

I - Organisation Member Development Plan: 2008-2010

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The organisation member development plan is based on a three-year strategy for growing ISOC organisation membership with an emphasis on member recruitment and retention. This is a “living document” which will evolve over time to reflect adjustments to strategy based on progress, success and other relevant factors which will affect the direction of the program.

The plan identifies target segments by industry sector, geographic region and management responsibility. To optimize near and long term recruitment and retention efforts, the target segments have been divided into 2 categories.

- Near term opportunities (2008-2009): those segments that provide the greatest opportunity for near-term success and value to ISOC.
- Long term opportunities (2009-2010): those segments whose businesses benefit from the Internet (e.g., content providers, enterprises, financial services, Web 2.0 companies).

To execute the growth strategy, we will collaborate with the communications department to raise ISOC’s visibility and brand awareness; create an engagement model to enhance ongoing relationships with current and prospective members; and partner with the program departments (policy, standards & technology, education) to drive specific member programs that support ISOC’s mission and add value to members.

1. VISION

ISOC’s organisation membership will reflect ISOC’s position as an international, independent, non-profit organisation committed to the open development of the Internet everywhere. This means an organisation membership that is global in nature and represents all segments that support ISOC’s commitment to an open and global Internet, as well as a membership community that is actively engaged in the initiatives and programs that ISOC is leading.

2. PLAN OBJECTIVES

- The objective of the plan is to grow the total number of members, increase the diversity of the membership across segments/communities and increase year-to-year revenues generated from organisation members over the 3 year plan period.
- Expanded member engagement in ISOC initiatives and activities, in support of ISOC mission and values.

3. SEGMENTATION STRATEGY

The segmentation strategy supports the objective to create an organisation membership that is global in nature and that represents those segments that support ISOC's commitment to an open and global Internet. The segmentation strategy will drive retention and recruitment activities.

- Near Term Opportunities (current-2009).

The membership recruitment strategy will focus initially on existing customer segments and organizations that provide the greatest opportunity for 1) immediate membership gains because of fit with core ISOC strengths and existing ISOC relationships; and 2) value because of potential for revenue, input/expertise, or awareness/support. This category would include network operators, ISPs, vendors, ccTLDs, etc.

Further segmentation will occur by geographic region (Europe, Asia, Americas); areas of interest (standards, policy, education) and by level of engagement (CEO, CTO, senior executives in technical, policy job functions). Expanding ISOC's outreach activities beyond North America is an important component of the target market strategy, as this offers significant opportunity for membership growth and enhanced global presence.

- Mid-Long Term Opportunities (2009-2010+).

Longer term opportunities include market segments in which ISOC does not currently have a strong presence yet where it is likely that ISOC's pending major initiatives will resonate because they speak to Internet issues in terms of broader and more critical implications to Internet dependent business models. Segments include financial services, content providers, e-commerce, Web 2.0 providers, etc.

4. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY

The recruitment and retention strategy is multi-dimensional, with a focus on the key issues of awareness generation and member engagement.

- Awareness Generation

Strong awareness of the ISOC "brand" is an important component of membership recruitment and retention. Prospective members need to know who ISOC is, what it does, and the value that ISOC brings to them before they will consider becoming members.

The branding research project currently in progress provides an important foundation to support efforts on formalizing ISOC's organisation member brand platform and will include recommendations for organisation member brand strategy, objectives, and themes, positioning options, and messaging tactics and value proposition (see Attachment for value proposition statement).

▪ Member Engagement Strategy

In addition to building brand awareness, a central component of this plan is to develop a value delivery system based on *engagement* of organisational members and prospects defined as two-way, personalized and structured interaction between staff and representatives which produces mutual, demonstrable, measurable and measured value. A successful model begins with understanding the different ways that current and prospective member representatives are most comfortable and effective interacting with ISOC. Things that need to be understood include:

- What drives them personally (e.g., advancing issues/solving problems, being recognized as an expert, learning more about issues, and networking, understanding what peers think about a given issue)?
- What issues do they consider critical within the umbrella of ISOC's major initiatives or other subjects for engagement?
- How do they best realize value from two-way interaction (e.g., discussion, interactive briefing, and collaboration on a document)?
- How do they want to be engaged (e.g., meetings, conference calls, and blogs)?

Answering these questions will be accomplished through expanded outreach to current and prospective members. A variety of actions will be employed in this regard, including, but not limited to: on-line surveys to current and prospective members and one-on-one meetings with key members and prospects. In addition to these ongoing efforts, the current research project will provide a strong base of data relating to member engagement.

The engagement model will enhance the membership department's effectiveness in its role as an "engagement enabler," a resource for both staff and members to help identify necessary expertise, facilitate introductions, and help to convene members around ISOC's initiatives. This in turn will provide direct, tangible benefits to members, while illustrating to prospective members ISOC's value proposition.

▪ Driving Program Value

The engagement model establishes the "way" we communicate and enables the communication itself. The "products" of that communication will be used to improve member programs, and identify specific membership opportunities to participate within the context of ISOC's initiatives and activities.

This engagement model will allow for member experts to "have a seat at the table", and to make them feel more engaged with ISOC. Success in bringing together member representatives within "communities of interest" to work on specific initiatives and program will create a valuable resource to ISOC in terms of motivated volunteers that can contribute to the success of ISOC's programs and initiatives. For members, this opportunity to participate and provide input to ISOC's programs and initiatives adds value to them individually and to their organizations.

Membership will work with program staff to develop clear rules of engagement, so that members understand and agree that their participation shall focus on outcomes consistent with ISOC's mission, goals and objectives and not personal or company positions.

In addition to opportunities for meaningful member participation, program value will be enhanced by broadening and deepening ISOC communications with current and prospective members. This will be a coordinated effort across ISOC, including communications, standards & technology, policy and education. The objective is to ensure that current and prospective members are well informed about ISOC initiatives, programs and activities and look to ISOC as a recognized source of reliable and trusted information.

There also is opportunity for organisational members to take a more active and consistent role in spreading ISOC's work and advocating it. A principle purpose of the organisational membership program is to lend to ISOC's work the credibility inherent in having a large and diverse group of respected institutional players participating in and promoting it.

Given the increased level of involvement and thus "buy-in" resulting from the first type of activity, member representatives will be more effective and willing as vocal advocates of ISOC's work. This will compound the credibility value of organisation membership for ISOC. Members will benefit from showcasing their involvement and leadership in advancing ISOC's mission and issues.

II - Organization Member Value Proposition

Background

The recent member survey identified different views among current, former and prospective members as to whether ISOC is a traditional membership organization or a cause-related organization.

Presenting ISOC to organization (current and prospective) members as a *cause-related organization* offers a more accurate and effective description. *Cause-related* implies a proactive posture, passion and action to get something(s) done. ISOC has identified and supports several definite results and end states/causes (e.g., “The next billion users”, “Keeping the Internet open and accessible”, etc.) ISOC also has strategies to act and mobilize others to act to affect those causes.

It is essential that we recognize that there are trade-offs to be made while we keep a balance between our cause-related mission (and our corporate status) and various expectations that would align with a more traditional membership organization. Our value proposition is built on maintaining this balance.

The foundation for the value proposition is built on ISOC’s rich history as home to the IETF, the premiere standards organization in the Internet community. Building on this IETF equity, the value proposition is designed to appeal to its traditional technical audience (including the majority of current members) while expanding ISOC’s significance with a message to executives who value the Internet and want to engage with the ISOC community to extend the Internet’s economic and educational value to others around the world.

For this value proposition to be successful, ISOC will need to build its brand awareness globally; extensively communicate about its programs and initiatives to its target audiences; and, create a sense of urgency around the challenges to the Internet in order to mobilize organizations to join.

The Value of the Internet Society

The Internet is a global medium, reaching more than 1.5 billion people. Yet as successful as the Internet has become, it also faces many challenges that include: maintaining the principles of openness and user centricity; ensuring trust and security of the Internet; and enabling access to those without it.

A viable Internet requires an environment characterized by choice, connectivity, and active communities; an environment where skills development, capacity building and local content development are priorities; an environment where businesses are attracted by enabling public policy environments and predictable investment climates.

The Internet Society (ISOC) is uniquely positioned at the intersection of development-oriented (technical) groups, public policy, and educational activities; and serves as the hub of a global network of individuals and organizations that are collectively working toward the shared vision of an Internet that benefits everyone, everywhere.

In its position as the leading international, independent entity dedicated to the future of the Internet, ISOC:

- promotes the formulation and adoption of public policies that make the Internet accessible to everyone;
- safeguards the integrity and continuity of the context within which the Internet develops and operates;
- supports and contributes to the continuing evolution of the Internet as an open, decentralized platform for innovation, creativity, and economic opportunity;
- brings authoritative, unbiased information about the Internet to individuals and organizations in every part of the world.

The Value of ISOC Membership

As an ISOC member, you will engage with other leading organizations worldwide that understand the need to take action collectively to ensure the Internet remains open, accessible, trusted, and secure

Through ISOC, members can participate in the global Internet community, addressing technical and policy issues that require the collaboration of highly respected companies, universities, NGOs, and government ministries and agencies. These are issues that one organization by itself cannot resolve. As an ISOC member, you will come together with key stakeholders and decision makers to address these issues that impact the Internet today and in the future.

Staying current on the intersection of global policy, standards, and educational issues affecting the Internet is important to your organization's operations. New standards and public policies affect products and services being offered by your organization and the global market. Through ISOC, you will gain access to timely and in-depth information and research that will help your organisation make decisions and initiate thoughtful and informed discussions. Moreover, you will interact with a global community of experts who share your interest in the Internet and the efficiencies and benefits it brings to daily life.

By joining with other like minded organizations who understand the economic and innovative engine that is the Internet, you will be contributing to a future in which the Internet improves the quality of life for people everywhere because standards, technologies, business practices, and government policies sustain an open and universally accessible platform for innovation, creativity, and economic opportunity.

Your constituents (customers) will know you are a forward thinking organization that takes responsibility for improving the future by bringing the Internet to those not currently served. Together, you can be a catalyst for change, expanding the reach of the Internet to the next billion users.

Member Benefits

- Engage with experts from the leading companies, NGOs, universities, and government ministries and agencies with similar interests regarding the future of the Internet.
- Stay current with relevant and timely reports, research, and statistics on the issues and subjects related to the Internet that could affect your organization and your constituents.
- Be in the know about Internet policy and technical standards that could impact new service and product offerings or global markets through the member's only link on the ISOC website.
- Share your expertise and contribute to ISOC's initiatives focused on maintaining the principles of openness and user centricity, ensuring trust and security of the Internet, and enabling access.
- Participate in the ISOC governance process through your vote for the ISOC Board of Trustees.