



CASE STUDY

NAFA Fleet Management Association

naylor.com



“ Since we can't do it all in-house, you have to find a partner who asks the right questions, instead of just selling you on their capabilities. If they're consistently delivering results, you should treat them like an extension of your own staff, not like a vendor. ”

Phil Russo, CAE
Executive Director

The Challenge

In 2008, the board of directors at NAFA Fleet Management Association was looking for ways to boost its authority and reach in the fleet management industry. The 50-year-old Princeton, N.J.-based organization billed itself as the world's premier not-for-profit association for professionals who manage fleets of sedans, public safety vehicles, trucks and buses as well as military and off-road equipment for organizations. Despite offering research, regional chapter gatherings, seminars and an annual expo, lack of interest in the association's publications combined with the strong presence of for-profit publishers within the industry meant NAFA's voice as the association for the fleet management profession was fading.

The Solution

Naylor representatives met NAFA's new executive director, Phil Russo, CAE, at a conference in 2008 and proposed a solution: Let Naylor's experienced team of designers, editors, marketing specialists and sales representatives work with NAFA's staff to transform the magazine into a well-designed source of news and commentary about fleet management topics while offering NAFA the opportunity to earn more non-dues revenue that would support its other membership activities. NAFA agreed, and Naylor went to work. The magazine's distribution was streamlined from eight to six issues per year, and more advertising pages were added for industry supporters. The title also changed from *NAFA Fleet Executive* to *FLEETSolutions* to position the magazine as a source of answers and resolutions for vehicle management. A complementary digital edition allowed NAFA's 3,400 members to read the magazine at their desks and on their mobile devices.

Results

In just six months, magazine revenues grew nearly 25 percent and online readership increased seven percent. NAFA and Naylor began looking at other ways Naylor's portfolio of association communication products could benefit NAFA, and began producing a biweekly eNewsletter, *FleetFOCUS*, which delivers timely information and updates to members on the go. While NAFA welcomed this additional non-dues revenue, the value of having professional, consistent member communications was equally important to its leadership.

"Effective communication isn't just reaching out to members when you want something from them like a dues renewal or an exhibit contract," said Russo. "It's about keeping the dialogue going continuously."





Trade Show Expansion

By the beginning of 2009, NAFA was feeling the trickle-down effects of the American recession via sluggish sales for booth space at its annual Institute & Expo. The show's guide was also becoming an expensive item to provide attendees. Capitalizing on the success of the magazine and newsletter, Naylor took over booth sales and the show guide and, despite the nationwide slump in the auto and truck industry, sold enough space to share a significant portion of the revenues with NAFA. Naylor has produced the *NAFA Institute & Expo Show Guide* and has increased the amount of booth space sold every year since 2009. Show sponsorship revenue increased 213 percent between 2008 and 2011, with NAFA receiving a revenue share every year.

With its print and event components successfully meeting the needs of members and industry supporters, NAFA turned to NaylorNet, Naylor's online division, for additional help improving its online communications. Naylor began producing advertising for NAFA's website in early 2010, and in June of the same year launched an online buyers' guide to assist NAFA members with peer-to-peer purchasing. A mobile version of the buyers' guide was added in fall 2010. Although the association was apprehensive about advertising on its website, Naylor allowed them to maintain full control of the project, from the initial designs through testing and final board approval.

"Whatever the opposite of 'duck and cover' is, that's how you've got to operate. There are great opportunities in all economic climates, and if you have the courage to put the pedal to the metal when everyone else has the brakes on, you can make your own success and come out of the downturn with a full head of steam while everyone else is just getting back on their feet."

Website sales are now NAFA's most profitable product. *FleetFOCUS* and *FLEETSolutions* continue to deliver pertinent fleet management topics and advertising opportunities, and an annual directory was added to the list of Naylor-provided products in late 2010.

A Stronger Voice in Fleet Management

Because NAFA and Naylor worked together to transform the association's communication platforms, NAFA has a stronger persona and a stronger brand. They have once again become the voice of the industry, displacing the for-profit publishers and positioning membership in NAFA as a hallmark of fleet management professionalism. And NAFA's relationship with Naylor has become a true partnership where each participant carefully considers the needs of the other – and delivers on its word.





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Naylor provides member engagement and revenue solutions to 1,800+ associations throughout North America.

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