

CASE STUDY: MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION

Can Good Research Help Retain Members and Improve Chapters?



CHALLENGE

Like most associations, ABC deals with the issues of appropriate dues levels and what events, programs and services to offer their membership. ABC needs to understand its member retention drivers.

RESPONSE

CERC conducted a survey research program of ABC members to meet ABC's objectives and develop actionable recommendations. Five years later, we worked with ABC on its "Healthy Chapters" initiative to establish benchmarks that ABC chapters must meet.

SOLUTION SET

For this project, CERC first met with the ABC executives and team in Washington DC to deeply understand the organization's goals and what they perceived to be the challenges. We then designed a comprehensive questionnaire and conducted a mixed mode (phone and e-mail) survey with ABC members.

In a separate project five years later, ABC asked us to expertly identify lynchpin metrics of chapter health. The goal was to identify crucial chapter characteristics that objectively indicate whether a chapter is likely to fail so that corrective action can be taken.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE



Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is the national U.S. trade association representing the non-union construction industry. It consists of 70 chapters with 21,000 commercial contractors and construction-related firms among its members.

COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY & ANALYTICS



The survey data was analyzed using Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detection (CHAID), multiple regression analysis and other appropriate statistical tests.

We then wrote a comprehensive report and presented the findings to ABC's team.

CERC's analytic team reviewed the data ABC has on its chapters, requested more data, computed a failure likelihood metric, and analyzed the relationship of the chapter characteristics to failure likelihood.

KEY FINDINGS

The survey found eight drivers of member retention that ABC should be focused on. One key benefit of the research is that the organization's team now knew what to focus on and what amounted to distractive factors that they could safely ignore.

The data analysis identified three factors within which objective "healthy thresholds" were established.

RESULTS

With CERC's research results, ABC is empowered to confidently address the challenges it faces. The organization is no longer guessing about various issues that all membership organizations deal with. Further, the Healthy Chapters analytic project creates a sense of trust within the chapters because objective metrics -- rather than subjective impressions -- are used to determine which chapters need assistance.

