

Executive Summary

APPA's Seven Key Strategies

by E. Lander Medlin

The wealth of data and critical information that we received from the qualitative and quantitative research surveys of APPA's members in late 2005 supported our focus on the future and set our direction around seven key strategies. These seven key strategies will position the association for a bright future, especially since they align with the desired outcomes that will ensure the following:

- The APPA "brand" is clear and well known
- APPA is the "go-to" resource for all education facilities questions
- Credibility with senior institutional officers
- An increase in APPA's information and offerings through partnerships
- APPA nurtures and mentors young professionals
- Educational programs for continuing professional development needs
- Competence of educational facilities professionals

Now that the plan is clear, it is critically important for both volunteers and staff to effectively implement each of these seven key strategies.

1. **Develop and execute a "brand" initiative.** Branding is a process. One that requires intentional organizational focus on the members' perception of our identity and image, and the clarity of our message. We must clarify the value proposition and cleanly differentiate ourselves from other peer or competitor organizations. Yet, we clearly serve two constituencies, the senior facilities officers and the mid-level

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managers, and their needs are somewhat different. One way to resolve this dilemma is to target cutting-edge educational programs to meet both the professional development needs of both. It is also important to recognize that APPA's mission is two-fold. And of equal importance, we must reinforce the strategic role of physical assets in education.

2. **Develop and implement an enhanced website to become the "go-to" resource for facilities questions.** Accordingly, APPA's website is undergoing a transformation to be more dynamic and robust, to improve user navigation, and to increase its utilization by young facilities professionals. As the world shifts technologically from information to communication, it will be critical for APPA to compete with other providers by improving the content and delivery of its website.
3. **Expand research to build credibility and visibility by senior institutional officers.** To accomplish this end, we must target strategic, institutionally focused projects and activities. This will enhance member service, increase the value provided by the association, and provide research information for better institutional

decision-making. We are presently engaged in several critical activities, such as delivering the outcomes of our two major sponsored research projects at the upcoming 2006 joint conference in Hawai'i, *The Campus of the Future: A Meeting of the Minds*. *The Impact of Facilities on Student Recruitment and Retention* explores the differences of gender, race, institutional type, and other comparative responses. *Buildings... The Gifts That Keep on Taking: A Framework for Integrated Decision-Making*, will outline the value of a clear, well-articulated asset investment strategy designed to better predict and control facilities investment decisions. In addition, APPA has sponsored a Thought Leaders series workshop that will result in the identification and articulation of the critical facilities issues in higher education in order to positively impact the future state of higher education institutions. This body of work coupled with our Web-based Facilities Core Data Survey information and its resultant *Facilities Performance Indicators* will continue to build and further increase the awareness of facilities professionals and their issues with senior institutional officers.

4. **Engage in symbiotic and collaborative partnerships.** Through partnerships, APPA will increase the depth and breadth of its information and offerings, broaden its scope and value, leverage its resources, and create increased synergy across the facilities and educational community. Our strategic alliance agreements with both national and international organizations continue to increase value for our members. The code advocacy program comes alive in the

magazine's Code Talkers column. Plus, synergy with APPA's regions and state and local chapter enhances value for all educational facilities professionals. Of particular note, APPA is working with Sebesta-Blomberg and the EPA's Energy Star program to improve our energy benchmarks and rating tools.

5. Engage Young Facilities

Professionals. In doing so, we ensure a focus on the future that is knowledge-based and technologically improved. Young facilities professionals desire credentials to increase their mobility and to demonstrate their work accomplishments in more credible ways. APPA's Board of Directors has authorized the development of a credential for the young facilities professional and an accredited certification for the seasoned facilities professional. This is indeed an exciting new venture for all of us.


6. Provide Targeted Cutting-Edge Educational Programs.

In Baltimore, Maryland next July, we will introduce a conference called "APPA 2007—Back to the Future" and a "Senior Facilities Officers Summit." These two educational programs will serve the continuing professional development needs of both mid-level managers and senior facilities officers. These activities are considered essential by the volunteer leadership to provide for a continuum of professional development opportunities for the educational facilities professional.

7. Establish Credible and Valued Credentialing Programs for Individuals and Institutions.

APPA will endeavor to develop and deliver the first of two credentials at its new APPA 2007 conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Although a significant undertaking, its time has come. The need for a curriculum-based credential/

designation for the young educational facilities professional is overdue. The corresponding need for a certification for the seasoned professional will take more time to develop since it will incorporate both the body of knowledge of facilities management and successful demonstration that knowledge has been shared and applied at the institutional level. We are planning to unveil this accredited certification program at the APPA 2008 conference.

Implementation and execution of these focused strategies and targeted outcomes over the next three to five years will be critical to APPA's future as the association of choice for educational facilities professionals. They will serve as the foundation for APPA to be the voice on strategic institutional issues for the educational facilities professional. 



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