



Expanding Association Educational Offerings has Positive Impact on Bottom Line



NAPO was formed in the early 1980s as the National Association of Professional Organizers. Now known as The National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals™, NAPO has approximately 3,500 members dedicated to helping people and organizations bring order and efficiency to their lives. NAPO's mission is to be the leading source for organizing and productivity professionals by providing exceptional education, enhancing business connections, advancing industry research, and increasing public awareness.

Originally, NAPO provided education to members through the annual meeting and other in-person events. Recognizing the need for more formal professional development opportunities in the nascent profession and adopting the education model of the times, NAPO developed an education curriculum for professional organizers. From the beginning, educational sessions were delivered during the annual conference. It didn't take long for NAPO to identify that members needed access to education throughout the year and from that, live webinars were added as a member benefit. Soon enough, technology quickly transformed members' demands for flexible learning opportunities to accommodate their growing workday schedules.

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New Technology allows for Growth

Recognizing the limitation of only offering live classes during the workday when members were working with clients and identifying the growing demand for new content, NAPO pursued a new learning management system (LMS) in 2016 to grow the education program. NAPO began to record the foundation courses that were previously only offered via live webinar and offer as on-demand options. Additionally, NAPO already had the practice of recording the annual conference sessions and while originally, the recordings were offered for sale in the form of CDs, the new LMS provided a clear path to quickly expand the number of class options by adding conference session recordings to the educational library.

Bundles of Education Offered

With NAPO's mission of "providing exceptional education" as the focal point of decision making, the NAPO leaders creatively developed bundles of educational offerings to assist members in easy access to professional development opportunities at a discounted rate. NAPO Members quickly embraced the concept of paying one price and having an annual pass to certain groups of classes.

For example, NAPO has a strong will to assist professionals who are just starting out, navigate the waters of owning their own organizing and productivity business. This "Building a Business" bundle includes classes about the logistics of starting a business, project management, client intake, marketing of a new business, etc. This bundle is available for one price for members and makes sure that all relevant classes are easily accessible.

Specialist Certificates & Digital Badges Added

As the success of the bundle sales started to have a positive impact on NAPO's financials, the NAPO Leaders broadened their thoughts on what might be next. The Board had already been monitoring and discussing global and association trends. The trends of "micro-learning" and "job tenure" were topics clearly on the radar. There was a growing awareness that potential members would change careers and want to quickly gain credibility in the organizing and productivity profession.

CASE STUDY

NAPO already had a formal certification program that was operating under the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) guidelines. The CPO® (Certified Professional Organizer) is the pinnacle credential for a professional organizer. Achieving this designation requires a course of study, experience, and passing an exam. There are 358 CPOs which has grown since its inception in 2007.

NAPO saw a need for intermediate and advanced member education for those not yet certified. To respond to relevant trends, NAPO launched a specialist certificate program. Specialist Certificates enabled those newer to the profession to earn a designation by completing a set number of classes specific to an area of study. Members quickly embraced the ability to gain professional development and earn a digital badge to share the achievement with their prospective client base. Currently, NAPO offers three Specialist Certificates in Residential Organizing, Workplace Productivity and Life Transitions. As the productivity and organizing profession continues to mature, the NAPO leaders have made the strategic decision to continue to grow the number of Specialist Certificates they make available to those interested in joining the profession. New Bundles of educational content focused on the class options required to earn the certificates are now being offered to members to provide a clear and easy path for professional development.

NAPO's ability to respond to the evolution of the profession and embrace new technology **has resulted in a 33% increase in education revenue during the first year** of implementing the changes. The important lesson here is that technological, economic, and societal changes are rapidly transforming the way people connect, learn and work. There are affordable and even free resources that your current or prospective members may be considering. If associations want to maintain their status as a go-to education source, they must continue to evolve the way they offer learning opportunities.

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