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Three Hidden Issues Hurting Your Membership Renewal Campaign Success

Chris Gloede

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Your association membership renewal campaign is one of the most important business efforts every year, and likely one of the most complex as well. While your team may have mastered crucial tasks like ensuring renewal lists are accurate and the amounts due are correct, obscure issues can still thwart your success. Here are three hidden issues that could be sabotaging your membership renewal campaign:

Over-reliance on one channel

When it comes to membership renewal campaigns, most organizations rely heavily on email for dues invoice delivery. While email is a great channel, mostly (or solely) sending renewal statements through email assumes your members are still opening and engaging with you through that channel. A fast review of opens and clicks for your recent newsletters will help you understand how many of your members are actually ignoring your emails. Take action by expanding your invoice delivery to some mix of email, direct mail, telemarketing, and texting.

Too many bad email addresses

Over 25% of American workers will change employers in any given year, and with a new job comes a new business email address. Associations often don't monitor email delivery "hard bounce" that result from an inactive email address. In fact, most of the popular association email systems don't remove hard bounces from email list counts (they just suppress the delivery), so you likely overestimate the number of renewal emails that are actually sent to members. Take action by creating processes to regularly review the hard bounce list and reach out by phone or other methods to members that need to update their addresses.

Only allowing online payments

In today's digital age powered by Apple Wallet and Venmo, it's easy to forget that many people prefer to pay through traditional methods. Especially in professional settings, business checks, wire transfers, and even credit cards shared over the phone are still popular with companies that require receipts or have other internal financial controls. For many members, it's easiest to simply forward a renewal invoice to their accounts payable department which does not have access to your member's online account. Take action by including a customer service phone number (with hours of service) plus a way to pay by check or wire on all your renewal invoices.

These three hidden issues are just a few of the often-overlooked dues collection roadblocks. Renewal campaigns are so important to associations that they should be reviewed every year. Changes in member payment preferences, new association technologies, and even invoice copy and design can unexpectedly affect collection success. A careful review of the invoice operations can help ensure collections success.

About The Author

Chris Gloede is the Chief Consultant for Ricochet, an agency that helps associations transform their membership and marketing efforts. Chris is the past Chief Marketing Officer for the American Bar Association where he led the organization to the largest membership count in 137 years. He frequently teaches and lectures on topics related to association membership strategy.

Join Chris at the live and in-person AENC Membership Bootcamp on January 25-26 in conjunction with the winter conference. Chris will be sharing many more strategies and tactics to turbocharge your membership.

If you would like to have one of your articles featured in **Success by Association Live** or have interest in sponsoring please contact Madi today at madi@aencnet.org.



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