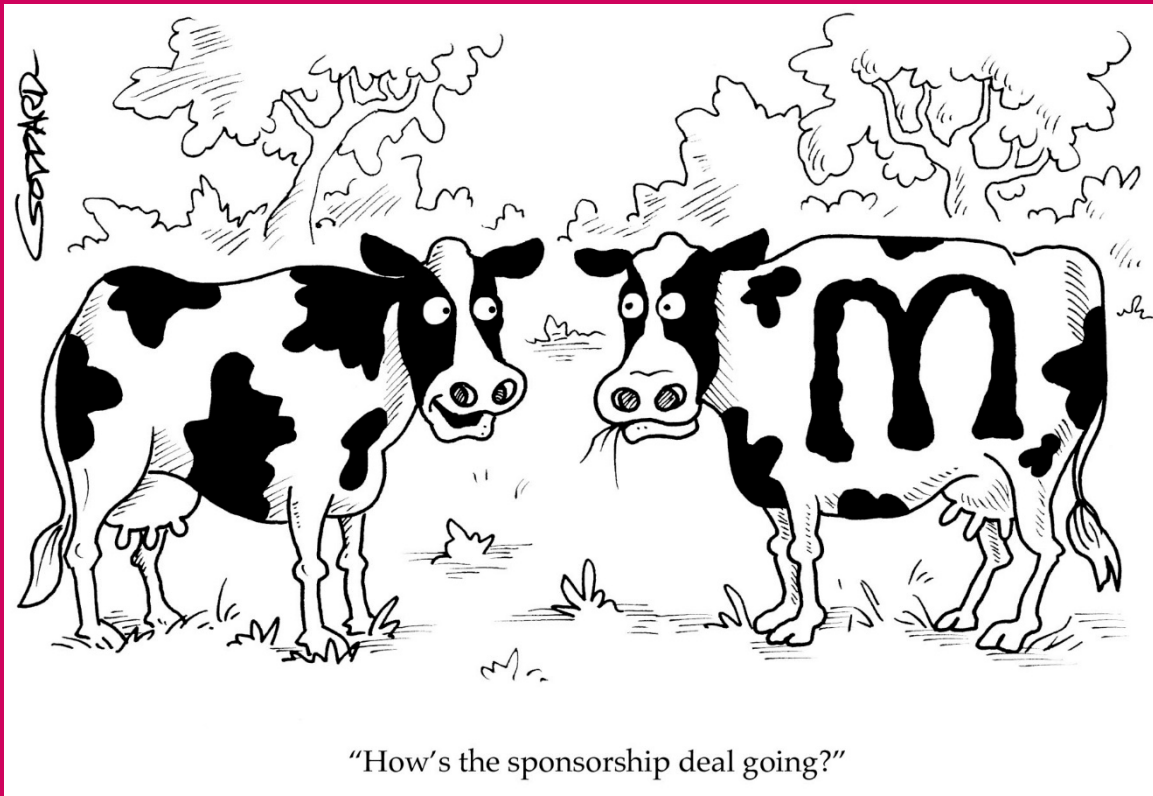


Revenue Generation Ideas for Association



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to read our *Ideas for Generating Revenue into Your Association* paper.

In this paper you will read about a broad range of income generation ideas designed to inspire and motivate you to dramatically increase revenue into your association. Not all ideas will be appropriate for everyone and it is up to you to choose those that are most relevant for your organisation.

Financial sustainability can only be ensured with diversified revenue streams, judicious financial management, effective leveraging and creative pricing strategies. Through using selected strategies learned from this workbook we hope to provide you with some of the tools to achieve this.

Warm regards,

Belinda & Julian

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

BELINDA MOORE

Belinda Moore is passionate about associations, charities and other not-for-profit organisations - and the critical role they play in fostering a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and sustainable society.

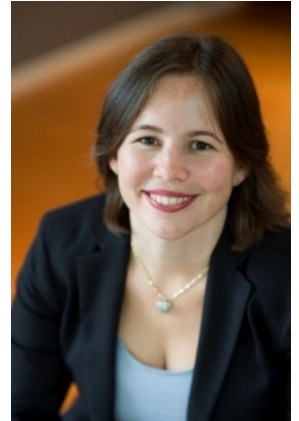
Belinda has been involved in the sector in a wide variety of capacities since the early 1990's. She is Australasia's foremost membership specialist and has assisted thousands of member-based not-for-profit organisations with their challenges. She specialises in training, motivating and up-skilling boards, staff and volunteers to improve membership performance.

Belinda is the author of two books including *The Membership Machine*, *Membership Fundamentals* and *The Membership Managers' Handbook*. She is the author of the popular paper "Membership is Dead?" which forecasts future trends for member based organisations.

Belinda frequently presents at conferences and other events around the world. She arrives on the platform armed with an array of topics relating to membership. Revealing insights from her personal and professional experiences, she ensures that participants walk away with practical ideas and information that can immediately be applied.

In 2015 Belinda completed a two-year project to successfully turnaround the Australasian Society of Association Executives. Over that time, Belinda took the organisation from 135 to 876 financial members and built a community of over 10,000 subscribers. When Belinda started at AuSAE their turnover was just over \$40,000 per annum. On her departure, it was well on track for a turnover over 1 million dollars.

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JULIAN MOORE

Julian is Australasia's foremost non-profit sponsorship practitioner specialising in charities, associations and other non-profits.

Julian specialises in training, motivating and up-skilling boards and staff to improve sponsorship performance. His work predominately includes sponsorship coaching, sponsorship seeking, in-house training and facilitation, and keynote speaking. He draws on his extensive experience in Australia and the United Kingdom to deliver sponsorship outcomes for clients.

Julian is also an accomplished and entertaining speaker who regularly presents at conferences and other events around the world. Throughout his presentations he gives real world examples and case studies that inspire and motivate attendees. He focuses on providing practical and useful ideas that can be implemented immediately to start benefiting your organisation.

Julian also assists his clients through his extensive network of contacts within the corporate sector. Over his years working in the field Julian has developed close relationships with many sponsors and has a large database of corporate sponsors.

Julian can be contacted on +61 401 648 533 or julian@smsonline.net.au.



ESTABLISHING STRONG REVENUE STREAMS

1. **Tangible value is critical.** Create products that deliver compelling, tangible value to your members. If you haven't created something that is going to make a significant positive difference to members, then keep working. To ensure you are creating the right product for your members take the time to understand what their issues are – what are they worried about, what things annoy or frustrate them. Talk to your members (don't just email or post survey them). Develop products that solve member problems.
2. **Determine if the members will use it.** When considering a new service, or reviewing your existing services, it is important to find out if your members will use it. Do not ask them "Is this product a good idea?". Invariably the answer will be "Yes". And unspoken will be "for someone else". Instead ask your members "If we were to launch this new service, would you start using it within the first month?" and "Is the offer compelling enough for you to move from your existing provider?". The time taken to get honest feedback from members is well worth it as it will usefully inform decisions about a product's viability and revenue generation potential.
3. **Quality over quantity.** You are better to have fewer, more compelling, services than a large suite of services. There are many associations offering benefits members never use. This is a huge waste of time and resources – and can adversely affect membership as it makes it difficult for members to see the useful products.
4. **Leverage from new or existing products.** Take the time to fully explore how you can leverage maximum revenue (and member benefit) from each new or existing product. For example, you may run a series of seminars on a new piece of regulation. This could also be run as webinars, personal briefings for Boards, consultancy, or tools to assist with managing changes. It's limited only by your imagination.
5. **Ensure you only deliver high-quality services.** If you cannot deliver a planned or existing service to a consistently high standard, then you should consider other options. Your members trust their association to deliver the best possible products and services and, in most cases, will happily pay to ensure that quality. Do not breach that trust, and risk the subsequent non-renewal, by implementing a product or service you cannot effectively deliver.
6. **Stage the implementation of new revenue streams.** When looking to expand your revenue streams, choose those that will generate the biggest impact most efficiently first. Implement one major new income stream at a time. Focus on getting it working successfully before moving to the next. Good income streams need time, attention and resources to succeed. Bring each in gradually, and only add others once the previous one is operational or deemed unviable.
7. **Use Non-Member Pricing.** Ensure you maintain a strong price difference between members and non-members to consistently convey – and deliver – value to members.

Other Ideas

PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORSHIPS

2016 has seen a continuation of the strong trend towards fewer partnerships, of higher value, over a longer term with a strong element of exclusivity. Sponsorship is dying and partnerships are the new black. Partners want real inclusion in your organisation – not a logo on your website. And the use of Gold, Silver and Bronze levels is dead.

8. **Focus on long term partnerships rather than one-off sponsorships.** Traditionally associations have focused on “one-off” sponsorships (e.g. for a single event). This creates a need for the association to continually be seeking sponsorships, often from the same organisations. Sponsors then see a call from the association as “yet another ask for money”. The relationship becomes very transactional in nature. One-off sponsorships are often also ineffective for the sponsor, as a “one-off” sponsorship opportunity doesn’t give the sponsor the opportunity to generate a tangible return from the market you represent. This can lead to sponsors using more hard-sell tactics to make the most of a limited opportunity. In contrast, long-term partnerships offer:
 - a. A longer term, structured approach to generate significantly higher returns for all parties.
 - b. With fewer, higher value, partners to service, a higher level of service can be provided. With the higher level of service, better outcomes for the partner sponsor can be achieved and a better retention rate of sponsors is likely.
 - c. Once your program is established the need to constantly “sell” is greatly diminished. The focus moves to servicing existing partners in a way that will build and maintain a good relationship.
 - d. Associations can approach potential partners strategically to better ensure they are dealing with reputable partners whose approach is consistent with their organisational culture and values.
 - e. The ability for partners to generate better economies of scale on their own costs related to the partnership as well as the ability to have a more strategic approach to the opportunity.
9. **Get Board and staff support for your partnership program.** For your partnerships to be successful organisational support is required. Get it early.
10. **Focus on fewer, higher value partners.** A single partner whose payment represents most of your income is high risk. Having many small partnerships is costly and ineffective. Instead focus on having fewer, carefully selected, partners.
11. **Create a compelling sponsorship proposal.** Potential sponsors don't sit at their desks all day waiting for your proposal to arrive on their desk. For many, sponsorship is one part of a larger role which keeps them very busy. This means your proposal isn't just competing with other sponsorship proposals (of which there will be many) but also for a share of their attention. Having a well-crafted, compelling partnership document is a critical first step in getting the attention of a potential partner. A good proposal is a particularly useful step where little or no prior relationship exists with the potential partner. A compelling proposal can be an invaluable tool for enticing the other party to the table by making them excited to learn more about you. For more information download the SMS Whitepaper called “*Creating a Compelling Sponsorship Proposal*” from www.smsonline.net.au.
12. **Price your partnerships appropriately.** Set your pricing at a level that does not undersell your value. If you are a route to market for a product that will generate \$5 million dollars for the partner, ensure you apply a price that reflects the value of your offer.
13. **Exclusivity is important.** Partners are looking for some element of exclusivity in their agreements. This is a significant requirement for most potential corporate partners.
14. **Tailor how you contact prospective partners.** The way you contact a potential partner will depend on the size of the partnership you are seeking, your profile in the industry or profession, whether there is a prior relationship with the prospective partner, and whether you have a current sponsorship program. For a very high value proposal, where you have produced a written proposal designed to excite the potential partner (rather than one that contains all the details, terms and conditions) then your proposal should be merged and issued to a carefully chosen target database along with your tailored cover letter. For lower value proposals, you should not send out your proposal in the first instance. Instead, send a brief, tailored email designed to get your prospective partner excited about investigating the partnership further.

15. **Follow up your initial contact by phone.** It is important that your proposals are followed up by phone 7-10 days after they are issued. Therefore, you should only send out your proposals at a rate you can easily follow up. When you follow up your proposal on the phone, the purpose of the call is to excite the potential partner about the opportunity your organisation represents for them while remembering not to oversell the opportunity. Keep it succinct, to the point and clearly explain what's in it for them. This purpose of this call is to secure a meeting. The only time making the sale across the phone is likely to be effective is for advertising, exhibition booth sales, or one-off smaller sponsorship opportunities, it is not appropriate for high value partnerships.
16. **Make your first partner meeting about the partner.** The purpose of the first meeting is NOT to tell the potential sponsor everything about your organisation. Instead the purpose is to ask questions to learn more about what the sponsor is trying to achieve, what marketing channels work most comfortably for them, and what their idea of a "successful" partnership looks like. The first meeting is your opportunity to build a genuine relationship with the individuals in the other organisation and seriously evaluate whether they are the right partner for your organisation. Every meeting is different but, to enhance your success, remember there is no such thing as "small talk". The "get to know the other person" stage of the discussion is vitally important. If the individuals in the room have common ground, then it is more likely discussions will be successful. Successful high-value partnerships are best built on a solid foundation of genuine personal relationships.
17. **Use the Application Form approach to shorten the buying cycle.** By incorporating an application form complete with terms and conditions into your Partner Prospectus you can greatly shorten the buying cycle. People are very geared to fill in application forms and just accept the terms and conditions – which are as binding as they would be in a contract form. Had you submitted the same terms and conditions via a contract, it would be sent to their solicitors to review. For a sample copy of the Application Form style of partnership prospectus please email info@smsonline.net.au.
18. **Seek to secure longer term partnerships.** By setting up partnerships to continue over more than a single period you can secure the income and focus on generating the return.
19. **Offer additional proactive marketing options.** As part of your package with partners incorporate options for more proactive marketing of the partner offer for an additional fee. That may include: phone calls to new and existing members to make them aware of the offering, direct mail and/or email opportunities, mentions via social media channels.
20. **Measure return on investment.** It is important to establish how you will be measuring the return on investment for the sponsor. Ask them "How will you measure the success of this arrangement?" Ensure they are measuring appropriately (e.g. you should be measured by the number of qualified leads not sales). Then gear all your reporting to the partner to reflect their KPIs. This information will be invaluable. It will become the focus of discussions when renewing or on-boarding sponsors. And, in our exceptionally competitive sponsorship industry, it will set you apart from the competition in a very positive way.
21. **Service your partners.** Once the partnership has been implemented it is important to put in place a robust servicing program. This incorporates: Regular return on investment reporting and regular personal catch-ups. Cultivate relationships between different people from each organisation to minimise the risk caused if someone moves roles.

Other Ideas

AFFINITY PROGRAMS & WHITE LABELLING

An affinity program is a product or service delivered by a third party that is aligned with your brand. White labelling is where you put your branding on a product being delivered by a third party to make it look like your own.

22. **Insurance programs** – Association Insurance programs have a long and successful history of generating strong income streams for associations. There are a huge number of insurance companies and brokers who would pay you a small sponsorship to meet your members. However, recently one organisation has decided to focus on association business. Association Insurance provides solutions for both the association and its members. Part of this incorporates a commission on all transactions with members back to the association. They will also help to actively market this program to achieve the greatest take up by members possible. For more information contact Drew Fisher at Association Insurance (www.associationinsuranceaustralia.com.au).
23. **Auto Tender.** Auto Tender is an online portal offering the cheapest cars in Australia – way better than fleet discount. This means you can now offer your members exclusive access to the cheapest cars in Australia. Auto Tender will build a web page with your brand that will look as if it is part of your website. Your members can use this service for free. For each vehicle sold, and any finance taken, you generate a commission. This is a simple to implement and free solution that, if promoted effectively, could be generating upwards of \$50,000 per year. Also, if your staff and members are eligible, they can deliver a salary packaging solution that will save your staff and members thousands a year in tax. They will also compare your existing salary packaging solution to ensure you are obtaining the best deal. For more information contact Todd Kerr at Auto Tender (www.autotender.com.au).
24. **Amazon Online Bookstore.** If you have an organisation whose members are heavily reliant on books for continuing professional development, then an Amazon Online Bookstore can generate a great passive income stream. When you set up the service you have a website carrying your brand with the products and services you want to sell. Members can order from the site, and Amazon will deliver. You generate income from both the advertising and product sales. Income varies from 4% to 10%. For more information check out www.affiliate-program.amazon.com.
25. **Credit Cards.** For organisations that have more than 4,000 members, a credit card option may exist. This is where a credit card provider will offer beneficial interest rates and other benefits to your members for a credit card that bears their name and your logo. The benefits of this are: members receive low interest rates, no annual fee, etc. And every time a member uses the card you receive a small trailing commission on the purchase. It is also a great retention tactic as, every time a member uses the card, they get a reminder about the value of membership.
26. **Hotels.** Many hotels run affiliate programs. The best of which are still mediocre. Essentially, they offer corporate rates to your members and you receive a small commission each time one of your members stays the hotel. However, if you have a large group of members who are travelling frequently, and you can save them money every time they stay, then this can be a well-used program that can generate a small but steady income. Particularly if you have selected a hotel partner popular with members. Last minute hotel booking sites such as bookings.com and hotels.com also run affiliate programs.
27. **Merchant Facilities.** Merchant facilities are often a loss leader for banks, however with the rise of internet gateways, people such as eWAY and Ezipay are now reaching out to retailers. Essentially they provide a machine to receive credit card payments that is WiFi enabled. This enables a retail environment to use online payment gateways – and get your members a huge reduction in the cost of their merchant facilities. It is common for them to offer a small commission for all members who sign up. In addition to this income stream, you can use it as a powerful tool to recruit and retain members as, if you have members who make many low value transactions per day, their merchant fees could be in the tens of thousands per annum. A small change in the percentage they pay could see them easily save their membership fee.

Other Ideas

MEMBERSHIP

28. **Membership fees.** Many organisations price their membership fees well below what is appropriate. If your retention rates are high, there is generally a good amount of price elasticity around membership fees. Consider either restructuring your membership fees or even just implementing a membership fee increase. More information on structuring membership fees is provided in the “Membership Managers’ Handbook” that will be emailed to delegates after the session.
29. **Membership Upgrade Campaigns** – If you have both individual and bundled/organisational memberships there may be an opportunity to run an upgrade campaign. About 5 months prior to renewal, offer eligible individual members the opportunity for a free trial at the organisational level, ensure you add all possible contacts to the record and have an active communication plan in place. At renewal time, issue the renewal at the organisational rate. For those who don’t renew at the higher rate, you can follow up the additional contacts directly for individual membership.
30. **Membership Renewals – Move to a single date** – this will make the membership renewal process a campaign. You can reduce costs, produce more effective reports, and optimise the time and financial resources you have available.
31. **Membership Renewals – Have multiple points of contact** - Start sending renewal notices out three months before the membership lapses. This gives members many opportunities to re-join before personal follow-up needs to take place. For instance, if a member's renewal date is 30 June, the process will be:
 - a. 1 April - Renewal Notice
 - b. 1 May - Reminder Notice
 - c. 1 June - Urgent Reminder Notice
 - d. 1 July - Resigned Notice
 - e. 15 July - Telephone Call
 - f. 15 Feb - "We want you back" reactivation mailer
32. **Membership Renewals – Follow up lapsed members by phone** - If the invitation to renew doesn’t reach the member then revenue is unnecessarily being lost. Ensure your database is up-to-date prior to renewals. Start your renewal process early and then ensure you contact non-renewers within two weeks of their membership lapsing by phone. If you don’t have the resources to undertake outbound calls to lapsed members, consider outsourcing to an association specialist outbound call centre. For more information about outsourced calls contact Colin Perry at Optimum Contact (www.optimumcontact.com.au).
33. **Membership Renewals – Police the use of your logo.** Audit resigned members to check and see if they are still using your logo. Optimum Contact recently did this for a client and found 15% were still promoting their membership. This provides a good reason to reconnect with the lapsed members to encourage them to renew.
34. **Member Re-Activation Campaigns.** Messaging for past members who are still valid prospects for membership is quite straightforward – ask what’s changed. When you consider that research shows 50% of non-renewal rates have nothing to do with you, running a campaign to past members who haven’t renewed in the last 3 years can be effective. A well-crafted letter, followed up by a phone call work very well.
35. **Move Members to Direct Debit.** Allowing members to pay by direct debit will increase your retention rate. When you create a situation where people need to act in order not to renew (e.g. give notice in writing that they do not wish the direct debit to continue), then retention will go up. Each year you send a notice letting them know the new fee for the year and letting them know that the direct debit will continue at the same or a higher fee level unless the member notifies you in writing that they wish to resign.
36. **Leveraging from partners who service your target market.** When partners send mail (invoices, catalogues, etc.) to people who fall into your target market, see if it is possible for you to insert material into their mail out or have them send out marketing on your behalf. This gives you cheap access to a clean, targeted database. This is most effective if your mailer contains a compelling offer with a strong call to action.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

37. **Suppliers Guides or Directories.** Suppliers Guides and Directories are an often-overlooked benefit to members and partners and can offer huge value. There are many options for directories such as a list of members or suppliers to the sector/profession. These can be offline or online. You can sell the directories themselves as well as advertising and/or listing in them. Many people enhance the value of their directories by also including content (e.g. a technology suppliers guide could incorporate steps to putting together a request for proposal). You can outsource the development of supplier directories to contract publishers such as TMPC (www.tmpc.com.au).
38. **Branded merchandise.** Branded merchandise is often only seen at conferences however, if utilised correctly, you can stand to make a good profit. When Amnesty International first launched in the UK with quite strong views they released a line of t-shirts just with their logo. Those t-shirts, after 12 years, generate them millions of pounds per annum in revenue. Do you have a sexy logo that can go on mugs, pens, caps, clothing, etc? Clever use of merchandise can be a great way to engage with youth. Consider the power of the FCUK brand. For merchandise supply we use www.execugifts.com.au. There are online services that will enable you to set up your own online store to sell your own branded products e.g. www.merchify.com.
39. **Mobile apps.** Mobile app providers are currently spending big on sponsorship. If there is an app for your profession or industry, then it would be worth approaching them for a partnership. In terms of app development, if you have something truly different and appropriate for a mobile lifestyle then it is worth considering and could be lucrative. However, few associations have had huge success. If looking to design an app you can get it done cheaply through using services like www.fiverr.com (an auction site for service and creative work).
40. **Certification and/or accreditation programs.** Professional certification, trade certification or professional designation, often called simply certification or qualification, is a designation earned by a person to assure qualification to perform a job or task. Accreditation is the process in which certification of competency, authority or credibility is presented. It represents an opportunity for an association to increase revenue and provide a valuable service to members and the industry.
41. **Management consulting.** In the early stages of a business, or when a professional starts their own practice, they have a significant need for information and advice. This represents an opportunity to provide a valuable, revenue generating service. E.g. for those in health and allied health, a practice management consultancy service can be both lucrative and a strong member benefit.
42. **Industry research.** Having good research into your profession or industry makes you more valuable to industry partners and gives you credibility. Often partners will fund this research, particularly if they can get access to the raw data to undertake further analysis. Undertaking ongoing research is a key part of building a sustainable partnership program. Once research has been undertaken Industry reports can be sold as a product.
43. **Art Union, Lotteries, Competitions with fee to enter.** Many associations seeking to raise funds are utilising Art Unions, Lotteries and Competitions. While these are governed by different legislation in each state, it can be quite lucrative if you have the right prize and good marketing.
44. **Industrial Relationship, Human Resource Management and Workplace Health and Safety advice.** If you have members who are small to medium businesses, this kind of service can be invaluable. While larger organisations will have in-house departments to call on, your association can provide them with the ability to outsource that function. Many associations provide a baseline level of service free as part of the membership, then charge a fee for service for in-depth advice and assistance.
45. **Career services including jobs boards.** Career services are a great way to provide tangible support to members. This often includes a jobs board. You need a jobs board to be comprehensive but you also need to generate revenue. Consider allowing basic listings for free but make an enhanced listing (complete with inclusion in an emailed job alert) available at a higher rate. You may also provide services such as resume assistance, placement services and career advice.

46. **Mentoring programs for members.** Structured mentoring programs are growing in popularity as they provide a way to effectively engage with younger members to deliver tangible value. With an effective combination of mentee fees, sponsorship and possibly government grants, mentoring programs can become revenue generating – whilst also improving retention rates. For more information about mentoring speak to Alex Richardson at Art of Mentoring (<http://artofmentoring.net/>).
47. **Mentoring programs for staff of members.** Industry and professional associations can white label mentoring technology and resources to on-sell to their Corporate Members to generate revenue. For more information about mentoring speak to Alex Richardson at Art of Mentoring (<http://artofmentoring.net/>).
48. **Online communities.** Successful online communities have a significant impact on member recruitment and retention. However, they can be difficult to implement and significant resources need to be invested to create momentum.
49. **Resource libraries.** Online resource libraries that provide a range of free information with other publications available to download for a fee can create a small but steady revenue flow.
50. **Group purchasing discounts.** Group purchasing discounts work when you actively engage members in the process. E.g. ask your members if they would switch from one provider to another provider if you could show a substantial savings. When negotiating with potential suppliers you can aim for a very good deal for members as well as an income stream back to the association. Keep in mind that outsourced group purchasing discounts are often not very effective as they are not customised to your membership and the outsourced provider keeps much of the income stream.
51. **Industry guidelines.** An association’s role is to professionalise their industry or professional and make their members more successful. Taking an active role in setting best practice industry guidelines will give your members an advantage over non-members. Particularly if adherence to those guidelines is attractive to the customers of your members (e.g. Master Builders Association). Income to be generated off this is both in membership fees but also in products and services that will assist members to adhere to these guidelines. In addition, partners who will benefit from the introduction of these guidelines will often be willing to financially support the organisation bringing them in.
52. **Technology Hub.** When you have members, clients or stakeholders who have mental conditions such as Alzheimer’s, Asperger’s, Autism, companies such as Hewlett Packard and Microsoft have tech hub requirements for these niche groups to be involved in computer program training. These individuals constantly rank at the highest level of programmers in the world with a substantially higher output. There is income to be generated if you can take on a program that actively connects these corporates with this kind of talent. See <http://makezine.com/2011/09/15/hps-hacking-autism-initiative/> as an example of one of these programs.
53. **Services for Clients of Members.** Implement services that members can supply to their clients. E.g. You may have day care centres as members. You could set up an arrangement with an automobile club where they will go into the day care centres and train parents on installing car seats. The centre can then generate an income stream for hosting the events.

Other Ideas

EVENTS AND EDUCATION

Associations with dynamic and engaging event programming are much more likely to be successful than others. It is critically important to the success of your events calendar that all elements of your event are optimised.

Types of Events

54. **Choose styles of events appropriate for your members.** Experienced professionals may prefer smaller, discussion orientated gatherings while other members may prefer webinars. There are a massive variety of event types to choose from, e.g. pinnacle events (small, senior-level events of up to 12), workshops, symposiums, state conferences, national conferences, online events, webinars, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, executive briefings, exhibitions, etc.
55. **Be open to change.** A Sydney based association undertook member research and found the single biggest issue they were having was the time commitment required to fulfil the CPD requirements. So they cancelled the annual conference and instead ran a full day event. It runs from 8am to 6pm with no breaks – but food and drink is available in the foyer all day. What makes this event so popular is that a member can attend and obtain all the CPD points for the entire year. Being open to change enabled the creation of a new type of event that was more successful than any run previously.

Registration Fees

56. **Ensure your fees are commercial.** It is tempting to assume that a low price will generate more delegates. But it will also affect your ability to generate a quality event. You are better to price at a commercial rate and provide tier pricing to enable those who genuinely can't afford it to attend.
57. **Implement a VIP Registration Fee.** To enhance your registration income, implement a VIP registration that comes with a range of free perks. Many VIP tickets incorporate the ability to "meet and greet" key performances or speakers before or after the event.
58. **Provide a "skip the line" registration option.** For events with a large general admission with competition for the best spots a "skip the line" registration option can be popular.
59. **Bulk Registrations.** Identify those organisations that have the capacity to send a large number of people to your events. Approach these organisations in a very personal way to secure their registration early. This enables you to secure large registration income and delegate numbers as early as possible.

Event Logistics

60. **Budget conservatively.** Have a clear budget for your event. Be conservative on income estimates and generous on estimated costs. Ensure your events are geared to generate a good surplus to minimise risk and ensure sustainability. Report against your budget regularly.
61. **Use data to ensure appropriate destination decisions** – The decision to hold an event at a destination shouldn't be left to the Board. It should be made using data, e.g. where will attract the most delegates, hotel room availability, competitor event programs, ease of access, cost to exhibitors.
62. **Pick appropriate venues.** Make sure your venues are interesting, convenient and practical. Things like parking matter and will affect your registration income.
63. **Get financial support from your destination** – Talk to the local destination marketing or convention bureau to find out what they can offer to entice you to bring your event to their venue.
64. **Accommodation - Room blocks.** Ensure that you adhere to deadlines to release room blocks if it looks likely the blocks won't be filled. Otherwise you may find yourself liable for a large, unplanned, cost.
65. **Accommodation – Commission.** Ensure you have negotiated a commission on hotel rooms booked because of the event. While some hotels no longer offer commissions to anyone but Professional Conference Organisers, many others will still provide a commission if asked.

66. **Staffing.** Events, particularly conferences, can be costly from a staffing perspective. Use volunteers to share some of the workload. You can use existing members as greeters, or engage with institutions who have hospitality or MICE courses to source students needing work experience.

Formats and Programming

67. **Use relevant formats** - Tailor your formats to the needs and learning preferences of your delegates. E.g. younger people like the content and may require introductory information. More experienced people may prefer highly interactive discussion based events.
68. **Review the frequency, duration and timing of events.** Consider what's happening in the lives of your members and ensure your events calendar is structured to account for these.
69. **Use strong differentiation mechanisms** - Differentiate your event from others so your events become known as something special. Embedding "money can't buy" experiences is an excellent way to do this.
70. **Create awesome content.** There is a lot of competition for events. To ensure you generate substantial paid registrations, the content of your event must be superb. Your content should be both informative and delivered well. Become known as the organisation that always has the best speakers who provide genuinely useful insights to delegates. If running a conference, your opening speaker should be excellent and set the tone for the event. Your closing speaker should be a drawcard who will prevent people leaving early. Share the program as early as possible to attract more registrations.
71. **Use strong engagement mechanisms of your events.** Ensure your events incorporate mechanisms to build your members' community and get members interacting with each other. This may include social media through using an effective hashtag, having an event twitter handle and having an event group of Facebook and/or LinkedIn. For expert advice on leveraging social media, speak to Mel Kettle (www.melkettle.com). This can also help to enhance sponsor and exhibitor outcomes.
72. **Webinars/Webcasts.** You can then leverage from this content. Recording sessions and making them available "on-demand" for a fee after the event. Redback Conferencing helps their clients to do this. (www.redbackconferencing.com.au)
73. **Livestream your content.** Livestreaming some or all your event enables you to widen the pool of potential registrants and gives you more sponsorship and advertising opportunities.
74. **Digital information sales.** Make videos, audio + presentations and/or conference papers from the event downloadable for a small fee.
75. **Merchandise.** Merchandise sales at the event.
76. **Books.** Have a bookshop at the event. You can offer space to a bookstore or publisher specialising in your profession/industry as a special rate or on a percentage of books sold.

Event marketing

77. **Segment your messaging and channels.** Different market segments will be motivated to attend your event for different reasons. Increase registration revenue by segmenting your event marketing. Utilise different channels and messaging. Younger people, and those new to a profession, will be more interested in educational outcomes. More experienced people will be more interested in who they are going to meet. With such different outcomes desired, segmentation of event promotions is critical.
78. **Target past delegates.** Provide special marketing to past delegates of this event and other events. People tend to be "attenders" or "non-attenders". Someone who has attended before is likely to attend again.
79. **Outbound calls.** Don't rely on email and hard copy collateral to generate delegates and sponsors. Get on the phone, or engage a call centre, to get the word out about the event. For more information about outsourced calls contact Colin Perry at Optimum Contact (www.optimumcontact.com.au).
80. **Use Magazine Inserts – Not advertising.** If you have a magazine, or access to a relevant publication that goes to prospective delegates, put your program into the magazine as a loose insert. Don't just reproduce it within the pages of the magazine as it won't be as effective.

81. **Market your conference to non-members** - Getting non-members along gives you extra income (due to the higher non-member price) as well as a chance to showcase the benefits of membership and to meet potential members face to face.

Generate Members from Your Events.

82. Pre-Event
- a. During the planning process
 - b. On your collateral
 - c. Via online registration process
 - d. Via offline registration process
 - e. By segmenting your marketing
83. During the Event
- a. Use your staff & volunteers
 - b. Train your staff & volunteers
 - c. Create buddies
 - d. Use visual indicators for new and prospective members
 - e. Get the other delegates involved
 - f. Testimonials (don't forget video testimonials)
84. After the Event
- a. Event evaluations
 - b. Event marketing
 - c. Integration into membership campaigns into past event participants

Sponsorship.

85. **Utilise as many sponsorship opportunities as appropriate.** 60 opportunities for sponsorship at every event. The question is not whether I want to be sponsored, but instead how much intrusion will I allow. The kinds of things that have been sponsored include: naming rights, newsletters, emails, CDs, DVDs, breakfasts, dinners, lunches, awards, speaking rights, research, hotel door keys, memory sticks, juice bars, programs, scholarships, bag inserts, registrations, exhibition booth, dinner tables, logos (almost anywhere), banners, lecterns, AV equipment and staff, accommodation, hotel rooms, delegate bags, internet lounges, elevators, refreshment breaks, water bottles, special events, keypads, table gifts and centres, pamper zones, fireworks, entertainment, cars, boats, planes, speakers, Tweets, WiFi and phone charging stations, toilets (with toiletries), shoe shine, VIP lounge, mobile app, and more.
86. **Separate exhibition and conference sponsorship.** Structure your conference sponsors and exhibition sponsors differently. You can have an overarching headline sponsor, then an exhibition sponsor and a conference sponsor. Beneath each of those are bundled packages. This gives you the opportunity to have three major sponsors instead of the normal one. Don't offer gold, silver, and bronze. Instead maximise your sponsorship revenue by bundling opportunities tailored to the needs of the potential partner.
87. **Target sponsors for your CPD programs** – Partners love CPD programs. Not one-offs but entire project series. A partner can then pull from a range of funding options. And CPD gives them the opportunities to influence an audience. This is a particularly good option for all types of medical and related.
88. **Leverage sponsorship with media involvement** – Linking your event to media can be very attractive to potential sponsors. E.g. the keynote speaker will be making an announcement to the media so the main sponsor has their logo on the backdrop.

Exhibitions

89. **Have a variety of exhibition sponsorship options.** Exhibitors like options that let them stand out - flags from ceilings, projection onto exhibition hall walls, enhanced signage on shell schemes, different coloured carpet to denote different areas of your conference, and engagement strategies (massage, build a bear, charging stations, virtual reality sets, coffee bars, etc).
90. **Optimise your exhibition floor plan.** Use a creative floorplan to maximise valuable space and minimise dead space. Do this though removing line of sight. Central to your exhibition should be an attraction (information desk, entertainment, food and beverage). Where you have a dead area, create activity (e.g. a video game). Traditional corridor floorplans restrict the opportunity to increase booth pricing as it doesn't enable you to control foot flow. Historically driven by exhibition companies that just wanted to sell shell schemes.
91. **Maximising Foot Flow.** Companies such as Nomi produce monitoring systems for foot flow in exhibitions and retail spaces. These monitors will allow you to show live data to your exhibitors showing how many people have walked past their exhibition stand. You can also combine this data with a key identifier (e.g. mobile phone) so you also know who. This information is helpful when pricing your exhibition booths.
92. **Leverage additional sales when the exhibitor books.** On the exhibition contract list the additional sponsorship opportunities to give them the opportunity to purchase them at the same time as booking their booth.
93. **Use a passport to generate foot flow and leverage additional income from the event.** A passport is when you provide all delegates with a card that includes the names of some or all your exhibitors. To enter the draw for a major prize the delegate must get all selected exhibitors marked off. A good prize is essential for the passport to achieve its goal of getting delegates engaging more effectively with exhibitors. You need to train exhibitors on how to manage delegates wanting their passport stamped. You can charge exhibitors extra to go onto the passport.
94. **Sell ad space to those potential exhibitors who can't attend.** Some organisations won't be able to attend but will be interested in ad space in your conference collateral. For those unable to make it to the event offer them this opportunity.
95. **Use testimonials and referees.** Use existing sponsors and exhibitors to gain new ones by having them provide written or video testimonials or act as personal referees attesting to the excellent value to be obtained from participating at your event.
96. **Offer multi-year rates.** Offer multi-year rates for exhibitors to lock them in long term. Ensure exhibitors understand that early booking gives them first choice of booths (e.g. a special pre-release for early bookers).
97. **Undertake and leverage from delegate research.** Conduct research from the point of registration and throughout the event. Questions can cover things such as their stage in the buying cycle for a product or their opinion on a specific issue. This kind of information is hugely beneficial to sponsors.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLATERAL

98. **Seek long term advertisers for communications and collateral.** Seek a long-term partner who will advertise on a variety of both online and offline channels. Leverage fewer partners for a higher spend will both maximise their return as well as your time and potential income.
99. **Sponsored social media posts.** Offer sponsored Twitter tweets or Facebook posts to trusted partners. To understand the value of your Twitter followers, visit <http://www.sponsoredtweets.com/> to find out how much people would be willing to pay to access your like. For expert advice on leveraging social media, speak to Mel Kettle (www.melkettle.com)
100. **Ensure all communications have a clear offer, call to action and deadline.** This goes for prospective member kits, new member kits, event promotions, and promotion of products and services. Give people a reason to act – and act quickly.
101. **Mailing list rental.** Create a limited number of times each year that a trusted partner can send a communication out via email or post to your members and other stakeholders. If doing this, it is important that you include the necessary messaging that demonstrates you haven't provided members' details to a third party. List rentals upwards of \$5,000 per time are quite common even for smaller to medium sized organisations.
102. **Maintain a Blog** – Blogs can create a variety of benefits for an organisation including generating revenue. A full list of reasons can be found here <http://www.melkettle.com/2016/11/benefits-of-blogging-for-business/>. A popular and engaging blog can provide you with a springboard to get a variety of information to members and other stakeholders that will lead to increased revenue in many ways.

Other Ideas

FUNDRAISING AND GRANTS

103. **Community fundraising.** Community fundraising, such as bake sales, a-thons, parties, chocolate sales, can be useful for smaller non-profits or those seeking avenues to enable their members to become actively involved in fundraising. You can read a very comprehensive list of community fundraising ideas – and specific opportunities - on the Fundraising Directory website <http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au/>.
104. **Planned Giving.** Many non-profit organisations use the term “member” when the intent of the use of the membership structure is to build a relationship with “supporters”. Those organisations have an excellent opportunity to leverage existing members into a planned giving style of structure.
105. **Donations.** Some associations actively solicit donations from members. As few have Deductible Gift Recipient Status, this isn’t common. For this to be successful you need to have a very clear purpose whose successful attainment will have a tangible and significant impact on members. E.g. You may solicit donations from members towards a fighting fund to oppose proposed legislation. You can learn more about good fundraising practices on the Fundraising Institute of Australia website <https://www.fia.org.au/>.
106. **Bequests.** It is not uncommon for members to leave a bequest to their industry or professional association in their will. While there is rarely enough justification to undertake the significant investment into a formalised bequest program, associations can take steps to subtly make members aware of the opportunity to leave a bequest to the association.
107. **Corporate Social Responsibility.** Many corporate entities offer corporate social responsibility programs that are independent of their sponsorship programs. It is worth looking at the websites of major corporates to find the area where they speak about their CSR initiatives as there may be funding available to you.
108. **At risk sectors.** Most corporate security companies (e.g. man-guarding, alarms, private security services) aren’t big enough to take on structured CSR programs. Instead, when seeking to implement CSR initiatives they will provide security services and equipment services. Having these kinds of programs can assist them when tendering for large corporate conference. For non-profits who require security for their clients, this can represent a significant cost removal.
109. **Grants.** Broadly speaking, there are three types of grants. Government grants (offered at a Federal, State and Local level), Corporate grants (e.g. Optus), and Foundation grants (offered from a not-for-profit set up to distribute money). One of the hardest parts about grant seeking is finding grants that are available to your organisation. An organisation called Strategic Grants offers a service where they will provide you with a calendar of all grants available to you, as well as information about submission deadlines. You can find out more information about the calendar on their website www.strategicgrants.com.au. For more information on grant seeking you can also visit the Philanthropy Australia website which has many tools for grant seekers. <http://www.philanthropy.org.au/>

Other Ideas

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 110. **Database Management** – Ensure your database is up-to-date to ensure you are not wasting resources by contacting people at old addresses (which also means missed opportunities to have that member renew).
- 111. **Cashflow Management** – Follow up your debtors. Consolidate your loans to reduce interest fees. Ensure that any surplus cash is in the most advantageous interest generating position possible (within your risk profile). Take advantage of discounts for early payment. Otherwise pay on the due date to optimise the interest you generate from the money in your account.
- 112. **Use your assets.** If you have spare space in your office, consider subletting. If you have a venue space, then considering making that available for people who wish to hire it for their own meetings. If you have cash in the account consider options for generating a higher return from that cash.
- 113. **Actively look to create efficiency savings** - Part of creating a sustainable association is not just generating income. It is also about managing your money wisely and identifying areas where costs can be reduced without affecting member satisfaction. Often just a few dollars’ saving per member can make a huge saving in the medium to longer term. Opportunities to generate efficiency savings will vary between associations, but it is worthwhile to review where your money is currently being spent to ensure you are still receiving the best price. Common areas to review are payment methods (e.g. moving to BPay can generate substantial savings on processing and receipt issue costs), printing costs (savings can be gained through aggregating all your printing to a single supplier), and event and accommodation expenses.
- 114. **Implement technology that streamlines your processes and optimises your income generation.** Good technology is a vital part of recruiting and retaining members. Well-planned and implemented technology software and hardware can enable significant reductions in service costs, increases in service standard, and enable greater surplus to be generated from membership. Even for those on a tight budget, effective and low cost solutions such as Wild Apricot (www.wildapricot.com) are available. Calum from Converge Website Design (www.convergedesign.com.au) can assist with Wild Apricot set-up in Australia and New Zealand.

 **Other Ideas**
