accella

thinking across digital

websites | mobile apps | digital products

We Help Associations **Attract, Engage, and Retain Members** Through Thoughtful Digital Experiences.

accella

3 Challenges Facing Association Websites
(And How to Confront Them)

SECTION

01

The Perception Problem: You Don't Look Like An Authority In Your Industry

02

You Told Me You Had All The Expert Resources I Need: Why Can't I Find Them?!

03

There's No Personalization: Every Member's Experience Is The Same

About Accella

Accella is a digital partner that empowers you to achieve your organizational goals through digital strategies and technology delivery. We develop websites for innovative associations designed to attract, engage and retain members.

Deliver what your members need with a partner you know you can depend on.

LEARN MORE

01

The Perception Problem: You Don't Look Like An Authority In Your Industry

WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU AND JOIN YOUR ASSOCIATION? HOW CAN I TRUST THAT YOU'LL DELIVER THE VALUE YOU'RE PROMISING ME?

Your association's website serves as the frontline of your organization's identity and credibility. Yet, despite the importance of projecting authority online, many association websites struggle to establish themselves as trusted leaders in their respective industries.

Why Authority Matters

Consumers have become increasingly discerning about where they invest their time and trust. When visitors land on your association's website, they're asking themselves, "Why should I pay attention to you? And by extension why should I PAY you to become a member?" If your website fails to convey a sense of authority and expertise, you also fail to gain the trust needed to convert the visitor to a paying member.

Authority breeds confidence, and confidence leads to engagement, membership, and support.

accella.net | 888-856-2664

LEARN MORE

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Step 1: Define Your Unique Value Proposition (UVP)

Identify what sets your association apart from others in your industry. What unique value do you offer your members and stakeholders? Are you actually offering solutions to the problems they are facing today - and the challenges the industry will face tomorrow?

## Step 2: Craft Compelling, Direct Messaging

Develop clear, concise, and compelling messaging that communicates your UVP to your target audience. Your messaging should resonate with your audience's needs and aspirations, addressing their pain points and offering solutions.

Step 3: Apply Modern Design Principals

Update your website with a responsive design that leverages today's more advanced CSS capabilities to guide the visitor's eye and create interactive engagement. Focus on designing clean, hierarchical content layouts, user-friendly navigation, accessibility features, and responsiveness across wide screens to mobile devices, ensuring a seamless experience for users on all platforms.

Step 4: Professional Imagery and Graphics

Use high-quality images and graphics that align with your association's branding and convey professionalism. Avoid generic stock photos and opt for custom visuals that resonate with your audience. Apply branding through background imagery, iconography, font choices and more - every aspect of your website design should reinforce your brand recognition and position.

LEARN MORE
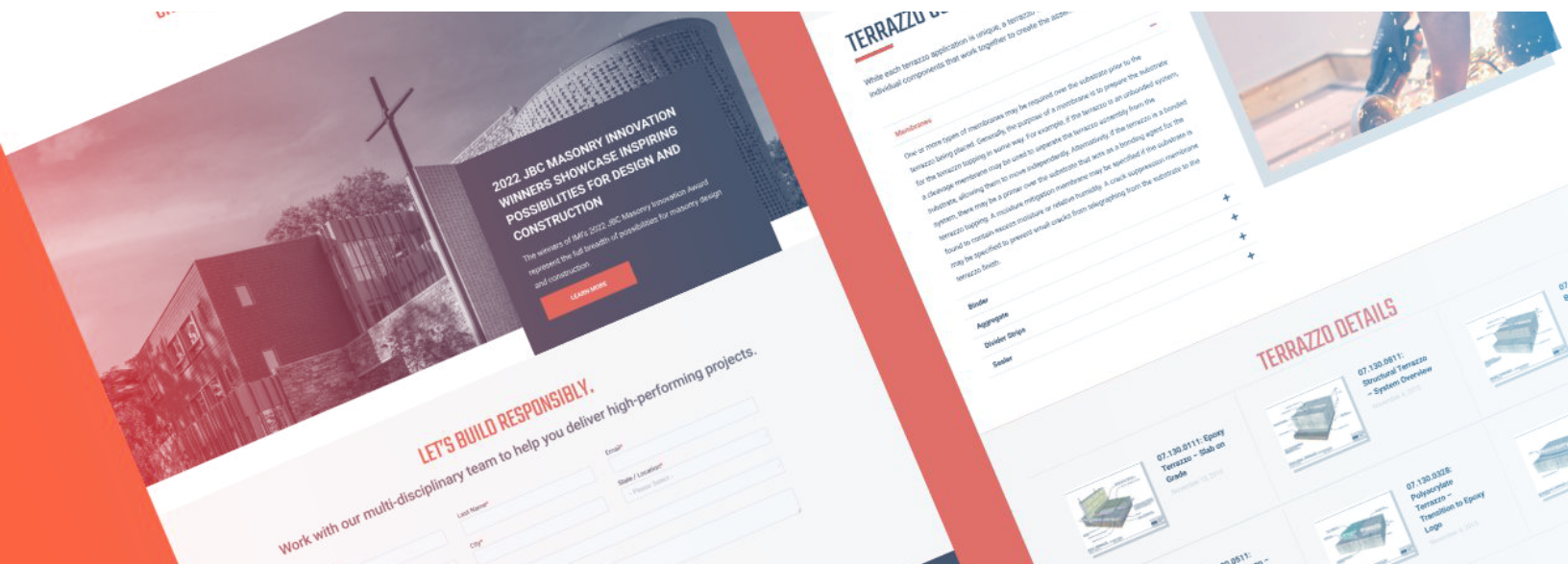
# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: IMI'S STRATEGIC BRAND AND CONTENT REDESIGN

Challenge

The International Masonry Institute's mission is to offer quality training for craftworkers, professional education for masonry contractors, and free technical assistance to the design and construction communities. However, their prior website left visitor's lost as to who they were and what they actually DO - they seemed more like a wiki providing general information about masonry materials, with an outdated, poorly designed website.

Solution: Increase Visibility of Brand Expertise

We entered into the website redesign with the primary goal of establishing IMI as the authority for all training and technical project expertise for masonry materials. We accomplished this by:

• **Increased the visibility of masonry materials available and how to apply them to projects**

• **Ensured the Project Request lead form was evergreen on all pages of the website**

• **Automatically display related webinars on all content pages to drive registration**

• **Increased the content paths leading to education information**
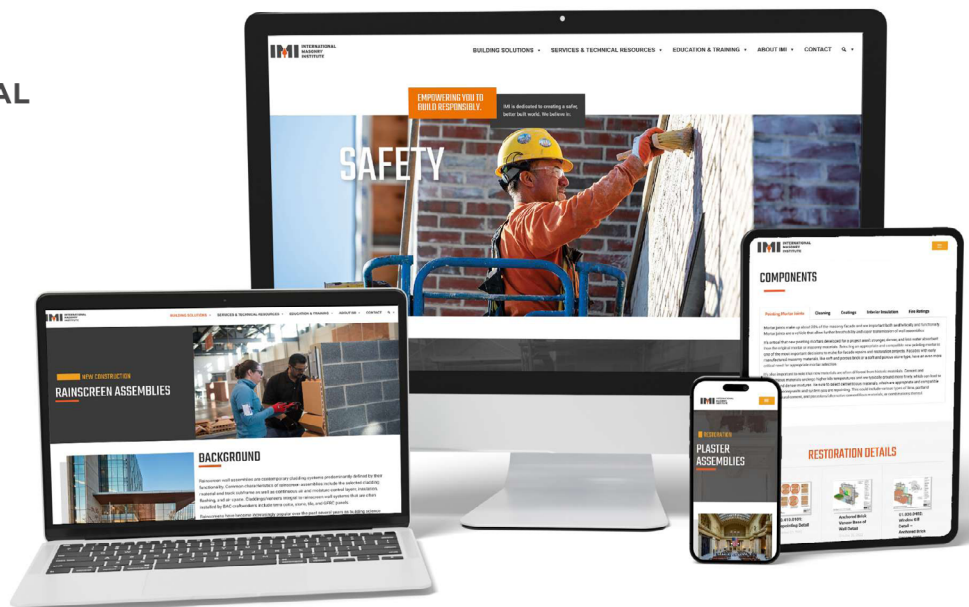
Educational Webinar Registrations Increase 210%

LEARN MORE

You Told Me You Had All The Expert Resources I Need: Why Can't I Find Them?!

FOR MOST ASSOCIATIONS, INFORMATION ISN'T CLEARLY ORGANIZED, ACCESSIBLE, SEARCHABLE, OR DOESN'T EXIST ONLINE

Associations often tie their value to the exclusive information they provide, yet the ability for members to find that information within 2-3 clicks of landing on the homepage is often an impossible task. This leads to website visitors leaving without finding what they are looking for, and searching for information and solutions elsewhere.

Why Content Organization Matters

In an age where most interactions with associations are digital-first and content consumption is the most frequent engagement, content organization should be your top priority.

Whether it involves strategically structuring content to attract new visitors or delivering essential information that supports membership renewals, inaccessible content can significantly impact an association's revenue negatively.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Step 1: Build a Website Content Taxonomy

Develop a multi-level content taxonomy to automatically display related content throughout your site.

Step 2: Use Content Wayfinding Design

Incorporate in-page navigation to guide users through the website by suggesting related content or next steps.

Step 3: Maximize Your Navigation Displays

Ensure clear labels and accessible content for all visitors, avoiding deep nesting of information.

Step 4: Implement Robust In-Site Search

Integrate powerful AI-driven search tools across your website to enhance result relevance and elevate user experience.

Step 5: Centralize Resource Libraries

Consolidate resources into centralized libraries based on taxonomy for simplified resource management.

Step 6: Adopt Member-Friendly Language

Use language that resonates with your members, moving away from internal jargon to create clear paths to information.

Step 7: Implement Accessibility Features

Improve usability for all visitors, including those with disabilities, by implementing alt text, descriptive headings, and keyboard navigation.

Content wayfinding features are critical to a successful association website design.

LEARN MORE

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: AHLA

Challenge

The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) is the largest hotel association in the United States, representing all segments of the industry nationwide, and offers extensive benefits to its members. However, member surveys and focus groups revealed that members often struggled to locate critical information promptly on the AHLA website.

Solution: Member "Resource-First" Website Redesign

The AHLA website redesign overhauled the brand positioning to increase association trust as well as a full content strategy pivot to ensure minimal clicks to resources and AHLA expertise. With a robust menu system and taxonomy, the website populates itself and enables members and non-members alike to easily access timely breaking news as well as the everyday resources AHLA provides to the industry.

> "Accella's redesign of our website has not only made it easier for visitors to find what they want, but with the mega menu feature, automated components, and improved search, it makes it much easier for visitors to discover related content of interest they would have never discovered on our old site."
>
> • Mike Sanoff, Vice President of Marketing at AHLA.
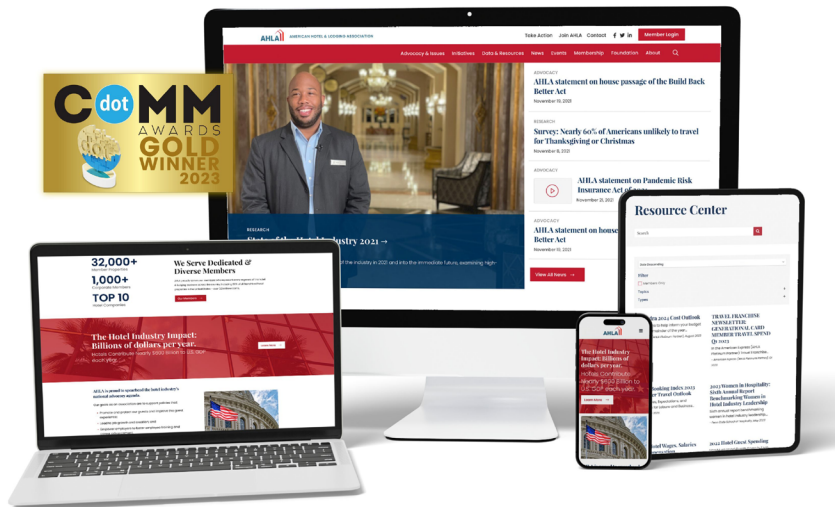
Reduced Bounce Rates by 98%

03

There's No Personalization: Every Member's Experience Is The Same

TO INCREASE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, TAILOR A MEMBER'S ONLINE EXPERIENCE TO THAT INDIVIDUAL'S BEHAVIORS AND PREFERENCES

Personalization has become a cornerstone of successful online consumer experiences, allowing organizations to tailor content and offerings to the specific needs and preferences of individual users. However, many associations are falling short, failing to provide personalized experiences for their members across their digital channels.

LEARN MORE
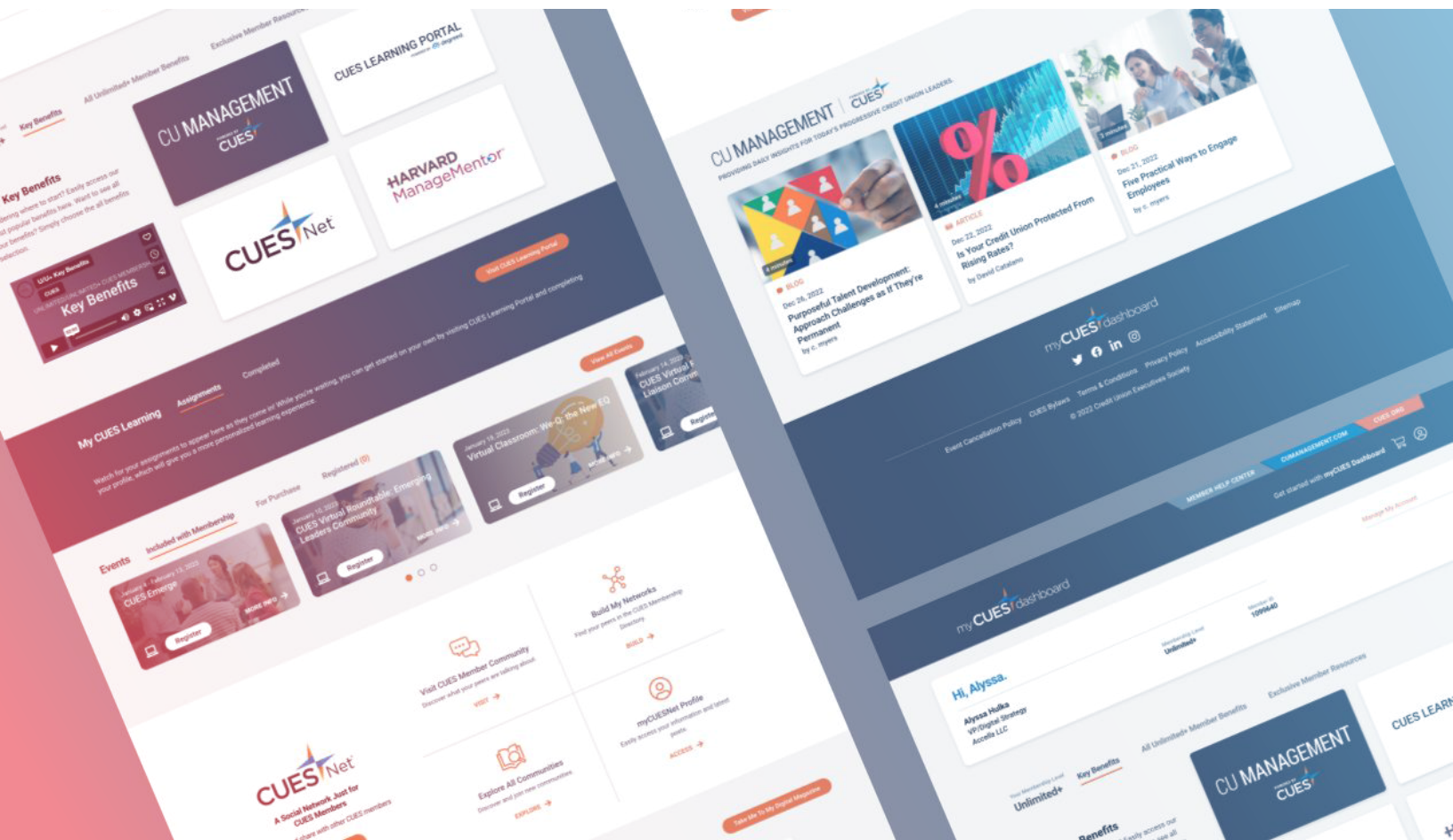
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

To address personalization deficiencies and create more engaging experiences for your members, use this 4 step process to get started:

Step 1: Unify Your Member Data

Unite all digital engagements with your members under one data roof. Build your data warehouse to get ready for personalization delivery and business intelligence reporting.

Step 2: Create Marketing Personalization Journeys

Write out the explicit examples of personalization journeys that will help IT and marketing understand what data is needed to deliver personalization across all digital touchpoints.

Step 3: Implement Incrementally

Start with improving email communications and then focus on website personalization. Implement in a test and learn mindset to ensure direct business value is consistently derived from the digital investment.

Step 4: Explore AI

Now that your member data is centralized, you can begin to enhance your member data with computed traits that allow look-a-like audiences, predictive content delivery, and more in the future. Feeding this data into machine learning models, such as AWS Personalize, allows you to deliver predictive recommendations to your digital channels to increase purchase conversion and content engagement.

You can't do good business with bad data!

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: CUES MEMBER DASHBOARD

Challenge

CUES, the Credit Union Executives Society, conducted in-depth user research in 2021 with the ultimate goal of understanding and improving member engagement with their vast and varied member benefits systems. The research concluded that members were not only not aware of the breadth and depth of their benefits, but they also did not know how to access them. This launched the concept of the CUES Member Dashboard - a personalized journey to growth for each CUES member.

Solution: Hyper-Personalization Increases Member Benefits Usage

The dashboard is designed to provide a targeted, personalized benefits experience for every member, aiding them in discovering the tools, content, and learning modules necessary for career advancement. Through sophisticated personalization, each member gains access to their full range of benefits, along with predictive content and course recommendations. Each CUES dashboard is unique, offering fresh and valuable content with every return visit to support members in achieving their goals.

"CUES developed this dashboard based on member feedback to break the barriers standing between our members and their benefits. Since launching the dashboard we have received overwhelming feedback on the ease of use and the simplicity of members being able to seamlessly navigate to all of their benefits."

• Kristen Christianson, CUES, Director of Digital Marketing
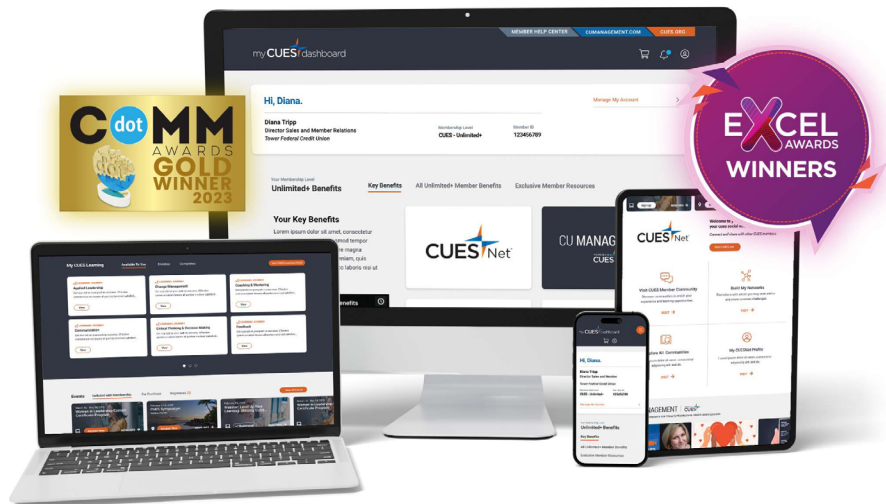
Member Benefit Access Increased 61%

accella

Let's Talk About Your Next Project

accella.net | 888-856-2664

LEARN MORE