

Background

Australia is a Commonwealth made up of six states (New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, Tasmania) and two territories (the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory). The capital city of Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory, is Canberra. IABC is represented in Australia through chapters in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory (IABC Canberra).

IABC Canberra is medium sized chapter located in Australia’s capital city and home to the Australian Government. We have 97 members of which 55 are part of a corporate memberships. Our catchment (the Australian Capital Territory) has a population of 408,000, giving us a market penetration of 0.02%. The Canberra chapter penetration is five times larger than any other chapter in Australia (see Figure 1 Australian states, populations, chapters and chapter penetration).

Figure 1 Australian states, populations, chapters and chapter penetration



As a market, Canberra is unique in Australia. Our major industry is Government, and the industry associations and advocacy groups that lobby government – and the professional services firms that service them.

As a government town, Canberra doesn’t have large corporates or significant industry sectors to draw on. As a result, the mainstay of many chapters, like financial services, health, oil and gas, and [non-government] internal communicators are missing from our catchment.

We have five corporate memberships drawn from government, education and professional services firms, as well as a range of solo consultants who look to us for networking and fresh ideas. This has implications for the kinds of events that we run and the content that makes up our professional development program. Canberra also has a large transient workforce made up of contractors and consultants coming from interstate to deliver services to Government. This is reflected in part by the high percentage of non-members that attend our events.

Unsurprisingly, most of our members work in Government (see Figure 2 Current membership by industry). And for most of them, this is the first year that they have been part of the IABC family (see Figure 3 Length of membership of current members).

Figure 2 Current membership by industry

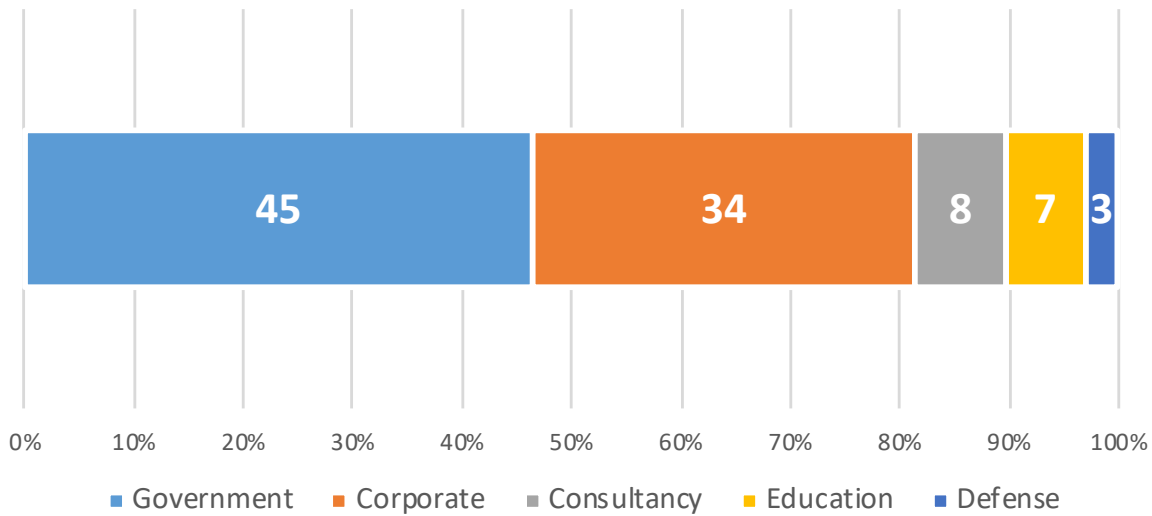
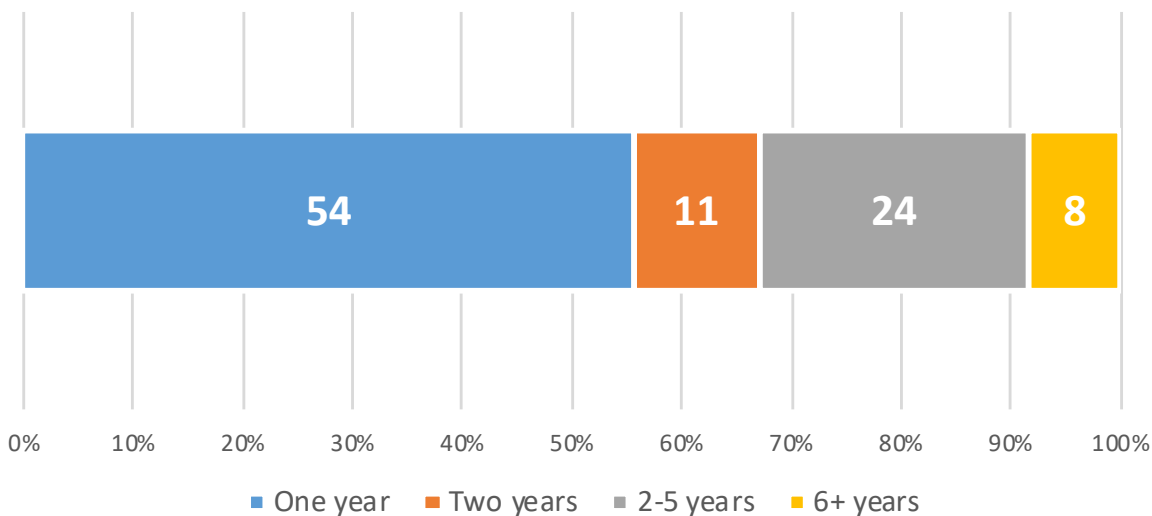


Figure 3 Length of membership of current members



IABC Canberra are known for our professional development events. In the preceding twelve months we held ten events with a total attendance of 300 people. Of the three hundred, 54% were non-members.

Our chapter faces a number of challenges. These include

- increasing the percentage of members attending events (to demonstrate value for their membership)
- membership being tied to available funds (governments institute spending freezes regularly and our membership is often cut as funds get tight, particularly during an election cycle)
- member retention (partly fuelled by demonstrating value and the funding issue)
- no student representation among our members
- little to no uptake on certification and Gold Quill entries.

The three-year strategic plan developed at the beginning of 2018 was designed to start addressing these issues.



Engaging students and young professionals

The University of Canberra (UC) has a highly regarded marketing and communication faculty, with many Canberra communications professionals holding UC qualifications. Of our eleven Board members, eight earned their undergraduate degree from the University of Canberra!

Up to now, the IABC Canberra Chapter did not have a relationship with the faculty or the future communication professionals who study there. We identified this as a major gap in our 2018 planning review and saw a unique opportunity to further our shared chapter value proposition to be *'The place where Canberra communicators come together for insight, connection and professional development'*.

Claire George was the newly installed director of professional development and set about forming relationships with key personnel from the university's communication faculty. These initial informal discussions identified a shared need for local case studies that demonstrated strategic communications in action in real world scenarios. Through our networking activities and discussions, we found common ground and the basis of a mutually beneficial relationship: UC needed access to case studies for students to examine as part of their course work; mapping theory with practice. And we needed student representation in our membership and more entries in the IABC Gold Quill Award Program (see Appendix 1 for case study template).

We agreed to collaborate on a shared project to create the first ever Canberra Communication Showcase, providing an opportunity for final year students to implement the skills they have learnt and to create valuable connections with communication professionals in the region. Furthermore, these case studies could be channelled into the Gold Quill awards, fulfilling another strategic priority for our chapter.

Goals, Objectives and Measurement:

One of our chapter goals for 2018 was to secure an agreement/alliance with University of Canberra's Faculty of Communication and Media by end of 2018.

Upon agreement to collaborate around the Canberra Communication Showcase project our objectives included:

Objective	Measurable Target
Increase exposure to communications work in Canberra by identifying members willing to share their work.	Identify ten communication campaigns and gain permission to write them up as a case study
Increase the number of Gold Quill award submissions for Canberra	Progress at least two case studies to Gold Quill entries
Raise awareness of IABC with final year students studying communications	Board members to attend one student meeting and provide information and coaching
Create unique opportunities for connection and access to local insights for Canberra chapter members	Secure 50 attendees at launch event

While not an objective at this point, we also wanted to lay the foundation for student representation in IABC Canberra.

Budget

One of the benefits of this program being built into the curriculum at UC, was that our costs were minimised. We contributed some funds to support the launch event, website development and promotional materials. We also secured sponsorship from Hays, a local marketing and communication recruitment agency. This gave Hays with the opportunity to connect with both members and students. Hays also provided a workshop for students on entering the workforce. A total budget of \$3,000 was available to the students made from equal contributions from IABC Canberra, Hays and the University.



Implementation

We worked together with the University of Canberra to identify organisations willing to provide access to a communications campaign they had completed in the preceding year. This was done through an open call in IABC newsletters (see appendix 2) and through contacts of board members and University faculty. Organisations were required to meet twice with students to elicit the case study and to review the final submission. Students were divided into teams of two, to develop a detailed case study written structured around an IABC Gold Quill entry. In addition, students had to prepare content and photographs for the website, organise a launch event and associated promotion.

Timetable

Week 1	6 August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student briefing • Student teams contact organisations to arrange interviews
Week 3 and 4	27 August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student teams meet and interview organisational representatives and take photos; request any visual or video support, background statistics or information
Week 7	17 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of complete case studies and web copy to UC for grading • UC convenors mark assessments, confer with IABC and suggest edits or changes • Comments to be given to students by 28 September
Week 9	1 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student teams incorporate UC and IABC feedback and submit case studies and web copy to organisations for approval
Week 9 – 13	1 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students organise and promote launch
Week 10	8 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from organisations to students by 12 October
Week 14	8 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of ‘Communicating Canberra’ held at the University of Canberra: Faculty of Arts and Design End of Year Exhibition.

Results

The program has been a great success for us and the University of Canberra. The launch of Communicating Canberra 2018 was attended by students, the organisations whose stories had been told, IABC members and senior leaders from the University of Canberra including the university Vice-Chancellor, underscoring the importance the Faculty placed on this program.

The website showcasing the case studies is available at communicatecanberra.com and includes 13 case studies from some of Canberra’s most prestigious organisations and government departments:

- Science and Technology Australia
- Museum of Australian Democracy
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs
- ACT Environment Directorate
- Art, Not Apart
- Australian National University
- The Australian War Memorial
- Icon Water
- Australian Government Department of Human Services
- IP Australia
- Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and Content Group
- Launch of 50/50 by 2030 Foundation
- Craft ACT’s Design Canberra



Measurable Target	Actual Results – as at 23 Nov 2018
Identify ten communication campaigns and gain permission to write them up as a case study	Exceeded. 13 case studies published
Progress at least two case studies to Gold Quill entries	Exceeded. Four case studies identified for Gold Quill entry (still in progress at time of award submission)
Board members to attend one student meeting and provide information and coaching	Exceeded. IABC board members attended three workshops and provided 1:1 coaching to students. Hays also delivered a workshop for students on entering the workforce
Secure 50 attendees at launch event	Exceeded. 60 attendees at launch event

Learnings

The Canberra Communication Showcase has been an incredible program that has helped us to form the foundation of a solid partnership with the University of Canberra. We expect to build on this foundation over the coming years. The development of a repository of case studies of communication campaigns from the Canberra region will be invaluable to students and professional communicators for years to come.

The UC team put in an incredible amount of work to build this program into their curriculum. It was challenging to identify the right clients and case studies for development, given it was the first project of its kind. Timelines were tighter than we might have chosen given that the program had to meet university assessment timings. See Appendix 3 for some follow-up communication from the University. Another interesting learning was the insights from students that many organisations struggled to identify the strategic goals for their programs and adequately measure them. This has helped us see the continued need and desire for support in this area, something we can take into our future plans.

Next steps

We will continue to showcase the case studies through member newsletters and social media posts throughout next year. Four case studies have been identified as potential Gold Quill award submissions and are currently being finalised by students and their owning organisations.

UC will also be using these case studies as ongoing reference documents for students studying public relations and media. Now that the foundations have been created, repeating the program annually will help build momentum and desire from more organisations to be involved.

We are now able to explore other opportunities to expand the program and our relationship. Initial thoughts to develop next year include an ambassador program at UC to start to build a student membership base in our Chapter. The Associate Dean at UC who has assisted with the program will be joining our Board in 2019, further solidifying our relationship with the University and well and truly achieving our overarching goal of securing an agreement/alliance with the University of Canberra's Faculty of Communication and Media by end of 2018.



Appendix 1: Case Study Template: (adapted from IABC Gold Quill Awards application)

Organisation Name:

Project/Program/Campaign name:

Organisational Contact:

Timeframe for Program:

1. Introduction and Acknowledgments
2. What was the BUSINESS NEED OR OPPORTUNITY addressed in this program?
3. What was the CONTEXT for this business need or opportunity? (briefly outline the political/economic/social or technological context surrounding this program or campaign).
4. Who were the STAKEHOLDERS who were targeted or involved? How are they relevant?
5. What were the GOALS AND OBJECTIVES of the program?
6. What were the key messages, and how were they developed?
7. What was THE SOLUTION to this business need? (prompt for types of strategic approaches, tactics, media employed). What was the PROCESS for developing this solution?
8. How was the solution IMPLEMENTED? What were the CHALLENGES, and how were they overcome?



Appendix 2: Sample communications to support activities

26/11/2018

Executive communication, Canberra communication showcase, and win your way to FUSION in Melbourne! - victor@zalatos.com - ...

JULY 2018 ISSUE



Newsletter



Lunch event: Executive presence and moving beyond storytelling

Join us for an illuminating lunch with Shawn Callahan, one of the world's leading business storytelling consultants. [Book your ticket now on Eventbrite](#) or visit the [IABC Canberra website](#) to find out more.

When: Wednesday, 1 August 2018

Time: 12pm - 1.30pm

Where: National Portrait Gallery

Cost: \$75 for IABC members, \$90 for non-members



Communicating Canberra: Showcase 2018

Have you run a strong communication program this year that you think deserves recognition?

Over the next few months, IABC Canberra and the Communication and Media Program at the University of Canberra will work together to identify, document and promote examples of local best practice in communication in the ACT region in 2018.

We will support you by developing a case study for submission to the [IABC International Gold Quill Awards](#) to promote the excellent work done across the sectors by local Canberra communicators. UC students benefit by being exposed to senior industry leaders to identify and learn about good practice and how to document and promote it.

To participate, email us at info@iabccanberra.com.au, with the name of your organisation, the program or campaign you'd like featured, and your contact.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/communicating+canberra+case+study/FMf0gxxvBPLJxGcSMfGPMNbvHTZqZjh>

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Appendix 3: Example follow-up communication from University of Canberra



Barbara Walsh • 1st

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University of Canberra PR students have produced excellent case studies of good communications practice in the first 'Communicating Canberra' initiative launched at an industry event last night. Narratives on the web here: www.communicatecanberra.com; full case studies to be used in curricula and can be made available on request. Students also developed the website, produced collateral, organised the event & worked with UC Media to promote this & other events. Awesome student work & beyond valuable partnership with [IABC Canberra](#). Huge thanks to [Claire George](#) and other IABC Board members including [Alison Senti \(Murray\)](#), [SCMP](#), [Michael Liu](#), [Virginia Cook](#), [Damian Tunney](#).
#CommunicatingCanberra #WeAreUC #partnerships



64 Likes · 8 Comments