

Communications Assessments for Associations

How to gain valuable insights to improve communications strategies.

The primary reason for a **communications assessment** is to determine whether your current communications strategies are working.



A communications assessment is a *snapshot* of your association's communications programs, practices, tools, and activities. The goal is to **discover** what is working and **uncover** what may need to be modified or eliminated.

ASSESSMENT TACTICS

Observation: Observe and assess communication in the working environment, current association communication methods, organizational structure and any barriers that prevent effective communication. Work flow is observed from staff to member to final delivery (reviewing all communications along the way).

Internal and External Research: Interviews are conducted across three levels in the association. A cross-section of employees & members are interviewed one-on-one regarding the association's ability to communicate effectively. Management and/or executive teams are also interviewed using similar questions.

In addition to one-on-one interviews, feedback from other groups of people within and outside of the organization (in the form of focus groups or surveys) can also be insightful into the association's communication effectiveness.

Review and Analysis: Identify current communication needs, objectives, tools, and strategies of the association. Gather examples of all materials for review in order to evaluate and recommend efficient alignment of all materials to overall communication goals.

Report and Implement Findings: The information and feedback gathered are analyzed and submitted in a report of findings. Suggestions are offered on areas of communication that need improvement, and a plan of action with detailed steps to accomplish those improvements.

"The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) utilized the services of David, Leanna, and Molly in 2016 to conduct a comprehensive assessment of our association's communication strategies and current effectiveness. From the valuable insights from our members to the group's evaluation of our marketing and public relations efforts, we received strategic guidance from them at every stage of the assessment. The final product was a detailed report with specific, actionable recommendations. We were extremely pleased with the process and final result and will definitely use their services again."

*- Sally J. Baker, Director of Marketing & PR
AAEP*

The Team

Our team is comprised of talented professionals who add value, with a unique mix of experience and capabilities. **Contact us to learn more.**



David Caldwell
859.381.9510
david@balancecreative.net

David Caldwell, Principal, Balance Creative

Experience: David Caldwell is an advertising, graphic design and marketing professional with more than two decades of experience.

Background: BFA, Graphic Design from Eastern Kentucky University

Emphasis: In addition to project management, David handles the marketing & business management side of his firm. He began his career as a graphic designer, but migrated to client services, project management and media services. David still plays an active role in the creative process for clients, but now he gets just as energized from helping clients determine appropriate marketing strategies — and the necessary approach to get them there. David has worked alongside many groups, non-profits, and associations, assisting them with design strategy, membership retention/recruitment, public relations programs, and branding/positioning efforts.



Leanna Comer
859.351.0692
leanna.comer@gmail.com

Leanna Comer, Owner and CEO, Comer Research Consultants

Experience: More than 25 years in the market research industry, including the last five years as owner of her own firm.

Background: BA from Morehead State University (degrees in both Journalism with Advertising & Public Relations emphasis and Radio/TV Production). A past adjunct professor in the Communications Department at the University of Kentucky, teaching Research Methods for the Communications Professional for two semesters.

Emphasis: With more than 25 years of experience, Comer specializes in developing research studies that support and advance clients' marketing and public relations strategies. Comer has extensive experience with a wide array of research methods including focus groups, in-depth interviews, and surveys conducted online, via mail, or through telephone interviews.



Molly Sutherland
859.509.2249
molly@sutherlandww.com

Molly Sutherland, President, Sutherland & Associates

Experience: 30 years in business design initiatives for Fortune 10 organizations as well as privately held and family-owned organizations, associations and other non-profit organizations.

Background: Executive MBA from Bellarmine University, past member of Vistage, the world's largest professional association for CEOs and COOs. A past Bingham Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Bellarmine University's MBA program, teaching Entrepreneurial Strategies, for seven years.

Emphasis: Understanding the importance of challenging others as part of the process of: transformational leadership, change management, prioritizing business initiatives, professional growth and development, building teams and valuing people, introducing lean principles in non-manufacturing environments, and utilizing the tool of discovery.