MULTIVIEW

The Essential Guide to Creating Non-Dues Revenue in 2020

AN EBOOK FOR ASSOCIATIONS



The coronavirus pandemic has had a strong impact on **operating environments** for organizations.

This includes membership organizations, which have seen their bottom lines significantly impacted by the resulting economic downturn. Within these new environments, associations are faced with new obstacles, as well as intensified versions of traditional challenges.

To remain relevant, and to continue pursuing their missions and serving their respective industries, membership organizations must rely more than ever on non-dues revenue. But innovating and generating this non-dues revenue is a challenge of its own.

Details revealed in the recent Association Communications Benchmarking Report demonstrate the reality of this challenge. For example, consider these findings from the survey:

3/5

expect non-dues revenue to decline post-COVID

Half project a decline of 10% to 30%.

4/5

respondents expect double-digit declines in non-dues revenue in the year ahead

7/10

expect advertising, sponsorship and exhibit sales to decline post-COVID

Source: Association Communications Benchmarking Report

More than half of respondents to the survey called their inability to generate non-dues revenue from communications efforts a **"serious or significant challenge,"** and only 26% said their non-dues revenue has improved since 2019.

> Our new **reality** is one of digital-first...



"Many associations were slow to embrace digital transition, but now they have no choice," Michael Candela at Multiview said. "Our new reality is one of digital-first. A silver lining to this transition is that it presents new opportunities for revenue, especially for those organizations that hadn't explored these opportunities before."

Another report, issued by ICCA in June, found two-thirds of membership groups polled expect COVID-19 will change how they fundamentally operate going forward, including the willingness to make changes to revenue sources.

> ...creating more and more authentic ways to **communicate in digital spaces...**

"The simple truth is that we are still learning how to maximize the tools available on digital platforms and we are creating more and more authentic ways to communicate in digital spaces at an incredibly fast speed," the report asserted.

How to close the revenue gap

Fortunately, there are both mature and emerging channels for cultivating digital non-dues revenue available to associations inclined to pursue them. Success with these approaches hinges on two primary factors: associations being able to adapt the mature channels to the "new normal" environment, and adapting the organization itself to the realities of operating in this environment.

Agility hasn't always been a common descriptor for associations, but these organizations are shedding that image. Look at how in a matter of months they adapted to remote working environments, to fostering digital connections where they had none before, to altering membership models and rapidly organizing critical advocacy efforts. But this doesn't change the fact associations need revenue to fulfill these efforts, and that's why it's vital this same agile way of thinking translates to generating revenue.

STRATEGIES

Non-dues revenue generating strategies for 2020 and beyond

It remains to be seen how traditional revenue sources such as in-person exhibitions and conferences rebound on the other side of the pandemic. But any organization hoping to see that other side knows it can't wait around to find out. Bottom lines and balance sheets need immediate attention. Here's how to do that.

STRATEGY 01

Virtual Events

According to the aforementioned ICCA report, 84% intend to include hybrid and digital elements to all events going forward, with a general consensus that these digital options should ultimately lead to increased attendance.

As an example of this potential, the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) was forced to quickly re-imagine their annual tradeshow and conference in March 2020. The Virtual Edition morphed from a three-day affair into a six-week-long smorgasbord of content. Once the dust settled, SPE had clocked more than 3,300 participants, about double the number that had been registered for the live event. Around half of the virtual attendees weren't registered for the original meeting.

While taking an event out of the exhibition hall removes physical marketing opportunities (e.g. signage, swag bags), moving an event online presents new marketing opportunities. All virtual content, from webinars to forums to presentations, provides options for display advertising. Furthermore, digital sponsorship opportunities have one distinct advantage over most traditional forms: data. Collecting attendee and engagement data allows you to demonstrate performance to sponsors. Data analysis, including clicks, impressions and conversions, can help sponsors determine ROI, as well as guide you in adapting your sponsorship pricing structures moving forward.

It's impossible to directly transfer some traditional marketing opportunities, such as branded charging stations or sponsored coffee bars, but that doesn't mean you can't get creative and effective in the online environment.

STRATEGY 02

Webinars

Webinars surged in popularity in 2020. There's no mystery behind the reason. But this increased focus on webinars has also fueled their evolution from a speaker and a slide deck into a fully interactive microevent.

Unlike speaking engagements attached to a larger event, webinars provide the opportunity to deliver your specific message with customized branding. They also offer branding opportunities for vendors and suppliers through advertising and sponsorship.

STRATEGY 03

Newsletters / Email

Despite countless predictions of its demise, email maintains its place as one of the preeminent communications tools we have. It's estimated that about 300 billion emails are sent each day. A portion of those are newsletters, which like email itself, were once considered an endangered species.

However, among other things, the rise of the smartphone breathed new life into email newsletters and they're as popular (and useful) today as ever. Optimized for quick digestion and available to read on just about any platform or device, email newsletters quickly became appealing to millennials and all the digital natives that followed. But that appeal extends well beyond younger generations; the Quartz Global Executive Survey found that **94% of executives** get their news from email newsletters.

These digital news vehicles offer prime advertising real estate that can foster regular non-dues income. Important in the case of association newsletters is that the advertising is (should be) highly relevant to its audience. Unlike unsolicited consumer ads, B2B marketing connects buyers and sellers. A digital newsletter with relevant advertising actually functions as a valuable extension of the industry marketplace.

> "Associations sometimes tend to be a little reluctant to integrating advertising opportunities within their digital member communications pieces. But if done correctly, it could be an excellent source of non-dues revenue," said Chris Mazzon, Multiview VP of Partnerships. "Content should still be king within your email newsletters, but adding a few non-intrusive, relevant ad spaces can be a benefit for your association, members and supplier members. In fact, adding advertisements from industry suppliers could even add additional credibility to your newsletters because major players in the industry are showing support for your association and its communication vehicles."

Another option for using your member list to draw revenue is sponsored email blasts. This approach might be considered a little more invasive toward members, but it also represents the opportunity to charge a premium for direct access to that membership. Paid advertising blasts should be approached strategically. Avoid passing the saturation point with them to prevent alienating members and diluting the ROI for advertisers.

STRATEGY 04

Website / Retargeting

The majority of interactions members have with your association begins with your website. Your homepage is your membership storefront. Think about other storefronts you frequent. If you go to a sporting goods store, for example, it's not unlikely to see something promotional from the likes of Nike or Under Armour greeting you in the windows. In a similar manner, you have spaces on your website, your digital storefront, that can be utilized for drawing revenue.

Advertisers gain more than exposure by appearing on your website. They gain credibility, considering you're an authority in your industry. There's an inherent prestige in appearing as an official sponsor or partner of an association. If done well, paid advertising on your website can appear seamless and not tacky or distracting.

The value of ads doesn't have to stop at your website, thanks to retargeting. Programmatic technology allows your advertisers to show their messages to visitors on their favorite sites after they leave yours. This unique service, which you're probably familiar with as an online consumer, gives your advertisers more reach, lets buyers better connect with suppliers, and delivers another stream of non-dues revenue to your association.

HOW RETARGETING WORKS

One line of code. Retargeting ads never run on your site.



STEP 1

A Member Visits Your Site

Your site quietly notes the visit. Nothing changes for the member.

STEP 2

They Browse Elsewhere

News, search and the other sites they use every day.

STEP 3

Your Advertisers Show Up

Relevant ads from your industry suppliers appear on those sites.

STEP 4

You Earn Non-Dues Revenue

A share of every campaign comes back to your association.

STRATEGY 05

Interactive Buyers Guides

As an authority in your industry, a guide that connects buyers and suppliers simply makes sense. It also makes money. Sellers want to be where their buyers are, and a directory specific to their industry is a no-brainer. Digital versions of buyers or sellers guides have multiple advantages over traditional printed books or lists. In addition to cost savings from a lack of printing, listings can be easily and frequently updated and can be searchable.

These digital guides can be enhanced by offering more than a simple list of companies. Featured listings can bring a premium ad rate, and there are also opportunities for other enrichments like custom or featured content, which of course can also be sold for marketing.

One important thing to consider is that in today's mobile and displaced business environment, mobile technology plays an increasing role, so your guide should be optimized for mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to make it useful for the active and busy user.

Talk to us about your association's revenue: **multiview.com**
or email us at **partnership@multiview.com**

Conclusion

With the need for non-dues revenue indisputable, it's time to look closely at the options presented by our new working environment, which skews heavily digital. There are several useful ideas outlined in the above pages, and partnering with an expert in developing and maximizing these digital revenue streams makes sense. In fact, ICCA CEO Senthil Gopinath recently noted, "It is clear the partnerships between suppliers and associations have become more important than ever."

Multiview has been developing digital communications and non-dues revenue for associations for more than 25 years, and is well positioned to help membership organizations of all sizes thrive in the current digital environment. In fact, over the past 30 days, Multiview has delivered more than $1.2 million in non-dues revenue to our association partners.

For more details on strategies tailored to your needs and your organization, reach out to Multiview today for a free assessment specific to your association. Together, we can meet, accept and rise above the challenges of generating non-dues revenue.

MULTIVIEW

Ready to skyrocket

your non-dues revenue?



About Multiview

We are the exclusive network that connects associations with the professionals and businesses who want to reach them.

Multiview partners with associations on a no-cost, revenue-share model. We fund and run digital advertising programs on your behalf, source the advertisers, and share the resulting revenue with you. You keep ownership of your brand, content and audience data, with no added workload.

Contact us for a **free Digital Revenue Assessment** to learn how your association can put the strategies in this eBook to work.

Talk to Us

850+
association and trade organization partners

16M+
opted-in professionals across 30+ industries

10.4 yrs
average partnership tenure

Multiview is a digital media and marketing company serving associations, B2B advertisers, and small businesses. We help associations grow non-dues revenue, help advertisers reach 16M+ professionals, and help small businesses grow with an all-in-one marketing and growth platform.

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