

REVENUE

Striking gold

Five tips for creating new revenue streams for your association

In a world where disruption is creating havoc at every turn, every association can buy themselves some security by finding new revenue streams. Here are some strategies almost any association can pursue.

Think long-term, not one-off

One-off sponsorships are often easier to secure but they are generally ineffective for the sponsor, which is forced to do a 'sales job' at every turn, leaving a sour taste in members' mouths.

On the other hand, long-term partnerships give the sponsor the opportunity to generate a tangible return from the market you represent, giving sponsors more exposure. Having fewer, higher value, partners also enables your team to service them more effectively.

Get staff buy-in first

One of the worst mistakes you can make when seeking partners is to create benefits that your operations team can't manage.

You might think offering a partner a sponsored post is an 'easy win' but the marketing team might see it differently. Without the teams' support, the benefit could be difficult to deliver, leaving you with an unhappy sponsor.

Create a jobs board

Jack Welch, the former CEO of GE said, "Help people make money and you'll never be a day out of work."

Offering a jobs board is one of those ways. Members love it because it helps them find new jobs (and more money) and employers love it because it streamlines their recruitment.

The best way forward is to offer employers a basic listing for free. If that works, offer a paid, premium service for an enhanced listing. You can then maximise your revenue by offering the members a range of add-on services like resume assistance, placement services and career advice.

Build an online community

One successful association in the United States has over 100,000 members in their online community. They charge a basic membership fee of \$49 per month.

Do the math and you can see that's an outrageously lucrative way to make money. Creating an online community takes time, effort and energy, but if you have an engaged membership base, and you can offer outstanding content, support and mentoring, the financial benefits far outweigh the cost to implement it.

Create third-party revenue streams

Third-party revenue streams are member benefit programs that provide both the member and the association with a benefit. One of the most beneficial of these programs are association's membership insurance programs.

Associations establish an arrangement to provide members with quality insurance cover tailored to their needs at a competitive rate and also generate a referral fee paid to the association from all purchased member's insurance policies.

Drew Fisher from Association Insurance Australia said, "Association CEOs don't always realise how powerful the membership insurance programs can be from both a member benefit and income perspective for the association. It is not uncommon for associations to generate a six figure income."

Association Insurance

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