

**“Creating a Value Proposition for
Your Chamber or Association to
Attract Members”**

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Amy has been successfully creating effective strategies for local and national nonprofits across the US since 2005. Her work with volunteer and member-driven organizations to advocate, engage, and build alliances to effectively represent a greater industry at the state and national, allows for each participant to build on their strengths and gain new experiences. She is Co-founder of Association Rockstars - a peer collaboration creating stronger stakeholder connections by engaging chamber and association professionals.

Mission vs. Value Statement

- **Mission:** A Mission and Vision are longer term

“Your vision should be describing the future you are trying to create in order because of your organization’s unique contribution. Your mission is how to get there. If the description of that future is no longer the one your membership, industry, or society needs, then a strategic refresh can help you reset the vision.”

- Lowell Aplebaum

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/might-right-time-do-strategy-lowell-aplebaum-fasae-cae-cpf/>

- **Value Proposition:** The benefits your audience (members/industry/donors) will gain by supporting your organizations cause.
 - Answers their question of “what’s in it for me?”
 - Not just a marketing tool

Mission vs. Value Statement

How does this all play together?

A value proposition **changes regularly to meet your member needs** and it supports the path that is your mission to achieve your vision. Your organization's value proposition provides solutions to the largest pain points - making this a dynamic, moving target that needs evaluation yearly.

3 Qualities of a Value Proposition

- Focus on the end result
- Don't be vague
- More than a catchy slogan

3 Qualities of a Value Proposition

Focus on the end result

- Define your organization's reason for existing.
- Relevant to a current pain point of the industry
- What do members receive after engaging with you?

3 Qualities of a Value Proposition

Don't be vague

- Avoid meaningless words or jargon
 - Example: “Helping to build a better world”
 - Example “Legislative Affairs”
- Use language members will understand

3 Qualities of a Value Proposition

More than a catchy slogan

While it should be catchy and prominent, remember it's more than just a catchy slogan, it's why your members choose you.

Defining/Redefining Your Value Proposition

Questions to ask:

- What does your organization do really well and what is the end result for your members?
- Who is your ideal audience(s)?
- What problem are you solving for your ideal audience?

What Do Your Members Value?

Create a two-way conversation

- Online member community
- Online survey tool
- Virtual town hall style meetings
- Focus groups

Testing Your Value Proposition

TESTING, TESTING:

- A/B test with membership email
- Post poll in online community

How are you testing with your members?

Please answer in the chat

Sharing Your Value Proposition

5 ways to get your message out there:

- Website
- Email
- Board and Membership Committee
- Social media
- Media

1. WEBSITE

You'll find several places to include your value propositions on your website. If there's an industry-wide value proposition, lead with that on the homepage. Why? Think about how fast you scroll through websites. Some users only give a site a fraction of a second's consideration. That's why the value proposition must be up front and crystal clear.

For other, more targeted value propositions, there should be navigation tabs that quickly let members know, "this is for you." Again, once they click on that tab, their value proposition should be delivered quickly and clearly.

Instead of "Sign Up for Our Newsletter," try something less generic like, "Sign Up for Updates About (who or how your organization helps – as it pertains to the value proposition)".

For donation requests, instead of "I Would Like to Give a One-time Gift," try more effective phrasing such as, "Donate to (who or how your organization helps)," or "By Donating to (organization), You're Taking an Active Role to (vision statement)." Again, tie all these CTAs back to your value proposition.

A FEW EMAIL TIPS:

NEWSLETTERS

Instead of “Your Legislative Affairs Newsletter,” focus on communicating the results or outcome that the team is creating, such as “Building Better Policy for (your members).”

RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

Is there anything more thrilling than a “Join Now” button? Why put that button there at all if you haven’t answered the question, “Why should I?” Place the value proposition statement in the immediate vicinity of that button to reinforce that you’re the right group for them.

ONBOARDING CAMPAIGNS

Congratulations, you recruited a new member! Now make sure they don’t have buyer’s remorse or wonder why they joined the association in the first place by reinforcing the value proposition throughout automated onboarding messages. Consistently tying value propositions to newsletters and products will remind them why they joined and keep them excited about what they’re going to get out of their membership.

AUTOMATION

Having an automated email system doesn’t mean you can just check out and go hit the beach. Your involvement is still required. Always be revisiting, editing, and updating your emails to accommodate new or changes to value propositions. Scheduling a yearly copy review is a good practice to keep messaging from growing stale and irrelevant.

Board and Membership Committee

Remind them to focus on the results, benefits, and outcomes for members, not just feature details. This will help them successfully recruit new members and sponsors. And don't let them "wing it" when it comes to the association's messaging. Make sure they have clear statements available whenever needed.

Use your Value Propositions as talking points for when your members are representing you at committee meetings, networking events, member meetings, city council, etc.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media remains a powerful way to reach audiences on the platforms of their choosing. Adhere to long-held social media best practices by concentrating on images and/or video that showcase your value propositions. Establish a social media editorial calendar so that posts support current areas of focus and initiatives, be they events, membership drives, donation drives, or product promotion.

As long as someone is holding a laptop or mobile phone (and who isn't?), you have an always-on open communication channel to your membership. Some social media content tips:

- Take a value proposition statement and connect it to a member testimonial for reinforcement that the benefits are very real. This can cause member prospects feel like they are missing out and could also benefit.
- The social media world has become largely about “short.” Keep social media content small and quickly digestible as users rapidly scroll through their social media feeds. Again, strong images are one of the few things that will make them stop and dwell longer on your content.

5. MEDIA

Just as you're providing value propositions for your board member champions, organizational leaders and executives will also need to be armed with these propositions to use as talking points should they land a media interview, or if they're invited to give a presentation at a conference. Having the anchors of the value propositions will keep all media appearances consistent and cohesive.

If a member has an opportunity to discuss you in the media, encourage them to come up with a personal story that directly ties into a value proposition. When writing press releases, apply the same rules as emails—make sure the messaging resonates with your value proposition.

Bonus: From Winter Institute - Communicating Through the Media

How Do You Create Talking Points?

- Prioritize the ONE thing you want your audience to take away from your message
- Determine how many points you want to make
- When being interviewed, tailor the talking points to the questions they send you (note: request to be sent questions ahead of time, never hurts to ask)
- Consider what emotions you want your audience to feel
- Stay focused and concise

Resources

eBook: How to Craft Value Propositions That Attract Association Members:

<https://www.higherlogic.com/lp/how-to-craft-value-propositions-ebook/>

Today's presentation: <https://www.amyhagersolutions.com/presentations>

Association Rockstars: <https://associationrockstars.com/>

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AssociationRockstars>

Questions or Stories to Share??

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