

2021

2022

2023

2024



International Association
of Business Communicators

**STRONGER
TOGETHER**

TODAY

- Objectives & Background
- Review of Research and Thinking
- Stronger Together
- Hearing from You
- Next Steps



OBJECTIVES



- Identify the key elements of thinking/work of the taskforce that led to the formation of the plan
- Examine the current and future needs of the profession relative to the new strategic plan
- Evaluate the components of the plan and impact on the next four years of IABC
- Defining how volunteer leaders and members can be part of this ambitious 4 year plan

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE



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PLANNING TIMELINE



REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND THINKING



- Identifying Mega Trends
- Communication Professionals Survey
- Blue Ocean Strategy Analysis
- Value Chain Analysis
- Persona Development

GLOBAL MEGA TRENDS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON IABC



POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

- Africa and Asia are potential growth markets
- By 2030 all Boomers will be 65 years and older: why will they remain with IABC?
- There are more Millennials and Gen Z, than any other demographic today and into the future, who are very comfortable in a digital/virtual world that is always on and in real-time.

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

- Higher business failures and reduced demand for some communication professionals' skills
- Large organizations will restructure to implement new digital technologies with further pressure on communication roles and hiring
- Downsizing and budget freezes in certain industries
- More gig opportunities for deeper knowledge-based communications expertise (crisis, reputation, change, coaching, etc.)
- As corporations become more politically active with many potential reputational threats' communicators will need to be agile and prepared for all situations
- Digital listening will be critical.

TECHNOLOGY CHANGES REQUIRE HIGHER-VALUE THINKING

- Basic communications skills will be redundant, and more strategic and complex thinking will be required to solve complex cross-functional issues
- Communications has become vital in all disciplines so many education programs will incorporate specific communications training into their curriculum.
- Communication professionals will become influencers driving messages socially internally and externally.

HOW COMMUNICATION IS EVOLVING

- Visual and audio communication skills will continue to grow in demand and will become a core skillset for business communication professionals.
- The line between communicators/influencers and professional business communications will blur.
- Greater personalization of messaging will reduce the need for generic broadcasting of messaging
- Major focus on pull communications – voice search tools/chatbots/digital assistant
- Fewer live large events and conferences (most will remain in digital format) will greater emphasis on smaller, personalize and unique face-to-face events.
- Constant, real-time communication with employees and stakeholders

DIGITILIZATION - FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

- Greater emphasis on expertise in gamification and augmented reality
- Greater focus on data analysis and transformation into actionable insights
- Implementation of autonomous digital communications enterprise in larger international companies to centralize, streamline communications with more personalization.
- Regionally and local communications will be embedded in the business as influencers generating content via social channels (internally & externally)
- Smaller organizations will outsource third-party autonomous digital communications enterprises for personalized communications both internally and externally.
- Digital communication channels and tools will continue to evolve and adapt with new technologies and players.

SOCIETAL CHANGES AND NEW NORMAL

- Greater sensitivity to a multitude of different audiences (language, culture, data profile)
- Introduction of blockchain into certifying facts from fiction in communications
- Greater demand for corporate transparency, ethical behavior and ESG/CSR/DEI
- Corporations will need always to be prepared for a reputation digital attack (ethics, security & privacy issues)
- Continuous upgrading of communications skills across an organization (coaching, new tools, etc.)
- New communications etiquette will be established in the new home life/work-life balance
- Greater access to communication talent pool in a WFH environment.
- Company influencers and brand ambassadors will become more valuable.
- Impact on communication training and education system

COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONAL SURVEY

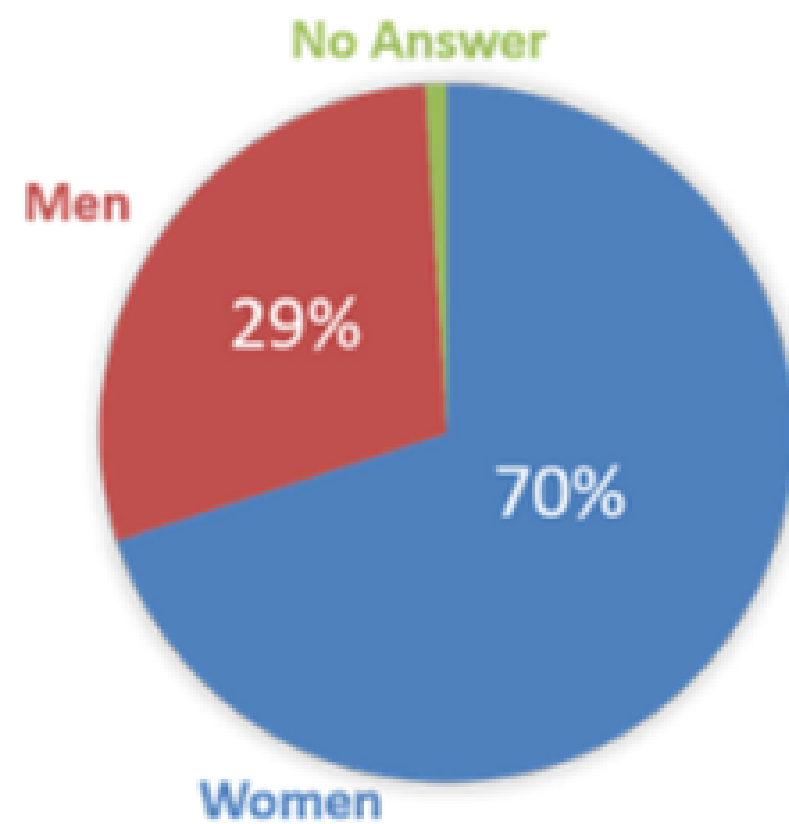


“As a business communicator, what is the biggest communication challenge you are struggling with right now?”

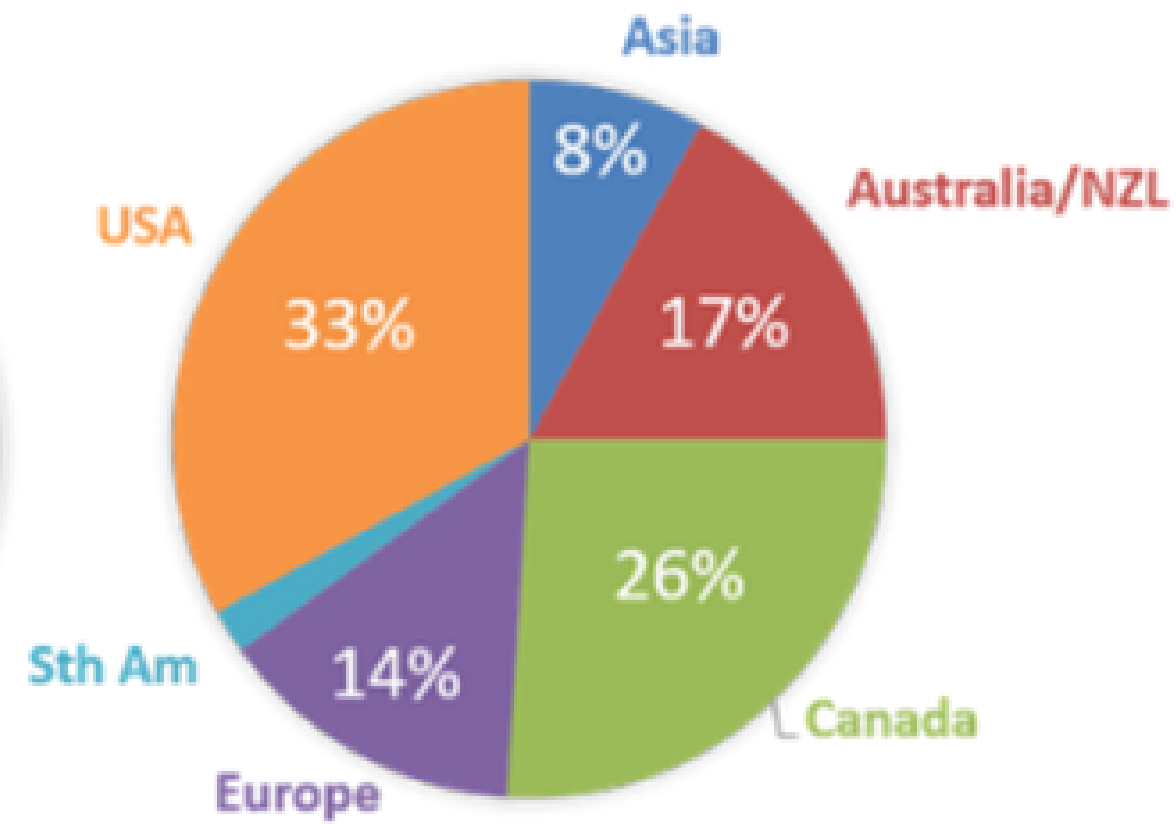


IABC executed an online survey directed to communication professionals from 12–30 April 2021. The purpose of the anonymous survey was to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the business communication profession in this new digitally transformed world.

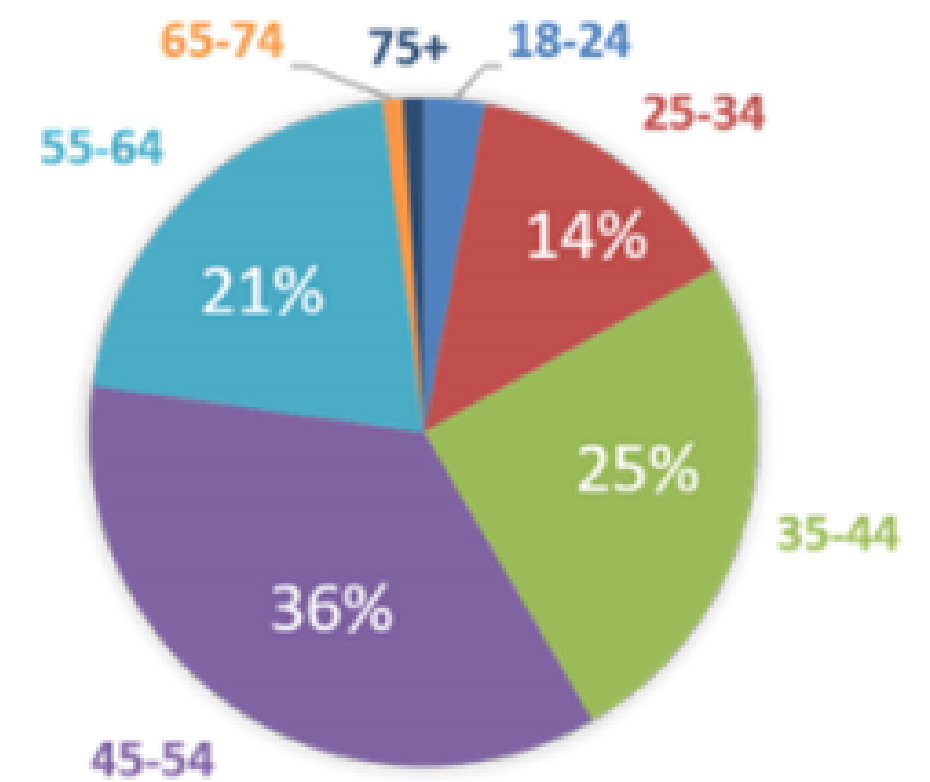
SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS



Gender



Geography



Age Groups



IMPACT OF COVID-19

COVID 19 has accelerated the importance of communications

"Never in our history has well planned strategic communication been more critical to success – for business, for society, for humanity itself. Embrace the opportunity to make a positive difference for others through both actions and words."



MAJOR CHALLENGES

The major challenges facing communication professionals

DISTRACTED AUDIENCE

Poor target engagement, too much noise & clutter, fragmented, too many channels – traditional & digital, complexities, with a major focus on COVID.

OVERTAXED WORKLOAD

The volume of work, expectations for shortened turnaround times, digital speed and fatigue and the lack of face-to-face collaboration.

SPEED OF CHANGE

Keeping up with trends and the speed of change, adopting new ways of working, upgrading skillsets, and understanding the ramifications of digital transformation.

LACK OF RESOURCES

Budget cuts, limited people, and crushing business priorities will negatively affect the impact we want to achieve

THE DIGITAL WORLD IS HERE



Top skills communication professionals want to master...

EVERYTHING DIGITAL

There is a great urgency to better understand everything about digital from design, marketing, mindset, production, and data and digital analytics.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

It's no surprise this is a skillset in demand with so much change occurring within and outside of organizations. Communication professionals want to better understand how communications can build a resilient culture to facilitate effective change.

MEASUREMENTS

With everything going digital there is a need for better understanding of digital metrics , what they mean and how to use the data to increase communication effectiveness



OPTIMISM AND MOOD OF COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS

The optimistic communicators' journey...

- 43% At the top of my game and trying to survive
- 37% Happy where I am
- 33% Ready for the next big challenge
- 26% C Suite and/or Trusted Advisor to Executive Leaders

Professional communicators' mood...

- 34% Ready to shape the future
- 28% Eager to learn and try new things
- 20% Tired



WHAT THEY WOULD SAY TO LEADERS ABOUT THEIR DISCIPLINE

"[We are] enablers of culture, change, transformation, and reputation."

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast and a great culture is built with great communications."

"Effective communication engages people, changes their perceptions, motivates their behaviour and ultimately influences business results."

"[We] bring strategic value..."

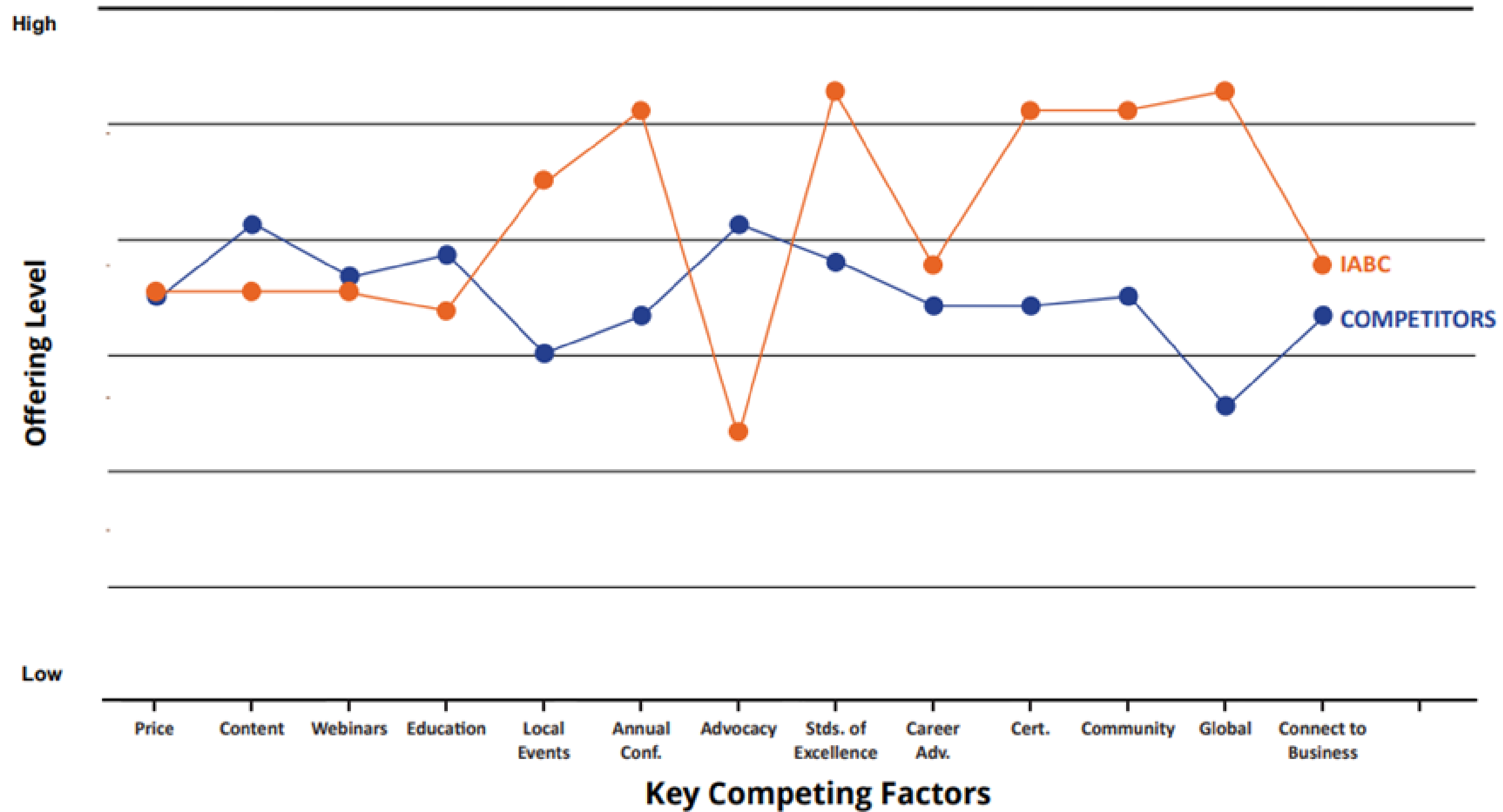
"You need us now more than ever!"

"Communicators need to have a seat at the leadership table."

"Words can have an impact on changing the world."

"Open, honest, and trustful communication is key."

COMPETING IN A BLUE OCEAN



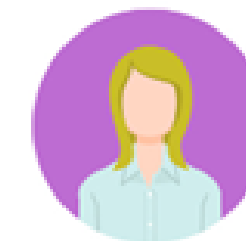
PERSONA DEVELOPMENT



The Director



Mid-careerist



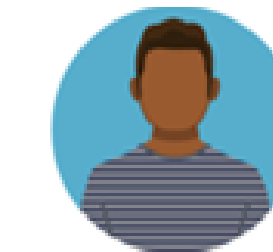
Just started



Business Owner



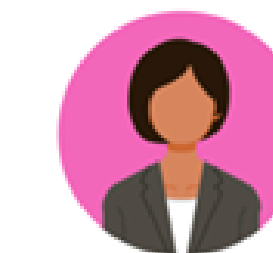
Freelancer



Academic



Student



Thought leader

Personas are a tool in user-centred design. They help you understand the expectations, concerns and motivations of your best potential customers. They support teams to design products and services that are attractive to key audiences. The most effective personas are based on quantitative and qualitative research.

The IABC Stakeholder Personas were first developed in 2016. This 2021 update follows a Journey Mapping Workshop held at the IABC Leadership Institute in Austin Texas in 2020. It has been further informed by LinkedIn Talent Insights and qualitative research conducted by the IABC Strategic Planning Taskforce 2021.

PERSONA DEVELOPMENT



The Director

Celia, Vice President, Communications & Brand

Toronto, Canada

"If only I had time"

Background

Celia has had a successful career in communications & marketing working in tertiary education and now in financial services

- Female, mid-40s
- Married with two children in their teens
- Degree in political science, McGill University
- Masters in Marketing, Western University
- Income is \$250,000 + per annum

Personal drivers

Celia is optimistic and open-minded. She is focused on her children's future. She and her partner want them to have a well-rounded education so that they have the skills and confidence to explore and venture out into a very different world to the one she grew up in.

Career aspirations

Celia has a broad professional network and enjoys connecting people with opportunity. She leads a high performing team and wants to work for organisations with a purposeful mission and a culture that inspires employees to do their best.

Identifiers

- Is a volunteer leader in a number of industry organisations including as a Director for an NFP
- Has been a member of IABC for 10 years and has a small group membership for her communications team
- Is active on social media with a solid followership on LinkedIn and Twitter
- Occasionally presents at industry conferences

Challenges

- Fast paced and outcome focused work environment
- Time poor with a busy personal life
- Employer is navigating a disrupted business environment
- Budget is under pressure and the CFO is very focused on ROI
- Staying ahead of her competitors

Needs in membership of a professional association

- Podium to build her personal brand and profile
- International network of like minded peers
- Industry insights on international best practice
- Benchmarking data on measures that matter in demonstrating ROI
- Development opportunities to develop her team

STRONGER TOGETHER

#IABC2025

IABC 2025 is our ambition for IABC. It is also our response to the changes impacting our world and our profession. What energises us is that it is in our hands to make this happen.

We all lead IABC.

STRONGER TOGETHER

#IABC2025



About the Plan: A Future Ready Association

- Who We Are
- How We Will Operate
- How We Will Grow

WHO WE ARE



OUR WHY

In leadership surveys, qualitative discussions, and conversations within the Board and with staff, there was broad support for a purpose statement that included three elements:

- Highlighting the impact of our profession;
- Taking action, not merely providing words; and
- Tackling the challenges of our age, from local to global communities.

Our statement of “Why?” encapsulates that viewpoint:

Use the power of communication to deepen understanding, inspire action and transform our worlds.

OUR WHAT

Professional communications at the heart of every organization.

OUR HOW

We advance the profession, create connection and develop strategic communicators.

OUR CULTURE

Our culture of volunteerism, shared commitment to six key principles, and generosity toward others is the backbone of IABC. We are a relational – not transactional – community, with peer-to-peer relationships at the heart a diverse, connected, global community that cares passionately about communications.

As we transform IABC, we will invest in our leaders so that they are able to lead our association into tomorrow. We must have the capacity and resilience to lead through change. We have a once-in-a generation opportunity to galvanize our community around our shared purpose and fashion future. When we succeed, we will elevate the value of strategic communication world-wide.

WHO WE ARE



HOW WE CREATE VALUE

IABC exists to create value for those we serve – our members, our volunteers and our profession, and the organizations and communities they serve.

This is a significant remit and we need to set priorities. There is no one-size-fits all solution.

Value is subjective, based on context, life/career phase, lived experiences, biases and expectations. It is more than the financial outlay of an IABC membership, event or training program, and more than espousing features and benefits. This is about fit for purpose. How do we do this?

MEMBERS

We help business communication professionals along their career path to develop their strategic, business and leadership capabilities, build their confidence and credibility, showcase their impact, give them tools to make their work easier, and connect them with peers and opportunities to grow.

VOLUNTEERS

Through active involvement as a volunteer, we provide members with the opportunity to develop their leadership capabilities, broaden their global perspective, expand their professional network, champion the profession and enable others to grow.

BUSINESS

We help organizational leaders understand the impact that great communication has on business and society, as well as transformation and leadership, through access to evidence-based thought leadership, expert advisory and how to be better communicators.

PROFESSION

We champion our profession as a value driver in organizations and an enabler of change in business and society. We can lift the standards of communication excellence, demonstrate the impact of strategic and ethical communication, and partner with like-minded associations to advocate for our profession and deliver to our purpose.

THE SIX PILLARS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN



HOW WE WILL OPERATE

**STRONGER
TOGETHER**

**DIGITALLY
TRANSFORMED**

DATA-DRIVEN

**DELIVERING
VALUE**

**CHAMPIONING
OUR PROFESSION**

**ADVANCING MY
CAREER**

HOW WE WILL GROW

HOW WE WILL OPERATE



STRONGER TOGETHER

Through improved alignment between global, regional, and chapter structure and governance, the collective organization can take advantage of leading-edge digital systems and data management tools to integrate programming and content sharing. This allows IABC to shift from a member organization to a broader community with member benefits.

DIGITALLY TRANSFORMED

To increase value for members and the profession, IABC will transform its technology platforms and level of service at pace with current innovations, to more effectively connect and engage members.

DATA-DRIVEN

IABC must become a more data-driven organization. Access to high-quality and relevant data will allow us to better serve our members and other stakeholders with customized and personalized solutions.

HOW WE WILL GROW



DELIVERING VALUE

For IABC to deliver on its purpose and deepen the impact of the communications profession and expertise of business communications, it is necessary to design and develop products and services that meet the professional needs of the IABC community.

CHAMPIONING OUR PROFESSION

In support of our members, customers, and profession, IABC must be a champion for the significance of our profession to business. We must differentiate between communication as a skill versus the profession that focuses on the Global Standard of the Communication Profession.

ADVANCING MY CAREER

IABC helps business communicators identify gaps and learning opportunities, develop their communication skills and capabilities, broaden their network, and build their confidence and credentials.



QUESTION: IN ONE OR TWO WORDS, WHAT FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN RESONATES WITH YOU MOST?



QUESTION: HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH OR SUPPORT EACH PILLAR?

HOW WE WILL OPERATE

**STRONGER
TOGETHER**

**DIGITALLY
TRANSFORMED**

DATA-DRIVEN

HOW WE WILL GROW

**DELIVERING
VALUE**

**CHAMPIONING
OUR PROFESSION**

**ADVANCING MY
CAREER**

#2025 BENCHMARKS



NEXT STEPS



- Thought leadership report "Towards 2025: Trends Impacting the Business Communication Profession" based on our research
- IEB will serve as brand ambassadors and advocates for the plan
- Present strategy to Region and Chapter boards throughout the year
- Launch strategy to IABC members and volunteer leaders post AGM.
- Present strategy to International Committee & Taskforce Chairs, IEB Liaison and Staff Liaison end-July
- Create a year round content calendar across Leaders Chat, Podcast, Catalyst and Trends Watch to amplify strategy and one or more pillars.
- Create Strategy Planning Toolkit for Volunteer Leaders
- 2025 here we come!

FEEDBACK & DISCUSSION

