



# Growing Membership: Showing Value and Enhancing Engagement

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CONNECTING CHAPTERS.  
**GROWING  
LEADERS.**



## Top Four Issues: What we're hearing

- How can we stop the membership decline in chapter growth year over year?
- Need help defining the value of IABC Membership
- How can we solidify engagement and volunteering?
- Key messages about WIIFM



# What We are Hearing

“IABC NJ has been experiencing a drop in the number of new and renewing members. Some of it is due to corporations no longer paying their employees' membership dues, some of it is due to the rise in unemployment in our region. I'm not looking for a quick fix, just great ideas from my fellow Chapter Leaders. How have you dealt with this situation?”

[Joseph Donner](#) – IABC/New Jersey



# Stop membership loss by focusing

- Find niche areas and focus efforts there:
  - Corporate
  - Friends of members
  - Lapsed members
  - Members of other professional organizations
- More focus on members nearing the end of annual membership



# Stop membership loss by improving engagement

- Establish a process for engaging members in planning, networking, renewing.
  - Iowa has one of these!
- Host member-only events for free/reduced rate
- Form a volunteer base of members and non-members— for one specific project.
- Use methods other than email for communication



*Let the conversation begin:*

## **How do we stop membership loss?**

- What has worked for you?
- How can the whole board support membership growth?



## **Show Value of Membership in a changing professional climate**

- Use new Certification information to support professionalism
- Encourage similar industries to gather/share
- Circulate “best practices” from IABC.com



*Let the conversation begin:*

## **Show Value of Membership in a changing professional climate**

- What has worked for you?
- How can the whole board support membership growth?



## **Solidify membership through volunteering ...without begging**

- Move committee volunteers to board roles
- Have you consider “regifting?”
- When is begging okay?
- WIIFM...



# What's in it for me and why should I (or my boss) care?

- Letters from the President to the Board member's boss
- Start the Board term with an "Update LinkedIn" exercise
- Document one new skill each member wants to learn/expand upon



*Let the conversation begin:*

# **What's in it for me and why should I (or my boss) care?**

- What has worked for you?
- What resonates with your boss?



# What We are Hearing

“We are going through all of the same things: lack of awareness in the business community, declining membership, declining event attendance, dismal numbers of awards entries, etc. We could use much more support from the top and less competition from International when it comes to webinars, awards programs, etc. I'd like to see them send us content for our chapter newsletters, provide support for the administration side of running a chapter, and develop resources (events in a box) that we can use at the local level. We definitely need a stronger value proposition when we go up against AMA, PRSA, etc.”

**Tami Wendt – President IABC/ Minnesota**



*Let the conversation begin:*

## Define the Value of IABC

- Focus on the I and the B:
  - **International and Business** focus. No other organization has International depth, connections and offerings.
  - Likewise, no other organization focuses on the business aspect of communication—the unique challenges of being grounded in business goals and objectives.
  - For business: Is it important to build business acumen alongside communication goals? Can you build PD around the I and the B?



*Let the conversation begin:*

## **What can PPR do for you?**

- What international capabilities/resources can we highlight?
- How can those benefit chapters?
- How does it fit in equipping communicators to compete more effectively in a global marketplace?



*Let the conversation begin:*

## What can PPR do for you?

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# About Rob Walgren

## Chapter Advocate

Rob Walgren is Communications and Community Engagement Program Manager for the Port of Seattle, and recently added social media manager to his responsibilities. He has more than 15 years experience in public relations and corporate communications. Rob recently won an “Award of Excellence” in the Special Event category from the American Association of Port Authorities, and won a Economic and Business Development Fellowship focusing on international tourism promotion.

Prior to joining the Port, Rob served as deputy director of a maritime museum, and worked in environmental public relations and marketing. A past-president and vice-president of IABC/Seattle, Rob holds a B.A. in Journalism with a public relations emphasis from Northern Illinois University.

When not thinking about international trade and tourism promotion, Rob enjoys working on old house projects and hiking in the mountains with his dog, Foster.



## **About Martha Nevanen - Past Director, IABC Pacific Plains Region Chapter President, Minnesota**

Martha Nevanen serves as vice president of corporate marketing and communications for the Pohlads Companies and its real estate companies, United Properties, Cushman & Wakefield|NorthMarq, NorthMarq Capital and RJM Construction, supervising a team of ten. Her more than 20 years of communications and marketing experience range from strategic planning, advertising, employee communications, marketing communications, and media relations.

Previously, Martha spent six years at The St. Paul (now Travelers), where she worked in corporate communications and business unit marketing communications; she also led public relations and legislative communications efforts for a multi-state environmental testing company and worked as a writer/editor for a small manufacturing company. Martha earned her Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri.

She thinks she can cook, knows she can't garden and continues to be strongly motherly to her two children – ages 22 and 18.