



ABM Strategic Plan 2009-2011: **Leading a Transforming B-to-B Media Industry**

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Overview

It is the intent of this plan to position ABM as the leading voice for integrated b-to-b media companies during this time of dramatic transformation.

Having said that, today's B-to-B marketplace is undergoing the most dramatic transformation in its history. The recessionary environment has accelerated significant media shifts that were already taking place. These changes include the growth and diversity of digital media, the extension of trade-shows virtually, the precipitous decline in print, the significant growth in custom media, and the enormous opportunity presented by data. It is also a time when Private Equity has made significant investments in our industry and debt levels have never been higher on these investments, leaving many companies on the precipice. All of these issues added together have resulted in an entire industry in flux.

In this recessionary environment where each dollar is precious, every organization must justify/rationalize expenditures. This is especially true as it relates to Associations, and specifically ABM. In this new environment, ABM must build upon its value proposition, delivering to members new products and services that better serve their needs, by fighting for our members interests in Washington and developing industry standards and providing outstanding networking/educational opportunities and research, all within a new dues structure and with a greater sense of urgency. In addition, recognizing its limited resources, ABM will collaborate with other associations, organizations, and universities to better serve member needs.

Plan Approach

This member driven plan has been developed with the input from the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, the Strategic Planning Committee, Committee/Council Chairs and Membership outreach calls. The plan is a clear reflection of the thinking and the mood of the membership of this diverse association. We have identified five key issues that the plan will address:

Member Issues

- Government Policy & Industry Standards
- Networking/Education
- Research-to-Know
- Research-to-Show

Internal Issues

- Membership Retention/Development

Plan Objectives

I. Overall Objective

ABM will be the leading voice for integrated B-to-B media companies during this time of dramatic transformation in the industry. It will act in collaboration with related associations and organizations as a catalyst for change.

II. Specific Objectives/Priorities

Priority 1) Ensure the life of the Organization

- **Develop a new dues structure to meet a new marketplace**
- Retain membership by enhancing and succinctly communicating the new value proposition to current members
- Recruit new members
 - Digital Media Companies
 - Digital Associate Companies
 - Business Information Companies

Priority 2) Act as the catalyst for our members' transition from print to the digital distribution of information

Priority 3) Ensure that each of the five key issues of the plan have clearly defined priorities and timelines.

- Networking/Education
- Government Policy & Industry Standards
- Research-to-Know
- Research-to-Show
- Membership Retention/Development

Priority 4) Develop a stronger relationship with this select group of Sister Associations

In an era of cost savings, it makes eminent sense to develop joint-projects, be they research, programs, or Washington initiatives. These relationships will evolve based on the specific Associations' strengths. It is not intended here that we would merge or take over these associations, rather develop cohesive individual approaches to each of these key organizations for the benefit of our members: ANA, IAB, SIIA, SISO

The ABM Difference – What makes ABM Unique

- 1) The only B-to-B media association
- 2) The only association focused on the B-to-B integrated media model
- 3) The only association focused on all of the disciplines at media companies
- 4) The center of the B-to-B media & information services ecosystem
- 5) The Catalyst for change in the B-to-B marketplace

I. Issue 1: Networking/Education

Background

Networking ranks as the most important reason for ABM Membership. ABM has traditionally been a top-down association with heavy emphasis on the owners or C-level executives. Recognizing the changing dynamics of the industry, ABM has driven networking opportunities deeper into the membership ranks, with Committees & Councils, thus creating touch-points at all levels of member organizations, reinforcing ABM's value proposition across its membership.

Critical to the networking process is not only the exchange of ideas and best practices with peers, but also education by experts both within and outside of the industry on the newest products, services, and tools to grow member businesses. Thus, networking and education are clearly intertwined.

Goal

ABM will provide leadership in the B-to-B space by creating innovative content events and networking opportunities that will bring buyers and sellers together, and thus help members navigate the challenges of growing their businesses now.

Strategies:

Strategy A

Recognizing that ABM represents the integrated Media model, ABM will partner with key associations, organizations, universities and others who share common interests to strengthen the educational content of ABM programs. Individual collaboration models will be developed by partner, on a prioritized basis:

- **Association of National Advertisers (ANA)**
 - This association is at the very core of our members' advertising initiatives and revenue. Every major advertiser belongs to the ANA. They are primarily a consumer-centric Association; however they do represent B-to-B advertisers as well. It is critical for ABM to develop a more robust relationship:
 - Bring their members, as speakers to ABM events.
 - Partner on a new research initiative
 - Share operational best practices

- **Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB)**
 - Ensure IAB (which is 90% consumer-centric) and ABM partner on the following:
 - consumer standards work for the B-to-B industry. ABM's IPC committee will review their standards, and with their permission, disseminate and educate our members on these B-to-B standards.
 - When applicable, we will joint venture on B-to-B specific programs.
 - Share operational best practices

- **Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)**
 - Because Data has become an integral part of the B-to-B industry, ABM will initiate a joint-venturing relationship, utilizing SIIA's singular expertise in the Business Information arena:
 - ABM will develop programs, secure speakers, and work together with SIIA on Washington initiatives.
 - Share operational best practices

- **Society of Independent Show Organizers (SISO)**
 - Build on our current relationship with SISO. This association brings a unique depth of knowledge of the Face-to-Face sector.
 - ABM will initiate joint-venturing on events such as ABM's Event Summit and SISO Events.
 - Identify through SISO, industry leaders to speak at ABM events.
 - Share operational best practices

Additional Associations' Outreach: There are a number of other Associations that touch upon the B-to-B ecosystem. These Associations are not as critical as those prioritized above, there is, however, an importance to them, and a reach-out program is necessary to ensure that the ABM B-to-B ecosystem encompasses all of their relevant expertise.

- **Magazine Publishers Association (MPA)**
 - Share best practices:
 - Possible shared back-room services and programs.

- **Online Publishers Association (OPA)**
 - Utilize their digital expertise to identify speakers for ABM events
 - Where applicable ABM will reach out to OPA for digital research

- **Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR)**
 - Engage President of CEIR as speaker

- **Specialty Information Publishers Association (SIPA)**
 - Share best practices in the subscription based print model.
- **Custom Publishers Council (CPC)**
 - Continue to work on the Pearl Awards, Custom Media Day and CEBA Awards
- **American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA)**
 - Work with AAAA's B-to-B Committee to identify industry leaders to speak at ABM events as well as entries and judges for the CEBA awards.
- **Advertising & Research Foundation (ARF)**
 - This Association can provide ABM with industry specific research which can be adapted to the B-to-B space.
- **American Advertising Federation (AAF)**
 - Engage the AAF's B-to-B Committee to identify industry leaders to speak at ABM events as well as entries and judges for the CEBA awards.
 - Utilize AAF's local chapters as an early warning system to identify potential State and Local Advertising and Advertising Tax related issues.
- **Business Marketing Association (BMA)**
 - Attempt to develop a relationship with them
- **Association Magazine Publishers (AMP) (formerly SNAP)**
 - Target as a potential ABM member
- **International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE)**
 - When appropriate, add their members to ABM's Face-to-Face coalition in Washington

Strategy B:

Continue to refine ABM's Committee & Council structure to ensure they represent the key disciplines within our member organizations.

Tactics:

- 1) Committees & Councils must clearly define their individual missions, ensuring that each has a mission driven by the strategic plan.
- 2) Each Committee & Council, individually or collaboratively, is charged with best practices and disseminating them back to their companies to the membership, and ensuring these best practices are delivered to the membership
- 3) Committees & Councils should create forums to educate and enable networking amongst members.
- 4) Each Committee & Council will serve as a resource to the membership at-large in their area of expertise.

Strategy C:

ABM will adopt a fresh approach to its events: location, environment, content and presentation

Tactics:

- 1) Major ABM events will be updated for today's environment and new events will be created to serve the needs of the evolving marketplace.
 - a. ABM's Top Management Meeting becomes ABM's Executive Forum and takes on a whole new approach: location, environment, content and presentation
- 2) To broaden the reach of all ABM events, they will be streamed live and made available on- demand as a benefit of ABM membership.

Strategy D:

Take ABM to the members

Tactics:

- 1) Broadening ABM's reach to the membership, ABM will continue and expand upon its regional and digitally delivered programming as a benefit of ABM membership.
 - i. 7 regional events, up from 6 from last year.
 - ii. Targeted next year: Minneapolis and Atlanta.
 - iii. Participate with Canadian Business Press in Toronto and Montreal.
 - iv. All ABM events will be delivered digitally through streaming video or on-demand.

Strategy E:

Deliver cutting-edge information to help members grow their top-lines.

Tactics:

- 1) Ensure that ABM delivers on the educational imperative by identifying and delivering speakers who will disseminate the best of innovative ideas. These speakers will be drawn from marketers, advertising agencies, business, educators, and B-to-B media companies.
- 2) ABM will also ensure the educational imperative is delivered on the financial front from economists, bankers, private equity and merger & acquisition experts.

II. Issue 2: Government Policy & Industry Standards

Background

ABM and its members are faced with a host of Governmental Issues driven by the Members' ever expanding array of business platforms, advances in technology, and the sophistication of their customers.

Today, issues related to events, digital, business information/data, as well as print products are at the forefront of ABMs lobbying and standards' efforts. The strategic approach to Government Policy & Industry Standards is interwoven due to the ever changing environment in Washington.

Goal:

Expand ABM's leadership role, influencing government policy on issues critical to our members' businesses.

Strategy A:

Build new coalitions on issues that impact the B-to-B space, Identify new issues that will potentially impact the B-to-B space and leverage our current lobbying efforts in Washington to encompass these new issues.

Tactics:

Digital

- 1) Enhance ABM's early warning system to better announce critical legislative initiatives to the membership such as: Email, Telemarketing, Faxing. Behavioral Targeting, Privacy/Piracy, and Net Neutrality.
- 2) Where appropriate, work with IAB to push or block legislation on issues of mutual interest.

Data

- 1) Identify issues such as Privacy, etc that impact our members and partner where appropriate with SIIA

Events

- 1) Develop a face-to-face coalition with SISO, IAEE and other likeminded organizations or companies in order to share valuable information, ensure protection of the industry, and advance legislation to better serve the industry's needs
 - a) Visa issues affecting foreign speakers at events
 - b) Union and vendor monopolies at conference venues

Print

- 1) Look for additional opportunities to partner with the Magazine Publisher's of America (MPA) on legislative issues that impact Print
- 2) Continue our robust efforts to minimize Postal rate increases

Strategy B

Ensure existing standards are relevant to the B-to-B space and develop new standards where appropriate.

Tactics

1. ABM will develop guidelines, policies and standards for all disciplines within media companies (ie: Editorial, Publishers, etc)
2. Collaborate with IAB to ensure their digital standards are appropriate for B-to-B. Make changes where necessary, and disseminate. Government Affairs IPC Committee to vet standards and communicate to ABM members
3. ABM will continue to update its digital editorial policies/guidelines.

Strategy C

Ensure ABM succinctly communicates the broadened Washingtonian agenda to the membership.

Tactics

- 1) ABMs Government Affairs Committee & Sub-Committees along with our lobbyists will monitor any and all legislative developments that could affect our members' products and services. (Early warning system)
- 2) In addition to current communications, we will develop a new communications tool which communicates the issue, the current status, and member relevance in a simple, easy to read format.

III. Issue 3: Research-to-Know

Background

Historically, ABM has delivered seminal research, and has evolved its organizational structure, importantly including Committees & Councils, to provide members with sales tools and benchmarking/best practices to meet the needs of a dynamic and changing marketplace.

Goal

ABM will be the leading source of b-to-b industry knowledge, providing members with the latest information, metrics and best practices to drive their top and bottom lines.

Strategy A

ABM will collaborate with partners to lessen its research costs.

Tactics:

- 1) Conduct and disseminate seminal research in collaboration with other Associations and Organizations that share these issues to minimize ABM's financial exposure.
- 2) Collect and disseminate non-proprietary best practices from the membership
- 3) Develop a new series of smaller forums at which members can share their thoughts on these critical issues.

Strategy B

Restructure the BIN reports to reflect the totality of the B-to-B media sector.

Tactics:

- 1) Continue to work with IMS for Print Revenue numbers
- 2) Continue to work with CEIR for Face-to-Face Revenue number
- 3) Develop a Digital Revenue reporting system by working with IAB, Outsell, and e-Marketer,
- 4) Gather additional input where possible (ie: Jupiter, etc)

Strategy C

Restructure all reports, white-papers, policies, guidelines and vendor supply lists to be forward looking

Tactics:

- 1) Revitalize Cost, Compensation, and Vendor Supply list to better address today's transitional environment.
- 2) Partner with companies like Outsell, Hoovers, and others to develop case-studies for our current members on generating revenue from Data.
- 3) Work specifically with the American Association of Advertising Agencies B-to-B committee on an updated RFP form for Media Proposal
- 4) Reinstitute with SISO a co-sponsorship of the Event-specific Cost & Compensation Reports
- 5) Joint-venture with CEIR to provide members with comprehensive research on the Trade-Show Industry, including new research sharing program launched August 28th 2009

Strategy D

Develop a systemic approach that allows the membership to reach out to ABM for answers to critical questions.

Tactics:

- 1) Establish an ABM Referral System whereby members can direct all 'questions-of-the-day' to ABM's General Manager.
- 2) Where appropriate, conduct quick-turnaround research to answer member questions. (ie: Benefits survey, etc.)

IV. Issue 4: Research-to-Show

Background

Faced with the current economy and its impact on dues, ABM can no longer afford to produce robust research for the marketplace or create and run Ad campaigns on its own.

Goal

ABM will be the leading voice, validating the power of the broadening portfolio of B-to-B offerings through cutting edge research and targeted communications.

Strategy A

ABM will identify marketers and advertising agencies critical research needs/gaps in the b-to-b space.

Tactics:

1. Consult with members, marketers, agencies, consultants and other associations for input.

Strategy B

Develop a collaborative research process to minimize ABM's financial exposure.

Tactics

1. Work with other Associations, Companies, and Universities (ie: Booz & Co, University of Illinois, etc) to achieve this strategy.

Strategy C

Ensure the continuation of Platform/Industry-specific research where appropriate. Identify the needs/gaps of marketers and advertising agencies

Tactics

1. Utilize ABM's Committee & Council structure to accomplish this (ie: Marketer & Media Advisory Councils, Digital Council, Events Council, Agri Council, Healthcare Council)
2. Continue partnership with CEIR to deliver seminal Trade-Show research.
3. Explore opportunities with the Online Publishers Association (OPA) to provide unique B-to-B digital research
4. Collaborate with other Associations/Organizations and Universities as appropriate
 - Custom: CPC
 - Data: SIIA
 - Agri: Purdue Univeristy, University of Illinois
 - Healthcare: Nielsen

Strategy D

Sales Support: To drive members' top line, ABM will ensure the members' sales forces have powerful tools to communicate research to marketers and agencies.

Tactics

1. Develop a series of case-studies, power point presentations, Web-casts, and new ads for members to utilize, all as a benefit of ABM membership.
2. ABM will create a Speakers Bureau to proactively reach out and deliver the B-to-B message to marketers and agencies.

Membership Retention/Development

Background:

With the growth of mobile communications and social media, a titanic shift is occurring in the consumption of information that is accelerating the digital transformation. It is clear that our industry is going through a tumultuous time, the most challenging since the Great Depression. With the advent of Private Equity players, and massive debt on many of our members, this too has added to the tumultuous times we are experiencing. All of this has had a great impact ABM membership, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Goal:

Build on the tools and formulas that have been successful this year to enhance the current system of retention and institute a new approach to recruitment. Specific targets of opportunity will be prioritized: Pure-play Digital Media Companies, Digital Associate Companies, Business Information Companies, and other Associations, as well as Face-to-Face and Print.

The new Strategic Plan will include a new dues structure that positions the value proposition in Membership retention, as well as recruitment. \$50,000 of dues should translate to the potential member as \$100,000 worth of products and services.

Strategy A:

Utilize the new Strategic Plan and more effectively utilize members for retention

Tactics:

1. Utilize the new Strategic Plan to enhance the value proposition to all current members.
2. The board of directors and other members who have special relationships, and specifically the E&A Committee, will be provided background of members-in-question by staff and asked to make direct calls on the Association's behalf.
3. Utilize the Priority Coding system in defining secure members, Members-in-question, and dropped members for ABM's executive staff to contact.

Strategy B:

From a Retention standpoint, utilize the Committees & Councils as ambassadors to the membership.

Tactics:

1. Ensure each Committee and Council member is aware of all of ABM's products and services and reports back to their respective member companies.
2. Committees & Councils will also help develop content, drive attendance to ABM events, and thus help create the value proposition to further engage and thus retain the membership.

Strategy C:

From a Recruitment standpoint, ABM will strategically target new members based on the new digital/data paradigm with a priority put on the following: Digital B-to-B Media Companies, Digital Associate Companies, Business Information Companies and like-minded Associations.

Tactics:

1. Develop recruitment presentations which lay out the ABM value proposition in the
 - a. B-to-B digital space
 - b. Business Information
2. Aggressively recruit single-focused B-to-B centric Associations such as:
 - a. AMP (formerly SNAP)
 - b. DVG – German B-to-B Association
 - c. CPC – Custom Publishers Council

*Footnote: Food for thought: the addition of a sales person to the ABM staff to deliver on the retention/recruitment program, approach and timeline to be considered.

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