



Real-Time Learning Available Anytime

Management guru Stephen R. Covey and his 7 Habits of Highly-Effective People has been a business world mainstay and his advice and recommendations have helped countless people grow in their professional careers. The 7th and most overlooked Habit is "Sharpen the Saw," meaning to take the time to grow your mind through activities and education. Covey sees development as one of the most important aspects to prepare someone to face the countless hurdles and aspire to higher levels of ability.

As profound and popular as his habits have become, the 7th Habit is becoming almost impossible to follow. Between careers, families and other pursuits, education often falls far down the priority list. Most will agree that everyone should take the time to "Sharpen the Saw," but for most, it just does not happen.

Enter the world of the Internet and its infinite resources, including a growing population of education-based Web sites. The Internet is providing the busy professional with the chance to learn and grow through education at their convenience. The educational opportunities are almost endless, offering everything from medical education, how to become a justice of the peace and even earn an MBA!

Because of its ease of use and ability to provide learning on demand, these educational programs are taking off and there is an increasing demand for these services from professional associations.

Now entering its third year, Association Resources' award-winning Education Department has partnered with the AR Digital Group to develop Web-based education programs for the benefit of clients' membership. These programs include everything from podcasts to full-on programs that integrate video, slides and transcripts. Each program delivers interactive knowledge as presented by the speaker(s) and is intended to provide quality information and dynamic interaction to enhance the online learning experience for professionals of all types.

"By providing continuing professional development online, we are giving members convenient and immediate access to rich content," said Priscilla Shisler, Director of Continuing Professional Education. "This is particularly important for professionals who must meet multiple continuing education requirements with limited time and financial resources."



The production of online programs goes far deeper than the speakers and the technology behind the program. For example, education for medical fields and their respective professional associations must participate in accredited programs. The Education Department's staff are experts on Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements as outlined by the governing bodies, including the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the main accreditation body of CME providers.

AR staff's knowledge and experience guarantee that the programs offered meet the strictest of guidelines, ensuring that professionals are receiving quality programming and earning qualifying credits toward their certifications or educational goals.

In addition to the comprehensive knowledge of medical programs, the staff is very well-versed in other types of educational guidelines. Organizations such as the Association of College and University Auditors (ACUA) offer online education through their organization's Web site.

The Education Department continues to grow in staffing and expertise. JoLynn Amsden has joined the Education team and brings to the table many years' experience developing CME programs for the medical-education company Center for Advanced Medical Education. She is a cognoscente of CME program development and will work with the staff on developing CME programs and ensuring that they meet the standards necessary to provide credit.

JoLynn's appointment to the staff is unique in the sense that she will be working from her home office in Perkasie, Pennsylvania. She is set up with the technology she needs to work virtually, even though she is not in the physical AR office. Her computer interfaces with the AR systems and she has a telephone extension at the office that rings on an IP phone in her home office. The integration is virtually seamless and will allow JoLynn to work effectively with AR staff and clients.

Already with staff in Brussels, Belgium, AR is looking to establish satellite offices as part of the company's overall strategic plan.

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The House That AR Built

To most of us, the luxury of having a cool, dry place to sleep is something we have all become accustomed to, but we all have seen the images of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, which made landfall in the Gulf Coast region a little over a year ago. After Katrina left the region, there was little proof that there were once neighborhoods in the piles of rubble and chest-deep water. By the end of the storm, the federal disaster declarations covered 90,000 square miles, an area almost as large as the United Kingdom.

If there is one bright spot in this tragedy, it is the outpouring of support from around the globe, an influx of volunteers and monetary donations to help rebuild this area and help its residents put their lives back together. World leaders have also rallied to help the region get back on its feet, including a \$100 million grant from the people of Qatar.

On the forefront of this philanthropic charge is Habitat for Humanity. Habitat affiliates around the nation have pitched in to restore damaged homes or replace homes completely destroyed by the storm. Since August 2005, Habitat has raised over \$125 million and has seen an estimated 32,000 volunteers pitch in on some level.

On July 28, 2006, Association Resources partnered with a local Habitat for Humanity affiliate on the construction of a panelized house-in-box frame as part of Operation Home Delivery. More than 40 volunteers from Association Resources also helped complete a three bedroom home that was shipped to Mobile, Alabama in mid-September.

The AR crew hammered, sawed, measured and marked the hundreds of pieces of lumber used to construct these houses. The staff worked hard, but took care in their efforts as each section of house required precision work to ensure the pieces would fit together when it is reassembled.



After a brief break for lunch, which was superbly prepared by AR staff members, the crew was back to work. The momentum carried over from the morning and once the first home was completed, the AR staff and the handful of Habitat group leaders began construction on the framework for a second house. By the time the dust cleared at the end of the day, the framework for the second home stood tall and was met with loud cheers. This second home put Habitat over its goal of 10 homes to be completed over the summer.

"It was truly an honor to be part of such a worthy cause and be able to make a tangible impact on someone's life," said Suzanne Berry, Vice President of Association Resources. "Habitat has been on the forefront of the Katrina disaster and our involvement today gave us new perspective on how much work still needs to be done to bring that region back. Habitat afforded us the opportunity to make a hands-on impact and at the end of the day, we were able to see exactly what we had accomplished and understood how it was going to change someone's life forever."

In addition to the 328 hours of staff time given to Habitat, AR donated \$2,600 to help cover the cost of the building materials. The Association Resources staff will never get to meet the people whose lives they touched, but each staff member was asked to sign their names and inscribe a message on the frame, wishing success and good fortune to the family that will eventually call their work home.

The residual effects from Katrina are still felt throughout the region and will be for years to come. As of July 2006, there are roughly 100,000 people living in 37,745 FEMA-provided trailers¹ and roughly 750,000¹ evacuees are still living away from their homes. Habitat for Humanity International and its 1,700 nationwide and 500 international affiliates are all pitching in to help rebuild the lives that were washed away by the storm. As of August, they had built almost 340 homes; their goal is to reach 1,000 homes by mid-2007. To learn more about volunteering with your local Habitat affiliate or to make a donation, visit www.habitat.org/cd/local.

Notes

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency (July 7, 2006). Hurricane Katrina Recovery Update: Week 44. FEMA.

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JoLynn's geographical area (New Jersey/Pennsylvania) is a key area of the eastern United States and a satellite office will help to obtain and service CME business, and employ additional staff.

To complete the learning experience, Association Resources has developed the Education Evaluator, an online application tied to the education program that allows the user to complete the necessary tests and program evaluations to receive proper credit. Once the user completes the post-program work, a certificate of completion

is generated and exported to a .pdf file for printing at the user's convenience.

On the back end, the Education Evaluator tracks submissions and creates real-time reports of speaker and program evaluations. The Evaluator can create a final report of the speakers and programs, which will aid in planning future programs. In addition, the application tracks completed programs by unique user, so that they can log in to their online profile and see what programs they have completed, along with

all of the .pdf certificates that have been earned.

This comprehensive suite of innovative programs has helped Association Resources' clients take their educational offerings to a whole new level. Education tends to be a primary reason for association membership and by offering such opportunities in an on-demand capacity, AR helps clients provide their membership with resources to further their careers, which becomes another key reason to maintain their membership.



AR Announces Expanded Strategic Alliance

Association Resources (AR) announces that it has entered into a strategic and expanded relationship with leading meeting planning firm, Experient. AR already offers a full range of client-centric meeting planning services, but the expanded relationship will augment the current AR staff and will leverage Experient's relationships with hotels and convention centers around the country.

Experient is the leader in providing associations with comprehensive meeting planning services. Their key services include on-site expertise, attendee management, supplier negotiations, marketing consulting and trade show sales and management. Their start-to-finish event solutions also include registration, housing, sales lead retrieval and a myriad of other services.

Experient will work closely with the AR meeting planning staff on site selection, contract analysis and negotiations with hotels and convention centers. Their exclusive, long-term, partnership contracts with major hotel companies dramatically expands the options for finding the perfect meeting location at a reasonable price.

"The relationship between Association Resources and Experient will benefit

clients of all sizes," said Peter Berry, president of Association Resources. "Experient has established relationships with hotels and convention centers around the nation and we will take advantage of their 'buying power' to procure better rates for our clients' meetings."

In addition to meeting planning services, Experient will also be working with the AR staff on exhibitor management. They will liaise with current exhibitors to ensure their renewal and will research opportunities for recruiting new exhibitors, which can be difficult due to changing economies and products.

In addition to working with AR on site selection, Experient will have representatives onsite to provide supervision of the hotel/convention center personnel to ensure that all meeting details are taken care of, including audio/visual, meeting room set up or food and beverage. Their onsite logistical support will be an asset to the staff, allowing them to focus more on the client's direct needs.

"We are thrilled about our expanded relationship with Association Resources, and the many clients they serve," said Douglas C. Weese, CMP, account executive for Experient.

Experient has organized, managed and improved hundreds of trade shows, annual meetings and company conferences. This year Experient will create memorable event experiences for more than 2,800 events attended by 3.2 million people who will occupy more than 4.2 million hotel room nights.

Experient has over 680 employees in nine offices around the country, including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Deerfield, IL, Denver, Frederick, MD, St. Louis and Washington, DC, along with a network of sales and service staff across the nation. Many Experient employees are Certified Meeting Planners and are certified in Exposition Management, belonging to professional event organizations such as Meeting Professionals International, the Association of Meeting Professionals, the Professional Convention Management Association, the Society of Incentive Travel Executives and many more.

Experient was formed this past August as industry leaders Conferon, ExpoExchange and ITS merged. While Experient itself is only a few months old, its three founding companies have roots dating back to 1970, 1982 and 1946, respectively.



Syndicated Content the Wave of Today

The Internet has become the fastest means of sharing all types of news. The information superhighway has become a traffic jam of communication, stuffed with newsletters, blogs, and headlines to read, but never enough time to read them. While most wish that there was enough time to read everything of interest, the latest blog entry from Anderson Cooper just doesn't seem to fit into the daily routine.

This time crunch is commonplace among Web users, but a new technology is quietly gaining momentum across the Internet. Real Simple Syndication feeds, commonly referred to as RSS, are a technology employed to deliver selected Web content to subscribers. RSS feeds allow users to stay informed by retrieving the latest summaries — of the day's news, best computer deals, latest job openings in their field and even injury updates for their fantasy football team — and bringing them to the end user.

While many subscribe to e-mail updates or newsletters from their favorite sites, more often than not the newsletter is flagged to

read later, but ultimately ends up being deleted without even a glance. RSS feeds are similar to a newsletter in the way they are delivered, but RSS feeds are drawn into a feed reader or news aggregator program. The aggregator program pulls and manages RSS feeds and presents them in a single interface. Many different aggregators are available for free from sites such as download.com.

Amazingly enough, most site visitors don't notice the RSS feeds, but they are available on almost every information portal on the Web from ABC News to the Wall Street Journal and almost everything in between. Sites such as MSN, CNN, Web MD, Monster, Hot Jobs offer these feeds — along with the daily Dilbert comic.

To find an RSS feed, simply look for one of the RSS logos ( ,  or ) or a link that simply says RSS. Once the link is selected, paste the URL into the aggregator and click subscribe. The content will automatically begin to arrive and will be updated as information becomes available.

RSS is also popular with associations because of its information-sharing potential. RSS is an opportunity for businesses and associations to promote their information in a non-invasive way. Basically any information that is updated can be put into an RSS feed, including job postings and message boards.

Many publishers are also beginning to offer RSS feeds, often providing a feed of a journal or newsletter's table of contents, with maybe a few lines from the article. This allows the end user to view the titles and, by clicking on the headline, to access the entire article content.

Although similar types of technologies are precursors to this technology, RSS is still relatively new. There are tens of thousands of Web sites that offer RSS feeds, and that number is expanding every day.

Currently two AR clients are using RSS feeds on their Web sites and many more are on the way.

Barracuda Taking a Bite Out of SPAM

So long junk mail and telemarketers! SPAM has become the scourge of any e-mail user who receives countless offers of stock tips, hair replacements, pharmaceutical breakthroughs and the promise of riches from some exiled prince in a faraway country. SPAM is everywhere. It has literally taken an act of Congress (CAN SPAM Act) to attempt to limit the junk e-mails that flow into an inbox.

Companies big and small are often targets for SPAM because of the large number of e-mail addresses tied to one domain name. Association Resources receives an exorbitant amount of SPAM because each client has a unique domain name(s) and unique e-mail addresses tied to their staff members. There are dozens of domain names and hundreds of e-mail addresses tied to the AR Exchange server. AR received 97,726 SPAM e-mails in June 2006 alone.

While the world fights a losing battle with SPAM, Association Resources has moved forward and virtually eliminated SPAM from the staff's inboxes. The latest addition to the company's network is the Barracuda Spam Firewall, an integrated hardware and software solution that provides powerful and scalable SPAM and virus-blocking capabilities.

"The Barracuda Spam Device has saved me hours of work," said Peter Pagani, IT director for AR. "This appliance is a self-contained device that catches all the email and processes it for spam and viruses before it reaches your mail server. This has reduced the overall load on our Exchange server tremendously."

With the integration of the Barracuda system, there has been a 93% decrease in SPAM reaching staff inboxes, which has saved time and money. While many SPAM filters inadvertently catch and destroy important e-mails, the Barracuda intuitively sends each staff member a daily digest of quarantined e-mails, allowing them to peruse the list and select e-mails that should be delivered and blacklisting those to be sent to oblivion. In addition to catching SPAM, the system also removes any viruses that attempt to break through the firewall.

The implementation of the Barracuda system has provided many benefits to Association Resources. In addition to eliminating staff time spent on deleting e-mails, the network resources are not strangled with the tens of thousands of SPAM e-mails that come in weekly, and the total elimination of viruses keeps the Association Resources network running at almost 100%.

Problem solved.

New Staff

JoLynn Amsden

Recently added to the growing Education Department is JoLynn Amsden. JoLynn already had an existing relationship with AR, having been the main contact between the Center for Advanced Medical Education and an AR client, for whom her expertise in Continuing Medical Education (CME) provided a valuable service in the client's program development.



JoLynn has worked in the medical education field for close to ten years. Prior to the Center for Advanced Medical Education, she held the title of Manager of Operations and Project Manager for various companies.

JoLynn will work from her home in Perkasio, Pennsylvania. She is married and the proud mother of two little girls. She is a graduate of West Chester University, West Chester, PA.

Sandy Voice

Sandy Voice was recently appointed as Association Resources' Director of Marketing.

Sandy has over 30 years of experience in marketing communications.

Her experience includes advertising copywriting and creative management, speech writing, position papers, product publicity and the editorial direction of both internal and external corporate publications.

Sandy has previously worked for Merck & Co., American Cyanamid, Exxon Corp., J. C. Penney, American Institute of Industrial Engineers and McGraw-Hill. Sandy and her husband John live in West Hartford, CT.



Jean Fazzino

Jean Fazzino joined Association Resources in June. She comes to AR with several years of association experience, having most recently served as a Member Services Supervisor at the Connecticut Bar Association.

She joins the staff as an Association Administrator, working with client leadership, and will also provide support on sponsorship development.

Jean lives in Portland, CT with her husband Tony and their two sons, Donovan and Kiefer.



Staff News

Christopher Blake and **Peter Berry** have both had their Certified Association Executive (CAE) accreditation renewed by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). Association Resources currently has five staff members with the CAE designation.

Suzanne Berry has been appointed vice chair of the newly-formed AMC Key Committee to the ASAE Board of Directors.

Pamela Hayes has been appointed a member of The International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference Committee and has also been asked to be a member of two subcommittees of the Conference Committee, the Boston Host Chief Committee and the Exhibit Committee.

Peter Berry has been appointed to the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Ethics Committee for 2006-2007.