2020 REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY

click here for more information

GrowthZone real estate edition
GrowthZone surveyed real estate association professionals across the U.S. and Canada. Topics included everything from staff turnover rates to political endorsements. The results showed a number of interesting trends impacting today's associations.

**About the Respondents**

**Experience** | Total # of Years Employed in the Membership Industry
--- | ---
1 or Less | 6%
2 - 4 | 25%
5 - 9 | 17%
10 - 15 | 28%
16 - 20 | 14%
21 - 29 | 8%
30+ | 3%

On average, survey respondents had 10-11 years of experience in the membership industry.

**Number of Members** | Predicted Member Count on 1/1/2020
--- | ---
Under 200 | 11%
200-500 | 19%
501-1,000 | 22%
1,001-2,500 | 31%
2,501-5,000 | 3%

**Annual Operating Budget** | Approximate
--- | ---
Under $250K | 28%
$250K+ - $500K | 22%
$500K+ - $1M | 19%
$1M+ - $3M | 3%
$3M+ - $5M | 0%
$5M+ - $10M | 6%
$10M+ - $20M | 0%
$20M+ | 0%

*Due to rounding and checkbox questions, percentages may exceed or not appear to add up to 100%*
Associations whose members recognize their value proposition reported higher renewal rates than those whose members don’t recognize their value proposition.
OVERALL MEMBER ENGAGEMENT | YEAR-OVER-YEAR CHANGE

- Better: 56%
- About the same: 36%
- Worse: 8%

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS | RESPONDENTS INDICATING INCREASED ENGAGEMENT ATTRIBUTED THE IMPROVEMENT TO:

TOP 6 ANSWERS

- More targeted communications: 24%
- New or updated education: 24%
- Better technology: 18%
- Deliberate strategy and dedicated focus: 18%
- Adding, improving, or discontinuing events: 12%
- Personal interaction and greater outreach: 12%

Associations whose members recognize their value proposition reported higher engagement rates than those whose members don’t recognize their value proposition.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT TRACKING

- Do you use a formal process and/or a software system to track member engagement?
  - Yes: 50%
  - No: 50%

- Of associations reporting increased member engagement, 70% use a process/system for tracking, vs. only 33% of associations with decreased member engagement.

VALUE PROPOSITION RECOGNITION

- Do you think members recognize your association’s value proposition?
  - Definitely: 64%
  - Somewhat: 8%
  - Vaguely: 8%
  - No: 19%

30% of the associations whose respondents answered “somewhat” or “definitely” reported increased new-member renewal rates vs. 0% of the associations whose respondents answered “vaguely” or “no.”
**SURVEY RESULTS**

**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Approximately how often does your organization increase dues?

- **1 YEAR**: 6%
- **2 YEARS**: 3%
- **3-5 YEARS**: 25%
- **6-10 YEARS**: 39%
- **10+ YEARS**: 17%
- **NEVER**: 11%

**RECURRING MEMBERSHIP**

Does your organization offer recurring memberships (auto-renewal)?

- **YES**: 42%
- **NO**: 53%
- **N/A**: 5%

Is auto-renewal participation optional or required?

- **OPTIONAL**: 50%
- **REQUIRED**: 50%

What auto-renewal payment methods do you accept?

- **CREDIT CARD**: 87%
- **ACH (E-CHECK OR BANK TRANSFER)**: 40%
- **OTHER**: 27%

Of respondents indicating “Other”, many specified renewals were paid by the brokerage.
**ADVOCACY**

Does your organization do any of the following?

- **86%**
  - Take a position on legislative issues

- **69%**
  - Actively participate in or provide funding for government lobbying

- **50%**
  - Endorse political candidates

- **39%**
  - Encourage members to vote a certain way in public elections

- **3%**
  - None of the above

**COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING**

Does your organization have a formal crisis communications plan in place?

- **36%**
  - Yes

- **61%**
  - No

- **3%**
  - Unofficially/in development

**MARKETING**

Over the past 2 years, has your organization done any paid advertising (e.g., boosted social media posts/campaigns, Google ads, display ads on specific websites, sent promoted texts, etc.)?

- **67%**
  - Yes

- **33%**
  - No
## HUMAN RESOURCES | EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

In the U.S., on average, 1 out of every 6 employees voluntarily quits each year (16%). Roughly, how would you say your staff retention rate compares?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much Worse</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Worse</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Same</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Better</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much Better</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Don’t Have Employees</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

73% of associations whose respondents are satisfied with their AMS have a below-average staff turnover rate.

## HUMAN RESOURCES | REMOTE EMPLOYEES

Does your organization allow staff to work from home/remotely on a regular basis? (e.g., 1 day/week)

- Yes: 28%
- No: 61%
- Other: 11%

Of participants including “other” in their response, many specified that it is handled on a case-by-case basis, based on position, or as a privilege.
CONSOLIDATION

How likely is it that your organization will merge with or acquire another organization in the next 3-5 years?

- **NOT AT ALL LIKELY**: 19%
- **NOT SO LIKELY**: 22%
- **SOMewhat LIKELY**: 3%
- **VERY LIKELY**: 6%
- **EXTREMELY LIKELY**: 50%

RETENTION

Does your organization have a particular benefit or affinity program used to keep your members returning (aka “golden handcuffs”)?

- **YES**: 44%
- **NO**: 56%

*golden handcuffs*: plural noun, informal - informal financial allurements and benefits that are designed to increase retention.

BENEFITS/PROGRAMS

The top 3 benefits and programs included:

1. **EDUCATION**
2. **MLS**
3. **ACCESS TO FORMS AND TECH SUPPORT**
## Member Feedback

### Comments from Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Feedback</th>
<th>What Respondents Said</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The association staff is friendly, helpful and always willing to find the answer they need.</td>
<td>They know they have to be a member, but not really sure why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We always get solid information to them to help with their business.</td>
<td>Didn’t realize we offer “that” as a member benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They appreciate how the association provides a family-like connection between members.</td>
<td>They always wonder why they have to pay dues to all three levels - local, state and national.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We're friendly and provide good information.</td>
<td>We’re trying, but they don’t see the benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’re locally ineffective, but useful on a national level.</td>
<td>The dues are too low, should be higher to keep out the people who aren’t really in it as a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would like for the association to abandon old ways and modernize to new trends that reflect how they do business.</td>
<td>The dues are too high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We do nothing for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They would not be sure who we were and why they had to pay dues to us.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Change is Good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They know they have to be a member, but not really sure why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t realize we offer “that” as a member benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They always wonder why they have to pay dues to all three levels - local, state and national.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’re trying, but they don’t see the benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would request an easier way to digest the information we send to them (singular source/syndicated news).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We “police” them too much.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Goals

### Common Goals

- Value Proposition
- Strategy and Operations
- Engagement/Interaction

### Comments from Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Proposition</th>
<th>What Respondents Said</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members seeing the benefit of belonging from the benefits to the lobbying efforts recognized.</td>
<td>Fluid member engagement and the ability to track how members connect in all of the various forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members understanding what we “really do.”</td>
<td>Higher participation by members in committees and task forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A higher perception of what we do for our members. I don’t think they know what we do for them.</td>
<td>More new membership involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability for us to communicate to our members our value to them and where they’d be left without us.</td>
<td>Better member involvement and communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be our members’ partner, their “go-to” organization.</td>
<td>Better membership engagement and showing value to the members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy and Operations</th>
<th>What Respondents Said</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Streamline processes and policies.</td>
<td>Get more members to read our communications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be the source of education and help the members to be the best they can be.</td>
<td>Financial success for our members, as well as making great strides towards our strategic objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To raise the standards of professionalism while forming a community feel for the members of the association that work together and help each other.</td>
<td>Keep up to date on current issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved distance education.</td>
<td>A single sign-on to one system where the member can go directly to multiple systems while keeping the member’s user names and passwords secure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At GrowthZone, we pride ourselves on listening to and focusing on associations and the people who make them run. In order to provide the best possible product to industry professionals, we regularly seek data on the trends and issues facing associations.

Thank you to the real estate association professionals who took the time to respond to the survey.

ABOUT GROWTHZONE

GrowthZone’s Real Estate Edition provides an all-in-one solution with NAR integration, which saves your association time and money.

The cloud-based system is powerful, easy to use, and designed to manage all the day-to-day operations of your real estate association. Guaranteed.

Download a free copy of our Association Management Software Buyer’s Workbook

Contact us today for a personalized product demo

growthzone.com/real-estate