

6 Trends to Help You Meet (and Exceed) Members Expectations in 2021



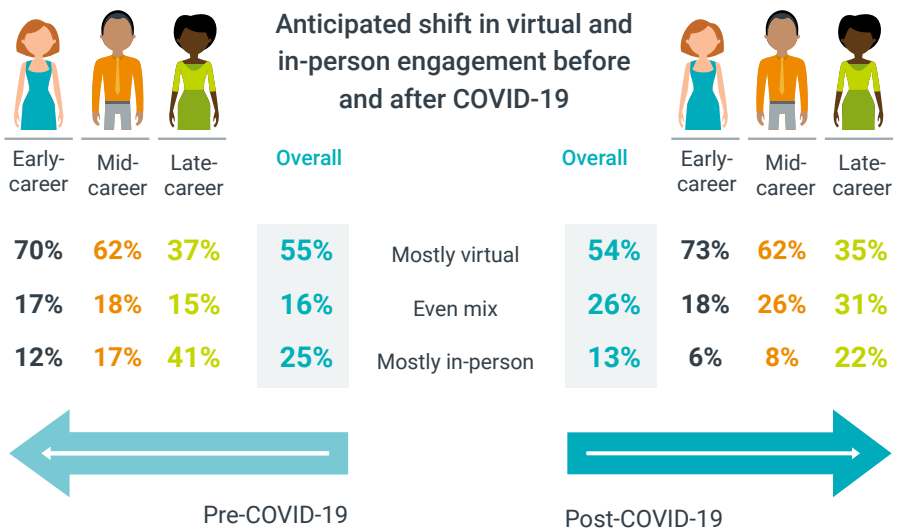
Is your association ready to meet members' expectations in 2021? Here are six trends (and some bonus tips and resources) you should be incorporating into your plans to deliver an experience that will meet (and exceed) your members' expectations in the new year, and for years to come.

1 Virtual connections that build community



It's no surprise but members of professional member organizations have shifted to virtual connections.

An online community has the power to inspire and enable members to connect with each other and gain access to relevant content. Offering an online community is a great way to elevate social networking among your association's members. At the same time, it can make your association a part of your members' daily social networking habits.



Member connections

Promote valuable one-on-one connections and networking opportunities based on common attributes and interests.

Mobile-responsive

Allow your members to stay in-the-know with the latest news and updates while interacting with fellow members on the go.

Networking feed

Engage members in your community by providing relevant content, learning and career opportunities, and member benefits within a single feed.

Gamification

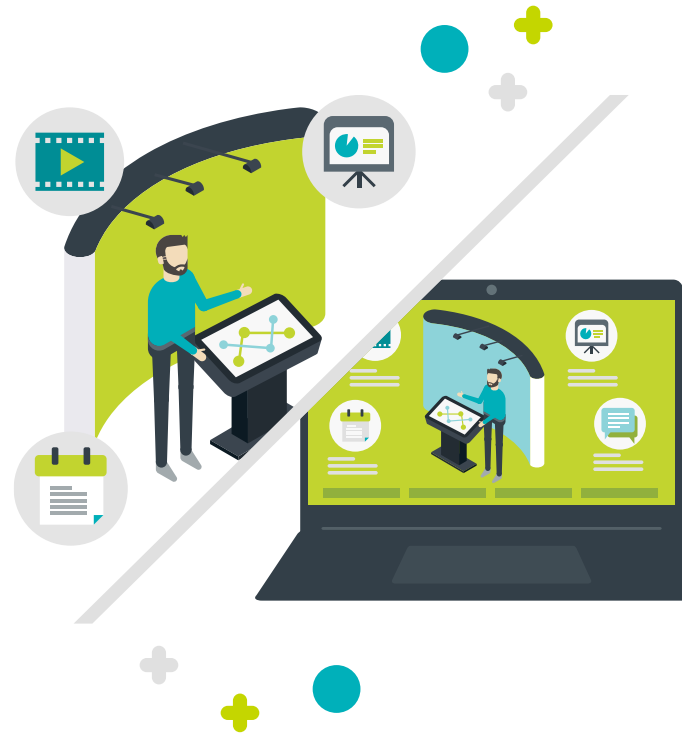
Visually display member activity and participation levels to encourage your members to keep returning, sharing, and connecting.

Make sure you AMS includes a place to connect members to events, volunteer opportunities, education, jobs, and industry information. An online community is the ideal vehicle to deliver these types of benefits to your members. It gives your members the tools they need throughout their member journey to learn, share ideas, and become loyal advocates – ultimately driving retention, revenue, and member satisfaction.



2 Hybrid events

Our world is changing, and with it, so are events. The annual in-person event has typically been one of the biggest learning, networking, and revenue-generating activities for associations. In recent years, virtual events were becoming popular as a convenient option for associations to offer members who couldn't attend the annual event or other in-person events. Then, virtual events became essential as many associations used them to replace planned in-person events that were not possible due to global health concerns.



Today, we find ourselves in a position to combine the best of both worlds with hybrid events. Hybrid events allow attendees to join in-person or online, and they offer associations multiple benefits. These types of events allow you to: expand your reach, improve return on investment (ROI), and gain actionable data.

Consider what it takes to pull off a successful hybrid event:

Planning your hybrid event

- Think digital first
- Determine event format and technology needs
- Partner close with your venue
- Recruit volunteers

Marketing your hybrid event

- Use clear messaging
- Use multiple channels such as email and online member community
- Recruit sponsors

Engage in-person and virtual attendees

- Engage each audience
- Encourage engagement and networking between in-person and online attendees



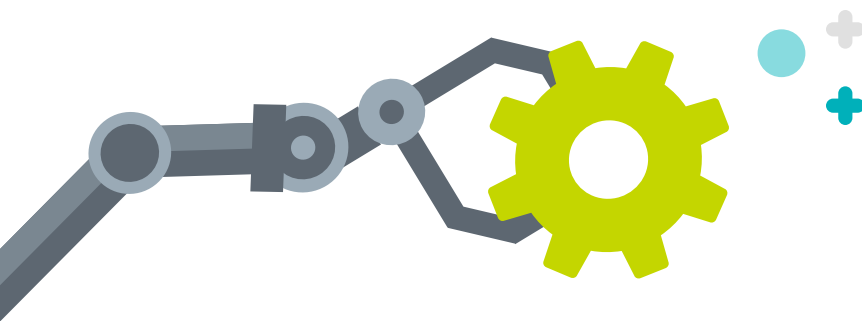
3 Efficiency through automation

To keep up with the fast pace of today's digital communications in the changing business world around you, efficiency means everything. It will be increasingly important to automate as many manual processes as possible so your staff members can spend more time creating a convenient, personalized member experience.

You can simplify your association's processes and save time by utilizing the automated workflows built-in to your AMS. Automated workflows are a series of operations triggered by a specific action. For example, if a member joins your association and pays his or her yearly dues, he or she will receive an automated email confirmation for joining that includes a receipt of payment. The action that triggered this workflow is a new member joining and paying the annual membership dues.

Data analytics are the sturdy backbone of your association. Without it, you are blindly leading your association and unaware of how your membership is trending. Schedule important, timely membership reports to send automatically via email to yourself or executive management. Keep your executive director and/or board of directors up to date with your membership trends with automated monthly membership reports so you can respond to trends before they become issues.

An example of a more sophisticated workflow is when members register for your association's annual conference. They can register with their updated mailing address and check a box to update their profile information with the new contact information. The automated workflow in the AMS can then update their profile instead of requiring a staff member to manually update it.



Take advantage of modern technology like YourMembership AMS, which allows you to automated repetitive tasks such as triggered emails, scheduled reports, and dues renewal notifications. This will simplify and streamline day-to-day operations so your team can focus less on repetitive manual tasks and more on meeting (and exceeding) member expectations.

4 Resource for job opportunities

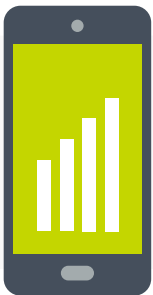


Member retention and engagement are always top of mind for association professionals. However, many find it difficult to be proactive in terms of identifying and developing a plan to address member satisfaction ... before it's too late. There are many benefits that attract prospective members to associations. Job opportunities rank as one of the top benefits an association can offer to acquire new members.

Help your members further their careers and achieve their goals by becoming their trusted resource for professional development. Job board software is fundamental in recruiting and retaining members especially those early in their career.

Eighty percent of Millennials are interested in relevant job opportunities based on their current certifications.

A career center with job alerts, personalized searches and recommendations, plus the ability for members to import their resumes from LinkedIn and log in through existing social accounts such as Facebook, Google, and LinkedIn will go a long way in boosting engagement and meeting member expectations. (An additional benefit is your organization will be more competitive, and members will spend more time interacting on your association site, which translates into increased event participation, networking, and ultimately renewals.)



Connect your members with their next great job opportunity with a mobile-responsive job board. Take advantage of an AMS like YourMembership that not only has built-in job board functionality but also integrates with the industry leading job board software, YM Careers.



5 Data privacy and security



We hear a lot about data privacy these days. It's a hot topic with consumers and your members are no different. In fact, 71 percent of members of professional associations say they worry about data privacy and security.

As your association grows and collects personal information about your members, you can't afford not to protect your member data. When your member data is housed in many different places and staff members are sending spreadsheets back and forth, it's tough to collect and share data safely. Put all of your member data in one secure place, a membership management system.

There are many AMS solutions in the marketplace today, with varying levels of data protection. So, be sure your AMS vendor values security and offers the following functionality to protect your member data and reduce risk. (And, make sure your members know you have these precautions in place).



Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a security system that requires more than one method of authentication to verify a user's identity. With MFA, you can add an additional layer of security to ensure access to your database is restricted to verified users and administrators.



Tokenization is an industry leading security technology used to protect consumer credit card data. Tokenizing payments significantly enhances the security of your credit card and ACH transactions. The goal of tokenization is to remove any original sensitive data, replace each number with an undecipherable token, and store the original data in a secure data vault.



GDPR compliance features are imperative for those organizations working with EU citizens. (These features are also great in improving security.) Some compliance features you should look for are privacy policy management, cookie notices, user consent collection, and auditing and activity logs.



Password standards should require complex passwords such as an uppercase, lowercase, number, symbol and not match previous passwords. Your AMS should require you to rotate passwords every ninety days, encrypt and salted for heightened security.

6 Personalized experiences



It may sound like the season's hottest new toy, but artificial intelligence (AI) is on the rise with for-profit companies. AI is changing the way we interact with technology in our everyday lives. Leading companies like Netflix and Amazon use AI to connect with consumers and provide the personalized experiences we've all come to expect.

And, now members are expecting the same in more areas of their lives – including their experience with your association. Associations are starting to take notice. Fifteen percent of associations survey in 2019 reported that they plan on investing in AI in the near future.

How can you dip your toe in the world of artificial intelligence on a budget? Chatbots are simple artificial intelligence systems that use instant messaging to chat in real-time, anytime. They can be used as a sort of virtual assistant to offer extremely responsive, automated customer service (answering questions, troubleshooting technical issues) or market to customers (offering up relevant products, providing information about services) while allowing a company's staff members to focus on other, higher-value tasks. Consider using chatbots to serve your members more effectively and more efficiently as you move into the new year.

Learn how YourMembership AMS can help you meet and exceed your member expectations:

[Learn more](#)



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