

# How to successfully engage and retain younger members at your association

## Introduction

Is your association prepared to provide the best experience for younger members? If there isn't a spotlight on Gen Z member engagement and retention at your organization, consider prioritizing both initiatives today. [The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), projects Gen Z to account for 30% of the workforce, totaling 61 million individuals, by 2030.

Without making an informed effort to engage and retain a younger audience, your association risks losing an entire generation of new members. Invest in Gen Z today to ensure you create lifelong members for tomorrow.

**Here's how to get started:**

**According to Pew Research**, Members of Gen Z were born between 1997 and 2012. It is one of US History's most racially and ethnically diverse generations. While Millennials experienced the internet boom and the rapid technological changes in their homes, Gen Z has always known this digital environment of on-demand entertainment, social media, and constant connection.

## 1. Networking

Younger members join organizations early in their careers for professional networking opportunities. Make Gen Z feel welcome at your association by boosting your virtual presence on their preferred social media platforms.



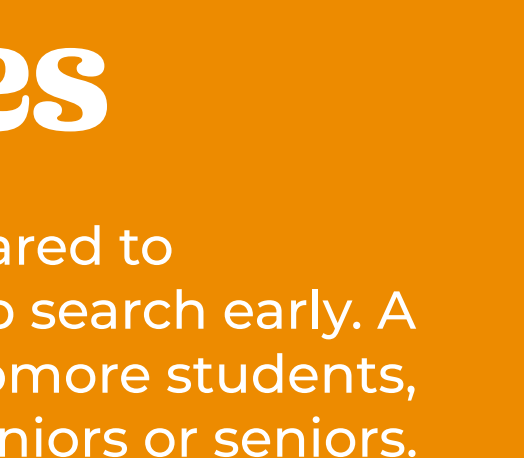
**LinkedIn won't cut it.** Community Brands reports 78% of organizations used LinkedIn for networking purposes, but only 34% of total member respondents engage on the platform. Gen Z members are even less likely to connect on LinkedIn, with only 15% using the network.

**Gen Z preferences.** According to Community Brands' member reports, 82% of Gen Z connects on YouTube and Instagram, 69% on TikTok, and 67% on Snapchat.



**Look to other organizations.** If you're uncertain how to get started on TikTok, search for other professional organizations that are engaging correctly. Try TikTok pages for organizations like [Pencils of Promise](#), [LinkedIn](#), and the [American Heart Association](#) for excellent examples. Empower a Gen Z member to take the lead on generating content.

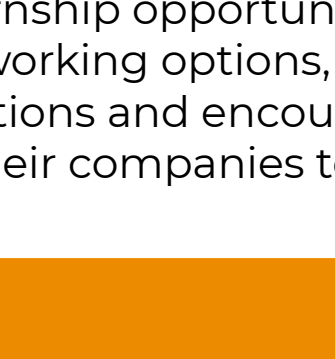
**Be intentional with your online community.** If your organization has a virtual community through your association management software, take care with how you organize the platform. Make separate channels or groups so Gen Z members can meet and network. Ensure you pin association social media accounts, so members know where else to find you online.



**Tech Tip** Leverage [Nimble Communities](#) to engage and retain younger members with personalized content, valuable connections, and a fresh, mobile experience.

## 2. Job opportunities

According to the [Yello Recruiting Study](#), compared to Millennials, Gen Z respondents started their job search early. A quarter started searching as first-year or sophomore students, and half began their search when they were juniors or seniors. This presents an opportunity for associations to offer student membership options and recruit Gen Z members early.



**Job board.** Whether they're still in school or actively in the workforce, having a job board is crucial to providing the best member experience. Connecting Gen Z members with job opportunities is a huge benefit, especially as they navigate the early days of their careers.

**Tech Tip** To prioritize Gen Z member engagement and retention, integrate Nimble AMS with Community Brands career software, [YM Careers](#).

**Internship board.** Develop an internship board to connect students and new graduates with employers who offer exciting internship opportunities. To allow for the most networking options, let external employers post positions and encourage members with internships at their companies to post opportunities too.



**Online career fair.** The Community Brands Study reports 49% of early careerists prefer virtual events. To help members advance their careers and appeal to their preference in virtual events, consider offering multiple mediums for members to engage with potential employers. For example, you could provide a virtual career fair in the fall, a hybrid career fair in the spring, and an in-person career fair in the summer.

**Tech Tip** Appeal to young professionals' preference for virtual events and help them launch their careers by integrating Nimble AMS with [Pathable](#) from Community Brands.

## 3. Certifications & credentials

Members join associations for the opportunity to develop themselves professionally through industry-specific certifications and credentials. If a young professional doesn't see the certification they need to advance their career, your association runs the risk of losing a member. Develop your learning program to enhance the member experience.



**Continuing education opportunities.** Offering various certification and credentialing options at your association is a vital way to boost member engagement. However, in a member benefit gap analysis conducted by Community Brands, results found the surveyed organizations' online continuing education options were lacking.

**Invest in learning management software (LMS).** To provide valuable professional development opportunities for your members, consider upgrading your LMS. Software designed for learning can help you offer engaging content in a variety of mediums. Try diversifying content offerings with social learning, webcasts, and webinars to keep young members coming back for more.



**Tech Tip** Offer a highly personalized learning experience for Gen Z members when you integrate Nimble AMS with [Crowd Wisdom](#), a Community Brands LMS.

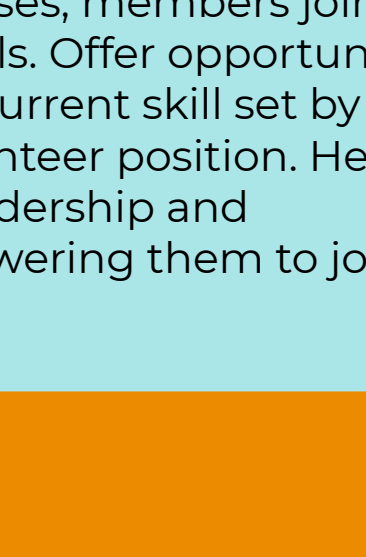
## 4. Career advancement

Regardless of where the Gen Z member is at in their profession, they'll stay with your organization if you have opportunities for career development. Because career advancement drives membership and retention, ensure you promote what you offer on your association website and social media.



**Career manual.** Support young professionals by compiling industry insights and resources to help them chart a path for success. Offer relevant career data, professional development materials, career pathing options, and details about your employer recruitment process.

**Mentorship program.** Help young members make professional connections with experienced members to advance their careers. Before matching members, ensure the pair personalizes their membership profile with demographic data, interests, skill sets, and program expectations. Find the perfect match for each mentee and mentor by ensuring you upload all data in your AMS—then let the mentoring begin.



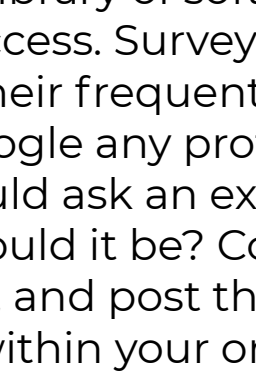
**Tech Tip** Upgrade your association records with Nimble AMS' member accounts. Run user-friendly reports and display easy-to-read results when you use [Nimble Query](#).



**Volunteer and advocacy programs.** In addition to developing hard skills through professional development courses, members join associations to develop soft skills. Offer opportunities for members to diversify their current skill set by placing them in a relevant volunteer position. Help young members hone their leadership and communication skills by empowering them to join your [advocacy program](#).

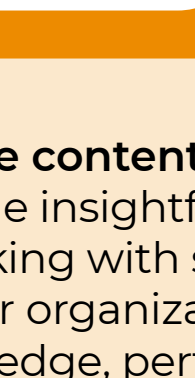
## 5. Training

According to a research study conducted by [Dell](#), Gen Z worries about having the right soft skills necessary for the workforce. Just 57% of respondents answered their education prepared them for their careers. By providing ongoing training opportunities, associations can be the answer to younger members' anxieties.

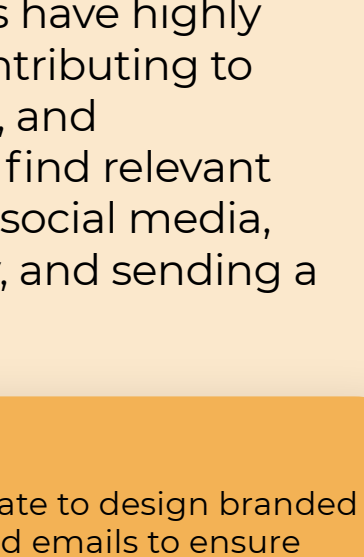


**Training groups.** Create spaces for members in similar career stages to connect virtually or in person. Having members take turns sharing industry information within the group presents a great opportunity for them to practice various soft skills. Groups can also consider electing a member who suggests content before meeting, then have them lead the discussion.

**Tech Tip** Consider streamlining your association's approach to training with [myTrailhead](#), in Nimble AMS. Design engaging training resources including videos, graphs, and gamification elements to empower younger members.



**Soft skills library.** Build a library of soft skills for members of all ages to easily access. Survey younger members to inquire about their frequently asked industry questions. Do they Google any professional questions routinely? If they could ask an experienced member one question, what would it be? Compile your answers, create content, and post them on YouTube, and don't forget to link within your online community.



**Targeted valuable content.** Ensure you provide insightful training information for members by working with subject matter experts (SMEs) within your organization. SMEs have highly specialized knowledge, perfect for contributing to ongoing training opportunities, blogs, and whitepapers. Help younger members find relevant content by posting on their preferred social media, linking within your online community, and sending a personalized email.

**Tech Tip** Use Nimble Create to design branded and personalized emails to ensure Gen Z members receive relevant and valuable training content in their inboxes.

## Take the next step

Engaging and retaining Gen Z members is vital to the future success of your organization. Having innovative association management software is crucial to delivering a superior member experience.

With the power of [Nimble AMS](#), you'll be ready to adopt the practices outlined in this infographic, boosting member engagement and retention at your association. Nimble AMS offers leverage-leading technology that's designed to empower staff and delight members. Built entirely on the Salesforce platform, Nimble AMS will help you manage every aspect of your enterprise association with ease. Expect continuous upgrades, AI and predictive analytics, robust reporting, and online communities to advance your association.

Learn more about the industry's most powerful, integrated portfolio of technology solutions that help you deliver more value to your members.

