In the fourth quarter of 2018, MCI Group ran a research study into future-proof organizations. The purpose was to find out the biggest disruptors’ associations are facing and the concrete actions they are taking to shape their future.

**ARE ASSOCIATIONS AS AGILE AS THEY NEED TO BE?**

**WHAT IS CAUSING DISRUPTION IN ASSOCIATIONS?**

Market disruptors causing associations to be better, faster, cheaper… and smarter

- Economic and political changes: 48%
- New offerings from the competition: 41%
- Industry disruption: 34%
- Change in member/customer needs: 33%
- Difficulty engaging those under 40: 33%

What does disruption mean for association events?

1. Bridging physical & digital through hybrid, live & social platforms
2. Encouraging delegates to generate new ideas through online communities
3. Being a knowledge connector through sophisticated information sharing
4. Improving audience experience through data intelligence and insight

Digital transformation: 6 factors that are forcing associations to put in place more customer centric strategies

- A shift in members/customers expectations: 62%
- New ways of doing business: 44%
- New engagement/co-creation with members/customers: 31%
- Customization: 31%
- New learning formats: 31%
- More engagement/co-creation with members/customers: 22%

**HOW ARE ASSOCIATIONS RESPONDING TO DISRUPTION?**

63% Associations are taking concrete actions to rethink the way it’s always been done and stay ahead of the game

Most common actions associations are taking:

- Encourage new ideas and approaches: 45%
- Adoption of new programs, initiatives, tools: 40%
- Facilitate co-creation and collaboration with members/customers: 32%
- Encourage members/customers to speak up, listen and act: 32%
- Appoint a Chief Innovation Officer: 11%

Without a digital transformation we cannot properly engage members and customers.

Respondents say disruption IS NOT openly discussed at Board level: 48%

- Encourage new ideas and approaches: 40%
- Adoption of new programs, initiatives, tools: 40%
- Encourage members/customers to speak up, listen and act: 32%
- Appoint a Chief Innovation Officer: 11%

We have created an innovation incubator to find solutions for our members.

We have taken the risk and reimagined the annual conference format.

We have started with a needs assessments survey.

The appointment of a CIO and the investment in innovation is paying dividends for our organization.

We’ll engage an outside facilitator to create a playbook for foresight planning.

**HOW ASSOCIATIONS ARE SEEKING TO BE MORE AGILE**

59% Associations say they have no strategy for innovation

Top 4 factors they consider for enabling innovation in organizations:

- Getting the leadership buy-in
- Adapt business models
- Increase competitiveness
- Develop strategic partnerships

Less micro-management and more encouraging well-measured risk taking.

46% Respondents say that CHANGE IS A CULTURE.

Associations are rethinking the way things have always been done by empowering their community/leadership to take innovative actions and by creating a safe environment to propose disruptive solutions.

Which function has the responsibility to drive innovation or transformation?

- CEO and C-levels: 50%
- All functions: 30%
- Board: 15%
- Marketing: 5%

Panel profile:

- 55% Professional Societies
- 39% Trade Organizations
- 32% Have grown their total revenues by 10 to 30% in the last two years
- 81% CEOs, Executive Directors and C-Level

Top 3 Industries:

- Healthcare & Lifescience: 18%
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics: 11%
- Energy & Utilities: 9%