and institutions the way they used to,” says Michael Hoffman, CEO of the video platform Gather Voices. “We rely too much on brand communication, and we need to make members the hero of the story.”

A year of remote work, facilitated by video meetings and other virtual communication tools, has made many people more comfortable on camera. They've also become more accustomed to watching videos—in everyday life, on many platforms—that have a great story but not necessarily great production value. Video used to mean professionals, productions costs, vendors, experts, editors—the works. No more.

"We're in this weird space where if the production value is too high, the trust gets lower," Hoffman says. Rather than a high-gloss production, audiences want something real that resonates. With these different expectations, "there's no excuse not to be doing more video content," he says.

Although no one is expecting a Hollywood production, it's important to keep a few tips in mind when producing video content:

- 1 **People will watch a bad video with good sound, but they will not watch a good video with bad sound.** An external microphone on a smartphone "works wonders," Hoffman says.
- 2 **Authenticity is essential.** Association members in every profession have stories about their work that are "wild and interesting," he says. The key is to find those people, get them to tell their stories, and create a culture where people are sharing those videos. The storytelling needs to be real, not someone reading from a script. "That doesn't work anymore," he says.
- 3 **Representation matters.** If your goal is to increase the number of young members in your association, then it's essential to have your younger members telling their stories on video about how membership in your organization has benefited their careers or enriched their lives. "You've got to be able to reflect the actions you want other people to take," Hoffman says.

And while people have become accustomed to finding video content in online communities, email, and social media, it's increasingly appearing in other settings as well, such as job boards. On a job board, video can convey to job seekers why they should work at a particular organization. Meanwhile, more employers are asking applicants to make videos that showcase what they bring to the table, which Hoffman says can give candidates an edge in the recruitment process.

"That's a really powerful differentiator when you're looking for scarce talent," he says.

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TALKING TECH

CHATBOT BASICS

Chatbots can support your members with quick customer service while freeing up staff from responding to routine questions. **VILLY SAVINO**, vice president of technology transformation at CoreNet Global, explains how and what to consider before adding one to your website.

Why should associations use a chatbot?

They provide immediate responses for members, while allowing your staff to focus on more strategic projects. And they can save your organization money compared to hiring a full-time employee with benefits. You can program a chatbot to be available 24/7, which is great for associations with global member outreach. Everyone's wearing 10 or more hats right now, so we need to figure out how we can work better and smarter. Chatbots can help you do that.

What should you take into consideration before implementing one?

Before launching a chatbot, you need to make sure it's easy for your staff to use. It's one thing to create a chatbot that looks good for members, but it needs to be just as easy and intuitive for the people administering it. It's critical for whoever is choosing the technology to understand who's going to be maintaining the chatbot, because part of the success of the tool itself is the people who are going to use it, manage it, and make sure it's up to date.

What are the long-term benefits of a chatbot?

A chatbot allows you to increase engagement through your web interface. If a member comes to your website and they're asking questions and getting the answer that they want, they're going to keep coming back. If you don't have the answers they want, they're going to abandon your site and go elsewhere. Engagement is critical, and it will help drive revenue. The ability to get answers quickly with a chatbot will allow you to convert your users through membership and registration a lot faster.

Membership



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MEMBERSHIP MEMO

Tap Your Real-Time Data

Behavioral data reveals member preferences

By Lisa Boylan An all-digital world has opened the door to more revealing member data. Members are connecting more through online platforms like social media, online community forums, and virtual events, which is painting a much more accurate picture of their interests. Tracking these behaviors, often in real time, will help associations be more responsive to member needs. ¶ “We can use all of these disparate pieces of data of how a member interacted with a virtual meeting, content, or on social media, to paint a richer picture,” says Tom Lyons, director of IT

at the American Society for Microbiology.

The ASM team is looking at member behavioral and demographic data to improve their understanding of what members are really interested in. “What we’re trying to do is find things of meaning and value to the people in our community,” Lyons says. Behaviors provide a more realistic glimpse into member preferences than an outdated member profile.

Data is everywhere; it just needs to be tapped. Beyond web analytics, online communities provide a dynamic way to find out what members are thinking in any given moment, social media gives a more personal picture, and the chat function in a virtual meeting platform reveals what’s on members’ minds when they’re engaged at conferences.

This more comprehensive and meaningful data mining can lead to strategies for more personalization and allows an association to anticipate what members will interact with or what they need—and provide it even faster. “Gathering quick intelligence gives associations the opportunity to then turn it around into an actionable item,” Lyons says. When an association does that well, revenue usually follows.

Where is the best place to start analyzing members’ behavioral data among online communities, virtual meetings, or social media? “Don’t try to do everything at once,” he advises. “Start with the one you’re most comfortable with, because then you’re working from a source of strength.”

Getting a real-time analysis of how members are engaging will help associations navigate uncertain terrain and remain relevant, responsive, and useful to their communities.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

SPEAKING TRUTH TO VIDEO

Members tell real stories about their transformative experiences

A series of recorded member recruitment webinars helped introduce the United Fresh Produce Association to industry professionals who didn’t typically come to its events. The project created microvolunteering opportunities and attracted new—and sometimes elusive—members.

“We figured people who were watching the videos were on the fence, and so it would be good to hear from someone who was also at one point on the fence,” says Miriam Wolk, CAE, vice president of member services at United Fresh. “It gives rise to a whole new generation of members.”

Three reasons the webinars succeeded:

1 MEMBER STORIES. The webinars feature members talking about their membership journey. United Fresh chose members who had not seen the value of the association previously, but had a transformative experience to share.

2 DEEPER ENGAGEMENT. A company Wolk had tried to engage for more than 12 years joined United Fresh after watching one of the recorded webinars. “Video captures more of the senses than just a two-dimensional marketing piece or even a website,” she says.

3 NEW OPPORTUNITIES. Participating in the webinars gave members a chance to microvolunteer, without the lengthy commitment of serving on a committee. The webinars also gave young professionals, who might not have had a chance to attend a large conference or event, an opportunity for professional development.—L.B.

DATA POINT

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Job services and career boards had low levels of member engagement before the pandemic, and plans for developing new products for members were a low priority, according to the 2020 *Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report* by Marketing General Incorporated, which was conducted just before COVID-19 hit. MGI followed up with the *Association Economic Outlook Report* in October, which indicated that there had been a significant shift.

“Don’t waste your association’s hardships,” says Tony Rossell, senior vice president of MGI and the coauthor of both reports. “Use this time to innovate, to re-engage members, and make the changes you’ve perhaps been putting off for a long time.”

Before: 2019

43% of associations said they were encouraging staff to participate in virtual professional development opportunities

68% of respondents said their association wanted to develop new products to assist members

After: 2020

84% of respondents said they plan to increase virtual professional development opportunities for members

78% indicated their association is looking to develop new products and services to assist members

SOURCES: Marketing General Incorporated, 2020 *Association Economic Outlook Report* and 2020 *Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report*

Meetings



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MEETINGS MEMO

Value for Virtual Exhibitors

Prioritize engagement packages over the expo hall

By Samantha Whitehorne When the American Society of Anesthesiologists canceled its 2020 live annual meeting and held a fully virtual program instead, organizers didn't necessarily have great expectations, especially when it came to its expo. ¶ "We knew, going into the meeting, that the exhibit hall was not going to be a sought-out destination for meeting attendees, and that we needed to drive them there," says ASA CEO Paul Pomerantz, FASAE, CAE. ¶ So, the ASA team did what it could, using responsive

design to encourage mobile participants to visit, as well as linking to the virtual exhibit hall from other areas of the virtual event platform. But organizers knew those tactics wouldn't likely help with another hurdle—getting smaller or unknown exhibiting companies in front of attendees. In a live setting, Pomerantz says, “they benefit by just being in the [exhibit] hall, where attendees are.” That kind of happenstance discovery by attendees who just walk by a booth is wiped out in the virtual space.

So, ASA de-emphasized the exhibit hall altogether, instead steering participating companies to invest in “engagement packages,” which included non-continuing-medical-education sessions, educational resource offerings, and organized networking opportunities called “Table Talks.”

These were highly attended, Pomerantz says, and often drew hundreds of people, which sponsoring companies were thrilled with. Participants relished the opportunity to ask questions or converse via the chat feature, and sponsored roundtables about career development and diversity also proved particularly popular.

For the latter, the team used Remo, a virtual networking platform. “It was almost like walking into a large room of roundtables, scoping out the room, looking at different topics—you click on the table of interest, and you’re there with four or six other participants,” Pomerantz says. “The energy was high; it was really quite remarkable.”

In the future, Pomerantz says, ASA is going to have to continue to think creatively when designing sponsored opportunities for the virtual space.

“We will stick with our formula of deemphasizing the exhibit hall and booth in the future, but we have work to do on strengthening the opportunities for engagement and better ways to share exhibitors’ educational resources,” he says. “Also, we’re predicting that we’ll host a hybrid event in October 2021, so we’re starting to begin discussions now about how we meet exhibitor needs simultaneously in in-person and virtual spaces.”

SMART BUSINESS

VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

Preserving the human element during an online conference

THE PROBLEM. As the National Association of Realtors (NAR) prepared for its 2020 annual conference and expo last November, the organization knew that many members in its audience were craving interaction. Despite doing brisk business, Realtors were experiencing the same effects of quarantining as many others around the world during the COVID-19 crisis. “We had heard quite a bit from our leadership that our members were feeling particularly isolated,” says Bonnie Stetz, director of conference content design at NAR. “Most [of them], by nature, are quite outgoing and used to connecting with people daily.”

THE TACTICS. With that in mind, Stetz and the NAR team knew they needed to prioritize attendee wellness and human connection. In addition to a match-making tool that helped pair up attendees with similar interests and an open Zoom room that replicated the casual environment of an expo hall, the program included an element in short supply in 2020: fun. A magician offered a break on opening day, and a book club gave attendees an opportunity to discuss lessons from Glennon Doyle’s *Untamed* in advance of the author’s closing keynote session. Those events, coupled with activities like a battle of the DJs and an evening bingo contest, sought to make participants feel more a part of a community. “It was important to give them every opportunity to not only learn, but connect in a material way,” Stetz says.

THE RESULTS. All these pieces came together well. According to Stetz, “post-event evaluation questions about networking opportunities and getting to know other attendees actually had higher scores than in 2019 and 2018.”—S.W.

DATA POINT

BUSINESS TRAVEL RECOVERY FORECAST

Business travel came to a halt in March 2020 due to the pandemic. But what will it look like in 2021 and beyond? Here’s a recovery timeline from the Global Business Travel Association’s annual *BTI Outlook*.

- **2025**
Full recovery to pre-pandemic levels.
- **2024**
Business travel spending projected to reach \$1.4 trillion, nearly equaling pre-pandemic peak of \$1.43 trillion in 2019.
- **2023**
Annual business travel spending growth expected to slow.
- **2022**
Further acceleration in business travel predicted, including a significant pickup in group meeting activity.
- **2021**
21% projected increase in business travel spending. Most is expected to come at the end of the year as vaccinations increase and consumer confidence returns.



In Search of New Revenue

To help offset financial losses from pandemic-related cancellations, some associations launched new revenue-generating products—and they did it fast. Those that succeeded followed a common formula: **identifying a need, **listening to members**, and **responding with speed and flexibility**.**

by Rasheeda Childress



For most associations, 2020 saw financial losses from major in-person events, like annual meetings and member trainings. While many struggled to recover from the tailspin, some were able to restore balance by coming up with innovative ideas that generated revenue to replace their lost income.

How did they do it? While a rapid product launch during a pandemic may seem like magic, it's more akin to following a formula with three essential elements. It starts with identifying a pressing need, and then figuring out how to address it. After that, an association can quickly develop a product, understanding that the objective is to try something, not to achieve perfection on the first attempt.

Even in an environment that requires speed, associations should do some market research to make sure they are on the right path, says Michael Tatonetti, CPP, CAE, founder of Pricing

for Associations. But don't let the term "market research" scare you.

"It's really about getting customer feedback from the specific segment you want to utilize the product," he says. "Try to get 2 to 5 percent of your audience to test it and give feedback, and then listen to them."

Listening is key because it will help guide product adjustments if something isn't working. "If you're proving a concept, it's not going to be 100 percent amazing from the jump," Tatonetti says. In this rapid environment, "figure out how you get it to 80 percent done and then launch. It doesn't have to be perfect."

It also doesn't have to be a brand-new product. "Half of what I've worked on with people [during the pandemic] has been something brand new," he says. "The other half has been looking at how to restructure. It's not just what's new and hot, but it's also what can we revamp and

make better, so we can have this as a good revenue stream."

The typical product development process takes nine months to a year, but now many associations are launching products in two to six months. "It depends on how much you already know about your people and the problem you're solving," Tatonetti says. "If you know more, then you can move much more quickly."

Finally, associations launching speedily enjoy support from their boards and use their existing budgets creatively. "They are quickly bringing ideas and getting permission to rock-and-roll within the budgets they have," he says.

Can it really be done? Consider these stories from three associations' proof of concept.

Meeting COVID-19 Member Needs

Building Service Contractors Association International was able to launch an



We doubled what we thought we would make on a return, and part of that was the increase in attendees.”

— Jena Eberly Stack, American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants

were thoughtful about the amount of time, thoughtful about the price point, thoughtful about how broad and specific some of the training was, making sure it was at the right education level,” he says. “It was a nice complement to our strategic plan of providing the kinds of resources that our members needed at a price they could afford to really deploy it broadly.”

entirely new product in three months after identifying a pandemic-related need of its members, who provide building maintenance and cleaning services.

“We realized there wasn’t training that spoke specifically to front-line cleaners that was really affordable and at an education level specific to [them],” says BSCAI Executive Director Christopher Mundschenk, CAE. “The board saw a real opportunity.”

A product for cleaners was a change for BSCAI, which typically provides training to executives and managers. “[Member] companies typically were responsible for training their front-line folks on process, how to use equipment, and how to use chemicals,” Mundschenk says. “We saw a real need to jump in and provide value to our members—and to those outside of our association—that really streamlined and saved them all the need to go out and re-create the wheel.”

The hardest part of creating the new course was getting the right

information, as safety guidelines kept changing early on in the pandemic. After that, everything came together smoothly.

“From start to finish, it was probably a three-month development, which is light speed,” Mundschenk says. “In the past, it has taken longer to get broad consensus for curriculum, to attach thought leaders, to develop the material, record the material, and get it into the [learning management system]. This was really a streamlined process driven by need. We knew speed to market was critically important for keeping people from dying.”

BSCAI’s COVID-19 Disinfection and Safety Course launched to incredible popularity. “We had targeted to produce \$100,000 worth of revenue, and it exceeded that,” Mundschenk says. That new income “went a long way to offset the revenue we lost from in-person and the shift to virtual.”

He credits the success to the product’s development process. “We

‘Razzle-Dazzle’ for the Directory

The Society for Scholarly Publishing canceled its annual meeting outright when the pandemic hit, realizing it didn’t have enough time to convert it to a meaningful virtual experience. Instead, SSP looked to other products to increase revenue.

“We wanted to come up with new things to razzle-dazzle people a bit,” says Christina DeRose, an industry relations associate at SSP.

One new thing was a redesigned online member directory, which the organization knew could perform better, both in providing value and revenue. The team began by talking to members who had previous listings to learn what was missing and what would improve its value.

“We did the market research,” DeRose says. “We asked: Is this really valuable? Are there any other players right now? Is this being offered somewhere else? Are we doing a duplicate process? We went through it in a very strategic way.”

During the design phase, talks with members revealed that some were concerned the new directory, called Solutions Source, wouldn't have enough visitors.

"We figured out ways we could drive traffic to the site to help suppliers get visibility," says SSP Executive Director Melanie Dolechek. "We had an industry event calendar, where other organizations [and] our members could post events for free. We moved it from our main website over to Solutions Source. We created a freelancer directory with free listings because we knew people were out of work with the pandemic. We wanted to create these resources that would help our community but also help drive traffic to the directory."

To ensure they were doing it right, SSP did a small, initial launch with organizational members. "That soft launch was so critical," DeRose says. "It really allowed me to evaluate pain points."

In addition to Solutions Source, SSP launched two other products, OnDemand Video Content Library and Quick Connect, which pairs up members for the type of quick chats they might have at in-person events. All were launched without adding much to the budget.

"With our OnDemand library, we reached out to one of our supplier members; they had a platform and they donated part of the platform in kind," Dolechek says. "You can get creative to find more financially effective ways to do things." While Quick Connect was designed as a member engagement tool, a sponsor made it a revenue generator.

New Career Options

The American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants also canceled its meeting due to the pandemic, leaving it with a lot of unused content. At the same time, frontline nurses were struggling through the pandemic.

"We saw a lot of fatigue in 2020 related to the clinical side" of nursing, says Jena Eberly Stack, the association's executive director. "AALNC had an opportunity to support them and share what options they could explore in the legal nursing side of the world, if they wanted to do that." AALNC

Advice From the Trenches

Pivoting to produce new revenue quickly isn't easy. Here, association experts offer advice to make your journey less bumpy.

Be prepared. "Within our strategic plan, we identify things we are doing now that support our strategic goals, what's in progress, and things we want to explore," says Melanie Dolechek, executive director at the Society for Scholarly Publishing. "That way, we have a pipeline of potential programs that support our overall strategic goals."

You can't do everything. "Be careful of the scope creep," says Jena Eberly Stack, executive director at the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants. "[You have] to navigate how much staff capability you have and how many hands and feet you have to get things done. That means saying no to some

things and stopping some programs to make room for others."

Start small. "If you want to test an idea and get it out there quickly, it doesn't have to be 100 percent integrated with your [association management system] in a huge expense," Dolechek says. "Try it in a manual way, and you can always improve it later. Get some feedback before you start investing huge amounts of money. That really lowers the barriers to trying something new."

Reinforce what works. "An association should look at your top two or three revenue streams, and that will tell you where to lean in," says consultant Michael Tatonetti, CPP, CAE. "Your people are already familiar, and you can quickly pivot and give better value." —**R.C.**

members are nurses who provide analysis of clinical issues in a variety of legal settings.

The organization created LNC Jumpstart, a half-day, virtual course. "This was a target market for clinical nurses who were still in the field and potentially looking to do something different as a next step in their career or as supplement to their career," Stack says. "We had breakout times for attendees to talk to speakers and to actually put an action plan together for starting their own business as an LNC."

AALNC spent time learning what members wanted as it designed the course. Because nurses were extremely busy during the pandemic, the group used feedback around timing—Friday was preferred—to finalize the schedule. "Had we just done it blindly without any information, we may not have seen such a good result," Stack says.

The event pulled in about 100 attendees, which was about a third of

the typical attendance for an annual meeting. "We doubled what we thought we would make on a return, and part of that was the increase in attendees," Stack says. "We also had a surprise sponsor. So, all of that made the program a lot more successful than we expected."

Because the canceled conference meant the budget was already tight, AALNC hosted LNC Jumpstart on Zoom, without purchasing extra features. "That is not necessarily something I would repeat, but it certainly worked in 2020 and gave us the ability to deliver something that was affordable and met our members' needs at the same time," Stack says.

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BLUEPRINT FOR THE HYBRID

What will work look like when some employees return to the office and some stay permanently remote? Making plans while aiming at a moving target has not been easy, but associations are putting pieces in place for a revised workplace, perhaps forever changed by the pandemic. Here is a glimpse of what's happening so far.

by Lisa Boylan

OFFICE

The past year has forced people to re-evaluate a lot of preconceived notions about how they work. In many association headquarters, physical workspaces were stuck in a hierarchical grid, with offices surrounding a perimeter and cubicles filling in the middle. Commuting two hours a day was normal for many employees in major cities. Meanwhile, remote work policies were often inconsistent, and work-from-home arrangements were treated like a coveted prize in a contest with unwritten rules for entry.

But, like many things during the past year, preconceived notions were no match for reality.

A year into the COVID-19 pandemic, associations are contending with how, when, and—in some cases, whether—to return to the office. Productivity has increased, employees prefer the flexibility of remote work, and with less need for office space, many associations are calculating the cost savings of a significantly reduced footprint.

Remote Work Converts

Before the pandemic, the American Industrial Hygiene Association allowed employees to work remotely one to three days a week, but AIHA CEO

Larry Sloan, CAE, was not comfortable going further. All that has changed.

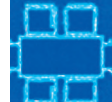
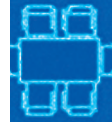
“I really did a 180 on allowing folks to expand their teleworking,” he says. “I quickly became a convert.”

After witnessing how well his staff worked remotely, Sloan realized that even after the pandemic is over, AIHA could loosen up its teleworking policy and allow employees to work remotely full time. The staff response when this option was announced last fall was “phenomenal,” he says. “People were just ecstatic.”

Jim Penrod, CAE, executive director of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) had many conversations with his staff after they shifted to remote work. Only one employee out of 21 said he wanted to come back to the office full time.

“They prefer the virtual work environment,” Penrod says. “It allows them to be more focused and get more accomplished.”

At AIHA, more remote work options meant Sloan could consider downsizing the organization’s office space. With a lease that will be up at the end of the year, he started researching other real estate options in and around Falls Church, Virginia, where the office is located. He focused on



Staff will share workspaces and be in the office on a rotating basis.

The American Industrial Hygiene Association's anticipated new office layout

Small-group workspaces will allow staff to collaborate.

With a new lease set to begin in 2022, AIHA expects to cut its office space in half.

AIHA's current office space is 17,000 square feet.

AIHA's current office layout

moving to a “hoteling” approach where staff would share workstations and be present in the office on a rotating basis.

Sloan and his team ran the concept by the AIHA board and executive committee last fall, explaining that with the new remote work option they could cut their 17,000-square-foot office space in half. That would save hundreds of thousands of dollars on a new lease beginning in 2022—money that could be used for program development and new staff rather than overhead. The board approved the plan.

Because employees indicated their overwhelming preference for remote work, AAVSB will also make changes to its office space, Penrod says. The new space will be designed primarily for group work and meetings, with a few cubicle spaces for any staff who want to work in the office on a more regular basis and some shared desks for hoteling. Partitions will be removed in the open space to make it more conducive to group work. Soft surfaces like couches and comfortable chairs will be brought for in-person brainstorming exercises and team meetings.

A Phased Approach

Returning to the office won't be like flipping a switch. Even as more people are vaccinated against COVID-19, employees' different experiences with the pandemic are likely to produce various comfort levels with the idea of going back out into the world.

Striking a balance for employees is paramount for leaders at the Center for Health Affairs. Realizing that staff members will feel differently about returning to the office, CHA focused on its core values to help guide its policy, says Lesley Forneris, CHA's people officer.

“We're not only looking at it from the physical safety of our employees, but also the mental health and well-being of our employees,” she says.

CHA has been seeking feedback from staff through pulse check-in surveys to gauge how they feel about returning. “We all left at the same time, but we're certainly not going to return at the same time—or in the same way,” she says.

A remote workforce was not new to CHA. With a staff of roughly 120 employees, some positions were 100 percent remote before the pandemic, so the technology and infrastructure were in place to support it. When CHA made the switch to all-remote work last year, employees “overwhelmingly” said how much they liked it, Forneris says.

She adds that CHA's employee engagement scores are the highest they have been in four years, making a significant leap from 73 percent in 2019 to 83 percent in 2020. That is not entirely because of remote work, she says, but it is a factor.

Given that success, CHA leaders expect that some employees will continue to work remotely even after the pandemic is over. “We're very comfortable having some sort of hybrid workforce,” Forneris says.

After staying completely virtual for the first quarter of 2021, CHA will offer opportunities for groups of volunteers to slowly come back to the office starting this spring, capping the number at no more than 25 people in the building at a time. Leadership will continue to monitor the number of COVID-19 cases, especially in Ohio, where CHA is located.

“We really have to see where the numbers are to make firmer timelines,” Forneris says. “There are a lot of variables.”

One challenge will be to avoid creating two cultures, with one

close-knit group working in the office and another group of remote employees feeling disconnected, she says. Similarly, CHA management will need to ensure that employees who come into the office don't get more exposure to opportunities to participate in projects and initiatives, or more face time with managers and leaders, while people who work remotely are inadvertently left out.

Plans Amid Uncertainty

The School Nutrition Association does not have an official date for returning to the office, but that decision will be based on two criteria, says Rhea Steele, CAE, SNA's chief of staff. One is widespread distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines, and the second is more availability of effective treatments for the virus, similar to treatments that are available for the flu.

In the interim, to address the needs of staff members who do need to return to the office for certain tasks, Steele's team has released safety protocols, using the building's guidelines as a baseline. Staff members must complete an online form, two days in advance, requesting permission to access the building. They must indicate the time of day they plan to be there, what areas of the office they will visit, and what tasks they plan to perform. With 90 percent of staff in workstations instead of offices, employees in adjacent workstations are not permitted to go in at the same time.

The online form goes to Steele and the office manager, who review it to make sure it is a reasonable request for entering the building. On the day of the visit, the staff member is required to fill out an online form listing their temperature and answering standard wellness questions. They must message the office manager when they arrive at the building and when they leave so Steele can keep records and conduct contact tracing, if necessary.

When eventually the time comes to reopen, SNA will have a flexible policy on returning to the office, she says.

Snapshot

The number of remote workers in the next five years is expected to be nearly double what it was before COVID-19: By 2025, **36.2 million Americans will be working remotely**, an 87 percent increase from pre-pandemic levels.

Remote work will continue through 2021:

Managers believe that **26.7 percent of the workforce will be fully remote in one year**, suggesting that employees will gradually continue to return to the office, but a significant share will remain remote in the near future.

Companies say remote work is getting easier, not harder: **68 percent of hiring managers say remote work is going more smoothly** now than when their company first made the shift at the start of the pandemic.—L.B.

SOURCE: Upwork, 2020 Future Workforce Pulse Report

Even if many people are back in the office and just a few remain remote, staff meetings will remain virtual to avoid a culture where remote employees feel left out.

"We want to maintain collegiality," Steele says. "We don't want people to feel excluded because they're not able to be in the office."

SNA is also trying to navigate employee preferences. Some employees haven't responded as well as others to the remote environment, and they're eager to return. Steele wants to make sure there is a safe space for them when they're ready to come back, "but the people this is working well for, let's let them run with it."

Although the details of SNA's plan are still emerging, "I am anticipating our workforce will remain hybrid for quite a period of time," she says.


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- "Five Elements of a Successful Post-Pandemic Workforce Strategy," by Jason Jones, *asaecenter.org*, January 4, 2021
- "How Leaders Can Handle Remote Work's Diversity Challenge," by Mark Athitakis, *associationsnow.com*, September 20, 2020



This year won't bring the complete recovery for face-to-face meetings that many have hoped for. **But things are looking up.** Associations have learned to be creative, innovative, and safe while bringing attendees together. **by Mark Athitakis**

The Outlook for In-Pers

The New York Society of Association Executives is one of the lucky ones. It was able to host a major in-person event in 2020, and it plans to do the same this year. But much has changed between then and now.

Meet NY, a hosted-buyer event that has accounted for 40 percent of NYSAE's annual revenue, drew a packed house in February 2020, with 500 attendees spending the day at a Manhattan hotel, followed by a group trip to a Broadway performance that night. Broadway has been shut down for the past year, but NYSAE plans to soldier on with a September event that will include social distancing, temperature checks, and a Broadway-style performance brought to the hotel.

"We're not going to be able to put 500 people in a ballroom like we did anymore," says NYSAE CEO and Executive Director Holly J. Koenig. "We are looking at a reduction in attendees and a reduction in sponsors and exhibitors. But whatever that reduction is, we're going to live with it."

Like a lot of associations, NYSAE has been eager to return to in-person meetings in 2021. Attendees miss networking; exhibitors miss the



leads; associations miss the revenue. While many associations anticipate that COVID-19 vaccinations and safety protocols will allow for a return to in-person conferences in the summer and fall, structurally they'll be different than in 2019. They might be more local, co-located, shorter, or simply smaller. And regardless of format, associations have been paying more attention to what attendees say will make them feel safe when they get there.

A (Virtual) Listening Tour

The enthusiasm for getting back to meeting in person is strong, says Carol McGury, executive vice president, event and education services, at the association management company SmithBucklin. "Probably 70 percent of our associations have started to more actively monitor members about meeting in person, and we've been planning accordingly," she says.

Before bringing back Meet NY in June, NYSAE surveyed its 2020 attendees to gauge their comfort level with meeting in person. It decided to move forward only after hearing that more than two-thirds of the respondents wanted a live program. Similarly, the Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening has been surveying potential attendees every month in advance of a planned in-person event in Vienna, Austria, in June, asking whether they'll attend if vaccinations and air travel safety hit certain benchmarks.

"We fully expect that the event will have lower attendance than in previous years and that attendance from outside Europe will drop significantly," says SLAS CEO Vicki Loise, CMP, CAE. "But it's still very important for us to try and hold this event in person, if it makes sense."

The interest in returning clashes somewhat with the anxiety that many people still feel about in-person meetings—and traveling to them.

To address that, the Coin Laundry Association is planning a smaller return to normal. CLA Connect Live, a series of small member gatherings around the country, shifted to

virtual in 2020 and is now planning a face-to-face comeback starting in July. Danielle Bauer, CAE, director of membership and education at CLA, says it's targeting regions where it has held successful in-person events in the past. Doing it right, though, has required reconsidering venues—and especially the RSVP process, to forestall same-day surprise arrivals.

“Pre-COVID it might have been OK, but now nobody wants to squeeze people in at a table,” she says. “We might have to rethink our venues a bit. Some restaurants are probably not going to work.”

Together Again, But Differently

In 2017, the Audio Engineering Society (AES) and National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) agreed to co-locate an annual conference held in New York. They went their separate (virtual) ways in 2020, but this year they plan to reconvene in October in Las Vegas.

At the start of the relationship, says Chris Brown, NAB executive vice president of conventions and business operations, it “enabled us to exponentially increase attendance and expand the show floor—a win-win for our attendees and exhibitors.” Now, with an ongoing recession and plenty of concerns about meeting in person, a co-located event serves more as a show of strength in a challenging time.

“So much business is done in person, and so much information is passed along that way, so we made the decision that it was vital that we be present again in some form,” says Graham Kirk, director of sales and marketing at AES. However, the organization is making some concessions to the new normal, cutting the length of the AES portion of the conference from four days to three and anticipating a smaller group—approximately 75 percent of 2019's attendance.

“There's certainly more activity around co-location,” says Jeff Calore, portfolio director, event services, at SmithBucklin, “particularly groups that bring synergies and are additive to one another in terms of content, audience reach, and buyer segments that one single event was delivering before.”

Regardless of format, there's a stronger emphasis on safety for the meetings that happen. Donna J. Kelley, U.S. account sales leader for Marriott International (and an NYSAE board member), says the company anticipates a tentative return to in-person meetings in the late summer and fall. But Marriott has developed protocols for cleaning and social distancing and has developed flexibility around an environment that's still shifting.

“Probably 70 percent of our associations have started to more actively monitor members about meeting in person, and we've been planning accordingly.”

— Carol McGury,
SmithBucklin



“We'll seek guidance from meeting planners to meet their needs,” she says. “If an organization usually has 1,000 attendees and now projects to host 500 people, we'll work with them to socially distance the meeting room sets, make suggestions to serve food and beverage, and highlight safety protocols for all guests.”

An Opportunity to Innovate

Smaller, though, doesn't necessarily mean lesser. Last year, the Association for Advancing Physician and Provider Recruitment shifted its annual meeting in Dallas to a virtual event. But it decided to experiment with a smaller event at the same venue this spring.

The hosted-buyer event will be limited to 100 member attendees, coming for free, and no more than 20 paying exhibitors.

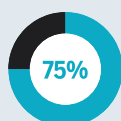
AAPPR CEO Carey Goryl, CAE, said surveys of members showed that about half of potential attendees would be comfortable flying to an event in April. “The issue is that people were unsure about their [travel] budget,” she says. “So we thought, if we can take budget costs out of the equation and just limit it to whether they felt it was safe to travel, we could try that.”

The initial outreach was positive—most of the slots filled quickly. “I just kept getting green light after green light,” she says.

Will They Come Back?

In January, Bruce Rosenthal Associates, association meeting planner Paul Miller, and association consultancy Ricochet conducted a survey of more than 8,500 members from 26 associations about their comfort with returning to in-person meetings. Among the findings:

2019 ATTENDEES

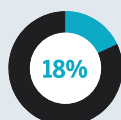


in-person meeting



virtual or hybrid event

2020 ATTENDEES



in-person meeting



virtual or hybrid event

2021 PLANS



will attend an in-person event this year

Among employers who paid for member meeting travel in 2019, only 44 percent said they will do so in 2021, 16 percent said they will cover costs for virtual meetings only, and 9 percent said they won't pay at all.

Given the softening financial support from employers, and with virtual and hybrid events still available, associations need to keep their options open, Bruce Rosenthal says. "With folks interested in all three formats, associations really need to be prepared to offer the best and greatest experience for attendees as well as sponsors in the coming year."—M.A.



Goryl anticipates that in 2022, the hosted-buyer event won't be a substitute for a larger in-person meeting that couldn't come off. It will be a new meeting—and new revenue driver.

"This has definitely turned into a pilot," she says. "If it's as successful as it appears to be, I'll certainly want to do it again. If it weren't for COVID, I don't know that we would have had the same opportunity to try out a completely new event."

MARK ATHITAKIS is a contributing editor to *Associations Now*. Email: mathitakis@asaecenter.org



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- "Five Legal Questions About Resuming In-Person Events as COVID-19 Continues," by Jeffrey S. Tenenbaum, asaecenter.org, August 4, 2020

How Performance Marketing Can Help Associations

Your association's usual strategies for reaching its audience might not work so well right now. Performance marketing can help you sharpen your aim. **By Melissa Bouma**



Melissa Bouma, president of Manifest, has more than 15 years of experience building insight-driven branding and content strategy, with a client base representing large companies, major universities and prominent associations.

HAVE YOU EVER WATCHED the Super Bowl and wondered what it must be like to have a massive budget to devote to a single 30-second ad?

Once it airs, millions of dollars are gone in basically the blink of an eye, and although the reach and earned media is there, the return isn't actually measurable.

Associations, by and large, don't have that kind of budget to spend on a TV spot. But they do need a strong marketing strategy to drive new members to join and to attract attendees to their next virtual events.

One way to attract the right audience without blowing your budget is through performance marketing. At its most basic level, performance marketing is a piece of marketing content that can be measured, allowing you to accurately gauge its return on investment.

This approach can take a lot of different forms. For example, you may create a blog post that is intentionally designed to work in a paid search context, hitting terms you know will do well with your audience. Or you might build a video campaign that targets specific audiences through paid social media. You might also target your audience through services such as Outbrain or Taboola; the options are plentiful.

The audience is narrow, and the content is highly targeted toward action. As a result, you're paying small amounts to make a big impact that you can quantify to decide whether to double down or pull back. Performance marketing is growing in value: In a comprehensive 2018 study of the sector, the Performance Marketing Association estimated the industry's value at more than \$6.2 billion, with more than 200,000 businesses and individuals taking part.

It has also gotten some high-profile attention. Last year, the management consulting firm McKinsey

wrote that performance marketing "will give marketers an edge when it comes to reaching their target groups efficiently during and after the pandemic."

While this is an emerging category, it also isn't on the bleeding edge—and that means there are established tactics that associations can try as they experiment with performance marketing.

THE BENEFITS OF SMALL SCALE

The beauty of performance marketing is that because you're only spending small amounts of money on paid advertising, it allows for a lot of testing and refinement.

That testing can cut across demographics and specific audiences so you can target your messaging as narrowly as needed. You can then experiment to see what works best and, over time, check your results to figure out what worked and didn't.

If you want to target the C-suite or perhaps heads of HR, you can do so, and you can actually see if it's driving leads to your association over time. If it's not, you can stop.

The result is that you can get really close to your audience and understand what your efforts and spend are netting you. Perhaps you started with 25 segments, but you cut it down after some initial testing to the most effective two or three segments. That means, rather than taking the old-school "spraying and praying" approach, your audience is tailored—and so is your messaging.

Performance marketing minimizes costs while maximizing results.

WHY ASSOCIATIONS SHOULD CARE

For associations, performance marketing may be a new way to think about solving the traditional problems of member marketing or promoting events. (Then again, given that events are largely remote right now, you're having to think in new ways already.) Nonetheless, performance marketing makes a lot of sense for associations as a way to target new members or sell new services to current members in a lean, thoughtful way.

That said, a good partner will help your association spot the differences between good performance marketing and bad performance marketing. After all, you don't want to waste time and money when the goal is saving time and money.

At this moment of tight budgets and fewer opportunities to reach members offline, you need marketing that's more down-funnel and is actually reaching your target audience, with the message you need them to read—one that encourages them to take action.

You may not have a Super Bowl budget at your disposal, but you might just get a better result.

To learn more about Manifest, go to manifest.com.

ASSOCIATION AGENDA

A SKILL-BUILDING BOOST

Tax credit would help workers access training, certification

By CHRIS VEST, CAE

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has not only left millions of Americans out of work, but it has also rapidly accelerated existing trends in remote work, e-commerce, and automation. In a post-pandemic labor market, these trends are likely to stick, forcing workers to switch occupations or learn new skills to remain viable.



As leaders in workforce development and post-college skills training, associations will be invaluable resources for workers transitioning to new careers and keeping pace with labor market demands. Congress has recognized the need for smart, flexible policy to reflect the continuing evolution of work.

In February, Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Ben Sasse (R-Neb.) reintroduced a bill that ASAE and other associations supported last year called the Skills Renewal Act. It would create a flexible tax credit of \$4,000 per person for workers who have lost their job due to the coronavirus pandemic to cover the cost of skills-training programs for high-demand capabilities. Companion legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-Wash.).

"As millions of American workers seek to re-enter the workforce after becoming unemployed during the pandemic, we must help them access training and development programs that will position them for success," Klobuchar said. The Skills Renewal Act "will help Americans afford the education necessary to thrive in their careers, helping set them on a path to long-term prosperity."

The tax credit is fully refundable, meaning it will be available to all workers, including low-income earners with no federal income tax liability. The credit could be applied to offset the cost of training programs such as apprenticeships, certification programs, and traditional two- and four-year education programs.

ASAE supports amendments to the bill proposed by the Professional Certification Coalition (of which ASAE is a cofounder and Steering Committee member). These amendments will ensure that the tax credit is available for use with a wide range of reputable national certification programs and for expenses associated with testing required to obtain or maintain a postsecondary credential.

CHRIS VEST, CAE, is vice president of corporate communications and public relations at ASAE. Email: cvest@asaecenter.org

FOUNDATION REPORT

CASE FOR COLLABORATION

Foundation study shows how associations have used partnerships to achieve greater impact

By JENNY NELSON

The pandemic has pushed association staffs to do more with less. However, it might also provide the opportunity for leaders to work together on shared needs and challenges.

Impact Every Day, the ASAE Research Foundation's new report on the role of associations in society, collected diverse evidence of associations' positive impact. A surprising reveal, though, was the importance of partnerships and collaboration to successful association initiatives. The report suggests that collaboration is key to transformative thinking, and it provides a collection of case studies that illustrate varied approaches to impactful partnerships.

Collaborate to Transform

For the study, researchers interviewed leaders from business, education, and other fields for their perspectives on associations. When they were asked for recommendations to improve the value of associations to their fields, greater collaboration among organizations was at the top of the list. Participants noted that such collaborations would strengthen the association sector and enable associations "to identify and promote areas of 'synergies' across industries."

Associations that take a collaborative approach

also have the potential to advance transformative thinking in their fields and across the association sector. Interviewed leaders could not settle on a single definition of "transformative thinking": A majority saw its purpose as addressing the current problems of their field, while a smaller group viewed transformative thinking as an imaginative and strategic consideration of future challenges.

Collaborate for Impact

Of the 20 initiatives profiled in the *Impact Every Day* case studies, 85 percent were developed through some kind of collaboration, often with other associations. The kinds of partnerships varied, and associations often engaged multiple partnerships at different junctures.

Not every partnership will—or has to—result in society-changing impact, but a collaborative approach will broaden an initiative's reach and help leaders and members think differently about the challenges before them.

The *Impact Every Day* study and related case studies are available in the ASAE Bookstore at asaecenter.org/bookstore.

JENNY NELSON is associate director, research content, at ASAE. Email: jnelson@asaecenter.org

EXECUTIVE PLANNER

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Exceptional Boards:
Strengthening the
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May 6-7

Online

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Women Executives
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in Unusual Spaces

June 16

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CEO Symposium

June 21-22

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Creating Your Content
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July 8

Online

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DESTINATION RECOVERY

DISCOVER PUERTO RICO

It's time to plan for Puerto Rico

CONTACT

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discoverpuertorico.com
DiscoverPuertoRico.com/
meetings

WHEN YOU PLAN YOUR EVENT

in Puerto Rico's island paradise, your attendees can look forward to turquoise deep dives, warm weather all year, endless non-virtual happy hours, and colorful ways to connect with one another.

ACCESSIBILITY HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

Because of its status as a U.S. territory, Puerto Rico offers the allure of an exotic locale with a rich, vibrant culture and unparalleled natural offerings, without needing a passport or currency exchange. Accessibility to the island has never been easier, with direct flights from domestic locations like New York, Charlotte, Dallas, Atlanta, and Detroit, among others.

Lodging options range from luxurious beachfront resorts to magical historic inns, and everything in between. High standards of health and safety have been implemented throughout the island, including local measures developed by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, along with U.S. Travel Association guidelines.

The highly anticipated Distrito T Mobile, opening in 2021, is an exciting option for groups. This experiential

complex combines the best in global retail, destination dining, art, entertainment, music, technology, and hospitality. Featuring an exhilarating urban zipline, a high-tech, open-air plaza, a production studio, and a brand new Aloft hotel, this entertainment district is destined to be the most vibrant and popular setting for events, conventions, and networking in the Caribbean.

AN ABUNDANCE OF OPTIONS

Puerto Rico offers an abundance of options for hybrid meetings, which will continue to be important in the coming months. The Puerto Rico Convention Center is the largest and most technologically advanced venue in the Caribbean, and also one of the greenest—with 20,000 solar panels and many other sustainable initiatives. Their new hybrid production studio will offer ways to engage attendees both virtually and in person. Managed by leading venue management company ASM Global, the Puerto Rico Convention Center boasts Venue Shield, ASM's environmental hygiene protocol, and was recently awarded the only GBAC Star Rating—an outbreak prevention, response, and recovery accreditation—in the region.

Outdoor options will continue to be an attractive alternative. Home to one of the world's largest dry forests, the only tropical rainforest in the U.S. National Forest System, hundreds of underground caves, 18 golf courses, and so much more, Puerto Rico delivers profound outdoor experiences, like kayaking the iridescent Bioluminescent Bay or ziplining through a canopy of emerald green to the sound of native coqui tree frogs.

The culture is equally impressive. Steeped in European architecture; eclectic flavors of Spanish, Taino, and African origins; and a rich history, Puerto Rico welcomes visitors with genuine, warm island hospitality. Explore the authentic local cuisine, the beat of captivating music and dance, and the bustling nightlife which, when blended together, create a unique energy you won't find anywhere else.

Take an exotic departure with your next meeting or event in Puerto Rico, the only island destination offering seamless accessibility, ease of transportation, and truly unforgettable island experiences for your attendees. Find out more at DiscoverPuertoRico.com/meetings.





IT'S TIME TO PLAN

Playa Escondida, Puerto Rico

It's time to plan meetings. In Puerto Rico, you and your attendees can explore turquoise deep dives, non-virtual happy hours and safe ways to connect. And with numerous ways to utilize our pristine beaches, mountains and rainforest as your event backdrop, planning a meeting in Puerto Rico will be as stress-free as our Island. Learn more at **DiscoverPuertoRico.com/meetings**.

DISCOVER
Puerto Rico

THE PALM BEACHES

Open for meetings, with open palms and open spaces



©The Palm Beaches, 2019

HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE TOP PRIORITIES FOR MEETINGS, and The Palm Beaches has the tools, resources, and support to integrate an all-encompassing wellness experience into your planning.

As the first and only destination in Florida to pursue destination-wide GBAC STAR™ Accreditation, attendees can be confident in the steps being taken to ensure their health and safety arrive in The Palm Beaches from the moment they arrive in the destination. The accreditation has become the industry-standard “Good Housekeeping seal,” and requires accredited facilities—including Palm Beach International Airport, the Palm Beach County Convention Center, its connected 400-room Hilton West Palm Beach, and several other properties and cultural centers—to undergo a rigorous, 20-element training and implementation process while following consistent health and safety protocols.

Partnerships with companies like SafeExpo for health screenings upon arrival and close relationships with healthcare providers and the Healthcare District of PBC provide access to top facilities and updated vital information to attendees. Additionally, hotel partners are also pushing the envelope on innovation, with everything from UV technology-enabled sanitizing walkthrough arches and regular electrostatic spray cleanings to hands-free meeting technology. DTPB has also created wellness kits for recent events, containing products like masks, hand sanitizer, and vitamins from locally headquartered Garden of Life.

WOW YOUR ATTENDEES OFF SCREEN

Mental and emotional wellbeing is as much of a priority as health and safety. In a time when we spend so much time on our screens, leverage our community partners to create

experiences that wow attendees with unique in-person or virtual experiences, without compromising safety.

DTPB's Destination Champions program, composed of nationally acclaimed guest speakers and volunteers—all of whom are conveniently based in the destination—offers the opportunity to integrate industry thought leaders seamlessly into events. Through a network of talented artisans, the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County can create an immersive experience within the meeting spaces with onsite art installations, performances, and exhibitions, or arrange for a visit to one of the 200-plus cultural institutions in the destination.

The Palm Beaches also offers food and beverage experiences that surprise and delight attendees. At a recent face-to-face event, the Palm Beach County Convention Center offered prepackaged snack medleys and local fresh-pressed juices, as well as made-to-order boxed lunches, and worked with local cafes to provide bite-sized desserts and individual charcuterie trays for an afternoon break. Everything was served safely and individually wrapped, while still offering delicious options with a local flair.

Attendees are also able to step outside and take advantage of The Palm Beaches' breathtaking natural beauty, and the health benefits that come from fresh air, year-round sunshine, and ocean waters along our 47 miles of Atlantic coastline. Outdoor event spaces run the gamut from lush courtyards and waterfront terraces to cultural institutions and private yacht charters. All these elements make social distancing easy and invite attendees to rejuvenate and stay inspired between sessions.

Contact The Palm Beaches at www.thepalmbeaches.com/meetings to plan your event!

Meeting with Open Palms



Plan a Meeting in The Palm Beaches and DISCOVER:

- Financial Support Dollars and Special Hotel Offers to assist in offsetting the overall cost of your meeting
- GBAC STAR™ Accredited Airport, Convention Center, hotels and attractions destination-wide
- Diverse hotel and venue options with expansive open air spaces to provide memorable experiences
- A dynamic, award-winning Destination Sales & Services team, ready to provide innovative solutions for your hybrid, in-person, and virtual events



ThePalmBeaches.com/Meetings
Sales@ThePalmBeaches.com
Meetings & Conventions | 877.722.2821

The Palm Beaches is proud to support a destination-wide commitment to pursuing GBAC STAR™ Accreditation. Visit our website to learn more.



VISIT LAUDERDALE OPEN FOR MEETINGS



The Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center expansion project is underway. And with Visit Lauderdale's Safe + Clean Pledge you can be assured that hotels, restaurants, attractions and other businesses are going above and beyond to keep your attendees safe. Be among the first to reserve your meeting space and it could be free. Learn more about our \$10 million in free meetings space offer at [VisitLauderdale.com/Meetings](https://www.visitlauderdale.com/meetings)



GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE

Safe meetings in the sunshine



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esimon@broward.org
VisitLauderdale.com/meetings

AS YOU PLAN FOR FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS,

Visit Lauderdale is working to help ensure Greater Fort Lauderdale is ready for you. From the expanded convention center to enhanced health and safety procedures, your attendees are sure to love more than our 23-miles of golden beaches.

CONVENTION CENTER REIMAGINED

The Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center expansion project is underway. The transformed venue will feature 350,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit space and an expansive outdoor waterfront plaza.

10 MILLION REASONS TO MEET IN GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE

Be among the first to reserve meeting space in the newly expanded Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center, and it could be free. Visit Lauderdale is giving away \$10 million in meeting space for events booked during eligible 2021 to 2024 dates.

PROTECTED WITH VENUESHIELD

As safety is a top priority, the transformed venue incorporates ASM Global's VenueShield environmental hygiene protocol to provide the highest levels of cleanliness and safety. Through partnerships with leading medical professionals, industry experts, and public health officials, the enhanced safety procedures of the expanded center will inspire the confidence of planners and attendees.

SAFE + CLEAN PLEDGE

The safety of planners, meeting attendees, visitors, and area residents is our highest priority in Greater Fort Lauderdale. Our hotels, attractions, and restaurants have taken the Visit Lauderdale Safe + Clean Pledge to keep your attendees safe.

WHAT MAKES THIS BEACH DIFFERENT?

When you're ready to hold your next meeting, our 23 miles of golden beaches await. Give your attendees wide open spaces to hike, bike, kayak, and paddleboard, including 300 miles of navigable waterways. Or take your group on an epic Everglades adventure.

Dine out in style in socially distanced dining rooms or al fresco on waterfront patios. The area's diverse dining scene includes everything from seafood and gastropub menus to vegan and farm-to-table fare. Sip on a cocktail and soak up the views at one of the many waterfront restaurants. And follow the Greater Fort Lauderdale Ale Trail to find local brews at some of the area's best breweries and craft beer bars, like the recently opened Sistrunk Marketplace & Brewery.

Round out your event with a wellness or shopping excursion. Greater Fort Lauderdale offers an array of spas and wellness centers, plus world-class shopping like Sawgrass Mills, The Galleria at Fort Lauderdale, and Las Olas Boulevard. And enjoy a variety of accommodations offering luxurious rooms and flexible meeting space, such as the new Hotel Maren Fort Lauderdale Beach or Hyatt Centric Las Olas.

So what makes this beach different? Everyone under the sun. Learn more about meetings in Greater Fort Lauderdale at VisitLauderdale.com/meetings.

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ASSOCIATIONS
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MEET AC

Meaningful meetings in Atlantic City

CONTACT

Meet AC

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President and Chief
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www.meetac.com



ATLANTIC CITY IS READY TO CREATE MEANINGFUL

meetings together, and sustainability efforts throughout our seaside destination show for itself.

Atlantic City's convenient location allows for visitors and meeting attendees to safely travel in the comfort of a car, not to mention it's more eco-conscious than traveling by airplane. However, air travel is available at Atlantic City International Airport, which is within 12 miles of Atlantic City, and Philadelphia International Airport is within 60 miles from Atlantic City. Located in the heart of the northeast and surrounded by many major cities, it's the perfect destination to hold your next meeting or convention for easy accessibility.

Leading the way with sustainable and energy efficient efforts, Atlantic City can give you the space you need! With more than 17,500 first-class hotel rooms, 1.8 million square feet of meeting space citywide, and 486,600 contiguous square feet of exhibit space at the LEED Gold and GBAC STAR certified Atlantic City Convention Center, we have the wide-open space you need for your group to meet with the proper social-distance specifications. Adding to the energy-efficient efforts is the largest single-roof-mounted solar array in the United States, which consists of 13,000 individual panels and covers over 290,000 square feet.

In need of an affordable, safe, and ecological mode of transportation for your attendees? The Atlantic City Jitney is the answer. Powered by compressed natural gas, this people mover runs throughout the city or can be tailored for a specific route for your event.

The Atlantic County Utilities Authority also plays a vital role in Atlantic City's energy efficiency efforts. Located at

ACUA, the Jersey-Atlantic Wind Farms have saved ACUA more than \$6.1 million in energy costs and have prevented more than 62,000 metric tons of CO2 from entering the atmosphere since its opening. This permits for a continued clean, safe, and healthy environment.

Focused on the future citywide sustainability and clean beaches, Atlantic City continues to offer a variety of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Regular beach cleanups help save and protect our important wildlife and ecosystem, while organizations such as the Atlantic City Boys & Girls Club, Atlantic City Rescue Mission, South Jersey Food Bank, and the Humane Society of Atlantic County always welcome volunteers to complete your organizations detailed CSR accreditations and help regenerate our destination.

Beautification projects are necessary for every destination and its environment to thrive. Atlantic City is home to more than 50 murals, which can be found throughout the city on exterior building walls. The stories behind the artists' work are as moving as the murals they create and continue to showcase the vibrancy of Atlantic City. In addition, after strolling the world-famous Boardwalk, you may find yourself resting in an Adirondack chair that has been constructed and remodeled by local artists.

Atlantic City is focused on the future as we continue to diversify ourselves and lead the way in regenerative tourism. We look forward to working with your group to establish meaningful meetings and conventions before, during, and after your event. Experiences await here.

EXPERIENCE ATLANTIC CITY'S

Incentives



2021-2025 **New** Group or Convention Bookings



Highly-competitive Room and **Meeting Cost** Incentives



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Contact us to learn more about Meet AC's attractive Convention Center & city-wide incentive plans! Call 1-844-855-6338 or visit meetac.com today!

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AC



OCEAN CENTER

Go beyond expectations in Daytona Beach

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oceancenter.com

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ASSOCIATIONS
NOW
SPRING 2021



THE VOLUSIA COUNTY OCEAN CENTER, located only 400 feet from the world-renowned sands of Daytona Beach and surrounded by outdoor adventures and incredible attractions and accommodations, is the modern, state-of-the-art facility that offers you the space, features, and attentive service needed to exceed expectations.

From an arena capable of holding more than 9,000 attendees to a 93,028-square-foot exhibit hall, as well as multiple meeting rooms and ballrooms, find the space to host events of all shapes, sizes, and needs, including conventions, conferences, sports and esports competitions, competitive arts, and much more. Thanks to an incredibly attentive staff, each event feels like a big deal no matter its size. Unlike competing convention centers, the Ocean Center makes even the smallest meetings or events feel like the center of attention. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of personalized service other convention centers can't offer.

The venue, with more than 200,000 square feet of multiuse space, is a short walk from the white sands of Daytona Beach. And beyond the walls of the facility, activity awaits. With outdoor adventures, exciting attractions, waterfront dining and accommodations, and miles of wide-open beach, there's plenty to see and do when the day's events wrap up. Whether you're a thrill-seeker logging high-speed laps on the same track as the NASCAR greats at the Daytona International Speedway, an outdoor enthusiast enjoying the natural beauty of the beaches and springs, or a foodie ready to discover your next great bite, there's something for everyone.

And getting here is a breeze! The Ocean Center is located just minutes from Daytona Beach International Airport, where travelers can catch a flight on Delta Air Lines or American Airlines year-round, with seasonal service to Toronto on Sunwing. And for road warriors, Interstate 4 and Interstate 95 offer convenient travel to the destination.

No matter what you're planning, the Ocean Center's state-of-the-art technology, ample and unique event spaces, and attentive staff will ensure your event is the most important thing happening in Volusia County. Book today and let our team make you the center of attention!

GO BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

THE BEACH SERVICE SAFETY

Located mere steps from the world-renowned sun and sand of the world's most famous beach, the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach is a state-of-the-art facility that offers events the space, features, and dedicated service they need to exceed expectations. From an arena capable of holding more than nine thousand attendees to a 93,028-square-foot exhibit hall, as well as multiple meeting rooms and ballrooms, find the space to host events of all shapes, sizes, and needs. And thanks to an incredibly attentive staff, each event feels like a big deal no matter its size. Book today and let our team make you the center of attention.



OCEAN CENTER
— DAYTONA BEACH —

OceanCenter.com





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VisitAurora.com

PLAN FOR WHAT'S NEXT IN AURORA, COLORADO.

Our convention center and 67 hotel properties are ready to welcome attendees to the Gateway to the Rockies with open arms (or elbow bumps).

Colorado's third-largest city artfully melds capacity as an ideal location near Denver International Airport and the Rocky Mountains with areas to explore, award-winning chefs, craft breweries, and a wide range of activities. In Aurora, attendees can explore the great outdoors and receive expert accommodations all in one destination.

A WIDE VARIETY OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Discover more than 67 hotels and various full-service properties well-equipped for meetings, conferences, and events. In total, Aurora has more than 1 million square feet of meeting space and 13,000-plus guest rooms. The Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center offers more than 518,000 square feet of total event space, and the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center is an IACC-certified meeting and events hotel that has more than 35,000 square feet of meeting space and 16 different breakout spaces. In addition to our largest conference centers, our hotel partners include properties in Aurora, Central Park (formerly Stapleton), and the Denver Tech Center.

BEYOND THE BOARDROOM

Wander around a city filled with untapped adventures. Stanley Marketplace, a historic aviation factory turned urban market, is a captivating destination for every group. Discover more than 50 businesses—from gourmet chocolates and handmade empanadas to boutique shopping and craft bev-

erages. Book The Hangar, an event space with indoor-outdoor capability perfect for close-knit gatherings or events up to 10,000 people. Southlands is an outdoor lifestyle center featuring dozens of brand-name shopping, along with local eateries paired with craft beer and patio seating. The Colfax Mural Tour in the Aurora Cultural Arts District features more than a dozen murals representing the diversity and culture thriving in Aurora. Host an offsite gathering at The People's Building as you wow attendees with local fare and flavor.

INTERNATIONAL EATS AND DRINKS

Explore a destination of culinary wonder, craft culture, and local flavor. Within the city, travelers can dine at more than 250 international eateries that showcase foods from around the globe. Explore On Havana Street for a true local-style flavor that impresses foodies every time. Bettola Bistro is a must-dine restaurant serving Italian-inspired dishes. In true Colorado fashion, explore 14 different taprooms in Aurora to sip on ales, lagers, experimental brews, and even cider. The city's first brewery, Dry Dock Brewing Company, has a production facility and taproom ideal for indoor-outdoor gatherings and food truck eats at their North Dock location.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN VISTAS

Watching the sun dip behind the majestic Rocky Mountains is an unforgettable sight. Cherry Creek State Park is home to miles of hiking trails and seasonal boating and paddle boarding. Catch a peek at some of Colorado's native animals, including bison, burrowing owls, and bald eagles, at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.





Visit AURORA

ALL
Together
IN AURORA

PLAN *for what's next*

The future of meetings begins in Aurora. With more than 13,000 guest rooms, 1 million sq. ft. of meeting space, and Rocky Mountain vistas, explore Aurora, the Gateway to the Rockies. Our full-service properties and convention center are ready to welcome your meetings, conventions, and events, with open arms — or an elbow bump. Contact our sales team today to get started.

www.VisitAurora.com/ASAE | 720.650.0798

VISIT IRVING

Your future is safe with us

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AS AN INDUSTRY BUILT AROUND LIVE EXPERIENCES,

handshaking, and networking, the landscape of meetings has changed dramatically. Visit Irving, the Irving Convention Center, and Irving's hotels and venues have collaborated to implement extensive safety protocols to ensure your group can meet safely—when you're ready. We are making every effort to allow you the peace of mind to plan your next event with confidence and excitement.

WORKING IN HARMONY

Our city, convention center, and hotel partners are working together to mitigate your financial risks with flexibility and favorable contract terms and a zero-attrition program, plus generous hotel concessions. The Irving Convention Center is offering double the space for social distancing at no additional cost.

A CHANGE OF TUNE

Room sets and event food and beverage will look different, but at the Irving Convention Center, we're ready with reimagined banquet options and social distancing plans in place. And while any ballroom can be set with social-distancing, the spread of COVID-19 has been found to be lower in the open air. The building's unique design provides covered outdoor meeting spaces with beautiful waterfront views of Lake Carolyn. And additional outdoor event venues abound in Irving—from patios, courtyards, and waterfront terraces, to large event lawns and festival plazas, including:

- Westin Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas—The 350-room hotel features 96,944 square feet of total meeting space, including a festival lawn with more than 9,000 square feet of space and a pool deck for events of up to 130.
- Texas Lottery Plaza—This open-air plaza at the Toyota Music Factory comes equipped with a stage, two outdoor bars, and full catering and production

capabilities for events of up to 2,500.

- Four Seasons Resort and Club Dallas at Las Colinas—The sprawling urban resort has a massive, manicured lawn for up to 1,500 guests, plus several additional outdoor event spaces.

THE BEAT GOES ON

With a beautiful lake and Venetian-like waterways throughout the master-planned community of Las Colinas, Irving is charming, clean, and safe. The area's Las Colinas Urban Center is home to a new, walkable entertainment district housing the convention center, dining, nightlife, and accommodations. The district's Toyota Music Factory features a thriving music and foodie scene, plus unique event venues for offsite meetings and special events.

REPRISE

Irving Convention Center

- Double the space for the same price—room to social distance
- Reimagined banquet options
- Documented safety protocols
- Implementation of ASM Global's VenueShield environmental hygiene procedures
- Actively working on a Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR Facility Certification
- Covered outdoor meetings spaces with lakeside views

Hotels

- Waived attrition/cancellation fees
- Generous hotel concessions, including rebates, F&B and meeting space discounts, room upgrades and in-room amenities, double-brand points, A/V discounts, and complimentary services

ICVB

- Site visit procedures include specific safety protocols, arranged transportation, and VIP Safety Kits



Unrisky Business

ATTRITION - FREE

Visit Irving has your safety and peace of mind as its number one priority. Accommodations, restaurants and entertainment venues have implemented social distancing and extensive safety protocols, so you can have peace-of-mind when you visit. Plus, VIP Safety Kits that include masks, hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes for attendees, with offers to planners such as waived attrition and cancellation fees,* as well as generous hotel concessions such as rebates, food and beverage discounts, room upgrades, bonus in-room amenities and other complimentary services.

**Offer good through June 2021 with the possibility of an extension.*

IRVING ROCKS Flexibility and Safe Meetings



VISIT ORLANDO

Number-one destination for healthy meetings

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OrlandoMeeting.com

WITH THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF VISITORS TOP OF

mind, Orlando and Orange County are open for business travel and tourism—including the Orange County Convention Center (OCCC) and Orlando International Airport (MCO), both of which have achieved the Global Biorisk Advisory Council's (GBAC) Star Accreditation, along with other local facilities.

Your group can look forward to new and improved safety measures at every step of your next Orlando convention, meeting, or event, starting with your arrival and continuing with our ground transportation, meeting hotels and venues, restaurants, and even theme parks and attractions. See how the OCCC and Orlando's meetings industry have adapted to meet today's business-travel needs, and how we're going above and beyond to safeguard your attendees' peace of mind.

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY PLAN AT THE OCCC

For a world-class convention, you need a world-class convention center—and one that prioritizes the health and safety of your attendees, at that. With new cleanliness measures in place, Orlando's state-of-the-art OCCC is the perfect candidate.

Developed in accordance with policy recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Orange County government, and state and federal mandates, the OCCC's Recovery and Resiliency Plan relies on the best available data, science, and research to safeguard clients, attendees, and employees. In short, the plan provides an excellent roadmap to ramping up operations at the country's second-largest convention center.

As a result, dozens of large-scale, in-person events have already returned to the OCCC and our meeting hotels,

including the Amateur Athletic Union Junior National Volleyball Championships, American Kennel Club National Championship Presented by Royal Canin, the 2021 Central Florida International Auto Show, Surf Expo, and others—and we're just getting started.

GBAC STAR Accreditation is impressive in its own right, in that it provides third-party validation to ensure the implementation of rigorous sanitation protocols. It is recognized as the gold standard of safe venues, and for good reason. In addition to the OCCC and MCO, the latter's onsite Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport and downtown Orlando's Amway Center have also received this important distinction.

MORE WAYS WE'RE HOSTING HEALTHY MEETINGS

In Orlando, enhanced safety measures continue long after your meeting attendees have arrived, including:

- New procedures and policies at Orlando International Airport
- Updated safety measures for Orlando's ground transportation
- Enhanced cleaning procedures at Orlando meeting hotels and resorts
- Reduced capacity and other safety protocols at local restaurants
- Safe reopenings for Orlando's theme parks and attractions
- Countywide facemask mandate

It all adds up to the greatest, safest destination for conventions, meetings, and events of all sizes. When your organization is ready to return to in-person meetings, submit your RFP to learn more about the number-one healthy meeting destination in the country!



INDUSTRY PARTNER ALLIANCE

Helping you find direction for more than 20 years.

The Industry Partner Alliance (IPA) Committee is more than a guide for ASAE industry partners. It's more than a group of companies and organizations that provide services and products to ASAE members. The IPA is a strong committee that listens and responds to the needs of the industry partner community.

Did you know that the IPA:

- + Improves the membership experience and return on investment for industry partners.
- + Works with ASAE and the ASAE Research Foundation on events and social responsibility programs.
- + Delivers education sessions specifically targeted for industry partners at ASAE meetings.
- + Develops resources for industry partners looking to connect with the association community.

We can't do it without you.

Learn more at AccessAssociations.org

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VISIT PHOENIX

From outdoor venues to tech-ready spaces, this Sonoran Desert city offers innovative solutions for your next event

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WHEN IT'S TIME TO TRANSFORM YOUR WEBINAR INTO A keynote speech, to reestablish the social aspect of networking, and to look past the screen into the future of business, we invite you to Phoenix, where there's more than enough space to reach your meeting and convention goals—safely.

In Phoenix, our state-of-the-art convention center, our new and reimagined accommodations, and our walkable downtown core complement the lush desert landscape that basks in sunshine 300 days a year.

ROOM TO MEET

As one of the nation's most-acclaimed buildings of its kind, the Phoenix Convention Center (PCC) offers 900,000 square feet of flexible, GBAC STAR-accredited space throughout a three-building campus, allowing for optimal socially distant settings.

Also located on the PCC campus is Canyon on Third, 80,000 square feet of urban outdoor event space that can accommodate a variety of activities and pair them with downtown Phoenix energy and iconic Arizona ambiance.

Additionally, the PCC acts as a versatile venue for virtual and hybrid meetings. With an integrated technology infrastructure capable of transforming any meeting room into its own broadcast studio, the PCC allows clients the ability to broadcast virtually from any location in the building—with round-the-clock technical support and system monitoring.

ROOM TO CONNECT

Widely known for its incomparable weather and proximity to nature, Phoenix offers an incredible spectrum of outdoor

event venues—for an intimate group of a few or a larger, private delegation.

From uniquely Southwest scenes amid sweeping Sonoran Desert landscapes to urban spaces set against the downtown skyline, the outdoor experience is a way of life in Phoenix—and now your attendees can take full advantage of the increased safety these spaces offer.

With more than 69,000 guest rooms at over 500 hotels and resorts, there's more than enough room for your attendees to stay in Phoenix. As one of the top resort destinations in America, Greater Phoenix is also home to over 40 full-service hotels. And with new projects on the horizon, this city's portfolio of conference-friendly accommodations is on the rise.

ROOM TO PLAN

The Arizona Department of Health Services has issued COVID-19 recommendations for private events, which note health and safety practices that the State of Arizona has recommended for all private meetings, conventions, and trade shows that are not open to the public.

Recommendations for private events, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services, include physical distancing, occupancy of 50 percent of the permitted fire code, enforcing the use of masks by both employees and attendees, ensuring hygiene practices for both employees and attendees, and minimizing environmental risk.






ROOM TO MEET IN PHOENIX

It's time to go beyond: To the heart of a lush desert landscape where each sunrise welcomes big ideas. To a walkable downtown core where history meets innovation. To reimagined venues where state-of-the-art spaces and new ventures converge. To Phoenix, where your next opportunity awaits.

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GROWING TO 200,000 SQUARE FEET OF EXHIBIT
SPACE IN ONE OF AMERICA'S FAVORITE CITIES, YOU'LL
WANT TO RESERVE YOUR DATES SOON. THE NEW,
EXPANDED SAVANNAH CONVENTION CENTER.

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E YOUR SPOT.





VISIT SAVANNAH

Make Savannah your safe meetings destination

CONTACT

Visit Savannah

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VisitSavannah.com

WITH ITS RICH HISTORY, MILD WEATHER AND DIVERSE venues, Savannah, Georgia, is the perfect spot to host your next meeting, incentive trip, convention, or event. The city overflows with unique attractions, historic sites, and some of the best food in the South. Trolley, Segway, and walking tours covering history, hauntings, architecture, and food fill downtime with excitement and entertainment. Elegant accommodations within blocks of meeting venues make gatherings in Savannah a step above the rest.

Whether you and your guests will be driving, flying, or riding the rails into Savannah, getting here is a breeze. The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport is located only 15 miles from the Historic District and offers more than 30 nonstop flights from Delta, American, United, Jet Blue, Allegiant, Frontier, Sun Country, and the recently announced Southwest Airlines services. Additionally, Amtrak rolls through Savannah on its Palmetto and Silver Service lines, and we're a hub for Greyhound Bus Lines as well.

Savannah is one of the most popular visitor destinations in the United States with increasing interest due to the expansion of the Savannah Convention Center. Opening in late 2023, the building will double the size of its exhibit hall to 200,000 square feet, add a new 65,000-square foot ballroom, increase the number of breakouts and boardrooms to 24, and include a new 90-space parking garage. Additionally, the convention center was among the first wave to achieve the GBAC STAR facility accreditation for cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention.

There are a variety of convention hotels throughout Savannah, with the most recent being the new 419-room JW

Marriott at Plant Riverside. This museum-like hotel includes dozens of larger-than-life geodes and historical displays from developer Richard Kessler's private collection, over 18,000 square feet of event space, and an entertainment district overlooking the Savannah River that boasts 14 different food and beverage outlets.

Savannah stands out when it comes to accommodations. There are many hotel choices within walking distance of local attractions, loads of restaurants, and the Savannah River. You can expect the best at Savannah's hotels with on-site amenities going above and beyond, scenic views, and suites that can accommodate a variety of group sizes.

Meeting attendees are also sure to enjoy Savannah's unforgettable dining experiences. From dining aboard an old-fashioned Riverboat, inside an elegant Southern mansion, or on a dock by the water, Savannah has a restaurant that is sure to please the entire group.

By its nature, Savannah loves to welcome guests. But it's also about caring for our fellow citizens, our visitors, and each other. The Savannah community has come together to create the Savannah Safe Initiative, a commitment to help stop the spread of COVID-19 with cleaning and disinfecting protocols to help ensure the health and safety of everyone in our places of business. More than 600 Savannah-area businesses, including the Savannah Convention Center, have taken the pledge.

To learn more and start planning your meeting, go to VisitSavannah.com.



A Volunteer Leader Orientation Tool You Can Trust

The **2021 Associations Now Board Brief** is a concise guide to the fiduciary duties of your directors.

Governance work is complex. Providing a resource to each of your board members so they have a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, along with some of the finer points of governing, can increase their effectiveness and serve as a motivational tool.

Your team will appreciate this issue offering insights on:

- Volunteer leadership during a crisis
- Board member fiduciary duties
- Financial oversight
- Managing the board-CEO relationship
- Ethical conduct and conversation
- How boards can support business-venture innovation
- How boards can lean into change

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AS THE WORLD OF MEETINGS CONTINUES TO EVOLVE, so does Florida's most dynamic meetings destination—Tampa Bay. From enhanced cleaning protocols and contactless procedures to our award-winning, world-class airport and all-new Hybrid Meeting Grant, Tampa Bay is committed to your meeting's success.

Peace of mind included with every meeting. The waterfront Tampa Convention Center received the GBAC Star accreditation. The Global Biorisk Advisory Council STAR accreditation is the cleaning industry's only outbreak prevention, response, and recovery accreditation—the gold standard for prepared facilities.

The Tampa Convention Center has added 18 new meeting rooms overlooking the Hillsborough River and fully renovated its breakout rooms and ballrooms. In total, the expansions span 16,000 square feet and two stories with a terrace and outdoor space.

Tampa International Airport soars to second place in J.D. Power rankings. After being a mainstay as one of the top-five airports in J.D. Power's rankings, TPA is now ranked second in J.D. Power's 2020 North America Airport Satisfaction Study. In addition to earning this prestigious new ranking, TPA just added 50 new places to eat and shop, an upgraded car rental hub, and a larger central terminal.

Smart preparations from arrival to departure. The airport is also introducing a wide-ranging new program called TPA Ready. Designed to help combat the spread of COVID-19, TPA Ready helps safeguard travelers nearly everywhere they walk, sit, dine, and more during their time at the award-winning airport.

Program highlights include plastic barriers to separate employees and travelers in select areas, such as service counters, social-distancing-conscious seating arrangements, detailed cleanings, reminder signage, and mandatory face coverings for every TPA associate.

An array of new ways to stay. There's a hotel option for every attendee, with the newly opened five-star JW Marriott Tampa Water Street, as well as new offerings from Hyatt and Hilton. That means more than 1,500 new hotel rooms, 1,000 more renovated rooms, and a variety of new meeting spaces for your next meeting.

Searching for a unique boutique hotel? Look no further than the new Hotel Haya that's minutes from downtown Tampa Bay's Convention District. With midcentury Cuban flair, Hotel Haya features wraparound balconies, stunning artwork, and innovative menus, all in historic Ybor City.

Stay connected with the new Hybrid Technology Grant. Introducing a convenient way to offset unanticipated hybrid technology expenses: the Hybrid Meeting Grant. With a maximum of \$15,000 per event, the grant helps keep attendees connected and minimizes hybrid technology costs. Grants will be awarded based on estimated economic impact, anticipated attendance figures, and other factors. For details on the Hybrid Technology Grant, go to VisitTampaBay.com/hybrid-meetings.

Explore more of Florida's most dynamic meeting destination. Visit TampaMeetings.com today.





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As Tampa Bay meetings get back underway, we're ready to greet you with gold standard safety protocols, new hotels and fresh possibilities for dynamic meetings.



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BOISE

The city boasts new possibilities

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VISITORS OF ALL KINDS WILL BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED by the positive energy and the can-do spirit in Boise, Idaho. The city's hospitality industry is ready for a fresh start.

The Boise Centre was recently lauded for its efforts by the Global BioRisk Advisory Council, or GBAC, the gold standard for facilities. The international group recently granted the Boise Centre the GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation for its "commitment to ensuring a clean, safe, and healthy environment for its employees, clients, and their guests." That includes aggressive cleaning protocols and disinfection techniques—creating a fully pandemic-functional meeting space.

Groups have access to 86,000 square feet adjacent to the Idaho Central Arena, adding more than 17,000 square feet, plus 5,000 stadium seats. That's a lot of elbow room to allow for a variety of meeting sizes, in addition to the expanded hybrid capabilities. At least two hotels, the Hyatt Place in Boise's downtown and the Hyatt Place at Town Square, were also recognized as GBAC STAR facilities.

Visitors will be pleasantly surprised at the adaptivity of the city's night life. Despite all the challenges of the pandemic, restaurateurs have persevered, and now the city is expecting as many as 10 new restaurants to open in the first quarter, a sign that Boise is ready to spring forward.

Visitors will find all of this energy surrounded by Idaho's peerless outdoor activity, all accessible from downtown hotels and the convention center. Whether it's hiking and biking on the nearby Boise Foothills or enjoying the Boise River, there are many ways for visitors to distance themselves from the busy days in our friendly, clean, and safe downtown.

Need more? Try the "Meeting Safely in Boise" page on Boise.org for travel updates and additional information.



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space to meet.
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Make Boise your basecamp for meetings and events. Downtown is steps away from restaurants and minutes from mountain trails. Visit boise.org/plan-your-meeting

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RENO-SPARKS CONVENTION AND VISITORS AUTHORITY

A new era for the “Biggest Little City in the World”

PEOPLE COME TO RENO TAHOE WITH AMBITION IN THEIR HEARTS and big ideas on their mind. So, we foster progress every way we can, starting with providing you and your clients inspiring facilities at affordable prices—which is why there are renovations and updates underway everywhere in the Biggest Little City in the World.

A NEW EXCITING ERA

At many of Reno Tahoe's largest properties, ownership is ushering in a new, exciting era with over \$57 million in renovations and additions. All so you and your clients will be welcomed by refreshed rooms and suites, sleek modern designs, and completely renovated convention centers, casino floors, and new, expanded fitness centers. Plus, an all-new Kimpton Hotel and Westin property will soon begin construction. But it's not all business.

The Neon Line District is a \$1 billion, mixed-use project encompassing 20 city blocks, the centerpiece of which will be a half-mile-long art installation in a bustling neighborhood full of exciting restaurants and shops. And let's not forget the unbeatable proximity to glistening Lake Tahoe and all its mountains offer.

Most importantly, from heightened health and safety standards to technologically enhanced facilities for hybrid events, we're doing everything we can to ensure Reno Tahoe remains a safe, exciting, and unique destination for your next event—whether it's one month or one year from now. So, why wait?

CONTACT

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But it's not like Reno Tahoe to stop there. We're all about progress, and since we independently own our convention facilities you can make more moves with less red tape, fewer hard costs, and more permission to deliver unique experiences at an incredible value. Plus, all our facilities are Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) Accredited—meaning they are cleaned and disinfected following a rigorous protocol. Bottom line? You can do more here.

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Sleep

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SPECIALTY SLEEP ASSOCIATION

While laypeople rarely see the words “sleep” and “innovation” paired together, the phrase is the mantra of the **Specialty Sleep Association**. Founded in 1995, the organization was born from the merger of waterbed industry associations and a futon association. SSA's mission is “to serve sleep innovators, both manufacturing and retail, by promoting members, product transparency, and education.” Additionally, the group promotes healthful and sustainable materials and the manufacturers that use them. Its signature BEDFAX program encourages truth in marketing, with an emphasis on products marketed as “green.”

EUROPEAN BEDDING INDUSTRIES' ASSOCIATION

In the year 2000, bedding manufacturers from several European countries joined together to ensure their interests on the wider continental stage were being met. Members of the **European Bedding Industries' Association** include mattress producers, innerspring companies, textile industries, and foam and latex suppliers. EBIA helps its members find solutions to common problems and is strongly engaged in improving bedding recycling systems.

INTERNATIONAL SLEEP PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION

The **International Sleep Products Association** is dedicated to helping “sleep product manufacturers and suppliers reach their full potential.” The organization covers a wide variety of topics for members, including mattress recycling, sustainability certification, advocacy, and consumer education. ISPA founded the Better Sleep Council, a consumer-facing arm that provides sleep research and thought leadership. BSC's research also helps inform ISPA manufacturers about trends in sleep.

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