



UNIVERSITY

Next Generation Intelligence

2012 Advocacy in Associations
Survey Results

Introduction

As a leader in next generation associations, our team at XYZ University sent out our 2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey at the end of June. The purpose of the survey was to support our ongoing research of the state of advocacy in membership associations. The findings from this survey serve as a starting point to pinpoint the hurdles that associations currently face in furthering advocacy efforts.

We often ask the question: “Is democracy dead?” As you will see from the results of the survey, it is a question not easily answered.

About the Survey:

In 2009, XYZ University conducted research on the changing political landscape in the United States (“New Generation, New Politics: Democracy Depends On It”). The 2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey served as a follow-up to this research from a strictly membership association-based viewpoint.

Throughout the survey, advocacy was referenced as any action that aims to influence public and government policy at either the federal, state or local level.

XYZ University invited leadership, Board members and employees of membership associations around the United States to participate in this advocacy research survey.

The 2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey offered questions that yielded more than 125 responses from participants throughout the country. This report serves as a synopsis of the raw survey data with any personal information and examples removed to protect the identity of those who responded.

Associations are encouraged to analyze the data on the following pages and develop their own conclusions and next steps as it relates to the advocacy efforts in their organization.

Demographics:

Of the 125 survey participants, **49.5% were age 48-66**. The second highest age group of survey participants was between the ages of 31 and 47 (37.9%). Those in the age range of 17-30 represented 10.7% of survey participants with 1.9% in the 67+ age category.

Additional Information:

For additional information about specific survey findings, or for information on how to work with XYZ University on advocacy efforts within your association (including a personal presentation of this report), please contact Sarah Sladek, CEO, at **763.773.5463** or email ssladek@xyzuniversity.com.

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LinkedIn Group: XYZ University Next Generation Intelligence

XYZ University is a management consulting firm specializing in helping organizations engage the next generation of members, employees, executives and advocates.

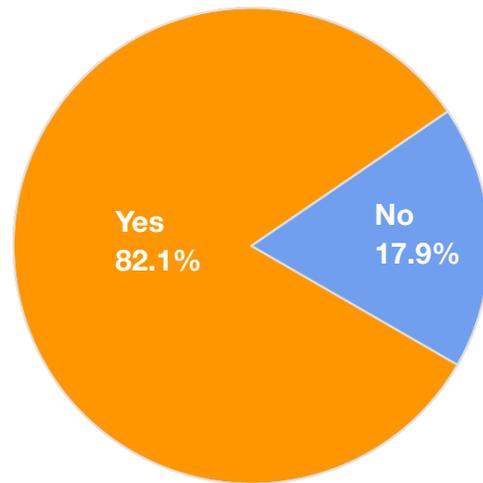
2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey

82%

of associations promote advocacy as a primary member benefit.

Question 1: Does your association promote advocacy as a primary member benefit?

Yes: 82.1%
No: 17.9%



Question 2: Which of the following roles are actively involved in your association's advocacy efforts (Check all that apply):

Lobbyist on staff: 31.9%

Lobbyist hired as an outside consultant/consulting firm: 42.0%

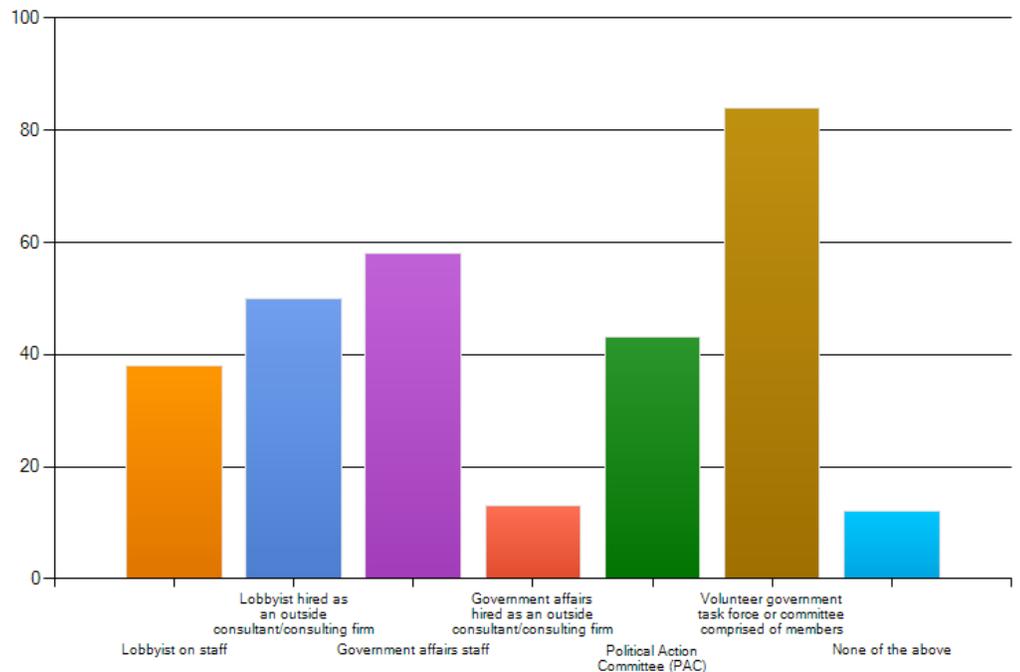
Government affairs staff: 48.7%

Government affairs hired as an outside consultant/consulting firm: 10.9%

Political Action Committee (PAC): 36.1%

Volunteer government task force or committee comprised of members: 70.6%

None of the above: 10.1%



2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey

84%

of associations find it challenging to motivate members to get involved in advocacy.

Question 3: When it comes to advocacy, what are the challenges associated with providing that service to your member? (Check all that apply)

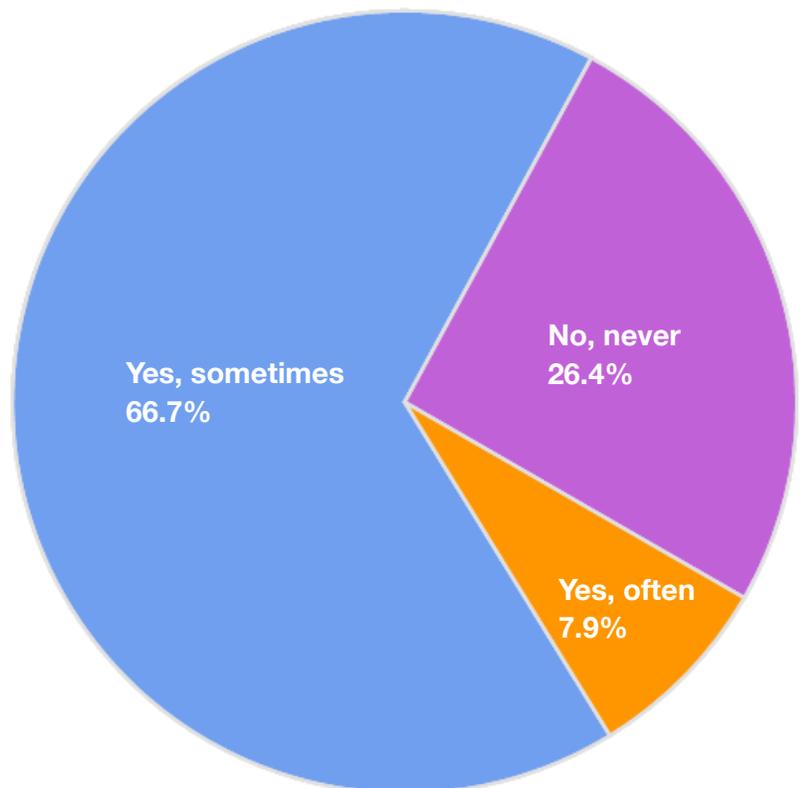
Explaining what advocacy is and why it matters:	49.1%
Motivating members to get involved in advocacy:	83.6%
Engaging younger generations in the process:	40.9%
Effective and efficient communication:	55.5%
Explaining that advocacy is a member benefit:	57.3%
Measuring or proving the outcomes of advocacy	73.6%

Additional comments from association professionals about the challenges associated with providing advocacy as a member benefit included:

- Not a top priority item for the association; staffing and monetary resources very limited
- Our members want “someone else” to do it
- Getting members to recognize the value of advocacy (that they need to pay dues to support the efforts)
- Funding advocacy activities beyond the use of PAC funds
- Trustees are afraid to take a stand that may alienate part of membership
- Identifying what members really want us to advocate for
- The difficulty is that nonmembers benefit from advocacy as much as members

Question 4: Does your association receive feedback from members or prospects that advocacy holds minimal value? For example, do you hear comments like “advocacy doesn’t benefit me?”, “it’s impossible to make a difference”, or “advocacy benefits me whether I’m a member or not?” (Check one)

Yes, often (at least once a month):	7.9%
Yes, sometimes:	66.7%
No, never.	25.4%



2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey

42%

of associations gauge the level of interest in advocacy among young members as “fair”.

Question 5: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the highest) where would you gauge the level of interest and participation in your association’s advocacy among young members (under the age of 40)?

Great: 0%

The association has a large number of young professionals actively engaged in and leading our advocacy efforts.

Good: 12.5%

The association has many young professionals expressing an interest or participating.

Fair: 42.0%

The association has some young professionals expressing an interest or participating.

Working on it: 32.1%

The association has few young professionals engaged and we are making efforts to engage more.

Off the radar: 13.4%

The association has few young professionals engaged and isn't making efforts to engage more either because it isn't a priority objective or because the association isn't sure what to do to engage them.

25%

of associations do not post any advocacy information on social networks.

Question 6: Do you post information about your organization’s advocacy efforts on social networks? (Check all that apply)

Yes, on Facebook 64.9%

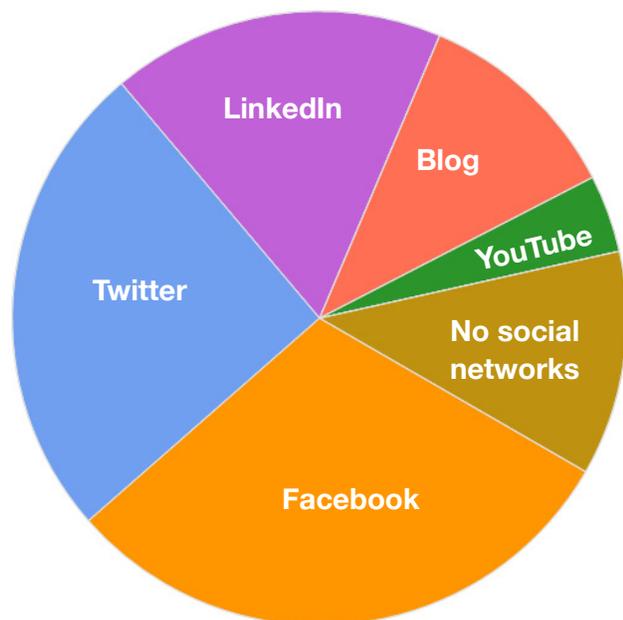
Yes, on Twitter 54.4%

Yes, on LinkedIn 37.7%

Yes, on a blog 23.7%

Yes, on YouTube 8.8%

No, our organization does not post any advocacy information on social networks 25.4%



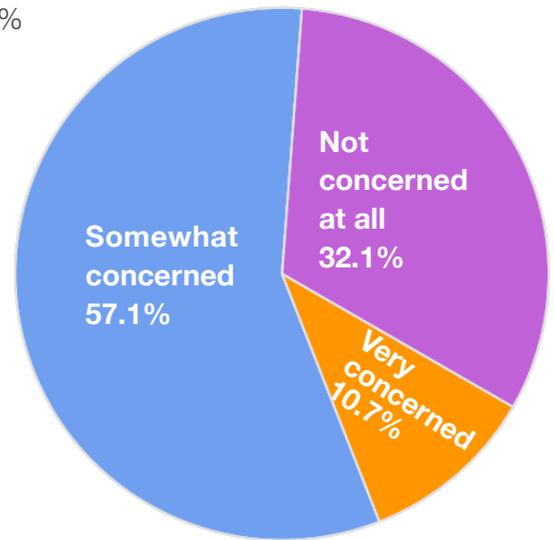
2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey

57%

of association leaders are somewhat concerned about the lack of participation and interest in advocacy from younger members.

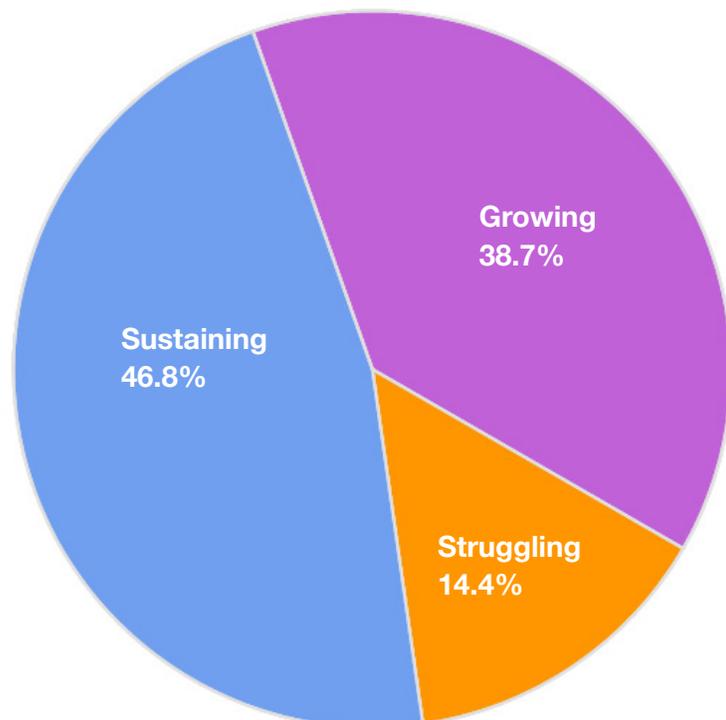
Question 8: Is your association's leadership concerned about the lack of participation or interest of younger members (under the age of 40) in the association's advocacy efforts? (Check one)

Very concerned:	10.7%
Somewhat concerned:	57.1%
Not concerned at all:	32.1%



Question 9: In your opinion, what will the state of advocacy in your association be in 5-10 years?

Struggling:	14.4%
Sustaining:	46.8%
Growing:	38.7%



2012 Advocacy in Associations Survey

88%

of associations would like a technology-based product with direct links to elected officials and templates/tools for member-driven advocacy.

Questions 10-12 asked membership associations about their interest in technology-based products that could potentially support advocacy efforts.

Overall, participating associations are interested in technology that would help them prove the benefits of advocacy to their members as well as engage more of their members in the advocacy process.

Technology is seen as an important tool that has the potential of helping to convey the importance of advocacy in associations.

The final question in our association advocacy survey had to do with education and resources, specifically, what resources associations use in their line of advocacy work.

More than 40 association professionals chose to answer this portion of the survey, the majority of whom listed local chambers and specific vendor resources. For a complete list of the resources mentioned, please contact Kathy Altman, kaltman@xyzuniversity.com.

Thank You!

We would like to thank those of you who expressed interest in our survey results and the association leaders, professionals and executives who participated in our research.

For additional information about our survey, please contact Sarah Sladek, CEO, at **763.773.5463** or email ssladek@xyzuniversity.com.