iMIS
Built for **you.**

2023 Membership Performance Benchmark Report

The **8th annual report** highlights the latest best-practice strategies executives are using to improve performance and insight into their top challenges and obstacles.

Prepared by **asi**, the developers of iMIS.

2023 Membership Performance Benchmark Report

iMIS

01 Introduction

Remaining nimble is essential for any membership organization. Part of that is having a plan, a system that supports the plan, and access to real-time data you can rely on to make quick decisions.

Member engagement — from onboarding through renewal — is the *key* to maintaining your base. By offering compelling content and useful tools on a dynamic website, you can ensure your members take advantage of the value you deliver and feel you really understand their needs.

But, how do you know for sure whether your plans and engagement tactics are keeping up with the pace of change and that you'll be able to weather the next storm? This benchmark report will help you assess how you compare to your colleagues, provide a peek into what's working well for others, and help you uncover mistakes to avoid.

Member needs are constantly changing and it's critical to explore new ideas to stay ahead of the curve.

This report highlights the latest best-practice strategies your peers are using right now to improve performance.

02 Key Takeaways

More than 120 association and membership professionals participated in our 8th annual **Membership Performance Benchmark Survey**, sharing their results and insights from the past year in several key areas. Here are the takeaways:

| Retention	Engagement	Membership Levels	Technology
Rates remained steady for most with one-third increasing retention.	**Levels were up for one-third of those surveyed.**	**Nearly one-half (47%) increased overall membership levels and 51% added new members.**	**42% plan to update their association software.**
On page 13, you can find the top reasons members aren't renewing, and tips for winning them back on page 14.	*On page 15, respondents share how an engagement plan impacted their success.*	*Learn how they did it on page 11.*	*See page 7 for the other important tech stack investments associations will make soon.*

Goals & Challenges

Association executives most want to increase engagement and are concerned about extensive system customizations.

Learn more on page 16.

Generational Differences
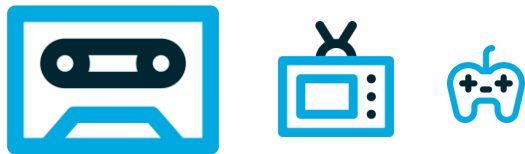
More than half of all respondents belong to Gen X followed by Baby Boomers and Millennials.

Priorities and challenges were different for each group; see page 19 for details.

What's Keeping You Up at Night?

Baby Boomers
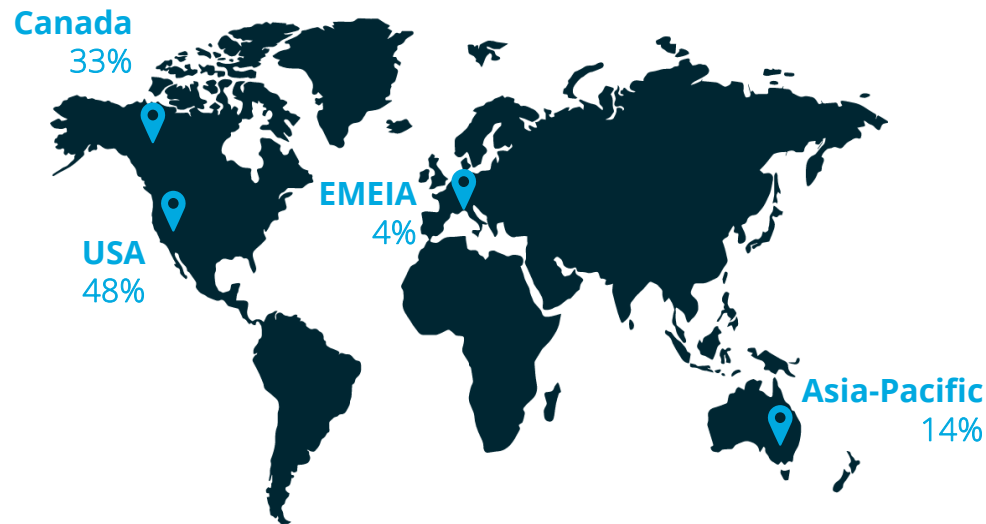*Increasing Engagement*

Gen Xers
Increasing Retention

Millennials
Attracting New Members

03 Demographics

Locations

Canada
33%

EMEIA
4%

USA
48%

Asia-Pacific
14%
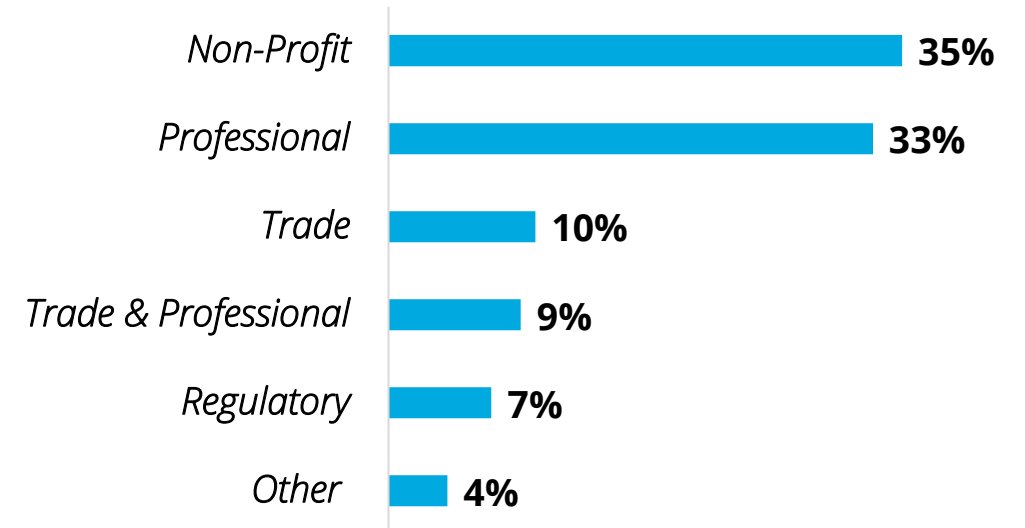
Nearly one-half of all 123 respondents are located in the United States and one-third are from Canada.

*EMEIA is defined as Europe, the Middle East, India and Africa.*

Organization Types

Non-Profit	**35%**
Professional	**33%**
Trade	**10%**
Trade & Professional	**9%**
Regulatory	**7%**
Other	**4%**

52% describe their organization as Trade and/or Professional, 35% Non-Profit, and 7% Regulatory.

Most associations now have a blend of remote and in-person workers (67%); 20% have an entirely remote team; 10% are all back in the office full-time.

Operating Budgets

$25+ mil
10%

$10 to 24.9 mil
9%

Under $1 mil
19%

$5 to 9.9 mil
15%

$1 to 2.4 mil
22%

$2.5 to 4.9 mil
17%
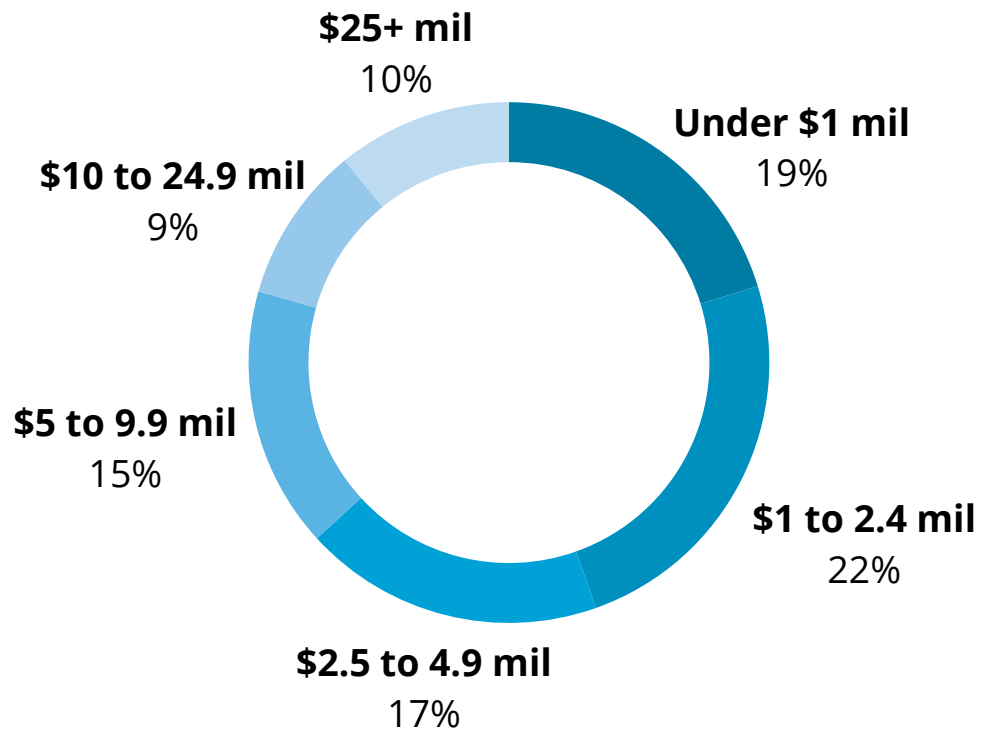
Most respondents (54%) are with small-to-midsized organizations with budgets of $1 mil to $10 mil while 10% generate more than $25 mil each year.
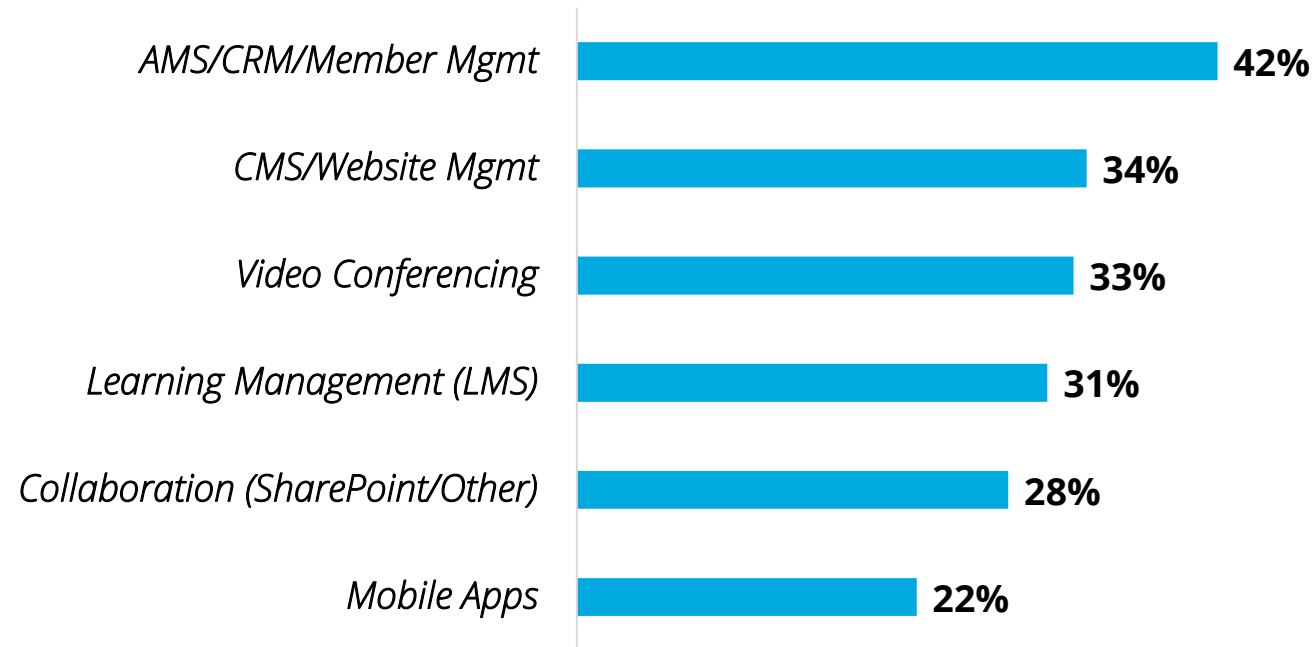
Roles / Responsibilities

Other
13%

Finance
8%

Executive
32%

Operations
9%

Technology
12%
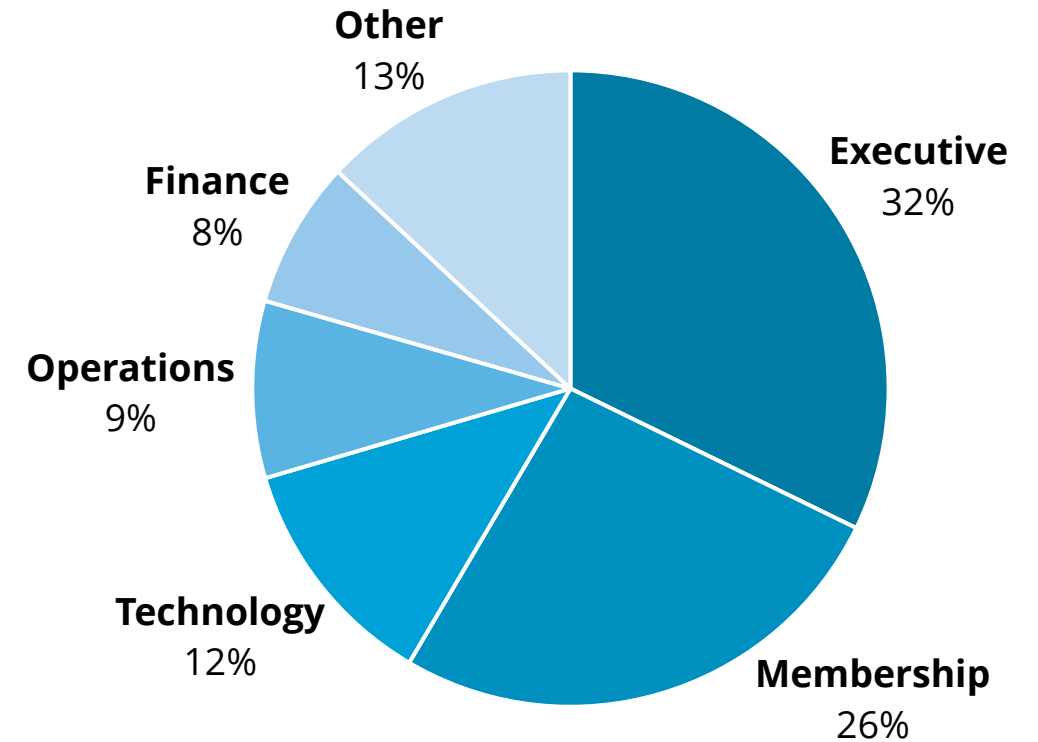
Membership
26%

Executives and membership professionals account for the bulk of respondents, followed by Operations/Finance (17%).

04 Membership Performance Insights

Planned Tech Stack Investments

Category	Percentage
AMS/CRM/Member Mgmt	42%
CMS/Website Mgmt	34%
Video Conferencing	33%
Learning Management (LMS)	31%
Collaboration (SharePoint/Other)	28%
Mobile Apps	22%

For Tech Stack investments, respondents are primarily looking at their member management system or website, but many are also considering Video Conferencing, Learning Management, and Mobile solutions.

42%
*will explore new **Association Software Systems***

33%
*are considering **Video Conferencing***

Cloud-Based Systems

59% in the Cloud

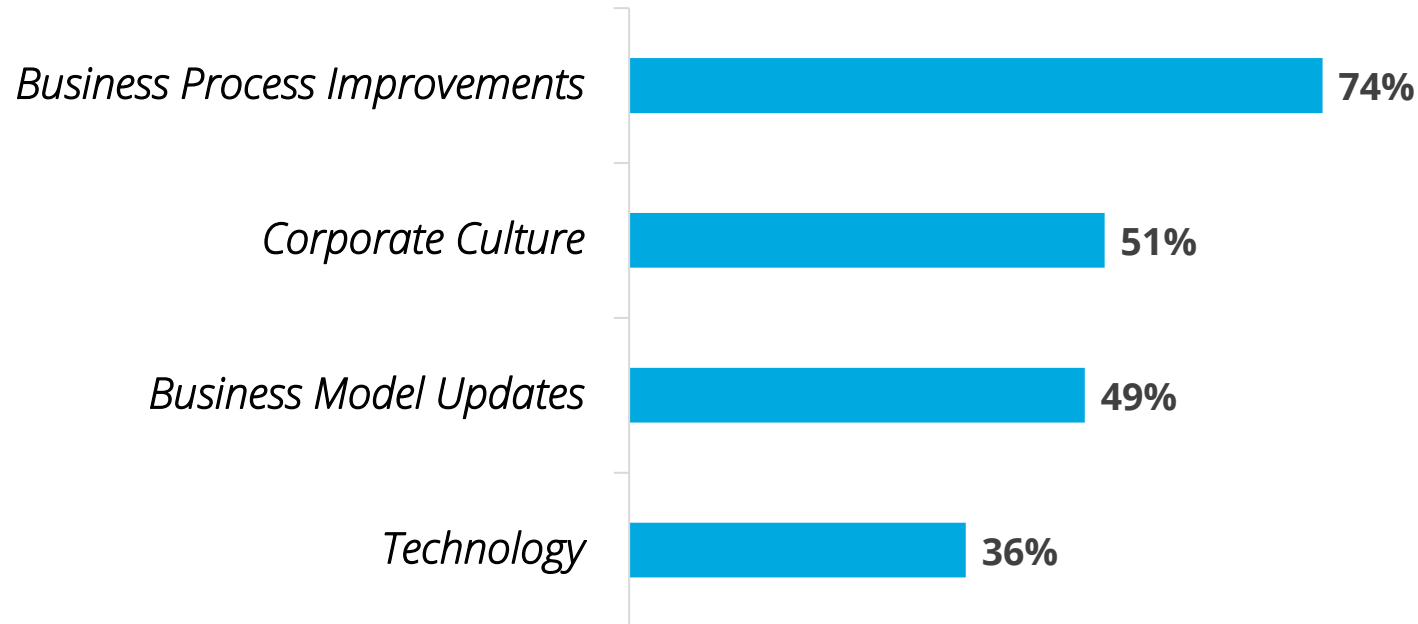**7%** Moving to the Cloud

28% Not There Yet

A cloud-based system is critical to supporting your digital transformation and creates a trusted single data source you can use to make informed business decisions.

The Power of an SSoT

iMIS — the world's only Engagement Management System (EMS) — is purpose-built for the way member-centric organizations work. It's designed to eliminate data silos and provide a Single Source of Truth (SSoT) that brings all interactions with your members, donors and supporters together in one database.

As an SSoT, iMIS **integrates your member data with your website** and accounting system **so you have a full 360° view**. And because it's in the Cloud, you can **always access real-time data** from anywhere with greater security than you could likely provide on your own in–house server.

Digital Transformation Strategies Address

Business Process Improvements — **74%**

Corporate Culture — **51%**

Business Model Updates — **49%**

Technology — **36%**

For those organizations with a digital transformation strategy, many are analyzing their business processes to see how they can better serve their members and increase efficiency. Changing the corporate culture/challenging the status quo is also a priority.
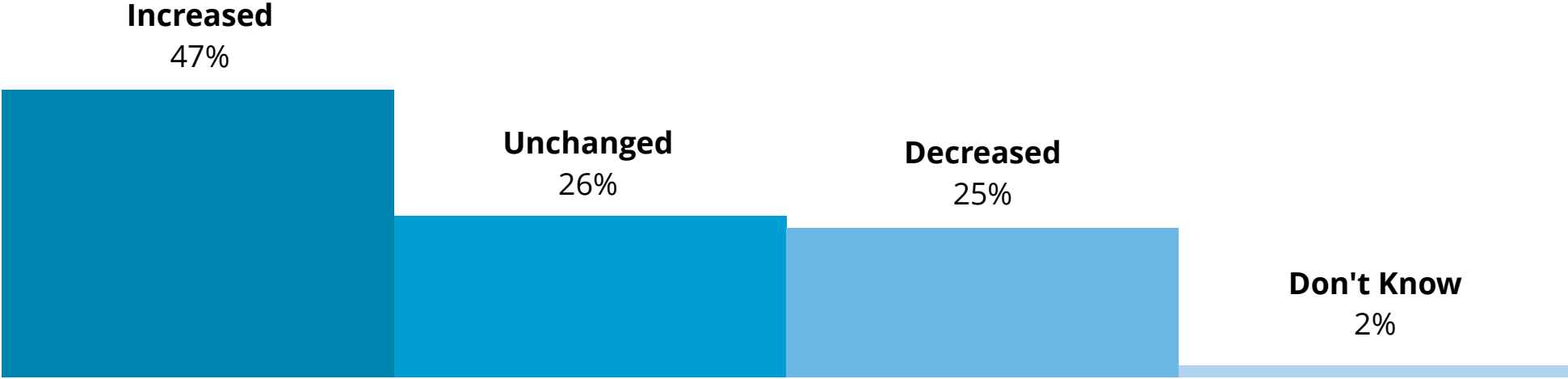
43%
Have or are developing a **Digital Transformation Plan**

74%
want to improve their **Business Processes**

Overall Membership Levels

Increased 47%

Unchanged 26%
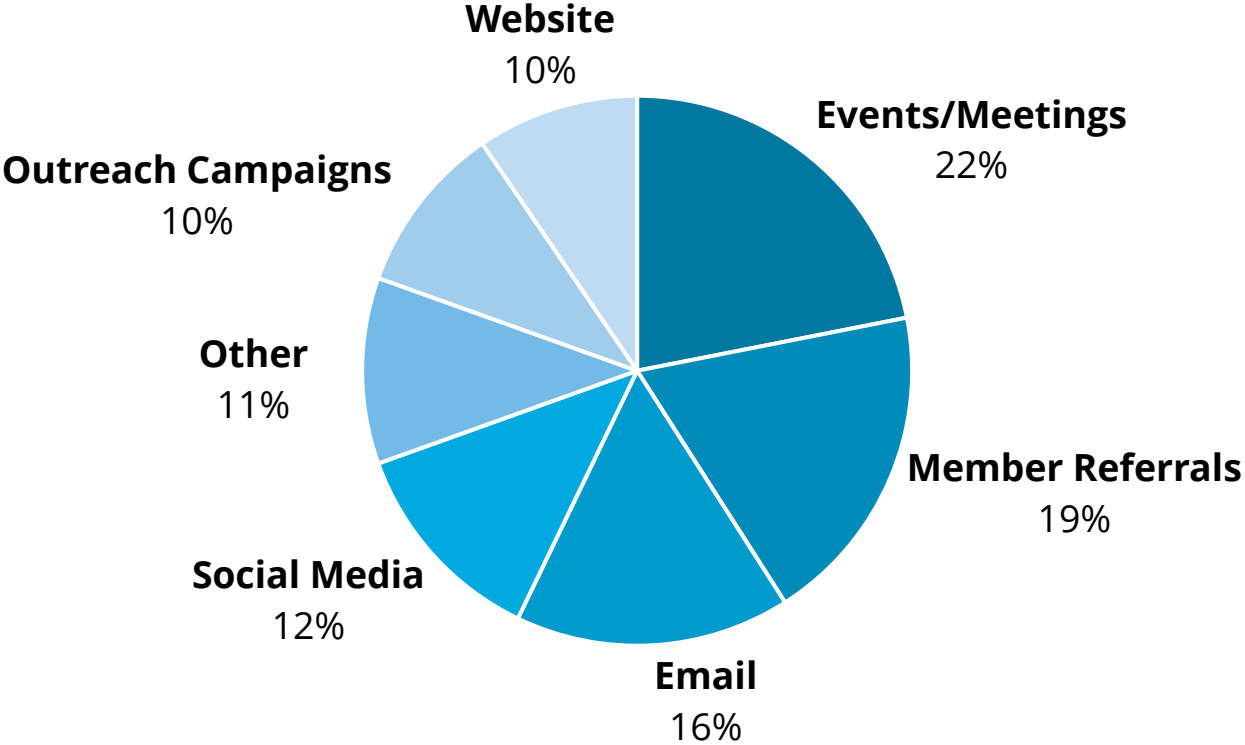
Decreased 25%

Don't Know 2%

Nearly half (47%) Increased overall membership levels; 25% lost members in the past year.

> " *iMIS has significantly improved access to the information we collect about our members and this data has enhanced the activities available from our association. The open, web-based platform has allowed us to not only improve our business but also better address the needs of our members.*"

TEXAS MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Best New-Member Recruiting Strategies

Website
10%

Events/Meetings
22%

Outreach Campaigns
10%

Member Referrals
19%

Other
11%

Social Media
12%

Email
16%

Events and meetings are some of the most successful ways to attract new members to your organization — followed by referrals from your existing base.
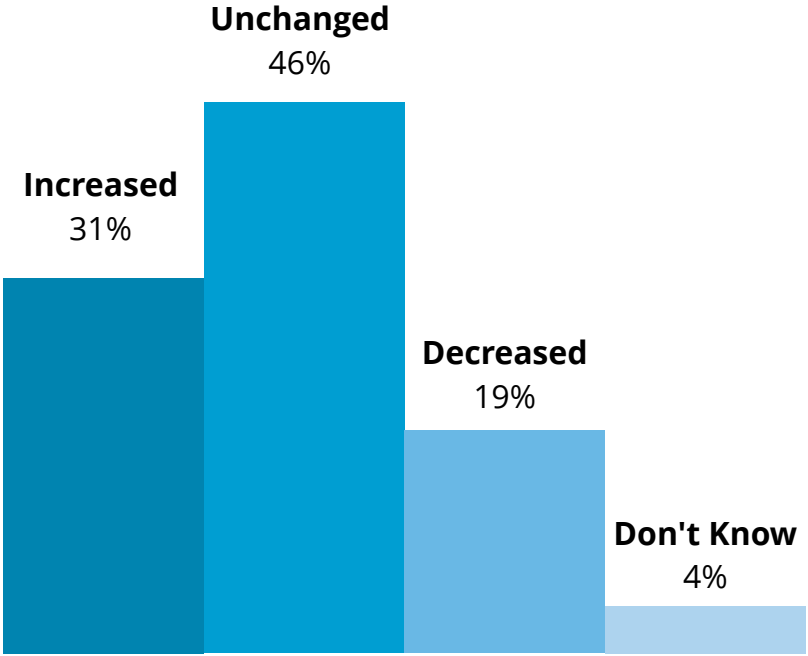
51%
increased **New Member Acquisitions**

33%
brought in fewer **New Members** *this year*

Overall Retention Rate Changes

Unchanged
46%

Increased
31%

Decreased
19%

Don't Know
4%

While retention rose for nearly one-third (31%) of respondents and decreased for others (19%), it's remaining steady for most.
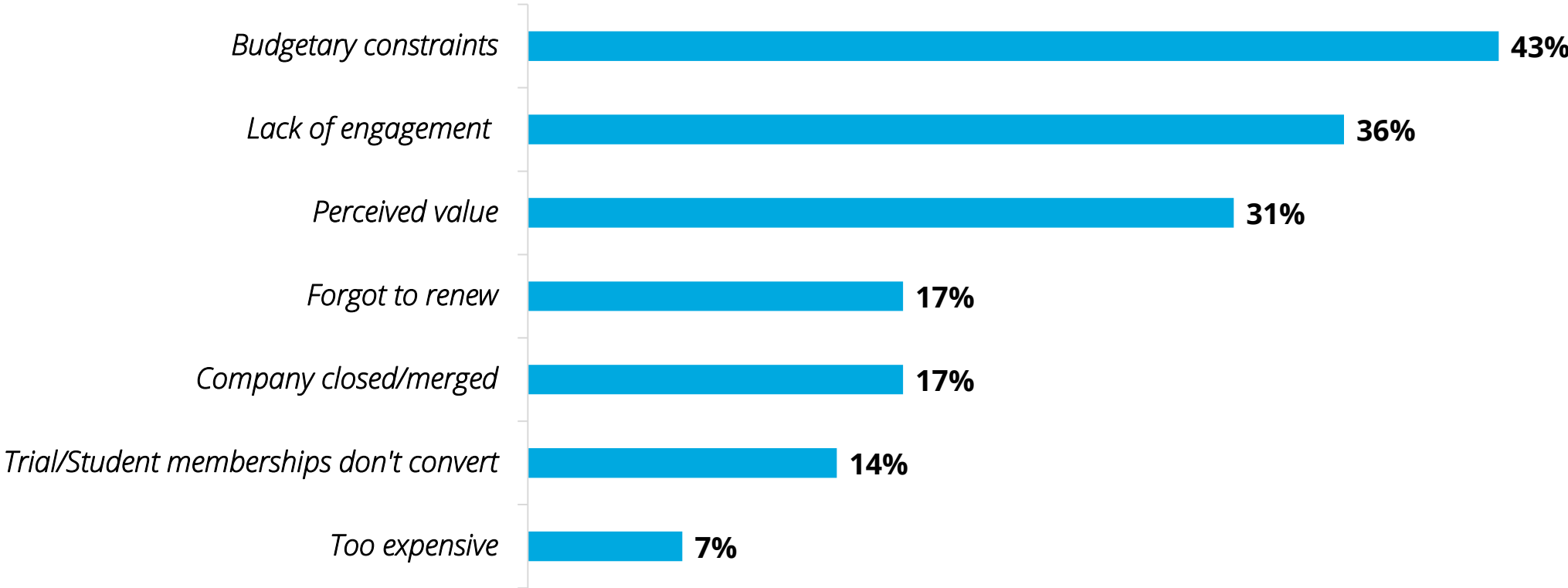
Personalized Member Experience

When you have a complete view of your members' engagement, you can deliver exceptional service and support — **which leads to greater retention**.

iMIS helps you provide a highly personalized experience that allows your members to take advantage of:

- ✓ **One simple transaction** for everything
- ✓ **Tailored content** based on their interests
- ✓ **Only one login to remember**
- ✓ Convenient **self-service options**

Why Members Don't Renew

Category	Percentage
Budgetary constraints	43%
Lack of engagement	36%
Perceived value	31%
Forgot to renew	17%
Company closed/merged	17%
Trial/Student memberships don't convert	14%
Too expensive	7%

This is an important glimpse into why retention dips for some organizations. Budgetary concerns top the list, but more than one-third of survey participants blame a lack of engagement.

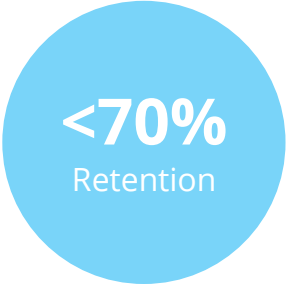## Renewal Rates for 1st Time Members

90%+
Retention

reported by 30% of respondents

80-90%
Retention

reported by 13% of respondents

70-79%
Retention

reported by 9% of respondents

<70%
Retention

reported by 8% of respondents

Best Ways to Win Back Lapsed Members

#1   **49%** of respondents stated **email** was the best method

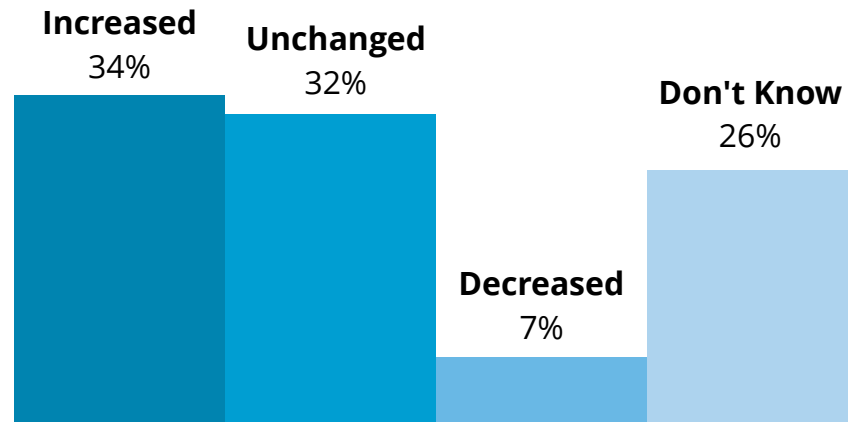**#2**   **48%** of respondents indicated **phone calls** impacted renewals

#3   **20%** of respondents noted **Board/Executive Outreach**

58% of respondents don't offer recurring memberships, which could be impacting renewal rates.

Overall Member Engagement Rates

Increased
34%

Unchanged
32%

Decreased
7%

Don't Know
26%

Strong engagement is important to maintain retention and grow your base. One-third (34%) increased engagement levels and another one-third (32%) kept rates steady.

Impact of an Engagement Plan

Organizations with a formal engagement plan reported significant increases in the following areas:

30% Event/Webinar Attendance

27% Annual Conference Attendance

22% Member Renewals

19% Volunteerism

"We created our new website so that we could manage our annual conference. At the time everything was being done using very administratively heavy processes on our WordPress website. Over the years we discovered all the functionality that iMIS websites could offer and we learned to utilize those tools and match them with our existing workflows."

BCNPHA
BC Non–Profit Housing Association

iMIS

Goals: Main Priorities

#1   **Increase Engagement**

#2   **Increase Retention**

#3   **Increase New Members**

Respondents' most pressing goal is to boost member engagement, but they also need to ensure retention.

Challenges: Greatest Obstacles

#1   Current **system requires extensive customization**
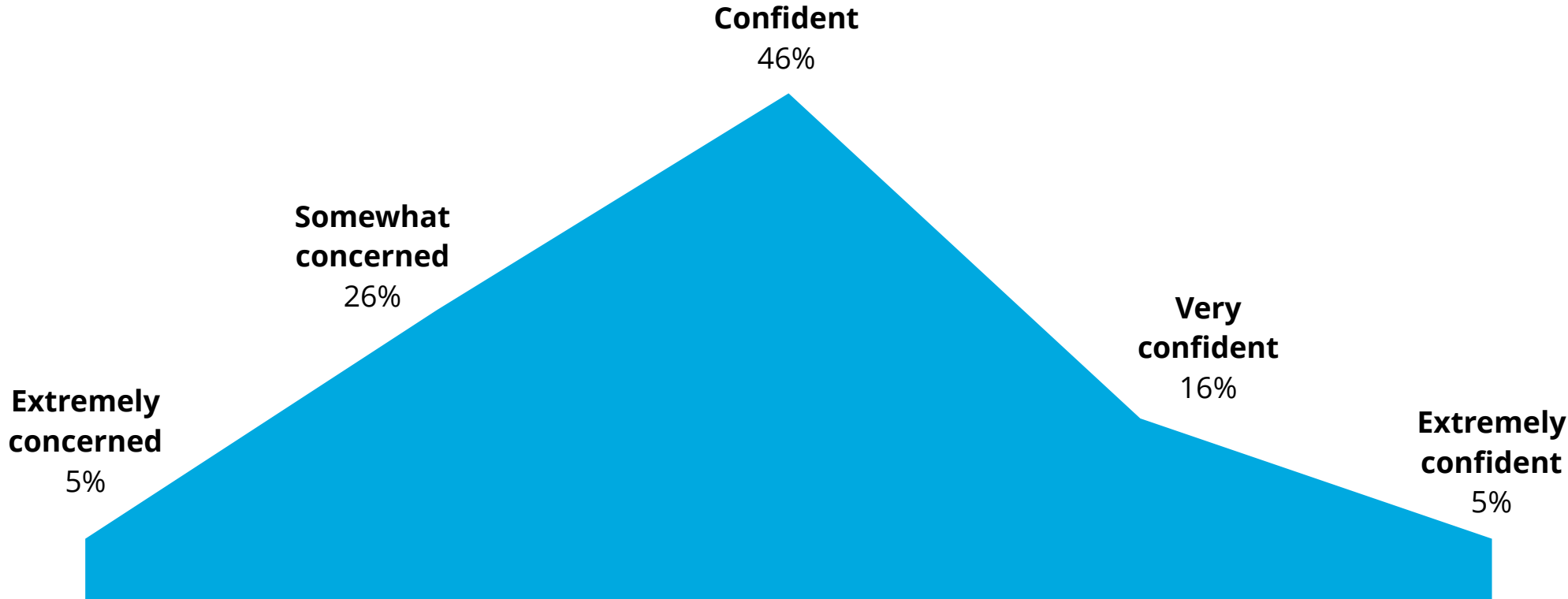
#2   **Inadequate reporting** tools

#3   **Incorrect/incomplete data** affects decision making & frustrates members

This year's top challenges are system customization worries and reporting/incomplete data issues.

How Executives Feel About Their Organization's Future Growth and Sustainability

Confident
46%

Somewhat concerned
26%

Very confident
16%

Extremely concerned
5%

Extremely confident
5%

67% are at least confident about the future, while 31% have some concerns.

Generational Breakdown

This year, we asked respondents to share their age range so we could explore how attitudes might vary by generation*:

**Baby Boomers** are *most cautious about the future* and are **concerned about engagement and system customizations**.

Gen Xers — half of all respondents — *feel confident* but are **worried about retention and the quality of the data** they're using to make decisions.

Millennials are the *most confident* but are **anxious about attracting new members and the extensive customization** their system requires.

Prefer Not to Answer
2%

Gen Z
2%

Silent Generation
2%

Millennials
20%

Baby Boomers
26%
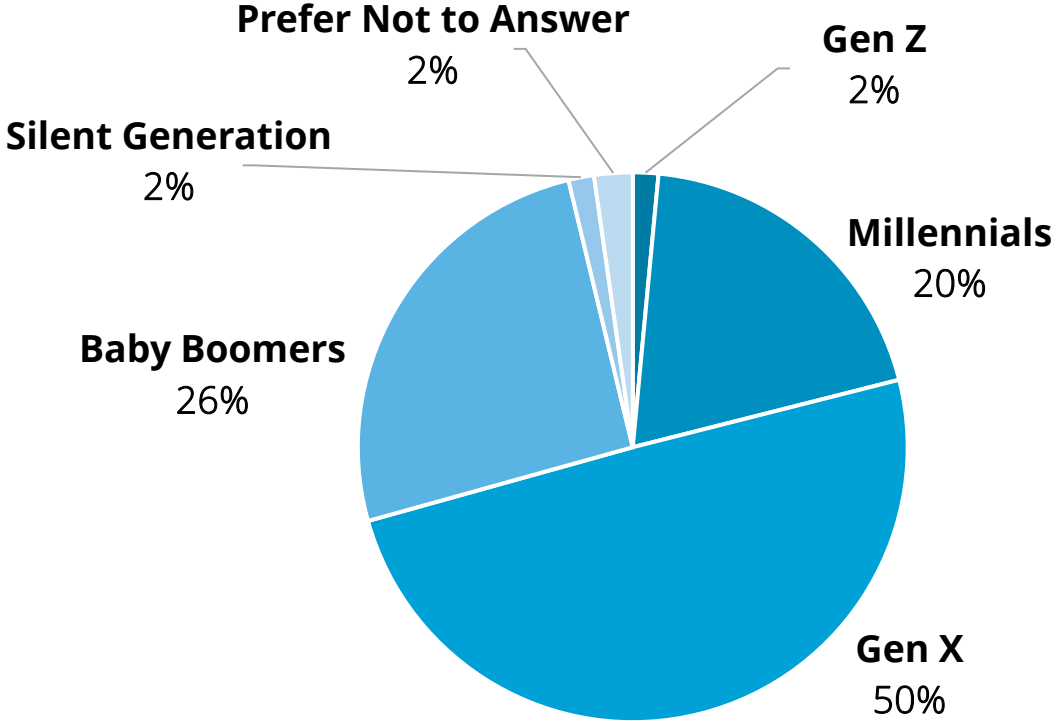
Gen X
50%

The Silent Generation is defined as born in 1945 or earlier, Baby Boomers born in 1946 to 1964, Gen X born in 1965 to 1979, Millennials born in 1980 to 1995, and Gen Z born in 1996 or later.

How Generations See the Issues

	Baby Boomers	Gen Xers	Millennials
Top Worry Keeping Them *Up at Night*	Increasing engagement	Increasing retention	Increasing new members
Top Goal	Increasing new members	Increasing member engagement	**TIE:** Increasing member engagement & increasing retention
Top Challenge	Current system requires extensive customization	Incomplete/incorrect data limiting decision making & frustrating members	Current system requires extensive customization
How They Feel About *the Future*	Confident but expressed the highest level of concern of all generations	Confident	Confident — the most optimistic generation

06 Next Steps

If you're considering new membership management software as part of your organization's performance improvement strategy in the next 1-2 years, we've put together several resources that can help you **now**.
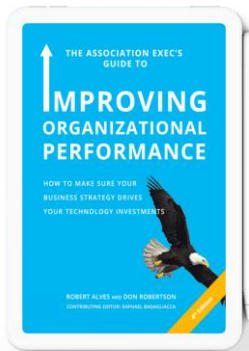
eBook: Get insights on how to improve your performance by becoming a learning organization to achieve continuous performance improvement.
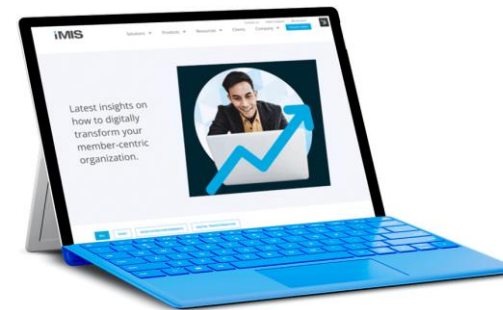
www.imis.com/assocbook

Whitepaper: Discover the three *critical* steps to creating your organization's digital transformation strategy.

www.imis.com/digitaltransform

Online Resources: Access a variety of complimentary resources to help you navigate your digital transformation journey from inception to evolution.

www.imis.com/digitaltransformation

Blog: Deep-dives on membership best practices & tips to drive sustainable growth for your organization.

blog.imis.com

About ASI, the Developers of iMIS

Advanced Solutions International (ASI) is a leading global provider of cloud software and services for associations and non-profits. We help clients digitally transform, streamline operations, and grow revenue through industry expertise, best-practice advice, and high-quality solutions. Our portfolio of solutions includes iMIS for association and non-profit management, TopClass LMS for learning management, and OpenWater for application and review management.

Struggling to identify membership trends?

iMIS, the world's only Engagement Management System (EMS), is purpose-built for the way associations, unions, and non-profits work and designed *at its core* to improve your organization's membership performance.

[Schedule a demo with the iMIS team today](#) to see how iMIS enables you to learn from every member interaction — putting you on a clear path to continuous performance improvement.

iMIS