16
SEE LEVEL
Associations are rich with data. So why aren’t more of them using it to measure goals and make decisions?
BY THOMAS MARCETTI

features jun/jul18

22
SEXY AND SCHOLARLY
Here’s proof that technical journals don’t have to be boring.
BY THOMAS MARCETTI

28
LONG LIVE THE KING
Repurposing information seems like an obvious way to make the most of your editorial investment, but it’s easy to overlook when immersed in the demands of day-to-day deadlines. Here’s how three associations are getting a lot more life out of their content.
BY RUTH E. THALER-CARTER

34
MARKETING WITH YOUR MAGAZINE
Here’s how to maximize your magazine’s marketing potential for everything from selling and renewing memberships to driving conference and webinar registrations.
BY JEFF BEBEE

39
AM&P ANNUAL MEETING EXHIBITOR SHOWCASE
Get a sneak peek at the companies who have the answers to your association publishing wish list and solving your challenges.
Keeping Afloat in Seas of Data
From elephants to oceans, this issue’s cover concepts illustrate association publishers’ challenges in capitalizing on data.

BY DANIELLE MOORE
LONG LIVE THE KING
Repurposing information seems like an obvious way to make the most of your editorial investment, but it’s easy to overlook when immersed in the demands of day-to-day deadlines. Here’s how three associations are getting a lot more life out of their content.

BY RUTH E. THALER-CARTER

It has been hammered into us: Content is king. And now, with even more opportunities for multi-platform and repurposed publishing, your new mantra might very well be, *Long live the king.*

The wealth of content generated by even the smallest of associations is pure gold. Content that informs members can also aid retention, recruitment, and external visibility, but it’s not just the purpose that is multi-use.

With omni-channel publishing practically a requirement of today’s media environment, associations are finding new and more efficient ways to repurpose their content across various mediums. Repurposing content seems like an obvious way to make the
REPURPOSE, REUSE, RECYCLE

Today’s ever-increasing electronic options make it easy to repurpose content. Here are just a few ideas.

ASSOCIATION EVENTS — such as conferences, workshops, webinars, courses, and more — are natural sources for repurposing and reusing material. Text renderings of PowerPoint presentations, short versions of lengthy speeches, fleshed-out notes, and more can keep an event alive beyond its actual occurrence. Speeches and webinars can become videos and podcasts.

SHORTER VERSIONS OF IN-DEPTH MAGAZINE ARTICLES lend themselves to republishing in newsletters or as blog posts and podcasts. An in-depth, well-researched magazine article could result in several shorter items that boil down the details, often by bulleting out points discussed at greater length in the original version. How-to articles can become Instagram posts.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES OR BLOG POSTS can be expanded with more research, interviews, and detail for use on an association website. Referring readers to online versions of print publications is increasingly common, especially in topics that lend themselves to in-depth coverage when print publications have limited space and scope.

BOOKS (AND MONOGRAPHS) are a natural source for repurposing content. Chapters or chapter excerpts can be used as magazine or newsletter articles, blog posts, and related other publications. These shortened versions can build greater interest in the books themselves.

TRANSLATIONS are another rich source of repurposing for associations with audiences in various countries or cultures. That option arises when an association’s publishing staff starts changing other things, such as researching audiences, that can pinpoint new outlets for their information.

“We would have great content from events, and then go dark until the next event. We wanted to be visible year-round, but the process was spotty and haphazard.”

JIM CHRZAN, PMMI

most of that resource, but it can be easy to overlook when immersed in the demands of day-to-day deadlines. The days when turning a newsletter or magazine article into a press release was considered repurposing are far behind us, and the potential is only going to expand — the possibilities may indeed be endless.

“In the past, we would send out a 67-page book to a magazine editor who would write a press release about it, and that was it,” says Jim Chrzan, content vice president for PMMI. “Now, we also create charts and figures and pull out factoids to use on our website.”

Chrzan meets regularly with colleagues to look at magazines they publish and identify information in different departments that can be turned into other uses. Even blow-in postcards about scholarships, education offerings, and events can become much more.
In addition to looking for opportunities to reuse bits of information, Chrzan is looking at the potential of brand-new content based on topics pulled out of general coverage of news, trends, and events. By taking existing articles and adding a little more information, Chrzan is able to revisit and even improve on topics that are still noteworthy. “In essence, we’re making content better with more context,” he says. “Information that had been buried for years is now accessible and interesting again.”

**REPURPOSE TO REVITALIZE**

When Melissa Jackson was senior director of publishing at the Water Environment Federation, she used repurposed content to make technical information more accessible.

“The bulk of our content was technically slanted, and we had hundreds of conference papers each year from which we gathered ideas to fit our magazine editorial calendar,” she says. “We also worked with authors to transform their papers into more concise, actionable, reader-friendly magazine articles. Occasionally, some of the papers from our conference research track would find their way into our journal. This gave the papers a wider audience and extended afterlife.”

Such success encouraged Jackson and her colleagues to start looking at other content in the same way. “If we don’t reuse our best stuff, it is ephemeral and easy to miss, which is doing our members and other readers a disservice. Plus, we want to get the most from our editorial investment,” she says.

By occasionally revisiting older content and looking for connections to more timely industry trends, Jackson was able to constantly pull from their publication back catalog. This provided jumping off points for refreshing a topic, opportunities to reuse content, and a way to highlight the depth of content the association provides.

“You can’t just slap content or links from one channel into another — you need to tailor the content to be the most effective for that channel.”

**MATT KINSMAN, CONNECTIV**

“Deep down, the instinct is to create completely fresh content for each and every item, and there’s a lot of merit to that, but realistically, readers have shorter attention spans now,” she says. “Most of them aren’t relentlessly stalking all of your publications and committing each story to memory. There are going to be items they missed or forgot about, or never saw in the first place, so cross-pollinating across platforms is helpful. So is linking to, or summarizing, related content that was previously published. Most editors have great curating skills, but can be afraid to use them, as if it’s cheating.”

Chrzan found this approach was particularly helpful when applied to event content.

“We would have great content from events, and then go dark until the next event,” he says. “We wanted to be visible year-round, but the process was spotty and haphazard. It’s my job to talk about and distribute our different business intelligence offerings.”

Even more opportunities such as these open up when the repurposing is baked into a content plan from the very beginning.

“A single research study can provide a wealth of content, such as various article angles, launching points for webinars, infographics, press releases, booth material, marketing collateral, etc.,” says Sarah Loeffler, director of custom media for PMMI Media Group.

**PROACTIVE REPURPOSING**

With a wide range of outlets to draw from — a daily email newsletter, monthly webinars, quarterly peer-to-peer council meetings organized by discipline, and two annual conferences — Matt Kinsman, vice president of content and programming at Connectiv, generates and repurposes content constantly.

“We will use content across all outlets — subjects of newsletter stories can become speakers at our live and digital events, and we will do profiles and Q&As with event speakers in the newsletter before an event, as well as summaries of sessions after an event,” he says. “We record webinars and live event sessions and offer summaries in newsletters and blogs, as well as links to the video and audio archive so members can view the sessions in full.”

“Q&As with industry leaders have proven to be very popular in our newsletter,” Kinsman says. “We are looking at adding podcasts to the mix. That would be a great format for a Q&A and would be more accessible — and possibly less labor-intensive — than a written Q&A,” he says.

Kinsman notes that repurposing content is also a great way to emphasize the value of the association. “Members have extremely busy schedules, may not be able to attend an event, or might miss an issue of the newsletter,” he says. “Seeing content in another platform informs them of the resources at their disposal. Offering content in multiple channels also gives members the option..."
of consuming content in the way that’s easiest and most effective for them.”

As an example, Kinsman points to Connectiv’s recent CEO Summit, a three-day event for C-suite executives. “In a follow-up survey, attendees said that one of the top ways that they heard about the event and became interested in attending was through content and promotions featured in the newsletter,” Kinsman says. “All that information was repurposed and cross-published.”

While practical and profitable in a variety of ways, repurposing is not always easy or straightforward. It may not be any less labor- or time-intensive than creating new content.

“Writing up an event session can take a long time, particularly as you review the recording,” Kinsman says. “You can certainly be more efficient with repurposing — it can offset the need for more personnel — but it won’t necessarily save more time than generating original content. You still have to listen to the recordings, watch the videos, and tailor the material for whatever additional outlet where you’ll be reusing it.”

Much of the extra work generated by repurposing can be negated with the aforementioned proactive approach.

“At WEF, we asked our staff writers to build out one story idea for multiple outlets — say, a 900-word news story for the magazine, a 300-word snapshot for the online newsletter, and then a Facebook post and a tweet to promote it,” Jackson says. “They found it didn’t take too much more time if they could do it all at once.”

Making multichannel use of content part of the planning process also allows for additional care to be given to issues that might otherwise be easy to overlook.

“Give yourself some latitude for future expansion. Author copyright and license agreements should not be limited to a single publication or time frame,” Jackson says. “Check your freelance contracts to be sure you have the right to repurpose the content. If you obtain images from photo libraries, revisit them so you know exactly what your licenses allow. Technology has made it easier for third parties to make a nice profit by policing the web. You might have bought the rights to use an image on the cover, but if it shows up somewhere else in your content, it can set off a red flag for a bot.” That could lead to fines.

It is also important to keep member expectations in mind. “You have to be careful about repurposing content that people have paid for in its original form. For example, event attendees could take exception to seeing event content that they paid to see live repurposed for free in a magazine,” Kinsman says.

A keen eye must be kept on audience and function when repurposing content. “You need to tailor the content for the platform you’re using,” he says. “For instance, event content doesn’t translate completely to text, nor can a written interview capture every element of a live speaker.”

That means identifying the purpose of each outlet rather than automatically reusing almost everything in the publishing silo. “An article has to offer a contained set of useful, applicable information, while a live event or webinar can offer a more dynamic exchange between speakers and attendees,” Kinsman says. “You can’t just slap content or links from one channel into another — you need to tailor the content to be the most effective for that channel.”

Ruth E. Thaler-Carter (www.writerruth.com) is a freelance writer, editor, and proofreader, and a longtime AM&P member.