



MEMBERSHIP

AORE is committed to growing its membership and enhancing the member experience—this is a strategic priority. We are working to expand AORE’s membership to include more people, especially those from underrepresented populations, but we are not leaving this growth to chance. We have a plan to engage prospective members and retain current members.

STRENGTHENING OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

In speaking with members at regional events, we learned that many members do not fully realize or take advantage of member benefits. This includes personal discounts and professional development opportunities, but members also were unaware of AORE’s advocacy efforts on navigating the permitting process; diversity, equity, and inclusion resources and development; and career tools.

So AORE needs to strengthen its value proposition for both members and potential members. Why is an AORE membership valuable? What do we offer that members and potential members need and want?

As part of these efforts, we have added and enhanced some membership benefits.

Enhanced conference offerings

The annual conference is a key driver in membership recruitment, retention, and engagement, so AORE has invested significantly more time, resources, and money to deliver a better conference experience for members. This includes:

- more educational sessions and higher standards for proposals
- additional programming, including activity sessions, Collaborate sessions, and demo day
- increased communication between committees and the national office
- additional contracted staff time devoted to exhibitor hall and sponsorship recruitment

Heightened presence in social media and outside publications

We learned that our investment in social media generated more engagement with current and potential members. We have stepped up our marketing efforts in areas where our members are spending time: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, NIRSA e-newsletter, National Recreation and Park Association e-newsletter, *Inside Outdoor* magazine, *Campus Rec* magazine, *Misadventures* magazine website, AEE e-newsletter, Outdoor Nation e-newsletter, and other strategic partner newsletters.

Upgraded communications

We’ve made our communications more professional, intentional, and informative.

- The Monthly Update has been upgraded using best practices, including a focus on “less is more” and added graphics.
- *Association News* and *Partner News* have been converted to digital magazine technology, and the mission of each publication has been differentiated to meet our constituent groups’ needs.
- Each *Outdoor Insider* issue’s theme is strategically developed according to the current news and topics that members are concerned about. Feature stories and photos are driven by that theme.
- A Weekly Digest newsletter was created for members who want fewer emails in their inbox but also want to stay current on message board topics, event listings, and job postings.

- A communications calendar lays out our daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly emails and publications, to increase the intentionality of each message.

Enhanced website

In a mobile and digital age, websites are increasingly important for membership engagement, recruitment, and retention. With the help of the University of Michigan IT School, AORE conducted a study on members' impressions of our membership database and website. Using the study findings, AORE unveiled a new membership database and website with a professional design, intuitive navigation, answers to common questions, and fresh content. The database and website now help us build relationships with members and encourage action, both key to increasing member engagement.