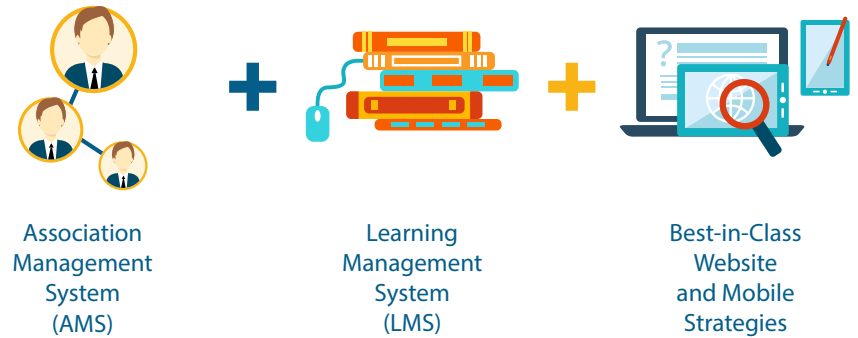


TOP 5 MUST-HAVE  
INITIATIVES FOR THE  
MODERN EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION



## TOP 5 MUST-HAVE INITIATIVES FOR THE MODERN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Over the past 10 years, technology has dramatically transformed the genesis and management of micro-communities and in today's digital age, education associations are constantly evolving to keep up with new technologies and member preferences. Successful education associations know that to keep current members engaged and attract new members, a unified technology strategy is a must!



Imagine a world where merging the robust data of an Association Management System (AMS), with the functionality of a Learning Management System (LMS) and ability to integrate with of best-in-class website and mobile strategies into one system was possible. Not only is it now possible, it is the new normal for education associations and their thriving member communities.

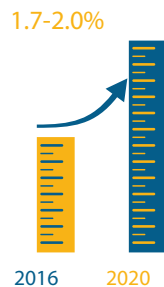
As education association membership becomes less popular for new generations of educators, association leadership must shift their focus to being more agile, available and technologically savvy in order to provide even the most basic value to members, all within budget constraints. Unlike technology, which is constantly changing and expanding the possibilities of member outreach, associations as a whole, must provide more benefits to members, all on the same limited budget. Now more than ever, finding affordable, robust, and scalable technology options is indispensable for 21st century education associations to continue to grow and expand their member communities.

Despite the emergence of interactive association platforms, designed with promises to engage all association members, ease the pain of registration, and grow conference activity, conference attendance has actually decreased considerably in recent years. Events and conferences across all industries have been plagued with declining attendance, dating back to 2008.



According to a Trade Show Week Quarterly Report, overall attendance decreased, year over year, by 1.2% since the first quarter of 2008. In addition, a recent EXPO Magazine study found that since 1999, average trade show attendance has decreased by upwards of 38%, while average cost per square foot has increased by 50%.<sup>1</sup>

That being the case, the outlook for education associations is less grim. Recent trends, in 2015 and early 2016 do speak to the slow, but growing interest in conferences, and attendance increases of 1.7-2.0% year over year through 2020.<sup>2</sup> To tap into this re-emerging market of a new generation of educators, it is not enough for associations to be the best in AMS technology, this must be deeply integrated into more customer-centric platforms like association websites and mobile apps to boost member involvement, conference attendance and community involvement beyond annual conferences. As it becomes more popular for people to consume content on every



type of device, responsive design websites and association mobile apps have become standard industry practice. As content is a key value-add to associations, availability of that content to any reader, must happen on a variety of mobile platforms.

If an association is not engaging a member at a conference and beyond, the results in decreasing membership can be disastrous. In fact, in the education industry, the National Teachers' Union lost, on average, 42,000 active members between 2013 and 2014.<sup>3</sup> The exact combination of outreach and communications that is most valuable to current and prospective members is still up for debate and evolves across the association spectrum.

To get started, education associations should focus on these top five must-have initiatives to stay valuable to their member communities, both current and prospective.



The National Teachers' Union lost

42,000  
members  
in 2013-14



01

## SHARE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP BY YOUR COMMUNITY, WITH YOUR COMMUNITY



Education associations are overflowing with great knowledge, experience, and industry expertise from current members. As leaders in the community, associations must find ways to connect, engage, and share the insight of these thought leaders, at all levels.

Opening member-to-member communication pathways is becoming as important, if not more important than association-to-member pathways. Providing resources and information in the form of thought leadership is a key value-add to new and existing members.

02



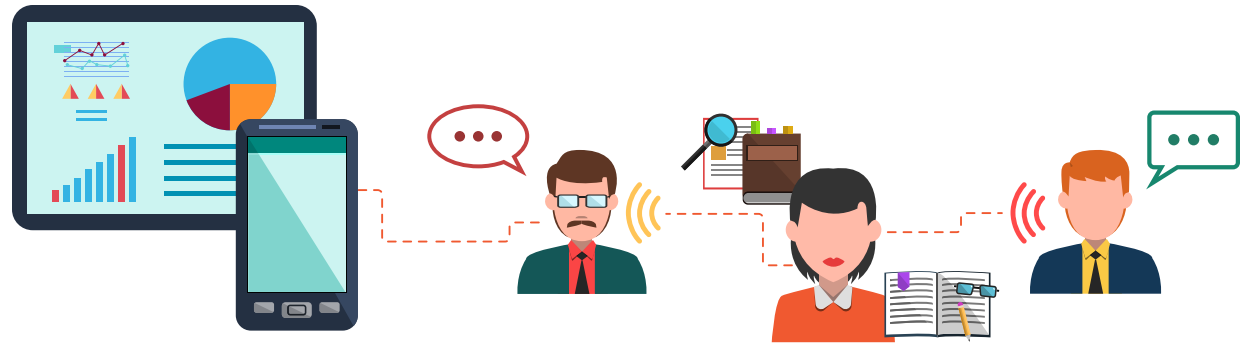
## ESTABLISH A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY TO ENGAGE CONSISTENTLY

Whether your association represents a large diverse group, or is tailored to a niche crowd, a key goal is to establish an association brand identity that members can stand behind. This can include marketing content like white papers and email marketing campaigns, hosting industry-specific events, or finding ways to reach out to and connect with professionals in the field. Creating a recognizable and consistent presence in the

association community will train members to anticipate and expect your valuable communication and resources. Successful education associations who are looking to attract a younger crowd find ways to stay active on social media and prioritize their mobile presence. These communication methods are ideal to spread information to your community while piquing the interest of your prospective member base.

03

## OPTIMIZE DATA FROM YOUR TECHNOLOGIES



Keeping track of member contact information, subscription details, and attendance records can be an arduous task for any association. Throw in a budgetary issues and a growing to-do list, it is no wonder that many associations struggle with how best to collect, store, and retrieve key information. Using a unified solution that merges AMS, LMS,

website and mobile strategies together saves association administrators tons of time that was once spent doing manual data entry. Efficient strategies begin with viable data and association data lives in their organizational systems. If systems are unified, data is unified, making it easier to analyze and develop strategic vision for any association.

Crescerance's Embr for Associations offering includes an AMS, LMS, Website and Mobile app as an affordable and user-friendly platform that is dedicated to making associations efficient so they may better serve member needs.

[www.embr.mobi](http://www.embr.mobi)



04

## IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Associations are often deadline-driven and metrics-focused. As such, having a comprehensive system in place to allow association members to work smarter, faster, and access information all in one place is key. Having one, easily accessible system to review attendance records, membership enrollments,

to send communication to members and other association-level analytics enables the modern association to effectively work toward their given mission, spending less time on managing day-to-day processes and more time adding value for schools, districts and the entire education ecosystem.

05

## IDENTIFY YOUR MOST CRITICAL VALUE-ADD OPPORTUNITIES

With growing demand to reach more members, and continuously engage current members, associations are always looking for affordable ways to market themselves and share information. In a recent survey, members across all industries state that they joined an association to network and learn more about community events.<sup>4</sup> These top reasons were followed by gaining access to professional development opportunities and staying aware of industry

trends. Modern associations are incorporating social media and mobile technology into communication and marketing strategies to meet member expectations. With mobile association apps designed by Crescance, associations nationwide are customizing technology solutions to engage, manage, and communicate to their growing member bases and seamlessly feeding that data, back into their administrative systems.



## CONCLUSION

To learn more about how Embr for Associations can help enhance how your association connects, engages, and collaborates with thought leaders in your member base, register for a complimentary demo and association consultation here.



To register for a complimentary demo of the suite of innovative Embr mobile applications, visit [www.embr.mobi](http://www.embr.mobi)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.personal.psu.edu/kkm11/files/Declines\\_in\\_Conference\\_Attendance.pdf](http://www.personal.psu.edu/kkm11/files/Declines_in_Conference_Attendance.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://associationsnow.com/2015/03/ceir-report-tradeshaw-industry-shows-consistent-growth-trend/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.maciverinstitute.com/2015/07/weac-membership-continues-decline-blogger-says/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.webbrightservices.com/the-association-blog/top-reasons-members-join-industry-or-trade-associations>