

Association Publication Evaluations

Executive Director/CEO Questionnaire

Please fill out this questionnaire for your own personal use and bring it to your private meeting/consultation with Steve Milano. You will not share this document with Steve, but will review the questions with him, sharing any information you'd like to share, and receiving Steve's feedback on these questions. No one will see this document but you.

What are the main goals your board has given you for your publication:

Long-term

This year

What is your association's main mission?

How does your publication help achieve your mission?

Do you have short-range, mid-term and long-range goals for your publication?

Executive Director/CEO Questionnaire – page 3

Do you have a strategy and/or specific tactics for your publication to achieve the following goals:

Increase membership recruitment

Increase membership retention

Generate advertising sales revenue

Increase meetings attendance

Generate sponsorship/booth revenue

Generate public awareness

Develop media coverage

Increase industry alliances

Perform lobbying

Increase membership participation (committees, speakers, articles)

Does your publication primarily:

- act as a tool to promote your association and its activities
- promote the business/practice needs of your members

Executive Director/CEO Questionnaire – page 3

Do you put association news toward the front of your publication and professional content toward the back, or vice versa?

Do you allow your president to have sole discretion when writing the president's message each issue?

Do you profile one of your members each issue?

Do you put your annual meeting venue on the cover of your publication each year?

Does the name and cover of your publication tell potential members, current members, industry suppliers, the media, legislatures and aligned industries exactly what your publication and organization are about?

Have you given your editor a main (strategic) goal regarding your overall publication mission and plan? What is it?

Do you work with your editor and sales director on an annual editorial plan for your publication each year?

If you have an editorial advisory board, is there a strategy behind it?

Do you have an annual action plan for your editorial advisory board each year?

Do you have written job descriptions you use to conduct annual reviews/measurements for the following positions as they regard the publication?

Editorial

Sales

Art

Marketing/Communications

Finance

IT

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Marketing/Communications Director Questionnaire

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What do you think your publication's role is at your association?

What percent of your publication's mission is to:

- promote the association and its activities
- provide a member benefit that directly improves the practice of your members
- promote your industry or profession outside of your membership (media/legislature/other industries)

What is your association's main mission?

Has your executive director/CEO given you a main (strategic) goal regarding your overall publication mission and plan? What is it?

What are the criteria used to judge your publication-management performance during your annual review each year?

Do you have one main audience, or two or more different market segments you're serving?

What are your publication's long-term strategies to help effect your association's overall strategic mission?

Marketing/Communications Director Questionnaire – page 2

Do you have a strategy and/or specific tactics for your publication to achieve the following goals:

Increase membership recruitment

Increase membership retention

Generate advertising sales revenue

Increase meetings attendance

Generate sponsorship/booth revenue

Generate public awareness

Develop media coverage

Increase industry alliances

Perform lobbying

Increase membership participation (committees, speakers, articles)

Do you put association news toward the front of your publication and professional content toward the back, or vice versa?

Do you allow your president sole discretion when writing the president's message each issue?

Do you have a defined editorial flow (where you place certain types of information in the publication)?

Do you use the publication to specifically drive traffic to your website?

How involved are you with the publication area of your website (do you manage it)? Do you write headlines with SEO in mind?

Who has final say on the publication layout (not design)?

Do you solicit expert content from your advertisers or trade show exhibitors?

Marketing/Communications Director Questionnaire – page 3

Do you accept advertorials, native advertising, branded or sponsored content or sponsor-generated content?

Do you work with your executive director/CEO, editorial director and sales director on an annual editorial plan for your publication each year?

Do you create annuals (special issues or directories)?

Do you put your annual meeting venue on the cover of your publication each year?

Does the name and cover of your publication tell potential members, current members, industry suppliers, the media, legislatures and aligned industries exactly what your publication and organization are about?

If you have an editorial advisory board, is there a strategy behind it?

Do you have an annual action plan for your editorial advisory board each year?

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Editorial Director Questionnaire

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Has your executive director/CEO given you a main (strategic) goal regarding your overall publication mission and plan? What is it?

What are the criteria used to judge your publication-management performance during your annual review each year?

What is your association's main mission?

Do you have one main audience, or two or more different market segments you're serving?

What are your publication's long-term strategies to help effect your association's overall strategic mission?

Editorial Director Questionnaire – page 2

Do you have a strategy and/or specific tactics for your publication to achieve the following goals:

Increase membership recruitment

Increase membership retention

Generate advertising sales revenue

Increase meetings attendance

Generate sponsorship/booth revenue

Generate public awareness

Develop media coverage

Increase industry alliances

Perform lobbying

Increase membership participation (committees, speakers, articles)

Does your publication primarily:

- act as a tool to promote your association and its activities
- promote the business/practice needs of your members

Do you put association news toward the front of your publication and professional content toward the back, or vice versa?

Do you allow your president to have sole discretion when writing the president's message each issue?

Do you have a defined editorial flow (where you place certain types of information in the publication)?

Do you use the publication to specifically drive traffic to your website?

How involved are you with the publication area of your website (do you manage it)? Do you write headlines with SEO in mind?

Editorial Director Questionnaire – page 3

Who has final say on the publication layout (not design)?

Do you solicit expert content from your advertisers or trade show exhibitors?

Do you have writer's guidelines?

Do you have a house style manual?

Do you accept advertorials, native advertising, branded or sponsored content or sponsor-generated content?

Do you work with your executive director/CEO and sales director on an annual editorial plan for your publication each year?

Do you create annuals (special issues or directories)?

Do you put your annual meeting venue on the cover of your publication each year?

Does the name and cover of your publication tell potential members, current members, industry suppliers, the media, legislatures and aligned industries exactly what your publication and organization are about?

If you have an editorial advisory board, is there a strategy behind it?

Do you have an annual action plan for your editorial advisory board each year?

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Sales Director Questionnaire

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Has your executive director/CEO given you a main goal regarding your overall publication mission and plan? What is it?

Do you work with your executive director/CEO and editorial director on an annual editorial plan for your publication each year?

What are your major advertiser categories?

Do you have one main audience, or two or more different market segments you're serving?

What makes you different/better than each of your competitors?

Are any of your competitors doing anything better than you are?

Do you create annuals (special issues or directories)?

Do you bundle sales (publication ads/booths/website banners)?

Do you have input into the makeup of your publication's editorial advisory board?

How involved are you with the publication area of your website?

Who has final say on ad placement in the publication?

Sales Director Questionnaire – page 2

Are you responsible for the content of your media kit?

Do you solicit expert content from your advertisers or trade show exhibitors?

Do you accept advertorials, native advertising, branded or sponsored content or sponsor-generated content?

Would your advertisers prefer a print publication, digital version or both?

Do you have a system/process for ensuring ads run correctly in each issue?

How many make-good ads do you run per year? Do you know the total dollar cost?

Do you know what it costs, per page, to get one issue of your publication into your members' hands?
Do you set your advertising rates based, in part, on that figure?

Rate these selling tools A, B or C, with A being the most important:

Your circulation
Ability to discount
Ability to bundle (print ads/banners/booths/sponsorships)
Direct mail
Website
Media kit
Phone calls
Proposals you develop and send
Publication-website linkage
Gifts/M&E/Trade show functions you sponsor

Circle your four most important selling tools (above) and underline the four least important

Are most of your sales issue-to-issue, or annual/multiple-issue contracts? What is the approximate split?

Of the things you sell (publication ads, booths, sponsorships, digital products, memberships), where do you rank publication ads?

Do you generate revenue with a sales-oriented or product-oriented approach?

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Creative Director/Graphic Artist Questionnaire

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Has your executive director/CEO given you a main goal regarding your overall publication mission and plan? What is it?

What are the criteria used to judge your work on your association's publication during your annual review each year?

What is your association's main mission?

Do you have a defined editorial flow (where you place certain types of content in the publication)?

Are you given the editorial placement for each issue (an imposition), or do you have discretion where to place/order articles and ads?

Who has final say on the publication layout (not design)?

Who decides where ads are placed in each issue?

What is the main difference between graphic design for marketing materials and graphic design for a publication?

What is a publication grid?

Is typography for a publication different than for other marketing materials?

Creative Director/Graphic Artist Questionnaire – page 2

Do you use your page layout program's default leading and kerning settings?

Do you put full-page ads on verso or recto pages? Why?

Do you have a stock of house ads in all of your ad sizes?

Do you create/produce ads for advertisers?

How involved are you with the publication area of your website?

Who traffics artwork for your publication?

Do you have a formal system for receiving and managing advertiser art that starts with the sales rep?

What is your system for making corrections/changes after editorial/sales sees the first draft of an issue?

Association Publication Evaluations

CFO/Finance Director Questionnaire

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What are the financial goals your executive director/CEO has given you for your publication:

Long-term

This year

Is your publication supposed to be a profit center or is it a mission expense?

Do you have a specific profit goal (or margin) for each issue?

Do you have a financial formula that tells the editor and art director how much money they can spend (including manufacturing and overhead) on each issue based on ad sales?

Do you work with your CEO, editor, art director, IT director and sales director to create an annual budget, or projected income and expense report, for your publication each year? Do you perform an issue-by-issue or quarterly variance report?

Do you know what it costs, per page, to get one issue of your publication in your members' hands (includes manufacturing and overhead costs)?

Who is allowed to approve "make-good" ads and how do you record them?

Do you "charge" your meetings department for meeting ads (e.g., annual conference, seminars, golf tournament, etc.) you run in your publication. To put it another way, do you apportion the cost of running these pages to your meetings department budget? Do you do the same for other areas of your association that are advertised/promoted in the publication?

Do you have a system for recording bundled sales? For example, if a business buys an association sponsorship that includes a trade show booth, website banner ads and publication advertising, do you assign a portion of that income to the publication?

Have you calculated the cost to produce your publication with in-house employees vs. using contractors?

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IT Director/Webmaster Questionnaire

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Has anyone given you a main/strategic goal regarding your website's publication area? What is it?

What is your association's main mission?

Do you know your association's strategy and/or specific tactics for your publication to achieve the following goals:

Increase membership recruitment

Increase membership retention

Generate advertising sales revenue

Increase meetings attendance

Generate sponsorship/booth revenue

Generate public awareness

Develop media coverage

Increase industry alliances

Perform lobbying

Increase membership participation (committees, speakers, articles)

IT Director/Webmaster Questionnaire – page 2

How involved are you with the publication area of your website (do you manage it)?

Does your publications director have a strategy to specifically drive traffic to your website?

How do you get your publication and its content “found” on the Web? Keywords? Social sharing? Link-sharing?

Does your publications director understand SEO?

How do you archive your publication’s content? Make it searchable?

Are you involved with the annual publication planning (editorial/art/sales) each year?

Does the publication area of your website benefit members in any way(s) that your publication doesn’t (or do you just put a digital version of the publication on your website)?

How does the publication area of your website benefit your advertisers and sponsors?