

2011 MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS REPORT

At the end of 2011, IABC Victoria conducted a member engagement survey to inform the Chapter's strategic and program planning.

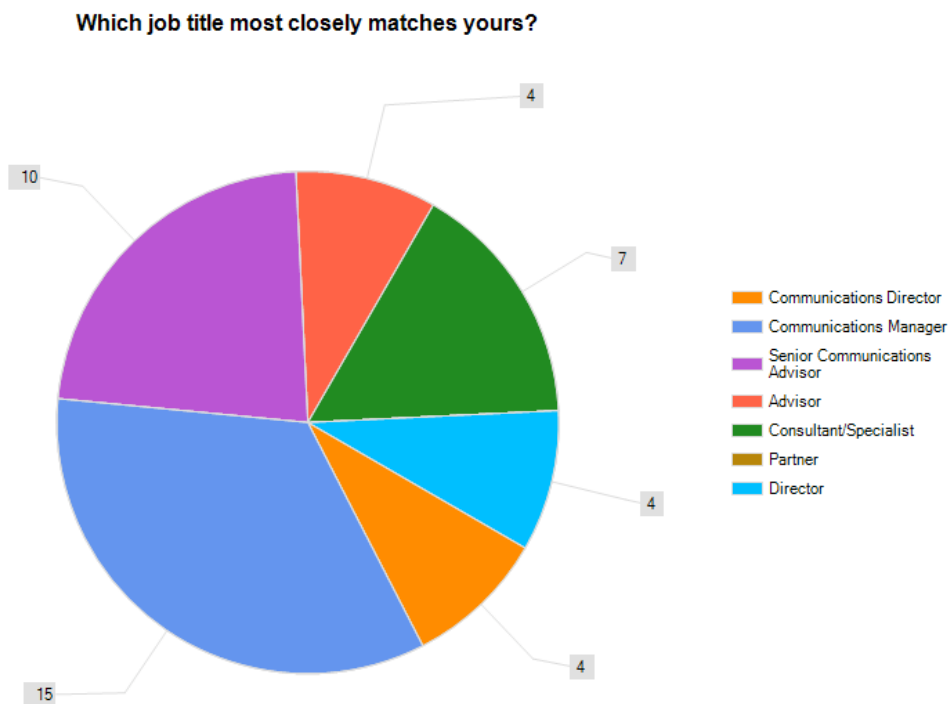
About the respondents

We had 47 people respond:

- 34 (74%) were IABC members
- 15 (33%) work in the public sector
- 27 (60%) work in private sector
- 3 (6%) work in the non profit sector.

Nearly on third relied on their employer to pay for their membership, with two thirds paying for their own membership, recognising the value of a good tax deduction!

Figure 1.0 illustrates the job titles of respondents.



Local value

There were some consistent themes in responses around what people valued most about the IABC Victoria:

- Knowledge sharing
- Access to best practice communications knowledge
- Networking
- Community and connections
- Access to local events
- Access to international peers and conferences

This feedback is important to help us focusing and further develop the services we provide.

Professional development

Responses to how IABC Victoria can better support professional development needs of members included:

- Snapshots of new trends and what they mean for communicators
- Extending the range of speakers beyond communication professionals to include senior leaders and chief executives
- A focus on professional qualifications for internal communicators and provision of internal workplace programs
- A mentoring program
- Keeping an eye on communication-related developments such as cloud computing
- Challenging current and conventional thinking through sharing case studies
- Discounts on further education
- Recommendations on books, courses and manuals
- A list of local accredited communicators (ABCs)
- More low cost get-togethers
- More focus on comms topics other than internal communications
- Holding events at non-CBD locations
- Benchmarking reports

Thanks for the great range of suggestions. Belinda Lawrie (Education Chair) and Kim Lovely (Professional Development Chair) are looking at how we can include these in our program planning.

To clarify some of the specific issues that were raised:

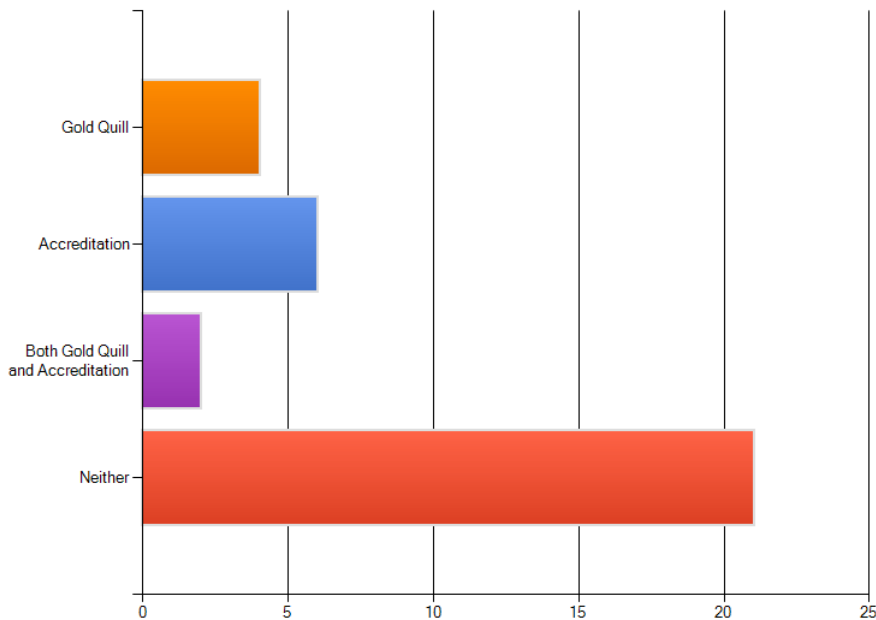
- IABC Victoria no longer maintains a hard copy library since the establishment of Discovery (the online resource site for members). There are many reports, case studies, articles that are free to members here.
- One respondent observed the postage charges to Australia associated with ordering resources from IABC are cost-prohibitive. We will raise this concern with Head Office and seek to review their delivery charges to make discounted books better value for local members

We will also update the www.vic.iabc.com website to include a list of our ABCs. IABC does have a formal professional qualification program (Accredited Business Communicators or ABC) and Belinda Lawrie is currently trialling an in-house program on this so stay tuned on this.

At least six of our members are undertaking accreditation so far this year. For those of you entering the 2012 Gold Quill awards don't forget that Gold Quill winning workplans count as one of the portfolio pieces towards accreditation. It would be great to celebrate multiple members achieving accreditation this year!

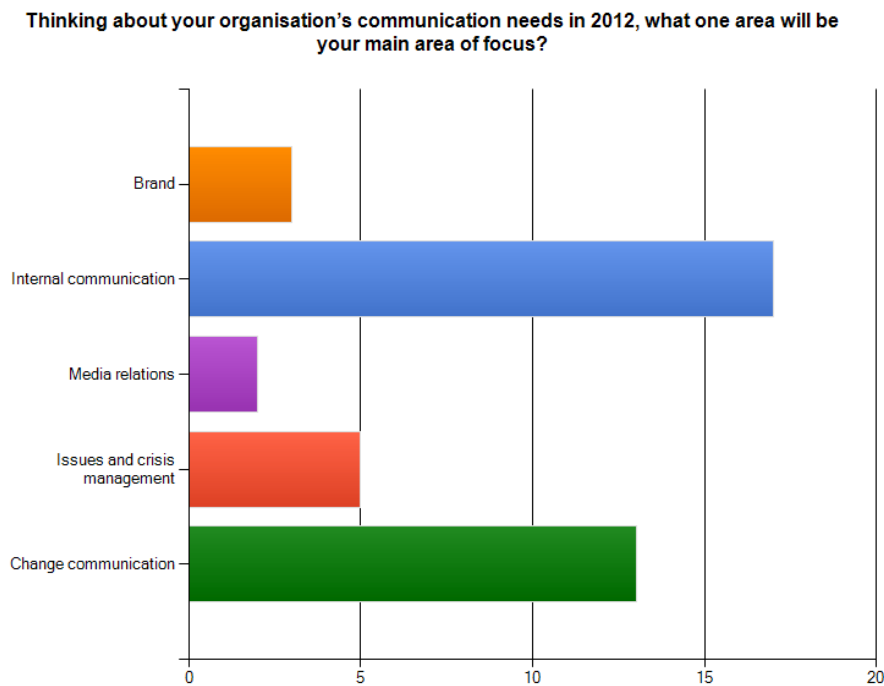
Figure 2 illustrates interest in Gold Quill Awards and Accreditation

Are you considering doing Accreditation or submitting for a Gold Quill Award?



The perception that IABC Victoria’s professional development program mainly addresses internal communications is a challenging one – as each year we run a range of events that address marketing, PR, social media, crisis, reputation and have CEOs speak. We will continue to deliver a diverse program and look at how we publicise events so they offer learning and development opportunities across a broad range of communications disciplines.

Figure 3 illustrates area of communication focus for organisations



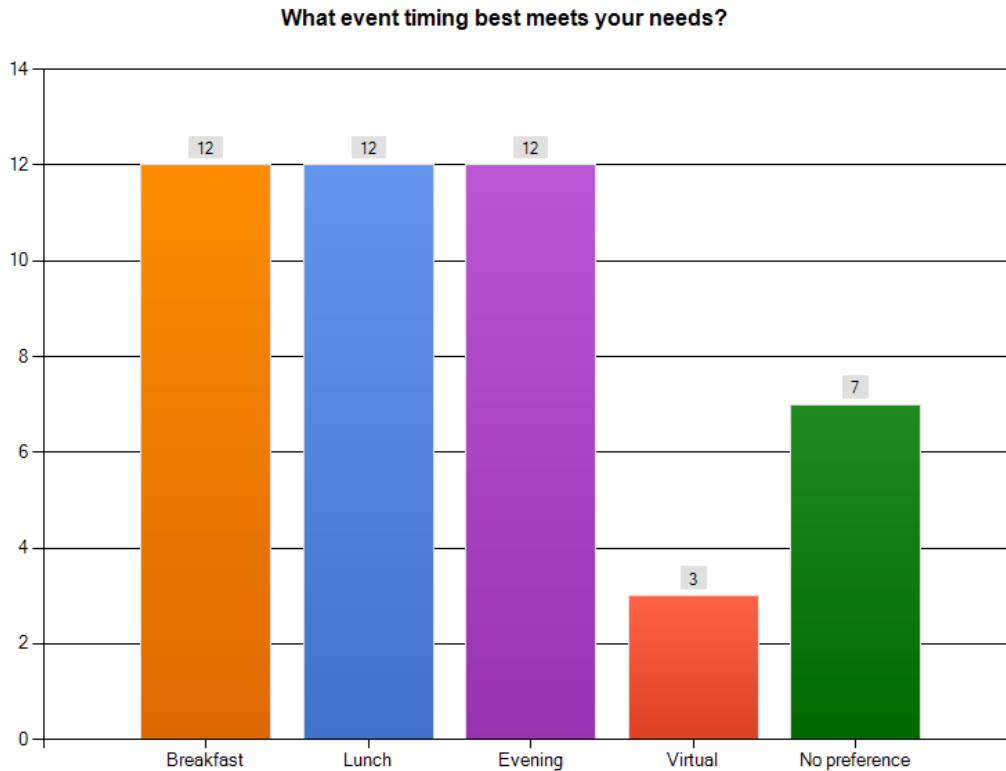
IABC Victoria Events

Given the strong interest in networking and connection, IABC Victoria events are a critical component of member value. We have been running lunches and after work events for the past few years with a few breakfasts - all within the CBD.

We were interested to understand why more people don’t attend. Key reasons included:

- Being too busy
- Was not aware
- Family commitments
- Working outside CBD

Figure 4 illustrates preferences for event timing



This year we have scheduled breakfast, lunch and after-work events, addressing feedback about the times that suit members best. We trust this makes it easier for more people to attend. We will also look at how we can host some events outside the CBD in the future

The question on topics of interest provided a great variety of responses.

Suggestions included:

- Innovation
- new media
- TEDx stylespeakers,
- media based work
- cross cultural communication
- internal communication
- brand and reputation
- media relations
- social media
- change communication
- issues management
- project management
- negotiation skills
- business leaders
- personal branding
- executive coaching
- international speakers
- career development
- crisis
- metrics.

This makes our event planning challenging, as there are no topics that clearly emerge as appealing to a majority and we need to be mindful of avoiding topics which may have limited appeal for many of our members.

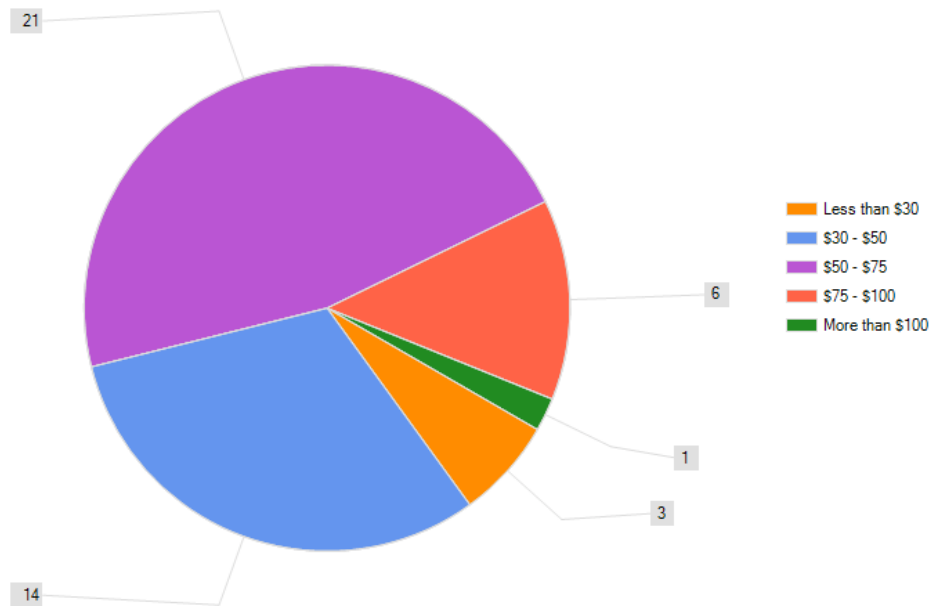
We will be mindful of these suggestions when confirming the details of our 2012 program and developing future event programs.

Event pricing

Figure 5 illustrates preferences for event pricing

The majority of respondents are prepared to pay \$50 - \$75 for an event, with the next largest segment preferring \$30 - \$50 per event.

Which of the following price brackets best describes what you expect to pay for professional development at a catered function?



Most respondents would like to attend at least 3-5 events during the year. The response to the question about the Gala Dinner was divided, with 55% of respondents believing that IABC Victoria should continue to run one, compared with 45% thinking it is not necessary.

We are mindful of two factors regarding the Gala Dinner:

1. We need to continue to celebrate excellence at a local level recognising the achievements of Bronze Quill winners, and
2. we continue to operate in a tough economic environment with downsizing, restructures and uncertainty about work for many in our industry.

So we have decided to suspend the Gala Dinner for a year, and have a Bronze Quill Awards Cocktail evening in its place. It will be at a lower price but still have the 'gala' celebratory tone to recognise the Bronze Quills. Stay tuned...

How to improve?

Again, we received some terrific suggestions, and some lovely compliments (thank you!) and we looking at how to implement as many as soon as possible.

A frequent observation was the desire for free events or low cost with the argument being that members have already paid their membership and resent paying more.

As a board, we empathise completely – the challenge we have is that as a chapter we only receive \$46 AUD from each retained member (not the full membership fee) – with no payment for new members until they renew for their second year of membership.

All of our member prices are below cost and subsidised by sponsors and non member pricing. However, in an effort to address these cost concerns,, do keep an eye out for two new Be Together community events throughout the year designed to offer value and foster a sense of community among members.

Be Together events will not carry a ticket price and guests will simply need to pay for their own food and drinks. We are also delighted to recognise Media Monitors as a new sponsor so hope to be able to provide even better pricing for select events throughout the year.

IABC Victoria Communication

It was great to see a big 'thumbs up' with regard to the local communication with some nudges to get even more 'social' with podcasts, online chats sessions and video.

We do have an [IABC Victoria Youtube channel](#) – and we would be delighted to receive more content from members to post on that. If you have content that you would like to share – by all means please do let us know.

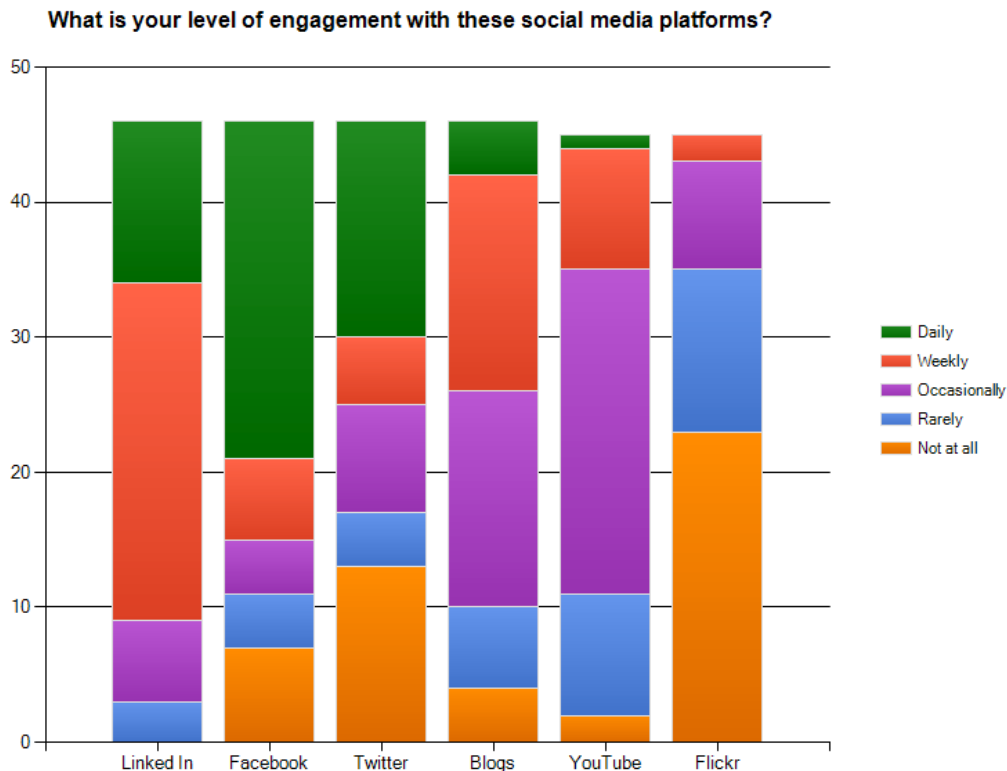
The question on social media platforms provided interesting results.

We have so far resisted Facebook as a local communication mechanism as we had perceived this as a personal platform. Yet, the results suggest the platform most respondents use daily is Facebook.

Twitter has more daily usage than LinkedIn. However, Twitter has as many people who never use it as those who use it daily. LinkedIn has a weekly audience, and YouTube has mostly occasional use within the respondent group.

We may need to explore further how social platforms are used and make changes in the future.

Figure 6 illustrates use of social media



The other platforms to consider in the future include Google+, Instagram, and Foursquare

There continues to be frustration with Head Office communications duplicating local content, providing information that is not always relevant and difficult to opt out of. To clarify, you can opt out at any time by contacting Head Office and letting them know. But, yes, we will continue to raise this issue on your behalf.

That concludes the findings from the survey – as always, we are very keen to hear your thoughts.

Don't hesitate to reach out to any of the board members info@iabcvic.com.au or @iabcvic on Twitter or the LinkedIn group.

If you have left a specific question with your contact details we will be in touch.

A very big thank you for your time and to all those who have indicated they are happy to volunteer or serve on the board in the future – we will be in touch shortly! You are all a credit to your profession.

Finally congratulations to Catherine Adler and Nicole Latham who are the lucky winners of the gold class double passes offered as a thank you to those who participated in the survey.