

# 2024 Association Chapter Membership Tendencies – A Continued Focus On Virtual Programming



Thanks to COVID-19 and the subsequent desire from association chapter members and member guests for hybrid and remote association chapter opportunities, the ways in which association chapters engage with members must continue to evolve. By now, most association chapters have jumped on the proverbial “virtual bandwagon,” – those that haven’t may have been forced to shut their doors by now, or been driven to merge with another chapter.



But for those association chapters that do offer virtual opportunities, webinars and online meetings aren’t nearly enough. To keep ahead of other association chapters in your area and to stay aligned with what your members (and member guests) are looking for, it’s important to keep adding to your virtual offerings. As we head into 2024, here are three areas where you could consider expanding your association chapter virtual programming.

**Member engagement.** As many people continue to work remotely, your association chapter members are probably finding it harder to find information in their fields and areas of interest. These days it’s not as easy for them to connect with their favorite subject matter expert. There’s a good chance they can no longer walk down the hall and knock on their office door. Consider adding online forums, where members can easily connect with other members, share knowledge, and learn

from each other. You could also offer exclusive members' only access to subject matter experts and research that your members can't find elsewhere. And, with the increased blurring of lines between work and non-work hours, consider adding a repository of short videos and training materials that members can explore at their leisure, in addition to live online training.

**Personalization in member communications.** Segmenting your communications so you're your association chapter members and other audiences receive the communications that are right for them, is critical to your continued association chapter success. But what if you took that segmentation a step further and personalized your communications, so readers feel you are reaching out specifically to them? In 2024, personalization isn't a nice to have – it's crucial to your chapter's ability to foster deeper connections and improve engagement. Leverage your member data by using artificial intelligence to create tailored content for each person in your database and speak directly to what specific members are looking for.

**Mentorship options.** Mentorship, whether between established association chapter members and new members, or members experienced in their careers (or retirees) with those who are new-ish in their careers, goes a long way toward improving engagement. Mentorship programs can be less structured, like these we've mentioned, or they can be more focused and structured, based on specific skills and interest. Virtual platforms, like speed networking and virtual mentorship panel events, can be the jumping off point for strong one-on-one mentorship relationships in your association chapter. Another way to strengthen these relationships is by creating online special interest groups, where members at all stages of their careers can share information and develop relationships that can stay online or move into the in-person space.

The needs and wants of your members are continuing to evolve. And, as it seems like many of your members will continue to work remotely for the long term, it's important to stay on top of those needs, so ask them what they would like to see from your association chapter in terms of services.

One thing we know for certain is that their need for association chapter virtual programming isn't going away. And with the advances in technology, that need is in fact growing. By continuing to keep an eye on what they're looking for, and adding in virtual programming where it makes sense, you'll increase the chances they'll stick around, virtually and in person.

