

2019

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

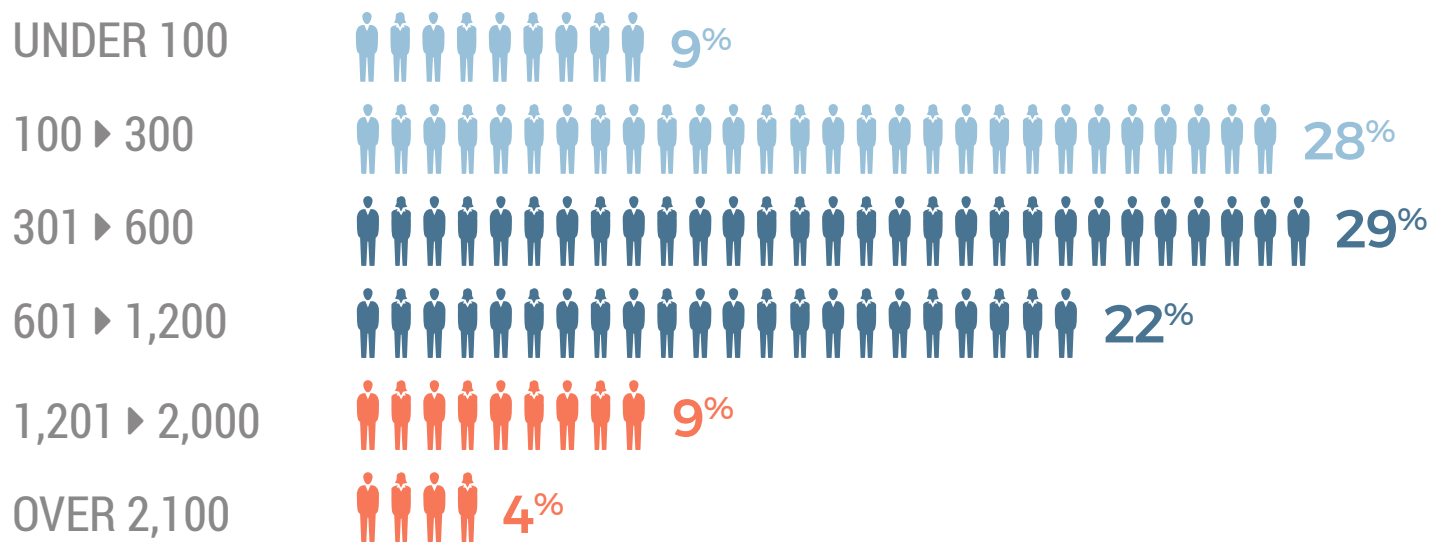


ChamberMaster surveyed chamber professionals across the U.S. and Canada. Topics included everything from employee-to-member ratio, to the most beneficial things their organizations have done in the past year, to satisfaction with their boards. The results showed a number of trends impacting today's chambers.

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

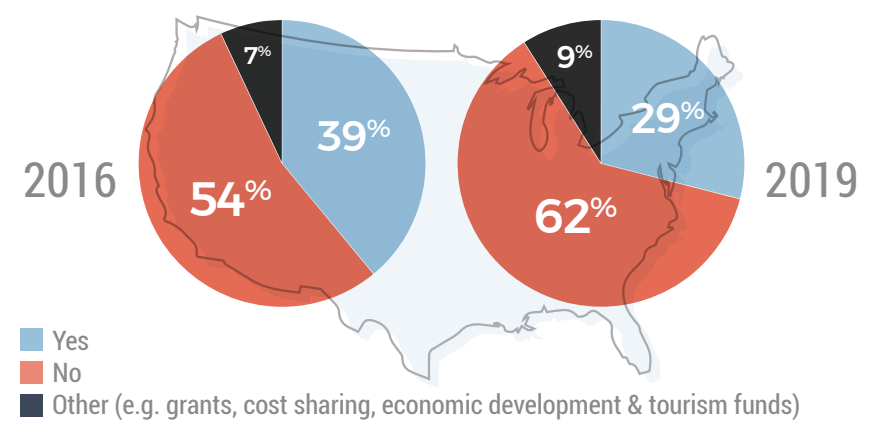
*Due to rounding and checkbox questions, percentages may exceed or not appear to add up to 100%.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS | PREDICTED MEMBER COUNT ON 1/1/2019



FUNDING

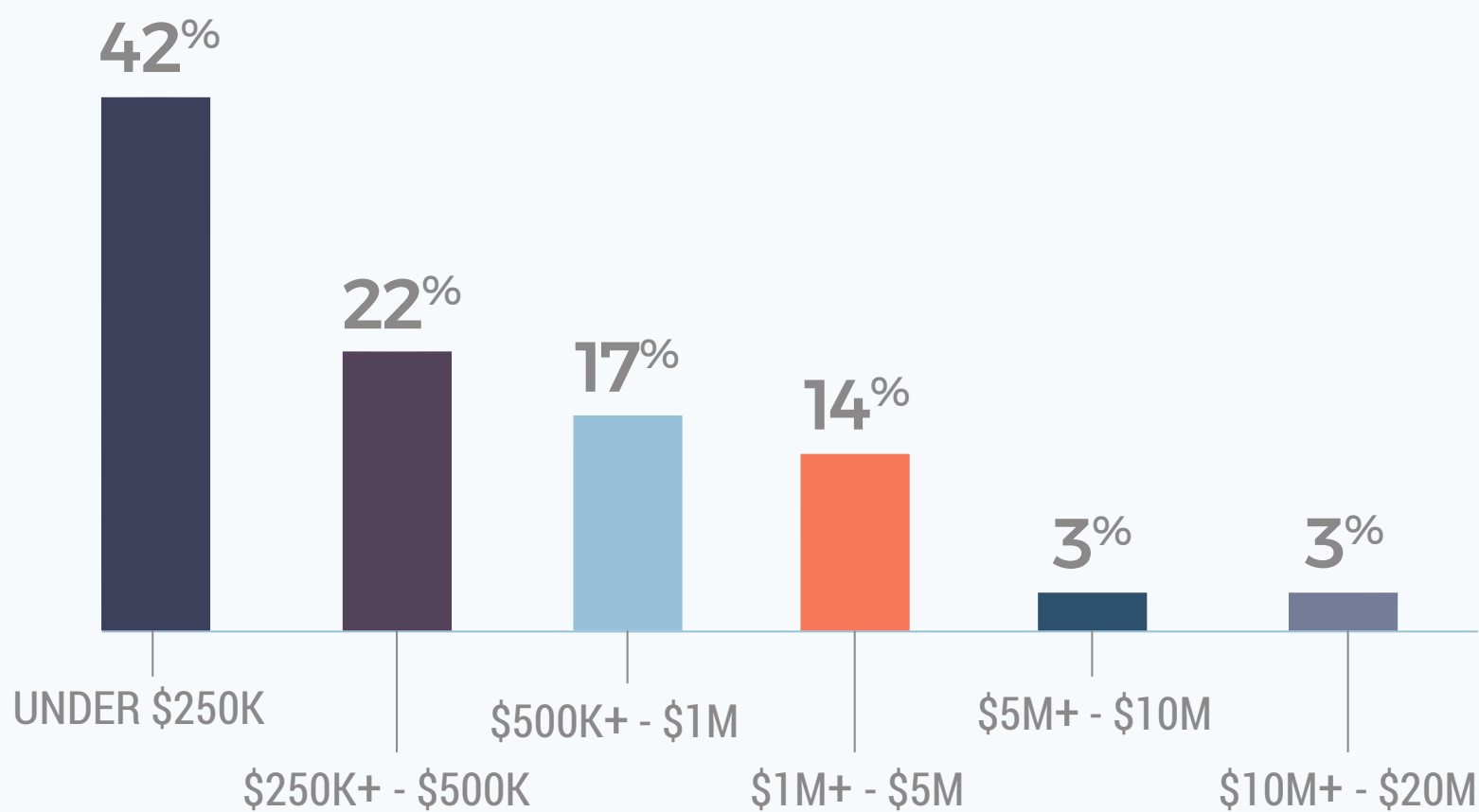
Does your chamber receive city/government funding?



★ 70% of chambers with decreasing membership receive no city/government funding whereas only 59% of growing chambers operate without city/government funding.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

APPROXIMATE

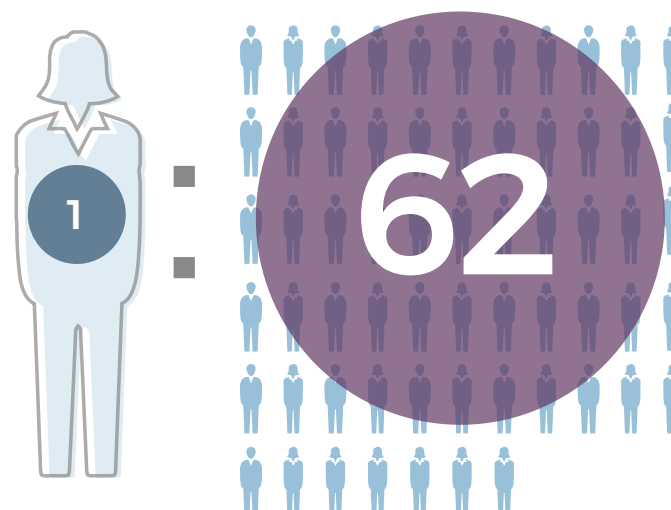


EMPLOYEES

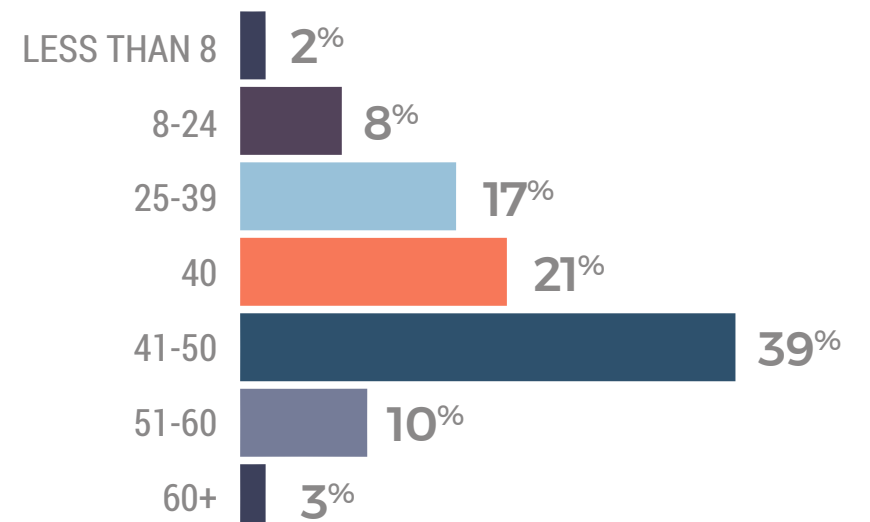
FULL-TIME VS PART-TIME



AVERAGE STAFF-TO-MEMBER RATIO



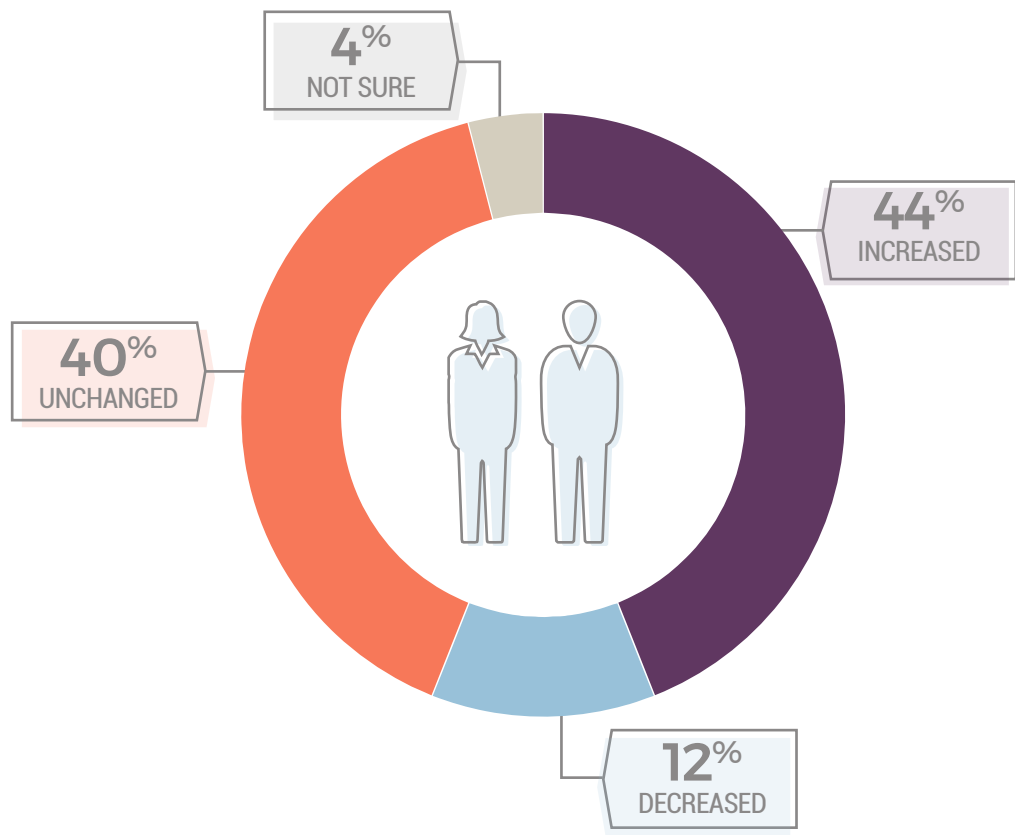
HOURS WORKED PER WEEK



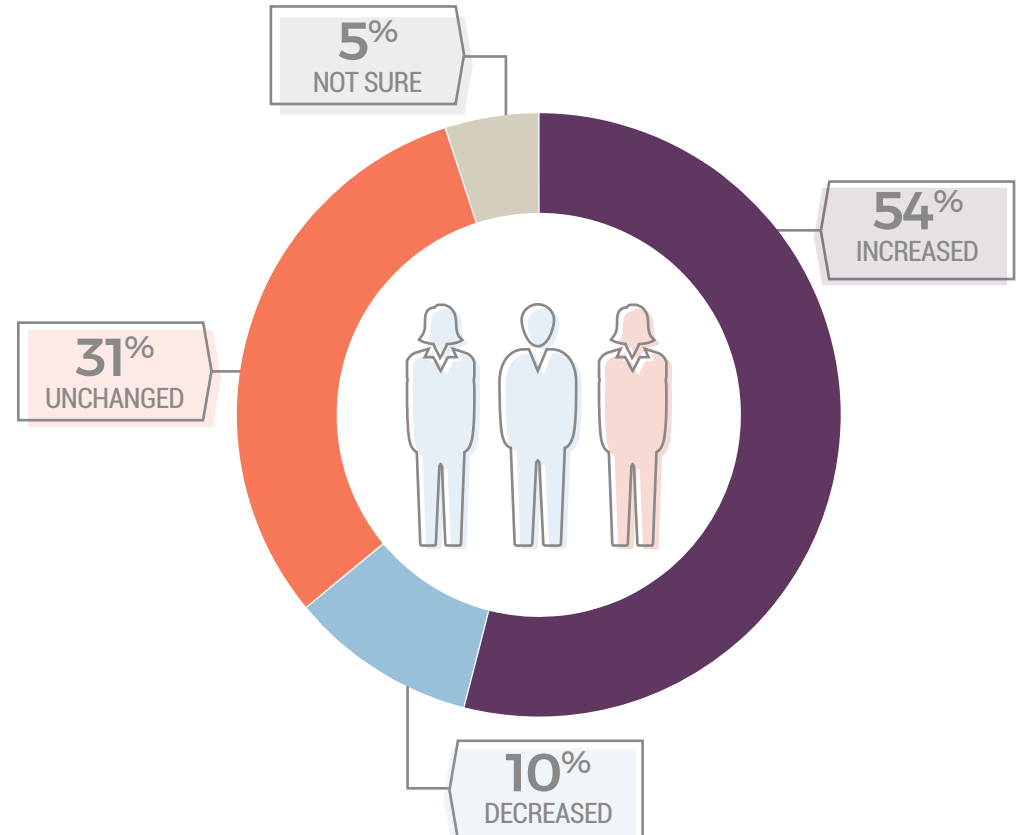
↓ Get 44 ideas to improve employee morale and reduce turnover, [The Staffing Solutions Playbook.](#) »

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

ANNUAL OVERALL NET MEMBERSHIP

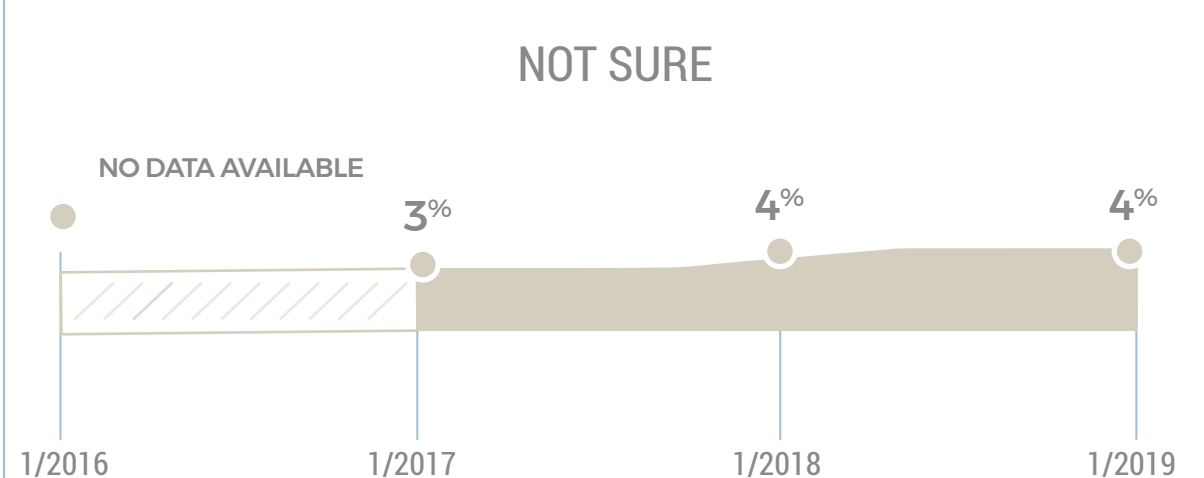
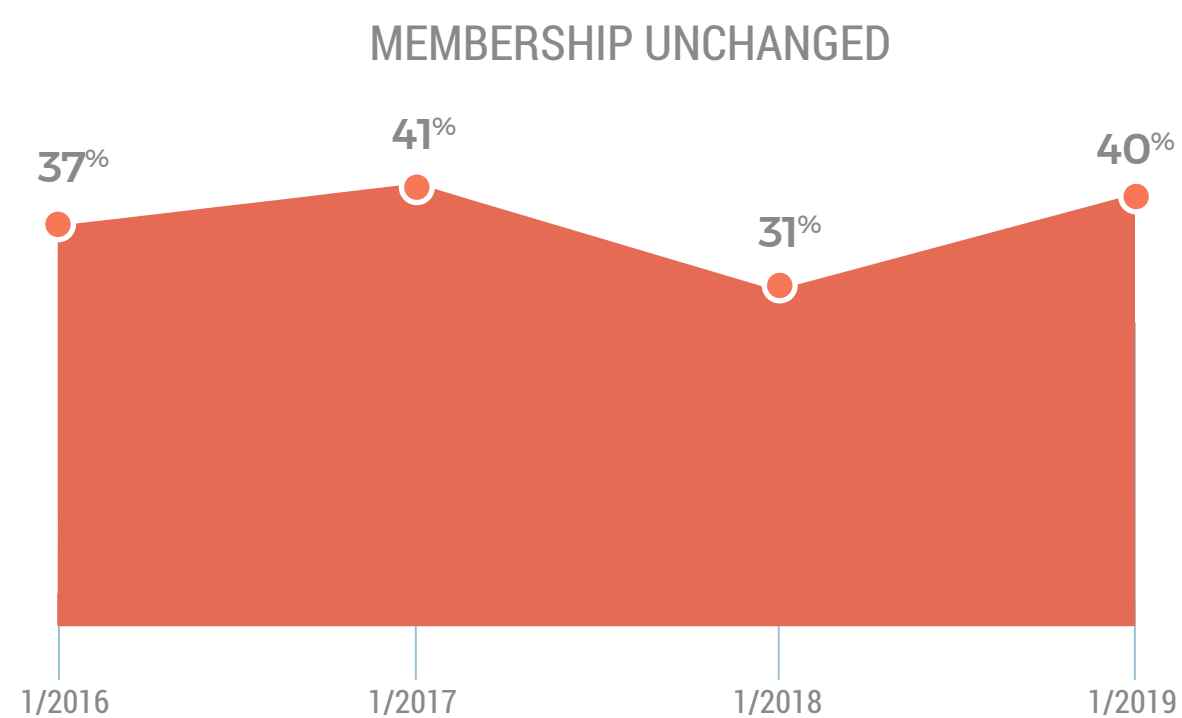
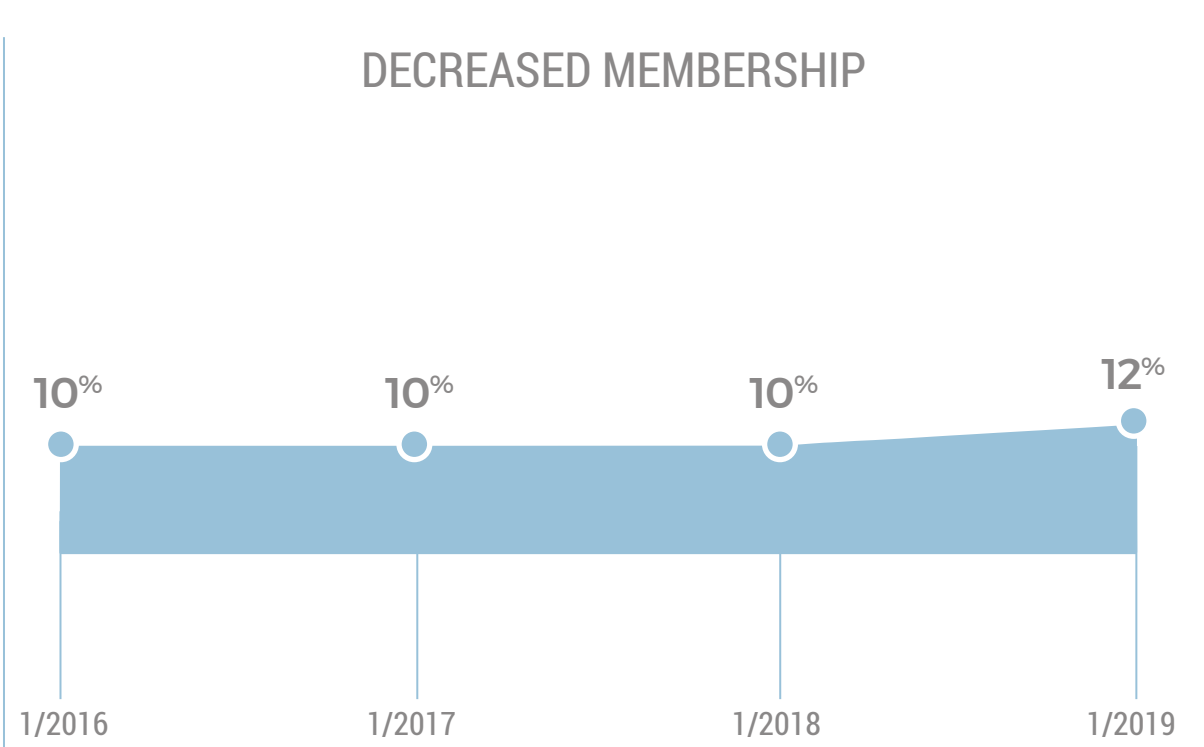
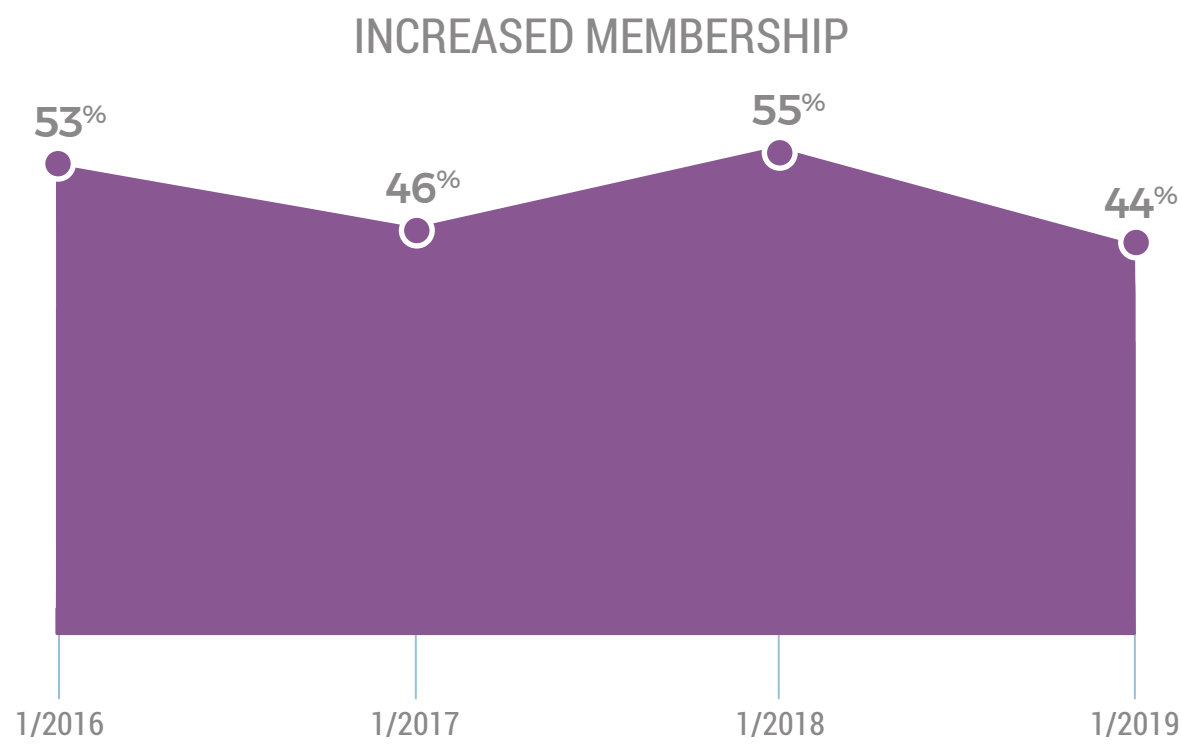


ANNUAL OVERALL NEW MEMBERSHIP



↓ Struggling with member onboarding? Download our [New-Member Onboarding Checklist and Schedule.](#)»

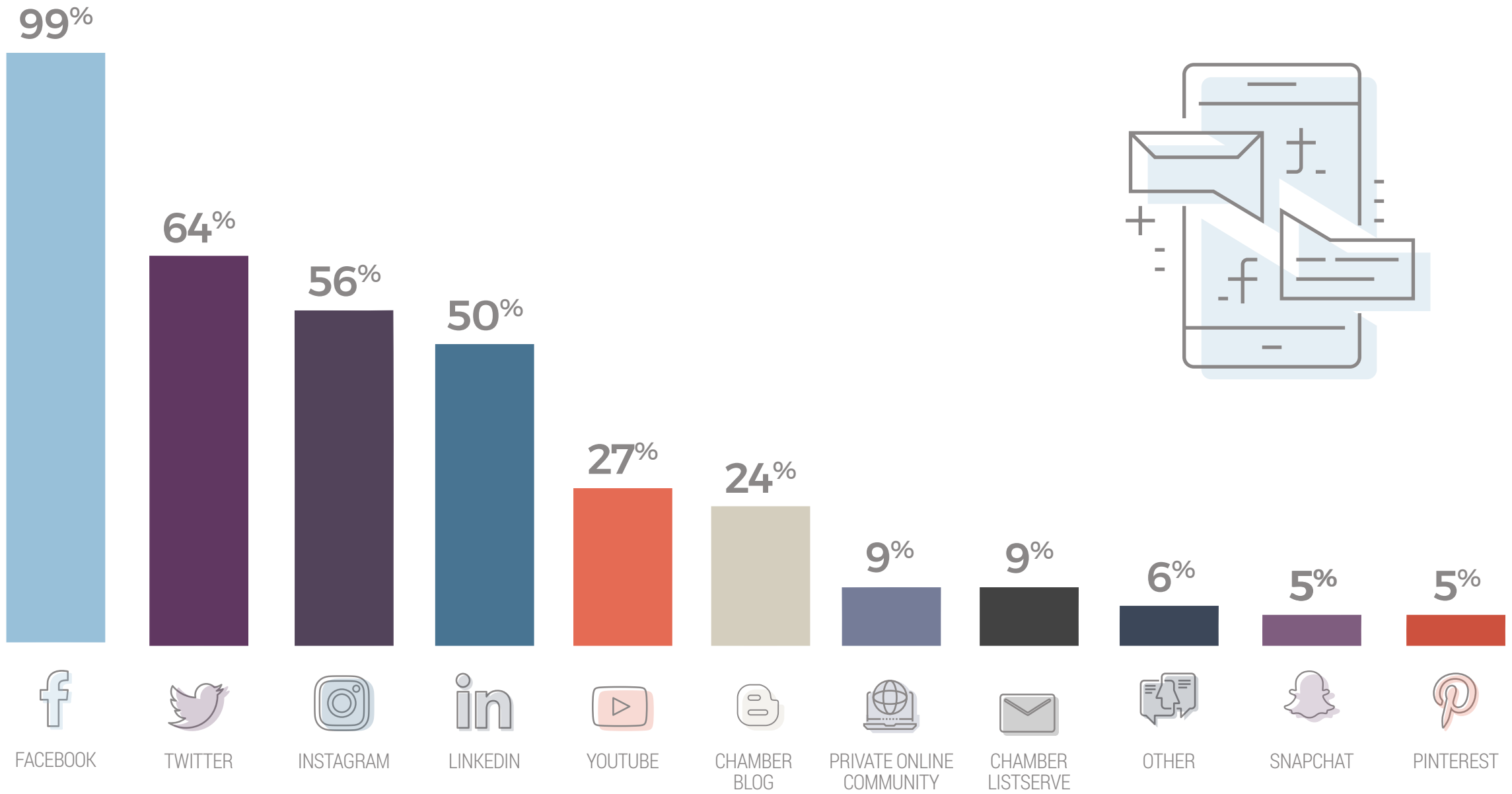
HISTORIC MEMBERSHIP TRENDS



★ Chambers with 301-600 members report the highest growth (53% indicate their membership has increased in the last year). The smallest segment was chambers with 2001+ members (only 25% reported increased membership).

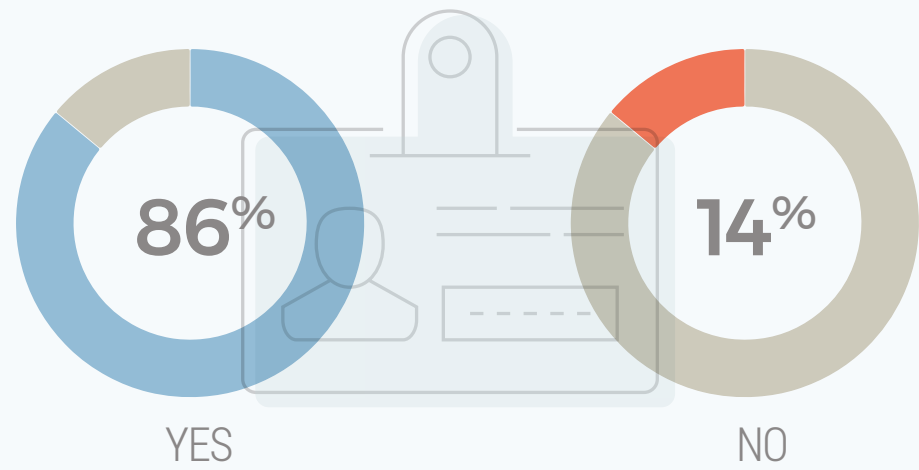
MARKETING

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS | ACTIVELY USED



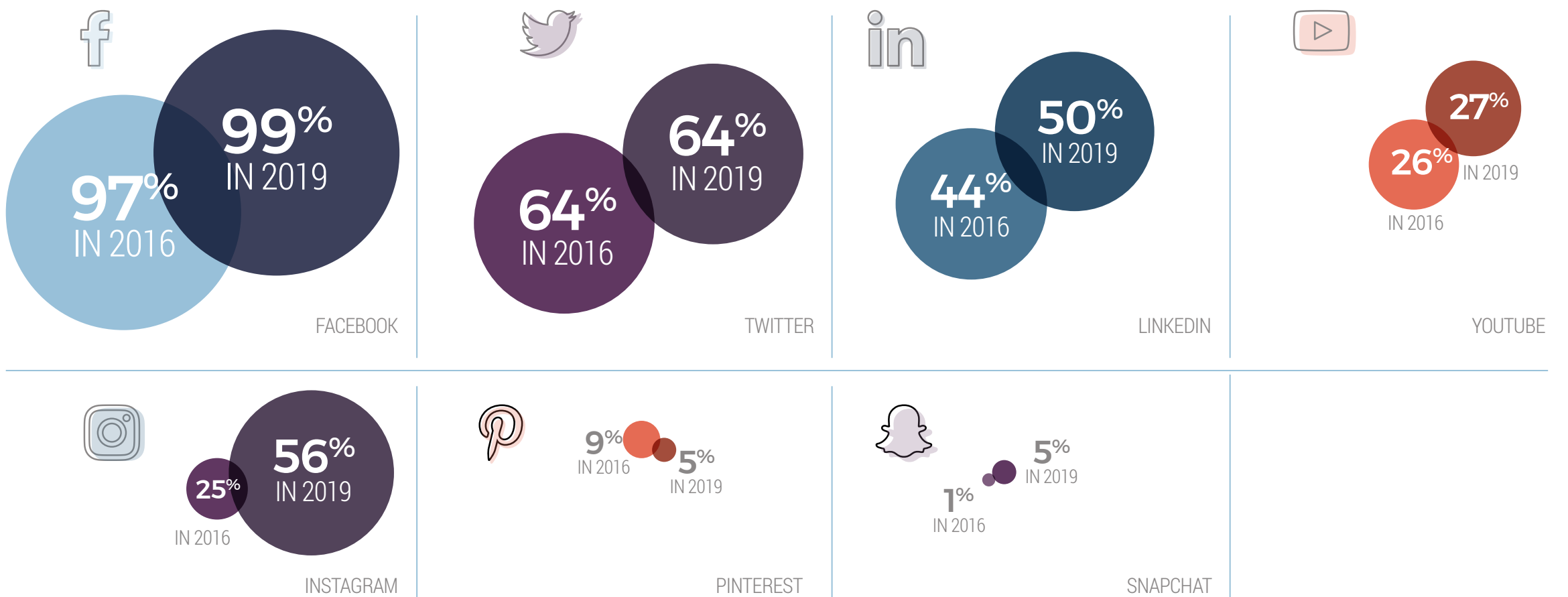
MEMBER IDENTIFIERS

Does your organization distribute member identifiers (e.g., membership card, certificate, window cling, etc.)?



Get dozens of #MondayMotivation social media posts in the handy tip sheet, [Quote Notes for Chambers.](#) »

SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS | USED BY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

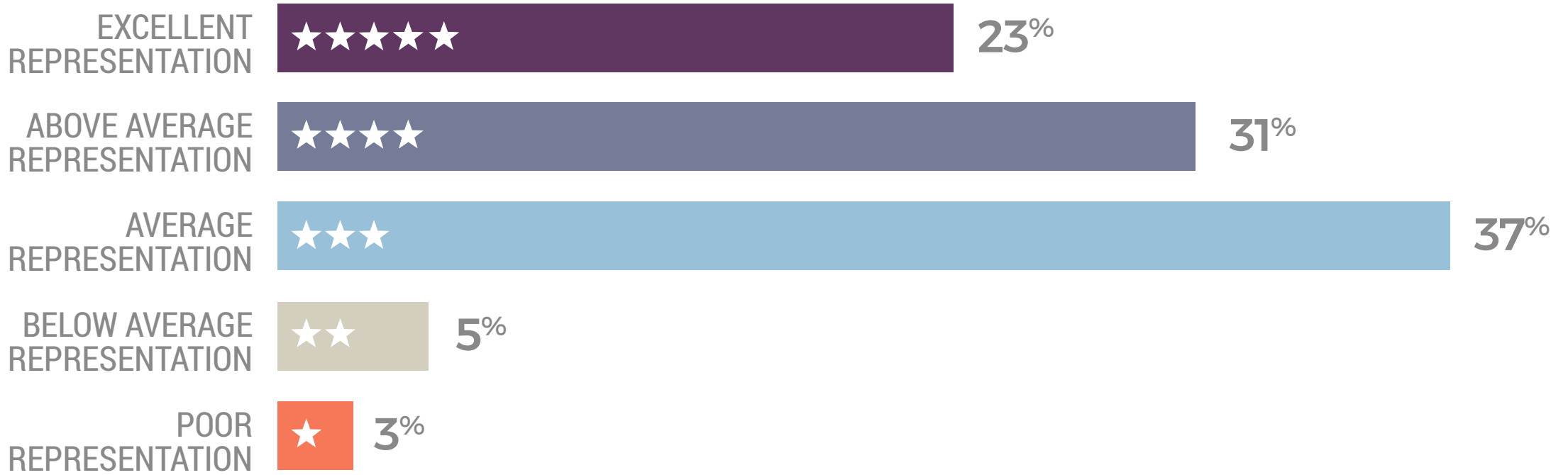


BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD DIVERSITY

AVERAGE RATING: ★★★★★ 3.64

Does your board proportionately represent a cross section of your membership?
(e.g., experience, blue-collar/white-collar, education, etc.)

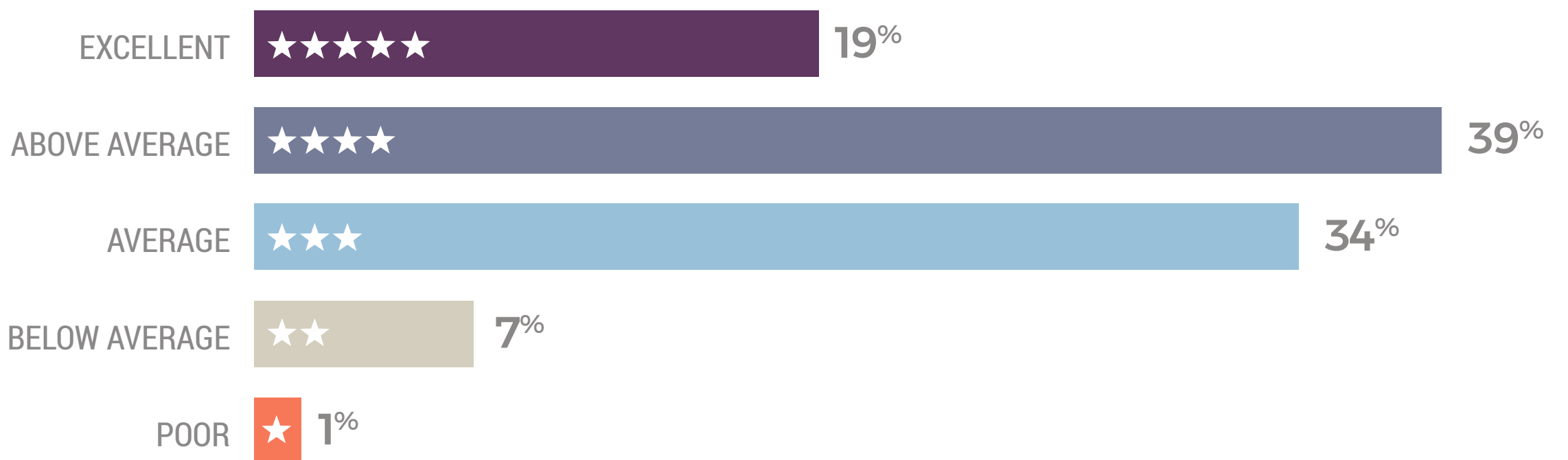


↓ Set up your board members for success with [The Field Guide to Chamber Board Orientation.](#) »

BOARD PERFORMANCE

AVERAGE RATING: ★★★★★ 3.63

How would you rate your organization's board performance?

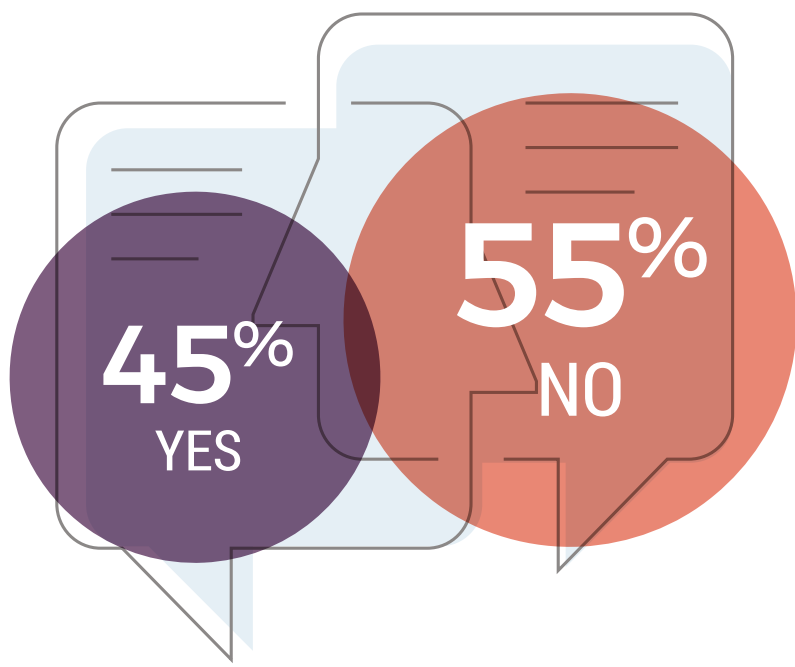


60% of respondents from growing chambers rate their board of directors' performance as "above average" or "excellent" vs. 36% of respondents from chambers with decreasing membership.

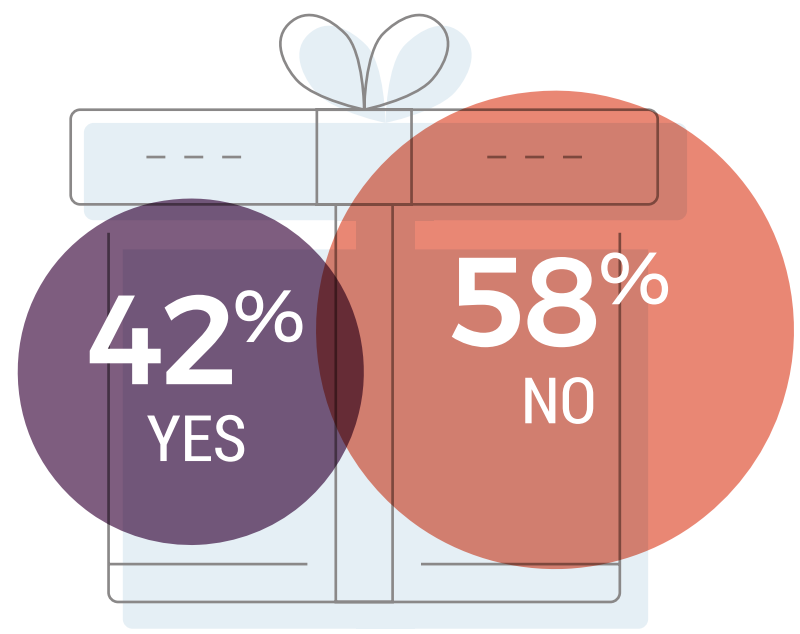
RECRUITMENT & RENEWALS

REFERRAL PROGRAMS & INCENTIVES

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION OFFER A MEMBER REFERRAL PROGRAM?

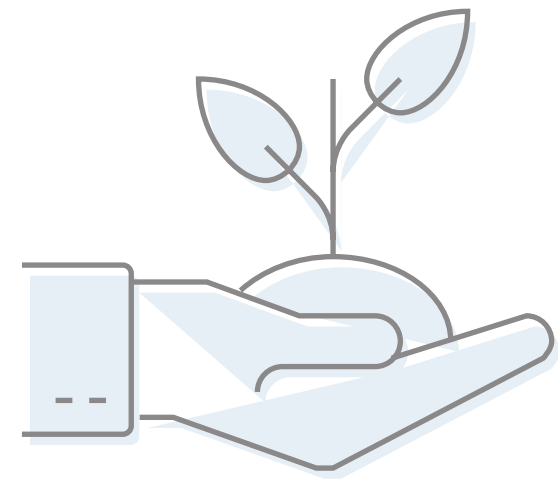
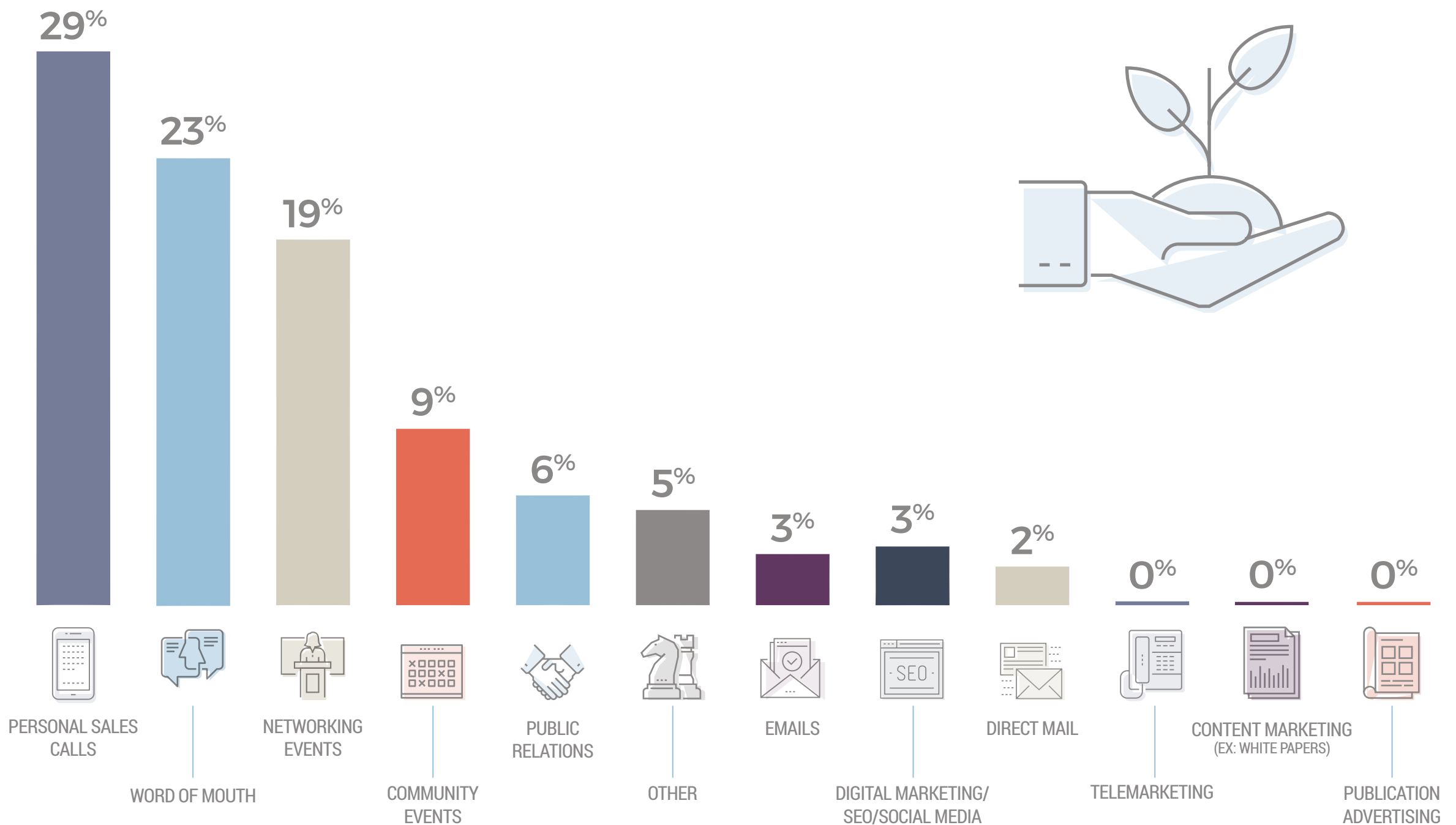


DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION PROVIDE TANGIBLE INCENTIVES TO JOIN OR FOR MEMBER RENEWALS? (e.g., 2 YEARS FOR THE PRICE OF 1, FREE GIFTS, ETC.)



★ 56% of chambers with decreasing membership do not offer incentives vs. only 43% of growing chambers.

MOST EFFECTIVE TACTICS FOR GROWING MEMBERSHIPS

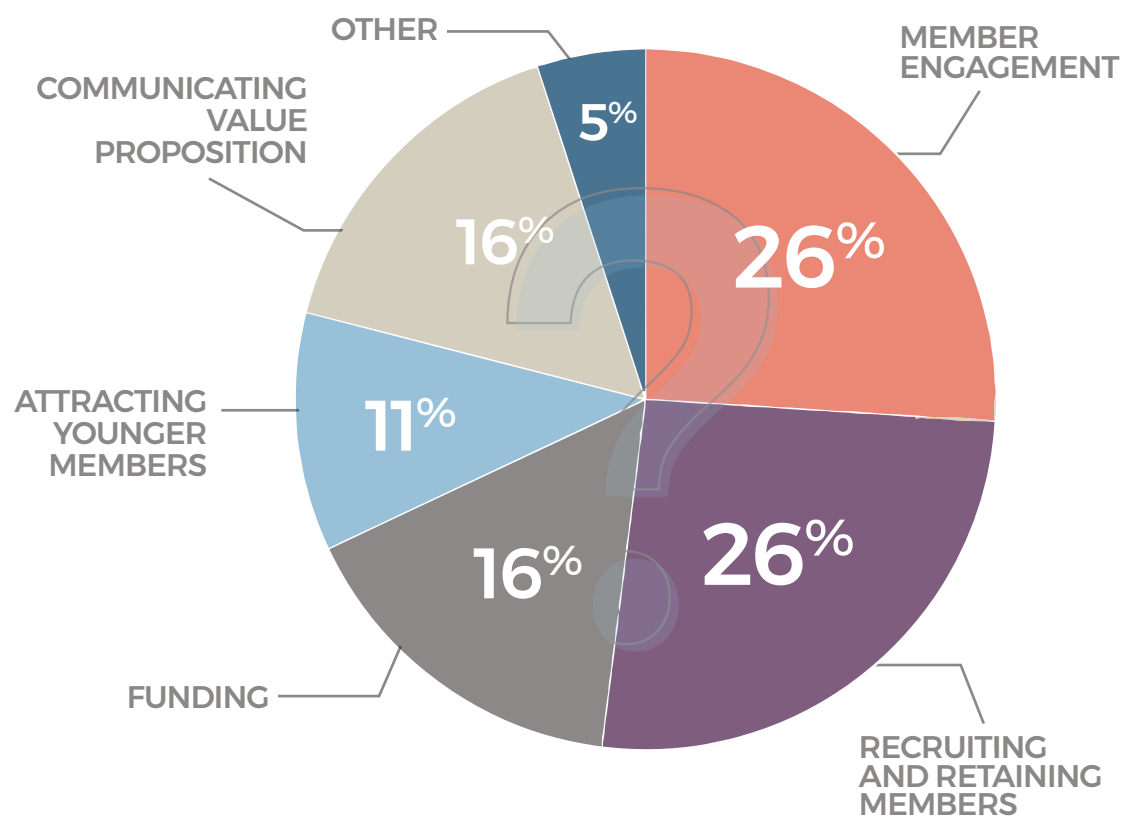


↓ Rethink your renewal process with the free guide, [Membership Renewals: The Secret Sauce Revealed.](#) »

ADDITIONAL TRENDS

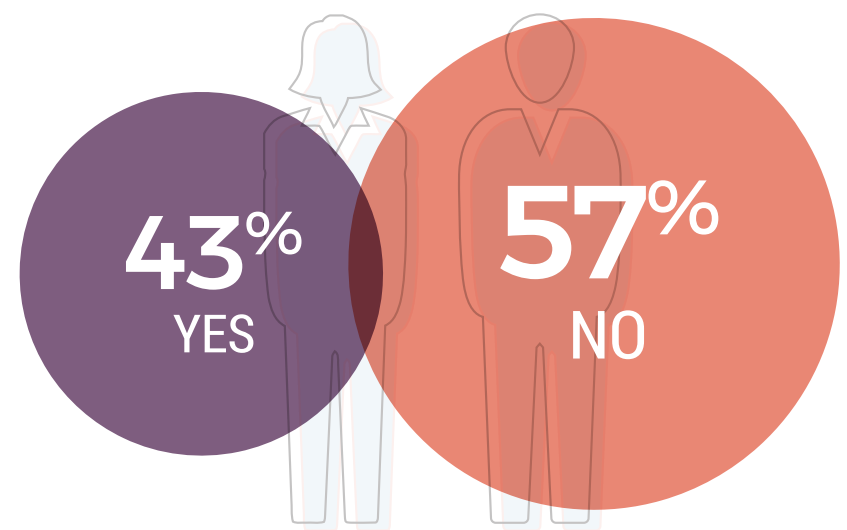
CHALLENGES

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WILL BE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN THE COMING YEAR?



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

DO YOU HAVE A YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP OR PROGRAM?



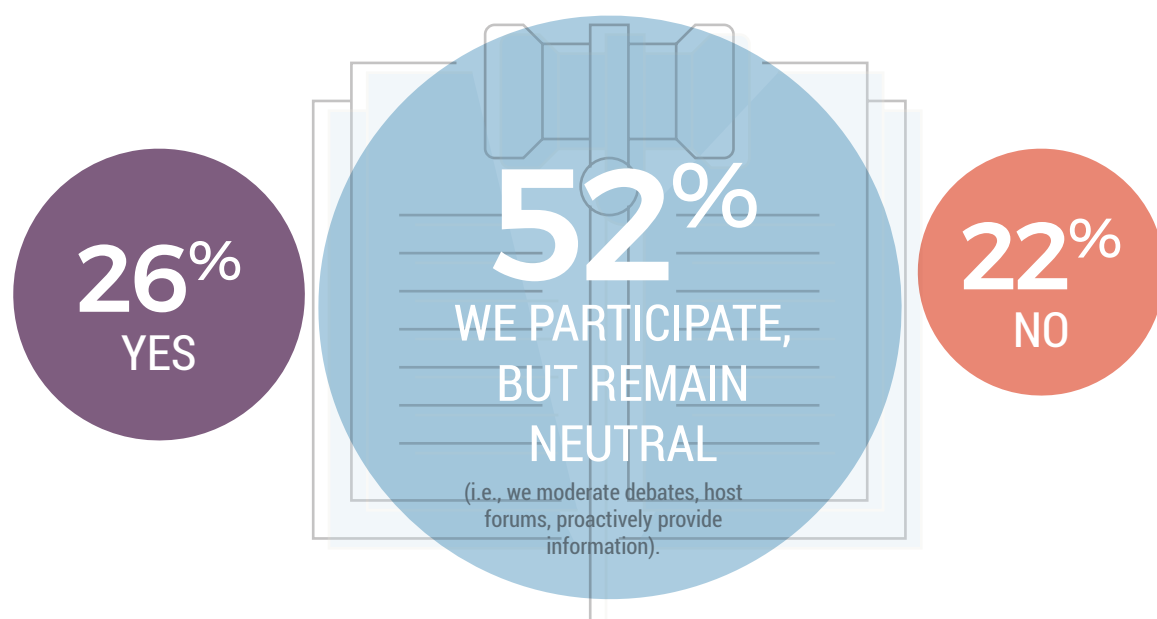
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM/GROUP - TREND



↓ For ideas to get young members to engage, read [The Power of Young Professionals.](#) »

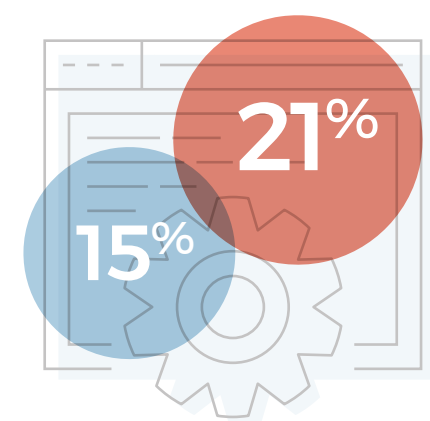
ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS (I.E., TAKE A POSITION ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, ENDORSE CANDIDATES, LOBBY DECISION-MAKERS, ETC.)?



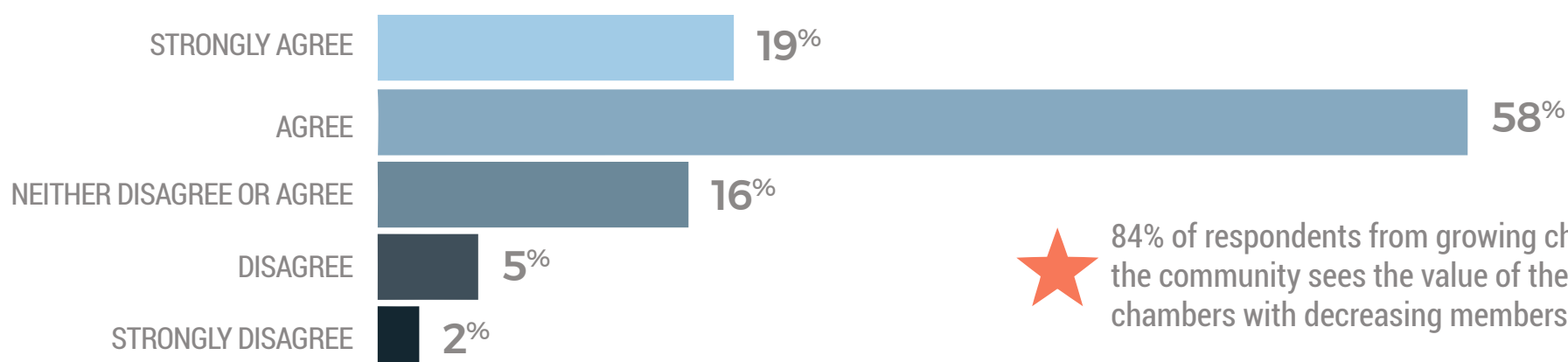
SOFTWARE USAGE

21% OF SHRINKING CHAMBERS DO NOT USE MEMBERSHIP MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE VS. 15% OF GROWING CHAMBERS.



★ Surprising Result: 76% of respondents from growing chambers report their organization participates in the legislative process vs. 83% of respondents from chambers with decreasing membership numbers.

COMMUNITY VALUE | DO YOU THINK YOUR COMMUNITY SEES THE VALUE OF YOUR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?



★ 84% of respondents from growing chambers "agree" or "strongly agree" that the community sees the value of their chamber vs. 58% of respondents from chambers with decreasing membership.

CHANGE IS GOOD

WE ASKED: What is the most beneficial change your chamber has made within the past year?







TOP CHANGES

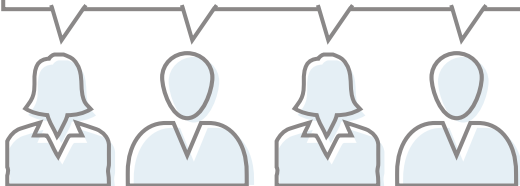
1. Staffing
2. Organization Strategy
3. Programs
4. Events
5. Marketing

COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

 = What respondents said

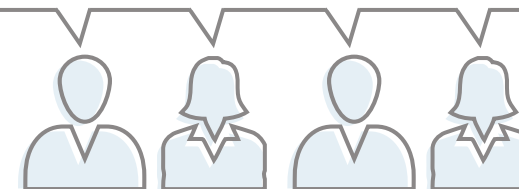
STAFFING CHANGES

-  Creating a new culture and adjusting the staffing to go along with that.
-  Addition of a Dedicated Workforce/Talent Resources Director.
-  Outsourcing both our bookkeeping and social media management.
-  Hired someone to handle member retention.
-  Hired a full-time admin assistant with IT background.
-  Hired a new President/CEO with progressive ideas.









STRATEGY CHANGES

-  Created a Strategic Plan identifying four initiatives.
-  Stronger focus on revenue by operating more like a business.
-  Thinking in terms of the member journey and developing a member-centric approach to everything we do.
-  Expanded into more economic development issues.
-  Asking for feedback from our members and implementing their advice.
-  Shifted Executive Director's focus away from low revenue generating/high effort events to more productive things.
-  Working intentionally towards projects that provide real results to issues facing our community.





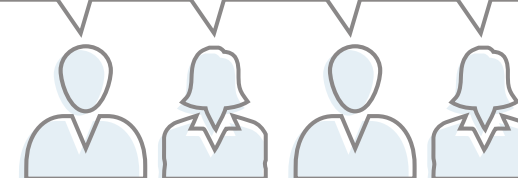
PROGRAM CHANGES

-  Adding a robust workforce development program.
-  Creating programs, including stronger advocacy, for large employers.
-  Focusing on small business programming and round table discussions.
-  Expanding our affinity programs.
-  Leadership exchange trips to other cities for economic and workforce development ideas and tools.
-  Added more meaningful programming such as public affairs programming and professional development/continuing education.







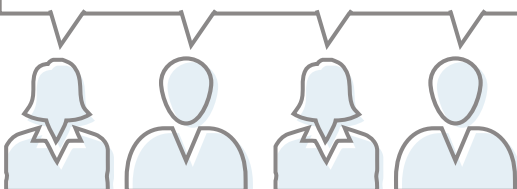
EVENTS CHANGES

-  Replacing some old events like golf with educational opportunities.
-  Partnering with other neighboring chambers for networking events.
-  Decreasing number of events so staff can work on more meaningful projects and programs.
-  Expanding our events to expose more potential members to what the Chamber has to offer.
-  Consolidating events to increase attendance and reduce operation costs.
-  Stopped hosting community events (i.e. car show, 4th of July).



MARKETING CHANGES

-  Stopped using volunteer resources to maintain our website and moved our domain name, web hosting, and email marketing all under a single (paid) provider.
-  Shifted the focus of our Chamber Guide to more of a community guide instead of solely advertising as well as created it in house instead of outsourcing.
-  Rebranded our organization.
-  Investing in personalization technology.



Drive participation and engagement with the ultimate guide, **Why Member Engagement No Longer Means Face-to-Face.** »

ON THE HORIZON

WE ASKED: What do you think is the next major trend for the chamber industry?

TOP PREDICTIONS

1. Increased Pressure to Recruit Young Professionals
2. Strategy
3. Growth of Social Media
4. Digital Engagement
5. Increased and Improved Benefits

COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

 = What respondents said

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS PREDICTIONS

- Identifying, recruiting, and retaining both solopreneurs & startups as members.
- Recruiting younger members to serve on board and committees.
- Adapting to and meeting the needs of younger generations.
- Morphing into a relevant organization that appeals to and connects with the younger generation of entrepreneurs.
- Chambers need to be a catalyst for young professionals and speak to their needs to help them grow in their careers.



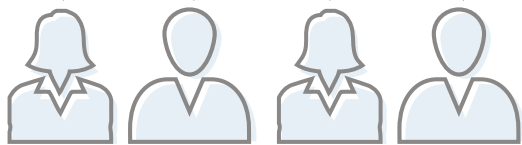
STRATEGY PREDICTIONS

- Focusing on key priorities (not all things to all people) while maintaining profitability.
- Positioning chambers as community problem solvers and not social clubs/ribbon cutting groups.
- Changing the way chambers do business. Fewer chambers operating as non-profits.
- Continued tension/competition with niche business organizations vs. our broad chamber service umbrella.
- Working on an initiative to recruit private vacation rental owners as members. (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO)



SOCIAL MEDIA PREDICTIONS

- Social media redefining networking events.
- Increased social media presence and engaging members in various social media/web channels.
- Creating more proprietary social media platforms.
- Evolving with social media as it impacts the scope of what we do.



DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT PREDICTIONS

- Digitally-g geared member participation: mobile member applications, digitizing tourism, micro-networking.
- Chambers based in a more digital space opposed to events/physical interaction.
- Virtual memberships for those members who cannot be present for every event, but want to connect, network, and market their businesses to other chamber members.
- Helping members connect and collaborate more with other businesses using technology.
- Live stream of more educational sessions, ribbon cuttings, etc.



BENEFITS PREDICTIONS

- More educational programming and fewer "fluff" events.
- Member health plans.
- Improve quality of membership portfolio so that their membership dues offset cost of serving them.
- Including more digital marketing in promoting members and as part of membership packages.
- To set themselves apart from other networking organizations, Chambers will need to advocate for business-friendly legislation, education, and workforce issues.



Need a mission statement makeover?
Get the tip sheet. »



For simple blogging ideas and tactics, get the
How to Write a Chamber Blog People Will Read »



chambermaster
membership, marketing & web solutions

At ChamberMaster, we pride ourselves on listening to and focusing on chambers of commerce and the people who make them run. In order to provide the best possible product to industry professionals, we regularly seek data on the trends and issues facing chambers.

Thank you to the chamber professionals that took the time to respond to the survey.

ABOUT ChamberMaster

ChamberMaster helps organizations grow and retain membership, engage and inform members and prospects, and streamline tedious tasks. The cloud-based system is powerful, easy to use, and designed to manage all the day-to-day operations of your organization.



Download a free copy of our Chamber Management Software Buyer's Workbook

DOWNLOAD



Contact us today for a personalized product demo

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