

SURVEY

2022

ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS



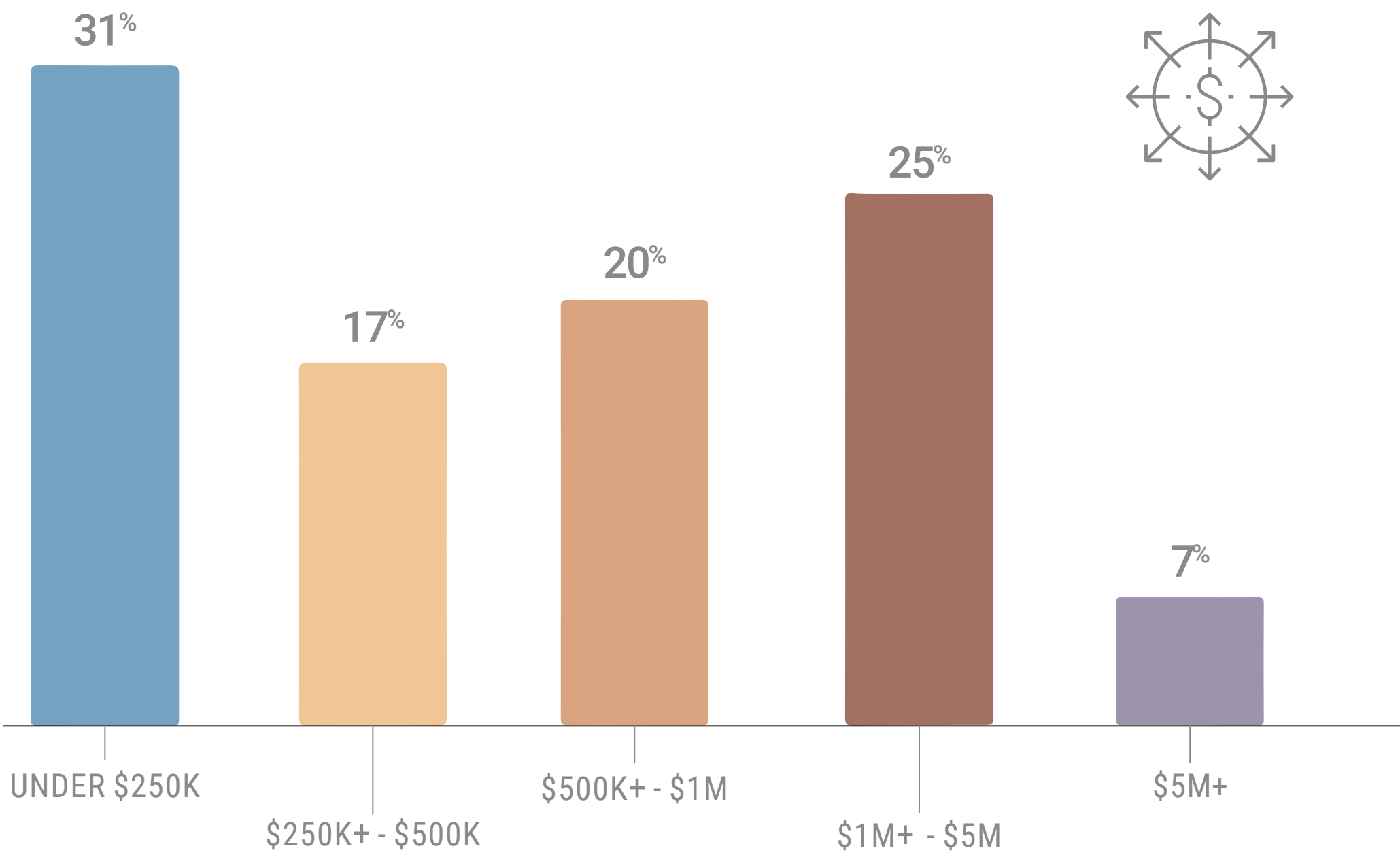
GrowthZone
smarter association software

GrowthZone surveyed over 300 association professionals across the U.S. and Canada. Topics included everything from non-dues revenue sources and operating budgets, to new service offerings and diversity practices. The results showed a number of interesting trends impacting today’s associations.

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

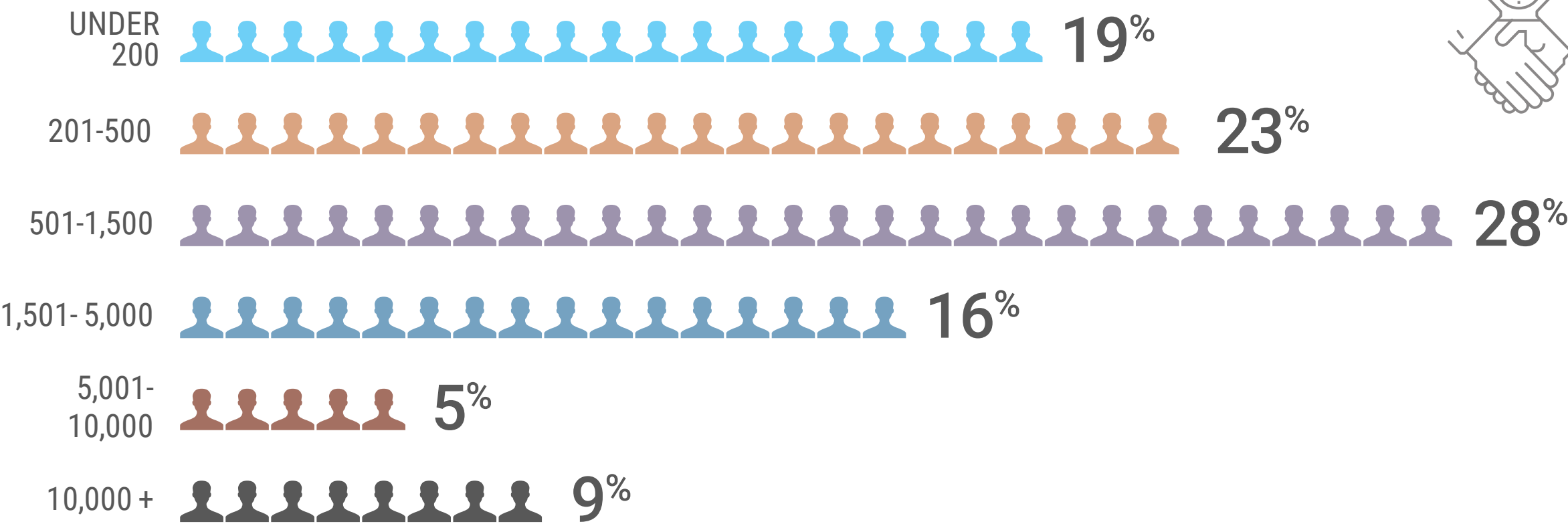
ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET | APPROXIMATE

Q: What is your organization’s approximate annual operating budget?



ANTICIPATED MEMBERSHIP

Q: What is your organization’s anticipated membership as of 12/31/2021 (number of billing accounts)

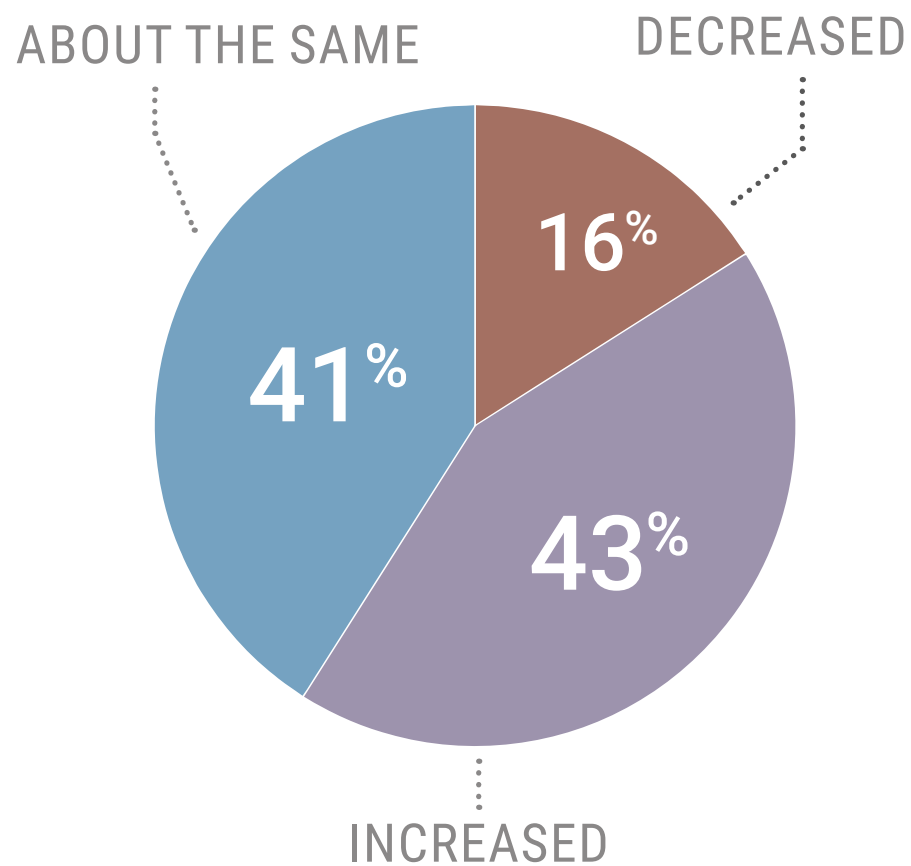


MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

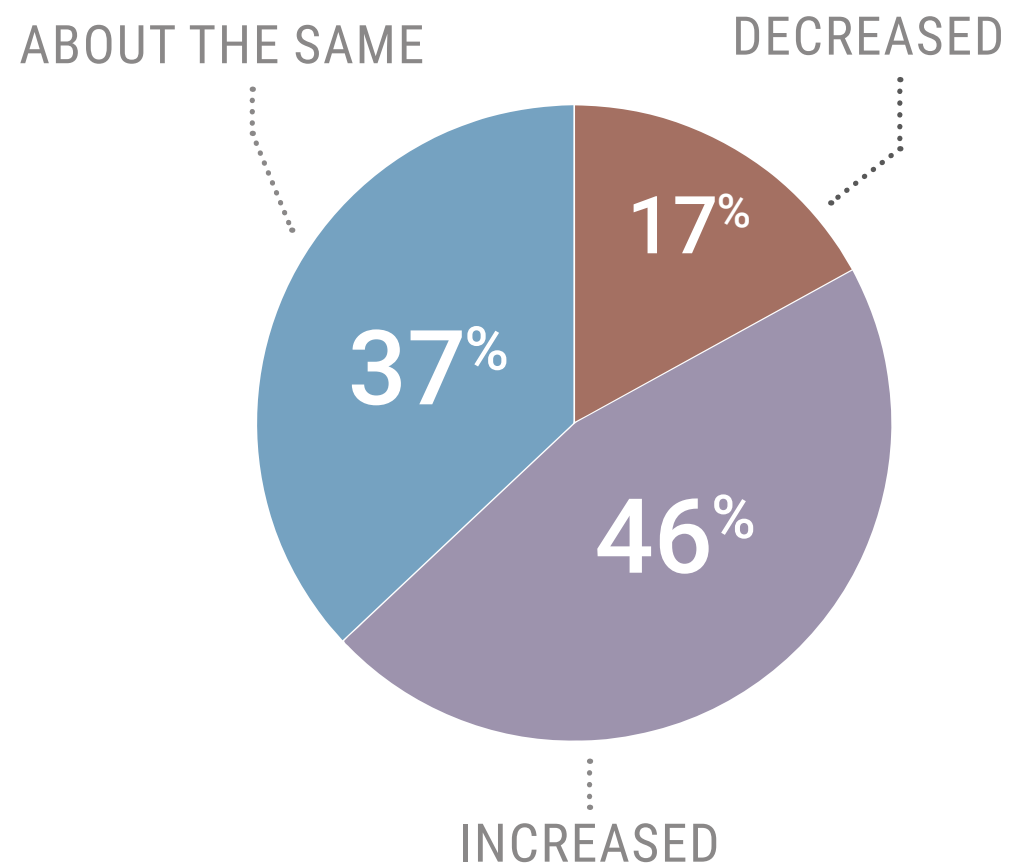


NET GROWTH | NEW + RENEWAL CHANGES OVER THE LAST YEAR

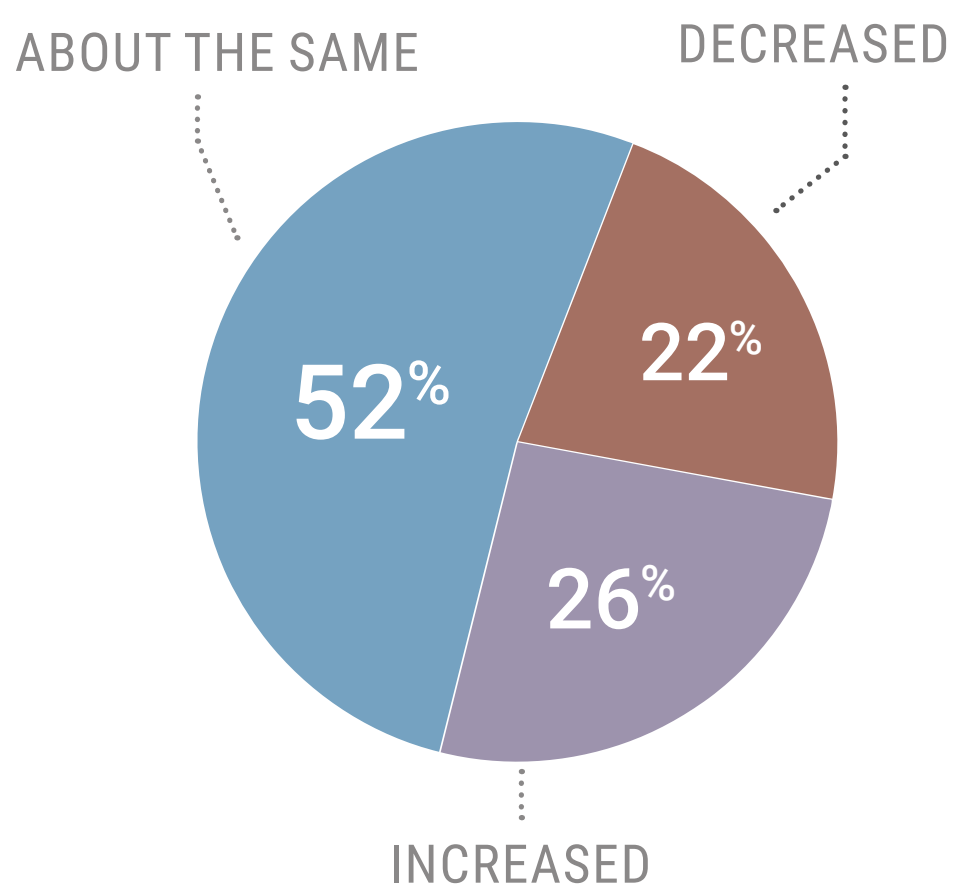
Q: Do you anticipate your membership at year end will show a NET increase or decrease over 12/31/20?



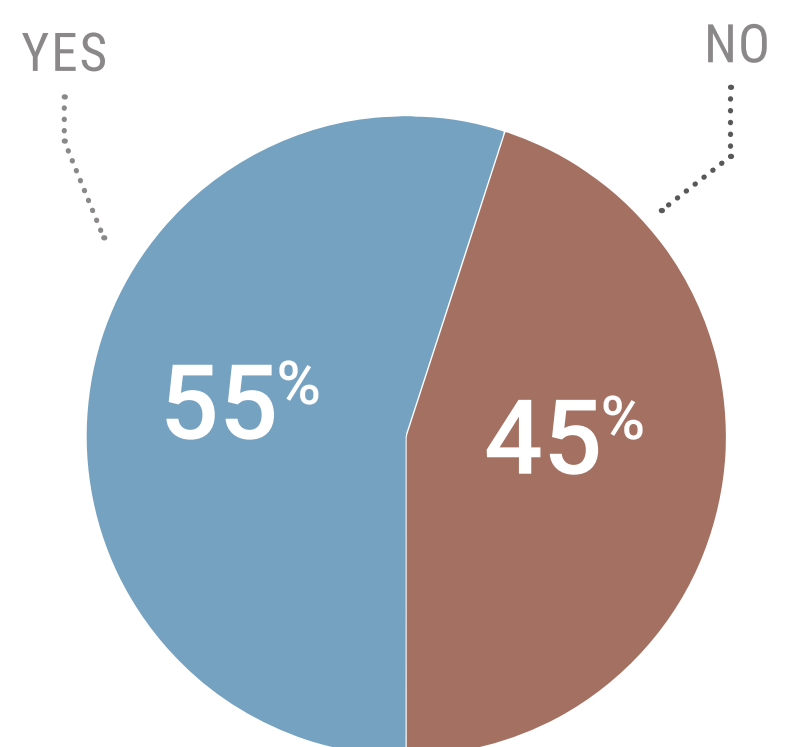
Q: Have NEW memberships increased or decreased since last year (since 12/31/20)?



Q: Did your overall RENEWALS change for 2021 over the year 2020?



Q: Are your members required to join your organization?

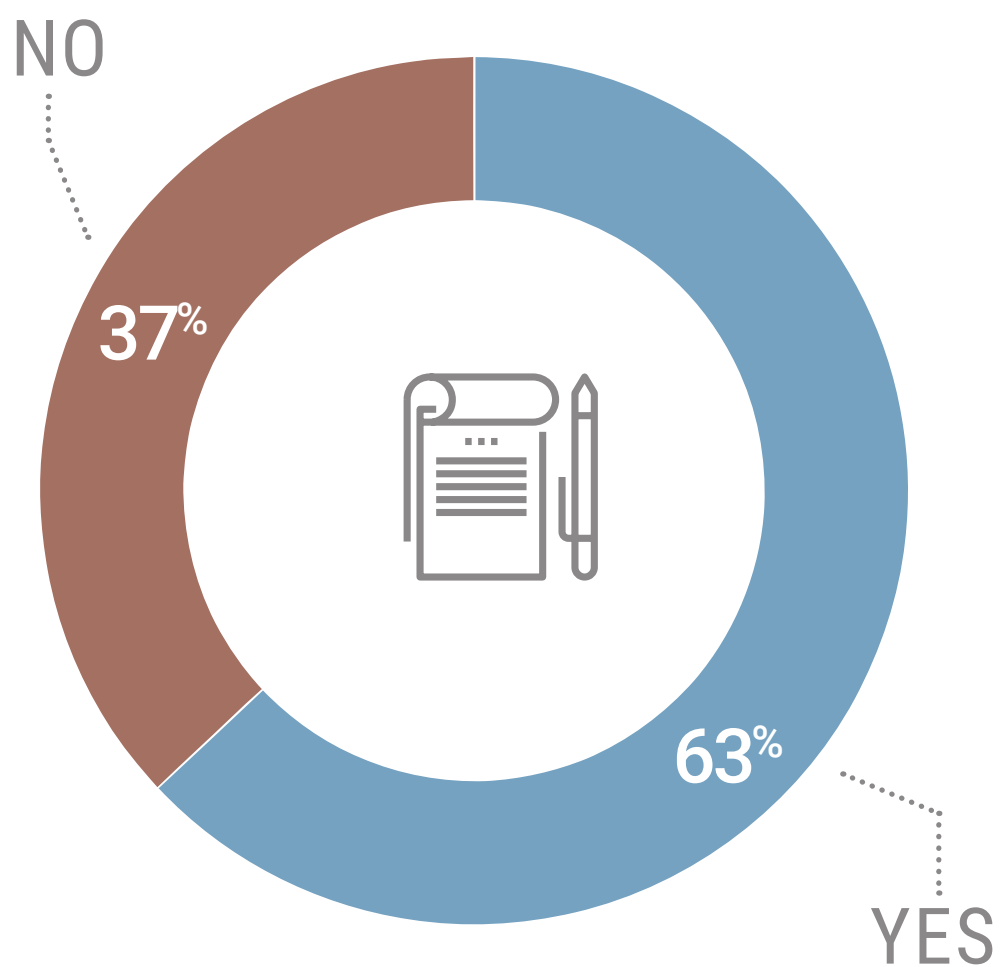


VALUES & POLICIES

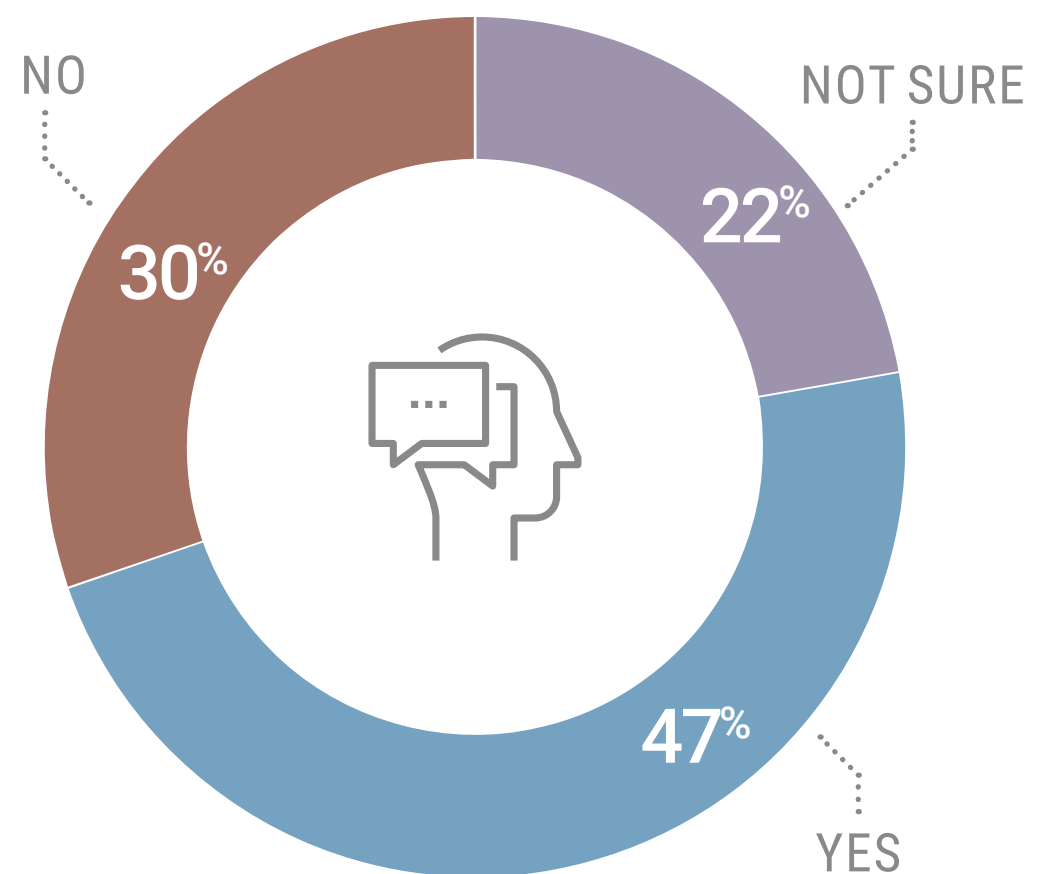


VALUE PROPOSITIONS

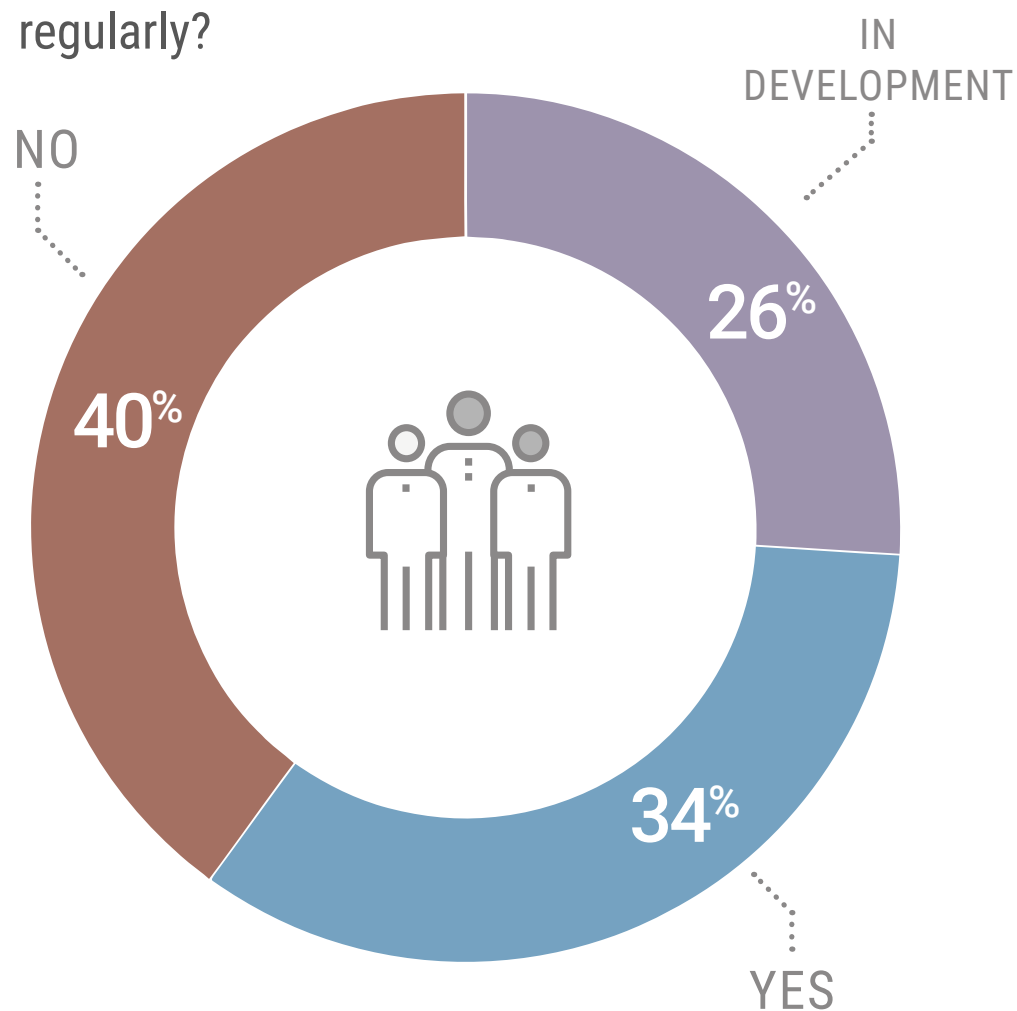
Q: Do you have a documented value proposition message that you use in your planning and your member interactions?



Q: Do you believe members clearly understand the value of your organization and the specific solutions you offer them?



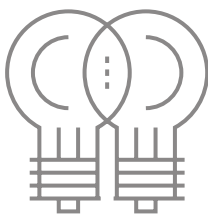
Q: Does your organization have a documented diversity and inclusion policy that you use regularly?



Q: What benefit have you seen from putting this policy in place, if any?

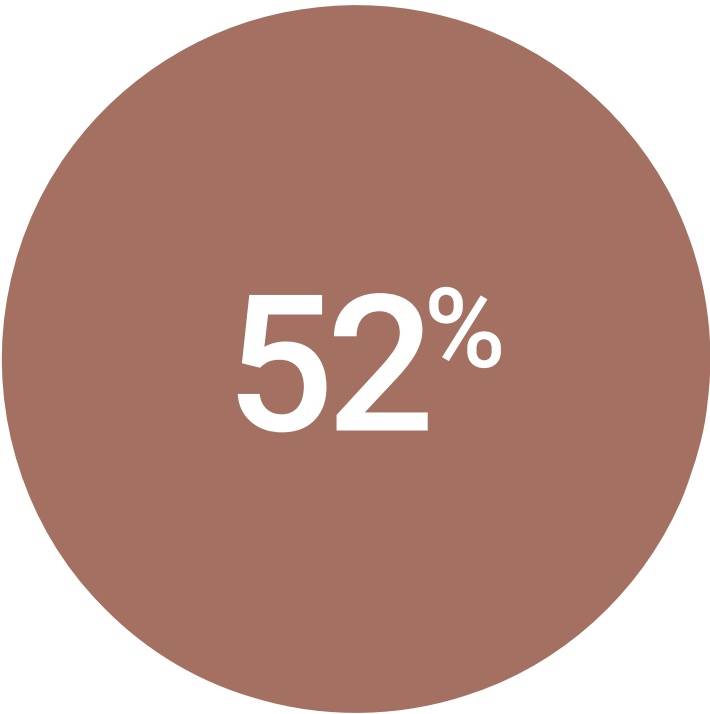
- ” An increased sense of working toward best practices that can benefit all members.
- ” Opened up communications.
- ” It has created a climate that strives to be more inclusive in everything we do. It has impacted our strategic plan and program offerings.
- ” We have a global diversity committee with the goal of bringing diverse speakers in front of our members to talk about unique issues we might not otherwise hear. Although it may not be across the board popular with everyone, we do think it is important.
- ” We have seen an increase in other companies that had not been engaged prior. Primarily BIPOC businesses.
- ” I have not really seen any membership growth due to the policy.
- ” It is always a work in progress that is positive. I believe employees feel more valued and listened to.
- ” None so far. It was a mandate to get one in place and we did.
- ” This is new for us this year. Our members have asked for it and we know this is something that is necessary.
- ” We have not seen much of a benefit.
- ” The benefit is obvious.
- ” Demonstrates a commitment to DEI and progress toward having the association look more like its members.
- ” We have seen a positive response from members who feel that the organization reflects their values. Sponsors have also liked this.
- ” Potential new members understand that the association values diversity in everything we do.
- ” More members and better morale.

INNOVATION & INITIATIVES

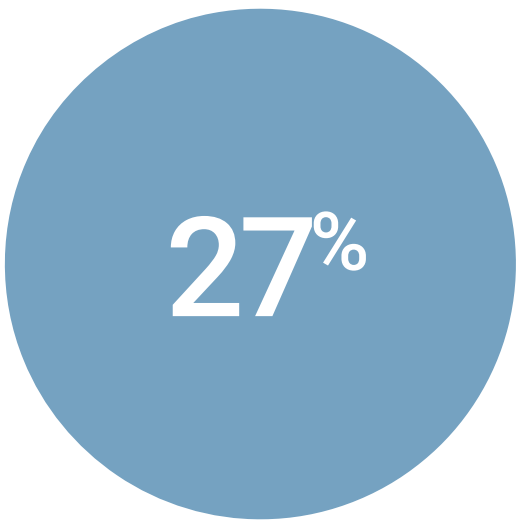


PROCESS

Q: Does your organization currently have a formal innovation process or plan to pursue new ideas for adding value to your members’ business?



No, we do not have a formal innovation process



Yes, we have a formal, ongoing process



Yes, we have a task force in place for short term innovation

NEW SERVICES

Q: Did you launch any new member service, offering or tool during 2021 that is showing promise today?



COMMON INNOVATIONS

- Events
 - Financial
 - Marketing
 - Promotion
- Member Benefits
 - Membership Programs
 - New Services
 - Professional Development
- Initiatives
 - Technology
 - Virtual Programming

INNOVATION & INITIATIVES (CONT.)

Q: Can you offer a short explanation about the offering and any results so far?

EVENTS

- ” Online meetings (they’re a very face-to-face group).
- ” Offered a hybrid option for convention.
- ” We launched a series of webinar workshops to help the members in navigating changing COVID-19 scenarios. The series received great response.
- ” We have a new Women in Horticulture program - a series of interviews with notable women in the industry. Interest has been strong, and we had a sell out in-person event at our annual conference in July.
- ” Monthly webinars.
- ” Monthly, semi-structured calls for members to share, learn, and support one another. We have only had two. They went well and were well attended.
- ” Virtual events and these have increased membership and awareness of the association.
- ” Technology conference is a big success.
- ” New free events.
- ” Member mixers and roundtables.

MARKETING

- ” We are slow growing enough right now that this is a personal touch method: phone call and follow-up email.
- ” Members are glad to see a directory coming into play again, as it has been over 15 years since the last directory.
- ” Member engagement profiles for group and institutional members to illustrate the ROI for membership.
- ” E-newsletter for group members with industry news, not promotional information.
- ” E-mail bursts to members for a fee.

MEMBER BENEFITS

- ” We offered a concierge service for our members.
- ” We have moved some of our materials that are normally free and tucked them behind a membership, thus making our membership more valuable.
- ” Member discounts on industry vendors.

NEW SERVICES

- ” We have added electronic forms and many of the members are using them.
- ” New video series.
- ” New member app.
- ” New contract opportunity with a group health insurer.
- ” We added a new Member Benefit Discount on a product. We have had several members request the form to use the benefit.
- ” Added support personnel training.
- ” Hiring tools.
- ” Began offering a new health insurance program.
- ” We added a strategic planning service for members.
- ” We introduced a paid coaching service where we provide one-on-one leadership coaching for members.

FINANCIAL

- ” Offering online payments for donations, new member orientation fees, and other items.
- ” Scholarships and grants.
- ” Added a Retirement Benefit because a lot of our members are small businesses; now they can leverage pricing through a larger pool.
- ” Individual memberships as opposed to just business memberships.
- ” Meeting assistance fund.
- ” Offering a [discounted] membership for 2022 and to receive the rest of 2021 for free.
- ” Enacted a \$5 per month dues increase October 1 but have now also provided free CE classes.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

- ” COVID-19-related resources.
- ” Member education DEI training. Increase in participation and conversation.
- ” Small group “coffee & conversations” where similar member categories share best practices and exchange ideas to solve problems and challenges.
- ” A “young member” category at a reduced price which has led to more new members.
- ” Rolled out a new affinity partnership program.
- ” We re-launched our co-op connections card. It connects members nationwide with participating businesses. We handle the marketing and communication, so it’s a high ROI for the businesses and members.
- ” Job boards and student chapters.
- ” Free virtual education.
- ” A new online member community.
- ” Supplier spotlights (videos and presentations).
- ” Training programs & learning management system. Each has been a driver for membership growth and retention.

PROMOTION

- ” A membership recruitment tool that includes a career interest web area with opt-in form and timed email responses with some personalization. Resulted in 16 new members since 2/2021.
- ” We just started up an automated job board. We hope to use this to increase student member engagement.
- ” We implemented a targeted marketing campaign for new member recruitment.
- ” We just launched a somewhat enhanced membership directory that allows vendor members better visibility based on the products/services they offer.
- ” Cooperative marketing opportunities.
- ” Testimonial Tree - a tool to collect and distribute testimonials.
- ” New marketing materials have expanded our reach.

INNOVATION & INITIATIVES (CONT.)

Q: Can you offer a short explanation about the offering and any results so far? (cont.)

TECHNOLOGY & PROGRAMMING

- ” A new website and it is working.
- ” New member app that can be used to sign up for classes and other items.
- ” New association management software.
- ” We are testing the value of our association’s website as a direct-to-consumer value proposition.
- ” Text Service for event reminders and volunteer opportunities.
- ” Interactive self-service AMS; e-advocacy platform; on-demand education platform.
- ” Began offering an automated recruitment software program.

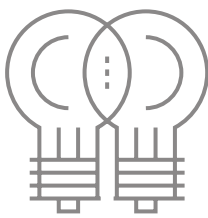
VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

- ” We have developed a wide range of virtual offerings that have been well-received.
- ” Virtual corporate exposure opportunities.
- ” We launched regular virtual programming outside of our online learning platform which has been great as the learning platform was previously too difficult to use.
- ” We now offer recordings of all of our chapter meetings on-demand for our members. Based on the views, it looks like we have members taking advantage of it.
- ” Will continue webinars but going back to live meetings.

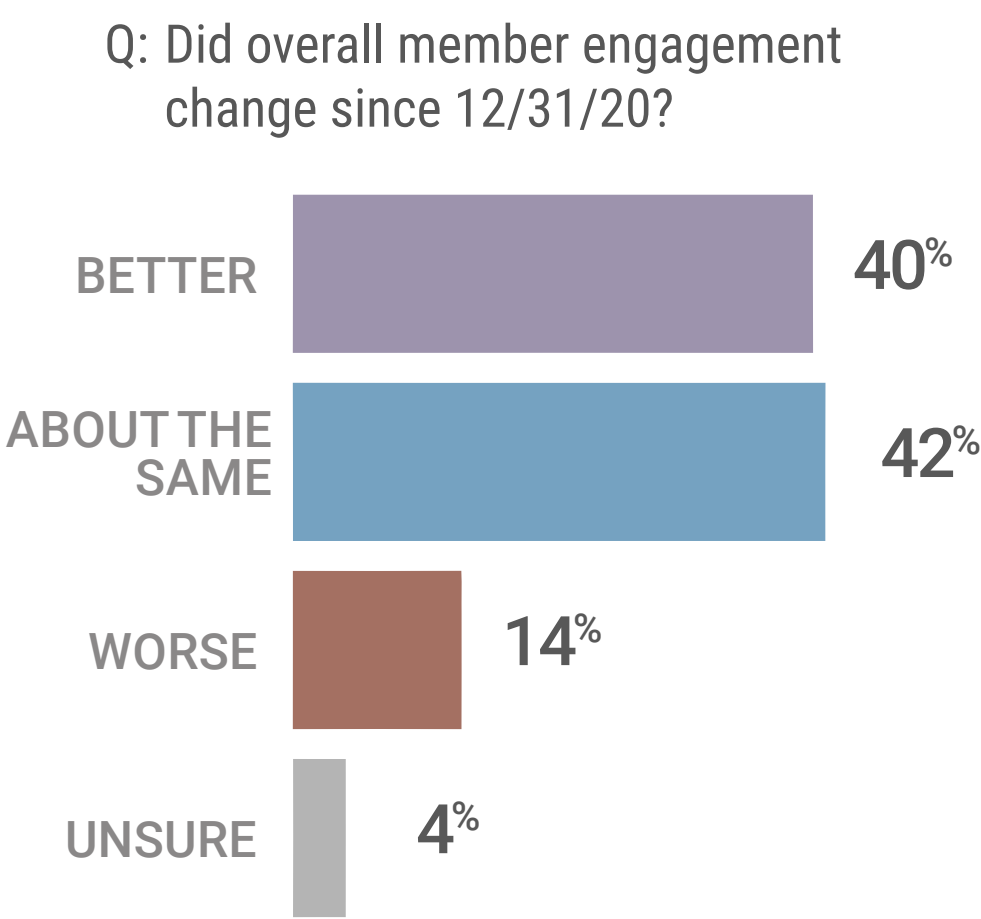
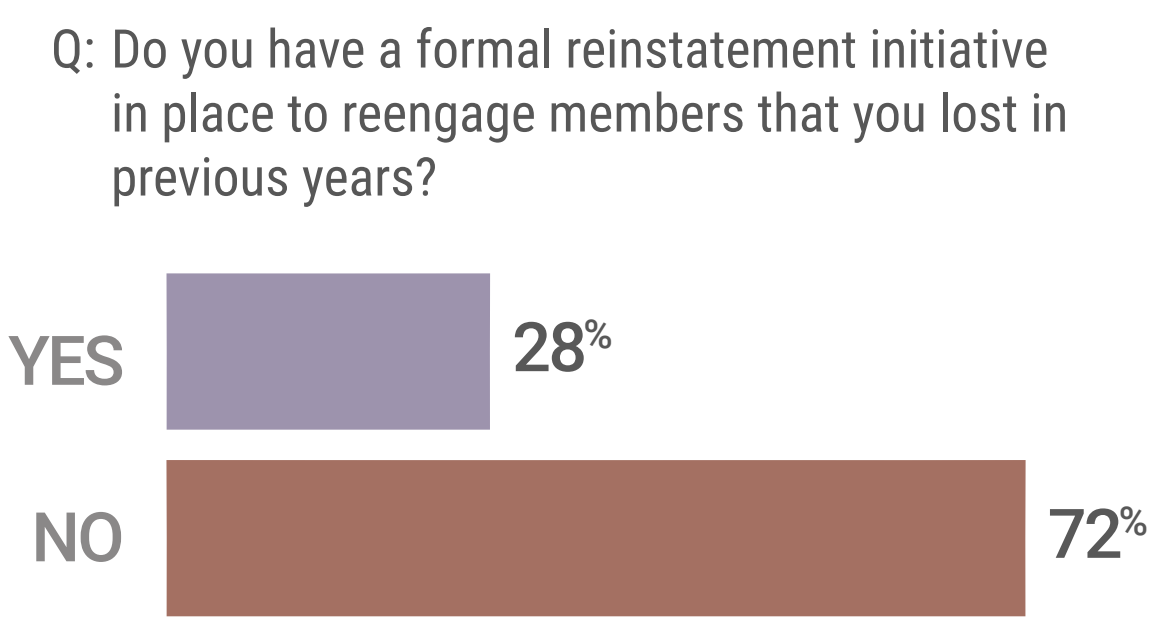
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- ” A training program specific to our members’ area of focus.
- ” Digital learning program and weekly community webinars for support, knowledge, and engagement.
- ” We are now offering a self-study process for improvement of faith formation within schools; an integral part of a growing and successful program.
- ” Virtual training opportunities have been very successful, as many of our member companies are spread throughout the state.
- ” New basic skilling training for entry-level workers.
- ” Free monthly webinars, with a range of 300-1000 participants.
- ” Increased professional development webinars for members; seeing more engagement with them throughout the year.
- ” A professional development training program for a skill specific to our community interests.
- ” Online learning management system.
- ” A webinar series for entry-level professionals to learn and network with our more experienced members.
- ” Moving to a totally online, virtual platform for educational programs.
- ” We introduced shorter, 20-minute “coffee break” webinars on specific topics relevant to our membership and prospective members.

INNOVATION & INITIATIVES (CONT.)



INITIATIVES



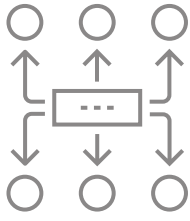
ACTIVITIES



Q: What OTHER activities helped your organization overcome the challenges of 2020?

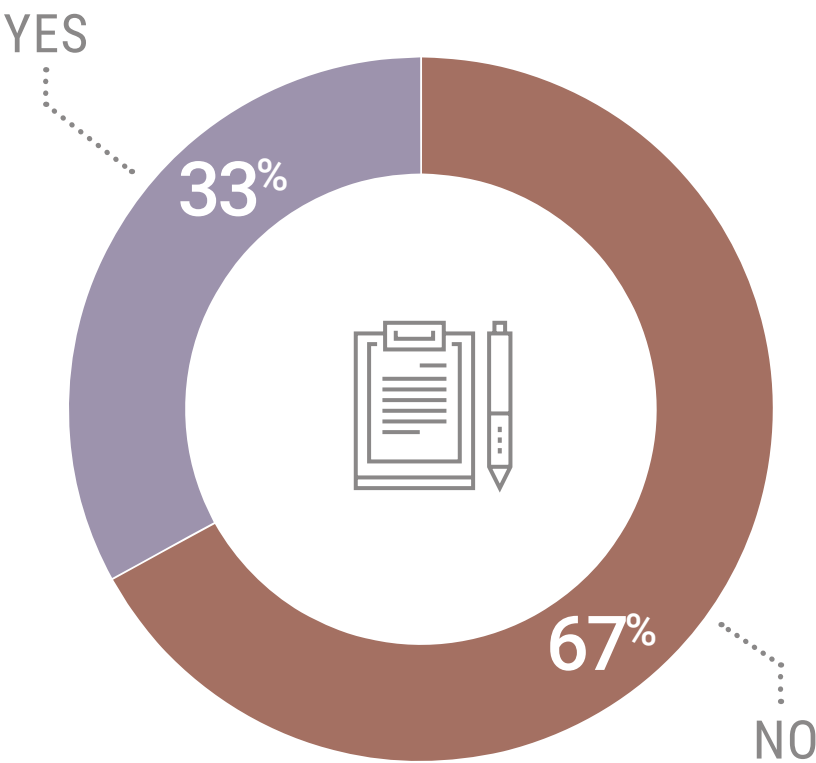
- Check-in virtual coffee breaks
 - Virtual training
 - Free COVID-19 tests, Vaccinations
 - Help with aggressive print, digital, and social media content marketing
 - Educated about the value of consumers contacting us for referrals
- Payment plan
 - More support for local chapters with help in setting up virtual meetings, finding educational opportunities for meetings, other communication tools
 - New member training
 - One-stop shop for information: so they don't have to gather themselves
- Online conference instead of in-person
 - Payment deadline extension
 - Accessible virtual resources
 - Change in membership dues structure to include training
 - Legislative help

MEMBERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

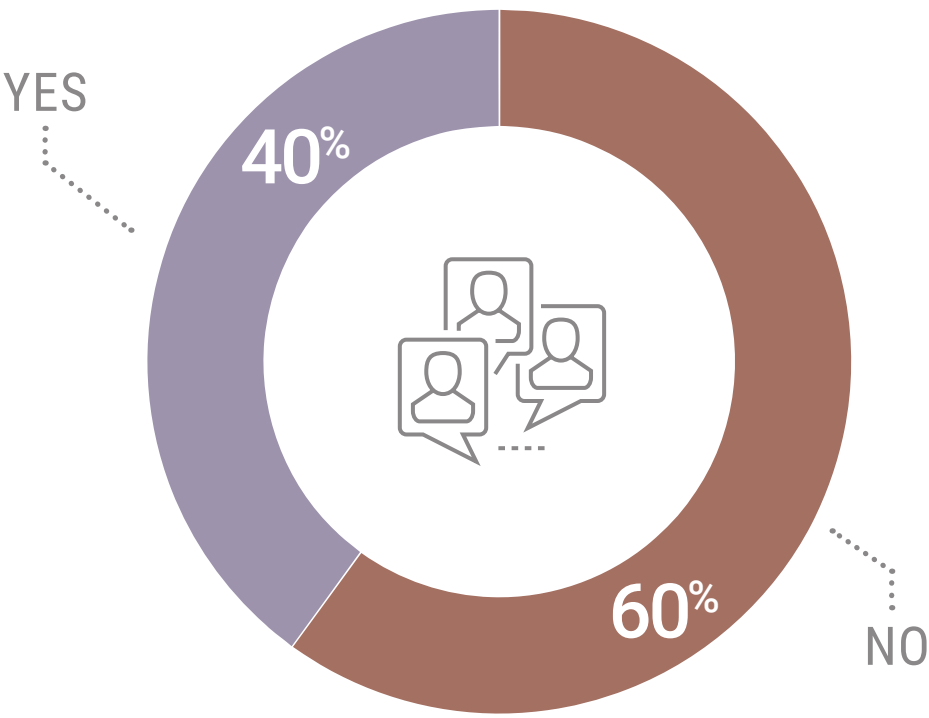


PLANNING

Q: Do you have a written plan for increasing member engagement?



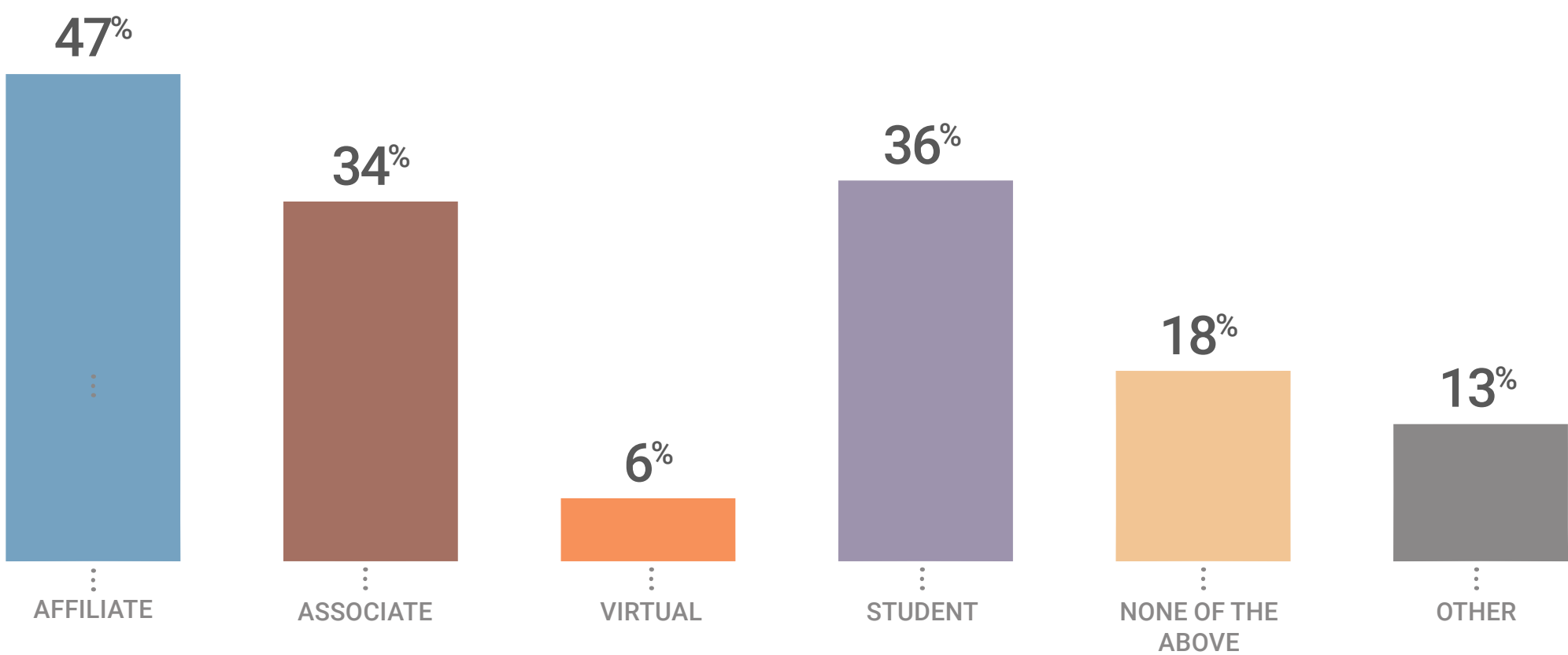
Q: Do you have one or more member advisory groups that feeds information into your strategy and/or operations?



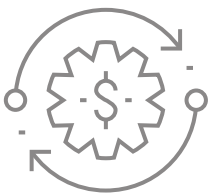
Q: What would you consider is the top benefit of your member advisory group to the association?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh ideas Brainstorming Member Perception Direct link to member needs Networking Education It provides us with outside perspectives and a clear goal we might not have otherwise. Doing business with members Discounts New ideas for programming Weekly communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused conversation on benefits Understanding interests and needs of members Growth trends Candid insight Voices being heard It's made up of members who have their finger on the pulse of what's happening in the local industry. Strategic feedback We get the member perspective on issues and concerns Hearing member and industry needs directly from the source | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input into our operational planning Cross-section of participating members provides insight to whole Variance in culture and thought processes Perspective on whether our priorities align with industry needs Vendors serving as advisors have a unique perspective on the industry |
|--|--|--|

Q: What non-standard membership categories do you offer?

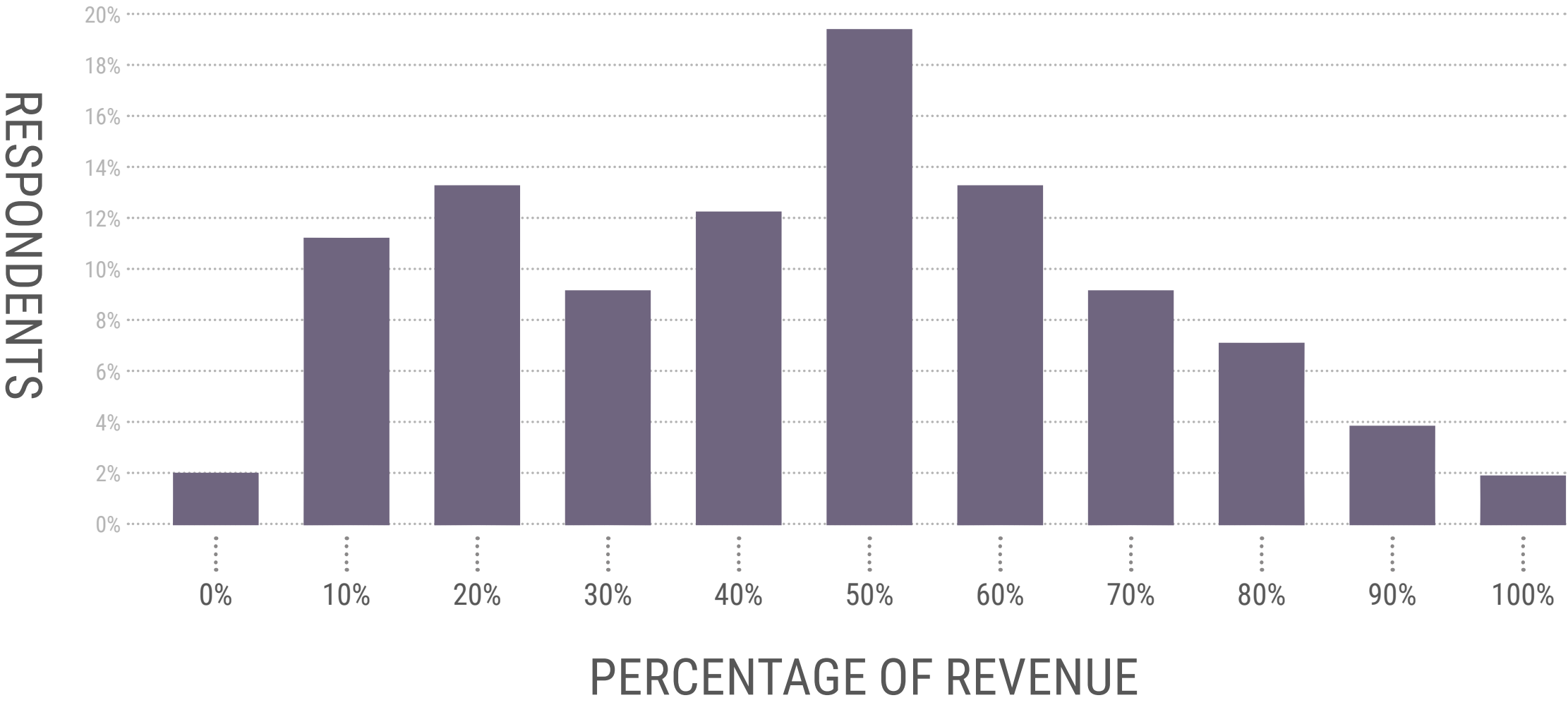


REVENUE



DUES & NON-DUES REVENUE

Q: In an average year, approximately how much of your total revenue comes from non-dues sources?



TOP 10 BIGGEST NON-DUES REVENUE SOURCES

- 
EVENTS
- 
SPONSORSHIP
- 
PRODUCTS/
SERVICES
- 
GRANTS
- 
ADVERTISING
- 
FEES
- 
ROYALTIES
- 
AFFILIATES
- 
FUNDRAISING
- 
OUTSIDE
FUNDING

IMPROVEMENTS

COMMON LESSONS LEARNED

- Big Picture/Strategy
 ➤ Communications
 ➤ Connections/Engagement
 ➤ Flexibility
- Keep Going
 ➤ Virtual
 ➤ Live/In-Person
 ➤ Reevaluate
- Technology
 ➤ Value/Relevance

Q: What is your biggest lesson learned as an organization in the past 12 months?

BIG PICTURE/STRATEGY

- Being bold in changing membership structure (went from offering quarterly and semi-annual to annual only).
- Need to revise membership levels.
- Members need to learn what we're up to strategically.
- Lacking taskforce to champion the future of association.
- Need for structure and organization.
- We need a documented strategy.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Need more positive promotion.
- Keep the lines of communication open - whatever form of communication it might be.
- Members yearn for more communication and education.
- More frequent communication prevents member complaints.
- I have been struggling to find ways to make sure our members get the communications they need that are important.
- Young people do not see any value in belonging to a local trade association. If they do join, they do not want to attend any meetings face-to-face. They want more online communications.
- The value our members place on communications and information.
- Stay in constant touch via web, email, social media; which also means upgrading and improving the content used in these formats.
- Constant communication on what's available to members, especially the benefits included as part of membership.
- Members are overwhelmed with the information. They want more 1-1 attention wherever possible.
- Our members look to us to provide them with the latest news in healthcare.
- Communicate in member speak.
- We need to develop more impactful storytelling focused on successes and outcomes.
- Showcasing members and using members to develop content for our site is highly important.
- Provide better, more engaging content to members.
- Repetition in communication is key.
- It takes so many touch points to get action despite deep engagement.
- Communicate and your membership will stay loyal.
- Communication is paramount. You must be innovative to continue communicating and offering the same level of service to the members.
- Our members don't engage with digital formats as much as they engage in printed formats.
- Hold webinars on topics that members need and want to improve their business practices or explain situations that affect them quickly.

CONNECTIONS/ENGAGEMENT

- Stay engaged and ask the members.
- Meeting the members where they are (online, in-person, etc.).
- Get feedback from our members.
- We need to increase involvement and get people excited again.
- Engagement is crucial.
- Members appreciate seeing and hearing from other members.
- People are tired and need to be embraced and reassured.
- Our membership wants to engage more during the year.
- We need a better plan to reach lapsed members.
- We need new and different ways to engage members.

FLEXIBILITY

- We can adapt to challenges presented.
- Be nimble, flexible, and responsive to changing conditions and members' needs.
- Don't feel complacent with our services. Things are changing constantly, and we would rather adapt them than be stuck trying to make something work that isn't viable anymore.
- Be flexible, patient.
- Adapt and overcome.
- The need to be flexible and to respond to members where they are. We moved a lot of our education programming to virtual and we are finding that many members now prefer that.
- We have a strong leadership team and are able to pivot quickly and to keep customer service top of mind.
- Things will always change.
- You can plan all you want but you'll still need to be flexible and ready to pivot with every curveball that comes at you.
- The world is constantly changing and trying to keep up with new ideas.
- We can make a big difference helping government entities to get their work done.
- We can adapt on short notice.
- Flexibility in online platforms
- Be flexible and focus on what's important at the time but always be looking ahead.
- Need to shift business services as needs of members change.
- Crises will happen. Prepare for what you can and react to what you can't.
- We learned how nimble we could be as a team, internally and with executive leadership.
- We must continue to adapt and respond to the market, as well as continue to offer virtual events and accreditation opportunities.
- We need to be more flexible and expand our revenue streams to be more diverse.
- Being flexible for our members as far as paying dues, and for the programs we offer.
- We must pivot and change constantly - innovation is not an option - it is a daily requirement.

IMPROVEMENTS

Q: What is your biggest lesson learned as an organization in the past 12 months?

KEEP GOING

- Keep innovating, planning meetings, and sticking to a schedule.
- We will get back to normal.
- Continue to keep members engaged.
- COVID-19 cannot stop us.
- Don't try to predict the unpredictable.
- The biggest lesson is that people are resilient, and they will continue to innovate despite perceived setbacks.
- There are many challenges with the ever-changing world we live in.
- We were more prepared for continuation of services because we have been working completely virtual since June 2016.
- Stay strong and vigilant.
- We are more resilient and better prepared than we thought.
- We can overcome any hurdle with a great team in place. This past year really proved that to us.
- We are not going back.
- The equation we used for addressing COVID-19 concerns for our industry is super successful and we are duplicating it for campaigns and member needs going forward.
- Do not overreact too quickly.

VIRTUAL

- People became comfortable with virtual events.
- We learned we can work both virtually and in-person.
- More patience with Zoom meetings.
- Virtual meetings are not 100% the best but can be great for engagement.
- Offering meetings and classes on a platform like Zoom allows more members to engage at a lower cost.
- People want virtual! Events, classes, meetings, etc.
- How to serve members virtually.
- You can do a lot of things online.
- Modifying operations to work virtually has really shined a light on the decreased need for a physical workspace for our office.
- Everything that can be done in-person can be done virtually.
- A hybrid mix of virtual and in-person programming is proving to be a winner.
- We may need more virtual events to accommodate the new norm of the workforce. It provides a lot more flexibility to the member.
- We can collaborate better working from home and checking in at least once a day.
- We can reach more people, internationally, by having virtual conferences.
- We were able to pivot to virtual meetings/education, translating into renewals and new members.
- Our members love having virtual options.
- Zoom is great for some meetings, but when used exclusively, some choose not to participate.
- Online workshops are good sometimes, but not all the time.
- Virtual is the wave of the future as an option for membership.

LIVE/IN-PERSON

- We all miss the face-to-face events.
- It's important to have members in-person and back in our building.
- My members work in-person, in an essential service, and prefer to meet and engage with the association in-person. Losing in-person events really hurt the association.
- Virtual is ok, but our people like in-person best.
- Our members want to meet in-person and not virtually.
- People do not like virtual meetings.

REEVALUATE

- We need to partner with more innovative organizations.
- We need better follow-through.
- Provide services to adapt.
- Need more new members.
- Provide options for our members to secure institutional registrations for our virtual conference.
- We need to provide education.
- The need for non-dues revenue is critical.
- Always be willing to figure out what our members want and need to stay in business.
- Respond to the unexpected.
- Don't put all your revenue eggs in one basket.
- We can't rely on doing things the same way year after year. We must be engaged with our membership, listen to their needs, and change our offerings accordingly.
- You must be willing to cancel something that isn't working/isn't popular.
- We need to not rely on dues as sole income.

TECHNOLOGY

- Need to be more tech-versed in case of another shut down.
- Technology integration was key to our success.
- Having a good technology system (hardware, software, & personnel) was significant in carrying on the work of the association when everyone had to work from home.

VALUE/RELEVANCE

- Members first.
- Even through a pandemic, we can offer our members great value to continue to get their CE credits. We can do them virtually and still get a great turnout.
- Be consistent in services.
- We need to demonstrate that membership in the organization is a necessary expense. Too many members view it as discretionary, so it is one of the first things to be eliminated when budgets get tight.
- Must understand what members need - that's what value is.
- Focus on the value of a "virtual" membership. How can we engage with members when there are no in-person events?
- Increasing membership renewals and following up with non-active members is important.
- When you offer something your members need, they engage more.
- Value proposition is key.
- Learn how to showcase what you work on.
- Associates need to see value.



GrowthZone

smarter association software

About Growthzone

The GrowthZone mission is to empower organizations with the tools they need to grow membership, keep members engaged, keep members longer, and do more in less time.

GrowthZone is a full Membership Management System with built-in payment processing, e-commerce, fundraising, marketing automation, member prospecting, and more. GrowthZone is ideal for business, trade, and professional associations.

Schedule a quick, no-pressure demo to see GrowthZone in action.

SCHEDULE DEMO

GrowthZone features a comprehensive suite of productivity modules for membership organizations, including:

- Website Content Management
- Email Marketing Automation
- Fundraising
- Billing
- Event Registration
- Event Exhibitor/Session Management
- Membership Prospecting
- Payment Processing
- Certification Tracking
- Chapter Management
- Mobile Staff App
- Website Hosting
- Advertising/Sponsorship
- Online Store
- Project Management
- Form Builder
- Job Boards
- Contacts
- Communication
- Lists/Committees
- Fundraising