

# Executive Memo

August 2002

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## A New Generation's Take on Associations

—by *Robert Wendover*

It is becoming a crisis in many associations—how to enlist the participation of younger generations in the myriad of chapter meetings, conferences, lobbying and other activities crucial to the organization's mission. When asked, association leaders lament the aging of veteran members and the lack of enthusiasm among new entrants. "They keep asking "What's in it for me?,"" say these leaders. "Don't they understand how crucial they are to the survival of the organization's future?"

Well, no. They probably don't. But can you blame them? Those in their 20s and 30s have grown up with a different take on what's important in life. As children in the seventies and eighties, they experienced, first hand, the tumult of social chaos, layoffs, Vietnam, recession, divorce, inflation, government scandals and a host of other societal maladies. These events have left the so-called Generation X with a skepticism about institutions and their value to society.

When invited to join a trade or professional organization, their antennae emerge, sniffing around for hidden agendas, time-consuming bureaucracies and the endless politics that characterize so many Baby-Boomer-led groups. Sadly, they discover much of this lives in today's associations.

Is this meant as an indictment of associations and their leadership? Certainly not. The difference is in perception. Many Xers, having learned self-reliance in their youth, simply choose to go their own way, and that has not included traditional institutions such as associations and other pillars of American society. They tend to take a harder look at the benefits of association mem-

bership before jumping in with both feet. So what's an association to do?

**Embrace technology.** Xers are famous for having an electronic network of 100 or more people with whom they communicate regularly. They survey each other on a wide range of topics, both personal and professional. As one can imagine, this can be a mixed blessing. If they find your association helpful and effective, they will tell their colleagues. If they don't...they will tell their colleagues.

The more you can integrate technology into the machinations of the organization, the more you will attract the interest of Generation X. Members should be able to register online for meetings, obtain the notes from seminars, link to other industry sites, participate in chat rooms about industry-specific topics and benefit from a host of other services without leaving their computer, wherever that computer may be.

**Take life balance into consideration.** Xers work to live. Older generations live to work. Herein lies one of the biggest challenges to participation. Given the option between attending an evening chapter meeting or spending time with family, Xers will choose family every time. Xers focus on the outcome, not the task. If associations are to serve this younger generation effectively, then they will need to provide services that serve the individual without putting them through some time-consuming process for doing so.

**Stop circling the wagons.** Generation X has matured into a society where politics

## Executive Memo

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## President's Message

# Strategic Planning Revisited

—by Karen Wojdyla, CSAE President

In May, the CSAE board met to review our core purpose and to take a further look at the supporting vision elements we developed a year ago in our strategic planning process. Why look back on something we did a year ago? To make sure that our strategic plan, its elements and the organization as a whole are moving forward in a positive direction and, in our ever-changing industry, continue to meet your needs as association management professionals.

The board agreed that CSAE's core purpose remains unchanged and *to support association executives in the ongoing pursuit of knowledge, wisdom and continued professional excellence* is our raison d'être or reason for being.

We also reviewed each of our nine vision elements and have outlined them below. Those in bold have been modified or added to better serve our core purpose.

1. Serve as a think tank for understanding, exploring and embracing the future
2. Deliver cutting-edge programs and customized services
3. **Demonstrate and encourage the effective use of information technology in association management** (revised)
4. Offer a gathering place for the association management community and provide a variety of energizing experiences
5. **Provide information on best practices and success stories in association management** (revised)
6. Embrace strategic partnerships/alliances to provide innovation and efficiency to members and customers
7. Promote public awareness of the impact of associations on society and the role of the association management professional
8. Improve and enhance communications, education and relationships to positively affect public policy



9. **Create an open and collaborative environment that fosters membership participation and service, and advances CSAE** (new)

### Vision Element #3

While the board originally thought one of CSAE's goals would be to "innovate and lead in contributing to the use of technological advances," we realize that CSAE is better positioned to "demonstrate and encourage the effective use of information technology." One example of this is our annual Technology Showcase. The Showcase gives members an opportunity to visit with technology vendors, partake in hands-on demonstrations and take part in state-of-the-art educational sessions on technological advances in the industry.

### Vision Element #5

Although we do "provide models for best practices in association management," we can more aptly provide information on best practices and success stories in association management. We presently provide this information through CSAE's Executives After Hours and Executive Circle programs.

### Vision Element #9

The board also wanted to add a new vision element—"Creating an open and collaborative environment that fosters membership participation and service, and advances CSAE." We'd like our members to reach out to our community and the community at large. By doing so, we benefit from the public's greater understanding of our industry and increase the visibility of CSAE.

*Continued on page 4*

## September Luncheon Promises to Help Build “Solid Gold” Relationships

by Dick Bruso

**C**SAE’s September luncheon program promises to help attendees go beyond the business card shuffle to unleash the true power of making the ideal connections for your association or business. This entertaining and highly informative lunch program will provide proven and powerful networking techniques (based upon the phenomenal “Six Degrees of Separation” approach), that are guaranteed to maximize your ability to meet just the right people. As you will discover, it’s not just what you know, but “who you know” that will ultimately create true and

lasting success in all that you do. At this jam-packed and fun-filled presentation you will learn how to:

- ❖ Favorably connect with anyone in the world you desire to meet.
  - ❖ Maximize key contacts at any conference or networking event.
  - ❖ Document and track your networking contacts.
  - ❖ Cultivate quality “centers of influence” to move your association or organization forward.
- AND as a Special Bonus for association leaders...

- ❖ Double the size of your association membership in one year!

Our luncheon presenter, Dick Bruso, is an accomplished speaker, marketing/media expert, and master networker, having given entertaining high-content keynote speeches and workshops on media relations, creative marketing, and strategic networking to numerous organizations across the country. He is a member of CSAE, the National Speakers Association (NSA), the International Federation for Professional Speakers, and NSA/Colorado. Dick has served on the Board

of Directors for NSA/Colorado and the NSA National PR Advisory Task Force.

An experienced broadcaster, he has managed three radio stations and was host and producer of a nationally syndicated radio feature heard on over 300 stations. As a highly respected consultant, Dick enjoys creating and implementing powerful marketing, media, and relationship-building strategies to position his clients to be “heard above the noise” in the marketplace.

Go to [www.csaenet.org](http://www.csaenet.org) for additional information or to register online. ❖



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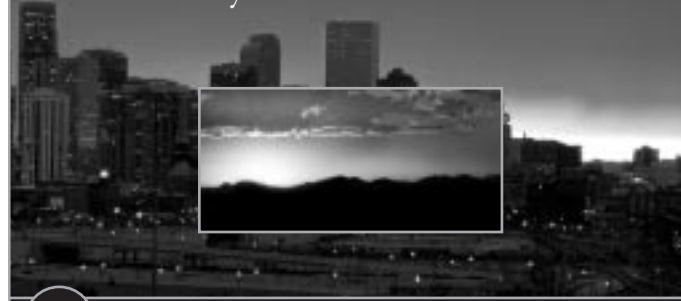
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## President's Message

*Continued from page 2*

## Strategic Marketing Committee

Our Strategic Marketing Committee, headed up by Dorothy Shadrick, CAE, ACE Management, will be contacting you this year to make certain our vision of CSAE is also your vision. It's important for us to hear what you think. We want your CSAE experience to be rewarding—personally and professionally.

## Noisemaker Task Force

Our Noisemaker Task Force, led by Dick Brusco of Heard Above the Noise, has been working on how CSAE can better promote itself internally (to our members), and externally (to the community). It's dubbed the

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***The board agreed that CSAE's core purpose remains unchanged and to support association executives in the ongoing pursuit of knowledge, wisdom and continued professional excellence is our raison d'être or reason for being.***

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Noisemaker Task Force because "we want to be heard"! There are some people within our association and many others on the outside who don't know what CSAE is all about. The Noisemaker Task Force has focused on the composition of our membership and the best way for us to clearly and succinctly describe ourselves...to each other and to people outside of the organization. They have come up with the following:

- C**reating networking opportunities
- S**erving educational needs
- A**dvancing your profession
- E**nhancing the community

Does this say what CSAE means to you? Are we the source to provide you with the means to help you grow professionally and personally? I know we are! You'll hear more from the task force as we continue to position ourselves to the community at large. With the ASAE Annual

Meeting and Exposition coming to Denver, we may get a good head start.

## ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition

On August 17–20, 2002, we will welcome many of our colleagues from across the world. This is the first time the ASAE Annual Meeting & Expo has been held in Denver and I hope you are planning to attend. We need you to help us extend our Rocky Mountain hospitality and show our colleagues that one of the best places in the world to hold a great convention is Colorado!

## CSAE's 50th Anniversary

You definitely don't want to miss our 50th Birthday celebration on Monday evening, August 19th at Coors Field. We'll also have a CSAE reception area at the convention center. With 5,000+ attendees at this conference,

we'll need a place to relax and visit. This is also a great opportunity for our first-time attendees and new members to visit with other CSAE members.

I hope you have been enjoying your summer and are ready for another wonderful CSAE year. I look forward to seeing you in August!

CSAE, your career deserves it.

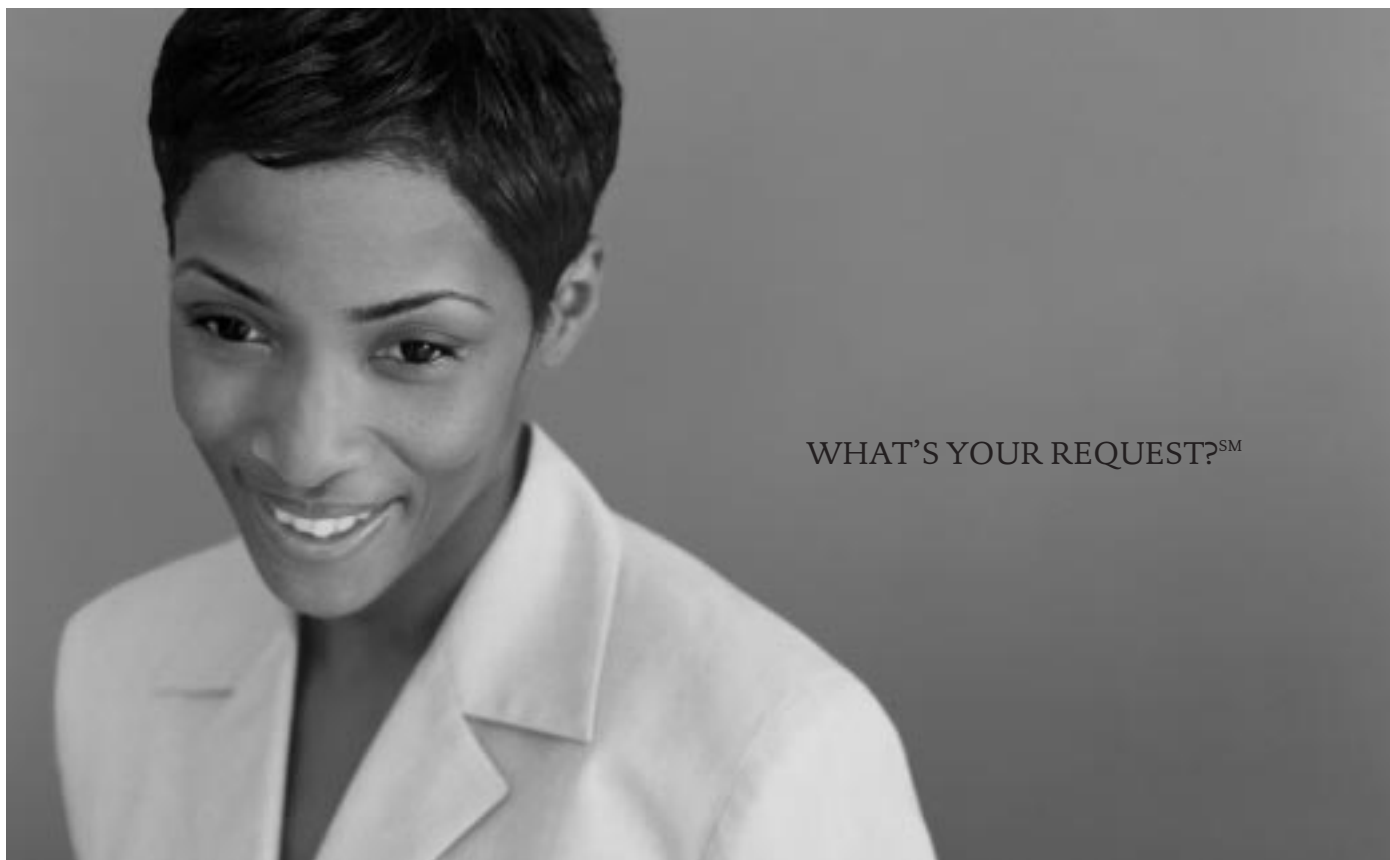


Karen Wojdyla  
CSAE President

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## A New Generation's Take on Associations

Continued from page 1

appear to have done more harm than good. Mention, or even infer, the necessity to "pay dues" before becoming "blessed" within association and you will never see them again. Xers equate knowledge and skill with power. For better or worse, tenure and experience fail to get their attention, in many cases. One might argue, successfully, that experience breeds wisdom, something lacking in many young professionals. But one also has to concede that erecting barriers of entry to the inner circle can also inflict considerable damage on the association over time. Instead...

**Place more emphasis on succession planning.** While discussed annually in strategic planning sessions in chapters throughout the country, little is ever done to formally nurture leaders

within local and regional organizations. History has shown that Xers thrive on this type of experience because it provides opportunities to strengthen skills and build credentials. The end result is greater versatility, something valued highly within this generation. What

conducting seminars and speeches around the US, I attend more than 60 events every year. Without sounding too harsh, I can honestly say Baby Boomer style music dominates most evening programs.

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### *They tend to take a harder look at the benefits of association membership before jumping in with both feet.*

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steps can your association take to implement a system for identifying and recruiting young members to take a leadership role over time?

**Rethink the agenda for meetings, conferences and shows.** In

**Eliminate the "talking heads" during the day.** If a speaker is boring, someone in their 20s or 30s will give the presentation 10 minutes. If it does not improve, they will discreetly leave by the back door. After all, the speaker should have had more respect for the audience and prepared better for the presentation.

**Ask!** Let's face it, Xers have a different take on what they want from an association than Baby Boomers and the generation before. This take is not wrong; it's just different. But the only way to increase the participation and investment of those in their 20s and 30s is to pursue their involvement in the strategic planning of the organization on all levels. While this may, and almost certainly will, create some adversity, adversity creates opportunity. For many, that's what associations are all about. ✧



## Tech Tip

**Q**uick tips to improve your day-to-day work and increase the efficiency of your organization. E-mail your tips to Tim Blum at [timblum@rmel.org](mailto:timblum@rmel.org).

**Image Formats**—Images come in a variety of formats. Three of the most common formats used are:

- .gif—known as GIF, pronounced Jif – stands for Graphics Interchange Format
- .jpg— known as JPEG, pronounced jay-peg – stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group
- .tif—known as TIFF, pronounced the way it looks – stands for Tagged Image File Format

First off, what are these three letters? They are known as file extensions. File extensions are the three letters following the filename (e.g. filename.tif). These short three letters indicate the type of file and tell the computer which application to use to open the file.

So when should you use these different formats? When scanning or saving your image, which format you should use, depends on the content of the image.

The two most common image formats used on the internet are GIF and JPEG. JPEG and GIF files are fairly similar, the difference is the way they compress the file data. Compression is key when transferring or viewing files on the internet. JPEG is designed for compressing either full-color or gray-scale image, such as scanned photographs. GIFs are much better for images with few distinct colors, such as black & white drawings. Save your images as JPEG or GIF if you want to use your images on the internet or have a smaller file size.

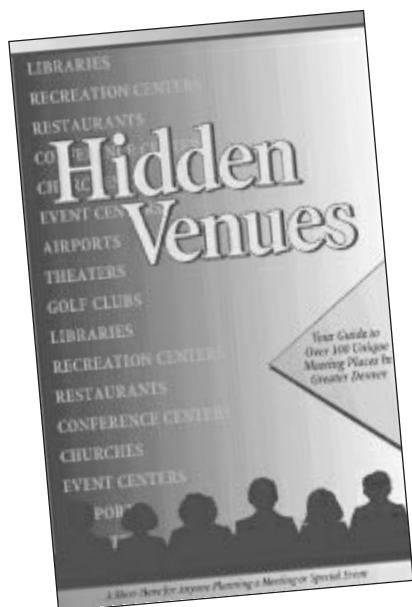
TIFF files by comparison can be much bigger because they don't have the compression capabilities of GIFs or JPEGs. However, where they lack in compression they make up for in quality. The TIFF file format was designed by developers of printers, monitors and scanners, so naturally it's geared for very rich images. Usually TIFFs are a higher quality image, like those you provide a printer for your newsletter.

Usually the resolution is much poorer for JPEG or GIF than TIFF's because of the compression factor. That's why you get a poor looking image with the well known "jaggies" when you copy a photo off the web and use it in a publication. Watch for more on image formats in the September issue. ✧

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*Robert W. Wendover is the Managing Director of the Center for Generational Studies which conducts research, produces seminars and publishes resources on how the generations relate to one another in American Society. He is a past president of both the Rocky Mountain Chapter of ASTD and the Colorado Speakers Association. For a complimentary subscription to the Center's newsletter, GenTrends, contact him at 1-800-227-5510 or [wendover@gen-trends.com](mailto:wendover@gen-trends.com).*

## Colorado's Hidden Venues



**H**idden Venues is Colorado's only directory of over 100 unique meeting places along the Front Range. This complete resource guide makes it easy to quickly locate meeting facilities of all sizes, costs and amenities. Listings provide key information including complete contact details, number and size of meeting rooms, rental costs, reception and classroom capacity, catering and alcohol availability, parking and other data.

Hidden Venues is an invaluable tool for any meeting planner, organization or individuals responsible for finding space to hold any type of event.

Companies, associations, fundraisers and training firms will benefit from finding alternative and possibly more cost effective locations for meetings and presentations. This is also a great source for individuals in charge of setting up parties, family celebrations and charitable events.

The book's author is The Meeting Edge president and CSAE member, JoLane Hochstetler. She can be reached at 303-457-2119. The book can be purchased at the Tattered Cover book-store, the Denver Chamber bookstore or online at [www.TheMeetingEdge.com](http://www.TheMeetingEdge.com). ♦

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## Branding Your Organization: If Starbucks and Nike Can Do It, Why Can't You?

by Mark Linnell

**B**randing has long been a staple of consumer marketing efforts, which is precisely why any of us can rattle off a long list of consumer brand names which are stuck like burrs in the folds of our brains: Tide,

Coke, Ford, Disney, Kleenex, Harley-Davidson and Budweiser among scores of others.

Each is the result of meticulously crafted marketing campaigns, woven together of exhaustive research, highly

creative messaging, constant media exposure and strategic planning worthy of a D-Day assault.

Is branding a concept that applies to marketing activities for organizations? Is a branding effort something your organization should or even could undertake? To answer that, start by taking a look at the role marketing plays in the success of your organization now.

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### The Point of Marketing

It's something of an oversimplification to say that if you're Ford, the point of marketing is to sell Fords. But if you're a professional society or association, you know you couldn't have an organization at all without a continuous supply of new members, and in order to get them, you have to, at minimum, compete with other demands on their attention—if not directly with other related organizations.

Marketing in this context is about capturing the positive attention of qualified prospects in order to achieve goals such as increasing membership, improving conference attendance or selling educational materials.

In its essence, marketing is using communications in its myriad forms to raise awareness, build confidence, reinforce positive opinions, overcome negative perceptions and ultimately cause a qualified individual to feel good about your organization, what you do and what you stand for. If you have a Web site, publish a newsletter or print conference materials, you're already marketing. Now the issue is to market smarter, and that's where branding comes in.

### Why Build a Strong Brand?

The benefits of a strong brand are these:

*Continued on page 9*

## Branding Your Organization

*continued from page 8*

- ❖ It differentiates your organization from others in your marketplace.
- ❖ The perceived value allows a premium price to be set.
- ❖ It generates an unqualified assumption of high quality.
- ❖ It provides a springboard for new endeavors.
- ❖ It can help you weather economic hard times.

## Do Your Homework

When the National Apartment Association (NAA) determined a branding effort was needed to bring their wildly diverse communications together into a single, focused campaign, they started by commissioning a detailed survey of their affiliates (city apartment associations) and members (individual members of those associations).

You should do no less. Before any work is done, you need to objectively assess current attitudes and perceptions toward your organization as well as determine what constitutes a useful and successful organization in the minds of your prospects. A good mail-in survey can help insure representation from the entire membership and quantify general attitudes; a well-organized focus group or series of in-depth interviews will help you see things in greater detail.

## Formulate Strategic Positioning

Among other discoveries from their research, NAA found that affiliates and members felt disconnected from the national organization. Thus, one strategy underpinning the planned marketing campaign would be to emphasize important ways in which the national organization worked with those in the field to affect multifamily housing legislation, suppliers and operations.

The development of a strategic statement or statements will need to take into account your research findings

and competitive situation with similar organizations, as well as your organizational goals and objectives. Stake out a "position" for your organization to occupy in your prospects' brains, one that defines your purpose as distinct from any competitive offering. In this case, NAA sought to portray itself as the broadly-based, grass-roots advocate for the apartment industry.

## Develop a Creative Look and Feel

A lot of our perceptions are formed on a subconscious level, which means that even when the strategy is the same, different wording of the message or different graphic approaches will yield different sets of emotional appeals.

*Continued on page 13*

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## How I Got Here...

Once again, CSAE Execs responded with vigor! The question, "How did you get here?" brought many "you won't believe this, but..." stories. A few of us attacked the profession with a mission, but most of us are "accidental executives," taking a winding path to fulfilling destinations.

Because of the number of responses, we are publishing these throughout several issues. Watch for them—stories about you—in this and coming editions of *Executive Memo*.

### Carol Brooks, Executive Director Colorado Chapter of the Appraisal Institute

I had always been very involved with volunteer work. When I found out that people pay people to do the things that I was doing for free, I took a second look. I told my future husband that I wanted to be an associa-

tion director, but I did not know how to get started. He said he wanted to start an association but didn't know how to do it. We blundered our way through starting a new association, Rubber Lining Applicators Association, distributed a newsletter and held the first conference in Louisiana!

At the time I was a residential real estate appraiser and belonged to the Society of Real Estate Appraisers. When I read in their newsletter that their executive director was retiring, I called the president. When he told me the association had no money, I said, "No problem, I have no experience." That was twenty years ago. I am still working with them. They now have money, and I now have experience.

I have since worked with many associations and still look forward to what each day will offer. I have learned an incredible amount about many areas, traveled to interesting places, met fascinating people, and love being self-employed. ♦

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## Member Profile: Dean Dennis, Facility Management for Global Spectrum

by Mo Goldman, Conference Direct

**D**ean Dennis, is regional vice president of Facility Management for Global Spectrum and a CSAE member for the past five years. And for the five years prior to that he represented the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce as vice president of the Convention & Visitors Council. You've probably seen him at monthly meetings and who could forget that he hosted the 2000 CSAE Conference in Pueblo. In addition, he served on the 2001 Conference Committee for Keystone.

In 1997, when Global Spectrum, a division of Comcast Cable, won the contract to manage the Pueblo Convention Center, Dean left the Chamber and took on his new position with Global. He also oversees management of their other western U.S. facilities—the World Arena in Colorado Springs. In addition, they manage two facilities currently under construction—the Budweiser Event Center in Larimer County and an event center in Overland Park, Kansas.

Dean was born in Kadoka, South Dakota and raised in Center, Colorado in the San Luis Valley. His parents were ranchers—raising cattle and harvesting barley. During his teen years they moved to Phoenix where he completed high school. Then he attended Arizona Technical College as a broadcasting student. While at his first post-college job at radio station KSLV in Monte Vista, Colorado he met his wife, also a disc jockey. He worked for many years in retail hardware and in 1991 moved to Pueblo. Shortly after, he began working for the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce where he implemented strategies designed to promote Pueblo as a tourism destination and convention site and to spur economic development.

Just recently, Dean and his wife, Gigi, moved to Denver. From 1995–

2000, she was a Colorado State Senator. Under a Bush appointment, she now works for the USDA in the State Director's Office of Rural Development in Lakewood.

Dean's accolades include "CSAE Associate Member of the Year" and Global Spectrum's General Manager of the Year, both in 2000. Hobbies include golf and baseball—his favorite teams are the Rockies and the Kansas City Royals.

What will Dean be doing in ten years? "Doing the same thing. I'm enjoying and learning a lot about convention and arena management, overseeing facilities, and building business. I'll just be busier!" If you need a meeting venue, call him at (720)981-9135. ✧

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## Branding Your Organization

*continued from page 9*

### Target Your Audience

Establishing what to say is important; establishing how to say it is critical. But if you can't get the message out to exactly the people who need to see it, with sufficient strength to break through the clutter, capture their attention and remain in their memory, your effort has been wasted.

Almost without exception, media is the largest part of any communications budget. The money you spend on advertising, direct mail, trade show attendance, publishing your newsletter or developing your Web site usually far outstrips other, relatively incidental costs. Maximize your return on investment by thoughtfully preparing an annual media plan in line with the overall marketing strategy.

### Stick With It

Attitudes don't change overnight or from a single exposure. If you're serious about changing perceptions, think long-term. A branding campaign is not something you do this year and change next year just because a new set of volunteer leaders has been installed. The whole point of branding is to present a cohesive, stable and consistent face to your targeted prospects and the general public.

You should continue to do objective research to keep abreast of your brand and how it is perceived, as well as defining the key areas of interest of your members and prospects. To deal with inevitable changes in communications needs and directions, develop a framework that can be altered as required. If you've chosen a sufficiently flexible graphic approach, you should be able to make alterations and

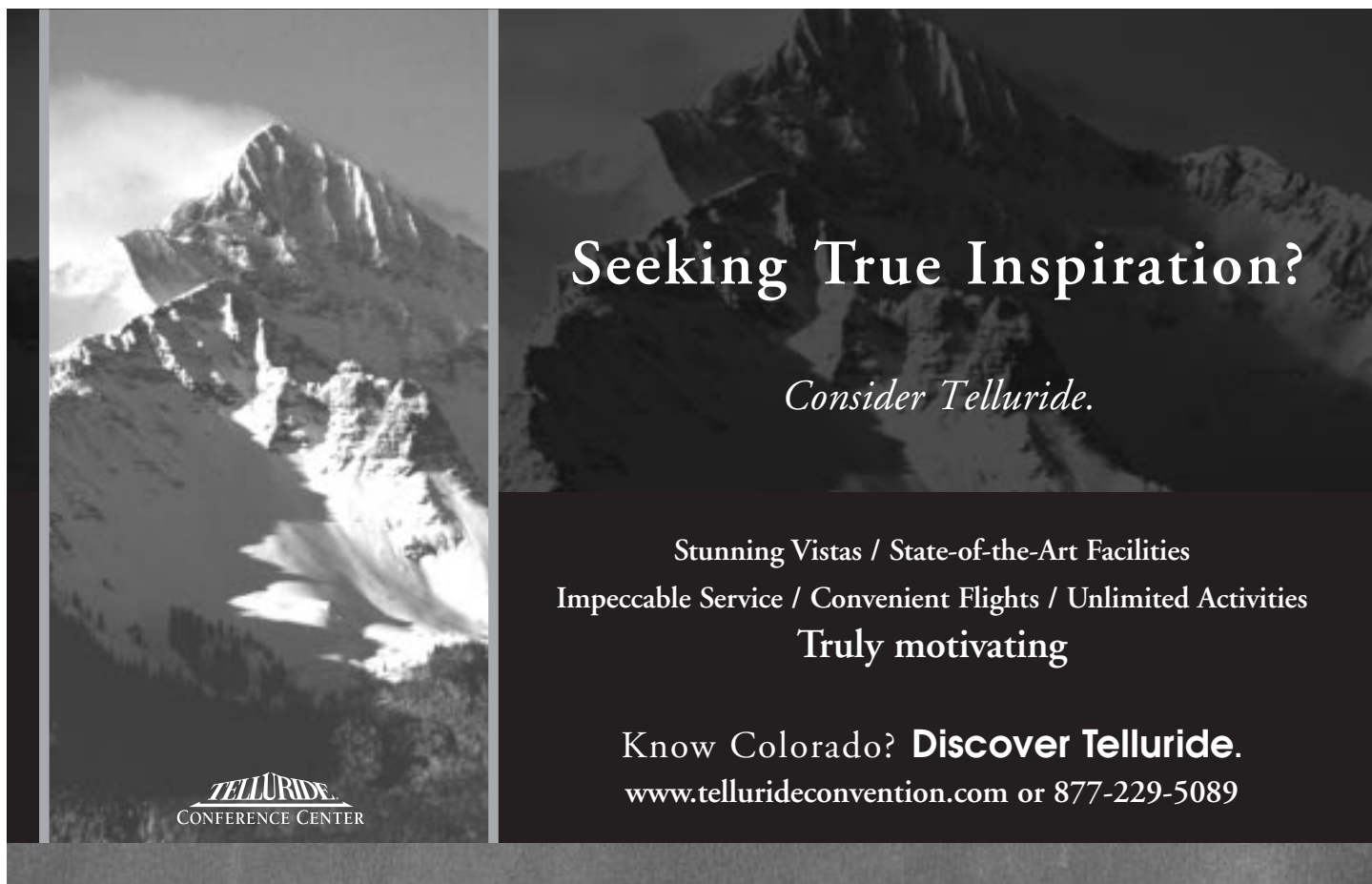
address new areas without changing the underlying branding.

### To Brand Or Not to Brand

A branding effort is not something to undertake lightly. To do it right requires significant time, effort, resources, patience and strength of will—especially when implementing it requires buy-in by a committee of more than just a small handful of people and support of the entire leadership. It's not right for every organization, but for some, the benefits will far, far outweigh the costs. ✧

---

*Mark Linnell is a partner with Linnell & Soreide Marketing Partners, a firm specializing in advertising, public relations and marketing consulting. He can be reached at 303-684-0300 or [www.2adguys.com](http://www.2adguys.com).*



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## Here's the CAE question of the month...

Which of the following conditions would most likely warrant discontinuing an existing affinity program?

- A. Reduced membership retention rate
- B. Changes in the vendor's contract terms
- C. Reduced income from the program
- D. Unfavorable member evaluation.

### Answer at bottom.

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Answer is D.  
Unfavorable member evaluation.

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303.368.4222. For sponsorship information call the CSAE office at 303.368.9090. ✧



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## September Golf Tournament

**When:** September 10, 2002

**Where:** Inverness Golf Club  
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I-25 & Dry Creek Road  
Englewood, CO 80112  
Phone: 303.799.5800

**Directions:** Take I-25 to the County Line Road Exit. Turn east on County Line Road, then North onto Inverness Drive West

**Time:** 6:30 a.m.—Continental Breakfast & Registration Check In  
7:30 a.m.—Tournament Begins (shotgun start)  
12:30 p.m.—Awards Luncheon

**Cost:** **Golf Tournament:**  
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**Tuesday, September 10,  
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