

The Worst of Times? Recession-Proof Strategies for Associations

“Strategies for Challenging Times”, the inaugural Association Masterclass organised by MCI Dublin, attracted over 80 association leaders from Ireland and earned excellent ratings from participants.

The masterclass featured a panel of expert speakers and was the perfect opportunity to present MCI Dublin’s White Paper on challenges and opportunities for member-based organisations. The paper offers 6 strategies to “recession-proof” an organisation:

1. Make tough choices

It’s a time to precisely define local market relevance and evaluate whether current

member services and products correspond to the present need.

2. Demonstrate value

It is important to position your organisation accordingly, placing a strong emphasis on the specific ways in which membership is your member’s best ally during recessionary times.

3. Make membership a necessity

Where feasible, your organisation could seek new standards for its sector, such as obligatory professional education or a requirement to be accredited to your organisation before practising in the profession.

4. Focus on retention

Organisations should spend as much, if not more, on retaining current members as generating new ones. Regular communication with members is at the essence of a successful retention campaign.

5. Pare costs

All organisations should be exploring ways to do things differently and to be more focused on creating quality, and relevant product and service experiences that empower members.

6. Diversify income streams

Faster, better, cheaper! Look closely at your cost base and optimise all cost cutting measures at your disposal. Take time to fully audit and review all expenses across the organisation – printing, insurance, rental etc. Then take advantage of strong competition to review or renegotiate terms.

Many associations are simply not big enough to both run a business and deliver top-level content to their stakeholders. This is why outsourcing should be seriously considered so that the services uniquely and irreplaceably provided by the organisation to its stakeholders – i.e., the content and thought leadership – can be delivered seamlessly without the burdens of administration.

Now is the perfect time for strong leadership that willingly embraces change. We should use this critical time to think out of the box, empower and motivate staff, focus the level of urgency, review existing services, set ambitious new goals, and, above all, act!

Let the worst of times be the best of times for your organisation.

Read the full study at:

www.mci-group.com/associations.

Organisational Challenges

