

# Judging Program and Service Effectiveness

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*Knowing When to Pull The  
Plug ... and How !*

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# Introduction

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## MEASUREMENT

- **Setting performance objectives**
- **Assessment: how to decide what contributes/dilutes from focus**

## APPLICATIONS AND ACTION

- **Does a program build member loyalty**
- **Evaluating value proposition for members**
- **The “Do’s and Don’ts” of transition**

# MEASUREMENT

**Performance Objectives**  
**Assessment Techniques**

# What Kinds of "Services"?

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- **Specific Services**
  - Affinity programs
  - Periodicals/subscription services
  - Conferences/educational programs
  - Special publications/catalogs
  - Web sites/services
  - One-timers:  
vanity projects, new initiatives

# Setting Performance Objectives

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- **At each stages of life cycle**
  - **Startup through early adoption**
  - **Maturity**
  - **Decline**
  - **New editions/  
off “life support”**

# What Are We Looking For?

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- **Metrics**
  - Consistent performance measures
  - Opportunities to improve (or eliminate)
- **Measures depend on development stage:**
  - Startup: marketing plan, coverage, reach, pricing, success-impeders
  - Early adoption: product problems, repositioning opportunities, buzz/viral marketing

# What Are We Looking For?

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- And, in “the autumn years” ...
  - Maturity: reinvigoration, new features and/or positioning
  - Decline: bundling opportunities, inventory exhaustion, giveaways, rebranding/folding into new initiatives
- Post-mortem evaluations

# Metrics for Performance

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- **Financial contribution**: direct, indirect to the bottom line, margins
- **Utilization measures**: traffic, users, revenue, satisfaction
- **Awareness**: aided/unaided recall
- **Lost potential**: performance relative to expectations



# Understanding What We Measure

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- **Any metrics are subject to caveats**
  - **“Traffic Generators” items that produce sales elsewhere**
  - **“Sacred Cows” protected pet projects**
  - **“Silent Majority” some services are appreciated quietly, universally**
    - **Never know until you measure attitudes and behavior**

# Tools of the Trade

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- **Don't rely on subjective judgment**
  - “But the Board likes this program”
  - Develop, maintain and *use* your fact base
- **Objective measurement tools**
  - Surveys
  - Qualitative research
  - Sales/transaction analysis

# Surveys: Direct Assessment

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- **Awareness of specific services**
- **Perceived importance, satisfaction, gap analysis**
- **Usage overall and by segment**
  - **Demographic profiles**
    - **Age brackets/generational differences**
    - **Practice interests**
    - **Industries/types of companies**
    - **New members**

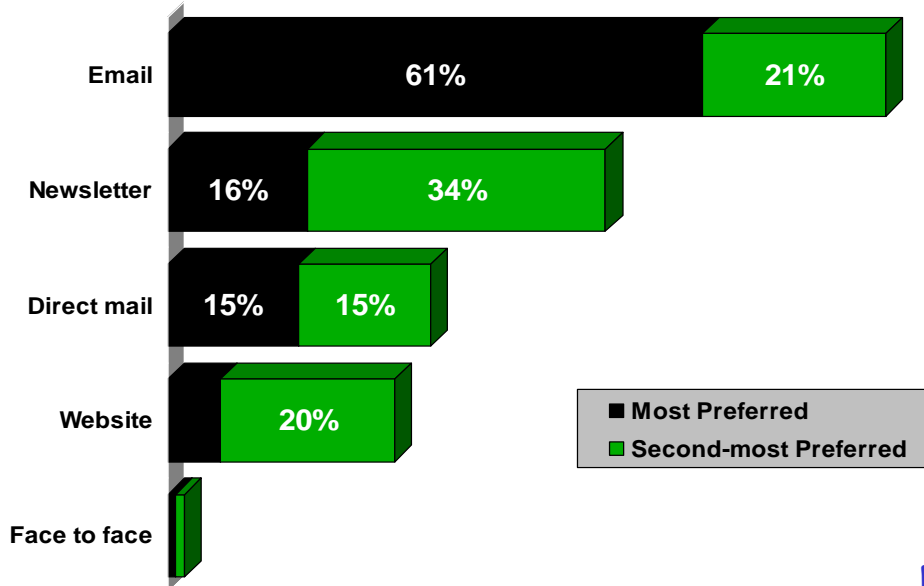
# Needs Assessment Survey

## B. SATISFACTION

For each Assn service, first indicate how important they are to your business, then how satisfied you are with the association's performance in delivering that service. (*circle your answers*)

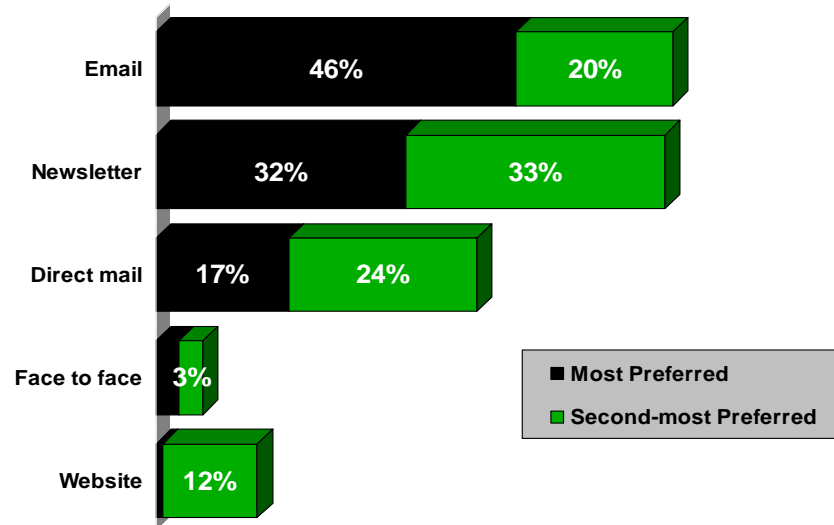
	IMPORTANCE					SATISFACTION				
	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	4	3	2	1 NOT IMPORTANT	VERY SATISFIED	4	3	2	1 VERY DISSATISFIED
A. Annual Conference.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
B. Educational seminars/webinars.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
C. E-mail newsletter.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
D. Assn website.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
E. Association newsletter.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
F. Association information service.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
G. General industry research publications.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
H. Councils.....	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1

## Member Preferences



## Distinct Audiences

## Non-Member Preferences



<b><u>Products and Services</u></b>	<b>Used</b>	<b>Satisfaction</b>
Abstract submission online	47%	4.29
Being published in journals	58%	4.07
CEU Meeting	17%	4.04
CEU Syllabus	19%	3.93
CME online	4%	3.40
Conference abstracts online	40%	4.19
Conference exhibitor search	11%	3.74
Conference Science Planner online	16%	3.72
Society News	66%	3.67
ESN online	16%	3.70
Self-Assessment Program	12%	3.99
ESN Live	32%	3.43
Ethics scenarios online	3%	3.38
Journals online	51%	4.32
MCR Syllabus	6%	3.90
MCR Meeting	4%	3.91
Online registrations	41%	4.34
Placement service	14%	3.33
RPHR Book	3%	3.55

<b>Gap Analysis</b>	<b>Importance</b>	<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Gap</b>
Annual Conference	3.35	3.81	0.46
Educational seminar/webinar	3.34	3.58	0.24
e-mail Newsletter	3.20	3.50	0.30
Assn Website	3.24	3.57	0.32
Assn newsletter	3.64	3.94	0.30
Assn information service	3.48	3.79	0.31
Industry research	3.68	3.82	0.14
Councils	2.95	3.24	0.29

<b><u>Interest in New/Enhanced Services</u></b>	
Broader web-based education	<b>3.61</b>
Evidence based practice guidelines	<b>3.39</b>
Computer DSM algorithms	<b>3.31</b>
Develop new teaching tools	<b>3.87</b>
New programs: fellows/in-training	<b>3.56</b>
Tools to access articles/back issues	<b>4.15</b>
More representation: congress/admin	<b>3.45</b>
More public represent	<b>3.65</b>
More representation: public	<b>3.44</b>
CRO/SMO clinical trials	<b>2.94</b>
Collaboration: other societies	<b>3.62</b>
On-site meetings	<b>3.46</b>

<b>Online Subscriptions</b>	<b>Access online</b>	<b>Aware it's free</b>
Yes	<b>47%</b>	<b>83%</b>
No	<b>53%</b>	<b>17%</b>

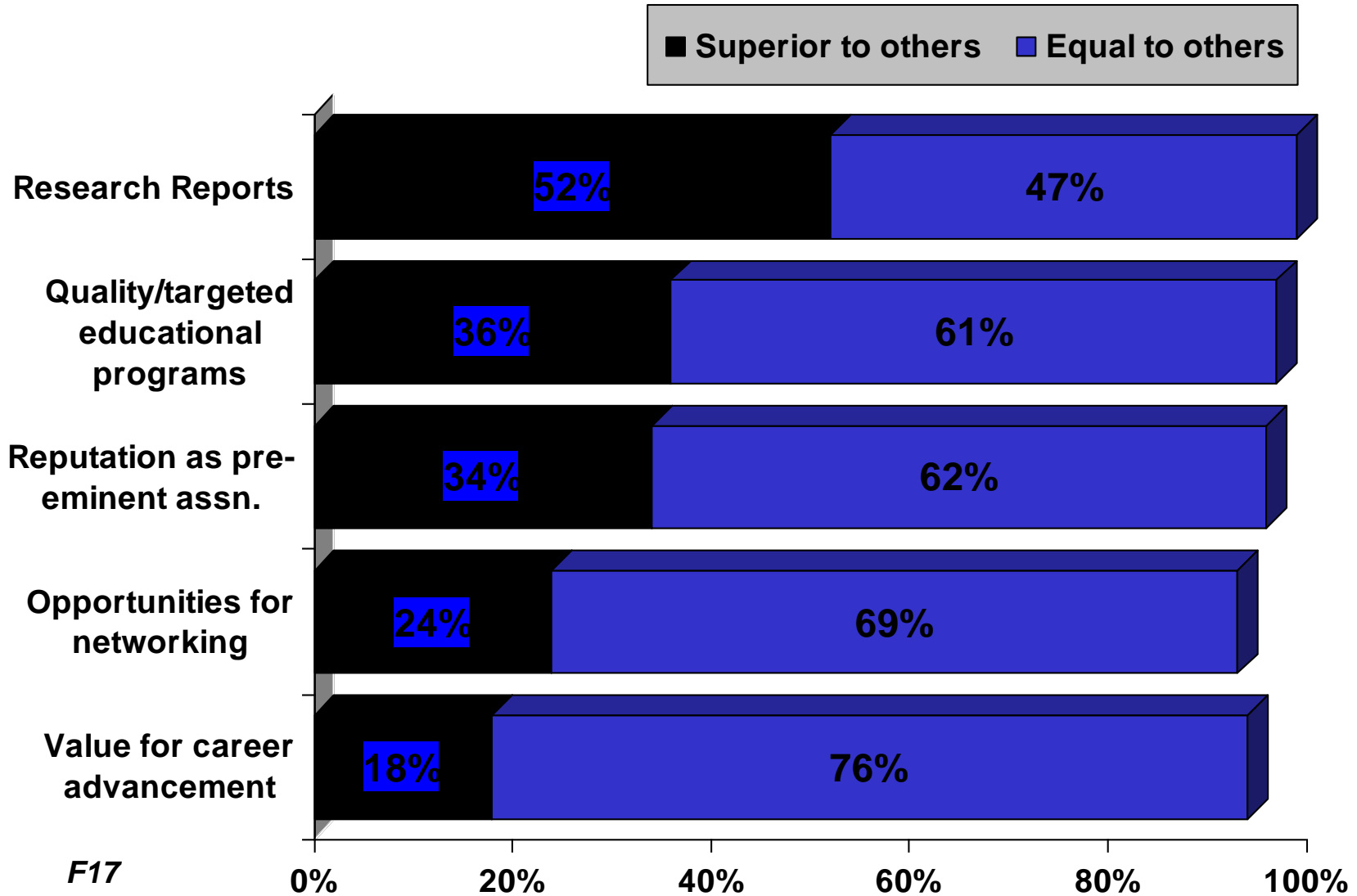
<b><u>Called for subscriptions</u></b>	
Yes	<b>5%</b>
No	<b>95%</b>
Treated courteously	<b>4.19</b>
Satisfied with info	<b>4.15</b>
Call returned/24 hrs	<b>3.67</b>

<b><u>Demographics</u></b>	<b>Age</b>
21-35	<b>16%</b>
36-45	<b>29%</b>
46-55	<b>30%</b>
Over 55	<b>24%</b>
Average age	<b>48</b>

<b><u>Rating for All Journals</u></b>	<b>Score</b>
Newness/cutting edge content	<b>4.31</b>
Scientific quality	<b>4.42</b>
Opportunity to publish	<b>3.75</b>
Relevance to practice	<b>4.08</b>
Coverage of news	<b>3.66</b>
Opportunity for dialogue	<b>3.04</b>
Coverage of legis/funding issues	<b>2.78</b>
Practice/lab management	<b>2.74</b>



# Health Care Association Example: How Assn. Compares to Other Industry Organizations



# Surveys: Indirect Assessment

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- **Importance/satisfaction relative to *other* services**
- **Measures relative to competition**
  - Overall attitudes toward assn: good value, relevance
- **Linking these indicators to “grade on a curve”**

# Surveys: Applying Results

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- **Raising awareness of gaps**
  - What they mean/how to remedy
  - Excess importance: more attention, more resources
  - Excess satisfaction: less attention, divert resources
- **Interpreting open-ended questions**
  - Isolated comment or “tip of the iceberg”
- **Projections/trend analysis**

# More Sophisticated Techniques

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- **Contingent valuation**: willingness to pay
  - Specific services, overall membership
- **Conjoint modeling**: voluntary tradeoffs
- **Elasticity measures**: impacts on sales/usage of price/price changes
  - Impact of specific features
- **Projection models**: inferring trends

# Using Qualitative Research

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- **Focus groups**: audience segments in moderated discussion
- **Depth interviews**: long, candid discussions with individuals
- **Electronic chat**: listserver or emailed comments
  - Findings depend on objectives: testimonials vs. assessments

# Sales/Transaction Analysis

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- **Using in-house data often overlooked**
  - **Look at size of audience segments**
  - **Look at market share, penetration by segment**
  - **Look for patterns: sensitivity to promotion**
  - **Look for repeat purchase/attendance**
  - **Look for trial/conversion: proportion of one-time attendees to serial users and never-attenders**

# Doing it Right the First Time

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- **In addition to evaluating past launches**
  - **Conducting feasibility studies for new product/service launches**
  - **Desired features, contribution to probable success**
  - **Willingness to pay/tradeoffs**
  - **Likelihood of success with set features**
  - **Establishing expectations overall and by segment up-front**
    - **Facilitates ongoing assessment**

# Ongoing Research

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- **How many conduct user surveys**
  - Detailed questions on product content, frequency, quality
  - Assessing conference timing, location, pricing, length/structure
  - Surveying lapsed members, lapsed users, non-repeat customers
- **Creating a base of knowledge from which evaluation becomes easy to do**



# Integrating Research & Quality

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- Many believe “don’t ask if you *can’t* change it”
  - Avoiding conflicts or findings that cast a bad light
  - Other desires: avoid scrutiny, Board attention
- Need to regard ongoing measurement
  - The “cost” of delivering quality services

# Diagnosing Causes of Poor Performance

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- **Varied causes**
  - Pricing/affordability
  - Promotion/awareness
  - Placement/distribution
  - Product/features and design
  - Community/compatibility
- **Developing action plans to eliminate these obstacles**
- **Or ... Identifying steps for ending the product or service**

# APPLICATIONS & ACTION

**Building Member Loyalty**  
**Member Value Proposition**  
**Transition Do's and Don'ts**

# Today's Changing Environment

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- **What's different today?**
- **Services versus Programs**
  - **Going direct....**
  - **Competition from other sources**
- **The Association as a distribution channel and its effectiveness**

# Considerations for Services and Programs

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- **Usefulness - Acquisition or Retention Tool**
- **Ability to obtain elsewhere?**
- **Sensitivity to regulatory and/or capitalization issues**
- **Think local, act global**

# Considerations for Services and Programs

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- **Organizational impacts (retention)**
- **Defining expectations**
- **Knowing remedial actions or options**

# Positioning Your Services/ Programs

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- **Organization branding and member loyalty are a **Must!****
  - **Relation to Mission & Vision**
  - **Blurring products and service**
  - **Acquisition lift**
  - **Know what your members are thinking!**

# Establishing the Value Proposition for Services & Programs

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$$\text{Value} = \frac{(\text{Product} + \text{Features}) + \text{Member Service}}{\text{Price}}$$



# Before You Pull the Plug...

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- **Consider the Five R's**
  - **R**e-visit brand impact
  - **R**emedial action
  - **R**e-package
  - **R**evise communications
  - **R**e-structure

# Methods for Decision-Making

- **The “good, the bad and the ugly”**
  - **Cowboy decision**
  - **Internal task force (“group grope”)**
    - **Clear owner**
    - **External consultant**
  - **Board involvement**
    - **Need for education**
    - **Need for buy-in**

# So You've Decided to Pull the Plug . .

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- **Know your destination**
- **Think strategically**
- **Impacts to:**
  - **Life cycle of Service/Program**
  - **Relationships**
  - **Revenue**
  - **Communications**

# So You've Decided to Pull the Plug . .

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- **Communication is critical**
  - **Control it!**
  - **Timing**
  - **Level of Detail - various audiences**
    - **Members**
    - **Board members**
    - **Non-members**
    - **Staff**
  - **Expect the Unknown!**

# So You've Decided to Pull the Plug . .

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**DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY!**

**-and-**

**DON'T BURN YOUR BRIDGES!**