



GET THE WHOLE PIE OR THE PIECES YOU NEED

Two AMCs share client case studies that illustrate the range of options that AMCs can provide to associations. Some opt for full-service management, and others work with AMCs for one or a few specialized services.

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EVERY ASSOCIATION IS UNIQUE, and so are its needs. Association management companies recognize this and strive to provide a range of service options for associations of all different tastes and varieties. Some groups need full-service management. Others may need support

in only one or two functional areas. And others may seek ad hoc, project-based services. Whatever the case, AMCs can serve up the “whole pie” or just a slice of their service options, and client associations can get just what they need to whet their appetite.

Below, two AMCs, Management Solutions Plus (MSP) and Talley Management Group (TMG), each with more than 20 years in serving associations, offer their experience in serving client associations on both ends of the service spectrum.

THE WHOLE PIE: FULL-SERVICE MANAGEMENT

MSP: In 1996, when the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) came to MSP for full-service association management, it had a limited scope of work, including membership processing, financial management, and meeting management for two annual events, as well as designing and distributing a quarterly newsletter.

Fast forward to 2014 and several strategic plans later, and both ASCA and the value it brings to the consulting arborist community have expanded significantly, as have the services that MSP provides. One of the keys to ASCA's early success was tapping into the education that ASAE provides for chief elected and staff officers.

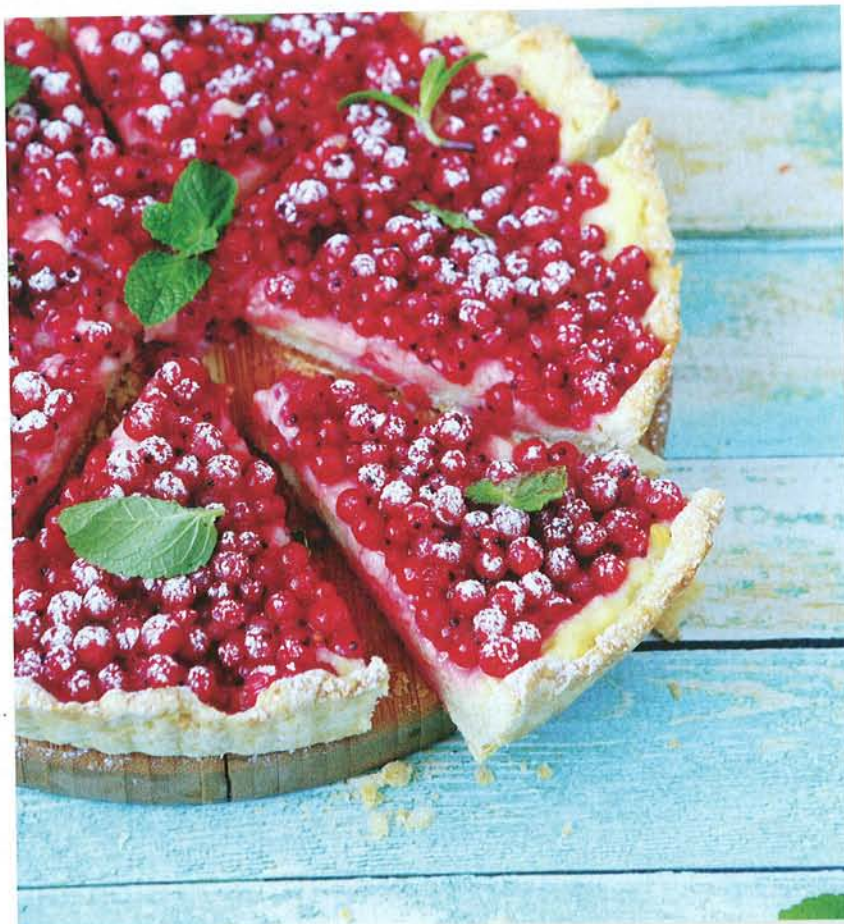
Good governance has enabled ASCA to position the association to anticipate its members' needs. And, as the association has grown and its scope of work has expanded, it has tapped into MSP's staff expertise. When a strategic plan goal involved branding and marketing, MSP's marketing department kicked into gear. When the next plan focused on increased educational programming, ASCA took advantage of other staff expertise to develop core competencies and educational vehicles to support them. The work of the communications department has also grown along with ASCA, from graphic design to website development to editorial services for its quarterly newsletter.

TMG: A great example of a full-service client at TMG is the American Headache Society (AHS), proving the adage that, yes, there is an association for everything. AHS came to TMG in 1989 as a group of 300 neurologists specializing in the

research and treatment of headaches, with \$150,000 in the bank. At the time, a headache was thought to be a psychosomatic “women's illness.” Members of AHS believed this was not the case, that it was a biological disease that could be diagnosed and treated.

TMG provided AHS business, financial, and program guidance; professional staffing; and management support. Today, AHS has more than 1,800 members worldwide, an operating budget of \$1.5 million, and \$2 million in reserves. It has produced programs to educate more than 5,000 primary care physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of headaches. The organization has hosted the International Headache Congress four times, most recently in 2013 in Boston. In 2001, AHS won the ASAE Associations Advance America Award for the Neurology Ambassador Program. In 2009, AHS launched the American Migraine Foundation's 36 Million Migraine Campaign with a goal of raising \$36 million (one dollar for each headache sufferer in the U.S.) for research and education about headaches.

Our job has been to help AHS see the future and implement the plans to get there. We help chart the path and then provide the management structure and knowledge to achieve the mission.





JUST A SLICE: INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

TMG: For a standalone international professional society, TMG has been brought in on a routine basis for more than two years to do program reviews or consult on specific, discrete projects. These projects have included finding and negotiating a new journal publisher and annual meeting site, budget consulting, AMS business-rule review, and vendor introductions, demos, and recommendations.

The full range of what TMG knows and does, knowledge accrued across a range of clients over 27 years, provides the expertise that can be applied to specific project needs of standalone associations on a consulting or project management basis. In this case, clients get the goodness of the whole pie but only pay for a slice.

MSP: SOCAP International (the Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals in Business) is a thriving standalone association. In a strong growth cycle, SOCAP decided in 2012 to capitalize on its success by investing in a marketing strategy that would help it continue to grow. While SOCAP had in-house staff to implement a plan once created, it sought experienced outside help in developing high-level marketing strategies.

SOCAP contacted MSP to work

on researching and developing the marketing strategy to increase its membership numbers and conference attendance, increase engagement of members and nonmembers in other areas, and explore new areas of opportunity. After researching the industry and holding discussions with key stakeholders, MSP delivered the final

report to SOCAP. “The benefit of using an AMC (or at least MSP) as a partner is that they were very comfortable with this model of jumping into a new association,” says Matt D’Uva, FASAE, CAE, president and CEO of SOCAP International. “We are constantly trying to explore new opportunities and growth strategies, but with a small staff, we do not have headcount or excess capacity. Working with partners like MSP allows us to explore new opportunities without increasing headcount and gives us the flexibility to bring new resources in and out as we need them.”

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