

Embracing AI In Association Chapters: Opportunities And Benefits



Whether you realize it or not, artificial Intelligence, also called AI, is becoming part of our daily lives. Your members, and most likely your industry, are already benefiting. AI is being incorporated into everything from logging into smart phones using facial recognition, to answering questions via chatbots and analyzing medical images and test results.



Knowing that AI is something your members and member guests may be coming to expect from your association chapter, you may have questions and even some concerns. The key is to understand why and how to use AI in your chapter, to take advantage of its strengths and sidestep its vulnerabilities. In an earlier post, we talked about some of the potential chapter uses for AI. Those were the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how and why AI is the right addition for association chapters. As professional communities with unique needs and challenges, chapters can benefit from integrating AI into their operations, with its countless real-world applications.

Why use AI in your chapter?

Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems that can perform tasks that have always required human intelligence to execute. These include learning from data, understanding language, recognizing patterns and even making decisions.

The promise of AI for association chapters lies in its ability to:

- **Automate routine tasks.** Free up volunteers to focus on higher-value activities like updating chapter web content and your overall visual brand and connecting with potential sponsors. Get them working on more interesting tasks that will keep them better engaged, instead of routine tasks like analyzing responses from your last event survey or checking the validity of email addresses.
- **Make better decisions.** Leverage the data from association chapter surveys to make stronger decisions by identifying potential challenges and new opportunities. And use what you learn to create more engaging elements that better brand your chapter with its different audiences, including logos banners and marketing materials.

The top applications of AI for association chapters

Here are the top ways to apply AI to your association chapter operations:

1. **Membership management.** AI-powered tools can analyze member data to identify trends, predict attrition and suggest specific ways to increase engagement. Some chapters, for example, find themselves with new members excited to join but who disappear after their first year. AI can help identify the reasons for their ghosting and recommend ways to keep them as active members.
2. **Event planning and promotion.** Use AI for event planning and marketing, to analyze past attendance data and use the results to forecast turnout, recommend future event dates and even suggest speaker topics. And using AI-driven marketing tools can help you optimize your email campaigns, social media posts and advertisements to ensure the right messages get to the right audiences to bring the right people to your events.
3. **Content creation and curation.** AI tools like natural language processing can help generate online content like newsletters, blog posts and social media tailored to your chapter's audiences. It can also curate relevant industry news and resources for your website or to send in email, ensuring members receive valuable information without the need for those hard-to-find volunteers.
4. **Data analysis and reporting.** Analyzing data including member surveys, event feedback and chapter financials can be difficult and time-consuming. AI simplifies this daunting process by generating insights and recommendations you can use. Tools like predictive analytics can forecast trends, to help your treasurer better allocate resources.



Addressing the “scary bits” of AI and association chapters

Whenever technology, specifically AI, comes up in conversation, it’s often accompanied by concerns around privacy and the ability of chapters to safely manage the technology. These are valid points, but they’re also not insurmountable.

Data security is probably one of the most important issues for your chapter (if it’s not, it should be.). Any AI tools you’re considering must comply with privacy laws and best practices. In addition, you’ll want to be transparent with members about how their data is being used, and protected, and ensure any vendors you work with uphold high standards of data protection.

And, while some AI solutions can be intricate, there are user-friendly platforms that have been created specifically for smaller organizations, allowing you to start with simple tools that don’t require much management that also allow for scale as your chapter grows in comfort and size.

Get your Chapter Started with AI

If your chapter is beginning to explore how it could incorporate AI into your chapter management, here’s a quick roadmap that will help you begin to integrate and manage it effectively:

1. **Assess needs.** Identify where AI could provide the most value to your chapter. Struggling with member retention? Overwhelmed by creating content? Focus your efforts on your biggest challenges.
2. **Start small.** Start with simpler, more straightforward tools like getting inspiration for articles for your newsletter or copy for your next event, which can deliver improvements quickly and require minimal investment.
3. **Educate your team.** Incorporating AI into your programming will involve multiple groups, including your board, other volunteers and staff. Ensure they all understand how AI works and the goals of incorporating it into your chapter operations. Holding training sessions and Q&A sessions can improve buy in, by demystifying the technology and increasing enthusiasm around the change.

The Road Ahead for Chapters and AI

AI has the potential to reshape and reinvigorate chapter operations. While there may be some hurdles, the potential benefits far outweigh the challenges. By automating survey analysis, inspiration



for content, and help with event promotion AI allows your board, volunteers and any staff to focus on more meaningful and impactful work. Starting small, focusing on high-impact areas and prioritizing privacy and transparent use, chapters can harness the power of AI to achieve their goals and better serve their members. It's an exciting time for association chapters to embrace all AI has to offer.

