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For the first time since 2011, we ended the fiscal year in the black. This is a noteworthy accomplishment, after several years of needed investments in technology and rebuilding our systems in order to better serve our members.

The 2016–2017 IABC board year has been one of important advancements, valuable achievements and exciting initiatives, thanks to the incredible dedication of our leaders and members around the world. The power of this commitment to our IABC is seen across our association and highlighted in this annual report. It has been a year of positive transitions and new perspectives driving progress at the local, regional and international levels.

It has been a seminal year in terms of successfully closing out the 2014–2017 strategic plan and setting up the transition to our next three-year strategy (#IABC1720).

The primary goals of the 2014–2017 strategic plan were as follows:

“Financial recovery and sustainability is primary, as is the loyalty and development of our members and leaders and consolidating gains from the 2011–2014 strategy. Increased reputation in the profession; better brand positioning; and greater interaction with business as a revenue generator are then the big opportunity to be grasped.”

Our 2016–2017 business priorities were:

1. Member retention.
2. Technology strategic plan.
3. Strategic communication plan.
4. Strategic marketing plan.

This board year was focused on member satisfaction, achieving financial sustainability and increasing our membership retention.

It is with no small sense of appreciation and pride that we report our financial health is the best it has been in some time. This is thanks to the immense diligence of our board and staff in ensuring budget decisions are always made in the best interest of our members. For the first time since 2011, we ended the fiscal year in the black. This is a noteworthy accomplishment, after several years of needed investments in technology and rebuilding our systems in order to better serve our members. With our new technology strategic plan completed, we are positioned like never before to make data-driven decisions and thereby meet our overarching goals of providing the best in our services, support and professional development.

A key business priority for this year was improving member retention. I’m exceedingly pleased to report that over the past year we have increased retention by 10 percent. That, I believe, indicates that we are making real progress in providing value to our members in new
and improved ways. With the exciting advancements underway and the stellar new 2017–2020 strategic plan ready to launch, I'm confident we'll see continued growth in this critical area.

We have made strides in creating greater visibility as the global association for professional communicators. Among the most important achievements in this regard were our statements taking stands for diversity and inclusion, and for ethics in communication. We put a global spotlight on our Code of Ethics, as well as the IABC Global Standard of the Communication Profession with the six core principles that serve as the guideposts to communication professionals around the world. One initiative to this end was the creation of a petition on Change.org to publicly stand in support of the IABC Code of Ethics and advocate for our profession at the highest levels. The response was overwhelmingly positive and we are committed to continuing to speak out in areas where we can make a positive contribution, on behalf of our profession, in the changing social and political environments around the world. To that end, we have also made a new commitment to advancing thought leadership for our association and our profession in order to ensure IABC stays relevant in ways that matter. With forward thinking and engagement, we will strive to lead conversations that serve to better our global community.

Underpinning this commitment to advancing in this space and across our association is our new Strategic Communication Plan. Immense appreciation goes to the Communication Committee, which wrapped up its work after two years of enormous effort and dedication. Guided by this solid communication infrastructure, we will continue to distinguish IABC in the global marketplace. The ongoing development of our new Strategic Marketing Plan will provide another “hand-in-glove” tool to advancement.

On a related “increased reputation in the profession” note, we are thrilled to report that IABC has this year achieved Platinum status from GuideStar, their highest designation conferred on nonprofit organizations for excellence in standards, impact, metrics and transparency.

A true highlight of this board year has been the re-establishment of the IABC Foundation. Our Foundation Committee is leading the mission of driving communication as a force for good in business and society. It is with heartfelt appreciation that I say thank you to everyone involved in re-envisioning our philanthropic arm with a re-imagined model based on four pillars of service: Gift of Communication, Gift of Experience, Gift of Excellence and Gift of Insights.

The Foundation Committee delivered on its initial project, a Gift of Communication Toolkit, at the 2017 Leadership Institute. The toolkit provides a comprehensive resource for chapters and regions to hold a “Gift” event and help professional communicators make positive impacts in their communities. The Foundation awarded three micro-grants to deserving chapters in order to support their “Gift” events. The outcomes of these and other IABC Gift of Communication events are being spotlighted in a special Foundation celebration at the 2017 World Conference. The committee is now embarking on plans for rolling out the additional three pillars, along with the all-important fundraising plans to support these charitable initiatives created to serve our members, our communities and our profession. The Foundation needs and appreciates the support of all IABC members and leaders in order to carry out its important mission.

To say it has been a privilege to have the opportunity to help lead our IABC this year is an understatement. I appreciate beyond words the dedication and support of our members, leaders, board and staff, which make our IABC unlike any other professional organization.

You are Inspiring, Amazing, Brilliant Communicators. You are IABC. We are a community. Let’s #createconnection and make a positive impact more than ever before.

All the very best,

Dianne Chase
International Chair
Message from the Executive Director

IABC is a strong and thriving community. As we close out the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan and look to the future, IABC has made tremendous progress in programs designed to advance communicators and the communication profession.

Driving alignment

Chapters and chapter leaders are key in advancing the IABC community. We continue to fine-tune the “freedom within a framework” idea to help ensure that IABC thrives by being successful together—at every level of the organization. We’ve launched chapter leader communities to ensure that chapter leaders around the globe can share their successes, from which others can learn, and to seek support from other chapters that may be working on similar challenges.

Technology into the future

After years of underinvesting in technology, we have made significant progress in moving forward toward long-term, future-focused technologies that will serve IABC and our members well. The 2016–2017 term saw the purchase and initial phases of implementation of a new membership management system, which will significantly improve the member experience. Additionally, the IABC website was configured to make the most valuable IABC content, from Communication World articles to webinars to e-books, available to members only. Finally, we wrote and advanced a three-year strategic technology plan which lays out both the fundamental technology best practices to be followed by IABC into the future, as well as the specific technology priorities necessary on a year-to-year basis to provide for the association and our members in the most efficient and forward-thinking ways.

Membership: The value is growing

Every IABC member brings knowledge, connection and life into our community. We’ve had a busy year working to enhance the member benefits we provide. Some changes you may have noticed included: monthly free-to-members webinars, the introduction of members-only content, publication of two e-books free to IABC members (Managing the Communication Function, 3rd edition, and Give Voice to What Unites Us), special discounts for members only, and a stronger focus on current world events and how they impact the profession and communicators. We are building the critical conversations between members that will drive the profession into the future.

Every IABC member brings knowledge, connection and life into our community. We’ve had a busy year working to enhance the member benefits we provide.
We will continue to focus on always being better for members, setting standards and promoting the profession, and driving forward the opportunities for communicators to grow and thrive.

Certification: The professional standard of the future
Led by the Global Communication Certification Council (GCCC), the new Strategic Communication Management Professional (SCMP) certification was launched in the spring of 2017. We are excited to see our senior communication professionals sitting for the exam, getting certified, and setting the bar for the professional standards that define the best of communicators.

IABC Academy: Learning when you need it
Advancing on the foundation built in previous years, the IABC Academy launched some exciting programs this year. We introduced self-paced courses, in which participants can learn at their own speed and on their time table. This learn-on-your-own-schedule model allows us to provide timely education to IABC members globally. The Academy also launched Learning Paths. These groups of courses are designed to help learners develop expertise in specific areas, or to prepare for the Global Communication Certification Council certification programs.

World Conference: Convene, connect, converse
We’ve been working hard to refresh and reinvigorate the World Conference to meet the evolving needs of communicators globally. In 2017, we’ve added a World Café general session to discuss ethics in communication, a Business Leaders Forum, speed networking, and many more opportunities to meet and #createconnection. World Conference is an event facilitating the most current and relevant conversations in the profession, with a globally diverse audience that brings unique perspective to the challenges, solutions and opportunities ahead of us.

Communication World: Anticipate
With content now primarily for members only, Communication World (CW) is stepping boldly into the future. The editorial calendar has been shaped to address relevant topics that help strategic communicators develop in their careers, while also being nimble enough to speak to emerging and immediately relevant events and topics. CW will continue to evolve to be on the leading edge of thought-provoking content to help IABC members stay one step ahead to understand what’s happening now and anticipate what’s next.

We have come a long way this year, and continuing to build on the foundation we have will serve us well into the future. We will continue to focus on always being better for members, setting standards and promoting the profession, and driving forward the opportunities for communicators to grow and thrive. I am honored to serve as your executive director during these exciting times.

Stephanie Doute, CAE
Executive Director

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”
—Margaret Mead
The Road to #IABC1720

The new planning cycle was an opportunity to validate our strategic intent to stay aligned to current needs as well as project our best assumptions for the future.

As we close out the 2014–2017 strategy this year, we will build on the continuity of achievements attained. It has been a busy three years of transformation to bring IABC into the 21st century. As 2016 brought us back to black for first time since 2011, we now have the momentum to kick off the 2017–2020 strategy from a solid, forward-looking foundation.

The new planning cycle was an opportunity to validate our strategic intent to stay aligned to current needs as well as project our best assumptions for the future. So, we’ve asked throughout the planning process this year: “What will it take to stay relevant into 2020 and beyond?”

“A Recap of Our Process:
An appreciative and participatory journey

We kicked off our strategy process last fall using Appreciative Inquiry—to engage our community in creating a shared understanding of what we value most to bring forward into the future.

The International Executive Board (IEB), regional and chapter leaders assisted throughout where we:
• Held World Café sessions in all eight IABC regions via a global listening tour.
• Leveraged Leadership Institute in February for feedback on our statements of strategic intent, field tested the draft #IABC1720 framework and invited leaders to explore “Freedom in a Framework” to align their strategic plans to collaboratively deliver local value.
• Conducted interviews with global executives to gage industry pulse.
• Drew insights from a range of industry trend reports.
• Liaised across committees to socialize the strategic priorities and gain input.

We are a diverse global community—it is our greatest strength but also our greatest challenge—how to deliver relevant value across a broad spectrum of needs?

For associations, this doesn’t change at the core: It’s to continue to help members be successful in what matters most to them—supporting through education and insights, credentialing, community exchange and advocacy for the profession. What changes over time is

In my role as Vice Chair this year, it has been a privilege to lead this planning process. A note of sincere thanks to the 2016-17 board, regional, chapter and committee leaders for your time and ongoing engagement in this important work - and to our members whose commitment to professional practice makes our peer community unmatched.

—Sharon Hunter
The Road to #IABC1720

The format and content of programming—and how we create opportunities for people to access it and engage each other to learn and grow.

For communicators in a rapidly changing business landscape, it means a commitment to adapt and develop new multi-disciplinary skills and demonstrate impact on key business outcomes.

The strategic priorities emerging from our process have shown that—now, more than ever—we need to have an outcomes-focused mindset, using insights from data to inform targeted approaches to individual needs that deliver expected results.

Input on the Vision/Purpose/Philosophy statements was enthusiastic and incorporated into revisions approved by the IEB at its April meeting. These go forward for bylaw change approval at the Annual General Meeting in Washington, DC. A special thank you to Ginger D. Homan, IABC secretary/treasurer and #IABC1720 co-author, for leading this essential exercise to conclusion.

The three elements of the Purpose statement—Advance the Profession, Create Connection and Develop Strategic Communicators—form the pillars of the proposed framework for the 2017–2020 strategic plan.

As we look to the future as a professional community, IABC’s next three years will aim to advance the profession through a proactive approach to thought leadership and by supporting communicators to realize their strategic potential as business advisers to prove their impact on the organizations they serve.

The finalized plan will go for formal IEB approval at its World Conference meetings in June—where work to tie strategy to action for the 2017–18 term begins.

Vision—What we aspire to:
Professional communicators at the heart of every organization.

Purpose—Why we exist:
Advance the profession, create connection and develop strategic communicators.

Philosophy—How we operate:
IABC pledges to:
- Represent the global profession.
- Foster a diverse community.
- Focus on insights and results.
- Honor our Code of Ethics.

We will achieve this by being open, contemporary and professional.
The world is a rapidly changing place, presenting communicators with new challenges. This year we saw the introduction of new phrases into our daily lives and work such as “alternative facts” and “post-truth.” IABC took a deep dive into what these things really mean for communicators globally as they do the work of telling the stories that keep the world moving.

IABC moved quickly to reinforce our commitment to the IABC Code of Ethics, one of the cornerstones of the professional standards of communicators.

IABC took a three-pronged approach to facilitating conversations that advance the profession around these emerging issues.

1. An assessment of the impact of these issues was discussed on the IABC Chair blog analyzing these issues in terms of the IABC Global Standard of the Communication Profession, and a petition was launched to allow IABC members and non-members to reaffirm their commitment to the IABC Code of Ethics and to ethical communication. With more than 1,000 signatories from around the world, IABC’s community raised our collective voice to support the ethical practice of communication in all spheres of influence.

2. A panel discussion webinar was held at no charge to members and non-members, with more than 600 registrants, to explore ethical communication in a “post-truth” world. Communicators from around the globe gathered during this opportunity to hear from experts and pose questions for thought and discussion.

3. At the 2017 IABC World Conference, we’ll have a World Café general session for the first time, focusing on the theme of ethical communication and the challenges facing communicators in today’s world. This is a time unlike any other for critical conversations among leaders in the field to discuss, develop and advance solutions to the ethical challenges facing professional communicators in today’s environment.

We will continue to stand by and advocate for our commitment to ethics as a key practice in communication, for both the integrity of our members and for the advancement of the profession.

IABC Code of Ethics

1. I am honest; my actions bring respect for and trust in the communication profession.

2. I communicate accurate information and promptly correct any errors.

3. I obey laws and public policies; if I violate any law or public policy, I act promptly to correct the situation.

4. I protect confidential information while acting within the law.

5. I support the ideals of free speech, freedom of assembly, and access to an open marketplace of ideas.

6. I am sensitive to others’ cultural values and beliefs.

7. I give credit to others for their work and cite my sources.

8. I do not use confidential information for personal benefit.

9. I do not represent conflicting or competing interests without full disclosure and the written consent of those involved.

10. I do not accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.

11. I do not guarantee results that are beyond my power to deliver.
This has been the year of rebirth and re-imagining of IABC’s philanthropic initiative, the IABC Foundation. The Foundation was reinvigorated to serve our mission to drive communication as a force for good in business and society. Dating back to 1982, the IABC Foundation was established as a charitable, nonprofit organization with a mission to support strategic initiatives that advance the practice, perception and effectiveness of the communication profession around the world.

The Foundation has now been reestablished with four pillars to serve as the infrastructure for the work of the new Foundation Committee, which is dedicated to carrying out the mission and making a positive impact for the good of our communities and our profession.

The committee will provide strategic guidance and execute the activities of the IABC Foundation. Specifically, the committee will address the four pillars as part of the revitalization plan.

The star of the Foundation’s efforts to date has been the annual Gift of Communication event held by at the World Conference and the “Gift” programs held by chapters and regions around the world. Working with nonprofits, volunteer communication professionals provide advice and counsel to help organizations address their most pressing communication challenges. Our IABC volunteers donate their time and expertise to provide professional development for nonprofit communicators who work every day to improve the quality of life in their communities. It’s social responsibility and professional development at its best. This past year saw growth in the number of volunteers and leaders engaged with hosting their versions of the Gift of Communication in their areas.

Marking the end of its first year as the reinvigorated IABC Foundation, there is truly inspiring work in progress and much more to come. The support of our communication community, in terms of volunteer leadership and financial donations, is vital to success.

“It was a different way to put my communications experience to work. I love that I was able to help such a great organization, and I learned so much.”

– IABC Gift of Communication participant
The Global Communication Certification Council (GCCC) introduced the Strategic Communication Management Professional (SCMP) certification this year. Designed for those who have been in the profession for 11 or more years, this certification sets the standard of communication excellence for the senior practitioner.

“Lifelong learning is challenging but rewarding. You need to push yourself to try new things, think creatively and put yourself in different situations. [Certification] helps ensure professional development and learning becomes part of your ongoing career planning.”—Kris Dundas

To be eligible to sit for the exam, candidates must have 11-plus years of professional experience, 20 hours of training in the preceding two years, and a letter of recommendation from mentees or an organization for which the candidate has done pro bono work making senior-level contributions to communication.

For more information or to apply for Communication Management Professional (CMP) or SCMP certification, visit GCCCouncil.org.
Groups of Regions

**Council of Regions**

- **Africa**: 4 chapters
  - Africa Region Conference held in Cape Town
  - Gold Quill Blue Ribbon Panel held in Pretoria
  - Chair: Carol Allers, ABC, APR
  - Past Chair: Daniel Munsow

- **Asia Pacific**: 14 chapters
  - APAC mini-conference held at the 2016 World Conference
  - Gold Quill Blue Ribbon Panels held in Melbourne and Sydney
  - Chair: Rajeev Kumar, Ph.D., ABC
  - Past Chair: Leanne Joyce

- **Canada East**: 8 chapters
  - Launched new IABC Canada website in partnership with Canada West region
  - Successfully ran an enhanced Silver Leaf Awards program co-chaired with Canada West
  - Chair: Sara Taylor
  - Past Chair: Rob Plant, ABC

- **Canada West**: 6 chapters
  - Home to the International Chapter of the year, IABC Calgary
  - Gold Quill Blue Ribbon Panel held in Vancouver
  - Chair: Jennifer Wah, ABC, MC, IABC Fellow
  - Past Chair: Kathleen Bell, ABC

- **Europe, Middle East & North Africa (EMENA)**: 9 chapters
  - Regional conference, Eurocomm, held in London
  - Gold Quill Blue Ribbon Panel held in London
  - Chair: Nikki Edwards
  - Past Chair: Klavs Valskov

- **Heritage**: 18 chapters
  - Heritage Region Conference and mini-Leadership Institute held in Columbus, Ohio
  - Silver Quill Awards
  - Chair: Amy Miller
  - Past Chair: Mary Bogan

- **Pacific Plains**: 14 chapters
  - PPR Leadership Institute held in San Diego
  - Gold Quill Blue Ribbon Panels held in Chicago and San Francisco
  - Chair: Ed Kamrin, CMP
  - Past Chair: Kim Arnold, ABC

- **Southern**: 26 chapters
  - Host of 2016 World Conference (New Orleans) and 2017 Leadership Institute (Dallas)
  - Regional conference, Connect16, held in Atlanta
  - Chair: Chip Bush
  - Past Chair: Julie Ludwig, ABC
For the first time since 2011, we ended the fiscal year in the black. This is a noteworthy accomplishment, after several years of needed investments in technology and rebuilding our systems in order to better serve our members.

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Financial Summary

US Dollars

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<th>Revenues and Support</th>
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“It took a community of dedicated people to achieve this step toward financial recovery. Thank you to everyone who invested their hearts and time to make IABC stronger.”

—Ginger D. Homan, ABC Secretary/Treasurer
It is with no small sense of appreciation and pride that we report our financial health is the best it has been in some time. This is thanks to the immense diligence of our board and staff in ensuring budget decisions are always made in the best interest of our members.
Thank you to our IABC Champions who referred their peers to join IABC during October 2016 and March 2017.
The IABC International Executive Board (IEB), committees, regions and chapters work together to achieve our goals, while increasing our reputation within the profession through better brand positioning and greater interaction with the broader communication profession.

Those who served this past year:

**International Executive Board 2016–2017**

Dianne Chase, Chair*
Sharon Hunter, Vice Chair*
Michael Ambjorn, Past Chair*
Ginger D. Homan, ABC, Secretary/Treasurer*
Olivia Gadd*
Zora Artis, GAICD
Shannon Frederick, ABC
Sherry Kennedy
Alain Legault
Daniel Munslow
Michael Nord
Jill Vitiello

*Executive Committee

**Executive Director**
Stephanie Doute, CAE

**2016 Executive Board Committee Chairs**

**Ethics Committee**, Connie Mayse
**Finance Committee**, Ginger D. Homan, ABC
**Audit & Risk Committee**, Olivia Gadd
**Investment Committee**, George McGrath, IABC Fellow, Past International Chair
**Nominating Committee**, Michael Ambjorn
**Foundation Committee**, William Briggs, Ed.D., IABC Fellow
**Policy Committee**, Victor Zalakos
**Credentials Committee**, Jennie L. Lamb

**2016 Programmatic Committee Chairs**

**Awards Committee**, Lynn Barter, ABC
**Fellows Committee**, John Deveney, ABC, IABC Fellow, APR, PRSA Fellow
**Editorial Committee**, John Clemons, ABC, IABC Fellow, APR, Past International Chair
**Program Advisory Committee**, Sarah McLaughlin, PMP
**Academy Committee**, Allison MacKenzie, MBA, MA Comm, ABC
**Certification Council (GCCC)**, Terry Cerisoles, CMP
**Council of Regions (COR)**, Sharon Hunter

**Task Force Chairs**

**Membership**, Deborah Hinton
**World Conference**, Stacy Wilson, ABC

**IABC Leadership by the Numbers**

- **14** IABC Staff
- **12** IEB Members
- **9** COR Members
- **223** Committee Meetings
- **15** Committees
- **112** Committee Members
- **772** Chapter Leaders
- **102** Chapters
- **102** Chapter Leaders
A special thank you to Jennie L. Lamb in College Station, TX, USA, for laying out our 2016 Annual Report.

Email her at jenniellamb@gmail.com, or follow her on Twitter @jenniellamb.

Thank you to Anne Lyons for completing a tone of voice re-write of the IABC Policy Manual during this year.
Driving communication as a force for good in business and society

2016 Annual Report