

Tuesday / 9:55 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Strategic Board Leadership: Elevating Governance for Impact



Jean Jernigan, CAE, CMP, IOM, President, Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce and Donna Oser, CAE, President & CEO, Michigan Society of Association Executives

This session will equip association executives with the tools, insights, and practices to strengthen board performance and governance outcomes. Blending legal responsibilities with strategic foresight, participants will explore what makes boards highly effective, how to foster productive communication and collaboration, and how to engage in meaningful, future-focused decision-making that supports organizational resilience and growth.

Freemium Membership Model: A Real Time Case Study



Barry Schieferstein, CAE, CMP, DES, Chief Operating Officer, The American Society for Nondestructive Testing, Inc.

With membership declines affecting many associations, one organization recently posed a transformative question: "What if membership was free?" This bold approach led to the adoption of a freemium model, challenging traditional practices and rethinking member engagement. This session will explore the journey of designing and adapting to this new model. From rallying volunteers and securing board buy-in to addressing marketing and financial impacts. Come prepared to discuss the successes and challenges of navigating change, with strategies you can apply to empower your teams and build sustainable membership connections.

Designing Event Programs That Engage & Deliver!



MacKenzie Feldpausch, MA, Education Programming Manager, Michigan Association of School Boards

Great events don't just happen—they're designed. In this interactive session, we'll explore bold ways to reimagine program flow, energize your audience, and craft experiences that keep members talking long after the closing session.

The Neuroinclusive Imperative: Strategies for Inclusive Event and Education Design



Tracy King, CEO, InspirEd

Neuroinclusion isn't just a buzzword—it's a design revolution reshaping professional development. In this data-driven session, learn why 20% of professionals struggle with traditional formats despite accessibility efforts. Using IACET's survey data, explore examples where neuroinclusive design improves outcomes for all. Leave with a Neuroinclusive Design Framework and actionable checklists to transform your events.

Why Print Still Matters



Matt Kenny, President, and Jillian LaCross, Managing Editor & Content Marketer, VP Demand Creation Services

In an increasingly digital world, we run the risk of inundating audiences with pixels, from emails to texts to video to websites. To avoid the risk of an association's message disappearing in this ocean of digital white noise, relying on print media returns a measure of authority to an association's message, makes it more memorable, engages members with a tangible benefit, and adds weight to your advertisers' message as well. At a time when members crave communication, don't ignore the tried-and-true print media as having perhaps the most impact.

Donate to the Silent Auction!

Showcase your brand and support Michigan's association community!



CEOs, Aspiring CEOs & Senior Staff



Volunteer Engagement



Marketing, Communications, Public Relations & Sales

OPTIONS THAT FIT YOUR NEEDS

Tuesday / 11:35 a.m. - 12:25 p.m.

Keeping Good People: The Value of Creating a Leadership Pathway



Todd Culver, President & CEO, Incompass Michigan

We'll talk about strategies for cultivating the next generation of leaders, and doing that in a way that brings transformation - by nurturing a leadership development pathway at all organizational levels. The discussion will include strategies for enhancing leadership skills of ALL high potential employees, and building a network of professional relationships to promote life-long learning. So whether you're in executive leadership, have an interest in how to develop and retain talent, or are looking to build leaders at any level of your association's member organizations - this session will appeal to you!

Apply your "HI" (Human Intelligence) to Artificial Intelligence



Vanessa Dennison, CAE, CBAP, Principal, Dennison & Associates

We all know what AI is, and are starting to use it regularly. But AI is only as good as our own creativity and prompting. Let's figure out how to maximize AI by applying our "HI", or our unique 'human intelligence', in directing this powerful tool. We'll share prompting 'recipes' for different business goals, such as research, creative thinking, or analysis. Together, we'll craft better prompts and explore how different tools respond to different tasks. And finally, we'll brainstorm new, out-of-the-box uses for AI with our peers. Walk away with new confidence in applying your "HI" to AI!

Check out the full conference details at
<https://www.msae.org/msae25>



Brand Boldly: Social Media That Connects and Grows



Shelley Davis Boyd, MBA, CAE, Chief Operations Officer, and Stacy Bogard, CAE, Sr. PR & Content Strategist, M3 Group

Ready to amplify your association's voice and foster a loyal, engaged community? This energizing session demystifies social media and branding—equipping you with practical tools to build trust, strengthen connections, and drive your mission forward. Led by Shelley and Stacy, it draws on proven strategies and real-world examples to refine brand identity and grow digital reach with purpose. Explore how a clear mission and authentic voice cut through the noise, and learn to craft messages that resonate deeply. Gain best practices to boost engagement, encourage dialogue, and build a credible, human social media presence.

Beyond Membership: The Essential Role of Non-Dues Revenue in Association Success



Bill Sheehan, Global Head, Association Strategy, D2L

Relying heavily on membership dues is no longer sustainable. Fluctuating numbers and inconsistent payments create financial uncertainty, making revenue diversification imperative. This session explores innovative pathways to long-term stability by strategically monetizing the enduring value of association products and services. From sponsorships and advertising to educational programs, certifications, and partnerships, participants will discover actionable strategies to leverage non-dues revenue opportunities, strengthen financial resilience, and drive sustainable growth.

Digging for Truth: Uncovering the Drivers of Membership & Retention



Pete Zimek, CAE, CEO, Novi AMS

Uncover the answers to the questions that have challenged membership managers and association leaders for decades: "Why do members join, and do they stay?" This session offers a dynamic blend of peer insights, academic perspectives, and practical tools to help you conduct impactful research within your own association. Together we'll explore tried-and-true research methodologies, as well as budget-friendly strategies to gain a deeper understanding of member motivations. Equip yourself with the knowledge to make data-driven decisions that strengthen both recruitment and retention efforts in your organization.

Tuesday / 2:35 p.m. - 3:25 p.m.

Long Range Planning That Makes Sense



Mark Griffin, President, Michigan Petroleum Association/Michigan Association of Convenience Stores

Do you want to help your group go from point A to point B? Do you want to do it in a simple, commonsense fashion that makes sense? Come to this presentation and learn how to make a practical and tactical long-range plan that won't sit on a shelf gathering dust.

Unlocking Member Value: Using the Value Proposition Canvas to Strengthen Your Product Portfolio



Jean Jernigan, CAE, CMP, IOM, President, Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce and Donna Oser, CAE, President & CEO, Michigan Society of Association Executives

As member needs continue to evolve, associations must ensure their offerings align with what members truly need and value. This interactive session introduces the Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) — a simple yet powerful tool to map member needs to your association's products and services. Attendees will learn how to apply the VPC to evaluate and enhance their portfolio, ensuring relevance, engagement, and member satisfaction.

Rethinking Non-Dues Revenue for a Bold Future



Edward Byers, CMP, CAE, Owner, CANRev Collaborative

This session will explore how to architect a visionary, values-driven sponsorship strategy that goes beyond event logos and lanyards. Learn how to position your association as a platform for meaningful partnership, align sponsor engagement with your organizational priorities, and unlock new forms of non-dues revenue that are sustainable, scalable, and mutually impactful. Ideal for executives and senior decision-makers, this session challenges traditional thinking and inspires bold approaches to sponsorship that align with the future of associations.

Cultivating Belonging: Inclusive Association Meetings and Events



Shawn Hunter, CMP, Inclusive Event Strategist, Director of Member Engagement, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan

Discover how to make your association's gatherings more inclusive and welcoming. This session offers actionable insights on creating accessible content, facilitating inclusive discussions, and designing events that resonate with diverse member needs. Learn to build a culture of belonging that strengthens member engagement and participation.

Four Strategic Communication Steps for Real Results



Andie Poole, APR, Partner, Bellwether Public Relations

You don't need a big budget to make a big impact. Learn how to apply the RACE process (Research, Action, Communication, and Evaluation) to build smarter, more effective communication strategies. This session explains the key elements your communications team should focus on, the strategic advantage of bringing in partners, and how to use the same tools professionals rely on, even if you're doing it yourself. Whether you're new to communications or looking to refine your approach, walk away with clear steps, useful resources, and the confidence to lead communications with purpose.

Notice of Annual Business Meeting.

WHO: All MSAE Members in Good Standing

WHAT: MSAE Annual Business Meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 @ 12:45 PM

WHERE: Governors CDEF, Grand Traverse Resort

Please Join Us!



CEOs, Aspiring CEOs & Senior Staff



Volunteer Engagement



Marketing, Communications, Public Relations & Sales

OPTIONS THAT FIT YOUR NEEDS

Tuesday / 4:05 p.m. - 4:55 p.m.

Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement: Practical Strategies for Association Success



Jared Burkhart, CAE, Chief Executive Officer, Big I Michigan

Sustainable success in today's association environment requires more than quick fixes—it demands a mindset of continuous improvement. In this insightful session, Jared Burkhart, CAE, will explore how associations can embed improvement into culture, operations, and planning. Drawing from real-world examples, Jared will share tools and frameworks to help associations become more responsive, data-informed, and mission-aligned. Participants will gain actionable ideas to engage teams, assess performance, and implement meaningful changes that create lasting results. Whether leading staff, managing programs, or shaping strategy, this session offers fresh thinking to help your association.

Capturing the Voice of Your Future Member: Analytical Tools



Christine Saunders, CM, President & Founder, Halmyre

Associations often find themselves hearing primarily from current, active members, which limits their ability to understand and address the needs of the broader market. This workshop will provide leaders with practical analytical tools to capture the voice of non-members and drive growth: 1. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods. 2. Data Analytics & Predictive Methods. 3. Member Personas. 4. Customer Journey Mapping. Participants will be equipped to transform their approach to non-member engagement, align their association's goals with the needs and expectations of a broader audience, and drive sustainable growth.

The ROI of AI: Personalizing Member Communications That Drive Results



Elizabeth Crosby, Senior Manager, Partnerships at rasa.io

Members expect communications that feel relevant, not generic—and when they do, engagement rises. This session will break down what true personalization means today, beyond just using a first name, and explore how AI can deliver measurable ROI by boosting response rates, retention, and overall member satisfaction. You'll see real-world examples of AI in action and discover practical tools you can start using right away. Walk away with steps to create a communication strategy that resonates with every member, whether your team is large or small.

Creating and Managing Online Learning with AI: What Works, What Doesn't, and How to Get Started



Diana L. Brandon, Ph.D., Chief Information & Technology Officer, eLearningDOC

Join us to learn how artificial intelligence (AI) can transform how your organizations build and manage online learning programs, creating valuable educational offerings for members while driving non-dues revenue. Explore the possibilities and limitations of AI in the process, helping organizations with limited budgets and staff leverage this technology effectively. Leave with practical strategies for incorporating AI tools into your e-learning development and actionable next steps to build scalable, high-quality online courses.

Leveraging Education to Drive Member Acquisition and Retention



Sierra Sharpe, MBA, PMP, Director of Professional Development, and Ken Root, Director of Membership, International Hearing Society

Associations must reimagine programs, benefits, and value to avoid losing members and influence. In 2023, IHS invested in a new learning management system and prioritized member value by offering unlimited continuing education at no cost. Instead of raising prices, IHS provided free, on-demand, high-quality learning to reinforce its commitment to professional growth. In this session, IHS leaders will share insights on this strategic choice, its impact on membership and revenue, and key implementation lessons.

Wednesday / 8:30 a.m. - 9:20 a.m.

Beyond the Heir Apparent: Building Resilient Associations Through Strategic Succession Planning



Drew Burns, CAE, Director of Client Strategy, and Bryce Barker, Director of Association Management, Advancing Organizational Excellence

Preparing for the future is vital for associations navigating leadership and workforce shifts. This session highlights the synergy between succession and strategic planning, moving beyond leader replacement. Participants will learn to build resilience, align workforce development with mission goals, and mitigate risks. Gain actionable strategies to anticipate needs, strengthen leadership pipelines, and ensure seamless transitions for long-term success.

Work Smarter, Serve Better: Streamlining Workflows for a Stronger Association



Ashley Wakefield, Director of Membership, Marketing & Events, Michigan Manufacturers Association

Are you and your team constantly putting out fires, reacting instead of planning, and feeling like there's never enough time to do the work and improve it? In this session, you'll learn practical, real-world strategies for creating margin by building intentional, repeatable processes—shared from firsthand experience inside an association. Whether you're leading a team or managing key initiatives alone, you'll walk away with tools to turn daily operations into a predictable, proactive rhythm that strengthens both internal workflows and member experiences. It's time to shift from survival mode to strategic momentum—and it starts with owning your process.

The World According to Z

Sarah Sladek, CEO, XYZ University

Meet Gen Z, the teens and 20-somethings coming of age during the most disruptive decade in history. They're bringing new skills, values, and expectations to work. Drawing from her research, Sarah shares key data on trends inspired by this generation and how to engage them.



Profitable & Unforgettable: Building Revenue Generating Events That WOW!



Jacquelyn Timm, CAE, Director of Association Management and Communications and Evelyn Dougherty, Association Manager, Kelley Cawthorne

Events should do more than break even—they should fuel your mission, engage your audience, and drive lasting success. This interactive session for association executives and meeting planners explores bold strategies to boost event profitability without sacrificing value or member experience. From reimagining sponsorships to uncovering hidden revenue streams, you'll learn from case studies, engage in hands-on brainstorming, and crowdsource solutions. Leave with actionable ideas to transform your next event into a revenue powerhouse.

Mic Check: Why Every Association Should Be Podcasting



Colby Horton, Founder & CEO, Association Briefings

Podcasting has emerged as one of the most dynamic and effective tactics in the association marcomm playbook. With the right strategy, podcasts can educate members, amplify your industry's voice, and even generate non-dues revenue. In this session, we'll explore why podcasting is such a natural fit for associations, how to get started with confidence, and what it takes to produce, promote, and sustain a successful show. You'll walk away with practical steps, insider tips, and creative ideas that will help your association launch a podcast that truly connects with members and stakeholders.

Register Your Team & Save!

Register by 10/15 and save:

\$499 for one

\$466 each for two

\$449 each for three or more!



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Wednesday / 10:15 a.m. - 11:05 a.m.

Small Staff, Big Impact: Strategies for Thriving with Limited Resources



Grant Carpenter, CAE, Executive Director, and Jessica MacMillan, Senior Meetings & Membership Coordinator, Raybourn Group International

Being part of a small-staff association comes with unique challenges and big opportunities. In this dynamic session, learn how to turn limited resources into powerful results. Hear from association professionals working with teams of three or fewer as they share real-world tools to prioritize what matters, delegate confidently, and leverage technology and volunteers to do more with less. Whether you're familiar with small-staff challenges, adjusting to FTE changes, or sharpening your strategy, you'll leave with practical takeaways to boost efficiency, strengthen your organization, and make confident decisions.

Mastering Cash Flow: Best Practices for Receipts, Controls, and Payments Building a Strong Brand for Your Association



Christopher Williams, Treasury Management Relationship Manager, First National Bank of Michigan

This presentation is designed to equip association leaders with clear, actionable strategies to better manage their cash flow – focusing on three essential areas: receipts (money in), controls (protection and earning a return on your funds), and payments (money out). By the end of the presentation attendees will be equipped to make small meaningful changes to reduce risk and improve their liquidity along with understanding how to partner with their bank to streamline collections and payments.

Value of the Volunteer



Annie Storey, CAE, Executive Director, Illinois Section American Water Works Association

Volunteers are an organization's key strength, but often are overlooked when it comes to training and development, professional development, and even budget and operations. In this session, we'll dive into the research around volunteering, what your organization needs to ensure volunteers are engaged and moving the strategic plan forward, and share ideas for your organization to consider to add value to the volunteer and your organization.

Building a Strong Brand for Your Association



Vic Veda, MSML, VP, Communications, Michigan Retailers Association

Your brand goes beyond a logo and color palette. It defines your association and how your members engage with you. Building a strong brand for your association is an in-depth, intimate (and sometimes even a little painful) process involving more than just your marketing team. It is a process that can transform your organization. From ideation to execution, in this session, we'll take a deep dive into everything you should consider to define and strengthen your brand.



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE!

PSST! The audience icons are just a suggestion! Association professionals need a full toolbox—choose the sessions that will equip you with the ideas and insights for success tomorrow.

Quick Tips for AI Productivity Featuring Microsoft Copilot



Randall Dean, MBA, CVP, The E-Mail Sanity Expert (R), Randall Dean Consulting & Training, LLC

Learn immediately-usable tips for integrating popular AI tools into your suite of productivity tools, with a strong focus on Microsoft's Copilot AI (although many of these tips also work with Gemini, ChatGPT, and other popular AI tools). Learn how to quickly draft e-mails and documents; summarize incoming messages, files, and even full books in seconds; enhance your project/task planning, improve staff management/coordination, conduct topic-based research, generate images -- even make your messages more polite and professional! You will also see how Copilot integrates with popular 365 tools like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to enhance productivity directly inside these programs.