

CASE STUDY

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS



ABOUT NAGC

Founded in 1976, the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) is a national membership association dedicated to advocating, promoting and recognizing excellence in government communication. Its members include hundreds of government communications professionals across the U.S. Providing opportunities for professional development and career advancement, enhancing effective communication with constituents, and advancing the profession of government communication, the principal purpose of NAGC is to advance communication as an essential professional resource at every level of local, state, tribal and national government.

CHALLENGE

In 2017, NAGC was a well-respected organization with a prestigious awards program, but signs of wear-and-tear were also evident:

- The association struggled to maintain a full, engaged board that was able to operate at a strategic level to support progress for the organization.
- Membership was stagnant, and it was difficult to demonstrate value to members.
- It was difficult to secure relevant presenters for programs.
- The organization was continually at risk financially, relying on a major annual event to ensure adequate cash flow to continue operations.

“Our relationship with our management company at the time had grown stale,” says Scott Thomsen, NAGC Board President. “It felt like we had a routine, rather than a strategic approach to accomplishing what we wanted to become as an organization.”

At that time, the NAGC board decided to solicit bids from other association management companies (AMCs), with the current AMC declining to bid.



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- Tabitha Clark, APR
2020 - 2022
NAGC President-Elect



(NAGC Case Study, continued)

SOLUTION

“Today, I am much more optimistic about the state of the NAGC board. We have a full, actively engaged board of individuals who continually seek opportunities to enhance our work in support of our vision to grow,” said Thomsen.

The MHQ team has developed membership onboarding and renewal plans and is implementing them in partnership with the NAGC board. Growth and participation in the association’s signature BPGS Awards competition, annual Communications School increased in 2021, during a pandemic.

“Management HQ has supported us by keeping our strategic goals in front of us, finding opportunities to enhance the systems we use for member engagement, and responding to our desires to push those systems to their maximum performance,” said Thomsen.

The association is creating and driving forward new sponsorship opportunities and has added a fall seminar. NAGC’s webinar series is now scheduled five months in advance with topics driven by the results of a membership survey. NAGC has also initiated a membership newsletter that is sent to their full database, including members and prospective members.

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RESULTS

With the support of MHQ, NAGC has created a shared board vision for the association, setting strategic goals from one to 10 years. By partnering with MHQ, NAGC's membership has grown and the organization is led by outstanding executive director who quickly earned the trust of the association's leadership and its members. Supported by that executive director and MHQ management team, each board member is fully committed to NAGC's dedication to advocating, promoting, and recognizing excellence in government communication and providing value to members. Over the course of their 4-year relationship, MHQ has supported NAGC in the following:

- Engaging a highly skilled, consistent executive director
- 23% increase in membership
- 22% increase in gross revenue
- 28.4% increase in non-dues revenue
- 81% increase in annual conference revenue
- Creating a newly designed monthly webinar series
- Securing strong, strategic board participation
- Implementing up-to-date technology systems
- Developing a current and detailed member database
- A significantly higher level of financial stability



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ABOUT SCOTT THOMSEN 2020 - 2022 NAGC President

Scott Thomsen is the director of communications and public affairs for the Ventura County Fire Department, which anticipates and responds to the public safety needs of about 1 million people throughout Ventura County, California. He also teaches advanced public information officer courses for FEMA and serves as president for the National Association of Government Communicators. Prior to joining the fire department, he worked in a variety of communications role, including director, at Seattle City Light, a municipally owned electric utility serving greater Seattle. And before starting his communications career, Thomsen worked as a journalist at a variety of news organizations, including the Orange County Register and The Associated Press. Scott has served on the NAGC board for eight years and has been a member since 2008.

ABOUT TABITHA CLARK 2020 - 2022 NAGC President-Elect

Tabitha Clark is the Senior Communications Administrator for the City of Perry located in central Georgia. She is accredited in public relations (APR) by the Universal Accreditation Board where she was trained and evaluated in the strategic planning process and best practices in the public relations field. Her communication experience includes law enforcement, K-12 public education, and local government. After spending over a decade working in communications, Tabitha knows how to engage target audiences through creative storytelling and communicating messages in a fun and unique way. Tabitha joined the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) as the Membership Director in 2020. She currently serves as NAGC's President-Elect.