

# REIMAGINE MEMBERSHIP



A DYNAMIC LAB EXPERIENCE FOR ASSOCIATIONS SEEKING RELEVANCE, RESILIENCE, AND RESONANCE IN A **CHANGING WORLD** 









Association membership retention is slipping.



New pipelines are shrinking.



Younger generations are tuning out.



Fewer organizations are reporting growth.



JANUARY JULY 2025 2025

1	Membership
	Increasing

45%

36%

Membership Decreasing

26%

36%

Source: Marketing General, Inc. - "Mid-Year Check-In Shows Drop in Membership Growth and Retention" by Tony Rossell on LinkedIn - Membership Marketing Insights.



NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO BELIEVE THEIR ASSOCIATION OFFERS A VERY COMPELLING VALUE PROPOSITION.

Source: Associations Now, July 2025

# **MEMBERSHIP IS AT A**

# **CROSSROADS**

Associations and membership organizations are facing big questions: How do we stay relevant? How do we meet members and prospects where they are, not where they used to be? What if the very idea of membership was at risk of disappearing?

Associations and membership organizations have been hard-hit in the past five years by unexpected, disruptive change. Now more than ever, members are relying on their responsiveness, leadership, and support. No longer can associations afford to lean on the models of the past or continue to do things simply because it's the way they've always been done. These practices are no longer sustainable, and innovation isn't optional.

# A NEW REALITY FOR ASSOCIATIONS

These aren't just trends - they signal a major shift in how associations deliver member value, driven by multiple forces:



### **ECONOMIC & POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY**

Organizations are facing shrinking audiences, growing polarization, unstable sponsorships, and reduced travel budgets.



#### **INTIMACY OVER SCALE**

Audiences now seek networking, and practical value. Large events underperform without meaningful connection.



### **DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT FATIGUE**

Organizations are being pushed to rethink how they listen to and engage with members.



### **EVOLVING MEMBERSHIP MODELS**

Models must adapt to shifting attitudes, clearer value, better segmentation, upskilled learning, and generational needs.



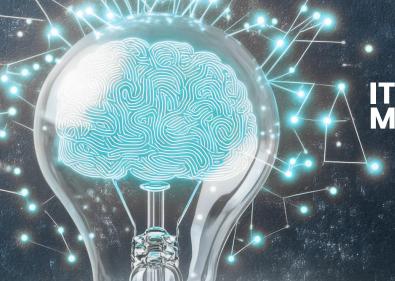
#### ADAPTING TO A DIGITAL FUTURE

Digital and AI advances are driving widespread disruption, requiring organizations to adapt quickly.



#### A MORE CROWDED MARKETPLACE

New entrants are vying for members' attention, increasing competition and forcing associations to differentiate their value.



# IT'S TIME TO REIMAGINE THE MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Associations must act with urgency to:

- · Understand what's driving disengagement
- Ideate new ways to connect
- Think differently about the future of membership

# THE REIMAGINE MEMBERSHIP LAB

Reimagine Membership is a high-energy, co-creative lab experience built to help association leaders and influencers see differently, think provocatively, and act courageously. We blend future thinking, generational insight, human-centered design, and change readiness to help you map what members will need next - and what it will take to deliver it.





# TEAM LAB EXPERIENCE





\*Online or in person.

Intended for cross-disciplinary teams from a single organization. Leaders and team members involved in membership, marketing, communications, social media, or strategy come together to collaboratively envision the best path forward for their members.



# REIMAGINE AND DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

Successful organizations don't just tweak the status quo they anticipate change, listen closely, and put members at the center. Drawing on research and experience in membership, generational strategies, and human-centered change, XYZ University and Talent Solutions, Inc. have identified the practices that help associations thrive, not just survive.

### THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

1.



How does your current strategy account for changes in membership demographics, needs, and habits over the coming five years?

Fifteen?

2.



What are you doing to proactively uncover high need moments for your members? How would your organization need to change to build truly member-centric offerings?

3.



How aligned is your leadership around the urgency and necessity for change and the path forward for your association? Is that same knowledge and belief held by other employees?

If these questions spark recognition or discomfort — if they highlight areas where your organization could grow — consider them an invitation.

Through the **Reimagine Membership Lab**, we break down and explore the five practices necessary for membership organizations to thrive.

We offer several formats based on your organization's needs. Contact us today for additional information!

# FIVE PRACTICES FOR ORGANIZATIONS READY TO THRIVE IN THE NEXT ERA OF BELONGING

These practices are the foundation of the Reimagine Membership program - an immersive experience designed to focus energy, cut through the noise, and envision a bold new future.

# **DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE**

Associations that thrive are not just operationally sound — they are future-conscious. They don't wait for disruption; they design for it.

They actively scan for signals of change, interpret early trends, and imagine the implications of new technologies, behaviors, and expectations. They ask bold questions:

- "What will the next generation need from us?"
- "What assumptions are we still holding from a world that no longer exists?"

This discipline is about widening your lens – experimenting with foresight tools, scenario planning, and generational analysis – and exploring what your current strategic plan isn't yet addressing. The goal: to replace "business as usual" with "future by design."

## **CRAFT THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE**

Every touchpoint tells a story – the question is, what story are your members living?

Crafting the member experience means seeing the journey as your members do: from first awareness and curiosity, through moments of delight, friction and doubt, to deep connection and advocacy. Thriving associations reimagine this journey continuously, shaping experiences that resonate both logically *and* emotionally.

Using tools like empathy mapping, persona building and journey visualization, we uncover what members truly feel, expect, and need. These insights help design experiences that generate trust, recognition, and belonging – the human fuel of long-term engagement.

### **CULTIVATE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY**



Belonging doesn't happen by accident. It's crafted through intentional systems of interaction, recognition, and reciprocity.

Forward-thinking associations treat engagement not as a set of disconnected programs but as a living ecosystem — one that balances structure and spontaneity, routing and ritual. Some organizations are turning to online communities to drive engagement. We love this solution, but offering a community is not the same as engaging members in community.

We help you design micro-engagements that invite participation, build curiosity, create feedback loops and recognition moments that reinforce belonging.

"If you build it, they will come" is not a strategy. Fostering curiosity and creating engagement is at the very heart of transforming activity to energy.

# **BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS**



### Great ideas falter when organizations aren't ready to act.

Readiness is the quiet infrastructure of change — the alignment of people, processes, culture, and technology working together to make bold moves stick.

We use a readiness framework to help you assess your organization's current state, identify gaps and design "first moves" that generate visible progress. This work isn't just about structure – it's about *narrative*: building a shared belief that change is both possible and necessary.

Readiness means equipping your teams to experiment, learn, and adapt without losing momentum. It means building roadmaps to translate ideas into action and monitoring signs of progress with both numbers and stories.



# 5

## **CLARIFY MEMBER VALUE**

At the heart of membership model lies one unrelenting question: Why does belonging here matter?

Too often, organizations answer with features and benefits – events, discounts, newsletters – while members are looking for *outcomes and impact*.

We help you measure and communicate value in ways that make members *feel* the difference. You'll track not just satisfaction but impact – translating results into stories that inspire belief, renewal and advocacy.

When you clarify and communicate value through both data and emotion, you transform membership from a transaction into a *movement*.



# THRIVING ORGANIZATIONS REINVENT THEMSELVES

Thriving associations are reinventing themselves: modernizing their value propositions, adopting new technologies, and delivering experiences that feel indispensable. Members who perceive their association as forward-looking, adaptive, and human-centered report dramatically higher loyalty and satisfaction than those who see an organization stuck in yesterday's playbook.

### ORGANIZATIONS THAT FADE

- React to member requests; cling to old habits
- Build from the association's viewpoint
- Rroadcast messages; control communication
- Work in silos; treat change as a checklist
- X Share routine updates and events

### ORGANIZATIONS THAT THRIVE

- Anticipate change; invest in next-gen tools
- Design around member needs and experiences
- Cultivate open communities; enable self-service
- Align leaders; adapt and pivot together
- Prove value with clear, ongoing results



## READY TO MOVE FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION?

Join us to reimagine the future of membership. Our lab experience helps you apply new approaches to your organization's challenges while sparking team ideation and connecting you with peers exploring the future of belonging.

# AN INVITATION TO THRIVE





# **LET'S CHAT!**

Let's start with a discovery discussion and co-create the format that fits your goals, your members, your moment.

By combining the research expertise of XYZ University with the practical, change-driven strategies of Talent Solutions, Inc., this program offers a grounded approach to navigating transformation.

Through evidence-based frameworks and real-world insights, leaders gain the clarity and tools needed to address today's challenges and prepare for what's next.



APPLY TODAY





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