

# IABC/San Diego – 2019 CMA: Professional Development

## Introduction

After a 10+ year hiatus, a small group of Members-At-Large in the San Diego area began talking about forming a San Diego chapter. An exploratory meeting was held in late 2002, with about 30 people attending. In early 2003, this group formed the basis of the new developmental IABC San Diego chapter. Over the next two years, the chapter worked to establish regular professional development meetings, create the necessary organizational infrastructure and build a team of leaders. The chapter was affiliated in June 2005 and has enjoyed up to 110 members at its peak. We strive to be the professional organization of choice for communicators in the San Diego region, however, in recent years there has been a decline in our membership, and it continues to be a challenge to source volunteers and get members to our events. We are now at 62 members and are classed as a Small-sized Chapter for the first time in 10 years. In addition, San Diego is a large metropolitan area and our diverse membership is dispersed across the county, often making it challenging to connect with our members in person.

To respond to these challenges, we developed a multi-pronged strategy of which a strong professional development program was an important element. Taking into account feedback from member surveys, anecdotal feedback, board brainstorming sessions and member referrals, we found we needed more consistent and early planning, the plan was focused on leveraging and showcasing our members, delivering diverse programming to meet the needs of our varying membership experience levels and disciplines, and ensuring locations and times were mixed to accommodate our membership spread across San Diego county. We also wanted to provide a high quality of programming that would enhance our reputation among non-members, and to host at least one event with a community focus.

## Goals & Objectives

As a board, we determined that our three focus areas for the 2017-2018 term would be:

- Leveraging and showcasing our members
- Engaging and growing our membership
- Enhancing our reputation in the community

To support these focus areas, the professional development program (in conjunction with our events program) consisted of the following:

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase member participation in our events by 10%</li> <li>– Increase non-member participation in our events by 10%</li> <li>– Engage 10% of membership in SIGs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To deliver more relevant, engaging professional development events that position IABC as a leading source of education for communicators, and increase opportunities for our members to connect through networking events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Schedule and promote events at least two months out</li> <li>– Increase frequency and diversity of events from 2016/2017</li> <li>– Select new venues and formats and times that will appeal to more members and prospects</li> <li>– Select speakers from membership base or member organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Attendance/ Participation across members and non-members</li> <li>– CMA recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– At least break even on events based on past attendance numbers and pricing.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Schedule consistent SIG events &amp; examine membership to find commonalities for content</li> <li>– Review pricing – bigger differentiator between member &amp; non-member, trial early-bird offers</li> </ul>		
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### **Implementation**

– **Schedule and promote events at least two months out**

In order to provide adequate time to promote professional development opportunities to our members, we wanted to ensure that we scheduled out at least two months in advance. The 2016/17 board introduced a 14-month planning calendar to enable the new board to “hit the ground running” with an event already scheduled for August. This is something we continued during the 2017/18 board term as it helped us to get a head-start on planning for the year.

– **Increase frequency and diversity of events from 2016/2017**

While we had a successful professional development program during the prior board term, through lessons learned and member feedback, we knew we had the opportunity to do more. Our goal was to complement our events program by increasing our offering of professional development opportunities from four in 2016/17 to at least six in 2017/18. We also wanted to ensure the topics were diverse and relevant to appeal to a broad an audience as possible.

– **Select new venues and formats and times that will appeal to more members and prospects**

As San Diego is such a sprawling metropolitan area, plagued with bad traffic and limited public transport options, it was important that we vary the time and location of our events to enable as many members as possible to participate. In doing so, we hoped to re-engage members who we had not seen in a while, as well as appeal to communicators who had not yet been able to attend our programs because of logistics.

– **Select speakers from membership base or member organizations**

We have award-winning, accredited and subject matter experts in our membership, as well as Fortune 500 companies in San Diego, so to support our strategic focus area of leveraging and showcasing our members, one of our tactics was to try to engage our members as speakers or to secure speakers from our corporate member organizations at our professional development events. Showcasing the talents of our members had many benefits – it was low cost to the chapter, it helped build our reputation as the association to network with and be able to learn from the best and the brightest, and it helped to build stronger connections with our member speakers by giving them added value for their membership in being able to promote their work and raise their profile.

– **Schedule consistent Special Interest Group (SIG) events & examine membership to find commonalities for content**

In addition to our traditional professional development programming, we also wanted to offer members added ways to connect and learn from each other. Our SIG program kicked off in 2013 but over the years had stopped and started. We want to revive the SIG events, get regular meetings on the calendar, and build a real community among participating members.

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### – Review pricing – bigger differentiator between member & non-member, trial early-bird offers

One of the areas we felt we could help show the value of being an IABC member is by providing lower-cost events to our members. We implemented a larger differentiator between our member and non-member pricing, as well as introduced an early-bird pricing structure to provide even more savings opportunities. Historically, we had struggled with having lots of last minute sign ups, making planning and catering challenging. The early-bird structure helped us to secure registrations earlier in the process so we were able to execute more effectively.

### Programs

#### **Professional Development Luncheons/Evenings**

Based on the demographics of our membership, we schedule mostly mid- and senior-level topics and speakers. Topics varied to target different specialties of our members such independent contractors, corporate internal communicators, or external/public relations communicators. We also conducted more broad sessions about coaching and career development to appeal to all disciplines. We always ensured there was time for networking and Q&A before and after the presentation to allow attendees to get maximum value from their attendance.

We started off our professional development series of events for the year with a presentation from long-time IABC/San Diego member Cason Lane who spoke about his experience transitioning from the Corporate Communications world into running his own successful consulting business. This event had broad appeal to both our more senior members who are perhaps considering a change in career, as well as to some of our more junior members who are interested in the “gig economy.” This was a lunchtime event in north San Diego.

Our next event combined networking, learning and beer! We hosted an Oktoberfest Brewhaha at one of San Diego’s premier breweries, the 9th largest craft brewer in the United States – Stone Brewing – where we had their Public Relations Manager share the company’s unique approach to marketing. This was an evening event in downtown San Diego.

We followed with an event on Humanizing Your Brand Through Human to Human Storytelling. Our speaker was from a local communications agency, he focused on the premise that at the heart of every business story, is a human story and human stories are what make investors, partners, employees and customers emotionally connected and invested in you, in your vision, and to helping your business grow. This was a lunchtime event in central San Diego.

To kick off the New Year, we had IABC member and former IABC/San Diego board member Marilyn Olson share her experience as the communications lead for the Dell/EMC merger – the largest deal in tech history. Marilyn’s presentation provided an insider’s look at the role communications played throughout the process – from announcement, through integration to one of the biggest tech industry parties ever thrown. This was an evening event in midtown San Diego.

Our next event coincided with Leadership Institute, which was held in San Diego in 2018. International asked if we could recommend any speakers on leadership, and we were able to kill two birds with one stone by connecting them with Chris Van Gorder, CEO of healthcare giant Scripps (which is a corporate member company), who wrote the book *The Front-Line Leader: Building a High Performance Organization from the Ground Up*. Chris is a speaker the local chapter has been trying to engage for some time, so the opportunity to have him present to a larger audience was ideal. We were able to open his presentation up to local San Diego communicators giving our members and prospects the chance to learn from him, as well as learn more about IABC by being privy to a small part of LI. This was a late afternoon event in central San Diego.

Our final professional development event of the year, leveraged long-time friend and member of IABC Angela Sinikas. Angela lived in Orange County at the time and was willing to come to our chapter to share her insights on How to Get Leaders to Listen to You. This program offered our attendees a chance to learn how to coach and influence leaders by speaking their language using data and metrics. As well as securing a member speaker for

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this event, we were also able to leverage one of our corporate member companies to provide the meeting space for free. This was a lunch time event in north San Diego.

### **Special Interest Groups**

Over the course of the year, we held three Special Interest Group meet ups, focused on internal communicators. Internal communicators are one of the most active disciplines in our chapter, so we wanted to start with a good foundation. We varied the event time and locations hosting two breakfasts (one in north San Diego and one in central San Diego) and one Happy Hour event (in north San Diego). Discussion topics were also varied to cover biggest challenges, metrics and tools, tips and tricks etc.

### **Other events**

In addition to our Professional Development program, we also hosted a series of networking, social and philanthropic events (full details provided in our Chapter Events entry). This included:

- Our annual summer social – drinks and appetizers.
- Mingle Bells – the annual industry holiday party in which IABC/San Diego participates with other communications associations to host 500+ communicators.
- Leadership Institute Dine Arouns – hosted 90 attendees at 10 restaurants across San Diego.
- A spring fling social – drinks and appetizers PLUS a free headshot (sponsored by a local photographer).
- A Gift of Communication event – members gave back to five non-profits by helping them with their communication challenges.
- Our annual Communicator of the Year award event – dinner and award presentation/speech.
- We also planned and executed the August 2018 summer social event to assist in the transition to the new board year.

In addition to the events we plan locally, we also take advantage of the International webinars and conference to promote to our members. Every newsletter contains 1-2 online learning resources to supplement local events and ensure that even if our members aren't able to participate locally, they have the opportunity to realize value from their membership by accessing IABC resources.

### **Promotion**

Each event was promoted via our monthly e-newsletter, regular event reminders, and our website to all members and prospective members, with links to online registration (and a list of upcoming PD events). This year we implemented a communications mix for each event, establishing a regular cadence of communications around our events.

Before each event

- Eventbrite listing
- Website
- Newsletter
- 2-3 promotion Emails
- 3-5 Facebook posts
- 2-3 Tweets
- 2 LinkedIn posts
- During each event
  - Facebook posts/live
  - Live tweets
- After each event
  - Attendee thank you on social

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- Post photos to social channels
- Thank you email to event attendees, containing information on the next event

We have also built relationships with board members for the local PRSA and Health Care Communicators chapters and we cross-promote each other's events, as appropriate.

We significantly grew our social media presence this year via our Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn pages, and continue to promote our events through those channels. We also re-launched our Instagram page, which has been a great way to share event photos and stories, and engage with a younger demographic. To help with event promotion, we ask our speakers to let their followers know they'll be speaking at an upcoming IABC event, and we always link back to the speaker's website, Facebook page, or Twitter in our promotions. We try to use fun and engaging photos featuring our members to promote events as well as in our event follow ups to help position us as a fun organization to be part of. We have been able to establish a strong brand for the chapter through the IABC guidelines and colors to help with brand recognition and engagement. And although we have a VP of Social Media on the board, we ask all board members to help promote events through their own social media networks to reach a broader and different audience.

- PD materials: The chapter president or another board member will discuss IABC membership at every monthly program and encourage non-members to get more involved. We also highlight the benefits that the PD events bring to our chapter and promote the next month's event. We also produce handouts and flyers for upcoming events.
- Live social media during events: At the beginning of each event, we share our Twitter handle with attendees and encourage them to live Tweet during the event. One of our board members may also live Tweet or go on Facebook Live or Instagram stories during the event.

### **Results & Measurement**

Our Chapter Events and Professional Development programming was coordinated as a whole, rather than broken out, so for the purposes of measuring against our goals, the metrics refer to all events. Where available, we have specified PD-only information. While we had ambitious goals to improve on an already sound events program, we were able to significantly exceed our goals across all metrics.

- During the 2017/18 board term:
  - We held a total of 15 events (not including the LI Dine Around or the August 2018 Social) up 36% from 11 in 2016/17.
  - Overall attendance increased from 32% from 171 to 225.
- Specific to Professional Development
  - We held six events up 50% from four last year.
  - Attendance at Professional Development events was up 22% from 83 to 101
  - Attendance at SIGs was up 228% from 7 to 23

#### **Goal: Increase member participation at our events by 10%**

- Member attendance was up 32% vs. last year from 124 to 164

#### **Goal: Increase non-member participation in our events by 10%**

- Non-member attendance is up 30% vs. last year from 47 to 61

#### **Goal: Engage 10% of membership in SIGs**

- 21% of members have engaged in a SIG event (Measured only the 14 unique members who attended – several attended all or multiple SIG events for a total of 23 attendees)

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Our budget goal was to at least break even on events. However, the success of our programming yielded strong financial results for the chapter:

- Event revenues were up 57% from \$2,872 to \$4,519 over the same period last year.
- Event profits were up 131% from \$153 to \$353 over the same period last year.

These success of our Events and Professional Development program helped to support all aspects of our strategic plan and helped ensure that we were successful in addressing our three focus areas for the year:

- **Leveraging and showcasing our membership**
  - Engaged three members to be professional development event speakers and showcase their work
  - Showcased a corporate member company – CEO of Scripps Health spoke at LI 2018 (facilitated by the San Diego chapter)
  - Leveraged a corporate member facility for a free event venue
  - Engaged member company as an event sponsor of the COTY event
- **Engaging and growing our member population**
  - Engaged more members and non-members at our events - increased number of events by 27%, increased overall attendance by 32%,
  - Gained 18 new members during the board term
- **Enhancing our reputation in the community**
  - Gift of Communication Event – helped five non-profits and saw positive media coverage
  - Significant increases in social media followers helped enhance recognition of our brand and helped increase the number of non-members at our events (up 30% over last year).

### EXHIBITS

#### Event promotion:

- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/IABCSanDiego>
- **Twitter:** <http://twitter.com/IABCSanDiego>
- **LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/iabc-san-diego/>
- **Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/iabc\\_sd/](https://www.instagram.com/iabc_sd/)
- **Website:** <http://sandiego.iabc.com>
- **Eventbrite:** <https://iabcsd.eventbrite.com>

**Examples of Eventbrite listing, event announcement, social postings, newsletter:**

# IABC/San Diego – 2019 CMA: Professional Development

**How to Get Leaders to Listen to You**  
Angela Sinickas, ABC

June 20  
How to Get Leaders to Listen to You  
By IABC San Diego  
\$25 - \$35

**DESCRIPTION**  
Your professional experience and your title seem to have less impact on getting leaders to listen to good communication advice than you would like. What to do? It helps to speak their language—numbers—to get their attention. And then you need to use more effective techniques for presenting your solutions and being ready to address their objections.

Join us June 20 for a session with internationally recognized measurement expert Angela Sinickas, ABC. Angela's session will share examples of how to gather research quickly and effectively to make yourself more credible when you advise your management team.

Key learnings will include:

- Consulting:** ways to improve listening skills and use the rule-of-3 for probing questions when a leader first asks for our help.
- Research:** ways of doing informal research to identify emerging issues or pretest potential messages, using pilot/control groups to test solutions, using business data from the last time your advice was not listened to.
- Persuasion:** how to present leaders with alternatives instead of only one solution, how to "stump up" to higher objectives or "stunk down" to attractive characteristics of competing solutions so that you and your leadership feel the right solution has been agreed upon.

Tickets include lunch.

**About our speaker:**  
Angela Sinickas, ABC, has been called a pioneer, guru, maven and even a diva of measurement. She is a globally recognized consultant on practical ways to measure the impact of communication on business results. Her client list includes 25 percent of Fortune's 100 largest global companies. She has conducted workshops on measurement in 32 countries and has written over 150 articles about strategy and measurement. Angela's work has been recognized with 21 IABC Gold Quill awards, in large part because she practices what she preaches and measures the impact of the work she does. She was named a Fellow of IABC in 2008.

**DATE AND TIME**  
Wed, June 20, 2019  
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM PDT  
[Add to Calendar](#)

**LOCATION**  
Qualcomm  
Building 5 (Room 5-266)  
5535 Morehouse Dr  
San Diego, CA 92121  
[View Map](#)

**REFUND POLICY**  
Refunds up to 7 days before event.

## IABC/San Diego

The association of choice for communicators around the world

### IABC/SD OKTOBERFEST BREWHAHA WITH STONE BREWING

Take advantage of early bird pricing by October 4.

Get in the Oktoberfest spirit at our upcoming Brewhaha event. Enjoy a flight of award-winning beers and a light bite, while learning from Stone Brewing Company PR Manager Lizzie Younkin. Lizzie will tell us about Stone's unique approach to marketing, which dates back to the release of Arrogant Bastard Ale in 1997. The ale gained its popularity on the righteous conviction that most wouldn't like it. An important element of Stone's success today can be attributed to marketing



Early bird pricing for our [Oktoberfest Brewhaha](#) ends October 4. Your ticket includes a flight of award-winning beers and a light dinner.

**When:** Monday, October 16 from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Stone Brewing Company, 3225 North Harbor Drive, San Diego  
**Tickets:** Early Bird: \$20 for IABC members, \$30 for non-members; \$25 for IABC members, \$35 for non-members after October 4

We look forward to seeing you there!

[REGISTER NOW](#)

**IABC San Diego** @IABCsanDiego · Jun 24

Cason: That was such a great session! Liz: I can't wait for the next IABC event. Lessons learned from this week's workshop on "How to Get Leaders to Listen to You": It's not enough to have employees understand strategy or have knowledge; what do they ne... [ift.tt/2K3k2Vw](https://ift.tt/2K3k2Vw)



**IABC San Diego** @IABCsanDiego · Apr 10

Thanks for coming out to our internal communicators breakfast meet-up! As an IABC member, you have the opportunity to network with other professionals and stay current on communication trends and tools other firms and orgs are using! Are you still interes... [ift.tt/2HpU7aG](https://ift.tt/2HpU7aG)



# IABC/San Diego – 2019 CMA: Professional Development



## IABC/San Diego

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### A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and that 2018 is off to a good start for you all. With the new year comes the inevitable setting of resolutions... and the general settling ourselves up for future. How many of us, year after year, fall into the trap of starting out with steely determination to try to live up to resolutions, only to realize they are impossible to stick to over the long-term.

This year, I'm taking a different approach.

Inspired by several sources (past-president Anna Davison, author Laura Lippman and [this article](#)), rather than defining resolutions, I'm setting an intention for the year by selecting a single word. Boiling it down to one word gives you a filter to apply to life, it allows for your own interpretation of success, and most importantly, it can't be broken.

My word is open. I want to invite new experiences and new opportunities. I want to be more open-minded, especially in a world where divisions are getting deeper, and I want to be open to change, in whatever form that takes.

An important part of being open is learning from others, which is why I'm so thrilled that IABC/San Diego is bringing two all-star speakers to our upcoming events.

On January 24, Marilyn Olson will share an inside look at the role communications played in the biggest tech merger in history. Marilyn leads Strategic Programs and Operations for Dell's Global Communications team, she was our Communicator of the Year in 2015, and she has more than 20 years experience in communications. [Don't miss out on this opportunity to learn about major organizational change.](#)

On February 9, Chris Van Gorder will be sharing the front-line leadership lessons he's learned throughout his career, including his 18 years as Scripps' CEO. This powerful keynote will give current and aspiring leaders a different approach to business success, and building a culture strong enough to weather the good times and the bad. [Tickets are now available to learn from this award-winning leader.](#) Attendance is limited.

When I asked the IABC Board what our collective focus word for the year should be, we decided on connect. Connecting members to each other and the communications community, and connecting you to great programming and professional development is what IABC is all about.

This month, we're busy finalizing our upcoming programs. Make sure you share your feedback with us via our [member survey](#) to help us ensure we're making the right connections.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and productive 2018!

Kate Griffin, ABC  
President, IABC/San Diego



### UPCOMING EVENT



#### JAN 24 - GO BIG, WIN BIG - INSIDE THE BIGGEST MERGER IN TECH HISTORY

A few spots remain for our inside look at the role communications played throughout the merger of Dell and EMC - from announcement, through integration to one of the biggest tech industry parties ever thrown. This is your chance to learn about managing comms for a major organizational change. [Register now.](#)



#### FEB. 9 - EFFECTING CHANGE THROUGH FRONT-LINE LEADERSHIP

Through 18 years as Scripps' CEO, Chris Van Gorder has led a financial and cultural transformation and positioned Scripps as a national health care leader. In this powerful keynote, Chris shares the front-line leadership lessons he's learned along his journey. Don't miss this exciting opportunity. Attendance is limited. [Register now.](#)