2016-2019 Strategic Plan

Adopted August 2016

Executive Summary

Based on surveys, board and stakeholder interviews and data gathered prior to the strategic plan work, clear themes emerged regarding the future direction of MSA. These themes led to the establishment of key strategic focus areas and key areas of operational focus.

Strategic Focus Areas

1. Create a dynamic program initiated and driven by young professionals that inspires industry members and creates new initiatives that advance MSA.

2. Develop essential, relevant and engaging MSA programming that includes:

   - Professionalized programming overall
   - Advanced sessions for Sr. Level attendees
   - Content for younger members on appropriate platforms
   - Assessing a pathway to meaningful credentialing

3. Develop a strategic program to communicate to the world the value and importance of non-profit retail with its curated products and unique experiences.

4. Reframe the MSA conference/expo as the event to inspire, delight and connect our stakeholders.

Key Areas of Operational Focus

1. Improve finances
2. Strengthen resources and programs
3. Improve usability/quality of the website and ShopTalk
4. Publish a useful, high-quality Retail Industry Report
5. Provide an accessible, user-friendly Membership Directory
6. Upgrade the database

MSA Strategic Lens

Every organization has a lens through which it views strategic decision-making. The MSA Board uses the MSA Board Principles and Supporting rationale which was developed in 2014 by the board.

MSA Board Principles and Supporting Rationale
The Board Principles and Supporting Rationale are particularly helpful as the board's criteria for making decisions, a filter for effectively making member-focused choices. They are:

1. **All stakeholders are interrelated and success is interdependent**
   Rationale: The MSA works with and for many stakeholders. Nonprofit institutions and their retail operations personnel, other associations in the industry, vendors, MSA employees, and contractors of MSA are all interdependent. The rising tide of MSA will lift all its stakeholders.
2. **Trust requires openness and communication**
   Rationale: In order to build trusting relationships among and between the stakeholders, MSA must proactively communicate information of interest to its stakeholders in a timely and positive manner. In receiving feedback, MSA better serves its stakeholders, so it is essential to operate and maintain systems to exchange relevant information. This creates a culture of dialogue in which feedback is effortlessly offered.
3. **Focus on stakeholder value**
   Rationale: MSA must deliver value to its stakeholders. The organization requires a stakeholder-focused business model that is sustainable in order to create ongoing value.
4. **Strategy is innovative and future-focused**
   Rationale: Strategic decisions by their nature require broad thinking that considers the future in a world that is rapidly changing. The economic, social, political, legal, and technological conditions of today will not be those of tomorrow. Recognizing that change is a given, it is important to build strategies from fresh ideas that are not necessarily dependent on the successes of the past.
5. **Collaboration requires strategic thinking and clarity**
   Rationale: As the association engages with the non-profit retail environment, the MSA has opportunities to collaborate with other organizations and businesses. In evaluating the opportunities, it is important to focus on the strategic implications of all relationships and to seek information to help evaluate the complex connections and clearly consider the tradeoffs in these relationships.

2016-2019 Strategic Plan

Goal 1: *Create a dynamic program initiated and driven by young professionals that inspires industry members and creates new initiatives that advance MSA.*

Key Objectives:

1. Gather young professionals group of institutional and vendor members who can develop and lead a program that builds excitement and connections.

2. Draft framework, guidelines and benchmarks for success. It should have three areas of connection: 1) each other 2) to MSA and 3) to the industry.

3. Develop programming and branding that "MSAForward" (working title for initiative) uses to drive initiatives.

Goal 2: *Develop essential, relevant and engaging MSA programming that includes:*

- *Professionalized programming overall*
- *Advanced sessions for Sr. Level attendees*
- *Content for younger members on appropriate platforms*
- *Assessing a pathway to meaningful credentialing*

Key Objectives:

1. Revamp current process with dedicated and committed staff, a budget, examine and address duties and terms of EAG.

2. Provide educational opportunities in a variety of platforms for targeted groups. Addresses advanced manager/buyers, millennial's and other stakeholders.

3. Assess the pathway to meaningful certification.

Goal 3: *Develop a strategic program to communicate to the world the value and importance of non-profit retail with its curated products and unique experiences.*

Key Objectives/Milestones:

1. Create an advocacy committee/task force to reach to the following audiences:
   - Museum leadership, regional museum associations, state museum associations, city, state, national cultural and tourism organizations
   - Strategic partners - AAM, APPL, ZAG, vendor members, corporations
   - Public outreach campaign/general public – such as, "Museum Store Sunday"

Goal 4: *Reframe the MSA conference/expo as the event to inspire, delight and connect our stakeholders.*

Key Objectives/Milestones:

1. Reassign or reallocate resources to attract higher quality content and speakers

2. Design all networking events to be inclusive (delight and connect)

3. Communication: creatively communicate excitement and enthusiasm to inspire attendance at Expo. Create a "fun voice."