

CASE STUDY



How Brain Traffic helped the American Society of Association Executives eliminate 12,000 pages from their websites and unify their content strategy



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“ Robb Lee, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer,
ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership

The American Society of Association Executives is an individual membership organization that focuses on knowledge and learning for association professionals.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Too much website content, including numerous daily content updates
- Multiple organization divisions and sub-brands, each with different communication channels
- Difficult to get the right resources and content to the right audiences

SOLUTION

- A unified content strategy for all organization divisions and sub-brands
- New user journey maps and messaging architecture
- A governing plan for future content decision making

RESULTS

- 12,000 pages of clutter eliminated from the website
- A cleaner, simplified web environment
- A more structured approach to content creation and management

Challenges

TOO MUCH CONTENT. NOT ENOUGH STRATEGY.

There's a fine line between having a lot of great content on your website, and just having a lot of clutter.

It was a problem that the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) had grown very familiar with over the last few years. ASAE staff would add content updates, new events, and other information to the website with little organization-wide oversight or coordination.

But after a certain point, they realized that a lot of the great content they were producing was simply getting lost in the noise.

“We have an incredibly complex organization, with many communication channels and activities,” says *Julie Shoop, Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of Associations Now*. “That being the case, we needed to make it easier for our members and non-members to find our resources and identify what was useful to them.”



“**Julie Shoop, Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of Associations Now**

The team at ASAE knew that they needed a way to parse through all the content and make it more accessible for their audiences.

“The site had developed a lot of clutter, and we just weren't equipped to make good decisions around what should be on the website and what shouldn't,” *Julie remembers*. “One of my colleagues even referred to it as the Wild West. As much as our web team at the time tried, there just weren't any strategies or processes in place.”

Robb Lee, the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer for ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership, says the amount of content they had was putting the team in a very tricky spot.

“Absent any kind of structure, the content team was really in an impossible situation,” says Robb. “They had to make individual decisions around who should be on the front page, and each subsequent page. It was untenable, and there was no way it was going to be helpful for anybody in the long-term.”

ASAE realized we needed to develop a strategy for all the content being produced. But in order to do so, it was clear we needed help.

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Solution

A UNIFIED CONTENT STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE PLAN

The ASAE team decided to reach out to Brain Traffic to see if they could help solve their content problem.

“All of us were exceptionally impressed with the deep knowledge Brain Traffic had about content strategy,” compliments Robb. “And that perspective, combined with the authenticity and candor with which it was delivered, was exactly what we needed.”

To get started, Brain Traffic met with various parts of the ASAE team to learn more about the content they produced, and how they wanted to ideally use it.

“Brain Traffic first came in for a discovery phase,” Robb recalls. “They met with all the departments, and took a lot of time to talk with them about what types of content were important to them and the audiences they serve. Including everyone in the process was critical for developing the strategy.”

From there, Brain Traffic developed the framework for the ASAE content strategy, and helped identify audience segments based on level of engagement with ASAE.

They also developed user journey maps for each audience segment, messaging architecture to help the team prioritize different pieces of content, and a governance plan to help them make future content decisions.

This framework was all-encompassing, and helped to align all of ASAE's different divisions and sub-brands.

“The biggest challenge was actually the culture adjustment,” *Julie says*. “The owners of content around the organization had to think more about things like SEO, writing concisely, and remembering to use our taxonomy. It took some time to get there, but in the end it was a really positive outcome.”

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Results

A MUCH CLEANER WEB ENVIRONMENT WITH OVER 12,000 PAGES ELIMINATED

Robb says that now that ASAE has a plan in place with the help of Brain Traffic, they have been able to think more strategically about how they use content on their website.

“I would say Brain Traffic did a tremendous job for us,” *praises Robb*. “I'm very comfortable now with our content strategy. We can see precisely what's happening, how people are experiencing the website, and we can adjust it more easily going forward.”

Julie says that their new content strategy has made a noticeable difference for their audiences as well.

“It's less about pushing our content out now, and more about pulling people in,” *Julie explains*. “We made it easier for our website visitors to navigate and find what they need. Brain Traffic helped us structure and simplify the environment so that everything is much cleaner than before.”

The new strategy also helped the team at ASAE take action with the old and outdated content that had become clutter over the years.

As an example, Robb points to the fact that they have deleted over 12,000 pages from their website since they started working with Brain Traffic.

“The planning, evaluation, and structure of our content has taken a quantum leap forward,” *praises Robb*. “We had not redesigned the site in nine years, so you can imagine there were some bad online habits to break.”

Looking back on the process, Robb says that Brain Traffic was spectacular across the board. He says they helped ASAE hit all the targets they needed to hit, and provided exactly the type of assistance they were looking for.

“The impact Brain Traffic had on our content culture was dramatic,” *says Robb*. “Their outside voice, unique knowledge, and industry experience was critical for us. I don’t know any other way we could have accomplished this work without that kind of insight.”

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Is your content in danger of becoming clutter?

Find out how Brain Traffic can help make the your website content more productive and purposeful.

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