Where Perception Meets Reality:
The state of association communications and recommendations to improve

Based on results from the 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report

Jill Andreu, vice president of content strategy and development for Naylor Association Solutions
TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

• The state of the association communication landscape

• Key findings and trends from the 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report

• Recommendations for bringing clarity to your association’s communications strategy

• Opportunities to learn more
ABOUT THE STUDY & VALUABLE 2016 ADDITIONS

- Originated in 2011

- Naylor has partnered with 11 member organizations of the Association Societies Alliance

- **New This Year**
  - Personalized Best Practices Report Card
    - Communications effectiveness
    - Communications strategy
    - Online communications
    - Customization
    - Advertising, sponsorship & measurement
Creating a two-way dialogue through the *Association Adviser* media brand, combined with our industry-wide benchmarking study, allows us to develop deeper insights to help you be more effective.

More than 2,000 senior leadership members of trade and professional associations across North America have participated in *Association Adviser’s* Communications Benchmarking Survey.

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED OVER THE YEARS

**2011**
Associations believed they were doing a better job of integrating their communications than they actually were.

**2012-2013**
Associations greatly underestimated communication overload and clutter.

**2014**
Associations' inability to generate non-dues revenue (NDR) from their communications appears to be a greater problem. Factors that could have a positive impact on NDR generation, such as utilizing technologies across the organization to improve customization for member subgroups, are not being fully leveraged.

**2015**
Social media frequency surpassed traditional online communications, and improvements were made in "cutting through the clutter" and targeting segmentation.

**2016**

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
More than half of respondents stated they have trouble generating significant non-dues revenue from their publications.
POLL QUESTION

Do you employ any tactics to cut through the clutter and monitor your member communications?

Please type in your free response.
Association executives surveyed believe members read far less than half of the information the association sends them.

Source: Association Adviser and Naylor Association Solutions, 2011 - 2016.
COMMUNICATING MORE FREQUENTLY

Associations are communicating with members more frequently, and the frequency with which they use various channels has changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online communication and social media usage are on the rise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
POLL QUESTION

Do you leverage association management software (AMS) to customize your member outreach and communications?

Select one:
• Yes
• No, but we plan to soon!
• No
MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS IS NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Only 28 percent of respondents believe they are effectively leveraging their member database/AMS to deliver a customized member experience.
ASK MEMBERS WHAT TYPE OF INFORMATION THEY NEED/WANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 Rank</th>
<th>2015 Rank</th>
<th>2016 Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Actionable data</td>
<td>5. Actionable data</td>
<td>5. Lobbying/advocacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
67 percent of associations cited having difficulty communicating member benefits effectively.
The millennial generation is accustomed to looking online and hunting down whatever they need. **Associations need to develop specific events, communications and mentoring opportunities unique to this group.**

Less of this... And more of this.
FULL INTEGRATION IS DECLINING

### Selected trends in association communication integration, 2011 to 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5 years</th>
<th>1 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations that consider their communications fully integrated</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations that consider their communications &quot;somewhat integrated&quot;</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong> (all or partially integrated)</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications not yet integrated, but planning to</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not integrated</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Please note: rounding errors <> 1% may occur.
TOP POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN 2016

Positive Changes:

• “Helping members find desired information quickly” decreased to 33 percent in 2016 vs. 42 percent in 2015.

• “Keeping members informed about new events and continuing education” decreased to 21 percent in 2016 vs. 30 percent in 2015.

• The use of communication channels is expanding and several new forms are gaining traction.

• Legacy communication channels continue to be among the most highly rated.

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
LESS TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS GAIN POSITIVE PERCEPTION

### Top 10 Association Communication Channels (out of 23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
<th>% Consider Very/Extremely Valuable</th>
<th>Average rating 5.0 Max</th>
<th>Rank 2016</th>
<th>Rank 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Conferences/Events</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member eNewsletter</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinars</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Magazine (print)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Member Directory</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Career Center</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member eZine</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Association Adviser and Naylor Association Solutions, 2016*

*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
POSITIVE & NEGATIVE, LINES ARE BEGINNING TO BLUR

• Feel their communication programs are slow to improve
• Are still struggling to develop a mobile strategy
• Think they need better social media engagement
• Aim to customize member communication and integrate content across all channels
• Actively measure their communications effectiveness
• Report having trouble engaging newer members
• Blame their inability to customize member communications on technology shortcomings

*Source: 2015 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report*
DETERMINE WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE LIKELY TO GENERATE THE MOST R.O.I.

When asked what they would do if their publishing/content creation team unexpectedly received a 50 percent increase in the annual budget, association executives told us the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upgrade Options</th>
<th>2016 Response</th>
<th>2015 Response</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a real mobile strategy</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade publishing tools, technologies or processes</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>+7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire more staff</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>+7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve quality of existing communications</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put more muscle behind social media</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch new communication vehicles</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total exceeds 100% due to multiple response option.
*Source: 2016 Association Adviser Communications Benchmarking Report
THINK BIG PICTURE

Interconnect and Leverage Accordingly for Success
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

Survey Your Members
Have Select “Member Only” Communications
Integrate All Communications
Offer Diverse Event Opportunities
Leverage Social Media

Update Email & Websites for Mobile
Ideal Communications Frequency
Offer Desired Resources
Consider Member Preferences
Utilize a Strategy

For an in-depth look at these recommendations and for more recommendations, download your Personalized Best Practices Report Card!
WHAT’S AN ASSOCIATION TO DO?

ASSESS

TAKE AIM

INTEGRATE

MEASURE
POLL QUESTION

In regard to the state of the association industry, what areas are you most interested in learning more about next year?

Please type in your free response.
IT’S NOT TOO LATE!

Interested in where you stand in comparison to your peers? You’re in luck! The survey platform stays live all year.

Take the Survey!

Get your personalized Best Practices Report Card!

Download the report at http://naylor.com/benchmarking

Visit https://communicationsbenchmark.naylor.com/signup.aspx
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Q&A

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