

2019 – Chapter Management Awards Application

Chapter: IABC Manitoba

Category: Professional Development

Division 2: Medium Chapters

IABC Manitoba is one among the fastest-growing chapters in Canada, an achievement we are proud of! To ensure we maintain our steady growth, the PD team, with support from the Board of Directors, revamped our speaker lineup to include recognized business leaders across Canada such as Kellie Garret and Priya Bates.

We also reinvented our one-day conference to better reflect the needs of the Winnipeg Business Community. We based these changes on our attendee analysis from years prior where we saw a decline in engagement from Senior leaders in our membership and in Manitoba, in general.

As a result, our goals and objectives for the year included elements to not just engage our membership in Manitoba but to also elevate the experience for senior leaders that may not have considered IABC to develop their networks and knowledge before.

Goals and Objectives

Increase overall attendance by 10% by June 30, 2019, with a focus on increasing senior leader engagement.

This year our approach to PD was determined by examining trends from previous years and tracking attendance. We realized that the low engagement level from senior leaders was due to the content of our PD events. To this end, we revamped our speaker lineup and reinvented the annual one-day conference.

While several of our presentation topics resonated with senior leadership, our speakers dedicated parts of their sessions to ensure entry-mid level professionals were catered to as well. We ensured that we relayed information on future events and the importance of IABC Manitoba memberships to industry leaders by ensuring they got to meet with our senior board members at these events.

Result: Overall attendance was increased by 22% Senior leader attendance was increased by 30+% in each event.

Increase Revenue by at least \$500:

Our goal for the year may not have been the loftiest but it was what we determined to be realistic. As we began revamping our PD event, we realized that the costs of hosting out-of-town speakers were higher than the years before. Keeping this in mind, we launched higher-priced tickets to cover costs. As this was something IABC Manitoba has never experimented with, we clearly understood where the pitfalls might be.

Through research, we knew that Manitobans viewed cost as an important factor when deciding which association's PD events were worth their time. So the biggest challenge we had was to convince our audience that our events, even though more expensive than our competitors, brought value to their jobs regardless of their title. This was no easy feat but we managed to exceed our revenue goal by over 5 times.

Result: Revenue was increased by 2237.44 (447% increase)

Reinventing the one-day annual conference:

Going back to what our research and analysis from previous years, we decided that we needed to reinvent and launch the one-day annual conference. After several months of planning and securing the right speakers to cover sessions, we launched our first ever multi-session events with a mix of breakout sessions, workshops, presentation and panel discussions. With topics ranging from beginner to advanced business techniques and tactics, the conference offered value to students and professionals in various stages in their careers.

As we have brought in impressive out-of-town speakers, we focused on local communications professionals who have done great campaigns.

Our speakers

RCMP MB to discuss their Social Media Campaign Strategy - Recommended by Canada West Region Chair, Jonathan Tremblay for their work on less-intimidating and more community focused approach on social media to change their image as friendly protectors of the society. We saw that people (not just Manitobans, but also the other parts of the country love their Social Media.

Tourism Winnipeg - for putting Winnipeg back on the map in the past few years. For their work on getting MB as one of the top 10 regions to visit in 2019.

Qualico Communities - They were one of the recipients of the Gold Quill award for their work in Special Events area

Tech Manitoba - Winnipeg is soon becoming home for tech giants like Amazon, Ubisoft, as well our own startups such as Skip The Dishes and BOLD has been growing rapidly employing thousands of Manitobans, as well as bringing in international talent. CEO of Tech MB spoke about gender parity in tech industry and importance of working towards equal opportunities in the tech industry.

Result: We received a very high satisfaction rates above 80%. Attendees commends us on featuring local communications professionals who are doing great things. They liked the holistic approach of topics from social media, to events, to advertising and gender parity. Overall, it was a tremendous success, and an added bonus as Colleen from Qualico sold the audience on applying for Gold Quill! Nothing like a great testimonial from a member (not a board member or IABC promo)

Budget

We started this year strong with a \$6000 budget for all events. Depending on the venue, ticket prices helped cover additional costs for rentals and catering. Our budget includes speaker gifts and any additional expenses a speaker may be subject to such as hotel stay, per diem and parking. We usually get rental fees for venues waived by signing multi-event contracts with vendors we have previously worked with.

Revenue	October	January	March	April	Total
Revenue	2227.09	1410.28	2603.12	3237.93	9478.42
Sponsorship			750	500	1250
Total Revenue	2227.09	1410.28	3353.12	3737.93	10728.42
Meals/room/speaker fee (5*580, 1*2000)	1575.25	715.14	1121.62	2662.36	6074.37
Speaker Honoraria/gifts	23.72	75	790	150	1038.72
Social Media Promotions	20			20	40

Prizes for draws			142.71		142.71
Nametags				25.39	25.39
PayPal	71.04	43.86	68.58	97.78	281.26
EventBrite	86.29	67.64	92.82	122.93	369.68
Other					
Expense Total	1776.3	901.64	2215.73	3078.46	7972.13
Profit	450.79	508.64	1137.39	659.47	2756.29

Implementation

Year-round PD events:

At the beginning of July 2018, the board met to begin our strategic planning for the year. We discussed the boards overarching goals and areas of improvement to better prepare teams as they went into their individual planning sessions. The PD team met later that month to go over some of the goals that we wanted to achieve before the year ended.

The consensus was that our speaker line-up needed some tweaking. We need senior executives not just from Manitoba but from around the country to help elevate our sessions and truly give our members what they needed. As we started to discuss this further we realized that bringing in bigger executives meant higher costs that needed to be offset by increasing ticket prices. To ensure success of events despite higher costs we launched a heavily (40%) discounted season pass to cover our fall events. Despite several challenges, we saw incredible uptake in the season pass that resulted in over 50% of our revenue this year.

To further increase attendance, we planned to have events at various times during the day to see which resonated most with our members. Futhermore, we incorporated different styles of events such as workshops, luncheons, panels and seminars to offer members more hands-on learning at the events.

Working with Marketing and Membership, we launched two other tactics. We launched a digital strategy to promote our events through Facebook and Instagram ads and posts. We worked with Membership on an initiative to ensure the board used their contacts to personally invite senior leaders and influencers from key organizations in Manitoba. This personal touch ensured we saw an increased attendance from non-members, who made up a majority (over 60%) of our attendees this year.

One-day event:

Planning for the one-day event began in January 2019, where PD met with senior board members to brainstorm potential speakers and topics/ industries we hoped our members would prefer. It was decided that each board member would use their connections with potential speakers to personally invite them to speak. This was another perk of having a well-connected board.

Promotions for the one-day event began in March. Each post and ad highlighted a session from the day. The sessions included breakout seminars, workshops, presentations and panel discussions. Breaks were primarily used for networking and gave board members the opportunity to connect with several potential members.

Measurement

We measured our success on the basis of the following:

- Total number of attendees
- Total increase in Revenue
- Percentage of uptake in the Season pass
- Positive post-event evaluations from attendees

Results

While we didn't quite beat last year's numbers on attendance, we remained on par with them. We saw a significant increase in attendance from Senior leaders with over 50% of our attendees being from this segment. We also saw an increase in our future member attendance which made up 60% of our attendees this past year.

Our revenue goal was realized 5 folds over what we had aimed for. We even made a profit of over \$2500, despite higher ticket costs.

Our season pass was extremely successful because we released it in summer when most professionals planned their yearly PD activities. Over 25% of our attendees bought the fall season pass, which is no small feat considering this was a new tactic.

Finally, our post-event evaluation showed us that 82% of attendees were satisfied with the events. Despite the events being largely attended by non-members, 80% said they would recommend IABC Manitoba to their friends and colleagues.

Areas of Improvement

While we began planning our year in July 2018, our biggest finding was that PD needed to push timelines ahead and start planning and booking speakers in May of every fiscal year. Due to speaker cancellations and unavailability, we were only able to host 4 PD events this year as opposed to 6. Planning ahead eliminates the possibility of not being able to schedule a speaker in time due to summer vacations and prior commitments.