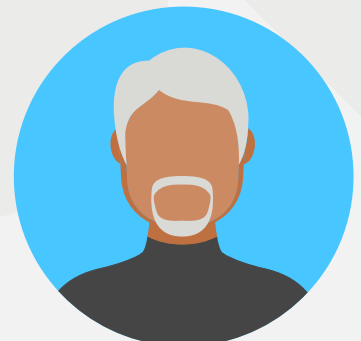




Content By Members, For Members Workbook



Introduction

As a member-driven organization, you work hard to keep your members engaged by providing informative, relevant, and meaningful content. Yet, good quality content requires considerable time and resources to produce, which can be a strain on your association.

Thankfully, there's another way! Instead of scouring the internet for trending topics and ideas, your association can **leverage real-life experiences, knowledge, and expertise of the most influential people in your industry** – your members. As active users on their own channels, your members voluntarily create content every day. They are the “boots on the ground” with an inside view of what is happening in their field, unfiltered and uninhibited. When this content is then shared by your association on social media or in an email newsletter, it elevates your association's reputation more than self-promotion or publicity.

In this workbook, you'll learn what types of member-created content your association can take advantage of to save you time, money and resources, as well as how to use your members as champions of your organization for years to come.

Learning Objectives

1

Identify members who are actively creating content and/or are subject matter experts and invite them to become a contributor for your association

2

Reach highly sought-after audiences on a deeper level and draw in a more engaged audience by using content centered around member experiences

3

Spotlight and share member-created content to simultaneously enhance the experience of your readers and engage the members who created the content on a new level

Identifying Member-Created Content

When a member posts pictures and/or videos highlighting their experience at your annual conference, that's member-created content. When a member writes a blog article about a hot topic related to your industry, that's member-created content. When a member shares a testimonial about the benefits of your association, that's member-created content. Simply stated, member-generated content refers to anything an individual or organizational member shares, reposts, or creates themselves, including social media posts, images, videos, real-time stories, blogs, guest editorials, podcast spotlights, journal articles and more.

How your association leverages this plethora of content, is what gives member-created content it's power. Despite being organic, meaning unpaid or unsponsored, the reach of sharing and re-sharing member-generated content is exponential since it **comes off as more realistic and resonates with audiences on a deeper level**. There are many types of member-created content your association can take advantage of, and as the market continues to grow and change, there will be more diversity in the future.

TYPES OF CONTENT



Pictures



Video



Blogs & Articles



Podcasts



Testimonials

QUESTION 1:

What types of content do your members value most?

QUESTION 2:

How do members engage with the content your association shares?

Sourcing Member-Created Content

Creating original content is vitally important for establishing credibility and thought leadership, but well-curated content from trusted first-party sources, like your members, also contributes to your association's trustworthiness. That being said, content curation is more than just sharing a post. It's a selection process of determining the best content across multiple channels that are most timely and relevant for your members. When you like, share, comment, or repost your members' posts on your own social media accounts it not only shows that you're in the know about what's going on in your industry, but drives additional interactions because your followers engage more with real content from real users.

The easiest way to get member-created content is to ASK! Fun campaigns like a photo contest or special hashtag are creative ways to get members engaged and excited about contributing. For a simple framework to get the conversation started and ask for permission, check out the appendix at the end of this workbook.

CONTENT CHANNELS



QUESTION 3:

What are the top three channels your members actively use?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

QUESTION 4:

What new channels has your association considered using in the future?

Sharing Member-Created Content

Before you start sharing member-created content, you should first consider your audience and *their* goals. What do your members care about? What interests them? What problems are they trying to solve? How do they like to engage with content? Just because a member shares an article or posts on their social media, doesn't mean it is relevant or valuable to the rest of your members. To answer the previous questions, you must have a good understanding of who your members are, including age, member category, level of engagement and more.

In the section below is a brief overview of the four generations that represent your membership. As you read through the descriptions, think about your association's current makeup, and what defines each group within your organization.

BABY BOOMERS

Born between 1946-1964, Baby Boomers were shaped by of the Vietnam War, the Moon Landing, Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement. They are considered fiercely loyal and hard workers. According to the United States Census, over 10,000 Baby Boomers retire every day.

List 3 characteristics that best describe your members who are Baby Boomers.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

MILLENNIALS

Also known as Generation Y, Millennials currently make up the fastest growing segment of the workforce. Born between 1981-2000, this generation was influenced by the Dot-Com Era, 9/11, Climate Change Crisis, 2008 Market Crash, and high inflation. They tend to value experiences more than money and place a higher emphasis on work-life balance compared to the generations before them.

List 3 characteristics that best describe your members who are Millennials.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

GENERATION X

The children of Baby Boomers, born between 1965-1980, Gen Xers are known for pushing boundaries and fighting against the status quo. This generation witnessed the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the expansion of the music industry, and the popularization of cell phones and personal computers. By 2028, they will outnumber their parents' generation.

List 3 characteristics that best describe your members who are Generation X.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

GENERATION Z

Known as the generation raised by social media, Generation Zers grew up in an interconnective world where nearly every aspect of their lives was driven by technology. Born between 2001-2020, they have been shaped by the polarization of America. Highly independent, progressive, and entrepreneurial, this group is more likely to voice their opinions online and stand up for social justice, compared to older generations.

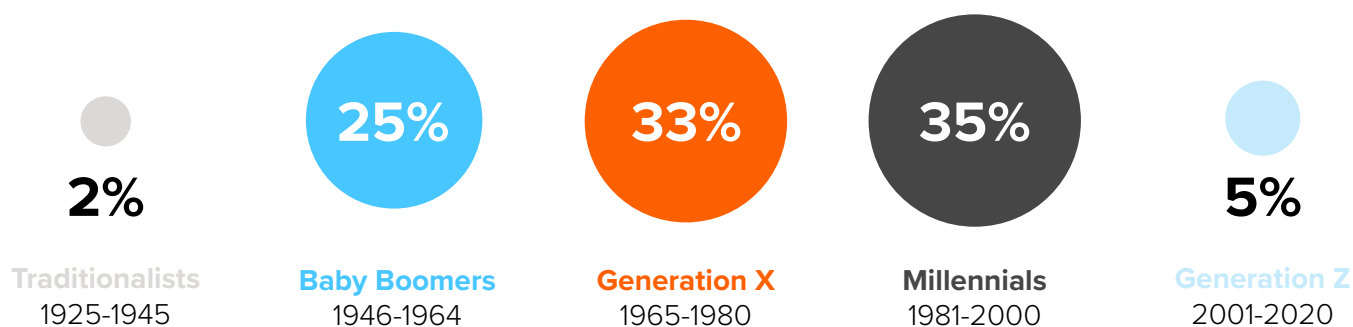
List 3 characteristics that best describe your members who are Generation Z.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Generational Differences in the Workplace

One size doesn't fit all when it comes to today's workforce—five generations of workers means five different approaches to work. It's important to learn how to adjust to a multigenerational workforce not only to effectively communicate to your members but ensure future growth and sustainability.

CURRENT U.S. WORKFORCE NUMBERS:



HOW DOES YOUR MEMBERSHIP COMPARE?



TIP:

Understanding your membership is critical to developing an effective communication strategy. Knowing who your members are, what interests them, and how they consume information are keys to delivering the **right message** at the **right time** to the **right person**.

Conclusion

The benefits of member-created content are numerous. With minimal effort your association can procure Grade A content that will get the attention of current and prospective members, earn their trust and involvement in furthering your mission, and improve your association's reputation while increasing member engagement and retention. To start capitalizing on member-created content today, take some time with your team to go through this workbook. Answer the questions and fill out the [Member Persona Worksheets](#) on the next pages. These exercises were designed to help you assess your association and gain a better understanding of your membership base. Once you've completed the workbook, use it as a framework for leveraging member-generated content in your communications strategy moving forward.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

Once you and your team have completed the workbook, we recommend you also get the input of your members. Send them a survey or quick series of polls with the same questions and form fills from the worksheets you filled out, letting them self-select their preferred channels, level of involvement, interests, etc.

Afterwards, compare their responses to yours. How similar or different are they? From here, you can determine whether you are in alignment with your members and how to best adjust your communications strategy before executing.

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Persona Worksheet

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: **STUDENT**



RILEY 20 YEARS OLD

At this stage in her career, what does she value most?

CHARACTERISTICS *Fill in scale*

Cautious	Risk Taker
Adaptable	Structured
Traditional	Progressive
Multitasker	Single-Task Oriented
Short Attention Span	Long Attention Span
Work-Life Balance	Workaholic
Virtual Experiences	In-Person Events

INTERESTS

-
-
-

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT *Circle all that apply*

Serve in a leadership position	Login to member portal regularly
Comment and share social posts	Volunteer
Engage with association publications	Attend annual conference
Download resource & tools	Participate in local meetings
Visit Association website regularly	

PREFERRED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Check all that apply

- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Journals
- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Newsletters
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Conferences/Seminars
- ☐ Association Website
- ☐ News Sites
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ Podcasts
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ YouTube

Persona Worksheet

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: **EARLY CAREER**



MICHAEL 28 YEARS OLD

At this stage in his career, what does he value most?

CHARACTERISTICS *Fill in scale*

Cautious	Risk Taker
Adaptable	Structured
Traditional	Progressive
Multitasker	Single-Task Oriented
Short Attention Span	Long Attention Span
Work-Life Balance	Workaholic
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INTERESTS

1.

2.

3.

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- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ Podcasts
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ YouTube

Persona Worksheet

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: **MID-CAREER**



RANDALL 45 YEARS OLD

At this stage in his career, what does he value most?

CHARACTERISTICS *Fill in scale*

Cautious	Risk Taker
Adaptable	Structured
Traditional	Progressive
Multitasker	Single-Task Oriented
Short Attention Span	Long Attention Span
Work-Life Balance	Workaholic
Virtual Experiences	In-Person Events

INTERESTS

-
-
-

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT *Circle all that apply*

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- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ Podcasts
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ YouTube

Persona Worksheet

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: **LATE-CAREER**



DIANE 60 YEARS OLD

At this stage in her career, what does she value most?

CHARACTERISTICS *Fill in scale*

Cautious	Risk Taker
Adaptable	Structured
Traditional	Progressive
Multitasker	Single-Task Oriented
Short Attention Span	Long Attention Span
Work-Life Balance	Workaholic
Virtual Experiences	In-Person Events

INTERESTS

-
-
-

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- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ YouTube

Appendix

Asking Members for Permission

Before sharing or reposting member-created content, it's important to get permission first. This can be done by simply sending a direct message or leaving a comment in their feed with an approval hashtag. Keep the message short, simple, and friendly. If they agree to let you use their content, make sure to tag the original user and mention their name in your caption for proper attribution. Remember to always reach out from your brand's official profile.

EMAIL TEMPLATES:

Video or Photo Request

Hi [INSERT NAME],

Thank you for being an active [member, subscriber]. We liked your [photo, video] and would like to use it on our channels [INSERT HANDLES] for other members to enjoy as well as future marketing materials. Please respond to let us know we have your permission.

Blog or Published Article Request

Hi [INSERT NAME],

We read your recent article about [INSERT TOPIC] and enjoyed [something you said/wrote referenced]. If possible, we'd like to share your content on our social media channels [INSERT HANDLES] and in our marketing materials. Please respond to let us know we have your permission.

SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES:

Sharing/Reposting a Social Post

Hey [TAG USER]! We love this picture/video and would like to share it on our social accounts and give you credit in the caption. If this is okay please reply #Yes[Association Name].