

The New Motto: Access, Resources and Solutions to Members

For as long as I can remember, the message to members was “Get involved, get results.” This implied that if members wanted to gain benefits from us, they had to come to events, belong to a committee, or be active in grassroots advocacy initiatives to drive favorable business legislation. Inadvertently, this message also told members that if they couldn’t get “involved” in the face-to-face opportunities we provide, they weren’t likely to reap the benefits they anticipated.

I agree that when members actively and consistently engage in networking and committee initiatives, they are more apt to know what’s going on and can develop deeper relationships with other members. It’s the same recipe for what it takes to make social media initiatives effective. It doesn’t matter how many Facebook friends, LinkedIn connections or Twitter followers one has—if you’re not reading, sharing, or contributing, you can be out of the loop and lose touch and favoritism pretty quickly.

Association Transformation



But membership in a professional or trade association isn’t another social media venue. People have so many choices today to be profiled, get involved, collect information, and network with others. Time poverty prevents so many members from attending programs and events that are either “one-offs” or offered on days/times when they can’t attend.

And managing so many different memberships can be time-consuming and unproductive.

We also have to realize that individuals and organizations belong to associations for different reasons. Some join because of us—why we exist, how we do it, and what we get done. Many others join because it’s more about them—what they want to communicate to the community about their brand, what needs or interests they have to address, and what they can get from us. The new motto we’re rallying around is focused on: Access, Resources, Solutions and realizing that the interests/needs the motto communicates can mean different things to different groups.

Our days of selling the same benefits to all prospects and members are behind us. The bottom line is that one size fits no one. We must develop different value propositions to communicate and serve a diverse membership base. That starts with an understanding of the various segments of your audience (both members and prospects), what’s important to them, and how these diverse

Common Interests and Needs



© 2013 Hight Performance Group

How to Appeal to the 4 Types of Members

We must develop different value propositions to communicate and serve a diverse membership base. needs are met through the association.

In our webinar, [How to Appeal to the 4 Types of Members](#), we discussed the most common interests and needs of our audience. This chart reflects a high level description of the most common ones. Of course, there are a few other "themes" that could be added. Learn more about the webinar.

Some of our audience is very interested in overall issues that impact most community businesses and they value that we take on those larger issues through our advocacy initiatives. Most businesses are concerned about the local economy and want us to take an active role in driving the key ingredients that breed economic success. All businesses have workforce issues which will continue as a result of a global talent shortage and the Millennials domination of the workplace. Small businesses are seeking tools and resources to help them grow while others prefer a home grown method of face-to-face networking.

The Member Profile Matrix illustrates how these different interests and needs create four different types of members who make up our membership base. This Matrix could be used to evaluate the benefits we offer for each type, identify service gaps, and even help us develop a tiered benefits model that appeals to all four types.

It's a good time to re-evaluate who you serve, how you serve them, and what changes to make to position your Chamber for success. Leverage the new motto Access, Resources, Solutions and consider what that means to each type of the member.

Member Profile Matrix—the Framework

Get Something Done Through You

INVESTED	Community Investors	Community Builders	INVOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic direction, vision• Sustainable, thriving economy• Progress towards goals• Community leadership• Public policy and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable, thriving economy• Community involvement• Public policy and advocacy• Recognition• Execute corporate initiatives	
	Business Investors <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost reduction• Pay to play• Convenience• ROI expectations• Access to experts, best practices	Business Builder <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transactional activities (leads)• Just-in-time marketing• Pay by showing up• ROI without \$ investment• Exposure, connections	

Get Something for Their Business

© 2013 Hight Performance Group, Inc.

How to Appeal to the 4 Types of Members

Cathi Hight is president of [Hight Performance Group](#) and provides realignment strategies that help associations of all sizes manage constant change, deliver benefits that members value, leverage volunteer and staff resources efficiently, and effectively communicate the value of membership. Contact Cathi at (512) 354-7219 or e-mail: cathi@hightperformance.com.