

Engagement





How

Storytelling

**Can Strengthen
Your Community
and Boost
Engagement**

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We all love a good story, right? But did you know that storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to bring people together? Whether it's sharing your association's history or highlighting personal experiences, stories help build deeper, more meaningful connections.



When members hear stories that resonate with them, they feel seen, heard, and valued.

Start With Your Origin Story

Every great community has a beginning, and people love to hear the “who, why, and how” behind it all. What inspired the founding of your association? Sharing your origin story allows members to connect with your values, mission, and vision. It’s like giving your association a personality—something members can relate to and feel proud of.

Take the example of the American Nurses Association. By sharing their story of advocacy for nurses’ rights since the 1800s, they’ve not only built trust but created a shared sense of purpose among their members, uniting them around a common cause.

Empower Your Members to Share Their Stories

Empower your members to share their personal stories too! Everyone has a unique experience to share, and when members talk about their hopes, challenges, and dreams, it creates empathy and understanding within the community. This is where the real connection happens.

For example, a member might share how your association helped them through a tough career transition, sparking a conversation among others with similar experiences. This builds bonds not only between the member and the association but also among the community as a whole.

Practical Ways to Use Storytelling in Your Association

Host Storytelling Events: Organize virtual or in-person events where members can share their stories. This could be an open mic night, a virtual storytelling circle, or even a dedicated segment in your annual conference. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has successfully run storytelling sessions where HR professionals share their workplace challenges and solutions, fostering a sense of community.

Create a Story Submission Platform: Provide members with a space to submit their stories, whether it's through videos, written submissions or podcasts. This could be done through your association's website or even a social media campaign with a unique hashtag to encourage participation.

Spotlight Member Stories: Feature these stories in newsletters, social media posts, or on your website. Highlight the diversity of experiences within your community. For example, a construction association might spotlight members who have led groundbreaking projects in their communities, showcasing both personal achievement and the association's broader impact.

Why Storytelling Makes a Difference

Storytelling isn't just about entertainment—it's about building trust, loyalty, and emotional connection. When members hear stories that resonate with them, they feel seen, heard, and valued. And when they share their own stories, it deepens their sense of belonging.

When members feel connected through storytelling, they're more likely to stay engaged with your association. They'll attend events, participate in discussions, and contribute to your community in meaningful ways. After all, stories are what people remember long after facts and figures are forgotten.

Create a Lasting Impact with Storytelling

When you embrace storytelling, you create a lasting emotional connection that keeps members coming back. It's simple and powerful. In the end, it's the stories that truly shape your association's identity—and they're what people will remember most.

Curious about fostering community among your members or do you want to learn more about Sengii? Email Cate at cate@sengii.com.

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Meet Cate

CATE BRONSTEIN is the Chief Strategy Officer at Sengii, where she helps organizations grow and retain their membership through the power of community and events software. In her blog, Cate shares insights into the evolving world of associations—from leadership and digital transformation to the small, human moments that spark lasting connection. Her approach blends clear thinking with empathy, rooted in the belief that great technology should bring people closer together.