

# advancing organizations to greatness.

**Association Headquarters** specializes in helping non-profit organizations achieve their mission, create value, and advance their causes, industries, and professions.



ASSOCIATION  
HEADQUARTERS

We provide full-service, hybrid, and project services to more than 40 national and international associations and non-profit organizations. Our specialists focus on custom solutions such as strategic planning, technology assessments, website builds and database integrations, accounting, HR, non-dues revenue growth, meetings and events management, and award-winning marketing and communications. We help your organization achieve greatness.



# red chair philosophy

Association Headquarters was founded in 1978 and since 2015, the red chair has been a beacon of AH's unwavering commitment to supporting, achieving, and celebrating the non-profit community. Associations, societies, and credentialing bodies are doing great things to better society and our job is to support them on their journey to greatness, remembering to pause and celebrate when they've achieved it, and be with them as they press on confidently to their next success.

The red chair symbolizes our client partners' seat at the table. It is where they sit while they write their story, make a difference, and advance their mission and cause. Our seat at the table is where we enable them to be their best.

Our clients' stories are our stories.

**We don't build rockets or cure disease, but we enable those who do. That's the red chair philosophy.**

# WHAT IS AN association management company?

An association management company (AMC) is usually a for-profit firm made up of professionals from various specialties (non-profit management, meeting management, public relations, accounting, etc.) that provides management services to volunteer associations on a fee-for-service basis. The AMC provides the professional staff, administrative support, office space, technology, and equipment an association needs to operate. The AMC staff works as the association's staff, helping volunteer leaders develop and execute the strategies and programs to serve their membership. The AMC industry is more than 110 years old. Today, there are more than 600 AMCs worldwide.

At the heart of AMCs are passionate and knowledgeable professionals who champion your strategic objectives and cultural values. Make a smart choice for your organization by partnering with us.

## WHAT BENEFITS DO AMCS PROVIDE?

- AMCs are usually owned/operated by former or current association executives
- Owners and key personnel are very familiar with the challenges of association management
- AMCs have staff who are expert in niche areas and usually have more experience in their given field than the candidates associations could hire on their own
- AMCs can provide associations the expertise they need only when they need it based on the concept of shared resources

- The cost of this experienced support is more affordable for associations because personnel costs are split across an AMC's client base
- AMCs provide organizations economies of scale through shared office space, equipment, and supplies costs

## WHO SHOULD CONSIDER HIRING AN AMC?

More and more associations are turning to an AMC for management because they can turn over the administrative hassle and day-to-day management to someone else and they get more valuable expert support to help direct their strategic operations. An AMC can work with any association during any part of the association life cycle, from start-up to well-established organizations. Some examples of associations who can work with AMCs are:

- Volunteer-run organizations that need help with management
- Organizations looking for more expert guidance in formalizing best practices and procedures
- Organizations looking for administrative or other types of support to complement their existing staff
- Organizations looking for a full service partner

## HOW CAN AN AMC SAVE MY ORGANIZATION MONEY?

*On page 8, you will find an AMC cost savings calculator. This tool is meant to serve as a starting point to deciphering where your spend and revenue lie and how an AMC can significantly lower costs and bring in additional non-dues revenue.*



# management services

BY THE NUMBERS

**3%**

year-over-year average membership growth rate of AH client partners

**25%**

average percentage of annual revenue made up by meeting registration

**81%**

average retention rate of AH client partners

Tasked with implementing organizational strategy in addition to maintaining daily operations, executive leadership is a crucial part of association success. The executive leaders at AH are business leaders who provide the guidance, foresight, and strategic operational support associations need to thrive. But, they're much more than business leaders: they're association leaders, having earned the Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), and who understand the unique challenges, regulations, and opportunities associations face.

## BOARD & VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Partnering with AH's Executive Management team allows board members to relieve themselves of the day-to-day responsibilities of running an organization and focus on advancing their missions, while also providing the business guidance and direction to propel the organization forward.

Your board is made up of the people who have achieved greatness in their respective fields and are ready to make a more impactful contribution to their field as a volunteer leader. Associations depend on the power of volunteerism to advance their causes, but when volunteer leaders lack experience, forward momentum can be lost. AH's Board Management & Operations consultants help volunteer leaders achieve greatness for their associations through proven best practices that develop high-performing, strategic boards.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Education and training are the cornerstone of associations. By developing and providing learning opportunities, associations drive value for members, advance their industries, and set professional standards. AH's program management professionals make it possible for associations to deliver leading-edge educational

programming that pulls together experts from across AH's content, technology, leadership, and credentialing teams.

From instructional design to materials development, speaker training, certification management, and our award-winning use of technology, we maximize the impact and potential of your education programs. Understanding that innovation is key to engaging audiences in new and different ways, we bring our best ideas forth to help your association establish the benchmark for excellence in your industry.

## MEETING MANAGEMENT

The event management team at AH includes Certified Meeting Planner (CMP), and Certified Exhibit Manager (CEM) professionals, who leverage our combined negotiating power and partnerships with hotels, CVBs, A/V companies, and other industry vendors who make our client partners' meetings a success. Our approach first brings together great minds across AH including meetings, sponsorship and exhibit sales, website, marketing, design, and public relations professionals to strategize and plan for a next-level event. Keeping our client partner's goals in mind, we develop a solution that fits in their budget while also focusing on growth and innovation for the association. We consistently deliver memorable attendee experiences and elevate our client partners' events year after year.

## VIRTUAL/HYBRID EVENTS

AH experts also have the necessary experience in planning virtual and hybrid events and includes Digital Event Specialists (DES). Events range from multi-day, multi-time zone events, covering topics such as scientific lectures to interactive, live equipment demos. Our relationships with virtual event platform providers and our knack for creating a unique and interactive experience is what sets us apart. AH understands the

expertise needed to host a hybrid event and what it takes to make the event successful on-site as well as virtually.

## MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Members are the lifeblood of associations, and membership recruitment is a vital process to keeping an association alive and relevant. Whether your association is dealing with low membership or is eager to drive interest in new member segments, AH can help create and execute a winning plan.

We understand that membership is a sales process that requires a comprehensive plan for success. Our multiphase approach begins with evaluating the marketplace, taking time to understand your association's role and the value of membership. We also assess the various audiences you may or may not currently be engaging. This is a critical point in the process, as associations may need to reevaluate their position in the industry or even their membership models to accommodate new or changing audiences. In a final phase of the membership recruitment process, we develop a tactical approach to engaging these new audiences and ushering them through the membership process.

When you encourage a member to renew their membership, you're really asking for loyalty. That loyalty translates into membership retention: a critical measure of an association's health. High member retention rates are always the goal, though some associations struggle with creating and executing on a dedicated membership retention plan that helps them maintain their valued members.

There is no one-size-fits-all membership retention plan. Each association has a different culture with members who value different things about the organization. AH works with client partners to create and implement successful membership retention plans that highlight what members value most and aligns with the unique culture of the association.

## COMPONENT MANAGEMENT

Keeping local members engaged and bringing members with similar-interests together is a large part of what keeps associations moving forward.

Making sure that chapters and SIGs have the materials and (sometimes) funds that they need in order to succeed can be a challenge for association volunteers to manage.

AH currently manages 40+ associations, many of which serve chapters and SIGs as a main part of their member benefits. This results in dedicated staff time to managing the activities,

marketing, communications, the sub-committees within each group, financials, and more. AH staff makes the operations and growth of our client chapters a priority so that they can continue to bring awareness to the national organization on a local level.

Chapter models are not a one-size-fits-all concept and AH works to make sure that your groups get the attention they need to grow and thrive while improving the bottom line of the national association as a whole.

## CERTIFICATION MANAGEMENT

Certification is used as a proxy for ensuring excellence and industry relevance in today's changing business environment. Maintaining an accreditation or certification body demonstrates an organization's skills and expertise in its subject matter and its advancement as a professional leader. Associations offering credentialing demonstrate dedication to being the best in their industries through examination.

AH's certification management team maintains the exceedingly high level of professional and business skills required for effective management of a certification body, such as foundational and advanced knowledge of the test development process, implementation of the eligibility requirements, advanced customer service, and certification data management. After more than 15 years managing credentialing bodies, AH has helped manage a wide range of certificants, from 400 to more than 30,000 certificants.

AH partners with an exam development and maintenance vendor that helps secure the most qualified subject matter experts to develop an exam blueprint, handle question writing, and pilot and beta test. In addition to development, they nurture the evolution of exams to ensure organizations' certifications continue to be the best gauge of professional competence and remain sought after in their industries.

## CUSTOMER & MEMBER SERVICES

From exams to membership renewals and meeting registrations, we understand that these interactions are more than just transactions — they're the foundation of a positive relationship with members. As the first association management company to achieve Platinum Certification by the Customer Service Institute of America (CSIA), AH emphasizes building and maintaining a positive experience for certificants through one of our favorite core values: customer service.

AH's award-winning customer service teams provide knowledgeable support that goes above and beyond, providing your constituents with the most positive experience possible.



# marketing & communications

BY THE NUMBERS

**3%**

average year-over-year event attendee growth

**22,000**

total readers accessing AH client partners' digital publications annually

## INTEGRATED MARKETING

As the in-house marketing and communications agency of an association management company, AH's MarCom team is uniquely positioned to strengthen relationships with members and communities, elevate brands, and deliver the most effective customized strategies for associations.

AH's MarCom Department staffs experts in event and membership marketing, brand awareness, design, content development, publishing, digital marketing, video, and public relations, allowing us to offer a diverse range of the latest marketing and communications solutions.

## EDITORIAL & PUBLICATIONS

In an ever-changing media landscape, AH's content and publishing experts help your association evolve to create content that connects, engages, and leads. Working with an organization's board, volunteers, and staff, we develop a deep understanding of the association and its audiences, identifying where and how to deploy content for maximum reach. We help shape a winning content strategy, create captivating content, and deliver content across the most effective channels for your association.

As a multifaceted editorial team, we focus on publications and publishing strategy, providing guidance and consulting on everything from editorial calendars to committee management, vendor contracts, and digital publishing. Our content team focuses on strategic content development for blogs, visual communications, newsletters, emails, and more, maximizing your content's potential across audiences and channels.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Great design isn't just a well-balanced page or a colorful take on annual meeting materials. It's connecting with your audience through visual

storytelling. Graphic design has the ability to make viewers feel your message in a fundamental way, conjuring emotions that go far beyond the page.

Our diverse team of graphic design pros specialize in visual storytelling for associations. They not only create and maintain client brands but strive to remain innovative and provide eye-catching designs for membership campaigns, conferences and events, logos, websites, social media, infographics, publications, annual reports, and much more. They weave your association's story through all aspects of your visual communications. And, because we specialize in working for associations, we're sensitive to our client's budget and time constraints and strive to deliver quality design for every budget.

## DIGITAL STRATEGY & VIDEO

Digital marketing is the must-have marketing tactic every organization needs, but establishing an effective strategy can be overwhelming for a medium that's constantly changing and evolving. AH's Digital Marketing Strategy team does the work for you, with in-depth knowledge of platforms, options, and data analysis. From industry-specific keyword research to drive content development and strategy, to highly targeted social advertising campaigns, elevate your marketing with AH's Digital Marketing Strategy experts.

Screen time is the new content marketing, with audiences viewing hundreds of millions of hours of videos daily. AH's in-house video production experts can help your association stand out with explainer videos to public service announcements, event videos, and everything in between. We film, animate, edit, and consult on video projects exclusively for associations, allowing us to have unique perspective on how to best connect with and engage members and prospects across the association landscape.

BY THE  
NUMBERS

**95%** increase in non-dues revenue  
for first-year client partners



# non-dues revenue

## SPONSORSHIP, EXHIBITS, AND AD SALES

Increasingly discerning sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers seek partnerships that allow them to connect in innovative and meaningful ways with associations' specialized audiences. While there's always room for the tried-and-true proven strategies that yield results for associations and their industry supporters alike, AH's Industry Relations team strives to provide highly customized, niche opportunities that set our client partners apart and make them a sought-after ally for supporters in their respective industries and fields.

AH's proven consultative, relationship-based approach generates results. We do not operate under a transactional sales model. On the contrary, we approach every opportunity with sensitivity and creativity and we craft solutions that are specific to the mutual needs of the association and its partners.

## CORPORATE MEMBERSHIPS

Corporate memberships represent a unique opportunity for associations to meet their financial goals through innovative membership models. And yet association staff may be hard-pressed to focus their membership recruitment efforts on cultivating the relationships that lead to lucrative corporate members. AH's Industry Relations team leverages a winning personalized approach to generate corporate memberships, frees up association staff to focus on operational excellence, and edges your association closer to success.

AH's Industry Relations team provides the market assessment to ensure your corporate membership program is competitive, guides the development of corporate membership programs that are both attractive and beneficial for both member and association, and builds custom prospect databases to maximize the reach of corporate membership programs. Our experience in a wide range of industries and our focus on working with membership organizations allows our client partners to benefit from our unparalleled expertise in corporate membership sales.

## MARKET ANALYSIS

A market analysis allows you to identify problematic areas that need improvement, so that an action plan can be developed to address and correct them. A good market analysis helps nonprofits to gain a truly in-depth understanding of their industry and/or field and membership as it relates to maximizing commercial support for their annual events and other multi-channel integrated assets.

Having a strategy in place for how your organization plans to bring in non-dues revenue begins with understanding your market and knowing who and what your assets are. An assets inventory is an audit of all current and potential opportunities poised for monetization and the pricing strategies and benefits development that will resonate with the market and drive mutual value.





**16 million** total dues revenue in one year



# technology solutions

## WEB SERVICES

Widely considered the “front door” of an organization, a website is a critical tool to convey your association’s identity to visitors. AH’s Technology Solutions team designs websites that immerse website visitors in a stimulating experience through an aesthetically appealing website while also providing a user-friendly and highly functional platform to share information, manage memberships, and connect throughout your association.

In addition to custom website design, AH’s Technology Solutions team is able to enhance the member experience by integrating with association management systems (AMS) to create customized functionality for member directories, volunteer portals, resource libraries, digital badging, and more.

Our phased web-design process leads us through three primary stages: discovery, in which we analyze current assets and how their use may align with our goals; design, during which we present creative and research-based designs optimized for a positive end-user experience; and development, where the proverbial rubber meets the road and we fully implement our design solution.

## DATA MANAGEMENT/AMS SUPPORT

Data can be polarizing. Done well, data is a treasure trove of information waiting to be interpreted. Done poorly, it can be the bane of an association executive’s existence and drive members away. AH’s Technology Solutions team ushers client partners through every aspect of data management and association management software (AMS) support to foster a more painless relationship with the vital data you need to run your organization.

Whether you struggle with database structure and understanding how to use your existing system, or require a large-scale data transformation project, AH is able to facilitate and guide you through the process. Following an examination of your mission, vision, strategic plan, and internal processes, the AH Technology Solutions team can help you determine what technology to invest in, how to use it, and how to customize the systems. We ensure that client partners’ investment in technology creates positive member experiences and increases efficiency in operations and communications.



# human resources

Associations are all about people; their collective knowledge and talent are vital to advancing industries and causes all over the world. We understand the value of people, and make it easy for associations to focus their time and resources on strategic endeavors while our human resources (HR) team handle all aspects of staff and employee management.

AH’s full-service HR team provides recruiting, on-boarding, payroll, benefit administration, and even providing safe and respectful office space for association employees. We can help limit employer-related liability by assisting with certain government reporting, unemployment claims management, and wage claims and audits.



# 60,000+

number of members of AH  
client partners worldwide

BY THE  
NUMBERS



## financial services

### FINANCIAL REPORTING & ANALYSIS

With such complex financial needs, financial reporting and data analysis is a task best left to the professionals. Compiling accurate and complete financial data is just one part of your organization's financial story. Interpreting and understanding the context of what those numbers mean is where that story comes to life.

Let AH's financial services professionals, including several Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), handle the heavy lifting when it comes to your association's most important information. Our in-depth financial reports provide visibility and clarity into the financial health of your organization in clear, concise terms, while our data analysis helps you understand the numbers that drive your association. Make more informed decisions with the support and guidance of AH's financial services team.

### OUTSOURCED ACCOUNTING

An association's financial needs are complex, but the ability to maintain a full accounting department of highly qualified accounting professionals is often out of reach for many associations. In addition, staff changes on small teams can lead to knowledge loss, affecting business continuity and the safety and security of financial information. From financial management to tax requirements, payroll, reporting, and payment processing, AH provides a full range of outsourced accounting services.

In addition, we provide the information and guidance to help you understand the numbers that drive your organization. Our secure, cloud-based systems make reporting easy and transparent, providing visibility and clarity into the financial health of your organization in clear, concise terms. Allow AH's accounting professionals to crunch the numbers so that your efforts can be spent where it matters most, working toward your association's goals and mission.



## consulting services

Where is your association headed? Have you had inspiring ad hoc conversations with other board members but have yet to document and start moving the association in an exciting new direction? Or, maybe you're a few years into a plan and need to take stock and make adjustments. No matter where your board is headed, AH's strategic planning experts can help you get there.

In addition to strategic planning, some of the consulting engagements AH has experience in include operational assessments which provide

recommendations on an organization's people, processes, and technology; chapter development including facilitating strategic discussions, launching a component structure and training chapter leaders; mergers and acquisitions by facilitating the due diligence process and business planning required for a change; volunteer training and development where our experts perform one-hour to multi-day trainings to review board and committee responsibilities and best practices, governance requirements, board development, volunteer management, and other topics of interest to volunteer leaders.

# AH is a cost-effective solution for associations

According to the American Society of Association Executives' Annual Operating Ratios Report, on average, associations spend approximately 57% of their annual revenue on expenses that would be covered under the management fee. On average, AH's client partners spend approximately 40-45% of their annual revenue on management fees. Use this simple grid, along with your most recent IRS Form 990, to determine what your organization is currently paying.

Operating Expenses	Amount
Compensation of Key Employees	
Other Salaries and Wages	
Pension Plan	
Other Employee Benefits	
Payroll Taxes	
Fees for Services (management)	
Office Expenses	
Occupancy	
Total Operating Expenses (that would be covered under management fees)	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	
% of Revenue spent on Operating Expenses (Expense/Revenue)	

Explanation	Current Amount	Calculation	Increase/Savings
<b>NON-DUES REVENUE</b>			
<b>Advertising</b>	AH clients realize between 45-95% growth in non-dues revenue in the first year of working with our Industry Relations team. The IR team works on a performance basis and the percentage varies depending on total revenue & whether the supporter is existing, new or returning but assume 20% average commission. For calculations, assume a conservative net increase of 16% in non-dues revenue (45% growth – 20% commission).	Current Amount * 1.16	
<b>Exhibit</b>		Current Amount * 1.16	
<b>Sponsorship</b>		Current Amount * 1.16	
<b>CONFERENCE EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Audiovisual</b>	Typically, we negotiate 10-20% discounts, assume 15%	Current Amount * .15	
<b>Exhibit Contracting</b>		Current Amount * .15	
<b>Food &amp; Beverage</b>	Typically, we negotiate 5-10% discounts, assume 7.5%	Current Amount * .075	
<b>FINANCIAL FEES</b>			
<b>Bank Fees</b>	Client bank accounts are structured to leverage our overall relationship and amount of funds held with the bank. As a result, our average bank fees are \$450/year	Current Amount – \$450	
<b>Credit Card Processing</b>	Our negotiations have resulted in payment processing charges being less than 2.05% for Visa and Mastercard transactions (which are 60% of the transactions). Typically, associations are paying 3-4% (assume 3.5%). Assume 41% savings on 60% of current cost.	Current Amount * .60 * .41	
<b>Printing</b>	Based on longstanding vendor relationships and volume of AH's printing needs, recent negotiating efforts have yielded savings of 30% on average	Current Amount * .30	
<b>TOTAL INCREASED REVENUE + COST SAVINGS</b>			

Beyond the potential operating cost savings, partnering with AH would allow your organization to increase revenue and decrease expenses in several areas by leveraging our buying power. Use this spreadsheet to calculate how your organization could further improve its bottom line.

AH may also be able to save your organization on insurance expenses through a partnership that can, at no additional cost, evaluate your current coverage, identify possible gaps in coverage, and potentially reduce costs.

Beyond the financial benefits that would result from partnering with AH, your organization would also benefit from the efficiencies, innovation, flexibility, expertise, and customer service culture that AH brings to every client partner.

**what every  
association  
needs.**



**Call** 856.439.0500 • **Email** [inquire@ahint.com](mailto:inquire@ahint.com) • **Visit** [associationheadquarters.com](http://associationheadquarters.com)

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