



# Division 1: Professional Development

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Edmonton chapter serves the city of Edmonton and area. The chapter's membership is large in number (nearly 500) and diverse in discipline, touching all aspects of communications -- from government relations to marketing, and everything in between. There are two similar professional associations in the Edmonton area, the Advertising Club of Edmonton (ACE) and the Edmonton chapter of the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS).

Stemming from IABC's overall #1720 strategy, IABC Edmonton's 2018/19 overall strategic focuses were to:

- Support IABC Edmonton members in their development at every stage of their careers.
- Continue to build the credibility for IABC and the valuable roles communicators play in their organizations.
- Demonstrate the added value of being part of a global network, while building on the strength of the local community.
- Increasing awareness of the international connections enabled through IABC and its programs.
- Aligning all activities by working collaboratively and leverage resources and efforts to enhance outcomes.
- Continue effective board governance and maintenance.

## About Professional Development at IABC Edmonton

Professional Development for IABC Edmonton is managed by the Director of Professional Development, reporting to the Senior Director, Programming. This portfolio is part of the broader Programming team, which also includes the mentorship, Capital Awards, and special events portfolios. Delivering high quality and engaging professional development opportunities for our members is a key focus for our chapter every year. In addition to helping develop communicators in our city, we also believe that a strong professional development program is a key reason communicators in our city remain IABC members and a strong value proposition in attracting new members.

## Goals & Objectives

Goal / Chapter Strategy	Objectives
Promote IABC certification by offering professional development opportunities that serve to progress members towards the next level of certification. 2018-2019 PD sessions will focus around 3 main topics/themes: ethics, leadership & technology.	Deliver 4 PD sessions/events related to ethics, leadership, and/or technology.
	Sell at least 60% of tickets to each event to IABC membership.
Leverage complementary portfolio, specifically the events portfolio, to combine events to maximize value, accessibility, and attendance.	Work in collaboration with the Events portfolio to deliver at least 1 networking + PD session/event.
	Sell 90% of available tickets for each event.
Leverage past partnerships, including Digital Alberta, and ignite new partnerships, including CPRS, to provide valuable PD opportunities that raises awareness of IABC across other organizations and strengthens our communications community.	Partner with Digital Alberta to deliver a joint conference in the fall.
	Partner with CPRS on 1 PD session/event.
	Increase non-member ticket sales by 20% over last year (85 in total across all events)
Leverage our Capital Awards recipients, past presidents, and senior, accredited members whose experience and careers span a variety of industries and areas of interest.	Incorporate a past Capital Awards winner, past president, and/or a senior, accredited member in at least 2 of the PD sessions/events delivered.



## Implementation

IABC Edmonton took a collaborative approach to enhancing our PD deliverables. PD worked with other programming portfolios to include more networking, interesting venue, and input for style of sessions delivered. We tried several different formats including breakfast sessions, evening sessions, and a one day conference -- to make sure we were being as inclusive as possible for people to attend. All of our PD sessions featured a wrap-up podcast that members and non-members could access following the event.

## Program

A key part of building our plan for the year involved closely analysing our membership. Through this analysis, we determined where we would need to focus our PD events and where we could work with other portfolios to deliver targeted content and increased value to these membership groups.

- **Students & junior communicators:** we worked with our special events, student development and mentorship teams to deliver low-cost networking-style opportunities that we historically have seen resonate with this group. These events included:
  - Mentorship program and related events.
  - Cheers to Careers annual event focused on helping students and junior communicators prepare for job searching, interviewing, etc.
- **Mid-career & senior communicators:** typically supported by the organizations they work for, these groups are more likely to attend speaker-focused PD sessions with targeted learning. This was the primary focus of our more traditional professional development programming.

With our speaker-focused sessions, it was also an important focus for us to provide high quality speakers who would provide engaging talks and interactive learning experiences. We interview and work with speakers ahead of time to ensure the maximum value for our attendees.

## 2018/19 event overview

Timing	Event title	Target audience	Details
October 2018	The shifting communications landscape with MacEwan Visiting Artist in Journalism Barbara Reyelts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All membership levels</li> <li>● Breakfast format and timing appeals to senior communicator audience.</li> </ul>	In partnership with MacEwan University, this breakfast session focused on the changing media/news landscape and technological impacts on our profession.
November 2018	The Digital Tipping Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All membership levels -- for both Digital Alberta and IABC.</li> <li>● Strong potential for non-member attendance</li> </ul>	In partnership with Digital Alberta, organize a full-day conference that provided PD and networking opportunities. Partnering with an organization like Digital Alberta also provided a strong exposure to a non-member audience. Included keynote presenters and breakout sessions.
February 2019	Communication Ethics in An Information Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Senior communicators</li> </ul>	In partnership with CPRS Edmonton, we delivered a panel-based session hosted by IABC Edmonton board member and IABC Ethics Committee Chair (at the time) Romany Rzechowicz.
April 2019	Rebuilding Trust: Crowchild Trail Case Study with Peggy Chan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mid-career communicators</li> </ul>	Showcased Gold Quill Award winner Peggy Chan and her work with the City of Calgary. This event was hosted as a breakfast session.
May 2019	Strategic Consulting Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mid-career to senior</li> </ul>	Small, full day workshop session hosted by Anne



	for the Communications Professional	communicators	Marie Downey and Colleen Foster.
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## Providing value

In 2018/2019 IABC Edmonton recognized the economic challenges of the city and partnered with several associations to provide value for PD sessions, including CPRS, MacEwan University, and Digital Alberta. This gave us access to larger networks of both attendees and speakers.

Our diverse set of PD sessions appealed to different levels of communicators. We also invested in sharing how PD sessions could be applied towards achieving or maintaining certification. Our marketing looked at both the networking opportunities and the deliverables/outcomes of what attendees would learn at the sessions.

## Challenges

Edmonton was facing a challenging economic climate for some of our larger corporate memberships which led to not as much professional investment on the part of employers for their employees to attend PD sessions. Throughout the course of the year, our PD Director's diligent proactive planning as well as board support in promotions were essential to driving attendance and revenue at our events.

We also encountered some issues working with our partner for the digital conference relating to budget and work load. In future partnerships, we would take a stronger lead in the financial management of a program like this and would also strive to ensure work balance between organizations.

## Budget

Building on our goals and objectives for the year, we conservatively built our budget reflecting costs and ticket sales that IABC Edmonton would take on itself.

Throughout the year, we also pursued PD opportunities with other organizations (Digital Alberta, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)) that increased our costs and registration revenue. Though these opportunities increased our budgets, they also provided increased security as our costs were shared. As well, the promotion exposure of our events also increased, driving more ticket revenue and exposure for our chapter.

Cost type	2018/19 Budgeted	2018/19 Actual
Ticket sales	15,000	10,925.48
Event Expenses	15,500	11,349.77
Profit / Loss	-\$500	-\$424.29

## Evaluation / results

Overall we were quite successful with our goals - the lowest result being in our desire to sell-out or mostly sell-out the majority of our venues. Our PD sessions were still able to bring in revenues despite lower than expected numbers - the exception being our Digital Conference which was disrupted by our partner not maintaining our initial budget.



Due to how work was split in partnerships, we did not capture post-event survey information from all events. Here are a few highlights from the two events we were able to capture post-event survey information from:

**Digital Tipping Point Conference**

- Over 85% of respondents said this conference was Very Good or Excellent.
- Over 80% heard about the conference through IABC channels or networks.
- 100% of respondents were likely or very likely to recommend this event in the future.

**Rebuilding Trust: Crowchild Trail Case Study with Peggy Chan**

- Topic was 100% why people attended of those surveyed
- After this event respondents were 93% likely to recommend an IABC PD event to colleagues

Objectives	Results
Deliver 4 PD sessions/events related to ethics, leadership, and/or technology.	<b>Objective exceeded: we hosted / supported 5 PD sessions / events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We hosted an ethics session in February 2019.</li> <li>• We hosted a one day digital communication conference that featured how to communicate across a multitude of platforms and through a variety of mediums and new technologies.</li> <li>• We hosted an issues and crisis management PD session focused on senior communicators.</li> <li>• We hosted “The Shifting Communications Landscape” in partnership with MacEwan University that attracted comms attendees from many fields.</li> <li>• We partnered to support a leadership workshop focused.</li> </ul>
Sell at least 60% of tickets to each event to IABC membership.	<b>Objective met: Avg 66% IABC membership attendance at events.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis MGMT: IABC Members 79%</li> <li>• Ethics Session: IABC Members 56%</li> <li>• Digital Conference: IABC Members 56%</li> <li>• Shifting Communications Landscape: 74%</li> </ul>
Work in collaboration with the Events portfolio to deliver at least 1 networking + PD session/event.	<b>Objective met:</b> In March we hosted a Cheers to Careers event that featured PD opportunities as well as networking.
Sell 90% of the available tickets for each event.	<b>Objective not met:</b> we saw an overall decline in PD event attendance due to lower corporate support for ticket sales. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis MGMT: 42/65 sold = 65%</li> <li>• Ethics Session: 55/85 sold = 65%</li> <li>• Digital Conference: 103/135 sold= 76%</li> <li>• Shifting Communications Landscape: 54/55 sold= 98%</li> </ul>
Partner with Digital Alberta to deliver a joint conference in the fall.	<b>Objective met:</b> Session was executed and was well received by attendees (see survey results highlights above)

**Work Samples**

- Work sample #1: IABC Edmonton February FYI Newsletter - this demonstrates the breadth of programming and PD content we would promote on a monthly basis, pulling from all portfolio areas as well as IABC International resources.