

VIII.

**PUBLIC
INFORMATION**

AGENDA

Conference Committee on Public Information

Monday, April 25, 2022, 9 a.m. – Noon

Room: TBD

Chairperson: Lauren A.

Secretary: Patrick C.

Conference Committee Members

Panel 71

Lauren A.
Jim F.
Katherine H.
Nick P.
Jan W.

Panel 72

Fred A.
Mary M.
Richard M.
Ben N.

- ◆ Discussion and acceptance of trustees' Committee report.
- A. Review the 2022 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.
- B. Public Service Announcements (PSAs):
 - 1. Review the distribution and tracking information for two video PSAs:
 - i. "Sobriety in A.A.: My Drinking Built a Wall"
 - ii. "Sobriety in A.A.: When Drinking is no longer a Party."
 - 2. Review the 2021 report on the "Relevance and Usefulness of Video PSAs."
- C. Review a progress report and the G.S.O. Podcast Plan.
- D. Review report on "YouTube Performance."

NOTE: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

- E. Review report on “Google Ads Performance.”
- F. Review report on “Meeting Guide Performance.”
- G. Review the "2021 Fourth Quarter Report on A.A.W.S. Board Oversight of G.S.O.'s A.A. website."
- H. Review report on “AAGV/La Viña Website, Marketing and Podcast.”
- I. Discuss feasibility research on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms.
- J. Discuss Public Information pamphlets/materials:
 - 1. Consider suggestion to revise the flyer “A.A. At a Glance.”
 - 2. Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings.”
 - 3. Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.”
 - 4. Consider request to retire and replace the “A.A. Fact File.”
- K. Review request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media.
- L. Review report on development and distribution ideas for the “A.A. Triennial Membership Survey.”
- M. Review content and format of P.I. Kit and Workbook.

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM A: Review the 2022 P.I. Comprehensive Media Plan

Background notes:

From 2021 Committee Considerations of the Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the report on the status of the 2021 draft Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan (CMP). The committee expressed support for the vision and architecture. The committee noted the new architecture is in keeping with today's communications standards and requested that the full plan be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information and that the full plan be available to all Conference members to distribute to their areas.

The committee also suggested that the content of the CMP be expanded to include a deeper understanding of targeted audiences within A.A. relating to all genders and reaching potential members.

From the July 31, 2021, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the status of the PI CMP. The trustees' PI Committee will review and update the content and architecture of the CMP. The committee will utilize a working group style approach, involving all committee members focusing on content, review of messaging/communications, digital assets, services, roles, and responsibilities involving the three corporations. Development of the Comprehensive Media Plan is an ongoing project.

From the September 21, 2021, trustees' Public Information (full) Committee CMP working group.

Status of work since July 2021 meeting:

Morgan B., Appointed Committee Member has worked to build the framework and structure for the revised CMP full plan. We are seeking to bring transparency to our three-corporation media plan, content, channels, short term work and long-term strategies.

Within this update framework there are ten sections of work streams that need to be assigned to working group teams of two to three members with an assigned leader. Each team will take the current section, review it, and prepare for a meeting with G.S.O. and AA Grapevine staff to discuss the current work being completed for each of the CMP work streams.

Current Skeleton CMP provision:

Morgan and Beau B. will provide the skeleton CMP document to all trustees' PI Committee members as background for the October 2021 meeting of the trustees' PI Committee meeting.

At the meeting, each working group lead will provide a progress update to the full committee. This could mean that you have simply reviewed the CMP section and have setup the office personnel meeting.

Final Working Group Meeting:

Planned for December 2021.

Working Group Team's Section Work:

Each section is about one to three pages long. The mission is to:

1. Review the current text
2. Meet with the team at the office
3. Capture the current state of the work project short term strategy
4. Document the long-term strategy
5. Document the planned for timeline

Note: a goal is not to disrupt the office work.

Assignment of CMP Sections:

There following are the sections assigned to CMP Assignment Groups – Leads and Players.

1. **Website**

Lead: Cindy F.

Team: Molly A.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Samantha N., Tracey G., Chris C., Julie G.

2. **Public Relations**

Lead: John W.

Team: Trish L.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Samantha N., Julie G., James H., Amy B., Racy J., Craig W., Chris C.

3. Social Media

Lead: Coree H.

Team: Vera F.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Samantha N., Julie G., Alexandra R., Amy B., Chris C.

4. AAWS LinkedIn

Lead: Nancy M.

Team: Beau B.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Julie G., Amy B., Diana L., Chris C.

5. GV Instagram

Lead: Vera F.

Team: Cindy F.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Niurka M.-V., Chris C.

6. Meeting Guide App

Lead: Kirk H.

Team: Coree H., Nancy M.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Samantha N., Tracey G.

Note: Initial vision document needs to be provided to Kirk and Coree.

7. Content Creation

Lead: Vera F.

Team: Kirk H., Patrick C., John W.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Racy J., Craig W., Ames S., Jon W., Karina C., Sofia R., Ed N., Julisa S., Alexandra R., Samantha N., Tracey G., David R., Irene D.

8. TV PSAs

Radio PSAs

Lead: Trish L.

Team: Patrick C., Nancy M.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

Internal Office Employee: Racy J., Julisa S., Samantha N.

9. **Podcasts**

Lead: Molly A.

Team: Kirk H., Cindy F.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Tracey G., Samantha N., Alexandra R., Julisa S.

10. **Literature**

Lead: John W.

Team: Cindy F., Nancy M.

Project Coordinator: Morgan B.

PI Coordinator: Patrick C.

Internal Office Employee: Racy J., Craig W., Ames S., Jon W., Karina C., Sofia R., Ed N., David R., Irene D.

PI Assignment staff meeting with Morgan B. (ACM):

Morgan B. will be developing a guidance document for the working group teams. She is seeking raw information from the office personnel to be able to add to the CMP. We will detail that the work time frame should be include 2021-2022 and what is planned for 2023 and beyond.

We will need to provide any information around the style guide that we have to Morgan B. These can be obtained from PI, Publishing and Communication Services Department.

From the October 30, 2021, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the status of the CMP. Four out of ten CMP working group meetings with G.S.O. and AA Grapevine staff have been completed. The staff secretary will coordinate minutes to be written to support the working group leaders and their team in completing their section updates. The committee will meet in early December 2021 to review a draft version of the plan. The committee asked that the Appointed Committee Member, Morgan B., develop a full CMP plan for review at the January 2022 meeting.

From the December 10, 2021, trustees' Public Information (full) Committee CMP working group.

The committee discussed the status of the CMP. Each CMP section leader provided an update. The committee agreed each section leader would send their update to the Appointed Committee Member, Morgan B., to develop a full CMP plan for review at the January 2022 meeting. The TPIC Comprehensive Media Plan 2022 is schedule to be provided to the staff secretary by January 7, 2022.

From the January 29, 2022, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the General Service Board and the General Service Office (GSO) and AA Grapevine (AAGV) staff to produce the 2022 CMP. The CMP is an inventory of ongoing work and plans, a guideline for the GSO and Grapevine offices in their work, budgeting processes, and HR planning.

Overall, this document can be considered a plan for supporting A.A. members in carrying the message to all who suffer from alcoholism. It is being presented to the Fellowship through the Conference process to better communicate all the ongoing work of the offices and to capture feedback from the Fellowship on these efforts. The committee recognized that the 2021 committee consideration "that the content of the CMP be expanded to include a deeper understanding of targeted audiences within A.A. relating to all genders and reaching potential members," needs more development.

The committee requested that the staff secretary revise the following CMP sections in preparation of the Conference background: LinkedIn, Meeting Guide App, La Viña website, AA Grapevine podcast and "Key Messages."

The committee noted that two recommendations, imbedded within the CMP regarding Google Ads and the AAWS YouTube channel, will be clearly presented in background forwarded to the Conference committee. Here they are:

1. Google Ads

Recommendation:

The office needs the ability to continuously optimize the Google Ads campaigns based on standard best practices. If we don't have the freedom to manage our campaigns, the campaigns will not improve, and we're wasting the fellowship's grant money and wasting opportunities to reach suffering alcoholics.

Appropriate staff members need to be able to make the following updates to the campaigns without waiting a year for conference approval to ensure improved campaign performance:

- Evaluate and experiment with ad targeting
- A/B test ad copy and design
- Add/remove keywords and negative keywords
- Change keyword match type
- Test multiple landing page options
- Approve/deny basic campaign suggestions provided by Google Ads

2. AAWS YouTube Channel

Recommendation:

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- Continue adding most if not all video content to the YouTube channel.
- Move on to phase 2 of keyword research/updates to further optimize SEO.
- Working on standards for accessibility in the videos, mostly in closed captioning/.srt files.

The committee agreed to forward the 2022 CMP, with suggested revisions, to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Background:

1. TPIC Comprehensive Media Plan 2022

Trustees' Public Information Committee
Alcoholics Anonymous Comprehensive Media Plan
January 29, 2022

The following is intended to serve as an inventory of ongoing work and plans, a guideline for the A. A. Offices in their work, budgeting processes, and HR planning to effectively carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Overall, this document can be considered a plan for supporting A.A. members in carrying the message to all who suffer from alcoholism. The development of this document occurs through close collaboration between the General Service Board and General Service Office and is being presented to the fellowship through the conference process to better communicate all the ongoing work and to capture feedback from the fellowship on these efforts. The structure of this document and the content will evolve over time but the use of it will remain critical in our efforts of effectively communicating our message of hope and recovery from alcoholism to the world.

As we continue to make our message available in both traditional and new formats/channels, it is always important to remain true to who we are and what we do. Defining that clearly and staying consistent with that definition and our identity is always important in clearly communicating our message of hope and recovery from alcoholism, regardless of the format or channel we are communicating through.

AAGV and LaVina have a modern and consistent identity which serves well as a model for AAWS in how to improve the identity of their assets. The new AAWS website launched in December 2021 has addressed many of these concerns and many others related to website performance, connecting people locally, accessibility, improved search, and providing service materials. Still more work remains ahead regarding digital kits, visual identity, and analytics to show us how people are and are not using our resources. The AAGV websites (currently four) are moving towards two websites with the goal of integrating the store with each of the main websites, streamlining the login process, and user experience overall.

Our efforts in trying to reach the millions of alcoholics who inhabit this world have led us to periodically provide press releases, usually regarding new literature or events like the International Conventions. We look forward to the introduction of the new Director of Communications to improve our thinking in this area, as well as the development of a communications calendar that will provide a more proactive and efficient approach to our internal and external communications.

Regular communications about our lifesaving content are vitally important in today's colossus of communication. We can seek to make our public service announcements more available to the suffering alcoholic by making them available where people are actually watching and listening to other information today. We can also make our information and content more shareable to support the army of recovering alcoholics out there already carrying the message of hope and recovery. A focused effort internally for developing this content to be more readily available across multiple formats for our fellowship to share will continue to be a growing need, while always staying well within our spiritual guiding principles.

As we go on learning how to be more effective with this information in a multitude of places through tools like our websites, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, the Meeting Guide App, and Podcasts, we will need to allow our great employees the flexibility to pilot different approaches that fall within our guiding principles and measure their effectiveness in carrying the message. For each new experiment we will want to ask ourselves how we can determine if this was more effective in carrying the message. We will need to continue to ask ourselves if we are making the most of the strengths that each of our corporations bring, as our Executive Editor recently shared, AAWS publishes the collective voice of AA and Grapevine publishes the collected voices of AA members. Are we allowing each to shine as brightly as it could in carrying the message?

As we move forward in 2022 there will be a focused priority in several areas:

- Website Search Engine Optimization plans for AAWS and Grapevine
- Public Information Calendar and planning key communications
- Developing more shareable versions of our great content and understanding the effectiveness of these
- Exploring and clarifying the role of the Meeting Guide App so we can solidify our strategies and timelines

The details of planning and execution across a multitude of projects can be found below. Some of these sections are more complete than others because each of these are in different stages of development. We will be encouraged to hear more feedback on the progress and direction of each item, as well as the overall plan through the Conference process. Understanding any clear priorities from the fellowship through the conference process will be quite useful as well. This feedback is critical in the balancing of intentions, direction, and resources applied in carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers and in moving forward in our communications through the collective conscience of our fellowship.

Detailed Plan Table of Contents

1. Summary & Introduction
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Key
2. Creative & Identity
 - a. AAWS Analysis
 - b. GV Analysis
3. Website
 - a. AA.org
 - b. AA Grapevine Websites
 - c. Online Listings Management
 - d. Google Ads
4. Public Relations
 - a. Press Releases
 - b. Events
 - c. Direct Communications
5. Content Creation
 - a. TV PSAs
 - b. Radio PSAs
 - c. Podcasts
 - d. Literature
6. Social Media
 - a. AAWS YouTube
 - b. GV YouTube
 - c. AAWS Vimeo
 - d. AAWS LinkedIn
 - e. Instagram
7. Meeting Guide App
8. Next Steps for the CMP

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

The Comprehensive Media Plan and its subsequent tactical implementation is a primary focus of the Trustees' Public Information Committee. It is submitted to the Conference Committee on Public Information annually for review. This document serves as a strategic communications plan and review for all of Alcoholics Anonymous and its incorporated brands. The following pages represent current business standards in outlining such plans and serve as a benchmark to build on year over year. These documents are prepared to chart a course for communication strategy and to measure effectiveness and accomplishments and/or reevaluate their effectiveness as things change. The guiding principles for this plan are firmly rooted in the Twelfth Step of AA and the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Each year, the Trustees' Public Information Committee will update this document regarding suggested items for action in the upcoming calendar year and topics for consideration in the following year. The trustees' P.I. Committee shares information about the plan and seeks input from AAWS, AAGV, and other Trustees' Committees as needed.

Communication is at the heart of A.A.'s mission to extend the hand of recovery from alcoholism to anyone who seeks help. It begins with one alcoholic sharing their experience, strength, and hope with another alcoholic. From there, it takes on more forms: group meetings, district committees, Area assemblies—an entire Conference structure that is served by three Boards and two corporations. This “upside-down triangle” is the pathway for A.A.'s internal communication structure. This document should speak to both internal messaging and external communications. Storytelling is an integral part of A.A.'s history; how the message of sobriety and hope is carried to the members, potential members, and the people they affect is the basis of this plan.

Key Tenets Developed for Technology/Communications Strategy

- Our goal is to get the still suffering alcoholic to local resources that can provide immediate help
- Our content needs to be accessible to all we serve
- We need to be present where our audiences are searching for our messages
- Our message needs to resonate with each of our core audiences in voice and tone
- We must identify and address any unnecessary internal obstacles to be more responsive and agile
- Provide consistent/stable anchor points for members and partners to seamlessly connect to, utilize and engage with our content

- Identify opportunities to better coordinate and share content from and across PI, CPC, AAGV, Boards, and office

We further discussed that our success in future communications and sharing of content would require that we find solutions that can balance our Conference mandated Governance with the current culture's:

- Affinity for social media
- Desire for smaller, more frequent communications
- Preference for mobile app-like experiences

Key Terms and Definitions

1. **Messaging Focus** – Those seeking help with a drinking problem and those that serve on the frontlines with alcoholics.
2. **Recovery Landscape**- Non-A.A. entities that provide similar or overlapping help to problem drinkers **or** provide help that A.A. does *not* provide.
3. **Media Objective** – To help the sick and suffering alcoholic and provide accurate information to the public about A.A.
4. **Public Relations Strategy** – Analyze, review, and develop our current strategies/platforms to serve A.A.'s "Public Relations Policy." Set goals, review tactics and timeframes to achieve improved and more accessible communications with those seeking information or help from A.A.
5. **Creative "Branding"** - This section represents the "voice" of our messaging. For example, a Digital or PDF pamphlet may have a different look or feel to teenage alcoholics vs. professionals. Still, it would contain some consistencies to make it look like it came from the same organization.
6. **Website/Media/Digital** – How do digital assets complement each other? Do our digital resources serve local committees and the A.A. Fellowship? Is information easily accessible for media and professionals?
7. **Implementation** – How we do things in A.A. is as important as what we do in a business and spiritual sense.
8. **Budgets** - Are we strategic and mindful of utilizing 7th Tradition contributions, keeping within the Board's fiduciary responsibility when embarking on projects?
9. **Impacts, Evaluation, and Follow-up** - Impact determines whether we have the resources, budgets, and personnel to complete the goals and tasks. Evaluation is necessary to show our goals have merit and that we're adequately working towards executing them. Follow-up refers to accountability and reporting.

Section 2: Creative & Identity

This section covers not only the look and feel of the Alcoholic Anonymous brands, including AAWS, Grapevine/La Viña (the publications), and as much of its communication assets as it currently stands in 2022.

A brand is easily identifiable marks, messaging, and imagery that communicate the identity of the brand to its target audience. It should be very closely tied to the communication strategy and voice of the brand. Brand voice is what you say, and brand tone is how you say it. Your tone may vary between audiences, so typically, we document when to use certain tones in certain situations. These should be documented in a style guideline or brand guidelines.

We will illustrate what the brand currently is and give examples of what it can be incorporating all businesses and a unified voice. A brand voice is a uniformity in the selection of words, the attitude, and values of the brand while addressing the target audience or others. It is how a brand conveys its brand personality to the external audience.

Key Message: There Is a Solution

Value Proposition: What Is the Problem A.A. Addresses?

- Need for recovery from alcoholism.
- Dependence on alcohol and wreckage of life
- Spiritual bankruptcy

Who is affected by this problem?

Alcoholics, those in their lives, society at large.

How are they affected?

Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually. Bad relationships, career issues, fatal illness, demoralization. Every aspect of their lives.

Why is it important to solve this problem?

Well-being, safety, sanity. So, individuals can live their best lives. Family and friends can be free of worry about the alcoholic. Recovery for the alcoholic and everyone they know.

Who else currently addresses this problem?

Therapists, religion, other 12-step programs, government, profit/nonprofit centers, support groups/peers.

How are their solutions delivered?

Mandatory action, court-ordered, church, short-term programs, hospitals, for-profit, counseling, group therapy.

AAWS Analysis

The launch of the new AAWS website has addressed many of the branding concerns raised in the past with its improved appearance and consistent use of the same visual elements. GSO has also assembled a style guide containing current versions of our logos, colors, fonts, and other branding elements for use within the office to further aid branding consistency across all our materials. New materials and our presence on external websites such as social media must stay consistent with the branding on our website.

Where our creative and branding is still problematic is our older materials such as pamphlets and books that were not created or revised recently. All our literature would benefit from an automatic review schedule in which their content and appearance would be evaluated to ensure it is still accurate and appears appealing to current audiences. Any outdated materials could then be brought to the conference's attention.

Literature and Pamphlets are a representation of our fellowship; if they are perceived to be outdated, irrelevant, and even ridiculous, then we are perceived to be those things as well. Pamphlets might easily be someone's first impression of our fellowship and we must stop undermining our credibility by offering outdated materials. Keeping our materials updated and appealing is a simple way to improve public perception of AA. The fear of not being organized or a professional class of therapy should not get in the way of us looking credible.

Ongoing Concerns:

- Lack of consistency in appearance between old and new materials
- Materials do not work together visually, which sends an unclear message to the user.
- Poor image/design quality: images across the assets are often quite poor—clip art, old-fashioned looking, stock photos, and many that don't add any visual value that aligns with the corresponding message AAWS is trying to put forth.
- The AA name and identity marks are used by many other entities, which is confusing to key audiences, and most importantly—to the still-suffering alcoholic.
- Confusing links to brands, our organizational structure should not determine our visible identity to the public

GV Analysis

GV and La Vina have a better, more modern, and clear identity. Their assets mirror each other more closely and have a more visible voice. They do not come up in search under ancillary keywords but do come up with direct keywords. Their consistency

across all platforms is better than AAWS with a clearer understanding of their purpose: to gather and tell the personal stories of AA members who are recovering from Alcoholism.

They seemed to have cleaned up muddled fonts, voices, etc. They may still need editorial and identity guidelines and better consistency with how AAGV and Grapevine/La Viña are noted across assets. Currently, it is listed in 5 different ways: (1) AA Grapevine, (2) AA Grapevine, (3) AA Grapevine Inc., (4) The AA Grapevine, Inc. (5) A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Inconsistency with how AAGV's website is noted on assets. It is listed in 3 different ways: (1) AAGrapevine.org, (2) aagrapevine.org, (3) www.aagrapevine.org.

GV/ La Viña could be one of our most powerful tools in helping alcoholics find recovery. We are storytellers, the first thing that resonates with us is one alcoholic talking to another. Beyond everything else, identification leads to the process of recovery

Section 3: Website

The intent of this section is to focus on the primary websites for AAWS and AAGV. This includes the sites' main landing pages, associated subpages, and store websites that sell AAWS or AAGV products. These sites support AA.org and AAGrapevine.org.

AA.org

The 2004 General Service Conference recommended that:

- a) The AAWS Board should continue to manage the Website through its Technology/Communication/Services Committee.
- b) Any correspondence, requests for changes, or requests for reports on the Website would continue to be responded to by the AAWS Board.
- c) The AAWS Board would be responsible for preparing a quarterly report to the trustees' Public Information Committee for their review. The report would include the following information:
 - Changes to the Website
 - Updates on Website activity
 - A summary of requests or correspondence from the Fellowship regarding the Website and a summary of actions taken by the AAWS Board in response to those requests or correspondence.
- d) The AAWS Board would prepare an annual report for the trustees' P.I. Committee summarizing all Website quarterly report information. The report, along with any additional comments from the trustees' Committee, would be forwarded to the Conference P.I. Committee for their consideration.

AAWS launched the new aa.org website in late 2021. The goal for the new website was to make the site more accessible, responsive, usable, and modern. The new website will present Alcoholics Anonymous as a credible, relevant resource to new visitors and deliver value to existing members. It will provide essential content and functionality where needed. It consists largely of the content of the previous website but provides a consistent experience across desktop and mobile devices.

Upon final completion of the site, AAWS will assume full responsibility for content and administration. Hosting and maintenance contracts will continue with our current vendor.

Identified goals include:

- Overall improvement of the user experience
- Mobile compatibility/responsive design
- Easy to use content management system or web application Framework
- Multilingual capabilities (English, Spanish, French)
- Improved search capability
- Improved ability for visitors to find A.A. meeting information
- Compatibility with assistive technology standards (ADA compliant)
- Search engine optimization strategy and backend implementation
- Updated visual style

Future Projects

The following projects are under consideration.

- Bookstore integration with the site
- Shared bookstore with AAGrapevine.org
- Mobile application
- Possible integration of an existing meeting guide
- Possible email subscription and integration for AA.org
- YouTube brand channel
- Microsites for specific topics or audiences
- Universal templates library

Key Ongoing Website Requirements

Easy task completion for key audiences

The information architecture should define the best path and best content to meet the needs of each user group. As part of discovery, we want to research and test the message and use of media content for primary segments. The audience consists of:

- Potential Alcoholics Anonymous members and people new to A.A.
- Current A.A. members

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- Concerned individuals/family and friends
- Professionals
- Media

Advanced search capabilities

Search needs to deliver fast, accurate, easily understood results. Advanced search options may be necessary for some content areas. In addition, the search will need to function independently in each language. All features of our website are typically available in English, Spanish, and French for audiences in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. We handle our own translations, but this aspect of the site does impact the overall design and number of pages.

Improved ability to contact local A.A. and find meetings

One core purpose of AA.org is to help users connect with AA and find meetings in their local area. The new AA.org does not currently provide AA meeting information, just links to the local sources of this information. This is one of the most used and frequently complained about features on aa.org. See the Find AA page for how we currently present the information: <https://www.aa.org/find-aa>

Aa.org should provide a better, more efficient experience to our users. Some ideas that we have had are:

- providing a quick search feature that includes geolocation like a “near me” button
- displaying targeted search results that only include results for the specific criteria searched on - for example, postal code, city, state.
- search results that take language into account (for example, searches in Spanish should prioritize Spanish-language organizations in results)
- a map view (some of our membership is concerned about anonymity issues related to Google Maps. Proposals should address this possible issue if Google maps are selected Any per hit costs associated with map or location search need to be minimal and accounted for in the proposal).

Ability for A.A. members to access service materials

A.A. provides a variety of services through a local committee system. These committees are provided with resources by AAWS, Inc., most of which are available on our current website (see current organization): <https://www.aa.org/service-committees>

This area needs to support key tasks of service members that are identified as part of discovery for this project. At a minimum, better organization and improved navigation are needed.

Updated visual style

The visual style of the site needs to be continuously refined and updated while maintaining the current logo and blue people graphic.

Optimized performance

Aa.org is a heavily trafficked site and needs to deliver industry-standard response times both on desktop and mobile devices. Back-end performance, front end performance, mobile versus desktop, payload sizes, and the number of assets, as well as time to first byte should be continuously maintained and improved to meet rising technological standards. For example, expected response times must be measured in milliseconds and not seconds.

Flexible and easy to understand website framework

The backend content management needs to be easily understandable for those with less technical knowledge but comprehensive enough to properly maintain and update all aspects of the website. AAWS staff should be able to create and edit content. Content editing should support a basic workflow process that allows reviewing and approving content before publication.

Security compliance

This site is required to be PCI compliant.

Cookies and Privacy

The team has developed a roadmap to GDPR compliance and will work with their new vendor to put as much of it into place by launch as technically feasible. One possibility being discussed is implementing a Drupal Cookies opt-in/out module.

Metadata must reflect page content.

- Basic descriptions and cleaned-up titles to match the visible titles on items applied to 579 assets in English, Spanish, and French. Focused on completing on-page information to boost SEO and help the users.
 - As often as possible, we are going to use the same descriptions on aa.org and the online store. Simplifies writing/translation and helps SEO to relate items across platforms.
- Various new filters (Literature type, Service-Related, and Format) were applied to all assets for easier searching and sorting. Initial “Service Related” filters are based on kit contents lists. We will have the ability to expand the content of filters and add additional filters in the future, but not likely before launch.

- All Newsletters in English titles and dates/years are updated to be uniform. Waiting to apply in Spanish and French due to translation setup bug. Identified to vendor.
 - Prepared descriptions for most newsletters based on article titles in each issue. No entry field available yet identified to vendor. Not critical for launch.
 - Planned work to apply filters to all newsletters similar to what we currently have for About A.A.
https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/about-aa-newsletter-for-professionals Not critical for launch.

Translations

Any new content must be translated and added to the French and Spanish versions of the website. The AA Content team will provide the Translations team with any outstanding copy to be translated. The Translations team will complete the review and approval of the copy on the new page. The Translation team will translate any outstanding copy, and the Content team will place it on the site and the Translations team will review and approve.

Next Steps for AA.org

Going forward, it is important to focus on website function, content, domain authority, expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness, video aggregation, search engine optimization campaign. The Google Grant and subsequent Google Ads campaign have allowed us to “buy our way into the search results,” just like using a PSA to put us in broadcast time slots we would not otherwise be visible. This is not a substitute for appearing in the organic (non-paid) search results, but it has given us more search visibility than we’ve had in recent memory.

Online visibility is critical to AA’s ability to carry our message. To increase our visibility, we are in the process of developing an ongoing Search Engine Optimization (SEO) plan for the AA.org website. Some basic SEO optimization is already in progress, and we’ll have more information available in the subsequent CMP.

Future Web Development

Digital kits (non-PDF versions) – Multiple conversations are in progress about this subject. Current suggestions include:

- More prominent placement of linked kit list PDFs
- Integration with Glide apps (significant learning curve and upkeep concerns, allocation of resources)

- Fully digital kit resources available to download or read on aa.org (must go through Conference review/approval)
- Discussion of potential AA Service App – covers more than kit availability. Also raises questions of development and maintenance.
- PI would like to be able to update their kits more often than once a year to keep current and relevant info.
- Information aggregate tools are often used by local committees and offices.

Analytics

We moved to Google Analytics for aa.org and Meeting Guide in 2021 in conjunction with the relaunch of aa.org. This brought our website, online bookstore, app, and Google Ads together under one analytics software for easier comparison and holistic planning. Once the transition has been made to Google Analytics, update all standard reporting.

Hope to move at least some of the standard reporting to include predictive analytics and make the data a larger part of the decision-making process.

AA Grapevine Websites

The AA Grapevine currently maintains four separate websites. The plan is to have one Grapevine site that includes the current magazine, archives, store, and other features, and one mirror La Viña site for Spanish-speaking members. We hope to transition to this arrangement by the end of 2022. Our current four websites include:

1. Aagrapevine.org is the primary website for all things Grapevine. This site includes the landing page for AA Grapevine with links to the magazine, the archives of AA Grapevine stories, Get Involved page for material related to carrying the message of Grapevine for GVRs, a link to the aagrapevine store, and a subscription link. This main page includes links to the La Viña, Carry the Message Project, Podcasts, ePub, and AA.org.
2. Aalavina.org mirrors the AAGrapevine.org site but all content is in Spanish.
3. Store.aagrapevine.org is a landing page to a separate site that provides links for subscriptions, products, and personal accounts. The intent of the site is to provide a one-stop-shop for users to purchase AA Grapevine material.
4. Lvtienda.aagrapevine.org is the mirror image of the store.aagrapevine.org, again, translated into Spanish.

In 2021, AAGV developed and deployed the landing page aagrapevine.org/podcast for the GV's New Podcast, The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour. This page provides users with access to the podcast via the website. The Podcast is also available on multiple podcast services.

Also, requested and posted on “What’s New” aa.org and the Meeting Guide app the URL alias aagrapevine.org/podcast.

Technically, updates were deployed to the GV and LV Drupal websites to hide the month and year from the start and end of article and audio titles. In coordination with the web vendor, developed and implemented new “Magazine section fields” dropdowns on the GV and LV Drupal websites. Now articles and audios display what section they belong to.

There is ongoing work on creating and setting the weekly Web Exclusives, monthly GV Product News, quarterly Your Group newsletters, and supervising the setting of the GV & LV daily quotes on the websites and blast emails to draw the Fellowship to the Grapevine and La Viña websites.

Ongoing work on building UTM codes and adding them to the AAGV newsletters and blast communications to better track data in google analytics. Ongoing work with the website marketing team on improving the metadata for both aagrapevine.org and aalavina.org websites.

Continued collaboration with the website marketing team in sharing the programmed AAGV newsletters and communications for the Instagram accounts.

In coordination with the website vendor, work continues in improving the aagrapevine.org and aaglavina.org website maintenance and support. More information about GV’s search engine visibility is needed but they would benefit from ensuring each page has a meta description and title that reflect the content of the page.

Online Listings Management Plan

Summary of Online Business listings:

We currently have business listings on Google, Bing, and Yelp. They were automatically generated by the individual platforms. We took ownership of all three in 2019 to correct inaccuracies. Currently, the information is correct.

There is a public comment feature to these listings that cannot be turned off or removed. We have not done anything related to these comments since we took ownership of the listings. However, by ignoring these comments, we are leaving inaccurate/inappropriate comments in place and missing an opportunity to provide help and contact information. It is a missed opportunity for public relations.

Recommended actions:

- Review listing information monthly. Correct any inaccuracies or update with new information. (We have been updating office holidays/closed days)
- Fully update business information
 - Examples of additional information we could add:
 - Summary of services provided, year established, business history
 - Many opportunities to link back to information on aa.org
 - Add office photos as appropriate (Not approved by management)
- Interaction with comments: Currently working with PI Coordinator to detail types of comments, response vs no response, and a set of guidelines for distribution to Staff.
 - Depending on the comment, use short, accurate response text from a Staff member on Public Information, contact information for the person at the office who can address their concern or a link to aa.org that answers their question.
 - For reviews that are aimed at A.A. in general or local entities and not G.S.O. specifically, remove them since the listing is for G.S.O.
- Discuss case-by-case, some are looking for general info which we can provide.
- Actions to be discussed in the future:
 - Use of “special announcements” and other features offered by the platforms.

Google Ads

Campaign level keywords as of Feb 19, 2021:

Find a Meeting Campaign:

AA app

Find AA meeting

online aa meetings

AA meeting finder

AA meeting schedule

AA meetings

alcoholics anonymous online

aaa meetings

AA meeting directory

12 step meetings near me

AA meeting list

aa online

Meeting Guide app

Meeting Guide

alcoholics anonymous meeting

AA meeting near

Get Help Campaign:

Recovery from alcoholism

Give up drinking

Stop drinking

Give up alcohol

Problem with alcohol

Drinking problem

How do I quit drinking

Quit drinking

How to quit drinking

Help with drinking problem

Alcohol abuse

Am I an alcoholic

Alcoholics Anonymous

Drinking out of control

Account Negative Keywords as of Feb 19, 2021

ACOA Meetings

Adult Children of Alcoholics

Cocaine Anonymous Meeting

Emotions Anonymous Meeting

NA Meeting

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting

OA Meeting

Overeaters Anonymous

All links in the ads lead back to aa.org.

The highest click-through rates continue to relate to finding a meeting.

Any lower-ranked or underused keywords will be swapped out to test new ones.

Also, as required by the grant guidelines, we cannot use single-word keywords.

Our ads are reaching a wide range of ages and genders. Men between 25-34 are currently the top group interacting with our ads.

Recommendations:

The office needs the ability to continuously optimize the Google Ads campaigns based on standard best practices. If we don't have the freedom to manage our campaigns, the campaigns will not improve, and we're wasting the fellowship's grant money and wasting opportunities to reach suffering alcoholics.

Appropriate staff members need to be able to make the following updates to the campaigns without waiting a year for conference approval to ensure improved campaign performance:

- Evaluate and experiment with ad targeting
- A/B test ad copy and design
- Add/remove keywords and negative keywords
- Change keyword match type
- Test multiple landing page options
- Approve/deny basic campaign suggestions provided by Google Ads

Section 4: Public Relations

“We are trying our best to reach more of those 25 million alcoholics who today inhabit the world. We must reach them directly and indirectly. To accomplish this, it will be necessary that understanding of A.A. and public goodwill towards A.A. go on growing everywhere. We need to be on even better terms with medicine, religion, employers, governments, courts, prisons, mental hospitals, and all those conducting enterprises in the alcohol field. We need the increasing goodwill of editors, writers, television, and radio channels. These publicity outlets—local, national, and international—should be opened wider and wider, always forgoing, however, high-pressure promotion tactics. It is to, and through, all these resources that we must try to carry A.A.’s message to those who suffer alcoholism and its consequences.”

Bill W. Concept XI page C38 Twelve Concepts for World Service 1962

Public Information structure includes a strategic path of messaging and content dissemination utilizing key stakeholders as the vehicle of the brand voice. Looking forward, here are items we can establish as an aspect of this path.

- Develop a content and public information calendar annually.
- Position representatives that can talk about AA to the public, professionals, and press.
- Develop key talking points and styles that are common and understood by all representatives.
- Media train individuals tasked with this role.
- Develop a list of friendlies and relationships with the press.
- Develop a press list.
- Develop a tracking matrix.

Talking points and Key Language:

No matter what your age, no matter what your gender or background, if you are drinking too much, A.A. offers a solution.

Our competence to speak about alcoholism is limited in subject matter to Alcoholics Anonymous and its recovery program.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Key Language: Key Phrases

1. AA
2. Alcoholics Anonymous
3. Hand of AA
4. The Grapevine and La Vina A.A.'s meeting in print
5. Anyone anywhere reaches out for help.
6. Help
7. The Big Book
8. A program of Recovery
9. Recovery starts with one alcoholic talking to another.
10. Program for living.
11. Sober
12. Sobriety
13. Recovery
14. Recovered
15. Program of action
16. AA is a *fellowship* of people.

Press Releases

The General Service Office currently contracts with Cision/PR Newswire for professional electronic distribution of press releases. This is a recent (2021) development; for the past ten years, no professional services had been used, other than for International Conventions. The use of professional distribution is in alignment with the GSB Strategic Plan, and the current contract allows for the distribution of 8 releases annually.

Releases are generated and coordinated through the Public Information assignment. Press release content creation is the three-way responsibility of Public Information, Publishing, and Communications. All releases are made available in English, French, and Spanish. Also, the PI desk also provides electronic press kits on request as background to releases.

The timing of releases has been based on newsworthy events such as new publications or International Conventions. An expansive Public Information calendar, which would incorporate external events (i.e., Alcohol Awareness month, public holidays, Sober January) as an opportunity for an increased broad understanding and highlighting of our message, is under development by the Communications Department.

Identification of individuals to speak about the topic(s) covered by the content is determined by the Public Information Coordinator, based on the specific need, and always bearing in mind the principles outlined in AA's 12 Traditions.

AA Grapevine Inc. and La Vina have their own processes for press releases. The vision for the PI Calendar is to include GV and LV events to work effectively together.

Cision/PR Newswire provides analytic data for releases it distributes. Releases are also placed on the aa.org website, which has its own analytics.

As part of a longer-term strategy and human resources consideration, a media relations position staff person/assignment would give the ability to tactically target specific members of the media with story ideas and feature coverage, in conjunction with broad press releases.

Events

International Convention, General Service Conference, Regional Forums

There are many opportunities for Public Information to raise awareness about Alcoholics Anonymous in the lead-up to the quinquennial convention. Conference actions, such as electing a new board chair, as well. These news opportunities around Conference actions and noteworthy Board elections, follow a regular schedule, and so can easily be incorporated into a PI calendar.

External Messaging around events can provide significant opportunities for PI to work with local media outlets in the host cities before, during, and after the International Convention. Also, it has been the practice of GSO to hire a local media professional in the host city to leverage the most publicity possible before, during, and after the International Convention.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

Direct Communications

Direct communications include announcements sent to members, staff, board members, Delegates, Districts, Areas, and local Intergroup/Central offices.

Types of announcements include messages from the General Manager on any number of topics, including but certainly not limited to 7th Tradition updates and news about GSO of interest to the Fellowship. The current General Manager has stated a personal goal of one “announcement” per month. These announcements need to be incorporated into the master PI calendar. Announcements are sent out using the e-mail marketing platform Campaign Monitor, using the available data in the GSO NetSuite software.

Box 459 is an inward-facing publication sent out four times a year on a seasonal (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall) rotation, both electronically and as hard copy to a small subscription base, as well as to all groups in the Fellowship Connections database.

Quarterly Reports are sent out from the General Service Board to all Conference members, and AAWS sends out “Highlights from AAWS” on a Quarterly basis as well. Again, the importance of incorporating these communications into a PI calendar is noted.

Section 5: Content Creation

TV PSAs

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) have long been recognized and used as a PI tool for many non-profit organizations, including Alcoholics Anonymous. The first mention in the History & Actions of the Trustee’s Committee on Public Information is 1966, with the continual production of 15-second, 30-second, and 60-second television PSAs throughout the following decades. Changes in the industry and can be detected through the actions from the first mentions of cable TV requirements in the early 1980s, to the increased need for professionals in getting the PSA’s distributed because of the sheer volume of TV outlets, to changes in submission formats, right up to current requests to research the placement on streaming services.

Television stations air public service announcements in unsold commercial airtime. Whenever a station has a commercial break, if the ads during that break are not entirely sold out, stations will turn to PSAs to fill that gap. AA makes an investment in the production of the content, distribution, and tracking, and the stations provide the airtime. Therefore, PSAs fill a content need for the stations. The commercial value of the airtime that has been provided to AA (as well as to other nonprofits) over the years is in the many millions of dollars.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

The professional production quality of our PSAs is key to the success of the campaigns over the years. The better the quality of a PSA, the more stations will play them. While it used to be the case that stations were mandated to provide airtime, that is no longer true. With the vast numbers of PSAs that come to the stations, high production values are essential for successful placement.

Local Public Information Committees also make use of PSAs within their committees and at information sessions. The PSAs are available on the aa.org website for viewing. Local committees are also very helpful in terms of getting broadcast quality (PSAs on the website do not meet broadcast standards) PSAs to television stations and outlets that may not have been covered by GSOs initial distribution or to provide an extra push to elevate the playing of our PSA by building local cooperative relationships.

Each year through the General Service Conference process the trustees Public Information Committee and Conference Committee on Public Information, in partnership with the Public Information Coordinator at GSO, work with the Fellowship to review the usefulness and relevance of the PSAs developed for Alcoholics Anonymous through this process:

- Decisions are made to maintain for use or retire PSAs.
- Decisions are made to develop new PSAs.
- Discussions are held determining items such as Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates.

GSO Staff on the P.I. Assignment leads any project to produce new PSAs, whether they are for broadcast television or radio placement. The production process includes our Publishing Department and third-party service providers to create a PSA. All-new creative content is provided for review through the committee process to Conference for approval. Once finalized, we currently engage a service provider to ensure that the broadest possible tracking and distribution occurs throughout the U.S. and Canada service structure. Analytics are provided to the committees for reviews. We also seek ways to repurpose or update creatives to ensure that if straightforward revisions are made it may maintain the relevance and usefulness of a PSA for a longer period. This could mean something as simple as updating a voice-over tagline recording.

Short-Term Strategy

- As opposed to paying an outside service provider to edit and repurpose content or the time on the PSA, we could use internal editors to make multiple stories, 15 seconds, 30 seconds, 1 minute.
- Utilize local committees more on PSA distribution.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

- Simple suggestions include links to our PSAs at the bottom of signature lines in emails, or in email communications to promote local committees to become additional distributors on their websites and local professional agencies. This can also be achieved through the PI Assignment ongoing activity updates.
- Determine the use of paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms including, but not limited to, Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube.

Long-Term Strategy

The continued effective use of resources such as our PI Appointed Committee members, who are professionals in the field, is essential in terms of keeping an active eye on the ever-changing media landscape, ensuring we do not miss new opportunities.

Radio PSAs

As with the television PSAs, AA has long found radio PSAs to be very effective tools. Currently, this is especially true in small, under-served, and remote locations, where local radio stations play a large part in service to those communities. In parts of the US and Canada where infrastructure does not support more complex technologies, radio is a true lifeline. Therefore, the importance of providing radio/audio content for those stations about AA, such as our PSAs, becomes clear. All radio PSAs were recently reviewed and tag lines at the end were updated to reflect the latest contact information for AA. The broadcast-quality PSAs are available on the website for direct download and through the PI desk.

While radio might at first glance appear to be an older, less effective technology in terms of comparative reach, it is in practice one of our most valuable tools for local committees.

Analytics

The General Service office contracts with Connect360 for its video PSA distribution. Different methods are used to track airtime in the United States and Canada due to different regulatory needs. Still, essentially, the approach in both countries is similar – using independent third parties to determine the following factors:

- Learning about airings
- Determining how many people saw the PSA from an airing
- Determining the value of the airtime.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

Below are quantities for two distributions in 2021/2022

	U.S. English	U.S. Spanish	Canadian
First Distribution	1,900	280	236
Second Distribution	800	150	236

Podcasts

GSO Podcast Pilot Episode: "This is A.A. ...virtually"

History

The General Service Office's podcast work was initiated by a proposed agenda item that led to the following Conference Advisory Action of the 71st General Service Conference:

It was recommended that:

Podcasts providing sharing within the Fellowship and information about A.A. to the public be produced and distributed by G.S.O. in cooperation with the Grapevine Office. The committee requested that a progress report on the development and implementation of podcasts be forwarded to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The committee noted that podcasts would serve as a new format to produce "service material" to communicate on topics with similar sharing that can be found in *Box 4-5-9, About AA*, *aa.org*, and sharing from AA Grapevine and La Viña.

Trustees' Public Information Committee discussed the advisory action at the July 2021 meeting and requested the following action:

The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of an A.A. podcast. The committee discussed GSO's current efforts and looked forward to a progress report at the October 2021 meeting.

Trustees' Public Information Committee discussed the advisory action at the October 2021 Board Meeting and requested the following action:

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

The committee discussed the podcast pilot episode and affirmed G.S.O. could effectively produce a professional-sounding podcast and the episode outlined the beginnings of a framework for future theme-based episodes.

The committee requested that the staff secretary coordinate with team members across G.S.O. and AA Grapevine to create a full podcast plan that details information on production, timeline, delivery channels, guidelines, cost, and proposals of 6 to 12 episodes. The plan is to include the departments involved in producing a finished product and an outline of the analytics that could be collected to gauge the podcast's success as a service tool. A full plan will be brought forward for review at the January 2022 meeting.

- a. One action is to provide a two-sentence podcast update in the TCS agenda in December 2021 – Julie G.
- b. Another action is to provide the following background to the Trustees' PI Committee:
 - i. A GSO Podcast plan
 - ii. Pilot Episode Evaluation feedback and analysis
 - iii. Any additional background needed and determined by the internal GSO Podcast Steering Committee

At the January Board 2022 meeting, the trustees' PI Committee will determine the final report and Podcast Plan information that will be forwarded to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Creative Process and Production

This process was fully supported by a podcast working group made up of GSO leadership and staff.

The Public Information Coordinator worked with Publishing and the Communication Services Department on the production of the pilot podcast episode titled, "Online Groups - Past, Present, Future."

A 30-minute timed episode format outline was produced that included the following segments:

1. Introduction
2. Announcement of the theme of the episode and a lead-in description of the episode segments
3. Segment: AA Grapevine...News!
 - a. This uses one audio content news story pre-recorded by AA Grapevine relevant to the episode theme.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

4. Disclaimer to the Interview segment:
 - a. On “Getting sober and staying sober during a Pandemic. This included the host interviewing two members, a sponsor and sponsee whose relationship began virtually and continues.
5. Segment: AA Grapevine...Stories!
 - a. This uses two audio content stories pre-recorded by AA Grapevine relevant to the episode theme.
6. Segment: A.A. History Fun Fact: “Did you know...?”
 - a. We selected a Box 4-5-9 article with a great historical overview of online meetings and had the host record it.
7. Segment: Events
 - a. We recorded a sharing about the recent related Advisory Actions from the 71st GSC regarding online groups as a recap of what is happening today.
8. Segment: Remote Communities
 - a. "Members in remote communities have leaned into technical means to connect and carry the A.A. message as demonstrated in the following experience, taken from an article in the Summer 2021 edition of Box 4-5-9"
 - b. Host recorded
9. Segment: Closing remark conclusion statement
 - a. based on the history and shared experience presented in the pilot episode.
 - b. Host recorded.
10. Final disclaimers recorded

The project team determined candidates for participation in the pilot podcast episode and confirmed their willingness and ability to complete the project.

We had a host with podcast experience who is also a current delegate on the Conference Committee on PI. We utilized internal voiceover talent from a staff member in the Staff Services department. One project team member reached out to the two interviewees and obtained their agreement to share their experience.

There was a discussion on future hosts, and it was determined we would like to have a minimum of three different voices to take on the host role in future episodes.

The Publishing department coordinated and oversaw the recording session that produced the content for the pilot episode. The session occurred in the evening in roughly a three-hour session.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

The recorded files were provided to the Communication Services Department who provided a first-round edit, project team review, and input that led to a final pilot episode record that was presented to the trustees' PI Committee at their October 2021 meeting.

Distribution

It was determined that we would need to provide a full podcast plan to the Conference Committee on PI at the 2022 General Service Conference before this pilot podcast episode can be distributed, if distributed.

Results

The pilot podcast episode was provided to the Corporate Boards and the GSO and AA Grapevine employees so they could listen for and provide feedback via a survey.

See attached survey questions and results report.

Comparisons

As we provide a GSO podcast plan for future episodes and through Trustees' Committee and Conference Committee on PI discussions, comparisons can be made between the current AA Grapevine podcast and the GSO pilot episode podcast to determine best practices related to format and production as this project moves forward.

Goals

To be determined.

AAGV: "The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour"

History

The Board and Publisher agree that AA Grapevine Inc.'s growth depends largely on the expansion of our digital publishing presence. To that end, we formed the "AA Grapevine Digital Transformation Working Group" consisting of Chris C., Josh E., Cindy F., and Coree H. This group took inventory of podcast ideas the Board and Staff discussed over the past two years. When the 2021 Conference gave the green light to podcasts, the working group explored several options.

We found an existing entertaining AA-related podcast called "The Boiled Owl," and the team agreed that we should contact the creators, Don M., and Sam M., to see if they'd be interested in working with Grapevine to create a new podcast. Don and Sam agreed

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

to join the effort as paid hosts. Over several weeks we discussed the creative direction of the podcast. We concluded that a Grapevine podcast would best serve the fellowship by reflecting the magazine, with members sharing their experience, strength, and hope in this new medium. Our goal is to enrich members' sobriety, attract members to Grapevine products, and perhaps attract alcoholics to AA.

Creative Process

Knowing that the AAWS podcast would likely include news and information, we decided that the Grapevine podcast would reflect the magazine as much as possible by being focused on members' recovery from alcoholism. We developed these parameters:

- G-rated language
- Strong adherence to AA Traditions
- Focus on recovery from alcoholism
- A fun mood, reminiscent of having coffee at a diner after a meeting
- Regular features such as "Ask the Old-timer," "What's in a Name" "Stump the Thumper" (big book trivia)
- Humor from the magazine
- Audience participation is encouraged with a dedicated phone number and email address.
- We discussed several program-length and frequency options and settled on a half-hour program once a week.

We produced three sample episodes to share with the Grapevine Board at the July meeting. A motion was made and accepted to develop a pilot season of 12 episodes.

Production

Don and Sam set to work on creating the podcast. The working group sent in suggestions for guests. The office worked with Don and Sam to schedule guest recording sessions and set up podcast distribution channels.

The production of the podcast is quite simple. Don and Sam interview the guests over Zoom and record the audio. They ask the guests to find a quiet place and use the best microphone available. Don also serves as the editor, and he takes the hour-long interview and cuts it down to about 20 minutes. Don and Sam's introductory banter, the humor spot, a special feature, and the episode's informational outro make up the remaining minutes.

Distribution

We launched the podcast on October 4, 2021. Our host site is Captivate, which automatically pushes the podcast to certain platforms such as Spotify and Google, but we had to take an extra step to register with platforms such as Apple and Stitcher. The podcast is available on all the most popular platforms and Grapevine's podcast player on our website.

Results

- After 18 episodes, as of 2/3/22, we have 46,500 downloads.
- We notice a peak of listeners on Mondays, the day new episodes publish, which tells us we're developing a following.
- Approximately 25% of listeners use the Grapevine website, while 48% use Apple Podcasts—other platforms making up the difference.
- The audience listens overwhelmingly on mobile devices, with mobile apps at 67% and mobile browsers at 18%. Desktop listens account for 8%.
- Operating device numbers confirm the overwhelming use of mobile devices with iOS and Android is used by 83% of our listeners.
- The podcast is the second-highest landing page on aagrapevine.org (Sobriety calculator still number one). The Grapevine Newsletter, Instagram, the Daily Quote, and referrals from aa.org helped that along.
- The audience is 88% in the United States, with Canada making up 7%. Great Britain brings about 1% of the audience, and we reach members as far and wide as Panama, Kenya, and Estonia.

Comparisons

This is an excerpt from an article on Podcast.co: "The metric that matters most to podcasters is the number of downloads new episodes get within the first 30 days, so that's the metric we're using — If your episodes get more than 124 downloads in 30 days, you're in the top 50% of podcasts. If your episodes get more than 1,000 downloads, you're in the top 20%. If your episodes get more than 2,900 downloads, you're in the top 10%." Grapevine averages about 2000 downloads per episode, so by this standard we are firmly in the top 20%.

Goals

At their December meeting, the AA Grapevine Board voted to continue the podcast in 2022, with a budget of \$13,500.

- Provide an immediate, intimate connection with AA members.
- Be available anytime and anywhere.

- Use the podcast to enhance the Grapevine brand in the minds of members.
- Attract members to Grapevine magazine, digital subscriptions, and products.
- Attract alcoholics to AA.
- We plan to expand the programming to include the podcast as a forum for debate, feature discussions about Grapevine books, and have traveling reports and interviews from AA events around the US and Canada.
- The podcast is a building block to the larger goal of the digital Grapevine on a smartphone app, with all things Grapevine with subscribers always.

Literature

Literature is a key component of the CMP because literature is the main form of media we produce and affects virtually every other section of the CMP. We need the publishing schedule for AAWS and Grapevine to be incorporated into a Public Information Calendar so all our platforms can promote the literature effectively. Currently, a new internal email goes out when a new piece of literature is published but we could more effectively promote it and carry our message if we utilized our PR tools and social media platforms to further spread the word. Not only can our external platforms support Literature, but Literature can also support the external platforms. Conference-approved literature is a key source of content for social media and gives us news to promote with press releases. We hope to add to this section significantly over the next year.

Section 6: Social Media

AAWS YouTube Channel

AA implemented a YouTube channel in 2005. Currently, there are over 5,000 subscribers to our channel with 49 videos uploaded. One of the goals of our YouTube channel is to drive visitors to AA.ORG and at this point, over 7,000 visitors have come to AA.ORG from our YouTube channel. Our videos include informational videos for physicians and employers as well as PSAs. Through YouTube analytics, we can gain some idea of the demographics of visitors to our channel, including geographic location, age, and gender.

Due to concern over the fact that YouTube plays other videos and advertisements before and after the actual uploaded video, we have posted disclaimers to support our tradition of no affiliation. Suggested Videos are a personalized collection of videos that an individual viewer may be interested in watching next, based on prior activity.

AAWS

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

cannot control suggested videos, but we do add a disclaimer at the end of each video as well as attempt to optimize our YouTube analytics so that suggested videos are appropriate and relevant, but much like a television PSA, we have no real control over what ad, commercial or suggested video appears after our video.

The most important thing that we can do as we establish and expand our YouTube channel is to establish one consistent brand and to focus on building high-quality content. While optimizing our existing videos is important, even more important is to create a publication calendar, and consider ways that we can utilize our existing AA content and transfer it to video form. A YouTube channel that is not fresh and frequently updated languishes as viewers lose interest. We lose the potential benefits of the Google/YouTube relationship if we don't consistently improve our channel.

We can utilize our existing analytics to guide us as we schedule our videos. It's evident that healthcare and other professionals are already utilizing our channel. What other ways can we carry the message to professionals and make our channel easy and attractive to them? How are we letting them know that our channel exists?

We also must consider our Conference approval process for publication. Who approves the videos that appear on our channel? Will we need approval for every single video that is uploaded, or is there a way to gain approval through a blanket motion (e.g., That we create a video "Daily Reflection" to be posted daily to a playlist?)

Creating a PSA is a lengthy and expensive process. How can we think outside of the box (e.g., animated "explainer" videos (what AA does and does not do for example) or literature excerpts translated to video) to give us fresh, appealing content? it will be beneficial to thoroughly consider and plan our content strategy in tandem with video optimization and analytics analysis.

Each video posted should include the following:

- A "Subscribe to Channel" end card.
- A video promotion playlist or recently uploaded end card
- A compelling, SEO-friendly title
- Titles should be at least 5 words long and include a keyword in the title, keywords should be situated towards the front of the title.
- An appropriate thumbnail image that matches the video and engages the viewer.

The length of the videos should ideally be around the 4.4-minute mark. When creating new PSAs, YouTube should be considered when setting up our 30, 60, 90-minute segments.

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Descriptions should always be utilized. Include keywords in the first 25 words. Keep the description less than 250 words, include keywords 3 to 4 times but do not “stuff” with keywords or the description will be what is known as “spammy”.

Tags should be utilized. The first tag should be the main targeted keyword. Then include a few variations and any descriptive tags or keywords.

- Videos should be grouped into appropriate playlists when possible.
- Subtitles/CC should be monitored for accuracy.
- Branding is consistent with YouTube.
- Articles should be regularly updated, and a publication calendar should be created. The point of the LinkedIn page is to look professional and to connect with professionals (judicial, medical, etc.) and consistency in posting helps us to present as professional, reliable, and current.
- Channel art should be consistent in branding.

Recommendations:

- Continue adding most if not all video content to the YouTube channel.
- Move on to phase 2 of keyword research/updates to further optimize SEO.
- Working on standards for accessibility in the videos, mostly in closed captioning/.srt files.

GV YouTube Channel

More information is needed for next year’s CMP.

AAWS Vimeo

Vimeo is used to host videos meant for internal use only. Vimeo’s use within our website and community continues to be discussed.

AAWS LinkedIn

LinkedIn serves as the professional social networking platform which hosts more than 600 million professional profiles along with 55 million companies listed on the site. AAWS’s presence on LinkedIn allows us to communicate and share our mission with the professional community. One way to make connections is to include relevant and informative content.

Articles should be regularly updated, and a publication calendar should be created. The point of the LinkedIn page is to look professional and to connect with professionals (judicial, behavioral health staff, correction professionals, public health agencies medical, etc.) and consistency in posting helps us to present as professional, reliable, and current. The requirements for creating a post include the following:

- 3,000 characters or less for the post text

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- Articles do not have a real character limit; however, it is reported that posts over 120,000 characters will be cut off thru the LinkedIn blogging network.
- Link to content on aa.org
- Any images or graphics to attach. LinkedIn will auto choose images based on the page we link back to.
- Post short text in 3 languages which will also link back to A.A.org.

When the LinkedIn channel was approved by the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community, they set out the following narrow scope and use of the profile:

- To offer another digital resource, in addition to www.aa.org, where professionals can find accurate information about A.A.
- To broaden the reach of the *About A.A.* newsletter for professionals
- To offer a platform where our professional friends may recommend us
- To raise awareness of exhibits staffed by local C.P.C. committees at national and local professional conferences.
- To expand the network of our professional friends and perhaps deepen the pool of Class A Trustee candidates
- By our presence on LinkedIn, to reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of A.A. to professionals.

Additional Committee Considerations:

The committee strongly suggested that those creating the LinkedIn company page consider adding a disclaimer or explanation clarifying that A.A. is not affiliated with any of the organizations who appear in promoted content on the LinkedIn company page.

2019 Committee considerations:

The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities revisit the plan for implementing a LinkedIn page taking into consideration the following suggestions:

- Add a disclaimer explaining that the "promoted" content on the LinkedIn page is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Include information from current A.A. literature about what A.A. does and does not do that can be useful to professionals who work with alcoholics.
- Add a concise description of Alcoholics Anonymous that is based on the Conference-approved literature intended for professionals that was reviewed at the October 2018 trustee's meeting.
- Add a link to aa.org, and a link to the information for professionals' page.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

- Add a link to the *About A.A.* newsletter.
- Include a schedule of C.P.C. exhibits at national level events that are coordinated through the General Service Office.
- Annually provide a report tracking the A.A. LinkedIn page, including visits to aa.org from the LinkedIn page for review by the Conference Committee on C.P.C.

The 2021 Advisory Action:

The committee recommended that the goals expressed in the 2018 Advisory Action establishing a dynamic A.A.W.S LinkedIn page be implemented by G.S.O to provide current and relevant content about A.A. to professionals in accordance with A.A. principles and Traditions; and that a progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of implementing these updates on the A.A.W.S LinkedIn page be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community.

Short Term Strategies

It is important to note LinkedIn's search results algorithm depends on the frequency and relevancy of content. Currently, we do not show up for "AA" search, but only if you search "Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.". A.A.W.S Communications Dept and the Cooperation with the Professional Community have identified and prioritized the following content to be developed for posting:

High Priority

- "About A.A." releases
- Link to Box 4-5-9/Sharing from Behind the Walls
- The holiday issue of Box 459 with the 12 steps to stay sober during the holidays
- Press releases -7 per year with Public Information
- Yearly anonymity letter with links to additional anonymity resource
- New videos appropriate to the professional audience
- Vacancy announcements (Boards/Nominating)
- Employment opportunities (Office/Human Resources)
- A.A. Events hosted by G.S.O or where Board/Office members will be present. Specifically, any event professionals can attend as guests. This can include professional conferences where A.A. may have a C.P.C. display.
- Seek Grapevine and La Vina resources that are relevant for the professionals.
- Assess the use of hashtags for the LinkedIn postings

Low Priority

- CPC/PI related video highlights

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- CPC/PI literature/resources highlights to include FAQs and short straightforward content
- Call out older issues of “About A.A.” with articles that are still relevant
- Open Letter to Health Care Professionals
- Highlight the YouTube channel as a resource
- Who/What are Class A’s (for the LinkedIn page, Class A’s should be referred to as non-alcoholic trustees which will allow the professional community to understand the difference between the A’s and the B’s)
- Encourage Class A’s to link themselves to the page as a resource. Consider relinking their introduction articles from newsletters and possibly adding headshots.
- Highlight LIM as a resource.

Long-Term Strategies

The following is a listing of possible strategies which may be considered to expand the use and visibility of A.A. on LinkedIn. Each suggested topic will be carefully and fully assessed as to the alliance to our thirty-six principles and the merit and feasibility of the action.

- Playback in LinkedIn

Video content playing on social media is huge for engagement. We can link back to the individual video page on A.A.org but the video will not play on the LinkedIn platform unless we upload it directly. Our current practice is we do not upload our assets to other platforms but bring people back to A.A.org.

- Video reminders to the calendar after press releases. We will soon post a press release regarding the new PSA's and put individual posts on the calendar 1-2 months later to highlight each individual video and serve as a reminder of the previous content.
- Seek ways to increase the followers/subscribers to provide information to a wider audience. This can be tied to the strategy of providing posts geared to a category of professionals with FAQs or misconceptions and encouraging them to reach out to the CPC desk.
- Consider LinkedIn webinars or go live with a Class A (non-alcoholic) trustee on-screen with CPC off-screen for a Q and or did you know type format
- Use the LinkedIn analytics to help shape the work we engage in.

Instagram (AA Grapevine)

As of 01/03/22 GV Instagram has 5,560 followers on GV, and 621 on LV, and those numbers increase daily. Posts generally receive 100-200 likes. Comments are disabled. A hashtag strategy is in place to increase visibility.

GV generally posts twice per day. Posts include the daily reflection, inspirational quotes, notices of new magazines and books, upcoming events, cartoons/jokes, photos from AA events, etc.

In keeping with our mission, posts are primarily directed at alcoholics, “inside and outside these rooms”. We also want to communicate with the professionals who have been instrumental in helping us to reach alcoholics.

Currently, there is no AAWS Instagram account but whether that should remain the case should be evaluated. There are several accounts impersonating AAWS, which could be confusing to members or potential members trying to find us on Instagram. The Grapevine Instagram account has been quite successful in terms of number of subscribers and engagement, indicating that there is an audience. Provided the content was different but of equal value, an AAWS account and the GV account could work in tandem, each increasing the reach of the other through linking and tagging while providing useful content to our audience and being visible on a platform where there are suffering alcoholics who would benefit from our message.

Section 7: Meeting Guide App

Purpose

To improve communications with members and to support members and friends in carrying the message of hope. In addition, improve communications with the professional community regarding the meeting guide app and the benefits it can offer as they work with their clients. The Technology Communications and Services subcommittee presented two recommendations. The licensing of the current “Meeting Guide” app and the creation of a basic AA app that would include a Meeting Guide, Big Book, Daily Reflections, and Alert/Messaging capabilities. Currently, a vendor has been hired that oversees monitoring and support that meets with staff every 2 weeks. Currently, there is no one on staff dedicated to the Meeting Guide App (MGA). Staff and the vendor are solely focused on maintenance and ongoing software releases when new operating systems for mobile platforms are released (i.e., Android 12, iOS 15.1.1).

Recently Completed Tasks

- Added ability for local entities to include natively online meeting data and visually differentiate from in-person or hybrid meetings.

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- Onboarding of a new vendor for maintenance and development so we can be more regular and agile in our updates.
- Help Docs – a more responsive online knowledge base for customer service.
- Front – Collaborative email management system that streamlines the feedback and customer service streams for the app.

To see the most recent list of features in v3.9 of the meeting app please view the News Section of the App.

Current Working State

- Discussing possible integration of OIAA meeting data – in initial days. Investigating data reconciliation, Possible interface format changes, and entity overlap issues.
- Inclusion of alternate group level contribution methods (Square & PayPal) – Future discussion will look at wider entity contribution concerns (Areas, Districts, IGCOs, GSO)

Long Term Strategy

To determine the long-term strategy most effectively and therefore planned timeline it would be helpful for the following questions to be discussed and answered:

- What is the primary purpose of The Meeting Guide App? The initial purpose was to improve communications with the members of AA.
- Should the app have features/services that will encourage ongoing use by users, rather than one-time use when a member needs to find a meeting? Most members know what meetings they go to on a regular basis and therefore rarely use the meeting guide app on a regular basis. Would features be added to the app like daily reflections encourage ongoing use? Features could include Meeting Timer, Common literature: How It Works, Twelve Traditions, The Promises, AA Preamble, etc.
- Should the name of the app change to be more inclusive of the objective of the app? Such as AA or Alcoholics Anonymous
- Since daily reflections is the #1 visited page on aa.org, should there be a 'banner' on this page to point people to installing the MGA so that they know they can access this information on the app?
- Since we have limited resources to maintain the app, should a funding strategy be developed so that the application is more self-supporting financially to cover the costs of ongoing development such as collecting 7th tradition via the app specifically for ongoing support or the ability to purchase online literature?
- Identify the activities designed to inform the professional community about the benefits the Meeting Guide app can offer in working with their clients.

Analytics

If getting the fellowship to use the app regularly is our goal, then one of the key metrics to monitor would be user retention. The percentage of users that use the app each day could also be valuable. The current user retention indicates that most users only use the application for 1-2 days.

Planned Timeline

TBD upon more feedback from the conference on the current MGA purpose.

Section 8: Next Steps for the CMP

The CMP is a living document meant to be improved and updated each year. The goal of the 2022 CMP was to create the most accurate picture of the current status of all the Public Information projects currently in progress at AAWS and GV while causing the least amount of disruption to office staff.

In addition to updating the current status information for next year, we'd like to add more data and establish Key Performance Indicators to measure the success of each project. This could look like setting goals for the number of new Instagram followers for the Grapevine Instagram accounts or aiming to lower the bounce rate for the AAWS website.

The following is a preliminary list of items we'd like to add to each section for next year's CMP:

Website Section:

- Search Engine Optimization Plans for AAWS and Grapevine sites
- A more expansive look at planned updates and improvements to the new AAWS website's front and backend
- Feasibility analysis of improving performance of new AAWS website to meet Google Core Web Vitals for improved performance and visibility
- Analytics
- Content Update/Review Schedules
- Analysis of relationship between AAWS and GV websites, identifying any ways they could further support each other

Public Relations:

- A Public Information Calendar containing all important dates such as scheduled Press Releases, Events, Literature Publications, New PSAs, Project Completions, etc.

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Content Creation:

- More data regarding distribution analytics and efficacy of TV and Radio PSAs

Social Media:

- More analytics so we can establish goals
- Updated Best Practices and Strategies for each platform to reflect the ever-changing landscape of social media
- Posting schedules or calendars
- Analysis of the relationship between GV and AAWS social media accounts and identification of any ways they could support each other or any redundancies we could eliminate

Meeting Guide:

- Clarification on the goal of the Meeting Guide App so we can solidify our strategies and timelines

[Back to Cover](#)

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM B: Public Service Announcements (PSAs):

1. Review the distribution and tracking information for two video PSAs:
 - i. “Sobriety in A.A.: My Drinking Built a Wall”
 - ii. “Sobriety in A.A.: When Drinking is no longer a Party.”

Background notes:

To view these two current video PSAs, go to the [Media Library | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](#) page on G.S.O.’s A.A. website. Filter by “Public Service Announcements (PSAs)” where you can select the PSAs to view.

Conference advisory action of the 71st General Service Conference:

In addition to the work of local committees, one to two PSAs be centrally distributed to broadcast media, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$60,000, and that the information gathered from the process be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

From the July 31, 2022, meeting of the trustees’ Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed a progress report on post-production efforts of the two 2021 Conference-approved PSAs. The committee looks forward to when the completed PSAs are made available to the Fellowship.

In keeping with the PI advisory action, the committee looks forward to a progress report on the broadcast distribution and tracking of the two PSAs at the October 2021 meeting.

From the October 30, 2022, meeting of the trustees’ Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the post-production efforts of the two 2021 Conference-approved PSAs. The committee secretary reported that the target distribution date and press release is November 2021. The committee looks forward to a progress report on the broadcast distribution and tracking of the two PSAs at the January 2022 meeting.

From the [staff report](#) to the January 29, 2022, meeting of the trustees’ Public Information Committee:

1. PSA Distribution to Canadian TV Stations:

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

The requirements to prepare the video PSA files to be ready for distribution is very different for the U.S. stations versus the Canadian stations. For a PSA to be aired by Canadian TV each PSA must be encoded with a telecaster number. The organization our vendor, Connect360, uses that provides PSA clearance guidelines is named, Think TV.

Think TV clearance “works with advertisers and agencies to ensure broadcast advertising is not false or misleading, or likely to cause harm or offend viewers.” This organization reviewed our PSAs and requested additional edits as follows:

- A.A. name/logo needs to appear on final screen for 3 seconds. Currently, the name only appears for 1-2 seconds.; also needs Indemnity Letter.
- Video super "Représentation de l'actrice" does not make sense in this context as there are multiple actors, not just one woman. This line will need to be translated differently prior to approval (perhaps to "Représentations d'acteurs").
- Recommend muffling the English audio during the Zoom-type call to avoid alienating French viewers.

We had to go back to our production company and ask for the revisions. GM signed off on our Indemnity letter. This is the reasoning behind the PSA distribution taking a little longer than expected, but we have crossed the finish line with lessons learned about what it takes.

2. PSA outreach by local committees:

A communication will also be sent to encourage the work of local P.I. committees, members, and groups to build relationships with the stations within their vicinity to improve the PSA airings.

3.Update from CPC Coordinator about a Potential PSA Project:

A year ago, in January 2021 there was a meeting with health care distributor – The C.P.C. and P.I. coordinators met briefly with *Mesmerize Point* of “Care Network” to learn more about the platform and learn more about their in-kind media program that would feature existing videos, PSAs, and other materials from A.A.W.S. on their digital network.

Mesmerize Point of Care Network contacted the office to discuss using the PSA’s developed by A.A.W.S., as part of their content that they would push out to their clients who might subscribe to these distribution channels. Such clients would offer this programming to viewers within community-based clinics, healthcare professionals, and with national associations and organizations such as Mayo Clinic, WHO & CDC.

Mesmerize’s network of digital TV screens in doctors’ offices, pharmacies, and community-based organizations dynamically displays timely and relevant health messaging to viewers.

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Through PSAs, Alcoholics Anonymous can share information with the public that might reach someone who is seeking help with a drinking problem. Through a HealthCare media platform, information about A.A. might inspire an individual to initiate a dialogue with their health care professional. These types of distributor platforms might provide a no-cost way to reach patients, clients, and caregivers.

In October 2021, the trustees' CPC/T-A Committee reviewed the information from the *Mesmerize Point* information packet. The committee requested that information be shared with the P.I. Staff coordinator and work in collaboration with P.I. The committee looks forward to progress report that includes a demo of how A.A. PSAs are used at their January 2022 meeting.

From the January 29, 2022, meeting of the trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:

The committee discussed a demonstration video on how to distribute PSAs on digital TV screens in offices, pharmacies, and community-based organizations with relevant messaging to viewers. The committee requested that the staff secretary continue efforts to develop a draft plan on PSA utilization in cooperation with the Public Information desk. The committee looks forward to reviewing the draft plan at the July 2022 meeting.

From the January 29, 2022, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee reviewed current reports for "Sobriety in A.A.: My Drinking Built a Wall" and "Sobriety in A.A.: When Drinking is no longer a Party." There have been approximately 8,000 English TV airings and 3,400 Spanish TV airings.

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the PSA tracking and distribution reports.

Background:

1. Email correspondence from tracking and distribution vendor *Connect 360*
2. The most recent reports on the *Connect 360* extranet site:
<http://reportcenter.c360m.com/>

Username: AA2021
Password: connect

Note: Date received January 13, 2022

An email correspondence from Connect360 our tracking and distribution vendor as of January 13, 2022:

The first phase of distribution and now tracking reports include data on the Alcoholics Anonymous U.S. English and Spanish TV PSA distributions through the end of December 2021. Airings continue to grow as more stations add the PSAs to their rotations. Since our last update, December 9, 2021, the English "Party" and "Wall" PSAs aired an additional 1,845 times. Total results are now 1,993 airings with 6,344,888 impressions and \$377,382 in donated media value. Coverage has started taking place on over 30 new stations, including Bally Sports Network regional stations FSN-BSN North, FSN-BSN Ohio, and FSN-BSN San Diego, as well as on new local stations in the markets of Los Angeles, Seattle, St. Louis, Kansas City, Columbus, Greenville, Madison and many more. The spots also continue to receive support on regional network FSN SportsTime Ohio-BSN Great Lakes, with ongoing coverage taking place on stations in the markets of Atlanta, San Francisco, Nashville, Paducah, Duluth, Anchorage, and others. The :30 "Wall" PSA and the :60 "Party" PSA are now receiving the most coverage, with 626 and 401 airings respectively. Additionally, 77% of airings are occurring during the more prominent non-overnight timeframes.

The Spanish "La fiesta" and "El muro" PSAs have aired an additional 703 times since our last update, December 9, 2021, bringing total results to 799 airings, 7,438,307 impressions and \$463,560 in donated media value. The PSAs have started airing on national networks Hogar de HGTV and Mexicanal, as well as on a new local station in the Denver market. Additionally, support also continues to occur on stations in Los Angeles, Phoenix, Nashville, Ft. Myers, Reno, and Yuma/El Centro. Over 80% of airings are taking place during non-overnight hours, with the :30 and :60 "La fiesta" PSAs now receiving the most coverage with a combined 456 airings.

The U.S. English and Spanish TV PSAs have now aired a total of 2,792 times with 13,783,195 impressions and \$840,942 in donated media value.

As of January 19, 2022, the Canadian distribution has been completed by Connect360. We hope to see airings begin to come in over the next few weeks and will be in touch with initial results once that happens.

Best, Shaliza



Shaliza T.
Campaign Specialist
Connect360 Multimedia

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM B: Public Service Announcements (PSAs):

2. Review the 2021 report on the “Relevance and Usefulness of Video PSAs.”

Background notes:

2008 Advisory Actions:

The Conference Committee on Public Information annually review current television public service announcements for relevance and usefulness, retiring a PSA only when it is no longer relevant and/or useful to the Fellowship.

The Conference Committee on Public Information annually assess the need for a new television public service announcement.

Background:

1. 2021 Report on the relevance and usefulness of video PSAs
2. History on the relevance and usefulness of video PSAs

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

2021 trustees' Committee on Public Information
Report on the Relevance and Usefulness of
Audio/Video Public Service Announcements

Beau B., chair of the trustees' Committee on Public Information, had requested that the full committee review the current video PSAs prior to the July meeting. At the July 2021 meeting, the committee reviewed and discussed the current video PSAs for relevance and usefulness.

The committee reviewed the current [video PSAs \(www.aa.org\)](http://www.aa.org) and found them to be relevant and useful and agreed to forward their findings to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

1. "Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking"
2. "Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking"
3. "Sobriety in A.A.: Since getting sober, I have hope"

Update on contact A.A. tag lines on relevant TV and Radio/Audio PSAs

Radio/Audio PSAs

The project to update all English (20), French (2) and Spanish (4) Radio/Audio PSA contact A.A. tag lines, to remove any outdated references, is complete. The newly edited files are uploaded to www.aa.org for downloading.

TV PSAs

The staff secretary reviewed the three HD Broadcast-quality Public Service Announcement Downloads deemed relevant and useful, according to the trustees' Public Information Committee at the July 2021 meeting, that are being sent to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The purpose was to confirm the scope of the project that the Publishing department will need to complete to update contact A.A. tag lines. The first two PSAs, listed below, had contact A.A. tag lines that did not need to be updated for any outdated reference to the phone book, for example. Each of these two PSAs include a tag line and video graphic that prompt a viewer to visit our A.A. website for more information.

- A. "Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking"
Tag line: Contact A.A. it works for me, and for me and for me (spoken in different voices).

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

B. "Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking"

Tag line: If you have a problem with Alcohol, contact A.A., it works.

As determined by the August 2020 trustees' Public Information Committee and confirmed again by the staff secretary on January 11, 2022, the following HD Broadcast-quality Public Service Announcement downloads deemed relevant and useful do require an edit to the contact A.A. tag line because they currently state as follows: "look for us in the phone book or on the web at aa.org."

- "Sobriety in A.A.: Since getting sober, I have hope",
- "La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza"
- "L'abstinence chez les AA : « Depuis que je ne bois plus, j'ai de l'espoir. »

The Publishing department has this project in the queue to change these PSA titles with an audio voiceover update. The new tagline voiceovers are already recorded and simply need to be edited on these PSAs. There are eighteen files to update for the U.S. and Canadian station versions. Project target deadline is March 25, 2022. The 2022 Budget project name category is the "Video/Audio Asset Revision" and the total budget for this category is \$6,000. Per Publishing, we are well within the allocated 2022 budget to complete this project.

From the August 1, 2020, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee noted that the audio PSAs and the video PSA "La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza" tagline (English, French and Spanish) should be updated with minor edits and that this be budgeted for 2021. This is seen as a top priority.

2017 – Current
History of Annual Review of A.A. Television P.S.A.s
From Trustees' and Conference P.I. Committee Reports
Updated February 2022

2017

(TRUSTEES) The committee determined that all three current video P.S.A.s remain relevant. In assessing the need for a new video P.S.A., the committee did not see the need for one at this time.

(CONFERENCE) It was recommended that a new video public service announcement be developed for a cost not to exceed \$40,000.

2018

(TRUSTEES) The committee reviewed, and agreed to forward to the 2018 Conference Public Information Committee, the rough cut of the proposed video P.S.A. and a recommendation that the new P.S.A. be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$42,000, in addition to the distribution work of local Public Information Committees

(CONFERENCE) That the video PSA “Changes” be approved with the following revision: That the line “That’s where A.A. came to my rescue” be replaced with “A.A. offered a solution.”

In addition to the work of local committees, the video PSA, “Changes” be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$42,000 and that the information gathered from the process be forwarded to the 2019 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.

Additional Committee Consideration:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2017 report from the trustees’ Public Information Committee regarding the usefulness and relevance of video public service announcements.

2019

(TRUSTEES) The Committee discussed a request “that the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous approve the development of a new public service announcement in video format that

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.).” The committee agreed to forward to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information a request to approve the development of a new Public Service Announcement (PSA) in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.).

(TRUSTEES) The committee reviewed the current video PSAs relevance and usefulness and found them to be relevant and useful.

(CONFERENCE) The video PSA “My World” be discontinued.

(CONFERENCE) The “Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates” be reaffirmed.

(CONFERENCE) Two PSAs be developed at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 for each PSA, and that if full-face characters are shown, to include an “actor portrayal” disclaimer on screen.

(TRUSTEES) The committee discussed the 2019 Advisory Action that two PSAs be developed at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 for each PSA, and that if full-face characters are shown, to include an “actor portrayal” disclaimer on screen. The committee asked that the development of a plan with focus on PSA messaging be included for discussion in the Public Information (P.I.) Comprehensive Media Plan.

(TRUSTEES) The committee discussed a request from an area to create and facilitate a targeted PSA to educate seniors about alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee asked that further discussion about this item and PSA messaging be forwarded to the Comprehensive Media Plan subcommittee.

2020

(TRUSTEES) The committee reviewed the current video PSAs and found them to be relevant and useful.

(CONFERENCE) The committee reviewed and accepted the 2019 report on the “Relevance and Usefulness of Video Public Service Announcements.” The committee noted the recent efforts by G.S.O. to explore editing a Conference-approved PSA to remain useful for local committees reflecting “social distancing” by A.A. groups and members.

(TRUSTEES) The committee noted that the audio PSAs and the video PSA “La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza” tagline (English, French and Spanish) should be updated with minor edits and that this be budgeted for 2021. This is seen as a top priority. The committee agreed to forward to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information the 2020 report on the Relevance and Usefulness of Video PSAs.

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(TRUSTEES) In keeping with a 2019 Advisory Action the committee reviewed draft storyboards and scripts for the development of two new PSAs. The committee supported the general concept and vision and looks forward to progress reports on final storyboards before production this fall.

(TRUSTEES) The committee discussed a request to create and facilitate a targeted PSA to educate seniors about alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous and took no action. The committee noted the Comprehensive Media Plan subcommittee report that while it would be important to include seniors in a PSA messaging, they would not want to limit the messaging to one demographic.

2021

(TRUSTEES) The committee agreed to forward to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information a progress report of the development of two PSAs. The committee will continue to meet to review the current rough cuts and to provide feedback. The committee asked that the Conference P.I. chair be included in their next meeting. The committee noted that if draft PSAs are completed prior to the 71st General Service Conference that they be forwarded to the 2021 Conference Public Information Committee for review.

(TRUSTEES) The committee suggested that if a new PSA were approved that the PSA be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to the work of local Public Information committees. The committee also noted that a targeted online paid PSA placement might be explored.

(CONFERENCE) In keeping with the "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or Its Affiliates," the video PSA utilizing full face actors "Party" (working title) be approved with the following revisions: That the voiceover "scratch tracks" be replaced, and other minor editorial edits to be conducted in post-production.

(CONFERENCE) In keeping with the "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or Its Affiliates," the video PSA utilizing full face actors "Wall" (working title) be approved with the following revisions: That the voiceover "scratch tracks" be replaced, and other minor editorial edits to be conducted in post-production.

(CONFERENCE) In addition to the work of local committees, one to two PSAs be centrally distributed to broadcast media, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$60,000, and that the information gathered from the process be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

(TRUSTEES) The committee reviewed the current video PSAs and found them to be relevant and useful and agreed to forward their findings to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information. The committee noted that while the content and messaging of the existing three PSAs *listed below remain relevant, the contact tag lines

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may need editorial updates to reflect consistent contact A.A. tag lines found in the recently produced PSAs to include Meeting Guide. The committee secretary shared that the tag lines in all radio PSAs have been updated in all three languages. The committee looks forward to the revised PSAs being made available on aa.org.

- Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking (PSA)
- Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking (PSA)
- La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza (ASP)

**Titles reflect SEO retitling*

(TRUSTEES) The committee discussed the post-production efforts of the two 2021 Conference-approved PSAs. The committee secretary reported that the target distribution date and press release is November 2021. The committee looks forward to a progress report on the broadcast distribution and tracking of the two PSAs at the January 2022 meeting.

(TRUSTEES) The staff secretary shared progress is underway with Publishing to update the existing relevant PSAs to reflect consistent contact A.A. tag lines found in the recently produced PSAs to include reference to the Meeting Guide.

- Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking (PSA)
- Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking (PSA)
- La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza (ASP)

(TRUSTEES) The committee reviewed current reports for “Sobriety in A.A.: My Drinking Built a Wall” and “Sobriety in A.A.: When Drinking is no longer a Party.” There have been approximately 8,000 English TV airings and 3,400 Spanish TV airings.

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the PSA tracking and distribution reports.

(TRUSTEES) The committee received an update from the staff secretary on 18 HD Broadcast-quality PSA download files, related to the following:

- “Sobriety in A.A.: Since getting sober, I have hope”;
- “La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza”;
- “L’abstinence chez les AA : « Depuis que je ne bois plus, j’ai de l’espoir. »

The committee acknowledged that the PSA files require an edit to the contact A.A. tag line which currently state as follows: “look for us in the phone book or on the web at aa.org.” The Publishing department plans to complete the project by March 2022. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the July 2022 meeting.

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM C: Review a progress report and the G.S.O. Podcast Plan.

Background notes:

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The background for your review is the requested 2022 Progress Report and G.S.O. Podcast Plan outlining the development and implementation of a G.S.O. podcast.

The Progress Report sections include the following:

- A. Overview
- B. History of the podcast
- C. Participant Responses to the Podcast Pilot Episode Survey
- D. Distribution of Pilot Episode
- E. Creative Process and Production Information

The G.S.O. Podcast Plan sections requested by the trustees' Public Information Committee include the following:

- E.2. Future episodes
- E.3. Developing themes and topics
- E.4. The production workflow
- E.5. A monthly timeline
- F. Guidelines for Podcast Episodes
- G. Staff resources involved in producing a finished product
- H. Vendors/Consultants involved in producing a finished product
- I. Delivery Channels
- J. 2022 Budget/Cost Breakdown
- K. Analytics
- L. G.S.O. Podcast proposals for consideration

From the January 29, 2022, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the 2022 progress report and GSO Podcast Plan, including the collaborative work that went into the production of a GSO podcast pilot episode. A working group, that included AA Grapevine staff, guided the creation of this episode. The corporate boards and office staff listened to the pilot and provided feedback via a podcast survey.

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The committee asked the staff to produce another edit to the pilot episode, using the survey feedback, to include in the Conference background. The committee also asked that documentation be produced that details the specific suggestions incorporated into the new iteration of the pilot.

The committee also discussed three proposals in the GSO Podcast Plan of a path forward for the GSO Podcast. The committee is asking the Conference committee to discuss the proposals as part of the forwarded Podcast Plan. The committee looks forward to the Conference committee's feedback.

The committee agreed to forward the following to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information:

1. The Progress Report and GSO Podcast Plan.
2. The corporate boards and office staff feedback survey results.
3. The new iteration of the pilot episode which incorporates specific committee suggestions, as well as any additional pertinent information for the discussion.

Background:

1. [2022 Progress Report and G.S.O. Podcast Plan](#)
2. [Pilot Episode Feedback Survey Results](#)
3. [Q7 Responses](#)
4. [Q8 Responses](#)
5. [Summary of Podcast pilot re-edit](#)
6. [Transcription of pilot podcast episode](#)
7. Link to the second edit of the pilot episode**

The Pilot Podcast Episode Disclaimer:

Do not share this G.S.O. Podcast pilot as it is only a test concept.

A pilot episode of any production is a test. G.S.O. has produced this pilot podcast episode to provide a concept of the G.S.O. Podcast for internal listening and discussion only. An audio link is being included as a part of the 72nd G.S.C. Background for Fellowship-wide discussion. This G.S.O. Podcast pilot episode is NOT to be distributed to the general public as it is only a test concept.

****Here is the link to listen to the G.S.O. Podcast pilot episode test concept:**

Link: <https://vimeo.com/677469165>

Password: GSC2022

2022 Progress Report and G.S.O. Podcast Plan

A. Overview

As requested by the 71st General Service Conference, in the third quarter 2021, the staff at the General Service Office (G.S.O.) produced a podcast named, "This is A.A. ...virtually" with the pilot episode titled, "Online Groups - Past, Present, Future."

At the October 2021 meeting the trustees' Public Information Committee affirmed G.S.O. can effectively produce a professional sounding podcast and that the pilot episode outlined the beginnings of a framework for future theme-based episodes.

B. History of the podcast

The General Service Office's podcast project was initiated by a 2020 proposed agenda item that led to a 71st General Service Conference Advisory Action.

1. A 2021 Advisory Action of the 71st General Service Conference:

It was recommended that:

Podcasts providing sharing within the Fellowship and information about A.A. to the public be produced and distributed by G.S.O. in cooperation with the Grapevine Office. The committee requested that a progress report on the development and implementation of podcasts be forwarded to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The committee noted that podcasts would serve as a new format to produce "service material" to communicate on topics with similar sharing that can be found in *Box 4-5-9, About AA*, *aa.org*, and sharing from AA Grapevine and La Viña.

2. The trustees' Public Information Committee discussed the Advisory Action at the July 2021 meeting and requested the following action:

The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of an A.A. podcast. The committee discussed G.S.O.'s current efforts and looks forward to a progress report at the October 2021 meeting.

3. The trustees' Public Information Committee discussed a podcast progress report at the October 2021 and requested the following action:

The committee reviewed and then discussed a podcast pilot episode and affirmed G.S.O. can effectively produce a professional sounding podcast and determined that the episode outlined the beginnings of a framework for future theme-based episodes.

The committee requested that the staff secretary coordinate with team members across G.S.O. and AA Grapevine to create a full (G.S.O.) Podcast Plan that details information on the production, timeline, delivery channels, guidelines, cost, and proposals of 6 to 12 episodes. The podcast plan should include the departments involved in producing a finished product and an outline of the analytics that could be collected to gauge the podcast success as a service tool. A full plan will be brought forward for review at the trustees' Public Information Committee January 2022 meeting.

C. Participant Responses to the Podcast Pilot Episode Survey

The pilot episode was provided to the Corporate Boards and the G.S.O. and AA Grapevine employees for listening and to provide feedback via a digital survey.

For questions one thru six, evaluation responses were received from a total of nineteen participants.

The survey rating scale for these six questions was:



Adding together the resulting “good” and “excellent” percentage rating feedback regarding the podcast’s name, content, audio quality, tone, and story-telling style it ranged from a rating of 57.9% to 73.68%. This translated to roughly 11 out of 19 review participants found it to be a **positive podcast experience** based on the responses to these questions.

One survey question, “How likely is it that you would recommend this podcast to a friend or colleague?”, responses provided more **moderate ratings** using the following rating scale:

Answer Choices	Responses	
<i>Extremely Unlikely</i>	21.05%	4
<i>Unlikely</i>	21.05%	4
<i>Neutral</i>	10.53%	2
<i>Likely</i>	26.32%	5
<i>Extremely Likely</i>	21.05%	4
TOTAL		19

The final questions seven and eight were open-ended, allowing for survey participants to provide feedback comments.

- 11 out of 19 participants answered question seven, “Please list any suggestions for repeatable segments you may have.

This report includes a section below titled, “Creative Process and Production” which outlines the repeatable segments selected and recorded for the pilot episode. The eleven responses detailed additional ideas for future podcast episodes that can be created to allow for a strong cross-section of varied repeatable segments. Some examples of these ideas are segments such as, *recovery unity and service, the promises; 12 weeks with 12 realized promises and interviews with local trusted servants about their service work, trustees-at-large and chairs of our various boards.*

- 10 out of 19 participants answered question eight, “Please include any additional feedback and/or suggestions.”

There was some excellent feedback provided ranging from input on developing content guidelines to support including the best messaging regarding “What A.A. Is” and “What A.A is not” and integrating the recorded segments more effectively.

Note: See attached background of the survey reports titled “Pilot Episode Feedback Survey Results”, “Q7 responses” and “Q8 responses”.

D. Distribution of Pilot Episode

The G.S.O. podcast production team believes it can re-edit the pilot episode recording into a form that can be ready for distribution.

Instead of having a 30-minute episode that includes an interview and several repeatable segments, that were meant to support one overall topic, “Online Groups - Past, Present, Future” the team believes that using the feedback comments, we think we can edit the content into several pilot episode parts.

With the survey feedback provided, there are enough ideas that will provide the direction for the edits. We see that the interview portion can be possibly split into a two-part segment along with using the other recorded repeatable segments to support creating an overall cohesive topic on online groups. Some additional introductions and segues can be recorded to provide reasoning as to how the different AA Grapevine News and Articles and *Box 4-5-9* segments can be linked in a more effective way. An idea is to use our Executive Editor and current host to support the work on this edit.

E. Creative Process and Production Information

1. The pilot episode

This production process was fully supported by a podcast working group made up of G.S.O. leadership and staff.

The Public Information Coordinator worked closely with Publishing and the Communication Services Department on the production of the pilot podcast episode titled, "Online Groups - Past, Present, Future."

To support the recording session, a 30-minute episode format outline was produced that detailed the following segments:

- a. Introduction recorded by Voice Over (VO) talent.
- b. Voice over (VO) Announcement of the theme of episode and a lead-in description of the episode segments
- c. VO Segment: AA Grapevine...News!
 - i. Included one audio content news story pre-recorded by AA Grapevine relevant to episode theme.
- d. VO Disclaimer to the Interview segment:
 - i. Interview topic "Getting sober and staying sober during a Pandemic." Questions were developed by the podcast team and reviewed and edited by the host. A host interviewed a sponsor and sponsee whose relationship began virtually and continues.
- e. VO Segment: AA Grapevine...Stories!
 - i. Included two audio content stories pre-recorded by AA Grapevine relevant to episode theme.
- f. VO Segment: A.A. History Fun Fact: "Did you know...?"
 - i. Included a *Box 4-5-9* article with a historical overview of online meetings. It was recorded by the host for this episode.
- g. VO Segment: Events
 - i. Included a sharing about the recent related Advisory Actions from the 71st GSC regarding online groups as a recap of what is happening today. It was recorded by the host for this episode.
- h. VO Segment: Remote Communities
 - i. Included an article from the Summer 2021 edition of *Box 4-5-9* about members in remote communities using technical means to connect and carry the A.A. message. It was recorded by the host for this episode.
- i. VO Segment: Closing remarks with a conclusion statement
 - i. It was based on the history and shared experience presented in the pilot episode. It was recorded by the host for this episode.
- j. VO Final disclaimers recorded by VO talent.

The project team located the candidates for participation in the pilot podcast episode and confirmed their willingness and ability to complete the project.

We selected a host with podcast experience who is also a current delegate on the Conference Committee on Public Information. We utilized internal voiceover talent

from a staff member in the Staff Services department. One podcast team member reached out to the two local member interviewees and obtained their agreement to share experience.

We have discussed hosts, and it was determined we would like to have a minimum of three different voices to take on the host role in future episodes.

The Publishing department coordinated and oversaw the recording session producing the content for the pilot episode. The recording occurred in one evening in roughly a three-hour session.

The recorded files were provided to the Communication Services Department who has one employee complete a first round edit. The podcast team reviewed and provided input which led to the final pilot episode recording that was presented to the trustees' PI Committee at their October 2021 meeting.

2. Future episodes

The pilot was completed within a three-week timeframe. The podcast team sees the process slowing down to ensure we have a total of four weeks to produce and deliver an episode.

The production experience of the pilot provided the team with lessons learned. In addition, the current bandwidth on the Communication Services Department team is short-staffed with a new Communications Services Director waiting to come onboard.

The future production concept we envision is that the podcast team include the P.I. Coordinator, the Communication Services department, and the Publishing department.

3. Developing themes and topics

Meet the Advisory Action goal of the G.S.O. podcast serving as a new format to produce "service material" to communicate on topics with similar sharing that can be found in *Box 4-5-9, About AA*, aa.org, and sharing from AA Grapevine and La Viña.

First, the potential themes of the podcast episodes can tie to a content calendar of G.S.O. events such as Regional Forums, General Service Board weekends, the General Service Conference, and events occurring on the International Assignment.

In addition, for non-event months, sources of themes/topics can come from the annual AA Grapevine and La Viña magazine topics related to Corrections, Treatment, Young People, Remote Communities and Accessibility or the current schedule of upcoming magazine topics will include.

Finally, episode topics and interview segments can be developed tapping into the many trusted servant's positions within the General Service Structure and the services that are provided by the General Service Office.

4. The production workflow

P.I. Coordinator, Communication Services Department and Publishing can develop the episode themes/topics. The Publishing department would take on the role of researching materials and producing a draft episode outline and content. The research would include gathering the potential service material, *Box 4-5-9*, interview questions and *About A.A.* and other pre-recorded or other materials to record for each episode that tie to the theme/topic. The P.I. Coordinator and Communication Services Department will review the draft outlines, suggest additions or edits, and as need arises, involve the larger G.S.O. Podcast Working Group for input.

All oversight reporting will continue through the Technology Communication Services committee for A.A.W.S. board and through the trustees' Public Information Committee for the General Service Board and Conference Committee on Public Information.

5. Monthly timeline

- a. Week 1 - Produce, review and approve episode outline and scripts
- b. Week 2 - Pre-planning meetings with host, interviewees, and staff participants
- c. Week 3 - Complete recording session and then review and edit the episode
- d. Week 4 - Post final episode to delivery channels

F. Guidelines for Podcast Episodes

These guidelines consider the feedback provided in the pilot episode survey responses and production lessons learned.

1. Include a diverse set of voices.
 - This was, and can be, accomplished by alternating the host, consideration of interview participants, choice of audio segments.
 - There was discussion on future hosts, and it was determined we would like to have a minimum of three different voices to take on the host role in future episodes.
2. Consider sustainability/repeatability.
 - Use a podcast format that is easily repeatable and not overly complex – the pilot demonstrated multiple segments around a question/theme.
 - Utilization of recurrent content creation such as *Box 459*, *About A.A.*, *AA Grapevine* and *La Viña* audio recordings etc.
3. Consider the ease with which the podcast can be either translated as-is or if the theme of the podcast can have an equivalent version in French and Spanish. (e.g. *Grapevine* and *La Viña*)

- The working group discussed ways which the pilot could be “translated”, such as having the interview portion be recorded by French and Spanish speaking members.
4. Collaborate and share resources between service entities (esp. Publishing, Grapevine & Communications Services)
 - The pilot made use of GV recorded audio and *Box 4-5-9* articles.
 - As the podcast moves into a post-pilot phase, G.S.O. plans to leverage the experience of AA Grapevine podcast production and with respect to decisions such as distribution platform, etc.
 5. Consider what unique information A.A.W.S. and G.S.O. can provide
 - The pilot had segments highlighting specific service areas that aren’t discussed in any other A.A. related podcast, such as the General Service Conference and remote communities.
 - Future episodes will make the most of access to trustees, board members and staff.
 6. Recording session guidelines
 - Half-hour program, or less, once a month.
 - Choose one very specific topic per episode.
 - G-rated language.
 - Strong adherence to AA Traditions, principles and what A.A. is.
 - Focus on recovery from alcoholism.
 - Never include discussion of non-conference approved literature.
 - Assure member’s anonymity is protected.
 - Share and discuss questions with interviewees ahead of time.
 - Make sure sound levels are consistent throughout the episode.
 - Include some (brief) interaction among podcast staff/presenters between segments and music for better segues.
 - End with a call to action/where to find information/how to get in touch.

G. Staff resources involved in producing a finished product

1. G.S.O. Staff PI Coordinator
2. Communication Services Department
3. Publishing Department
4. Translation Department (future episodes)
5. AA Grapevine
6. Podcast Working Group

H. Vendors/Consultants involved in producing a finished product

1. Audio production service provider
2. Music production service provider or subscription
3. Transcription service provider – helps with editing
4. Editing service provider
5. Or use internal audio production/editing services

I. Delivery Channels

Drawing on the AA Grapevine podcast experience, we are considering contracting with the same host site, Captivate, which from their experience shared it automatically pushes the podcast to certain platforms such as Spotify and Google. Also, taking an extra step to register with platforms such as Apple and Stitcher. These steps will allow the podcast to be available on all the most popular platforms. We will need to determine how to develop a podcast player on the aa.org website like the one working on the AA Grapevine website.

J. 2022 Budget/Cost Breakdown

The current approved trustees' Public Information Committee 2022 Budget for the G.S.O. podcast project is \$15,000.00.

The pilot episode was recorded at the studios of the audio production service provider, www.johnmarshalmmedia.com. The actual cost for the podcast record came in at \$962.50. This covered 3.5 hours of studio recording, equipment, and shipping fees.

Using this as our guide, if six to twelve episodes are produced, and we used this audio production service provider, the annual proposed cost for recording is between \$5,775.00 (6) up to \$11,550.00 (12). This of course bars unforeseen expenses.

K. Analytics

This is an excerpt from an article on Podcast.co: "The metric that matters most to podcasters is the number of downloads new episodes get within the first 30 days, so that's the metric we're using — If your episodes get more than 124 downloads in 30 days, you're in the top 50% of podcasts. If your episodes get more than 1,000 downloads, you're in the top 20%. If your episodes get more than 2,900 downloads, you're in the top 10%." Grapevine averages about 2000 downloads per episode, so by this standard we are firmly in the top 20%. Once up and running the G.S.O. Podcast team can leverage the AA Grapevine's experience regarding analyzing this same type of metric. We can seek to understand the following:

- Total visitors vs unique visitors
- % completion (how much did they listen to)
- Acquisition source (where did they come from)

L. G.S.O. Podcast proposals for consideration

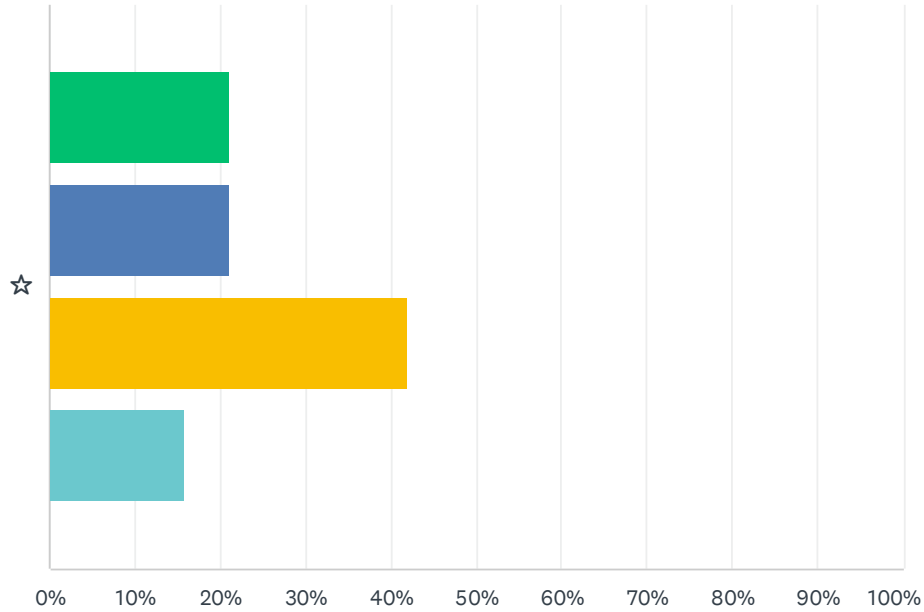
1. **Consider moving in a new direction and create a G.S.O. Podcast plan using the AA Grapevine podcast experience:**
 - a. Establish a very streamlined/simple/repeatable format that requires minimal oversight from G.S.O.
 - b. Find a person/persons such as the "Boiled Owl" service providers, A.A. members, to be the point persons – maybe start by asking them for a reference or even to help us get going.

- c. Production, ideas etc., would still be with the G.S.O. podcast team as needed – but leverage the tools/avenues that Grapevine is using.
 - d. Request that the Boards entrust select members of staff to manage podcast's creation and adherence to AA Principals, to allow the seamless production of a regular series of episodes.
- 2. Consider moving forward with the existing G.S.O. podcast team process outlined in this G.S.O. Podcast plan and produce 6 to 12 podcast episodes in 2022.**
- a. The G.S.O. podcast production team believes it can re-edit the pilot episode recording into a form that can be ready for distribution.
 - b. With current resource limitations in the Communication Services Department and the upcoming onboarding of a new Director of Communication Services, Publishing will support the production as detailed in this report under “Creative Process and Production Information” section.
 - c. Produce six to twelve episodes
 - d. Utilize John Marshall Media for freelance editing once recording is complete.
 - e. Incorporate the guidelines detailed in this G.S.O. Podcast plan.
 - f. Request that the Boards entrust select members of staff to manage podcast's creation and adherence to AA Principals, to allow the seamless production of a regular series of episodes.
- 3. Considering the success of the AA Grapevine podcast, request if we can incorporate G.S.O./Service Material oriented within the context of their format.**
- a. Do not create a separate G.S.O. Podcast currently.

[Back to Cover](#)

Q1 Please rate podcast content from 1-4 stars:

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



■ Fair
■ Average
■ Good
■ Excellent

	FAIR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	21.05% 4	21.05% 4	42.11% 8	15.79% 3	19	2.53

[Back to Cover](#)

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Q7 Please list any suggestions for repeatable segments you may have.

Answered: 11 Skipped: 8

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Recovery Unity Service	11/18/2021 12:20 PM
2	The Promises. 12 weeks with 12 realized promises.	11/16/2021 8:42 PM
3	GSC - Getting ready, Conference week (gratitude booth shares) and what happens now after up to the July meeting (Highlight July committee meeting with disclaimer). interview employees, and conference members; gratitude booth. -Sponsorship segment (se comments below); defining sponsorship; how it differs from other 12 step Fellowships (without opining on them), in-person relationships who had to adapt to pandemic; those who only have done virtual; letter writing; LIM; French speaking; Spanish Speaking (different cultures); how AA sponsorship is not coaching our counseling. Online group discussion -30:29 summary by Lauren – would be a strong introduction; to set the stage; Online group discussion – interviewing the online intergroup would set the tone and could transition in to online groups since the pandemic. It believe that the online intergroup not being included seems odd	11/10/2021 5:10 PM
4	Steps All different kinds of service-from coffee to GSR to CPC to corrections. Traditions	11/10/2021 3:35 PM
5	Interviews with different trusted servants about their work, from Intergroup office manager to Trustee at Large, to Chair of various boards, etc.	11/10/2021 7:15 AM
6	The audio quality was intermittent. Sometimes you could hear the host, sometimes not.	11/9/2021 4:45 PM
7	History nuggets, unique stories, AA world wide stories; the conference information may be interesting to service folks, but I think it will bore those who are not.	11/8/2021 2:02 PM
8	We could have a segment called "Meeting the member where they are at" and in this segment we can take topics and show how to use AA principles in current situations for members where they are at. Recovery, Unity, Service whatever the direction.	11/7/2021 12:47 AM
9	Hitting Bottom, No Matter What, Bridge Back to Life	11/5/2021 4:26 PM
10	Always love to hear from folks with 6 mos to 2 years of sobriety who are as excited about the programs as kids on Christmas morning. So refreshing	11/5/2021 2:44 PM
11	Do not use acronyms	11/4/2021 1:23 PM

[Back to Cover](#)

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Q8 Please include any additional feedback and/or suggestions.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 9

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	<p>The G.S.O. podcast has the potential, as the 2021 P.I. Advisory Action states, to provide "sharing within the Fellowship and information about A.A. to the public..." and "serve as a new format to produce 'service material' to communicate on topics (..from Box 4-5-9, etc.) and sharing from AAGV." It can be a dynamic and effective way to share our legacies. It is clear that much time, effort, and A.A. love have gone into the production of this pilot episode of the G.S.O. podcast. The comments and suggestions below are offered with that same A.A. love. This episode attempted to cover at least four topics in 30 minutes. While each topic dealt with the concept of "online" in some way, the segments didn't fit together, and the podcast felt disjointed to me. Suggestion: Choose one very specific topic- "History of online/email/mail/phone meetings", for example-per episode. In the interview: 1. A member's first name, last initial, city of residence, place of employment, and name and time of a virtual meeting they started and attend are disclosed. This member's anonymity was compromised if not broken. Their safety may be at risk. Suggestion: Develop a Traditions-based podcast interview guide or checklist. Review it with interviewees and check for understanding. 2. An interviewee discussed and recommended non- A.A. literature (Drop the Rock was mentioned by name). In a podcast approved and distributed by Alcoholics Anonymous/G.S.O, this raises questions of affiliation and endorsement. Suggestion: Develop a Traditions-based Podcast Interview guide or checklist. Review it with interviewees and check for understanding. 3. Frequently, several interview questions were posed at once. The interviewees seemed unprepared for questions, instead drifting into unrelated or non-A.A. topics. Suggestion: Use a fairly detailed script. Share and discuss questions with interviewees ahead of time. Practice, practice, practice. Other suggestions: Keep the overall introduction (Info about G.S.O.) brief and to-the-point. Pay attention to enunciation, speed of speech, and intonation. Make sure sound levels are consistent throughout the episode. Include some (brief) interaction among podcast staff/presenters between segments for better segues. Always end with a call to action/where to find information/how to get in touch. Keep at it. Great things will come to pass!</p>	11/18/2021 12:20 PM
2	<p>I miss the two wacky guys. They were entertaining. The current version is more the "educational variety." Each would have had their own audience.</p>	11/16/2021 8:42 PM
3	<p>Love Jacob's voice and Lauren voice too. Both have rich poise and depth which is engaging, with the questions and conversations they ask. On thing that would help is to include Music at all topic transitions and all segments. An instrumental that is more contemporary (even Jazz notes?) GSC snippet was nice; and what might make it impactful is to interview a couple of Conference Members (AA Delegates, GSB, Non-trustee Director, GSO /AAGV Staff) Talk about what surprised you the most? Most meaning full; most concerning. Also could create a segment with a compilation of highlights from the Gratitude Booth-put as many in as possible. Sponsorship Segment – Patricia and Kat: Amazing Grace Group (Do we need to put name of home group?) Around 7:49 was clear and direct might move up in the beginning. 9:27 aprx. Was good point about less distractions. 9:58 Feels more fortunate to get sober during Pandemic; around the world. Accessibilities; Sponsor tried to not compare getting sober in-person vs virtually. Opps, "Sponsorship Tree" too trendy and again might be better to have a segment before this. 24:30-ish: Asking opinions about should online meetings stay might be started with too soon. ; 15:32 – mentions that they have more than one home group; this is not common to all of AA. Also 15:10am SF AA group listed in NYC, introduces the emerging concept of online groups; Also they seem to only attend women's groups which may convey all of AA segregates attendance accordingly. Overall having a sponsorship segment is a good idea because it is at the heart of one-alcoholic helping another. What would make this a stronger series is to introduce segments that introduce the basic concept of AA sponsorship based on conference approved literature, which can be referenced. Also might have, two long timers (sponsee-sponsor) talk about their experience and how they adapted? The AA Sponsorship experience is different than other Twelve Step Fellowships. AAGV Magazine Audio Stories – AAGV prison issue - audio stories were a nice touch; and clarifying some were not all incarcerated so clarifying would be helpful. 30:29 summary by Lauren – would be a strong introduction; to set the stage; Online group discussion – interviewing the online</p>	11/10/2021 5:10 PM

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A.A. Podcast Pilot Episode - Feedback

intergroup would set the tone and could transition in to online groups since the pandemic. It believe that the online intergroup not being included seems odd North/South – Event nice snippet Music needed after this segment and Jacaobs' Glossary segment at the end.

4	I would not make this podcast public for several reasons 1. The sound is not good. I had to adjust the volume depending on who was speaking. Lauren's voice was very quiet 2. I would make sure that we are not talking about books that are not A.A. like "drop the rock". Not that they are not good, but it gives a very confusing message. Is it A.A./is it not. Since this is an A.A. podcast it seems to imply affiliation especially to someone who is new 3. Sponsorship trees perpetuate a notion that depending on the "tree" you are in the better your sobriety. I am completely against having this in our podcast. I know this is common in some parts but not all and it seems to say that A.A. promotes this	11/10/2021 3:35 PM
5	I think the first Podcast should have focused on explaining What is AA, What it is Not, more so like an introduction to A.A., that we are self-supporting and other basic information about the Fellowship. Perhaps a brief history - formed in 1935, and co-founders Bill and Dr. Bob. I would be more inclined to recommend this podcast to a friend if these topics were covered in the first podcast. If I didn't know anything about A.A., I would hope to be introduced to it in the first Podcast. Beginning the podcast with the GSC seems out of place and very confusing. I also think saying "transforming our General Service Conference" is not accurate. What did it transform to? The Conference process was not transformed and the statement alludes to some sort of permanent transformation. It is also muddled with too many topics. The virtual experiences were a result of present circumstances but these do not define the core of AA. I would feature this in a later podcast. A podcast on virtual experiences and "firsts" could feature the North -South Connection. Love the production quality of the podcast and narrator's tone. Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to share my opinion.	11/10/2021 2:25 PM
6	Rather than reading scripts about such topics as the Zoom conference, interview members who participated and who benefitted.	11/10/2021 7:15 AM
7	Really, it was quite vanilla. I don't think it would make me say " I want that to or this I must have".	11/9/2021 4:45 PM
8	Interviews were good. I think interviewing unique stories will be good.	11/8/2021 2:02 PM
9	Ask our listeners what they would like to hear. We need to be careful of the content and how we are perceived. This is going to be listened to by many and if we say it is ok to do something they will take that. There is content in here that are not AA sources and some even consider a certain meeting that was mentioned as a 24/7 controversial meeting. Also the language we use. We need to share closely with the team about the importance of content in relation to what AA is not what a podcast is. We publish our principles and I think we could be more principle oriented. We also need someone on the podcast with answers to some of these questions. We could of given so much when the remote community topic came up and we did not give any information.	11/7/2021 12:47 AM
10	Have the interviewer speak up	11/4/2021 1:23 PM

[Back to Cover](#)

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NEW SEGMENT SEQUENCE ORDER

Re-edit of G.S.O. Podcast pilot episode test concept
for the 72nd General Service Conference

2-14-22

PILOT Outline for Podcast Title "This is A.A....Virtually"

Episode title: "Online Groups - Past, Present, Future"

A. Summary of edits to the audio file:

At the January 29, 2022, meeting, the trustees' Public Information Committee requested the staff secretary to work with Publishing to produce a reedit to the G.S.O. Podcast "This is A.A....Virtually", pilot episode titled, "Online Groups - Past, Present, Future." The request was to use the survey feedback responses as the guide to the revision and to include an audio file link in the Conference Committee on Public Information background for listening only. The committee also asked that documentation be included that details the specific suggestions incorporated into the new iteration of the pilot.

The team updated the opening statement to the pilot podcast to remove "A.A. World Services" and state appropriately that this is a "podcast produced by the General Service Office on behalf of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in the US and Canada." We also shortened the introduction to keep it brief and to-the-point.

To focus in on the topic selected and to bring more cohesion as to how the episode segments were planned to fit together, we rearranged the ordering of all the audio segments, beginning with the interview portion.

The interview portion of the podcast pilot was significantly edited for timing, and to remove several suggested edits such as, asking interviewees to stick with the titles of Conference-approved literature and not to mention A.A. Group names as this, plus the city/state and names of interviewees could compromise anonymity. We also removed a question and answer about "sponsorship trees as while it is experience shared by some, may not be a message we want to carry in the podcast."

To reduce the amount of time for the entire pilot episode we deleted one AAGV audio story segment titled, "Our personal stories: Virtual Newcomer." We also deleted an interesting remote community's story recorded from Box 4-5-9, as it was felt this pulled

away from the cohesiveness of the episode bringing in too many different topic viewpoints.

We made new music selections and ensured that music was included at all segments segues and transitions.

B. Reorder of Segments:

1. Segment One: Introduce podcast
2. Segment Two: Announce Theme of episode & describe segments
3. Segment Three: Disclaimer for Interview
4. Segment Four: Interview Segment: Getting sober, and staying sober, during a Pandemic/Intro
5. Segment Five: Segment Segue "AA Grapevine... Stories!"
6. Segment Six: AA Grapevine disclaimer
7. Segment Seven: Segue to GV Audio
8. Segment Eight: 22 Hours a Day
9. Segment Nine: Segment Segue A.A. History Fun Fact: "Did you know...?"
10. Segment Ten: "For decades, A.A. Members have been debating..."
11. Segment Eleven: Segment Segue "AA Grapevine... News!"
12. Segment Twelve: Segue "Our annual in-person General Service Conference..."
13. Segment Thirteen: INTRO (1) Audio clip related to virtual conference experience
14. Segment Fourteen: Audio Segue "So what conclusion can we draw..."
15. Segment Fifteen: Closing remarks
16. Segment Sixteen: This is made possible by line. "Box 4-5-9 and this podcast are made possible by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members.

[Back to Cover](#)

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P.I.
Item C
Doc.6

Transcription of pilot podcast episode

Speaker 1 ([00:04](#)):

Welcome to This is AA Virtually, a podcast produced by the General Service Office on behalf of the fellowship of Alcoholic Anonymous in the US and Canada. We'll explore a variety of topics about Alcoholics Anonymous, including what AA is, what it does and what AA does not do. We welcome you!

Speaker 1 ([00:22](#)):

More information is available in our literature and on the website, www.aa.org.

Lauren A ([00:33](#)):

Hi, I'm [Lauren 00:00:34] A, and I'm excited to be your host for this new Alcoholics Anonymous podcast. In the next half hour we'll hear how AA and the fellowship survived and even thrived during COVID, including segments on our general service conference, welcoming newcomers amid a pandemic, our little history of online meetings and a conclusion years in the making.

Speaker 1 ([00:55](#)):

The views and opinions expressed during this podcast are those of the individuals. No one person speaks for all of AA.

Lauren A ([01:02](#)):

In this segment, we'll find out what it's like getting sober and staying sober during a pandemic. We'll meet Patricia A, who celebrate her first day and her first year of sobriety completely within Zoom rooms. Patricia will be joined by her sponsor, [Kat 00:01:16], and we'll get to hear their experience of navigating sobriety and sponsorship during a pandemic.

Lauren A ([01:21](#)):

Hi and welcome. Patricia and Kat, could you introduce yourself?

Kat A ([01:24](#)):

Hi, I'm Kat A from New York City.

Patricia A ([01:28](#)):

And I'm Patricia A from New York City.

Lauren A ([01:31](#)):

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Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

Page 1 of
11

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Welcome! Okay, let's get started with our interview. Um, Patricia, share with us about coming into AA as a newcomer during the pandemic. How did you even find us?

Patricia A ([01:43](#)):

Uh, the power of the internet. (laughs) I just logged onto the, the AA site and looked for, uh, meetings that were happening at that moment and just, um, logged on.

Lauren A ([01:55](#)):

That's great. Using the website. And you just celebrated your first year of sobriety a few months ago, right?

Patricia A ([02:02](#)):

I did. Yeah. It's ... I just celebrated 15 months.

Lauren A ([02:05](#)):

Fantastic.

Kat A ([02:05](#)):

Whoo-hoo!

Lauren A ([02:06](#)):

Did you have a party?

Patricia A ([02:06](#)):

(laughs) Thanks.

Lauren A ([02:08](#)):

Wasn't there a ce- a party or a celebration?

Patricia A ([02:12](#)):

Uh, yeah. You know, just a lotta love, uh, virtual. (laughs)

Lauren A ([02:16](#)):

Yeah.

Patricia A ([02:16](#)):

Yeah.

Lauren A ([02:17](#)):

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Pandemic love. And, um, Kat, I just want to ask what your approach to sponsor was during this pandemic. Uh, how did you become sponsor and sponsee and how did the relationship evolve?

Kat A (02:30):

Well, Patricia and I met because of my home group when it was in person before the pandemic and I continued on when it became virtual. I am somebody who attends that meeting, uh, regularly Monday to Friday and Patricia and I really got to know each other through our sharing and I ended up asking her to speak at that meeting to qualify after her 90 days. During that meeting, people assumed she was my sponsee (laughs) and actually what ended up happening was she then asked me if I was willing to work with her and go through the steps.

Lauren A (03:13):

Fantastic.

Patricia A (03:15):

Yeah, we were in fellowship and, and Chris said, "Isn't Kat your sponsor?" I was like, "I would love ... I ... No, I wish she was." (laughs) And, uh, and she said, "I would love to be your spon- ... You know, I, I, I wish I was your spon- ..." Like it was just like, "Okay." You know, I was so nervous. It's like asking someone to marry them, you know? And, uh, and so we exchanged numbers and just talked but yeah, she had what I wanted to I was very intimidated to, to ask her.

Lauren A (03:43):

Great. So, um, I believe that both of you ... This is a question for both of you. You've only met once in person. Is that right?

Kat A (03:50):

Yes. (laughs)

Lauren A (03:51):

Was-

Patricia A (03:51):

(laughs)

Lauren A (03:51):

What was it like to meet in person for the first time?

Patricia A (03:55):

Kat was having an art show (laughs) and, um, I said, "I'm gonna go." (laughs) And, um, I guess this is a I- ... Like, what? In the summer, wasn't it? Or May or June?

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Kat A (04:07):

Yes. It was, I believe, sometime in June.

Patricia A (04:11):

Yeah, so I already had a year of sobriety and we had already working together for about a year, face-to-face in person. We just hugged and, um, i- ... You know, we had gotten t- to know each other and, and saw each other's faces in the meeting so, uh, you know, we knew each other. Um, it- it seemed like such a small part of it just to meet in person. Like it wasn't a big deal. I, I knew her. And we, and we hung out for hours there and it was awesome.

Kat A (04:44):

It felt very easy when we met.

Patricia A (04:48):

Yeah.

Lauren A (04:49):

So, um, you guys, how have you approached the steps using online meeting technology? Did you, um, build trust between sponsor and sponsee online?

Patricia A (04:59):

Yeah. She, um, is a great listener. You know, she gives me a lot of space to, to talk and, um, I, I completely trust her, you know, with, um, you know, her sharing her experience, strength and hope, um, and just, just listening, you know? And giving me a lotta space to, to, to tell her, um, how I'm feeling and, and what's going on in my life.

Lauren A (05:24):

Kat, how did you approach the steps with her?

Kat A (05:26):

I approached the steps with Patricia in the same way that I did them with my previous sponsors. You know, experience, strength and hope, focusing on what's happened with me as opposed to what I think about something. I think that there really wasn't much of a difference other than not physically being in the same space. I think that the virtual aspect in terms of like video component, uh, I think makes a huge difference. You know, I th- I think that it would have been a different relationship it was, if it was strictly audio. But because I am accustomed to video chats and FaceTiming and, um, being on video and being in the world of, you know, um, company- videoconferencing, it didn't feel less intimate.

Kat A (06:24):

Um, in fact, in some ways it feels more intimate because I have nowhere else to look.

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Lauren A ([06:32](#)):

Yeah.

Kat A ([06:33](#)):

And so I have t- ... And, and there's this person who's looking at my facial expressions. The same basic s- things that I was taught and the ways in which I was t- you know, uh, encouraged to, um, do my step work. And ch- and actually, speaking of, you know, it being more vulnerable, there's also just less distractions. Um, because we're, you know, in this box facing each other. (laughs)

Patricia A ([07:04](#)):

Well, and there was no other choice, you know? Pandemic had us, uh, you know, isolated in our homes and, um, you know, I, I say it's like the p- it was like a p- AA for me and these online meetings was like the platinum lining of the pandemic. I, I, I don't know what I would have done. You know, and, and in meetings, y- you know, I hear a lotta people, "I don't know how people get sober in pan- you know in the pandemic. I feel so sorry for people that have gotten so- ..." But I, I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity. Um, you know, I don't know what I, else I would've done during the pandemic if I didn't have AA, I didn't have the fellowship, I didn't have the Zoom meetings, you know, on a daily basis.

Patricia A ([07:43](#)):

I would go to, you know, so many meetings, especially in the beginning. You know, I would go to five, six, 10 meetings a day, you know, and it, and that was accessible and, and they were there. I- I've been to meetings in New Zealand and Paris and in, in Scotland and in, uh, everywhere. Everywhere. I go to a, you know, meeting across the country on a daily basis. It's, it's amazing. Amazing.

Kat A ([08:08](#)):

I do think I would like to add to that. I would like to say that it was really important for me in the very beginning with both newcomers during the pandemic as well as with Patricia that I not emphasize, "Oh, if we were in person, this is what we would be doing." You know, I think for me it was really important to not compare the experience of getting sober via, um, virtually versus in-person meetings, mainly because of my own experience of having gotten sober, uh, fairly young. I got sober before my 21st birthday.

Kat A ([08:58](#)):

And in the beginning, there used to be a lot of conversation that I would hear about like, "Oh, you know ..." About having missed out on a- years of other drinking (laughs) and comparing that. And I think using that same model of experience of being like this experience that they're having right now is their, their experience and it's value and it is just as strong and it's just as important and it's just as much quality.

Lauren A ([09:31](#)):

Thank you for that. You, you mentioned, uh, several meetings just being on Zoom. How, how do these groups keep going during the pandemic? I mean, uh, how w- did some of them fall by the wayside? Uh, are there some-

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Patricia A ([09:47](#)):

No.

Lauren A ([09:47](#)):

... that have really, really thrived? And what about-

Patricia A ([09:49](#)):

No.

Lauren A ([09:50](#)):

... some of the out of town attendees or out of, way out of town attendee- attendees that may be, uh, uh, participating in these meetings?

Patricia A ([09:59](#)):

It's just, you know, logging onto your computer. Um, you know, these, these two groups that I'm a part of, um, seem to have gotten, gotten stronger, more members. Um, you know, we welcome everyone, everyone, you know? There's regulars now in both meetings that are from out of the country. You know, Michael of London comes into our, uh, 7:30 AM and Maureen is, is in England also. You know, these ... And then in San Francisco, you know, uh, [Merete 00:10:30] comes from, um, from Denmark and Juliana in Spain and they have service commitment.

Patricia A ([10:36](#)):

And, um, it's just gotten stronger. There's a 100 women in a, in a room for the daily women's, um, on a daily basis. They're actually meeting for the first time on Saturday and I'm getting on a plane tomorrow to go, um, and meet these women. Like I wanna ... I just wanna cry just because, um, they're so, they're so important to me and, um, I love them. I love the people that I've met through these rooms and I h- I haven't even met them in person. But, you know, it's, it's, i- ... There's actually more of an intimacy.

Patricia A ([11:10](#)):

You know, and these women, they, they call ... You know, they'll text me, "Do you have a moment to chat?" You know, people are asking me for advice or, or just, you know, to lend that, my, you know, my ear to them, just to, to, to talk and it's an honor.

Lauren A ([11:26](#)):

Yeah, you mentioned, um, that Amazing Grace is online, but I hear that you're meeting in person also. How does that work, Kat?

Kat A ([11:36](#)):

Well, I know that different groups, different AA groups have been d- approaching this dual meeting differently. The way the group conscience agreed is that the virtual meeting would happen and the folks

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... and it was really important for folks who had joined the ... our virtual community have a space wherein which the group still exists. And at the same time, we have an in person meeting that is happening, um, at our physical space, um, with a different set of people and it is a different meeting.

Kat A ([12:14](#)):

Uh, however, our literature meetings are in sync. So for instance, on Thursdays we read from the Twelve and Twelve and the way we have it structured is that both the in person and the virtual are reading the same text. However, we are not h- h- all in the same meeting, which I mention, because I know other groups are doing hybrid meetings, which is that there are folks online who are listening to or seeing a physical meeting happening.

Patricia A ([12:46](#)):

Yeah, we were, we were worried, uh, you know, when it was lockdown and people would say, "I hope, uh, you know, this Zoom doesn't go away. Oh, what's gonna happen? How are we gonna do this?" And people would talk and, you know, we would just say, "Yeah, we'll, we'll figure it out." You know, and not a future trip and just ... You know, then we had a business meeting and discussed it and came to a group conscience and we figured it out.

Lauren A ([13:09](#)):

Well, I ... My next question you kind of answered, uh, there, Kat, already. Um, just wondering what kind of services that, uh, provided by GSO, supported you carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic in online meetings. Like is there any literature you bought or used specifically? And it sounds like the meeting guide app was, uh, helpful to you, Patricia? Um, have any of GSO services or, um, others been helpful to you?

Kat A ([13:36](#)):

I also recommend the app for finding meetings which I'm really ... I have to say I'm really impressed at how updated it is and it's a- it's really exciting.

Lauren A ([13:47](#)):

I'm wondering if there's something more that we could be doing.

Kat A ([13:51](#)):

I feel like that quest- ... I feel like GSO's interest in being able to do more would really be answered by folks who have less access than myself. Like ... So for instance, I'm, I have a, I have ... I'm not visually impaired and not, and not hearing impaired. I don't have physical limitations and so I feel like all of my needs are met and it's difficult for me to project what somebody else, who may have different needs ... Um, so for instance, I would be curious as to how, uh, members who don't have access to a, a computer and who are just dialing in, what are the different, um, opportunities for them to engage in a meeting as oppo- than just calling in.

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Kat A ([14:46](#)):

I, I guess I've already said it. Like I feel like that question would go, be better answered by somebody who had, um, different abilities.

Lauren A ([14:57](#)):

You're kind of talking about remove communities-

Kat A ([14:59](#)):

Yeah.

Lauren A ([15:00](#)):

... right now. There are people that don't have computers or phones or access to the internet all over the US-

Kat A ([15:06](#)):

Exactly.

Lauren A ([15:06](#)):

... and Canada, so yeah. That's an interesting point. Okay, so tell me success you both had. Let's start with Kat.

Kat A ([15:17](#)):

For me, my main success is that I have, uh, managed to celebrate, uh, one and almost two sober anniversaries virtually. I have an anniversary coming up at the end of this month. I think a success for me was just maintaining my home group, being able to do service. Having a relationship with a sponsee during this time of such change and transition and, and, um, isolation has been such a gift. You know, life is just life, whether it's in person or it's in real life. Like I don't drink, I go to meetings and I help another alcoholic.

Lauren A ([16:01](#)):

How 'bout you, Patricia? Family, work, friends?

Patricia A ([16:06](#)):

I think, uh, staying sober for 15 months is, uh, pr- uh, been miraculous. Yeah, yeah, I'm really proud of that.

Lauren A ([16:16](#)):

Wonderful. So you guys, how do you think the future of AA looks?

Kat A ([16:21](#)):

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I think that the virtual world is allowing AA to practice its principles in a way that is very new and very challenging and also is an opportunity for us as a community to grow and practice and strengthen those principles. I think that c- having a virtual community is also giving us the opportunity to reach our hand out to folks who would otherwise not have the ability to, uh, to do it.

Kat A ([16:56](#)):

I think also, one of the things it will allow us to do is to reach out to young people who may not necessarily identify as alcoholics but perhaps might consider themselves to have a drinking problem and might pop into a meeting, you know, not show their video but be able to listen in. And I just think it's looking at those folks who might not necessarily be able to physically walk into a room of AA. I think it's gonna allow us to extend our, our, our reach, which I think is really, really great.

Lauren A ([17:37](#)):

Thank you very much, both of you, for being here and being so candid and open and honest with us. We really appreciate it. That's Kat and Patricia.

Patricia A ([17:45](#)):

AA Grapevine stories.

Patricia A ([17:52](#)):

The AA Grapevine magazine communicates the experience, strength and hope of its contributors and reflects a broad geographic spectrum of the current AA experience.

Lauren A ([18:00](#)):

The pandemic inspired sharing from the fellowship. Now we will hear a couple of stories from the Grapevine magazine starting with an excerpt from July 2021. The annual prison issue.

Speaker 5 ([18:11](#)):

Our personal stories. 22 hours a day. During COVID lockdown, literature is his hope.

Jude M. ([18:22](#)):

I'm coming up on a year of complete sobriety. I'm also currently incarcerated due to a parole violation for drinking. Since March, the three AA meetings that volunteers brought into our facility were canceled due to the COVID-19 virus. That was bad, but it got worse. We then went into complete lockdown at the start of April. Thank you for my Grapevines. They're the closest thing I have to AA meetings right now. They help me maintain my emotional sobriety despite how frustrating it is being locked in my cell 22 hours a day.

Jude M. ([19:02](#)):

When I'm frustrated, I read the acceptance passage in the big book, the serenity prayer, and then I read the stories in my Grapevine. That's my AA meeting. Together, they keep me calm in here. Grapevine helps

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02/14/22)

Page 9 of
11

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remind me that taking a drink won't make anything better and that if I do pick up; and believe me, there's booze and other things available in here; then tomorrow I either have to get sober again from scratch or get drunk again. Neither option is appealing. I reach for my Grapevine rather than the hooch so I can put together another day sober and be okay with being in here.

Jude M. ([19:42](#)):

Just because I'm doing time doesn't mean that I'm wasting time. I can't wait to celebrate an entire year sober. Jude M. Springfield, Vermont.

Speaker 1 ([19:53](#)):

AA history fun fact. Did you know?

Lauren A ([20:02](#)):

For decades, AA members have been debating how online meetings fit into the service group structure, from the February/March 1995 issue of Box 459. For some years now, AA's using their real names or monikers such as Serenity and Easy Does it, have been accessing their computers at all hours of the day and night to attend meetings on local bulletin boards and over national and international electronic networks. The sharing is often as old and healing as AA itself, but the way it's transmitted from one alcoholic to another is high tech, still young and expanding faster than you can say Alcoholics Anonymous. It works.

Lauren A ([20:40](#)):

Like all things new in AA, the explosion of online meetings raises questions about everything from anonymity, to self support, to registering as a regular group with the general services office, and supporting AA services worldwide. These gray areas, perhaps, can be resolved only with time through sharing and discussion within the fellowship and the spirit of its constant yardsticks, the 12 Steps and the 12 traditions.

Speaker 1 ([21:08](#)):

AA Grapevine news.

Lauren A ([21:10](#)):

Our annual in person general service conference is the closest thing we have to a group conscience of AA in US and Canada. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic required us to rethink how we were going to get the business of AA accomplished. Everything such down.

Speaker 5 ([21:24](#)):

With help from tech consultants and virtual meeting operators, the 70th General Service Conference, GSC, made AA history and convened virtually May 16th through 19th, 2020. The annual conference was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, opening the door to a historic first, digitally drawing together 135 conference members to do the business of AA in the US and Canada in all three languages. New

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02/14/22)

Page 10
of 11

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CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

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schedules were drawn up and digital practice sessions were held. Tech training was offered to those who needed it.

Speaker 5 ([22:01](#)):

One of the initial concerns focused on how to condense a sprawling agenda into a four day virtual conference. Each conference committee met via Zoom prior to the conference to pair their agendas down. Any item that didn't fit on the abbreviated agenda was automatically forwarded to the 71st GSC in 2021.

Speaker 5 ([22:23](#)):

Another challenge was determining how to enable the interpersonal connectivity so vital to the spiritual nature of the conference itself. With this in mind, a number of events were build into the schedule, including a half hour digital hospitality session each day and a virtual AA meeting each morning. The tech director provided music during breaks and many of the attendees danced with each other before each session.

Speaker 5 ([22:50](#)):

On a deeper level, Tom A, rotating West Central Regional Trustee in his keynote address said that, "Our unique situation with this virtual conference provides us with many opportunities for spiritual growth.

Lauren A ([23:03](#)):

So what conclusion can we draw from our history and shared experience? Alberto [Snee 00:23:08] sums it up in an article in the Spring 2021 issue of Box 459.

Alberto Snee ([23:12](#)):

We had to ask ourselves how do we move forward in a virtual environment while still manifesting the values and conscience of the group? But we're using the virtual environment to support each other and virtuality is becoming the new normal. After all, AA started with a phone call so you could say our fellowship really was born in a virtual environment.

Speaker 1 ([23:34](#)):

Box 459 and this podcast are made possible by the voluntary contributions of AA members. If you want to know more about AA Grapevine or subscribe, visit aagrapevine.org. Thank you for listening to the pilot episode of This is AA Virtually, a podcast produced by the General Service Office on behalf of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in the US and Canada.

[Back to Cover](#)

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM D: Review report on “YouTube Performance.”

Background:

1. Report on A.A.W.S. YouTube Channel 2021 Q4

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

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YouTube: Fourth Quarter Report 2021

October - December

PROGRESS:

- After adding 3 videos, there are now 109 A.A.W.S. videos posted publicly to YouTube (some in English only, others in English, Spanish and French).
- There have been no new requests to post A.A.W.S. videos on the YouTube channel
- Before the relaunch of aa.org, all linkbacks were updated. Moving forward, we will discuss more targeted linkbacks in video descriptions to relevant pages on aa.org.

ANALYTICS:

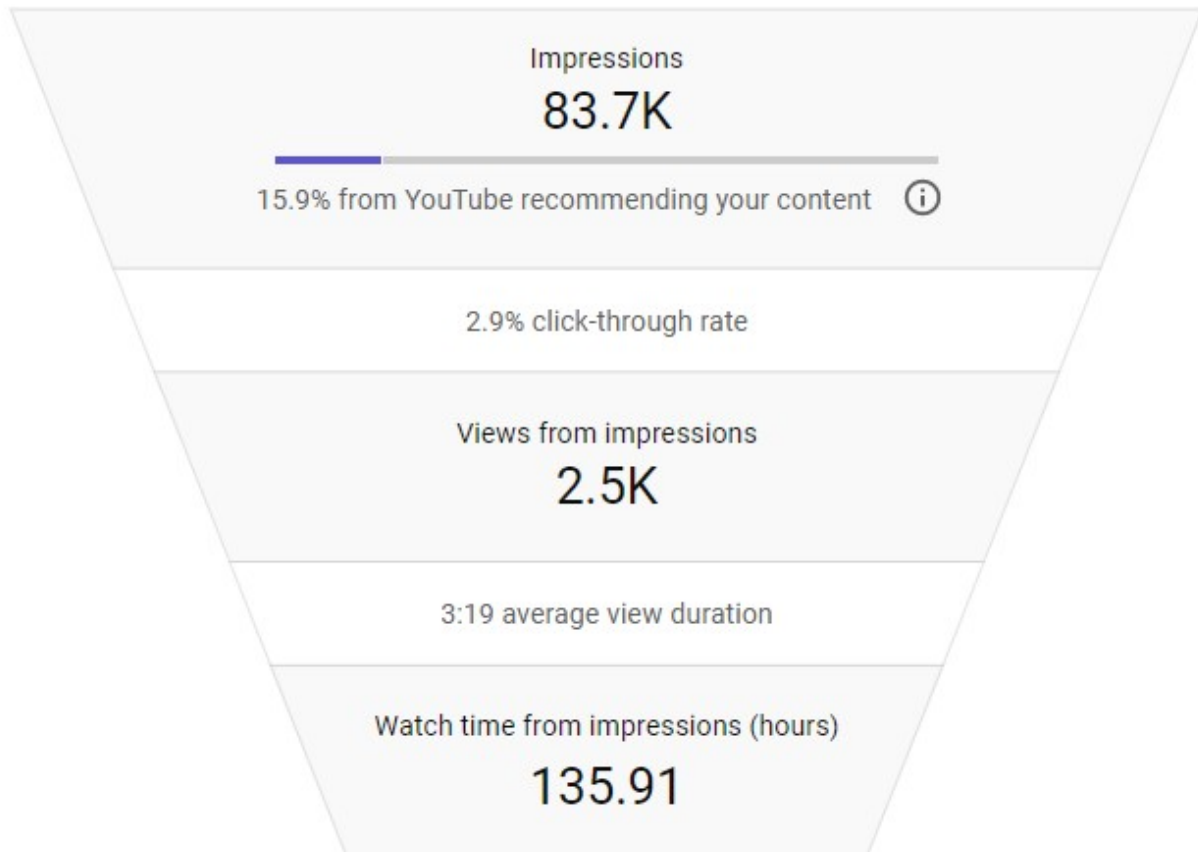
- As of December 31, 2021, we had over 6,500 subscribers.
- Channel stats this quarter:
 - Total views: 31,515
 - Total watch time: 1,100.4 hours
 - Change in subscribers: +301
- Top 10 videos on the channel:

Video Name	Time (hours) Watched	Average View Duration	Views
Alcoholics Anonymous	98	0:39	8,928
Alcohólicos Anónimos	212.1	1:48	7,043
Esperanza: Alcohólicos Anónimos	342.1	3:24	6,014
Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous	128.1	3:47	2,031
Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking (Public Service Announcement)	6.4	0:40	564
Your A.A. General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure	32.3	3:29	555
A.A. Big Book in ASL: The Doctor's Opinion	36.2	4:55	442
Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking (Public Service Announcement)	4.5	0:53	302
Joven y sobrio en A.A. : de la bebida a la recuperación	7.4	1 :31	292
Les Alcooliques anonymes: un espoir	19.1	4 :04	282
La sobriedad en A.A.: Desde que logré mi sobriedad, tengo esperanza	3.6	0 :51	255

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Impressions and how they led to watch time

Data available Oct 1 – Dec 31, 2021 (92 days)



NEXT STEPS:

- Continue to add content as it is made available.
 - Audio to video PSAs ESF – 1 set per week after visuals are completed
 - Need 1-2 sentence descriptions.
- When more resources are in place, continue discussion on standardizing video thumbnails for YouTube (and aa.org) for a cleaner, more professional look.
- In various meetings it has been suggested that we consider the “go live” feature for future use. Potential applications for consideration:
 - Training for Contributions portal or Fellowship Connection,
 - Streaming workshops from Regional Forums or the International Convention (anonymity protection would need discussion)
 - Meet your Class A’s, or Class A’s hosting short Q&As for their area of expertise as it related to A.A. – Suggested by CMP working group on LinkedIn.

HISTORICAL ACTIONS:

We were getting a lot of questions in various committees about these two items, so they are included here for reference.

In the March 2021 Website Committee meeting, the committee voted unanimously in favor of including bumpers in the beginning and at the tail on YouTube, aa.org, and other platforms as needed. This will not be retroactive to videos already completed, but all future videos will be prepared with the bumpers at the beginning and the end. That way we will have a single, completed version of each video that can be used for all platforms with little to no alteration.

In the June 2020 Website Committee meeting, the committee voted unanimously in favor of suspending work on preparing “A.A. in Correctional Facilities and “Carrying the Message Behind these Walls” for YouTube. Continuing to work on these would pull resources from higher priority projects with no guarantee they can be posted in the future.

[Back to Cover](#)

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM E: Review report on “Google Ads Performance.”

Background Notes:

2021 Conference Committee on Public Information Additional Committee Consideration:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2020 trustees’ Public Information Committee report on the Google Ads performance and requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information. The committee encouraged G.S.O. to develop an annual project calendar relating to Google Ads.

The committee also supported suggestions provided to them from a report from the G.S.O. senior digital communications analyst and Public Information A.C.M.

Suggestions include:

- Creation of more and diverse content. (This is a dynamic environment; a plan of monthly changes is the best use of the tool.)
- Create 2 new ad sets with different conversion goals and similar language.
- Consider setting half the new ads to clicks and half to conversions for comparison.
- Create one new campaign with multiple ad sets for the professional community.
- Improve use of the keyword planner and add appropriate keywords in a regular cadence.

*Conversion – Position based. Takes wider behavior into account for how metric was achieved.

**Clicks – counts the last click for the metric.

From the July 30, 2021, trustees’ Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information committee consideration regarding Google Ads. The Communication Services department will work in tandem with trustees’ Public Information Committee appointed committee members (A.C.M.s) to implement and broaden the current efforts to reflect the suggestions detailed in the committee consideration. The committee expressed appreciation for the ongoing work and looks forward to reports to be provided to the October 2021 meeting.

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From the October 30, 2021, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The staff secretary provided an update that work is underway between the C.P.C. and P.I. staff assignments crafting draft language to create one new campaign with multiple ad sets for the professional community. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the January 2022 meeting.

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

This is a comprehensive update on the progress of Google Ads. The background includes the standard quarterly Public Information Media Platform report on Google Ads from the Communication Services Department.

This past quarter the staff secretary coordinated with staff to complete the work of a 2021 Conference Committee on P.I Committee Consideration where that committee supported suggestions provided to them in a report from the G.S.O. senior digital communications analyst and the 2021 Public Information A.C.M.

New Google Ads campaign with multiple ad sets for the professional community.

If the committee agrees with the language, the G.S.O. senior digital communications analyst along with support from the P.I. Coordinator, C.P.C Coordinator and, as needed, the current P.I. A.C.M.s can start to do some research on the Google Ads platform for search terms to use on each ad and determine the cadence for implementing and tracking the new professional community Google Ads.

See background Item E.2 for the ad language.

Staff Note: From the G.S.O. senior digital communications analyst: As for the suggestion from the 2021 Committee Consideration about creating two new ad sets with different conversion goals and similar language. The analyst is working towards next steps with the A.C.M.s. They are planning to meet again once the website is launched and stable.

From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information a report, "Google Ads Performance: October to December 2021."

The committee reviewed and approved a new Google Ads campaign developed with multiple ad sets for the professional community. Eight ads were created for the following professional categories: corrections, education, faith, HR, legal, medical, military and treatment. The committee requested the staff secretary partner with the Communication Services department and CPC coordinator to develop a schedule for implementing and tracking these ads. The committee requested that the staff

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secretary include the schedule's progress report for ongoing discussions on Google Ads at their July 2022 meeting.

Background:

1. Progress report on Google Ads 2021 Q4
2. New Google Ads campaign with multiple ad sets for the professional community

[Back to Main Agenda](#)



Google Ads: Fourth Quarter Report 2022

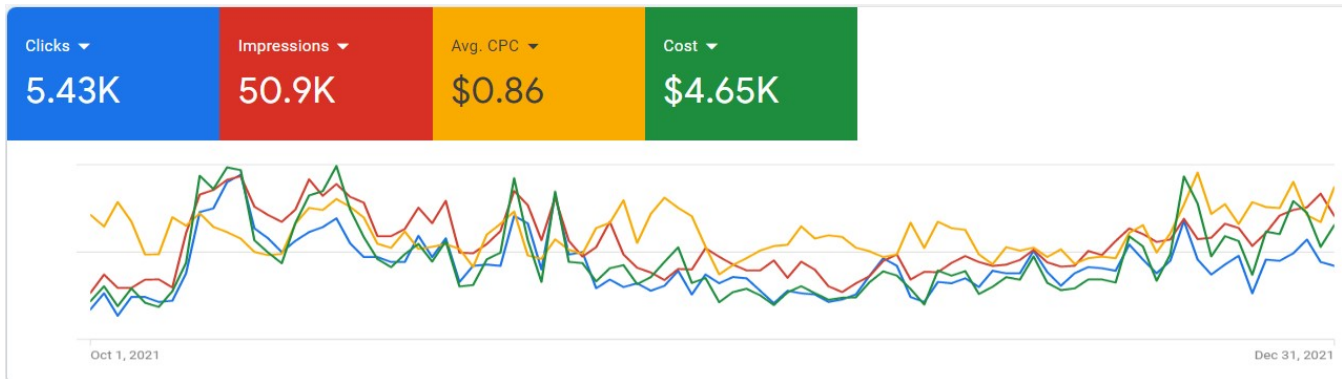
October - December

PROGRESS:

- No search terms added since last report.
- In response to the 2021 Additional Committee Consideration: CPC and PI Staff members finished drafting language for a new set of ads for professionals using categories where we already have developed literature: Medical, Faith, Treatment/Recovery, HR, Military, Corrections, Legal, Education. The draft language is being presented to the trustees' Public Information Committee in their January 2022 meeting.

ANALYTICS:

In the 92 days of the fourth quarter, we have seen the following performance statistics for the overall account. The total Grant spend for this period was \$4,647.73 which is more than double our last report (\$2,180.84).



The cost and average CPC (cost per click) are based on the keyword bidding system. The recommended bid setting for Google Grants automatically sets keywords to a \$2 maximum bid limit. If we desire to use higher bidding terms in the future, we have the option to set the bid manually

In the account are 2 ad groups. Find a Meeting continues to see far greater attention and engagement than Get Help. This has been the trend for our entire time on Google Ads.

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Ad groups

	Cost	Clicks	CTR
● FindMtg	\$3,128.67	3,978	11.43%
● GetHelp	\$1,519.06	1,454	9.03%

All links in the ads lead back to aa.org, as required by Google Ads. Before the relaunch of aa.org, all linkbacks were updated.

For “FindMtg”, users click through to either AA Near You www.aa.org/aanearyou or Information about Meeting Guide www.aa.org/meetingguide.

For “GetHelp” users click through to Is A.A. for You www.aa.org/new-to-aa

The below grid shows how each ad is performing individually.

Ad	Ad group	Status	Ad type	↓ Clicks	Impr.	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost
Find an A.A. meeting near you. Meeting Guide can help. www.aa.org/meetingguide Learn about the app that helps you find Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting information.	FindMtg	Eligible	Expanded text ad	2,334	18,190	12.83%	\$0.71	\$1,658.65
Looking for an A.A. meeting? Contact A.A. near you. www.aa.org/aanearyou A list of local Alcoholics Anonymous by state, province and country	FindMtg	Eligible	Expanded text ad	1,098	11,793	9.31%	\$0.96	\$1,058.14
Can't stop drinking? Maybe A.A. can help you. www.aa.org/gethelp Information about the program of Alcoholics Anonymous	GetHelp	Eligible	Expanded text ad	678	8,375	8.10%	\$1.15	\$778.93
Want to stop drinking? See if A.A. is right for you. www.aa.org/gethelp Information about the program of Alcoholics Anonymous	GetHelp	Eligible	Expanded text ad	643	6,207	10.36%	\$1.00	\$644.00
Looking for an A.A. meeting? Meeting Guide can help. www.aa.org/meetingguide Learn about the app that helps you find Alcoholics Anonymous meeting information	FindMtg	Eligible	Expanded text ad	546	4,810	11.35%	\$0.75	\$411.88
Is drinking causing problems? Maybe A.A. can help. www.aa.org/gethelp A brief look at the program of Alcoholics Anonymous	GetHelp	Eligible	Expanded text ad	133	1,513	8.79%	\$0.72	\$96.13
Total: All but removed ads ⓘ				5,432	50,888	10.67%	\$0.86	\$4,647.73
Total: Campaign ⓘ				5,432	50,888	10.67%	\$0.86	\$4,647.73

The highest click through rates continue to relate to finding a meeting overall. However, the two GetHelp Ads with “stop drinking” in their text have decent impression and click through rates.

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Keywords:

	Cost ▼	Clicks ▼	CTR ▼
● aa meetings near me	\$960.06	1,175	10.26%
● AA meetings	\$506.06	654	11.25%
● aa website	\$497.11	583	10.14%
● alcohol anonymous	\$488.78	289	5.68%
● aa org	\$339.87	440	21.34%
● aa org	\$308.03	648	26.30%
● aaa meetings	\$239.28	266	10.05%
● aa online	\$210.47	229	10.11%
● aa org meetings	\$174.13	202	10.39%
● Alcoholics Anonymous	\$154.20	119	6.24%
● online aa meetings	\$147.35	148	9.34%
● alcoholics anonymous meeting	\$143.52	169	8.91%
● alcoholics anonymous online	\$129.73	138	9.75%
● aa near me	\$88.71	102	9.22%
● 12 step meetings near me	\$65.26	66	10.73%

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● AA app	\$12.99	14	9.09%
● AA meeting list	\$12.25	12	12.37%
● AA meeting finder	\$10.84	11	11.83%
● Meeting Guide app	\$9.76	11	15.71%
● help for alcoholism	\$7.44	5	2.51%
● aa groups near me	\$41.99	47	8.87%
● Find AA meeting	\$26.34	34	12.50%
● Meeting Guide	\$23.64	28	22.95%
● join aa	\$18.83	9	7.69%
● aa zoom meetings	\$15.09	20	9.80%
● aa pamphlet	\$5.30	3	6.52%
● alcohol abuse	\$4.85	3	2.40%
● Problem with alcohol	\$1.68	1	4.55%
● AA meeting directory	\$1.63	3	7.69%
● AA meeting schedule	\$1.54	1	9.09%
● Alcohol problem	\$1.00	2	1.03%

*The items with yellow flags have been tagged by Google Ads as having a low quality score because the landing page experience is below their expectation. Their recommendation is “you might want to consider some changes to improve your website's landing page.” We are handling

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

that with our new website design. The item “aa brochure” was recommended to be paused by Google Ads due to low quality score, so we’re testing out the impact. We suspect it is because we call them pamphlets and flyers in our page text, not brochures.

Any additional keywords on our account received no traffic this quarter, so were not included in the report.

NEXT STEPS:

- After new Professionals ad language is complete, reviewed and approved by trustees’ P.I. Committee, we plan to release 1 per month to keep fresh material on our account and consistently refresh the Google algorithm’s attention to our content.
- Senior Digital Analyst has met ACMs to discuss planning of the additional committee consideration: “Create 2 new ad sets with different conversion goals and similar language.” We will meet again to discuss implementation.
- As a point of information, ACMs have recommended the following text be added to the Google Ads section of the Comprehensive Media Plan:

“The office needs the ability to continuously optimize the Google Ads campaigns based on standard best practices. If we don’t have the freedom to manage our campaigns, the campaigns will not improve, and we’re wasting the fellowship’s grant money and wasting opportunities to reach suffering alcoholics.

Appropriate staff members need to be able to make the following updates to the campaigns without waiting a year for conference approval to ensure improved campaign performance:

- Evaluate and experiment with ad targeting
- A/B test ad copy and design
- Add/remove keywords and negative keywords
- Change keyword match type
- Test multiple landing page options
- Approve/deny basic campaign suggestions provided by Google Ads”

Discussion of this recommendation will continue in the Comprehensive Media Plan.

[Back to Cover](#)

New Google Ads campaign with multiple ad sets for the professional community

Profession	H1 - Main message Up to 30 characters	Count	H2 - Incentive to click Up to 30 characters	Count	Description 1 - what will be seen on the linked webpage Up to 80 characters	Count	Source
Medical	Visible alcohol abuse symptoms	30	Maybe A.A. can help.	20	Medical professionals can cooperate with A.A. to help patients find a solution.	79	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-23_aaasaresourceforhcp1.pdf
Faith	Faith Leaders help drinkers.	28	Maybe A.A. can help you.	24	Faith leaders are often the first people sick alcoholics turn to for guidance.	78	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-25_FaithLeadersAskAboutAA.pdf
Treatment/Recovery	Treatment and the A.A. program	30	Maybe A.A. can help.	20	A.A. meetings in Treatment settings. Professionals find A.A. useful to clients.	79	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-27_AAinTF.pdf
HR	Problem drinkers at work?	25	Maybe A.A. can help.	20	A.A. has information to help employees live productive lives without alcohol.	78	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-54_isthereanaaintheworkplace.pdf
Military	Drinking in the Military	24	Maybe A.A. can help.	20	The illness of alcoholism can strike any rank of military personnel.	68	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-50_AAandtheArmedServices.pdf
Corrections	Alcohol related crimes	22	Maybe A.A. can help.	20	Many inmates are sentenced for crimes in which alcohol abuse is a key factor.	77	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-20_AMessagetoCorrProf.pdf
Legal	Alcohol related legal matters	29	Contact A.A. near you.	22	Legal matters resulting from alcohol abuse? A.A. might be helpful.	67	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-29_howAAMemCoopProf.pdf
Education	Alcohol impact on academics	27	Contact A.A. near you.	22	Alcohol abuse can take a toll on educators and students. A.A. has a solution.	78	https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-3_isaaforyou.pdf

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM F: Review report on “Meeting Guide Performance.”

Background:

1. Report on A.A.W.S. Meetings Guide app 2021 Q4

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

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Meeting Guide: Fourth Quarter Report 2021

October - December

PROGRESS:

Summary: The App team launched the 4th major application upgrade since App development was handed over to Foster Made. The App team has received positive feedback regarding this latest release, which included features requested by our users and entities. The number of connected entities continues to grow while the number of disconnected entities has continued to decrease.

App v.3.9.0:

- New features: **Attendance option, Distance**
- New **Notes** fields implemented
- For details please [see the communication](#) sent out to all MG providers.

Collaboration with Code for Recovery (CFR):

- Monthly meeting with the team that supports the TSML plug-in, to exchange updates and ideas

HelpDocs Knowledgebase:

- With the launch of the new website all current links are being directed to HelpDocs for support

Marketing/SEO:

- Code update to gather specific feature use via google analytics
- The Winter edition of the quarterly newsletter was sent to all participating entities

“Everything AA” App:

- The developer of the “Everything AA” would like GSO to take ownership of their App
- The team reviewed the App and it offers:
 - Links to pdfs and audio
 - Links to useful meeting-oriented literature such as: Preamble, “How It Works”
 - Meetings link to the Online Intergroup
- The team noted the following:
 - This App does not really provide anything beyond what the new website provides
 - The idea of links to literature, prayers etc., has been discussed before and the conclusion has always been that this is not a primary purpose of this App
 - The access to Online Intergroup appears to just be a framing of the site itself – which is an idea worth considering as it would provide a much quick and easier integration into the app – though it would separate it from other online meetings.

Meeting Guide App Update

Winter 2022

News for Meeting Guide Participants

This Meeting Guide update is part of a series of communications that are intended to help you stay informed about any changes or enhancements to the Meeting Guide app.

Major Release - 3.9

Version 3.9 of Meeting Guide was released mid November of 2021. This release includes the following:

- **Inclusion of Attendance filter type**

- The Attend option allows a user to choose to display only in-person or online meetings. The default display in Meeting Guide is to display all options.
- Entities do not need to update anything for these options to appear. If you list a meeting with a street address and don't apply the TC [location temporarily closed] type to the meeting it will appear as in-person. Any online meetings you are already submitting will show up as online. Hybrid meetings will show up under both attend options.
- Please let people in your area know they can now filter by attendance type - in these dynamic times many members have been asking for the ability to filter by these options.

Cancel Apply

Day Monday

Time Any Time

Attend Any Option

Any Option

Online 145

In-Person 359

Type Any Type

Reset Filters

- For more information see this support article: [Finding online or in-person meetings](#)

- **Filter by Distance**

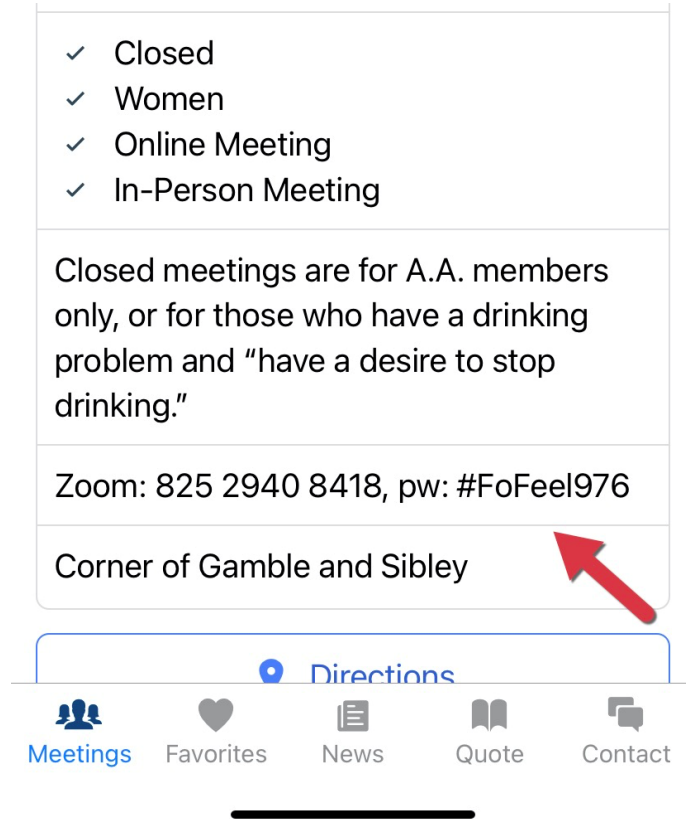
- This enhancement provides the ability to change the distance radius of the location search. Users can narrow or broaden the radius of meetings returned in a search.
- For more information see our support article: [Finding meetings in other locations](#)

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for searching meetings. At the top, the time is 10:37 and there are icons for search, signal strength, Wi-Fi, and battery. Below the title 'Search Meetings', there are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons. A search bar contains the text 'All Meetings'. Below that, a location field shows 'Current Location'. At the bottom, a distance slider is set to 30 miles, with markers at 5 miles and 50 miles. A red arrow points to the slider handle.

Use the above fields to search by meeting keyword and/or change your location to another city.

- **Inclusion of online notes on Meeting Details**

- This enhancement provides a specific area to display things like online platform meeting IDs and passwords.
- This update was often requested by participating entities who have been using this field already in the Twelve Step meeting plugin and were frustrated they had to also update this information in general meeting notes.
- If you have been putting online meeting details like IDs or passwords in notes - or not including it please consider adding this as many members contact us looking for online meeting access details that aren't always included in the Join With Zoom button.



- Code updates and bug fixes

New participating entities

We'd like to welcome some recently added participants to the Meeting Guide.

- El Paso, TX
- Intergrupo Hispano - Houston, TX
- Area 1, District 5, Tuscaloosa, AL
- Jackson County Central Office, Medford, Oregon
- Western Michigan District 13

Support requests

The app support team has been receiving an increase in requests for meetings that meet accessibility and language needs. For example, if you have ASL or non-english language meetings or meetings that provide wheelchair access in your area please be sure to add those types to your meeting listings so those who need them can filter meetings by that type.

Up Next

Next major releases will include improvements to meeting filtering.

ANALYTICS:

App Team End of Month Report snapshots

As of January 17, 2022

Increase by 10 from last quarter



Organizations → 462

Connected Entities:

Front (AppSupport Inbox)

November – post launch of 3.9 – relatively quiet – not many issues or question

Conversation statistics:



Type of interaction by category:

Top Tags ⓘ ↑

🔗 Add/Update (local entity)	31	↗ +6
🔗 Feedback/Feature Request	19	↘ -1
🔗 Add/Update Meeting or Local Entity (User)14	14	↘
🔗 Education Needed	13	↘ -9
🔗 App Data/Import/WP Plugin Issue	11	↘ -10
🔗 Temp/Online/Closures	8	↘ -15
🔗 No Coverage/Nonparticipating Org.	5	↘ -1
🔗 Sharing Key	4	↗ +3
🔗 kudos	3	↘ -1
🔗 Android Issues	3	↗ +2

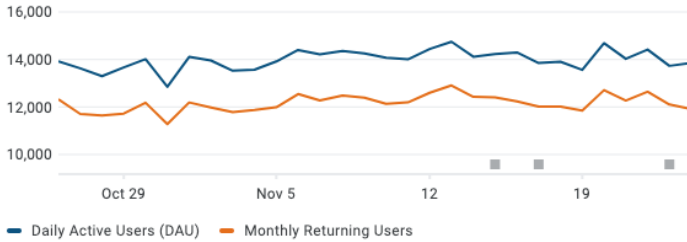
Google Play Store

End of month November - after 3.9 Release

All vs returning users

Daily Active Users (DAU) [?] Monthly Returning Users [?]

13.9K -1.44% **11.9K** -1.43%

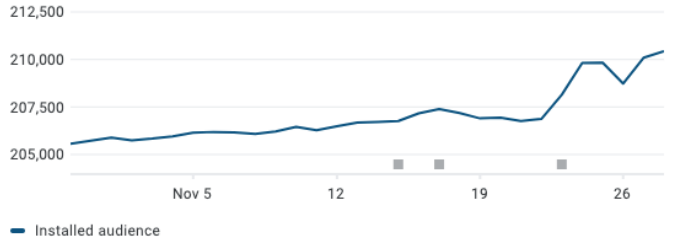


[Explore](#) →

Total audience size

Installed audience [?]

210K +2.49% **▲**

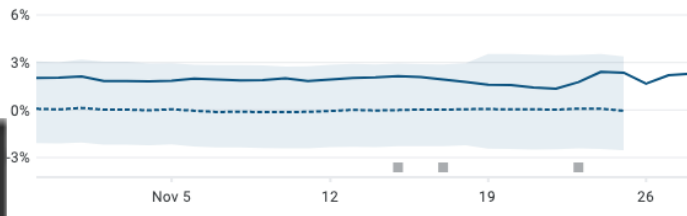


[Explore](#) →

Audience growth rate

Audience growth rate [?]

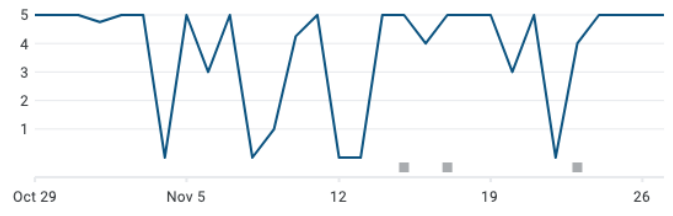
2.29% +0.22% **▲**



Daily average rating

Daily average rating [?]

5 ★

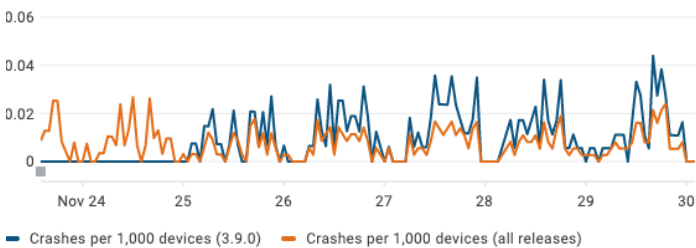


Latest release performance

[View release dashboard](#)  

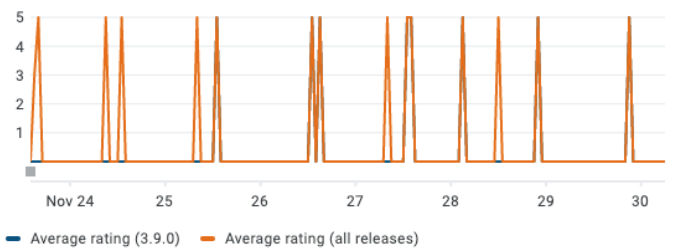
Crashes per 1,000 devices [?]

0.016 +67.97% **▲** vs all releases



Average rating [?]

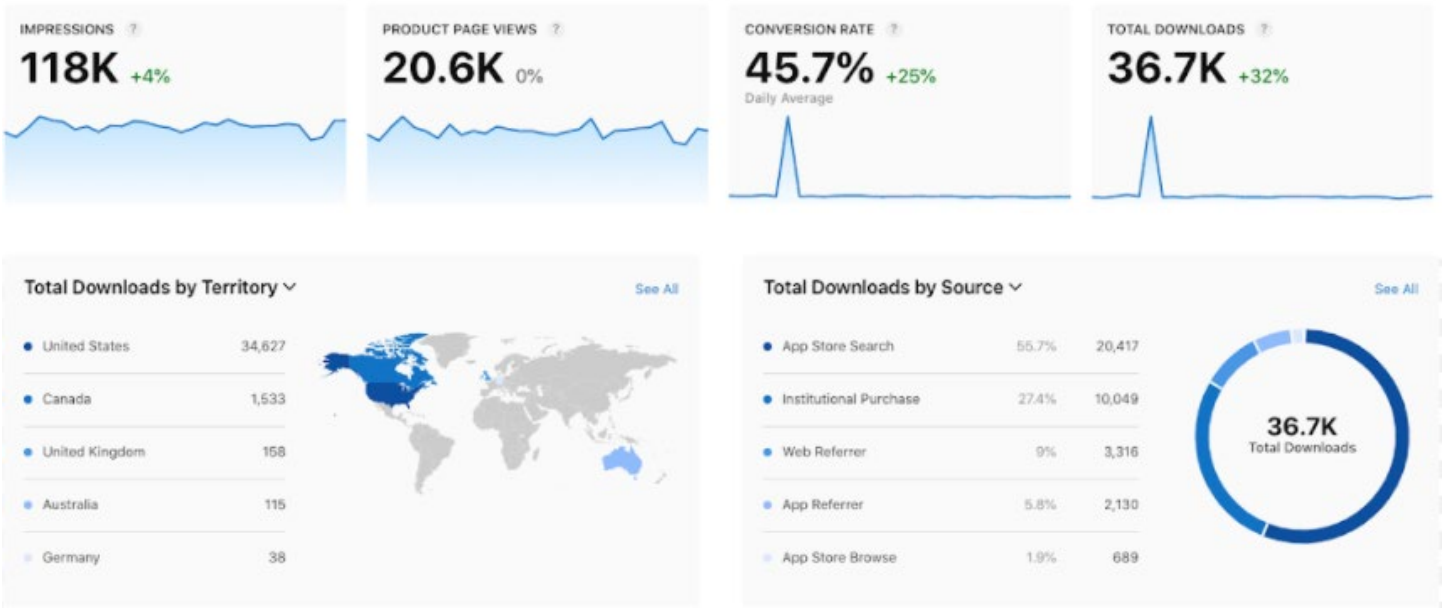
5 ★ +0.13 **▲** vs all releases



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Apple – AppStore Connect

End of month November - after 3.9 Release



Latest Reviews – End of month - December

All Countries or Regions



579 Ratings

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

Fantastic! ★★★★★

by Michelebella1977 – Dec 27, 2021

[← Reply](#)

What a wonderful surprise. After moving to a new area, one of the first things I did was research new meeting locations. I was pleasantly surprised to find this AA meeting finder app. What a great way for Alcoholics Anonymous to step into the 21st Century and provide our younger (in heart and in age) members with a easy, fast way to look for up-to-date meeting locations that include Zoom links. With our "new normal" reality of social distancing and spur-of-the-moment changes, it's of ultimate importance that our community help 12-step members find the information they need. The pandemic has caused a great struggle for many alcoholics by losing the one thing that keeps us spiritually fit - connection with one another. This app makes it easier for members to find ways to keep that connection. Thank you to the developers in helping to facilitate that connection.

Version 3.9.0 | United States | [Report a Concern](#)

Getting better all the time ★★★★★

by Itwasgrace – Dec 11, 2021

[← Reply](#)

I love this app! It now keeps my list of multiple locations and favorites. It has a mileage slider to pin down the location search. These features are so helpful when I am traveling. People are doing a great job of keeping this app updated. Often there is a link to the group or district's home page or a phone number to call. The Meeting Finder lists face-to-face, zoom, and hybrid meetings. It tells you if a meeting is open to the general public or "closed" to include only people who feel they may have a problem with alcohol. And it's free! It works, it really does.

Version 3.9.0 | United States | [Report a Concern](#)

Great app! ★★★★★

by Peter van Nostrand – Dec 9, 2021

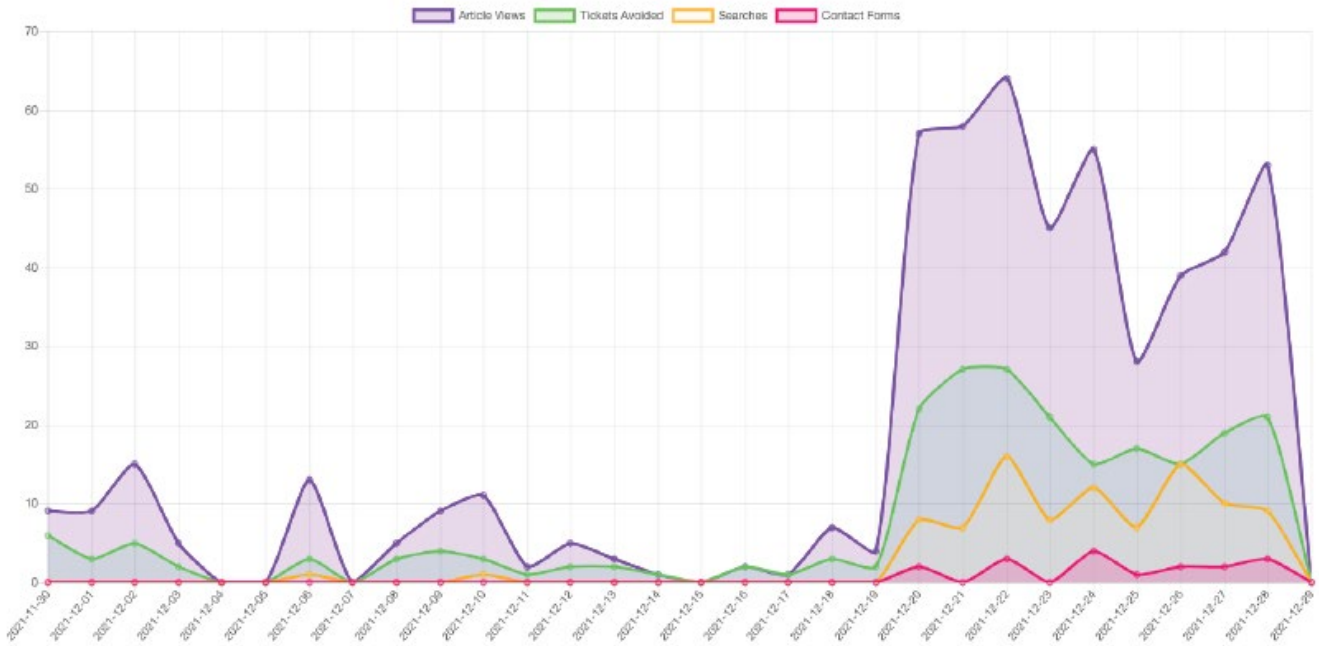
[← Reply](#)

I am so thankful for this app. I looked for other's like, but could not find any. It is nice to be able to find groups on the go or to even plan ahead. I love the 'Favorite' feature! If I find a meeting I like I could add it to the list so that it becomes highlighted in the meetings search and I don't have to search for it every time. It would be even more awesome if there was a 'Dark Mode / Night Mode' feature in this app.

HelpDocs

Spike noted when the the website launched – the new MG App page now sends people to HelpDocs:

Article Views 542 ↑ +307.52%	Searches 94 ↑ +1,780.00%	Contact Forms 17 ↓ -1,500.00%	Tickets Avoided ⓘ 227 ↑ +233.82%
---	---------------------------------------	--	---



Top Articles		
TITLE	PERCENTAGE	VIEWS
How to Connect to Meeting Guide	15.50%	84
Deciding to Connect	11.99%	65
Finding online or in-person meetings	8.30%	45
Minimum requirements for participating in Meeting Guide	7.20%	39
How to add online meeting information	6.48%	35
Finding meetings in other locations	5.17%	28
Connection Form	4.61%	25
Finding Meetings by Day, Time, Attend option or Type	4.61%	25
When multiple entities list a meeting	4.43%	24

Top Categories		
CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE	VIEWS
How To...	35.42%	192
Getting Started	31.73%	172
Using Meeting Guide	23.25%	126
About Meeting Guide	6.64%	36
Troubleshooting	2.95%	16

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CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

NEXT STEPS:

App v.3.9.20:

- The team is testing a release that includes:
 - Improved organization of the Contact screen to call out Contact features v. Help & Feedback
 - Access to our HelpDocs online support site in “Help & Feedback”
 - Upgrade to Expo 43
 - Fix for Current Location bug (current location should update automatically)
 - Fix for **Types** not displaying when their title includes a “-“ such as “Wheelchair-Accessible”
 - Analytics updates

Roadmap

- The team is currently working with our vendor to develop a release roadmap that will allow us to better improve the experience when searching for “online” v. “in-person” meetings
- Some “online” v. “in-person” feature ideas that we are working on/toward:
 - Integration of Map view for “in-person”
 - Sort by Time Zone for “online”
 - Exposed filters customized to the view (online v. in-person)
 - Easier toggle between “online” and “in-person”
- Exposed filters with meaningful categories
 - Research what categories people naturally group our current long list of meeting types by, utilizing sorting task “study” created with [Optimal Sort](#).
- Research de-coupling keyword search and location in the top bar
- Explore and test allowing different filters to make a distinct call to the database to retrieve a new meeting dataset
- Settings and Preferences: the team is exploring options and design ideas to allow default settings and preferences

Communications and IGCO Outreach:

- Development of a pamphlet and/or other educational materials

HelpDocs Knowledgebase:

- Examine our current information set and flow through the site; for example, we may need to provide information for an audience that is coming from the aa.org website and does not yet have the App installed.
- The team is planning to extend the functionality to include internal team documentation.

PLATFORM INFO:

- Expo was upgraded to v. 42 as part of the last release

RISKS/CHALLENGES:

- The App Support team has been operating at a reduced capacity due to personnel changes and the departmental focus on the website launch.

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM G: Review the "2021 Fourth Quarter Report on A.A.W.S. Board Oversight of G.S.O.'s A.A. website."

Background Notes:

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

Per the staff secretary of T.C.S. there was no Q4 Website Committee meeting due to the Q4 launch of the new website. The following reports cover Q4 Design, Development and launch for the new website, as well as post-launch highlights and tasks (both completed and outstanding).

From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information a report, the "2021 Fourth Quarter Report on A.A.W.S. Board Oversight of G.S.O.'s A.A. website."

Background:

1. [Website Q4 report 2021](#)
2. [Website Executive Steering Post Launch Update](#)

[Back to Main Agenda](#)



Website Report: Fourth Quarter Report 2021

October - December

NEW AA.ORG DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS:

Summary: Development of final dynamic pages was completed within the limitations or abilities of the software delivered by Perficient in the final sprints of the year. The AA Content team completed Drupal implementation (inserting approved copy, formatting, layout) of the delivered static pages and dynamic pages. Due to the limitation of the initial SoundCloud Implementation the team was not able to migrate all the existing Unikron files to a SoundCloud solution on the new website, that work will continue in the new year. After a series of team meetings and review, with the internal team, senior management and the AAWS Board, the decision was made to launch with existing limitations in December. The new website was launched on Dec. 20, 2021.

Static Page Content:

- Minor fixes such as page links were made to static pages.
- The AA Content team created all required pages that did not require copy changes (i.e. Policy pages)

Dynamic Page Content:

- “Book” pages
 - All PDF files were added for all book types.
 - A new requirement has been added to the task list to implement some type of weighting or ordering system for the content within the Read/Listen/Watch sections
 - As a work around, the team added a numeric prefix to the pdf title names to force the pdf content to appear in order.
- “Daily Reflections”
 - Working mostly as expected with bugs and improvements noted/requested
- Newsletters:
 - The AA Content team worked within Drupal to finish the setup, formatting, image, and translations
 - One bug remains that prevents renaming the French and Spanish newsletter titles
- Forms:
 - Completed for launch and working as expected
 - One outstanding bug prevents some form field translation
- AA Timeline
 - Working as expected in web view
 - Mobile view needs improvement and that has been added to the task list.
- “AA Near You”
 - Communication Services and Technology Services worked together to provide data files

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

- Initial implementation of “AA Near You” released – reviewed by teams and bugs noted
- AA team working with vendor to improve initial implementation of recurring NetSuite data export component
- Video:
 - Most of the existing Vimeo Video files were setup as content types in Drupal
- Audio:
 - All Unikron based audio files have been copied to SoundCloud
 - SoundCloud based solution for audio will be delivered in the next Sprint
 - For launch: audio files continue to be streamed from Unikron
- Literature:
 - Met with Publishing to establish a process for updating literature that has been updated since the literature was migrated from the old site.
 - Bugs or incomplete feature setup noted
 - Literature issues noted post-launch were added as a task.
 - Ongoing literature updates are being handled via the CSD Deptrequest process.

Search:

- Basic setup of global site search, including definition of initial filters and common searches was successful; the team will work with Perficient to further improve this feature
- A bug related to the translation of basic site terms was identified

Cookies and Privacy:

- A Drupal Cookies opt in/out module was implemented
- The existing policy was updated to be technically accurate with respect to the implementation on the new site.

Translations:

- French and Spanish translations are on-going as the team identifies copy that is not translated or could be improved.
- The team identified system generated copy such default field values in forms, which will need translation
- The team identified some areas where translations are not enabled, and these issues have been entered as bugs.
- The Translations team made a large push prior to launch to review and correct copy on the new pages.

Vendor transition:

- The team determined to continue working with Perficient post-launch and in a maintenance and development mode into next year
- CSD is working with Technology Services to phase out our use of the old hosting platforms
- CSD and Technology Services have been working with our consultant and previous aa.org website support, Daniel Brown, to transition accounts and projects.

ANALYTICS:

Site traffic and usage statistics will be provided after 3 months of data has been collected.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

High level statistics regarding initial post launch traffic, outstanding development and content tasks, and CSD department tasks **is available in background documentation (Item G.2).**

NEXT STEPS:

Team focus is on the following high priority items:

- Sprint planning and follow up with Perficient
- Outstanding items (priority = high) – **see attached background documentation (Item G.2).**
- Hiring temporary content support
- Internal training of CSD department and documentation
- Vendor and account transition from old aa.org and aa.org support (Rackspace, Unikron etc.)
- CSD department requests

PLATFORM INFO:

Acquia Platform and Git hub:

- Remote Administration setup

Drupal CMS:

- The AA Content team continues to learn the more complex features of the Drupal CMS, and is receiving adhoc training from Perficient

NOTE: transition from existing accounts and resources at Rackspace and Unikron is in process

EXTERNAL REQUESTS:

Project Requests:

- CSD continues to process requests made to the department for regular content updates i.e. updated forms, pamphlets etc.

AA.org

Post-Launch Update

Website Exec Steer: January 11, 2022

Updated for TCS: January 14, 2022

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Feedback

Communications, Member Services, and Tech Services have received 167 post-launch inquiries as of Friday January 7, all but 13 of which have been reviewed, responded to, or forwarded.

How the inquires breakdown

- 1 Meeting Guide
- 27 Daily Reflections
- 47 General Website Function/Suggestion
- 13 Junk
- 7 Meeting Information Requests
- 1 Other Dept/Grapevine
- 7 Regional or Service Committee
- 25 Technical Error/Information Correction
- 15 Webmaster Request/Query

Main Areas of Concern

- Daily Reflections date synch/formatting suggestions (we're working on fixes and possibly a version 2)
- Audio book files missing (a temporary solution is in place)
- AANY updates/missing entities
- Find forms
- PDF updates/corrections

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Traffic

Week of Dec 20

- 441,005 total visitors (377,855 unique)
- Total page views 754,041 (Avg 1.33 per session)
- 350,070 went directly to Daily Reflections (the dedicated page 337,360 E 10,883 S 1,827 F)

Week of Dec 27

- 425,122 total visitors (376,768 unique)
- Total page views 726,036 (Avg 1.29 per session)
- 311,244 went directly to Daily Reflections (the dedicated page 289,250 E 19,569 S 2,425 F)

Week of Jan 3

- 456,316 total visitors (399,196 unique)
- Total page views 775,421 (Avg 1.29 per session)
- 331,189 went directly to Daily Reflections (the dedicated page 304,594 E 23,561 S 3,034 F)

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Open Tasks

- 152 currently open tasks have been prioritized and given approximate level-of-effort estimates. **Update 1/14/22 TG: Outstanding Task/bug list for Perficient was consolidated with the internal task list, some new items were added and some completed, there are currently 185 tasks total**
- 36 of them require Perficient - their sprint plan for addressing these is coming tomorrow (Wednesday).
- They represent ~1,000 hours of work.
- This would take the current CSD team (Tracey, Julie, Sam) working at 50% 19 weeks to complete.**

Priority	Scope			
	Big (more than 1 day)	Medium (2-8 hours)	Small (< 2 hours)	TBD
Critical	2	-	3	-
High	11	9	7	7
Medium	11	13	14	10
Low	13	12	14	25
TBD	1	-	-	-
Estimated Hours to Complete *	760 hours	180 hours	76 hours	unknown

* For hour estimates: Big = 20, Med = 5, Small = 2

** 52.5 hrs./week (3 people working 3.5 hrs./day) X 19.5 weeks = 1,023 hours

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What's Next

Happening now

- CSD and Perficient are working to resolve known critical and high priority tasks.
- Perficient is creating a sprint plan for addressing the 36 issues that currently involve them. (draft coming tomorrow)
- All teams continue to review, assess and address feedback, though it's slowed down considerably since launch.
- Planning for release 1.1: what is fast-follow work (e.g., things deferred from the initial launch) and what is new work (e.g., changes to Daily Reflections)?
- Need to define parameters around scope and cut-off date for the *medium* and *low* priority tasks. (e.g., for PDF updates, how many will we do and how far back will we go?)

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What's Next

Questions and Follow-ups

- Temporary resources can help with the backlog of *medium* and *low* priority tasks. Scope and budget needed. **Update 1/14/22 TG: HR suggested we hire freelance help v. a temp position. The team will work on writing a marketing style description for this**
- What interim governance needs to be in place to manage this work going forward? **Update 1/14/22 TG: at exec steer we landed on the following:**
 1. **Continue Website Exec Steer, meeting every other week or adhoc as needed**
 2. **Continue Thursday website working group which includes PI, Group Services, CSD and Perficient**
 3. **Call on the Website Committee in an ad hoc fashion, discontinue quarterly meetings**
 4. **CSD team is empowered to make basic content updates; any debatable items/tasks can be reviewed in one of the regular meetings, or with the GM in the weekly department meeting, or if needed, by calling an adhoc meeting**

[Back to Cover](#)

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM H: Review report on “AAGV/La Viña Website, Marketing and Podcast.”

Background attached:

1. [AAGV/La Viña Website, Marketing and Podcast](#)
2. [01.27.22 Web Board Analytics Report](#)

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

AAGRAPEVINE, Inc.

P.I.
Item H
Doc.1

MEMORANDUM

To: Patrick C., Public Information
From: Janet B., Director of Operations
Date: January 27, 2022
Subject: AAGV Website, marketing and podcast report

- Work in progress: Upgrading to Drupal 9 the aagrapevine.org and aalavina.org websites. Working with North Studio team for UAT on the Dev. site through the front and back end of the site and adding tickets if something is not working as intended. Note: Typically developers allocate 10 business days for UAT (User Acceptance Testing).
- [Announcement](#) about the AAGV podcast is available on your favorite podcast systems was [blasted](#) on Nov. 24. (More on podcast at end of report.)
- Ongoing maintenance work of the mailing distribution lists of the Constant Contact marketing mailing system.
 - Mailing lists subscriber performance (30 days): GV: 32 [↑](#) and LV: 19 [↑](#)
- Ongoing work on creating and setting of the weekly Web Exclusives, monthly GV Product News, quarterly Your Group newsletters, and supervising the setting of the GV & LV daily quote on the websites, and blast emails.
- Ongoing work on building UTM codes and adding them to the AAGV newsletters and blast communications. 14 new codes built (last 30 days).
- Ongoing work with Stikky Media on improving the metadata for both [aagrapevine.org](#) and [aalavina.org](#) websites. 14 new URLs added (last 30 days).
- Continue collaborating with the Stikky Media team in sharing the programmed AAGV newsletters and communications for the IG accounts.
- In coordination with North Studio, work continues in improving the [aagrapevine.org](#) and [aaglavina.org](#) website maintenance and support.
- Continue supporting G.S.O. Digital Analyst Dept. (Upon request)
- Participate in bi-weekly Stikky Media SEO meetings.

Please find below the La Viña and Grapevine November Marketing Reports along with notes on performance for all sites/stores for last month and 2021 as a whole.

Grapevine

[AAGV Site](#)

Web Traffic Performance

- 84k Users (+2.4%), 102k Sessions (+1%), 173k Pageviews (+2.9%)

Month over Month Comparisons

All traffic remained fairly consistent month over month, and the site is outperforming metrics year over year - Users +18%, Sessions +19%. Aside from the landing page, the highest traffic page continues to be the Sobriety Calculator, with over 2x as many sessions as the next most popular page, which is for the Podcast.

SEO Performance

- 29k Clicks (+4.6%), 5.1% Click Through Rate (-12%), 17.23 Average Position (-7.1%)

Year over Year Comparisons

Queries for 'Sobriety Calculator' (and variations) brought in the highest amount of traffic overall, and account for 5 of the top 10 queries leading to clicks. The majority of others in the top 10 are broad branded searches, and then one for the magazine specifically. Searches for the podcast again make up 2 of the top 20 terms, as do searches for the daily thought/quote.

[AAGV Store](#) *Month over Month Comparisons*

Web Traffic Performance

- 13.6k Users (-11%), 20k Sessions (-11%), 238k Pageviews (-6%)

This is the first month since August that we didn't beat year over year metrics as there were 20,903 sessions Dec 2020 compared to 19,760 sessions Dec 2021 (-1,143 sessions total). Traffic is incredibly engaged on the site with Pageviews:Sessions as follows for the top 3 traffic sources: Referral 12:1 (largely AAGV main site), Organic Search 12:1, Direct 8:1.

E-Commerce Performance

- \$113k Revenue (-7.3%), 10% Ecommerce Conversion Rate (+3.8%)

While revenue was down slightly, December was the 4th highest revenue month overall just \$200 below the 3rd highest, January. Organic Search continues to account for a large amount of revenue, at 23% this month.

SEO Performance

- 2.9k Clicks (+4.2%), 2.7% Click Through Rate (+5.2%), 11.22 Average Position (-0.1%)

Branded searches for subscription/magazine continue to make up the majority of queries leading to clicks. Mobile traffic makes up 60% of traffic from search, so ensuring the checkout process is optimized for mobile users is important.

La Viña

[AALV Site](#) *Month over Month Comparisons*

Web Traffic Performance

- 3.1k Users (-4.4%), 3.8k Sessions (-2.8%), 5.8k Pageviews (+4.8%)

Web traffic overall remained relatively steady in December, as it has the previous few months since a big spike in traffic in the summer. 53% of sessions came from direct traffic, and 38% from Google.

SEO Performance

- 1.5k Clicks (-22%), 6.8% Click Through Rate (-9.4%), 14.71 Average Position (+16%),

SEO Metrics did dip in December, we'll look at this data next year to see if this is a seasonal trend to expect. Mobile traffic accounted for 80% of visitors from organic searches.

[AALV Store](#) *Month over Month Comparisons*

Web Traffic Performance

- 912 Users (-18%), 1.3k Sessions (-17%), 13k Pageviews (-13%)

This drop in website traffic, though steeper than that in 2020, does seem to match a trend of lower traffic toward the end of the year. Traffic metrics are up 20-37% year over year. Google was the top source of sessions for the store, beating even referral traffic from the main La Viña site.

E-Commerce Performance

- \$13k Revenue (+27%), 11% Ecommerce Conversion Rate (-1.2%)

December was the second highest revenue month in 2021 for La Viña, even with the drop in traffic overall. 78% of revenue was attributed to referral traffic, and 13% to organic.

SEO Performance

- 276 Clicks (+1.5%), 1.0% Click Through Rate (+23%), 6.78 Average Position (+39%),

Despite the drop in traffic overall, traffic from search remained steady and click through rate actually increased. Similarly to the site itself, mobile traffic made up a vast majority of clicks from search at 85%.

Reflecting on 2021

2021 was a good year for Grapevine and La Viña. We tracked over 1 million visitors between the Grapevine site and store, and saw a 13% increase in revenue (\$1.22M). The podcast, though launched late in the year, was the 5th most popular page on the site overall for 2021. La Viña's revenue increased even more substantially - growing by 145% to over \$100,000. Web traffic to the La Viña site increased 280% overall for over 43,000 users throughout the year.

Podcast Report

As of January 18, 2022

Episodes = 16

Episode downloads = 38,015

Averaging 2,376 downloads per episode. According to the website *podcast.co*, if an episode gets more than 1,000 downloads, it's in the top 20%. If it gets more than 2,900 downloads, it's in the top 10%. Grapevine is doing better than the top 20%.

Podcast downloads have grown 12% in the last 28 days, compared to previous 28 days.

Where they listen:

Apple 46%

Grapevine site 27%

Spotify 9%

Amazon, Overcast, Stitcher, Podbean, others make up remaining.

How they listen:

Mobile app 65%

Mobile browser 18%

Desktop browser 7%

Operating systems:

iOS 67%

Android 17%

Other 5%

Windows 5%

macOS 4%

Also chromeOS, AmazonOS, Linux.



Web Report
January 27, 2022
Niurka M.

Audience Overview

DESCRIPTION	AAGRAPEVINE.ORG			GRAPEVINE STORE			AALAVINA.ORG			LA VINA STORE			Acquisition: THROUGH AAGV, INC CAMPAIGNS			
	MONTHS	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	AAGRAPEVINE	CAMPAIGN	AALAVINA
Sessions	114,476	101,195	102,220	18,840	22,114	19,760	3,683	3,945	3,836	1,203	1,526	1,266	16,112	GV-Podcast	493	Cita Diaria
New Users	90,477	79,150	81,596	12,155	13,803	12,293	2,796	3,177	3,042	715	1,016	817	10,126	GV News	249	
Returning visitor	10,292	8,833	9,000	3,732	4,583	4,152	274	303	263	219	245	210		Monthly Newsletter		
Page views	186,700	169,035	173,951	204,590	253,434	238,123	6,485	5,536	5,800	11,021	14,937	13,039		GVDQ		
Average pg views per session	1.63	1.67	1.7	10.86	11.46	12.05	1.76	1.4	1.51	9.16	9.79	10.3		GV & Your Group		

Meeting Guide App

AAGV	AALV
316	13
158	11

Projects
AS OF 01/13/2022*

Audio Stories Collected	380
Daily Quote	45,136
Weekly Stories	17,857
Monthly News	54,735
Quarterly GV and Your Group	82,601
La Cita Semanal Con La Viña	1,869
Noticias desde de La Viña	1,505

Source: Constant Contact | Simple Voice Center

GV Top visits pages

1. Homepage	7. /archive
2. /sobriety-calculator	8. /site-search
3. /podcast	9. /carry-the-message
4. /login	10. /sobriety-card
5. /magazine	11. /get-involved
6. /gvr-resources	12. /announcing-new-podcast

LV Top visits pages

1. /inicio	7. /servicio
2. /la-revista	8. /sigue-lavina IG
3. /usuario/inicio-sesion	9. /historia-grapevine
4. /recursos	10. /comparte
5. /lleve-el-mensaje	11. /calculadora
6. /archivo	12. /estamos-aqui-para-ayudar

UTM CODES: Traffic directed to the aagrapevine.org and aalavin.org websites through the AAGV mailing campaigns

Campaign	Acquisition		
	Users	New Users	Sessions
aagrapevine.org	11,331 % of Total: 4.43% (255,637)	10,126 % of Total: 4.05% (249,888)	16,112 % of Total: 5.07% (317,891)
1. GV_Podcast	7,892 (67.57%)	7,300 (72.09%)	10,712 (66.48%)
2. GV-News-June2021	1,648 (14.11%)	1,273 (12.57%)	2,424 (15.04%)
3. GV-Product-News	739 (6.33%)	594 (5.87%)	989 (6.14%)
4. GV05172021	219 (1.88%)	158 (1.56%)	316 (1.96%)
5. GVDQ	212 (1.82%)	170 (1.68%)	244 (1.51%)
6. GV-Your-Group-June2021	187 (1.60%)	125 (1.23%)	269 (1.67%)
7. GV-News	158 (1.35%)	109 (1.08%)	269 (1.67%)
8. NewBookAvailable	144 (1.23%)	98 (0.97%)	229 (1.42%)
9. GV-and-YourGroup	119 (1.02%)	79 (0.78%)	179 (1.11%)
10. GV-Prod-News	85 (0.73%)	53 (0.52%)	129 (0.80%)

Campaign	Acquisition		
	Users	New Users	Sessions
aalavina.org	305 % of Total: 3.30% (9,248)	249 % of Total: 2.76% (9,015)	493 % of Total: 4.30% (11,464)
1. LV Homepage Ad	187 (60.52%)	158 (63.45%)	322 (65.31%)
2. LV CTM Ad	45 (14.56%)	33 (13.25%)	63 (12.78%)
3. 03-16-15	28 (9.06%)	26 (10.44%)	34 (6.90%)
4. NewBookAvailable	19 (6.15%)	9 (3.61%)	43 (8.72%)
5. NewBook-Sept2021	9 (2.91%)	7 (2.81%)	10 (2.03%)
6. GV10192020	8 (2.59%)	8 (3.21%)	8 (1.62%)
7. GV05122021	5 (1.62%)	3 (1.20%)	5 (1.01%)
8. Free-Access	3 (0.97%)	1 (0.40%)	3 (0.61%)
9. IG-2-Blast	2 (0.65%)	2 (0.80%)	2 (0.41%)
10. GV-Your-Group-June2021	1 (0.32%)	1 (0.40%)	1 (0.20%)

[Back to Cover](#)

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM I: Discuss feasibility research on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms.

Background Notes:

2021 Public Information Advisory Action:

That a feasibility study on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms including, but not limited to, Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube be conducted and that a report on the research be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

From the July 31, 2021, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the PI advisory action that a feasibility study on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms including, but not limited to, Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube be conducted. The committee looks forward to research conducted by G.S.O. regarding these platforms at the October 2021 meeting.

From the October 30, 2021, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the research conducted by G.S.O. regarding these platforms. The committee asked that the staff secretary research information on the price, the reach and the active versus passive viewing of the PSA and that a report be brought to the January 2022 meeting.

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The Communication Services Department Project Coordinator initiated research on this topic. This will hopefully provide solid information that will spark discussion that will lead to decisions on next steps, additional research needed, if any, and eventually the content of the report on the research to bring back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

As requested at the October 2021 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting the staff secretary is providing the additional research information requested on active versus passive viewing of a PSA.

What is passive placement of ads?

Passive ads attract your services in seemingly small, subtle, more native ways that

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doesn't inconvenience or overwhelm people. It involves efforts that reach people whether they know it or not, such as placing ads in locations where they are looking anyway.

Example:

A display ad in the margin of a website, or in between website content, is a passive form of advertising.

Since visitors have the option of looking at the ad or other content nearby, passive advertising doesn't feel forced or annoying, but rather optional and expected from customers. It makes content and opportunity available to online users through smart positioning—but then waits for consumers to view the content on their own.

What is active placement of ads?

Active ads generally involve invading people's space or time in larger, more aggressive (direct) ways. These efforts are more obvious and intrusive, so people know right away they are seeing ads.

Examples

Pop-up ads are the most obvious example.

The person wasn't looking for the pop-up or expecting it, but it was put in front of them regardless. Once they see it, there's no question they're being targeted, and they must take action to remove it from their view. Either click through to see the ad or close the window.

The research performed to date includes an attached two-page document detailing the "Digital & Social Media Opportunities" cost of paid placement services.

In addition, attached as a background document is a solid "Concept of a Distribution Plan" based on Connect 360s digital streaming services. This includes the details on the platforms, service, duration, targeting, estimated results and budgets.

The research:

Communication Services reviewed an RFI proposal (see excerpt below), did a bit more research, and confirmed with a vendor - paid placement is in fact a form of paid advertising. Anything beyond broadcast is considered Pay for Play (P4P) and it's an internet/online advertising model.

The research did not find anything in the Public Information Committee's History & Action documents or our department files stating we cannot do paid advertising. In fact, we already partake in unsolicited paid email marketing/advertising for

communication distribution via Campaign Monitor.

Therefore, Communication Services Project Coordinator was recommending moving forward with broadcast (which we are performing with Connect360) and paid online distribution (which we have no plans to do at this time) for "Wall" and "Party."

The following is an excerpted vendor services statement on paid placement advertising from their RFI:

Connect 360 Digital & Social Media/Streaming Services

I understand you are interested in looking down the road to put your PSAs on some streaming services. I'm attaching an overview of the services we offer. As you look at the chart I've provided, here is clarification of the column headings:

1. Platform – This is the platform where we can place your PSAs
2. Service - Explains more about the platform
3. Duration – Most placements are for one or two months
4. Targeting – As I mentioned earlier, with digital media you can target key audience demographics (age groups) or other lifestyle options
5. Estimated results - this is what we estimate the coverage to be; deliverables are either in terms of "video streams" (meaning, one person saw your video) or impressions
6. Budgets – the amount it would cost

Connect360 shared that while this gives you a great overview of options and price-points, please know we can customize programs and budgets and often spread over more months. Keep in mind that these are all fully PAID placements, it's not donated space. In all cases at the end of a campaign we provided you with a detailed report including the different metrics available (whether it's video views, impressions, clicks to your website, etc.)

From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the feasibility study on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms. The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the research conducted by GSO regarding paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms, including added detail on the variety of streaming and video platforms that are available.

The trustees' discussion led to some questions that might start the conversation:

1. Does this feel like a direction that the Conference would like to try?
2. What sort of target audience demographics might be reached with this type of PSA message?
3. What sort of messaging?

Note: It might be best not to include specific named platforms to allow for flexibility.

Background:

1. Connect360 Digital & social media opportunities
2. Concept of a Distribution Plan - Pd placement

[Back to Main Agenda](#)



DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES Alcoholics Anonymous – April 16, 2021

Platform	Service	Duration	Targeting	Estimated Results	Budgets
VIDEO SEGMENTS					
CNN, Fox News, USA Today websites	News Site Video Pre-roll – :30 PSA as video pre-roll on the three news sites – CNN, Fox News, Today Show	1 month	National, general public only	Est. 220,000 video streams	\$10,500
WebMD	Can include a combination of video pre-roll, display ads and programmatic ad placements on the nation’s leading health website	1 month	Custom targeting built at the time of inquiry. Spanish campaigns are also available.	Est. deliverables provided at time campaign is built	\$20,750
Hulu	Placement of :15 or :30 clickable video (excl. OOT) on Hulu’s multi-device platform. 100% completed views, full-screen mode	2-3 weeks	Gender, age ranges, millennials, teens, moms and any other audience category. Additional budget for regional targeting, behavioral, genre and any other type of specific audience targeting.	Est. 350,000 video streams	\$26,950
CBS Interactive	Option for a combination video pre-roll and/or banners on the CBS Audience Network, which includes; CBS.com, CBS News.com, CBSN, CBS All Access and CBS local O&O sites in the top 23 DMAs	1 month	Gender, age, income levels, ethnicity, lifestyles, parents & moms with child age breakdown, fathers, boomers and millennials. Additional budget for geo targeting.	Est. deliverables and specific CBS websites available for placement determined at the time of inquiry	\$20,750
YouTube	Brand safe :15 or :30 video coverage on YouTube includes optimized content, 100% video completion and call-to-action overlay button linking to campaign website	1-2 months	Demo targeting includes household income, gender, education, ethnicity, occupation, children in household, men, women, millennials, moms, seniors, teens. Geo targeting can be included as well.	Est. 140,000 video views Est. 280,000 video views Est. 425,000 video views	\$11,500 \$21,500 \$30,000
In-App Mobile Video	Placement of :15 or :30 video on premium mobile apps with target audience interaction	1 month 2 months 3 months	Demo targeting includes education levels, income levels, ethnicity, age ranges, marital status, donor profiles, category interest (news, finance, health, etc.) millennials, teens, boomers, moms, parents, etc. Upon request we can layer in additional demo targets that include: Pet owners, charitable people, seniors, moms, dads, sports, food, health, gaming, travelling enthusiasts.	Est. 235,000 mobile video streams Est. 475,000 mobile video streams Est. 715,000 mobile video streams	\$13,500 \$24,500 \$37,500
Facebook	Up to :60 video and display ad placed on Facebook	1 month	Interest, location, gender & age	Est. 5 M impressions	\$10,000

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Platform	Service	Duration	Targeting	Estimated Results	Budgets
AUDIO SEGMENTS					
Pandora	Placement of a :15 or :30 audio with campaign awareness banner on Pandora’s mobile and website platforms	1 month	Demo targeting by age range, ethnicity, income levels, content category, education level, marital status, lifestyles, parents & moms with child age breakdown, fathers, boomers and millennials. Additional budget for geo-targeting.	Est. 460,000 streams	\$14,000
iHeart Radio	Placement of :15 or :30 live-in stream audio segment with campaign awareness banner	1 month	Demo targeting by age range, ethnicity, income levels, content category, education level, marital status, lifestyles, parents, boomers, millennials and etc.	Est. 400,000 audio streams and 500,000 banner impressions	\$20,500
Spotify	Placement of :15 or :30 audio segment on Spotify with campaign awareness banner	1 month	National, general public targeting. Demographic and geographic available at additional budget.	Est. 550,000 audio streams	\$39,000
Pandora en Español	Placement of a :15 or :30 audio with campaign awareness banner on Pandora en Español’s mobile and website platforms	1 month	Demo targeting by age range, income levels, content category, education level, marital status, lifestyles, parents & moms with child age breakdown, fathers, boomers and millennials. Additional budget for geo-targeting.	Est. 441,000 audio streams	\$15,250

NOTE: Budgets provided are based on current digital platform partner pricing and are subject to change. Content is required to go through editorial review by all platforms.

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Paid Online Placement: PSAs

The following is a draft plan, including budget costs, for paid online placement of the PSAs “Wall” and “Party.”

Digital Opportunities

Platform	Duration	Estimated Results	Estimated Cost
Hulu	2 – 4 months total	Est. deliverables provided at time campaign is built	\$54,000 - \$108,000
YouTube	2 – 4 months total	Est. 140,000 – 425,000 video views	\$23,000 - \$60,000
In-App Mobile Video	1-month increments	Est. 235,000 – 715,000 mobile views	\$13,500 - \$37,500
News Sites	1 – month increments	Est. 220,000 video streams	\$10,500 minimum

Distribution Plan 1: Distribution November 2021 – March 2022
Total Estimated Cost - \$86,000 (\$107,500 with 25% contingency)
Estimated Results – 710,000 video streams/views

Platform	Month	Duration	Budget
Hulu	November – December	3 wks./per month (6 wks. total)	\$54,000
YouTube	January - February	1-2 months	\$21,000
News Websites	March	1 month	\$11,000

Distribution Plan 2: Distribution December 2021 – March 2022
Total Estimated Cost - \$50,000 (\$62,500 with 25% contingency)
Estimated Results – 710,000 video streams/views

Platform	Month	Duration	Budget
Hulu	December	3 weeks	\$27,000
YouTube	January	1 month	\$12,000
News Websites	February	1 month	\$11,000

Distribution Plan 3: Distribution December 2021 – March 2022
Total Estimated Cost - \$48,000 (\$60,000 with 25% contingency)
Estimated Results – 595,000 video streams/views

Platform	Month	Duration	Budget
YouTube	December	1 month	\$12,000
In-App Mobile	January - February	2 months total	\$25,000
News Websites	March	1 month	\$11,000

[Back to Cover](#)

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM J.1 Discuss a Public Information pamphlet

1. Consider suggestion to revise the flyer “A.A. At a Glance.”

Background Notes:

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees’ Public Information Committee meeting:

The staff secretary has researched the trustees’ Public Information Committee files and discovered the P.I. Pamphlet Review Grid of the Conference-approved pamphlets under the purview of this committee. This is a grid that prior trustees’ Public Information Committees have discussed.

For the January 29, 2022, meeting the Review Grid is being provided for discussion.

From the January 29, 2022, trustees’ Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed and agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information a suggestion to revise the Conference-approved flyer, “A.A. At a Glance.” The committee is asking the Conference Committee to consider if editorial updates and a more modern look would improve the ability to carry the message captured in this flyer.

Background:

1. 2022 Review Grid of a P.I. pamphlet
2. [A.A. At a Glance](#) (F-1) (Conference-approved P.I. literature)

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

2022 P.I. Pamphlet Review Grid

A.A. at a Glance https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/f-1_AAataGlance.pdf		
<p>History –</p> <p>Earliest reference to its creation 1954. No other mention until 1977. Unable to determine due to its early creation if it was “approved” other than service material however changes to the flyer have occurred through Advisory Action. Most recently 2019.</p>	<p>Suggestions/observations –</p> <p>AA.org description: “Flyer condensing facts on the Fellowship.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No charge item - Is it too long? - local committee order it in bulk but is it helpful? 	<p>Suggestions –</p> <p>Suggest that it be revised with editorial edits and a revamped “look.”</p>

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM J.2: Discuss a Public Information pamphlet

2. Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings.”

Background Notes:

From the October 30, 2020, report of the trustees’ Public Information Committee:

The committee reviewed a request that the P.I. pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” be revised. The committee noted the need for a comprehensive review of all P.I. pamphlets. The chair appointed a working group consisting of Cathy Beckham, Christine Carpenter and Ino Fernandez to begin a review of all P.I. pamphlets and materials. The chair requested that working group members provide feedback to the staff secretary, and that the staff secretary compile the feedback and provide a progress report to the January 2021 meeting.

***Note:** The working group reviewed the suggested updates to “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” and saw the need for a revision to the pamphlet. The committee also noted that there may be a need for a section on media training and press interviews in keeping with A.A.’s public relation’s policy within the pamphlet. The working group also discussed whether the pamphlet might regularly reflect the most current shared experience and resources if it were under the “Service Material” umbrella, to be helpful to committees.*

From the January 30, 2021, report of the trustees’ Public Information Committee:

The committee reviewed a request to consider a revised version of the pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings.” The committee agreed to forward to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information the request that the pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” be revised.

2021 Public Information Advisory Action:

That the trustees’ Public Information Committee revise the pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” to better reflect carrying the A.A. message to diverse public audiences in non-A.A. settings and include a section on media training/press interviews, and that a draft or progress report on the revision be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Committee Considerations of the 2021 Conference Public Information Committee

The committee discussed service materials and resources for Public Information committees and suggested that a PowerPoint be developed for the purpose of providing shared experience on “how to” present about A.A. at non-A.A. events.

From the October 30, 2021, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the P.I. advisory action, "That the trustees' Public Information Committee revise the pamphlet 'Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings.'" The committee requested that the staff secretary, in cooperation with the staff members on the C.P.C. and Accessibilities assignments, review the current version and provide suggestions for potential edits that may be helpful in P.I. and C.P.C. efforts. The committee also noted the suggestion that focus is given to A.A. messaging to diverse public audiences in non-A.A. settings and to include a section on media training/press interviews. The committee looks forward to reviewing these suggestions at the January 2022 meeting.

The committee also discussed the 2021 P.I. committee consideration that a PowerPoint presentation be developed for P.I. and C.P.C. committees for the purpose of providing shared experience on "how to" present about A.A. at non-A.A. events. The committee looks forward to a progress report on this effort from the staff secretary at the January 2022 meeting.

Staff Note: *The Staff members believe that the update to a template PowerPoint presentation for the purpose of providing shared experience on "how to" present about A.A. at non-A.A. events will need to be developed once a decision is made on the revision the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings."*

Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The focus of this background is for the trustees' Public Information Committee to consider several suggested revisions to the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings."

In 2021 the Trustees' P.I. Committee and the Conference Committee on P.I. considered and determined that this pamphlet needed more internal G.S.O. review and work to develop suggestions for a full revision.

The path that led to the suggestions for consideration is outlined in the following Public Information committee actions:

The requested proposed suggestions for change:

The staff secretary is requesting that the trustees' Public Information Committee consider the following suggested revisions that were developed by the Staff members on P.I., C.P.C., and Accessibilities assignments. We believe that pamphlet should not sound like we are setting precedent, but more like we are sharing experience and outlining ways to approach these presentations.

Suggestion 1:

Revise the current version of the pamphlet by starting with the fully revised Draft pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings" submitted by the local area (see background Item 10.A.1). Upon review, we agreed they met their stated goal to retain as much information from the current pamphlet as possible, add vital information and useful material, re-organize, and condense.

Suggestion 2:

Two suggested new titles are, "Speaking to Outside Groups about A.A." or "Speaking at Non-A.A. Events."

Suggestion 3:

Underneath opening section of the pamphlet, add section on Singleness of Purpose

Suggestion 4:

Underneath the "Amateur Standing" add a section or statement on what is the difference between Attraction/Promotion for the presenters or speakers

Suggestion 5:

To address the request to that focus is given to A.A. messaging to diverse public audiences in non-A.A. settings, we feel that the following additions can be made to three sections of the pamphlet. Several of these questions address the ask to include sections on media training/press interviews

Page 3 section: Types of Non-A.A. Meetings **add the highlighted language.**

Organizations of any type may ask for our presence. Organizations and institutions that may request us are schools, medical, lawyers, mental health, military, factory, union, social work, and many others. **Depending on our local area or region you may also receive requests from organizations such as, but not limited to cultural associations and police departments to a local American Sign language school or indigenous population school.** In keeping with our traditions, we attempt to cooperate with these organizations in order to serve the still sick and suffering alcoholic.

Page 4 section: Know your audience and reason for your invitation **add the highlighted language.**

Before committing to speaking at a non-A.A. meeting, reflect on and ask the requestor some questions:

- Who is the inviting group and what is their occupation?
- What is the inviting groups primary interest in A.A.?
- Why was A.A. invited to talk?
- **What are the cultural norms that need to be observed?**
- **What language or accessibility solutions need to be considered to present?**
- How can an A.A. talk be beneficial to them?
- How can you carry the A.A. message appropriately for this talk?
- **Ask if press/media are going to be in attendance and/or contact the presenter?**
- **If attending, meet with the press representative prior to and at the event to discuss our Tradition of Anonymity.**

Add a new section on Page 5 titled, "Considerations in working with press and media when giving such talks":

On the day of event, meet with the press representatives again, as you may have spoken with a producer and a reporter and camera person are attending the meeting. Review the following with the onsite media representatives:

- Those who are reluctant to seek our help often overcome their fear if they are

confident that their anonymity will be respected.

- If an A.A. member is identified in the media, we ask that you please use first names only (e.g., Sofia M. or Ben T.) and that you not use images in which members' faces may be recognized. This helps to provide members with the security that anonymity can bring.
- Anonymity acts as a healthy guardrail for A.A. members, reminding us that we are a program of principles, not personalities
- Our Fellowship does not comment on matters of public controversy, but we are happy to provide information about A.A. to anyone who seeks it.

Suggestion 6:

Under the section "How to Share about A.A." the section "Be familiar with our history, literature and program of action",

Current language: "Our program of action is contained in the first 164 pages of Alcoholics Anonymous, commonly referenced as "The Big Book."

Suggestion to change to: Known as the "Big Book," the basic text of Alcoholics Anonymous has helped millions of people recover from alcoholism since the first edition appeared in 1939. Chapters describing the A.A. recovery program — the original Twelve Steps — and the personal histories of A.A.'s co-founders remain unchanged since the original, while new stories have been added to the personal histories with each edition.

Suggestion 7:

Add to new section on Page 5: Practical "how to film anonymously." Use language about filming in shadow from Tradition 11 in illustrated pamphlet. If a virtual platform interview and recording, turn off cameras of the A.A. members.

Suggestion 8:

Change the FAQ, "What is the success rate of A.A.?"

Current language: Although A.A. does not keep any official records, it is estimated that A.A. has more than 2 million members. The program has been unchanged since 1935, with our literature now available in multiple languages.

Suggestion to change to something such as: Success Rate might best be detailed in statements about the following:

- *Membership*

Alcoholics Anonymous is an informal society of more than 2,000,000 recovered alcoholics in the United States, Canada, and other countries. These members have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. (Forward to the first edition)

- *Countries*

We are aware of A.A. activity in approximately 180 countries, including 64 autonomous general service offices in other lands. Because A.A. has never attempted to keep formal membership lists, it is extremely difficult for A.A.'s General Service Office (G.S.O.) to obtain completely accurate figures on total membership at any given time.

- *Translations*

Add approximate number of how many languages are book, Alcoholics Anonymous is translated.

Change the FAQ, "What makes you an Alcoholic?"

Current language: Absolutely any type of person may have this illness, as the unlimited variety of A.A. members indicates. If drinking has an unfavorable effect on any part of a person's life, and that person still cannot stop drinking, then he or she -- in the opinion of most A.A.'s may be an alcoholic.

Suggestion to change to something such as: "If when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic." (Page 44 in We Agnostics) Only you can decide whether you want to give A.A. a try — whether you think it can help you. (From Is A.A. for You?)

From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed and agreed to forward substantial revisions to the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings" to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information. It was suggested by the committee that the list of available publications in the pamphlet also be reviewed.

Note: *The staff secretary reported to the committee that a suggestion to update to a template PowerPoint presentation for the purpose of providing shared experience on "how to" present about A.A. at non-A.A. events will need to be considered after a decision is made on the revision to the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings." The trustees' P.I. committee looks forward to a progress report on this effort at the July 2022 meeting.*

Background:

1. The local area revised version of "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings."
 - a. for P.I. Committee eyes only – draft work.
2. Link to current pamphlet: <https://www.aa.org/speaking-non-aa-meetings>

[Back to Cover](#)

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM J.3: Discuss a Public Information pamphlet

3. Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.”

Background notes:

From 2021 Additional Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee requested that G.S.O. Publishing conduct editorial updates to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” to reflect current technology terminologies and service resources.

From the July 31, 2021, trustees’ Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the PI 2021 committee consideration that GSO Publishing conduct editorial updates to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” to reflect current technology terminologies and service resources at its next printing. The staff secretary will send a memorandum to GSO Publishing requesting these updates.

The committee also noted that more substantive updates may need to be considered to reflect a more current depiction of how members – as members -- utilize social media in service committee efforts, at the group level, and in Fellowship.

From the October 30, 2021, trustees’ Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed the P.I. 2021 committee consideration that G.S.O. Publishing conduct editorial updates to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” to reflect current technology terminologies and service resources at its next printing. The staff secretary communicated with Publishing and received a timeline to provide both the editorial changes and more substantive updates that need to be considered to reflect a more current depiction of how members – as members – utilize social media in service committee efforts, at the group level, and in Fellowship. The staff secretary will provide a progress report at the January 2022 meeting.

The committee secretary reported the communication of the editorial updates to the pamphlet to reflect the current technology terminologies. The Publishing department responded with a timeline for these changes and requested we also work to provide the more substantive updates so that all updates can be performed at the planned reprint dates outlined in communications that are provided as background material.

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Staff member background notes for the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The staff secretary is suggesting the following substantive updates to the pamphlet, "Understanding Anonymity." These potential changes, if agreed upon, will need Conference-approval.

Change Suggestion 1 - Pg. 10

CURRENTLY READS

Anonymity in the digital age

Q. I maintain an Internet website and a personal page on a social media site. I also belong to an online meeting. At what level should I protect my anonymity on the Internet?

A. Publicly accessible aspects of the Internet such as websites featuring text, graphics, audio, and video can be considered the same as publishing or broadcasting. Unless password-protected, a website requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio, and film. Simply put, this means that A.A.s do not identify themselves as A.A. members using their full names and/or full-face photos.

CHANGE TO:

Anonymity in the digital age

Q. I maintain a website and social media pages. At what level should I protect my anonymity on the Internet?

A: Publicly accessible aspects of the Internet such as websites featuring text, graphics, audio, and video can be considered the same as publishing or broadcasting. Unless password-protected, a website requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio, and film/video. Simply put, this means that A.A.s do not identify themselves as A.A. members using their full names and/or full-face photos.

It is suggested that when A.A.s gather as A.A.s or as an A.A. group on social media pages, such as Facebook, and other similar platforms- that these pages are set to "private" rather than "public."

Suggestion 2 To add the following text:

Q. Are virtual A.A. Meetings considered "Public?"

A. "These online gatherings are not streamed to the general public however information about the meeting is provided to A.A members, potential members, and the general public similarly to in-person meetings.

Many members feel comfortable using their full names and making their faces visible to fellow members and those new to A.A., including at "Open" meetings. However, some members/attendees have felt more comfortable having their camera off and just listening or using just first name and last initial.

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For safety purposes, some groups have provided helpful reminders in their group format that picture taking, or screen shots are not in keeping with anonymity principles.

From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee discussed and agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information suggested revisions to the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity". The staff secretary reminded the committee that GSO Publishing has received a memorandum detailing editorial updates to the pamphlet that reflect current technology terminologies and service resources to be included at its next printing.

Background:

1. Link to pamphlet: <https://www.aa.org/understanding-anonymity>

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM J.4: Discuss a Public Information pamphlet

4. Consider request to retire and replace the “A.A. Fact File.”

Background notes:

From 2021 Additional Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee discussed the content and format of the P.I. Kit and Workbook. The committee noted the memo regarding recent A.A.W.S. Board discussions on the possible development of an A.A. service app and new digital PDF version of the workbook. The committee encourages G.S.O. to move away from a “print-first” approach to publishing so that service material and resources on aa.org might be updated more quickly and efficiently with the most up to date resources for local committees.

To that end, in partnership with the Communication Services Department, Digital Media Content Creator, the Public Information Coordinator developed a digital A.A. Press Media Kit for your review and consideration.

The Public Information Coordinator is proposing an updated electronic A.A. Press Media Kit. We currently use the A.A. Fact File as our “Press Kit”:

Link: https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/m-24_aafactfile.pdf.

The Introduction to the A.A. Fact File:

Some Information About A.A. This booklet has been prepared to help provide basic informational material on the A.A. Fellowship, and in response to requests for data in a ready reference format. Millions of men and women have heard or read about the unique Fellowship called Alcoholics Anonymous since its founding in 1935. Of these, more than 2,000,000 now call themselves members. People who once drank to excess, they finally acknowledged that they could not handle alcohol, and now live a new way of life without it.

Recommendation: Consider retiring the A.A. Fact File. This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

Press Kit Examples:

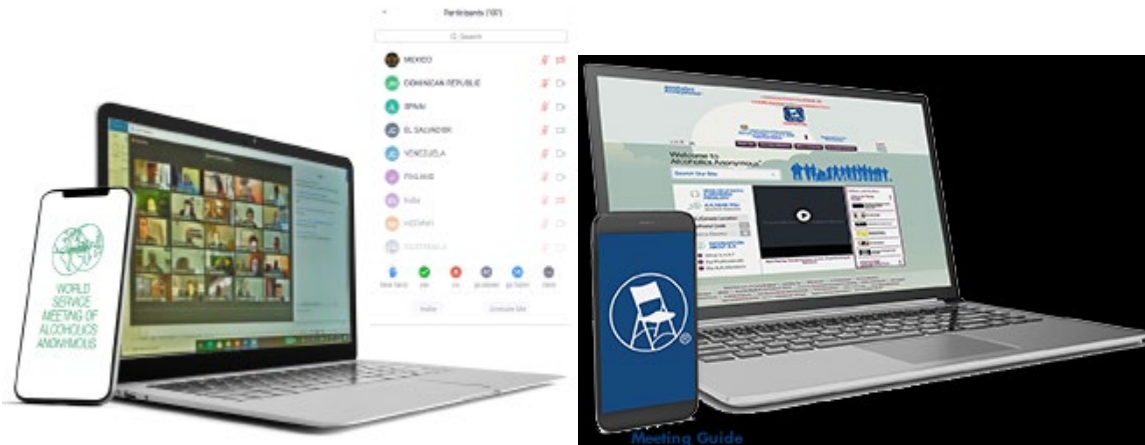
We reviewed several organization’s digital press kit examples as we developed a new A.A. Press Media Kit:

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- <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/OA-press-kit.pdf>
- https://fc9bea62-fbc7-43f6-92a1-36bc62eed623.filesusr.com/ugd/222180_8364680c01d840418020a539f940bfd2.pdf

We considered the following content:

1. What is Alcoholics Anonymous?
2. Who we are?
3. Primary purpose
4. Membership
5. Insert current Estimates of Groups and Members data maybe with a graph or chart.
6. Who Are our members?
7. What we offer
8. The 24-hour plan
9. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
10. The Structure
11. Include visually appealing content



From the January 29, 2022, trustees' Public Information Committee report:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the request to retire "The A.A. Fact File" (M-24) and replace it with a service material version of a new digital PI Press Media Kit.

Background:

1. A.A. Press Media Kit 09-30-21

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

Alcoholics Anonymous[®]

www.aa.org
(212) 870-3119
pressinfo@aa.org

What is Alcoholics Anonymous?

Alcoholics Anonymous is an informal society of more than 2,000,000 recovered alcoholics in the United States, Canada, and other countries. These people meet in local groups, which range in size from a handful in some localities to many hundreds in larger communities whether in-person or virtually.



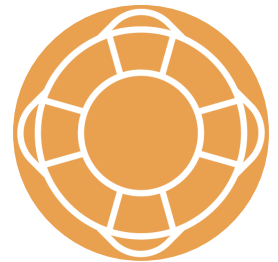
Who we are

We are people who have discovered, and admitted, that we cannot control alcohol. We have but one primary purpose: to stay sober ourselves and to help others who may turn to us for help in achieving sobriety. We are not reformers, and we're not allied with any group, cause, or religious denomination. We have no wish to "dry up" the world. We don't recruit new members, but we do welcome them. We don't impose our experience with problem drinking on others, but we do share it when we're asked to do so. We don't think we are the only people who have the answer to problem drinking. We know that the A.A. program works for us, and we have seen it work for many who wanted to quit drinking. Through A.A., we've learned a number of things about alcoholism and about ourselves.



Who are our members?

A.A. celebrates its members of varying abilities, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, gender identities, religions, languages, neighborhoods, socioeconomic backgrounds and ages. As a Fellowship we strive to support the wellbeing of all members as we evolve toward greater diversity, equity, and inclusivity. Any person who is seeking help with a drinking problem can call themselves a member. A person is a member if they say they are a member. It's that simple.



What we offer

- A.A. services supported through the voluntary contributions of its members
- Access to A.A.'s program of recovery in a variety of formats and languages
- A new way of living: Freedom from the pain and loneliness of active alcoholism
- In-person and online meetings at no cost for regular connection with fellow members
- A non-professional mutual aid environment of alcoholics sharing how they recovered with other alcoholics
- No costs, dues, or membership fees



Alcoholics Anonymous®

www.aa.org
 (212) 870-3119
 pressinfo@aa.org

The 24-hour plan

We take no pledges, we don't say that we will "never" drink again. Instead, we try to follow what we in A.A. call the "24-hour plan." We concentrate on keeping sober just the current twenty-four hours through A.A.'s program of recovery.

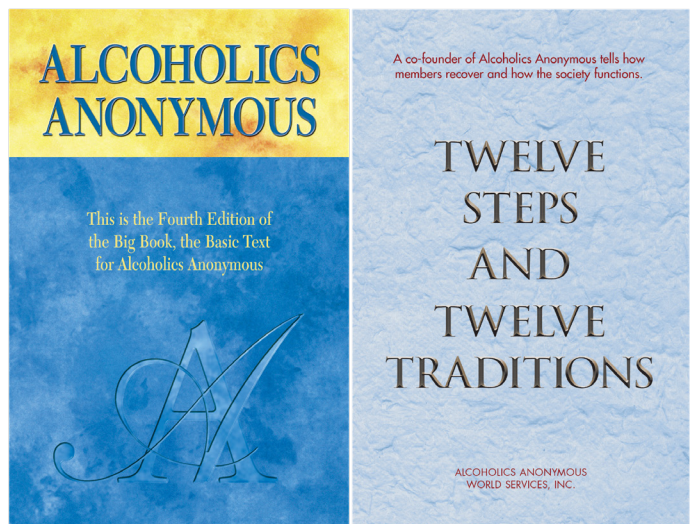
A.A.'s Program of Recovery

Twelve Steps

The "Twelve Steps" are the core of the A.A. program of personal recovery from alcoholism.

Twelve Traditions

The "Twelve Traditions" of A.A. are suggested principles to ensure the survival and growth of the thousands of groups that make up the Fellowship.

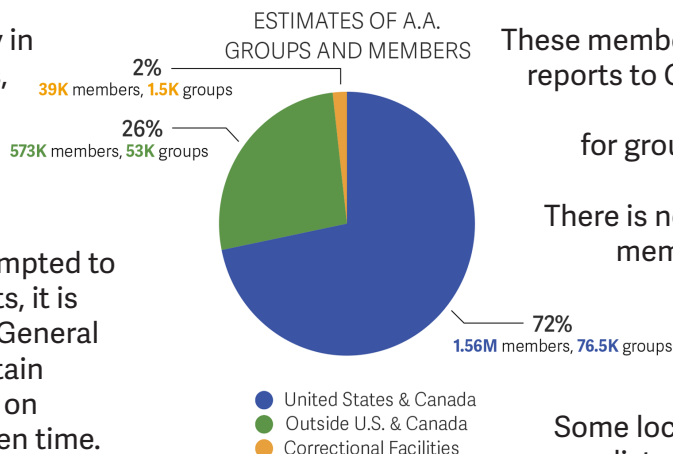


For more information about A.A.'s program of recovery visit aa.org.

Membership

We are aware of A.A. activity in approximately 180 countries, including 64 autonomous general service offices in other lands.

Because A.A. has never attempted to keep formal membership lists, it is extremely difficult for A.A.'s General Service Office (G.S.O.) to obtain completely accurate figures on total membership at any given time.



These membership figures are based on reports to G.S.O. as of January 1, 2020, plus an average allowance for groups that have not reported.

There is no practical way of counting members who are not affiliated with a local group.

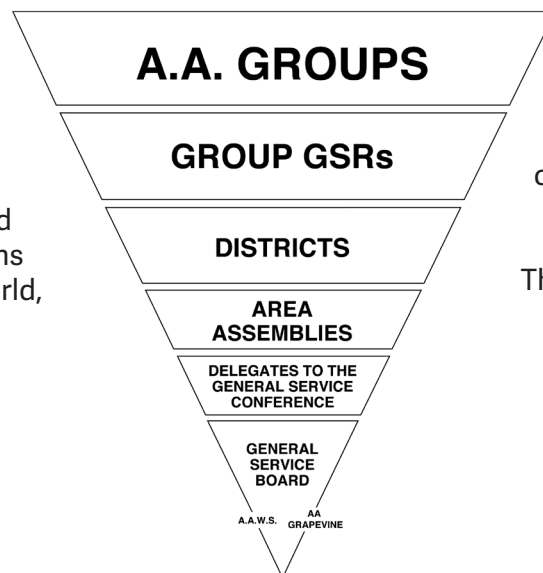
Some local groups choose not to be listed with G.S.O., others do not provide membership data.



The Structure

The General Service Office (U.S./Canada) is a repository for A.A.'s shared experience. It fulfills our primary purpose by: (1) providing service, information and experience to groups worldwide; (2) publishing literature; (3) supporting the activities of the General Service Board of A.A. G.S.O.'s history dates back to 1938, when the about-to-be-published book, Alcoholics Anonymous, provided a name for the small society known only as the Alcoholic Foundation.

**STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE
 (U.S. and Canada)**



The Foundation's rapidly expanding office soon served as the focal point for questions about A.A. from around the world, and in time became the General Service Office as we know it today.

The former Alcoholic Foundation is now called the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The General Service Office (G.S.O.) is not an authoritative or governing body.

Each A.A. group is autonomous.

Safety and A.A.

Please note: Anonymity in A.A. is not a cloak for unsafe and illegal behavior. Addressing such behavior and/or contacting the proper authorities when appropriate, does not go against any A.A. Traditions and is meant to ensure the safety of all in attendance.

A.A. does not provide medical advice or detox services; has no opinion on outside issues, including medication. Medical advice should come from a qualified physician.

Service entities, such as areas, districts and Intergroup/central offices, are available to help provide A.A. services and shared experience. All groups and entities in A.A. are autonomous.

There is no government within A.A. and no central authority to control or direct its members, but we do share our experience, strength and hope.





www.aa.org
(212) 870-3119
pressinfo@aa.org

Anonymity (Memo to the Media)

January 2021

Anonymity Letter to Media from the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

From time to time, we reach out to our friends in the media to thank them for helping us observe our long-standing tradition of anonymity for members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

First, we'd like to express our thanks. From the beginning of A.A. over 85 years ago, we've recognized that word-of-mouth is not enough to carry the A.A. program's message of hope and recovery to the many people still suffering from alcoholism. We've needed help – and the media has been a vital part of this effort. Today we estimate that there are more than 2 million successfully recovering members of Alcoholics Anonymous in more than 180 countries, and much of this growth can be attributed to the willingness of journalists and media professionals around the world to take an interest in our Fellowship.

Second, we invite your ongoing cooperation in maintaining the anonymity of A.A. members. The principle of anonymity is at the core of our Fellowship. Those who are reluctant to seek our help often overcome their fear if they are confident that their anonymity will be respected. In addition, and perhaps less understood, our tradition of anonymity acts as a healthy guardrail for A.A. members, reminding us that we are a program of principles, not personalities, and that no individual A.A. member acts as a spokesperson of our Fellowship.

If an A.A. member is identified in the media, we ask that you please use first names only (e.g., Sofia M. or Ben T.) and that you not use images in which members' faces may be recognized. This helps to provide members with the security that anonymity can bring. Again, we thank you for your continued cooperation -- in helping to carry our message to those in need of it and for helping keep the focus on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous rather than any personalities.

If you would like to know more about A.A. you are welcome to visit the "Press/Media" section of aa.org. We hope you will take a moment to watch a brief video on why anonymity remains a vital principle in Alcoholics Anonymous. Our Fellowship does not comment on matters of public controversy, but we are happy to provide information about A.A. to anyone who seeks it.

Sincerely,

Public Information Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous

For interview requests contact the Public Information Coordinator at pressinfo@aa.org.



Alcoholics Anonymous®

www.aa.org
(212) 870-3119
pressinfo@aa.org

Digital Resources

[Press Releases](#)

[About A.A.: Newsletter to Professionals](#)

[Meeting Guide App \(Google Play\)](#)

[Meeting Guide App \(App Store\)](#)

[A.A. World Services LinkedIn](#)

[A.A.W.S. YouTube](#)

[AA Grapevine YouTube](#)

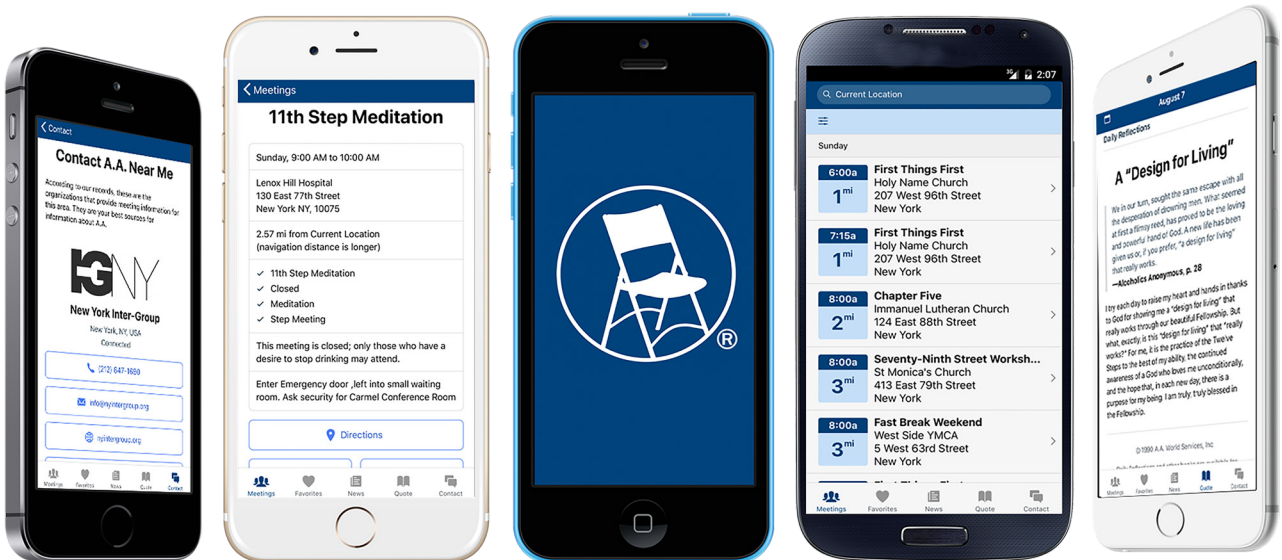
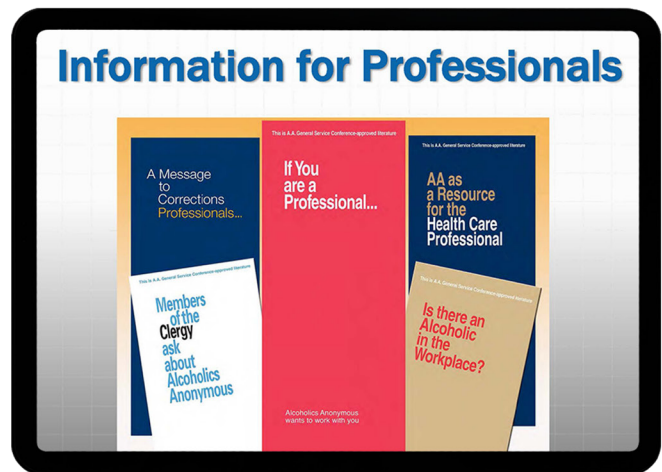
[AA Grapevine Instagram](#)

[La Viña Instagram](#)

[A.A. Literature](#)

[Web Banners](#)

[PSAs](#)



2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM K: Review request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media.

Background Notes:

From the February 1, 2020, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed a request to create a new form of communication specifically addressing the use of social media and anonymity. The committee agreed to forward to the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information a request to create a new form of communication specifically addressing the use of anonymity on social media.

Committee Considerations of the 2020 Conference Public Information Committee:

The committee reviewed a request "to create a new form of communication" to address anonymity on social media. The committee suggested that the trustees' Public Information Committee continue to discuss this request and that preliminary information be gathered before moving forward.

Information to gather:

- Shared experience from the Fellowship on how A.A. members adhere to anonymity Traditions on various social media platforms.
- Suggested safety and etiquette while using social media.
- Anonymity on video meeting platforms.

While the committee recognizes that A.A. literature on anonymity is available ("Understanding Anonymity," A.A. Guidelines on Internet, etc.) the committee noted that the content is dated and does not accurately reflect current technology or the Fellowship's experience. Specific, updated material is needed and the consideration that a video service piece to communicate this sharing might be explored. The committee requested that the trustees' Public Information Committee continue these discussions and that a progress report or draft proposal be brought back to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information.

From the October 31, 2020, report of the trustees' Committee on Public Information:

The committee discussed the request "to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media." The committee reviewed a progress report from the staff secretary on the development of an online survey of the Fellowship to explore their perspectives on anonymity-based Traditions and social media. The committee agreed to continue discussions and requested that the staff secretary provide a

progress report on the survey to the January 2021 meeting.

From the January 31, 2021, report of the trustees' Committee on Public Information:

The committee discussed the request to create a new form of communication on anonymity and social media. The committee also noted the 2020 Public Information committee consideration that the trustees' Public Information Committee continue to discuss this request and that preliminary information be gathered before moving forward. The trustees' committee reviewed potential survey questions that could be shared with the Fellowship and requested that notes be provided to the staff secretary regarding the draft survey questions.

From the July 31, 2021, report of the trustees' Committee on Public Information:

The committee continued to discuss and review the proposed agenda item requesting "to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media." The committee tabled the discussion and will either meet soon after the board weekend to continue discussion or will discuss at the October 2021 meeting.

From the October 30, 2021, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee continued to discuss and review the proposed agenda item requesting "to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media." The staff secretary located the request for shared experience survey titled, "Anonymity on Social Media Survey – A Request for Feedback from A.A. Members." The staff secretary will seek guidance from the committee regarding the survey questions and distribution and will provide a progress report at the January 2022 meeting.

On November 15, 2021, the staff secretary sought guidance from the trustees' PI chair and vice-chair regarding the shared experience survey titled, "Anonymity on Social Media Survey – A Request for Feedback from A.A. Members" and asked if several committee members need to gather to review and confirm the survey is ready to send provide edits.

The trustees' chair responded as follows:

Thank you for uncovering this work and helping this important item move forward. The background in the historical review is very helpful in evaluating the survey. The survey may need some work though, it is not quite ready for fielding as it stands. More than just a little wording may need to be adjusted to really get what we want from it.

The concern is that given the CMP work, asking the committee to review this form seems like a tall order to complete prior to January 2022 trustees' P.I. Committee meeting.

Option for trustees' P.I. Committee to consider at the January 2022 meeting:

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1. We share with the Conference Committee on Public Information we had to put this on hold until the CMP was complete. Work can continue in July 2022 with a new trustees' Committee on Public Information. The current trustees' committee work should be completed at the January Board meeting.
2. We analyze how much it would cost to have the survey methodologist review this survey to make sure it would capture the information from the Fellowship that is being sought.

Staff Note: *Right now, we don't have any monies set aside in the 2022 P.I. budget. If we needed to add this new SOW to focus on a review of the Anonymity and Social Media Survey work, we will need to add to the budget during the mid-year review budget process.*

From the January 29, 2022, report of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the request "to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media" and a draft survey developed to gather shared experience from the Fellowship (for consideration).

Background:

1. Shared experience survey titled, "Anonymity on Social Media Survey – A Request for Feedback from A.A. Members."

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

Anonymity on Social Media Survey

A Request for Feedback from A.A. Members:

Greetings from the P.I. Desk:

The Public Information desk is seeking deeper sharing on the topic Anonymity, specifically on social media platforms.

The topic of anonymity on social media is wide ranging and layered. Anonymity is the spiritual principle of all our Traditions. On one hand, both “private” and public media platforms have added a wider reach to communicate with members and potential members. Today in A.A. we are able to provide information about our program of recovery to the general public through email, A.A. websites and when appropriate - A.A. entity social media pages. Social networking offers contemporary vehicles to carry the A.A. message to the public.

Protecting anonymity is a major concern to A.A. members. Making sure A.A. is available on the platforms in which problem drinkers search for help is also a major concern to A.A. members.

Anonymity acts as a reminder for A.A. members, that we are a program of principles, not personalities, and that no individual A.A. member may presume to act as a spokesperson or leader of our Fellowship.

Your responses to the attached survey will provide vital perspective on the topic of anonymity on public and private media platforms.

Prior to taking the survey it may be helpful to review [A.A. Traditions](#) as outlined in [Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions](#) and the Conference-approved pamphlet [Understanding Anonymity](#).

While the below questions may not capture every facet of social media topics this survey is meant to gather a greater scope and depth of shared experience than what currently exists in A.A. materials. In the questions below, when appropriate, please click all answers that apply. For the purpose of this survey the word “public” is being used for any platforms that are viewed by non-A.A.s - with the exception of “Open” online meetings.

1. Do you use one or more of the following social media accounts account?
 Twitter Instagram Facebook Snap Chat Reddit
 Tik Tok Other
2. Do you consider social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter to be public or private in nature?

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Public **Private** **Both, depending on the privacy settings**

3. Do you post that you are a member of Alcoholics Anonymous or post statements that suggest you are an A.A. member on your personal public profile such as, "Thank you, to A.A. for my sobriety."

Yes **No**

4. Is your personal social media page visible to non-A.A.s?

Yes **No**

5. Do you think it is in keeping with A.A. Traditions to state that you are celebrating an A.A. anniversary without actually referring to A.A. itself on one's profile? (e.g. "Mary : Has 4 years today!" "Rafael hasn't had a drink One Day at a Time for 5 years")

Yes **No** **Not sure**

6. Do you see sober anniversary posts on public platforms (that do not mention A.A.) in conflict with the principles of humility and sacrifice that underlie our anonymity traditions?

In conflict **Not in conflict** **Depends**

7. Do you find sober anniversary posts (that do not mention A.A.) an effective way to let someone know they can approach someone privately for more information in how they got sober.

It is effective **Not effective** **Seems like bragging**

8. Is posting a sober medallion/chip on a public social media page an anonymity break? (Note: *Most* chips do not say "Alcoholics Anonymous/A.A." A.A. World Services does not make medallions/chips.)

Yes **No** **Kind of**

9. Is posting "XXI" or "21" for a sober anniversary in keeping with Traditions Eleven and Twelve?

Yes **No** **Not sure**

10. Do you feel it is important to *not* identify oneself or others as members of A.A. if full face and last name is visible when posting on "public" social media settings, on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, YouTube, public website, etc.?

Yes **No** **Not Sure**

I can post about myself but not other A.A. members

11. Do you believe that "private" A.A. groups on Facebook are at the public level?

Yes **No** **Maybe**

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12. Do you believe “Liking” or subscribing to a Public informational A.A. page implies that one is a member of A.A.?

YES **NO** **Depends on the media platform**

13. Do you believe that A.A. membership or perceived A.A. membership on public social media posts can possibly affiliate the A.A. message with outside affiliations, controversial subjects and opinions that might divert or push away A.A. members or potential A.A. members?

Yes **No** **Only if you state you are an A.A. member**
 I only post cat videos and everyone loves cats

14. A.A. members are “citizens of the world” with diverse opinions and ways they live their life outside of A.A. settings. Has social media changed how A.A. members interact with each other in their everyday lives?

Creates more unity & connection **Creates more disunity amongst members** **Creates disunity, yet once A.A.s gather back in A.A. settings the Traditions unite us to focus on A.A.’s primary purpose** **Other**

15. Whose responsibility do you think it is to monitor anonymity breaks on public social media platforms?

Self- monitor **GSR** **Delegate** **G.S.O.** **Fellow Friends** **My page/My business**

16. Are you a member of a “private” A.A. group on Facebook?

I’m a member of an A.A. group on Facebook.
 I’m not a member of an A.A. group on Facebook.
 I belong to a non -A.A. specific, Facebook group for people in various forms of recovery.

17. Do you consider online A.A. meetings and events...?

Public level **As private as an “in-person” group or event provided the meeting is not shared or streamed on “public” platforms** **Other**

18. Do you believe A.A. members should not use full names in their naming convention in online meetings?

Just first name, last initial
 I use full name. This is not the public level.
 It’s up to the person how they name themselves.
 I don’t want anyone to know my first name so I go by “Wonder Woman” or “Captain Dynamite”

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19. Do you believe online A.A. meetings should have passcodes?

For anonymity purposes **For safety purposes** **Why make it harder to get to the meeting?**

20. Do you believe groups should request that live faces be shown when someone is sharing at an online A.A. meeting?

Safety Purposes (trolling) **It's nice, but not necessary and should be voluntary** **Other**

21. Do you think A.A. entities should have public interactive social media platform pages?

Facebook **Instagram** **Twitter** **A.A. entities should not create public pages** **Other**

23. Do you follow "sober meme" social media pages?

Yes **No** **I don't follow a page but I love a good sober meme**

24. If a new service piece were developed on the subject of anonymity and social media, which format would be most helpful?

Hard Copy pamphlet/Flyer **Video** **Podcast episodes**

Whoot Whoot! You're done! Thank you for your service to A.A. service structure for the U.S./Canada!

You were probably expecting 12 questions, but we felt like changing it up and going for 24! More is more! (some things never change.)

Please feel free to add any additional comments or local sharing related to this subject.

G.S.O. is also looking for sharing on the following topics in A.A. settings. Contact:

Publicinfo@aa.org

- QR Codes, Apps,
- Social media platforms (Private groups, Informational Pages)
- Anonymity on social media

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- What A.A./Recovery social media platforms to you follow? (Example: Reddit)
- PSA placement on online platforms (Ex. Hulu, YouTube, e-radio)
- A.A. Google business listings
- Local P.I. and C.P.C. virtual presentations
- Billboards, Bus ads, Service pieces, and PowerPoint presentations
- A.A. online meeting guidelines
- Locally created videos sharing the experience, strength, and hope of “young people” finding recovery in A.A. (anonymity protected.)
- Submissions to the *Young People Video Project*

DRAFT

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM L: Discuss 2022 Analysis Report on the A.A. Membership Survey

Background notes:

2017 General Service Conference P.I. Recommendations:

That the draft 2017 A.A. Survey Questionnaire be changed as follows:

Question 2 be changed from “Sex: ___ Male ___ Female” to “Gender Identity: ___ Male ___ Female ___ [language to include all gender nonconforming] ___ No Response.” **Note: The Conference did not accept this recommendation.**

That the 2017 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted by area on a random basis as was done in the 2014 A.A. Membership Survey and requested that the trustees’ Committee on Public Information review the current A.A. Membership Survey methodology, possible methods for surveying the membership electronically and any reasonable hybrid of the two methods, and that a progress report be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information **Note: The Conference did not accept this recommendation.**

From the February 1, 2020, report of the trustees’ Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed a professional survey methodology report on the A.A. Triennial Membership Survey. The committee agreed to forward to the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information the survey report.

The committee also asked that additional information be included in the background reflecting discussions and suggestions that came from committee discussions with the survey professional. Noting that the survey methodology review is still in its infancy the committee asked that this discussion be continued at the August 2020 meeting.

Committee Consideration from the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the trustees’ Public Information Committee report on the A.A. Membership Survey. The committee noted it was encouraged by some of the findings by the survey professional and asked that the trustees’ Public Information Committee continue to explore this topic. The committee also suggested the exploration of a possible digital questionnaire feedback form be part of their discussions.

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From the January 30, 2021, report of the trustees' Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the report from the Survey Methodology working group on the Triennial A.A. Membership Survey. The committee agreed to forward the report to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information including the suggestion that the 2021 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted, including updated pre-survey communications, survey instructions and the option for a digital delivery method.

The committee also noted the importance of updating the questionnaire to expand the gender markers to allow for better reflection of the diversity of our membership and potential members.

Committee Considerations of the 2021 Conference Public Information Committee

The committee discussed the trustees' Public Information Committee "Survey Methodology Working Group on the Triennial A.A. Membership Survey" report. The committee reviewed and accepted the report and felt satisfied that the current methodology sampling of the survey is sound.

The committee also discussed the suggestion that 2021 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted and took no action. The committee expressed concerns on the timing of the survey being distributed to the Fellowship considering the status of many groups, attendance, and possible interrupted local communications relating to the distribution of the questionnaire.

The committee also expressed concerns about the A.A. Membership Survey in pamphlet form being used as an "outward" facing Public Information pamphlet to inform the public, professionals, and potential members about A.A. and believes that the function of the data collected might be better used to inform Twelfth Step efforts for groups and service committees rather than a Public Information tool.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Public Information Committee:

- Conduct a more in-depth review of the content, language, and function in the questionnaire.
- Discuss the function and target audience of the pamphlet.
- Produce a training video for delegates and G.S.R.s on data collection, purpose, and methods to enhance consistency and engagement.

From the July 31, 2021, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the 2021 committee consideration regarding the A.A. Membership Survey methodology report.

The committee recommended that the staff secretary moves forward and engage the professional survey methodologist, to conduct a focused review and analysis of the A.A. Membership Survey Questionnaire at a cost not to exceed \$8,000 (the

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current amount in the reforecast 2021 trustees' PI budget category for this item).

Note: GSB approved this recommendation at the August 2, 2021, meeting.

From the October 30, 2021, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

The committee discussed the final proposal engaging the professional survey methodologist, Dr. C., to conduct a focused review and analysis of the A.A. Membership Survey Questionnaire at a cost not to exceed \$8,000. The committee will participate in "A.A. Leadership" meetings with the methodologist in the fourth quarter. The staff secretary shared that the work has begun and a final report with findings and recommendations is planned to be provided at the January 2022 meeting.

The staff secretary coordinated the lists of member and professional candidates for Dr. Cooper to participate in cognitive interviews regarding the membership survey.

- Member candidates including new and existing members from a good cross-section of regions and areas. Those involved in A.A. service as well as the average A.A. member.
- Professional candidates were gathered from the most recent trustees' Nominating Committee of Class A candidates. The group includes professionals from addiction counseling and treatment, military chaplains, employee assistance program counselors, trial court judges, and high school administrators.

From the January 29, 2022, meeting of the trustees' Public Information Committee:

On January 10, 2022, Dr. C. provided the "2022 Analysis Report on the A.A. Membership Survey."

The committee discussed the 2022 final report requested from a survey methodology consultant regarding an assessment of the questionnaire used for the triennial Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Membership Survey and the approach the organization currently uses to report the results of that survey. The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information the 2022 final report and the 2021 final report from the Survey Methodology working group on the Triennial A.A. Membership Survey for full consideration of next steps.

Background:

1. 2021 Membership Survey Progress Report from working group
2. 2022 Analysis Report on the A.A. Membership Survey

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

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Workgroup on Membership Survey: 2020-2021**Trustees Committee on Public Information****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

With gratitude for the opportunity to study the survey methodology and its procedures, as well as previous thoughtful and thorough reviews, we conclude:

- 1) The survey sampling methodology is sound and consistent with best practice in the survey sciences.
- 2) The largest loss of data in the return rate (~50% of estimated members; ~50% groups invited), while not a threat to survey validity, appears to be largely a function of two sources that can be mitigated by adapting procedures:
 - a. Erroneous database listings
 - b. Disengaged delegates, GSRs, or groups.
- 3) Improved data collection could be anticipated with the implementation of:
 - a. Higher engagement with areas prior to data collection
 - b. Training content (including a brief Class A video) about the purpose and procedure of the survey for delegates and GSRs
 - c. Robust tracking of procedural survey step outcomes
 - d. Comparison of observed versus collected group demographics.
- 4) Relevance to local general service committees could be achieved through programming repeatable regional analyses.
- 5) Discussion about the functions and target audiences of the survey, including intended and unintended uses of survey findings, may be prudent.
- 6) Future work to explore parallel methods and enhance content relevance is warranted, including convenience sampling using the AA website and APP and content review with target audience input.

Respectfully
submitted, Deborah K.
Peter L. (non alcoholic)

Workgroup on Membership Survey: 2020

At the request of Trish L., chair of Trustees Committee on PI, in 2020 we met several times by telephone, zoom, and over email to distill reports and recommendations related to the AA membership survey. Note is made to acknowledge that over the past three years, the TCPI and its subcommittees have studied the survey methodology in light of review of current and recent procedures employed, have had input from a reputable, independent outside consultant, and have reviewed previous assessments of the survey.

Materials reviewed: **(Note: Dr. Cooper is a Survey Methodologist professional)**

- 2020 Report: Dr. A. Cooper, Duke University, Social Science Research Institute
- 2013 Report: J. Gary (NERT) TCPI Membership Survey Subcommittee
- PDF: Survey Pamphlets 1968-2014
- Pertinent procedural documents, including: Letters to the delegates and GSRs, notes for GSO PI staff preparing and having survey oversight, 2014 data tracking sheets and tabulations.

The TCPI and Conference Committee on PI (CCPI) are encouraged to appreciate A) Dr. Cooper's assessment of the sampling strategy and recommendations from January 2020, and B) The 2013 TCPI Membership Survey Subcommittee Final Report, chair J. Gary (NERT). The wealth of statistical and behavioral science expertise reflected in both of these reports is formidable, the work is outstanding, and the conclusions are thorough. Many observations can be found in both reports, though they are communicated differently. In this report, we will highlight those aspects that are elemental to the question posed and the recommendations suggested.

We find it noteworthy that the survey methodology has been thoroughly reviewed and vetted several times, and yet questions remain about the approach. Interestingly, questions most often do not focus on the overall *survey methodology* but rather the *sampling methodology*. So let's first address this.

Sampling methodology:

Questions related to the validity of sampling are expressed most often as some version of, 'how can less than 2% of a population reflect the population as a whole?' In this report, we hope to clearly indicate that *random sampling methodology is not only valid and appropriate, but a highly effective, efficient, and best practice method of data collection to measure a target population*. The methodology uses a sample of the body one wishes to characterize to reflect the whole, and the fact that those sampled are drawn randomly, without bias, ensures that the characterization will be accurate. Specifically, the survey methodology uses *true probability* sampling, which involves selecting a sample that is drawn randomly from the parent distribution, meaning that each group/member has an equal probability to be selected for inclusion. Importantly, the review found that our survey "*employs a sample size that is more than adequate to generate estimates that are quite precise*". Note that sampling 100% of the target population in national surveys is rarely feasible, but importantly, is a poor use of limited resources in large populations as the incremental data obtained above that of the randomly selected sample does not add new information or reduce sampling error.

In addition to random sampling, we also correctly use stratification and clustering techniques. *Stratification* means that the procedure insures that groups are selected from each *stratum*, which for us is defined as the 93 areas. Stratifying by areas ensures that areas with fewer groups are not left out and that areas with many groups do not disproportionately dominate. So, rather than applying the target percentage (1.3% of groups) to all active, registered groups in the US and Canada, the target is applied within each area, so that 1.3% of the groups in each area are selected. The selected groups then serve as *clusters*, where all members present at an ordinary meeting are invited to participate. While the use of clusters can give members who attend more than one group some advantage in being randomly chosen to participate in the survey, this drawback did not elicit any major revision recommendation in sampling from our reviewer (the interested reader is referred to Dr. Cooper's discussion of the use of group's as clusters).

In summary, the random sampling with stratification and clustering are sound, best practice methods used in large social science surveys.

Return Rate versus Potential Bias:

J. Gary's report indicates that in 2011, the target sample size was ~16,250 member respondents to achieve a sound, random sample. 746 groups were randomly survey (1.3% of groups) to achieve this, and about 10,000 members submitted surveys, 8,000 of which were usable (note this is about 50% of target). In 2014, this same strategy resulted in 817 groups being invited, and remarkably, 411 groups (50.3%) provided responses, for a total of 6450 completed surveys.

Importantly, the return rate of 50% does *not* compromise the validity of the findings. Dr. Cooper checked the estimates and error rates based on using a sample size of 16,000 and then again with 8,000, and the confidence bands and error rate differences were negligible (personal communication, October 2020). However, the lack of return from ~50% of the target sample suggests that several sources of data loss, some of which can introduce bias, are occurring with our survey:

- 1) The loss could be at the group level due to closed/inactive groups. For instance, if a sampled group is inactive and there is insufficient time to pull a replacement group, there is a loss of data. Review of procedural sheets do indicate this to be one factor impacting our data return, but it is impossible to estimate how much of the missing 50% these account for because of incomplete communication and/or tracking. This scenario may not systematically introduce bias, but does reduce the sample size and should be mitigated if possible.
- 2) The loss could be at the group level because of insufficient engagement by the delegate or the GSRs. Logs from 2014 suggest that 12 areas had zero surveys returned. The size of these areas were variable, suggesting that small size did not explain the absences. There is a lack of engagement from those charged with data collection which has a significant impact on the return rate. Note in 2014, 406 groups turned in no data. This scenario may not systematically introduce bias, but does reduce the sample size and should be mitigated if possible.
- 3) There could be a subset, or subsets of people, in a group that do not complete the survey. For instance, if only 75% of the members present take the survey, then bias is introduced if the 25% non-responders are different than those that responded. Unlike the other scenarios, this scenario has a high likelihood of bias. If the non-survey takers are different than the rest of the

members in any way, *self-selection bias* is introduced which can have a large impact on findings. For instance, if young mothers do not stay after the meeting to take the survey, or those that can't read well quickly leave, or those with a criminal history are afraid of surveillance and don't respond, then you survey only the remaining and systematically introduce bias. Please note that social science research is well aware of such biases in research participation, particularly in certain parts of the country and in certain populations.

- 4) Loss of data due to non-response on key items. In both the 2011 and 2014, about 20% of the data were considered non-usable because key items were skipped. This is a large loss of data that again should be mitigated if possible.

Procedural recommendations to address these sources of data loss and potential bias are included below. Please note the importance of mitigating sources of data loss and bias wherever possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We recommend a series of stepped improvements and projects be implemented to allow for a reasoned approach to the Membership Survey and its data collection. These recommendations assume resumption of in-person meetings by fall 2021. Should this not occur, we would recommend that the Trustees PI committee be given the latitude to postpone data collection.

- 1) **Year 1, 2021**, conduct the survey using our current, sound methodology, with the proposed improvements and procedural changes noted below. The target sample size will equal 1.3% of registered groups in each area (see procedures below). Note is made, and affirmed, that methods review confirms that the current stratified random sampling technique and sample size is sufficient to yields a representative sample of membership within our registered groups.

Proposed Improvements:

- a) Utilization of a training video for delegates and GSRs on data collection purpose and methods (see procedural recommendations) to enhance consistency and engagement. This is designed to mitigate major data loss (up to 50%) from lack of consistent communication and engagement.
- b) As recommended by Dr. Cooper, a simple method to explore the possibility of self-selection bias is achieved with simple tallies of observable data elements (group size, age groups, gender, and racial breakdown of a group). Because self-selection bias is one of the greatest dangers to the integrity of the findings, we do recommend this exploration. These data elements can be quickly tallied and compared to actual survey results to determine if there are groups of people that are not responding to the survey. Specifically, if there is a considerable difference between number of surveys returned, or the actual to observed composition of the group, then potential bias is involved (*eg, if there are 10 members under age 30 in a group and 20 in elder age groups, but the surveys returned are total 15, 10 of which are the younger members, there is an age bias*). Observable variables: age, race, gender, by broad group classification. It is important to note that attention these factors is to ensure that the data collection method maintains integrity; random selection will not yield a representative sample if there is systematic bias introduced.

c) Enhanced, relevant reporting. In addition to total calculation of the membership elements in the US and Canada, provide the same data by region to possibly reflect regional data more accurately. Once a dashboard of calculation is established, it is fairly easy to restrict the sample to regional subgroups as needed and results could be posted for download.

d) Content: In 2017, the GSC CCPI made the following recommendation regarding the question related to gender:

Question 2 be changed from:

“Sex: Male__Female_____”

to:

“Gender Identity: Male__Female_____ [Language inclusive of all gender nonconforming]_____ No Response_____”

Two CCPI recommendations to the GSC (one regarding survey implementation and the other an update to questionnaire language) did not pass. Based on GSC floor discussions, the TCPI continued their review of survey methodology. While a thorough review of content is recommended for the future below, we humbly suggest that consideration of inclusive gender categories in keeping with contemporary, professional language be utilized.

e) Procedural recommendations, below, to ensure greater data capture and reporting.

a. Creation and use of training video for delegates and GSRs to include the purpose of the survey, its relevance to PI work, and instruction on gathering the survey data. Considerations can be made for Class A trustee(s) assistance for creation.

b. In the past, to reach the target of 1.3% of groups, the percentage of groups pulled from each area varied from 1.0 to 1.5% and it appears that over time there was attempt to recalculate the groups pulled to maintain each percentage in light of changing number of groups in each area. This procedure should be simplified to 1.3% of groups being pulled from each area. If the result of this calculation is ≤ 1 , that area's target should be assigned 2 (thus, no area has less than 2 groups pulled). (Recommendation confirmed with Dr. Cooper, Oct 2020).

c. Previous practice eliminated surveys if either #5 or #6 was not answered:

#5: I first came into A.A. in _____(month)/_____(year)

#6: I had my last drink in _____(month)/_____(year)

The justification for omitting these was to ensure that those who responded were in AA. The data loss related to this (~20%) is considerable, and the value of omitting surveys due to #5 is questionable. We recommend that only surveys with #6 omitted should be discarded, and that the instructions should emphasize that *ONLY AA members should complete the survey*.

d. We recommend implementation and documentation of these steps (with timeline *draft*):

July 1: distribution of randomly selected group names to delegates with request for feedback on inactive groups by July 14. Significant efforts to engage delegates in this first phase so that replacement groups can be provided for inactive groups if warranted.

July 21: distribution to delegates of replacement groups.

Aug 15: distribution to delegates of final replacement groups, if needed.

Sept 1: Instructions to Delegates and GSRs about upcoming project, including distribution of training video and discussion as needed.

Oct 1-31: data collection.

Nov 1-30: tabulations.

- 2) **Year 2, in 2022:** As results arrive, it would be prudent to **consider the functions and target audiences, including intended and unintended uses of survey results.** Note that there are multiple potential consumers for survey findings, and it would be prudent to discuss these audiences and how we might better communicate the best information to them. **It may be prudent to ask the Conference Committee on PI to undertake such discussion on the function and audiences of the survey, to advise future study or action. It would also be prudent to consult with our Class A professional trustees about this.** Related to this discussion:
- a. The pamphlet states that *“Alcoholics Anonymous conducts this survey to keep members informed on current trends in membership characteristics. The survey also provides information about A.A. to the professional community and to the general public as part of A.A.’s purpose to carry our message to those who still suffer from alcoholism”.*
 - b. Note that one function is an inventory for us, to give us insights into sects of the alcoholic population that may not be finding or staying in AA.
 - c. This is very different than the function or purpose of informing our professional community about AA. Indeed, most service organizations do inventory and communicate to the public who they serve and the size of their organization in a general way (eg, Boy Scouts, youth organization in the US, with ~2.3 million youth participants). It may be important to understand what data elements are important for professionals referring to AA to have. One might question whether or not the trends found in the survey actually negatively impact referral trends (eg, “I will not send my young patient, my Hispanic client, etc, to AA because his/her/their group is not well represented”). The survey results (via pamphlets or tabletop display formats) may not be *THE* message that is best suited for professionals.
 - d. With thorough discussion, careful selection of appropriate reporting data for press (via inclusion in press letters or packets), professionals (“snippet data” on website, in pamphlets), and internal communications to inform 12 step efforts could be made.
 - e. Consistent with professional messaging, when we do present outward facing data, we may want to have standard language underscoring inclusion, eg, *“A.A. welcomes alcoholics of varying abilities, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, gender identities, religions, languages, neighborhoods, socioeconomic backgrounds and ages.”*
- 2) **Year 2, in 2022:**
- a) Design a pilot study of collecting two *convenience samples*: 1) AA website, 2) AA Meeting Guide App, using the same questions as 2021. Examine differences in data patterns across the three collection methodologies. Add basic questions such as member city/state and whether or not their home group is listed with GSO to assist in understanding the membership responding in these formats (*note: we may learn a bit about registered groups versus meetings with this methodology). Ideally, collection of this pilot data would follow collection of the traditional membership survey data within 1-2 years so that no portion becomes dated.
 - b) Initiate expert *review of survey content*; utilize target group focus group feedback on what content is most important to reflect to design response content of maximal value.

- 3) Future surveys, years 2024 and beyond.** Periodic consultation for sample size review using up to date estimates of fellowship membership should be requested, to adjust the 1.3% target if needed. Note that this is not a tri-annual review of methodology, but rather a periodic (at least by decade) review of the sample size target based on evolving membership estimates. Such sample size calculations do not involve extensive work, but should be updated.

And finally, outside the scope of the membership survey:

A number of related matters arise when discussing the survey, such as the matter of inactive groups, or the many AA members who attend unregistered AA meetings. These members are a part of the fellowship and these meetings are served by the products and services of GSO. At some point, it may be valuable to better understand the scope of both inactive groups and unregistered groups. We recommend these be brought to the attention of the AAWS board for consideration, when appropriate.

- a) Consider collecting simple data on the number of registered groups versus unregistered meetings. This might easily be executed through DCMs, who are familiar with groups and meetings in their 'jurisdiction'.
- b) Request to GSO to explore NetSuite and MyPortal to provide more accurate group listings, as possible.

[Back to Agenda](#)

Review of the A. A. Membership Survey Questionnaire and Results Reporting
A Report to the Trustees Public Information Committee
prepared by Dr. Alexandra Cooper
(Note: Dr. Cooper is a Survey Methodologist professional)
submitted January 10, 2022

Executive Summary

This report responds to a request by the General Services Board (GSO) of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. for an assessment of the questionnaire used for the triennial Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Membership Survey and of the approach the organization uses to report the results of that survey. The report is based on its author's expert review of the questionnaire itself, on a series of interviews with members concerning their reactions to the survey questionnaire, and on interviews with professionals concerning their familiarity with, use of, and reactions to the six-page pamphlet A.A. uses to report the survey's findings.

The report identifies many strengths in the existing questionnaire, notably its concise nature and narrow focus. It also recommends modest but substantively important changes to update and improve the questionnaire. It suggests changes to the layout and sequencing of the items in the Survey and recommends making the language more colloquial and accessible to a wider range of reading levels. It proposes very minor modifications in wording for a number of the question items, and somewhat broader changes to the items used to collect data about gender, race, ethnicity, and employment. Based on suggestions from the members interviewed it also identifies, a few items that may be worth adding to the questionnaire. It acknowledges that any such updates do introduce challenges with comparisons over time and discusses a strategy for reducing these effects.

This report also provides what should be considered a preliminary exploration of professionals' use of the pamphlet A.A. creates from the Survey data, and finds that while professionals who work with still-suffering alcoholics do find some of the information the pamphlet contains useful, they do not regularly use the pamphlet itself and are not convinced of its overall value. Based on their feedback, the report provides recommendations for ways in which the pamphlet might be improved. As with those recommended for the Survey, the changes recommended for the pamphlet are fairly minor, including some updates, additional information about ways in which prospective A.A. members can find meetings that are a good "fit" for them, and ways to frame the information the pamphlet contains to make it clearer why it is relevant to the still-suffering alcoholic. It also notes that adding a few short quotes from members about how A.A. has helped them achieve sobriety might prove a useful addition to the quantitative information the pamphlet already includes.

The report concludes with a very brief summary of what it has covered. It notes that the recommendations it contains involve tradeoffs that the GSO will need to consider as the organization decides which changes to adopt and which to reject, as well as how to implement them.

Review of the A. A. Membership Survey Questionnaire and Results Reporting A
Report to the Trustees Public Information Committee
prepared by Dr. Alexandra Cooper
(Note: Dr. Cooper is a Survey Methodologist professional)
submitted January 10, 2022

1. Overview

The General Services Board (GSO) of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. has sought expert assistance in evaluating the questionnaire used for the triennial Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Membership Survey and the pamphlet the organization uses to present the Survey's results. The Board seeks advice on updating the questionnaire and to use targeted feedback from both members and professionals to

1. confirm that the questions asked are the most appropriate;
2. identify appropriate question content updates; and
3. evaluate the approach used to provide the results of this survey.

Its objectives include making targeted, selective updates to the questionnaire it uses to ensure that it is up-to-date and accurately reflects the attributes and diversity of the organization's membership. It also seeks to better understand how professionals use the information from the Survey that is provided to them via a related pamphlet. The pamphlet seeks to allow professionals to communicate with those of their clients who are still-suffering alcoholics about A.A. members' characteristics and experiences, and, through this information, what A.A. is and does.

This report addresses these topics. It begins with a brief description of the existing questionnaire and the considerations motivating a possible update. It next describes the process used to evaluate the questionnaire and develop its recommended changes. Then, it details its recommendations, which it sequences in five sections – the Survey's general design and features, its introductory section, the question items for which no or very minor changes are recommended, those items for which broader changes are recommended, and possible additions to the questionnaire. This portion of the report concludes by discussing the ways in which modifying a survey can lead to changes in the data that result, and offers a strategy for understanding how much of an observed set of changes in data collected after such changes are implemented result from real change, and how much from changes in the ways respondents answer the modified questions differently from the original questions.

Following its examination of the Survey questionnaire, the report then turns to the pamphlet used to report the Survey's findings. It describes a series of interviews used to assess the utility of the pamphlet. These interviews with seven professionals who work with still-suffering alcoholics and seek to help them in reaching sobriety were centered on the professionals' awareness of, use of, and reactions to the pamphlet. The report describes the results of the interviews, and offers recommendations for modifications to the pamphlet based on the professionals' feedback. The report then concludes with a brief summary of its contents. It notes that the GSO will need to consider the recommendations it contains and the tradeoffs involved in implementing those recommendations as it decides which to adopt and which to reject.

2. Current Survey Questionnaire

During much of its history, A.A. has fielded a questionnaire to a sample of its membership roughly every 3 years; however, as the Survey was last administered in 2014, there has been a recent gap in data collection. The Survey collects demographic and related information (e.g. length of sobriety, source of referral to A.A.). The questionnaire is appealingly succinct with a focus on key characteristics of the A.A. membership and aspects of members' experience in finding A.A., attending meetings, and achieving sobriety.

Since the questionnaire was crafted, important changes have occurred relevant to the ways some of its questions and their answer options are presented, and to the content of the questionnaire itself. Best practices in survey research have also identified important aspects of design useful in encouraging participation, a particularly pressing need in an era when survey data collection has become seemingly ubiquitous, making many prospective respondents understandably and justifiably reluctant to respond to the survey invitations they receive. Thus, it is an appropriate time to consider updating the questionnaire. Below, I lay out

recommendations for doing so. First I provide a description of the process I used to craft recommendations for improvements to the Survey. Following that description, I present my recommendations.

3. Process – Review of Survey and Interviews with Members

After receiving the original version of The Survey, I reviewed the questionnaire and provided a preliminary report to the GSO, including a draft of proposed revisions and an explanation of the basis for the recommended changes. After receiving the go-ahead to proceed with these modifications in place, I conducted interviews via Zoom with 12 A.A. members whose contact information was provided to me through the GSO. All interviews took place between December 3rd, 2021 and January 8th, 2022. Each interview lasted between 20 and 45 minutes. Every interview involved – after a short introduction and overview of the purpose of the conversation – examining the questionnaire via Zoom’s Shared Screen tool and discussing the interviewee’s reactions to the survey instrument and its question items. I asked each interviewee to examine the Survey as if it had been handed out to them in a meeting and they had been asked to complete it, and to share their thoughts about it as they read through it. I also used verbal probing techniques to follow up on their thoughts and comments with additional questions about what they thought of and how they understood the questions. Examples of probe questions I used include:

- After reading the introductory section, do you think you would feel comfortable filling this out?
- What does the word (or phrase) X mean to you? Do you think this would have the same meaning to a newcomer to A.A.?
- Is it difficult to select an answer from this list of options?
- Was it easy or difficult for you to remember this?
- Are there options missing from this list of answers, that you think should be included?

In addition to these questions, I asked interviewees their overall reaction to the questionnaire – did the items it included seem relevant to them and would they be willing to fill it out, if it were handed out to them in a meeting? I also asked if there were topics not addressed that they thought were important and believed it would be useful to add to the questionnaire.

Below, I provide a summary of my key findings. Overall, both my review of the questionnaire and the results of my interviews with members suggest that A.A. has developed a useful and meaningful questionnaire. The “think aloud” responses members provided me and follow-up probes I used to query them suggest that the majority of survey questions were easy to understand, consistent in their interpretation across respondents, and successful in capturing the concepts desired. Respondents generally found the language clear and the answer choices appropriate, and were able to answer questions quickly and naturally – a hallmark of an effective survey.

4. Recommendations

A. General design and features

There are key features of the existing survey that should be retained. There are also useful changes that will probably improve its accuracy and value to A.A. Keeping the existing one-page format is strongly recommended, as doing so both keeps administration straightforward and encourages participation by reassuring prospective respondents that it will not take too much time to complete. Below there appears both a copy of the existing survey as it was last administered in 2014 (Appendix A), a copy of the draft survey used for the interviews I conducted (Appendix B), and a prototype of possible further revisions to the Survey (Appendix C). As the prototype that appears in Appendix C demonstrates, it is possible to incorporate all of the changes I propose while continuing to present the Survey as a single-sided one-paged document.

In addition to brevity and the selection of a modest number of high-priority questions, an important consideration in a survey’s appeal and the quality of the data it yields is its language. I recommend reviewing the language used in the Survey and, where possible, making it shorter, simpler, and more colloquial in order to make it more accessible to less-advanced readers. This recommendation is consistent with current understanding about the wide variety of reading abilities across different potential respondents, including those who may not speak English as a first language.

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Modest changes to the existing questionnaire can make the items it contains easier to follow and understand – for example, most of the questions on the existing questionnaire ask the respondent about “you,” but a few refer to “I,” such as items 5 and 6 that read, “I first came to A.A. in ___ month / ___ year,” and “I had my last drink in ___ month / ___ year.” Editing these to use “you” rather than “I” and to make them questions (“When did you...”) makes respondents’ experience more consistent and thus simpler, without changing the meaning of the questions. Similarly, question item 11, which reads, “Please indicate no more than two of the following entities that you feel were most influential in your decision to come to your first A.A. meeting,” can usefully be simplified and shortened to read, “Please select no more than two of the following that you feel had the most influence on your decision to come to your first A.A. meeting.” However, in general most of the question items are already easy to read, and minimizing changes to their wording keeps meaning as consistent as possible with prior versions of the Survey. While considering ways in which the language can be made more accessible is important and worthwhile, doing so does not require rewriting the Survey from scratch (or anything close).

Another consideration that affects a survey’s appeal to respondents – which is to say, people’s willingness to fill it out – is its layout and the sequencing of its components. Current knowledge of best practices in questionnaire design advocates beginning with question items that are interesting to prospective respondents, though not controversial or sensitive. Demographics, previously used as the first items in the questionnaire, are not generally a topic that interests respondents. For that reason, the modified questionnaire I present in Appendix B begins with questions about how the respondent learned about and how and when they started attending and participating in A.A. These items seem likely to be relevant to many respondents’ interest in A.A., and also to be about topics they will understand as important to A.A. as an organization. Prospective respondents may therefore be more willing to answer a questionnaire that begins with these items.

Moving beyond the general features and layout of the Survey, there are specific, detailed changes worth considering for many of the individual items it contains. I therefore turn next to examine its contents, incorporating (as appropriate) both general recommendations based on current best practices in survey methodology and particular insights provided by the dozen members’ interviews discussing the Survey. I begin with an overview of the lead-in materials to the Survey before moving to the questions themselves.

B. Survey Introduction

The introduction provided at the top of the questionnaire is brief and informative. However, the language used to describe the reasons for the Survey may be inaccessible to less-confident readers, and is formatted in a way that makes it difficult to scan quickly. I recommend changing the layout and language about what A.A. uses the Survey for in a manner similar to what follows:

Modify the text that reads:

THE REASONS FOR THIS SURVEY are to inform A.A. members of the characteristics of their Fellowship; to identify trends in membership characteristics; to provide information about A.A. to the professional community; and to inform the general public. Information provided by this questionnaire will not be used by A.A. for any follow-up studies of its members.

to read:

A.A. USES THIS SURVEY TO

- tell A.A. members about their Fellowship;
- observe patterns in the A.A. membership;
- provide information about A.A. to the professional community;
- inform the public about what A.A. does.

with the final sentence in the original placed in a separate text box and reworded to read:

The information you provide will not be used for any follow-up studies.

as the current wording might be interpreted to mean that individuals or organizations other than A.A. *could* use the information provided for follow-up studies of A.A. members.

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These modifications make the language more colloquial, and – by putting much of it in bullet form – easier to scan quickly. The precise layout and language proposed in the modified questionnaire are certainly not essential, and a graphic artist may well craft a more appealing design, but the representation provided does show ways in which the information can be grouped to keep the Survey on one page.

In looking at the revised lead-in section of the Survey they saw (see Appendix B) that incorporated the changes described above, most members reported that they found it clear and straightforward. Several described ways in which having information about who A.A. members are can help the organization realize its goals. Some did note that the lead-in provided them with information they had not known, even though they were familiar with the Survey. One said they did not know the Survey was used to provide information to anyone outside of A.A.

However, some interviewees did express uncertainty about the ways in which the purpose of the Survey is described. One asked if the Survey is meant to tell members about the demographics in general, or about the makeup of their group. A second commented that it is not clear how the information collected through the Survey helps provide information about what A.A. does, which is to, “help anyone achieve sobriety.” Another noted that, “Some people object [to the Survey] because we specifically say that we don't keep statistics.”

The term “Fellowship” is used in this lead-in, but is a term that many people may not use in their everyday discourse. When asked explicitly about the term “Fellowship” in this context, most interviewees felt that this term is a meaningful one about which members have a common understanding and that will – in the words of one – “be familiar to most people attending meetings, even newcomers.” However, one interviewee stated that the term “Fellowship would be meaningful to [most] attenders, but maybe not a first-timer,” and suggested instead a bullet reading, “Tell A.A. members about A.A.”

To quickly summarize key recommendations regarding the existing introduction to the Survey, it is appealing in that it is succinct and appears to be generally clear, and interviewees consistently reported that they could readily fill out the requested information and largely understood what the Survey is about and why it is done. Thus, major changes are not needed. However, the existing language used to describe “The Reasons for This Survey” is – in this modern era of brief lists and concise texts – somewhat verbose, and would be more accessible to a larger range of people if presented in short list form. As with any survey project, it is important and worthwhile for A.A. to reflect on why it conducts the Survey and for what the data will be used, and to articulate that in clear, inviting language. The language I provide may not be the most appropriate. It is worth carefully considering how best to articulate the purpose of the Survey in a way that makes clear to members how their completing it assists A.A. in realizing its mission.

Just as survey respondents will progress from the survey introduction to the question items, I now proceed to consider these question items. I group and discuss them in three broad categories – those for which no or only very minimal changes are needed, those for which I recommend changes, and those suggested by members as possible additions to the questionnaire.

C. Survey Items – No or Minor Changes Recommended

Using the numbering employed in the existing questionnaire that was last administered in 2014 (see Appendix A), most items – question 1, questions 5 through 11, and questions 13.a. through 16, require no or only very minor changes. Question 1 is straightforward and not sensitive, as it asks age – no interviewees had any objection to providing this information. Similarly, without exception, interviewees reported they can readily and accurately provide answers to questions 5, 6, and 7, even though for many of them this required drawing up information that is decades old. Clearly the topics addressed – first meeting attended, duration of sobriety, and time to obtain a sponsor – are very salient and central to these members’ experiences, even long after they happened. Several commented that these experiences are, indeed, very important for members of A.A. However, a few noted that they would likely report the date of their “first meeting” not as the first one they attended, but as the first one that led to their making a successful commitment to ongoing A.A. membership and sobriety. A few commented that it was somewhat more difficult to remember how long it took them to get their first sponsor (question 7), but all believed that they could largely answer this question readily and reasonably accurately. One

suggested adding “weeks” as well as “months” to the possible answer options for this question, as she remembered needing only a few weeks to find a sponsor and felt that her experience was not unusual.

Similarly, interviewees reported no difficulties in understanding question 8 (“Do you have a sponsor now?”) or 9 (“Do you have a home group?”) and while they agreed that both of these questions involve concepts – sponsors and home groups, respectively – that are specific to A.A., they believed that everyone, or almost everyone, attending a meeting would be familiar with them. One commented that if anyone was confused by these terms while filling out the questionnaire they could ask for guidance from other meeting attenders. Question 10 – How often do you normally attend A.A. meetings – was similarly clear, although one interviewee stated that new members, particularly, often attend multiple meetings per *day* and suggested adding that as an answer option to the list of possibilities provided.

Question 11 was similarly largely easy for respondents to answer, though a few pointed out challenges of one sort or another in knowing what factors were most influential in the decision to come to their first A.A. meeting. One reported a sequence of events that elapsed over years before deciding to attend, and another commented that he attended his first meeting not because he was motivated to do so to seek sobriety for himself, but rather because a friend was required to attend as the result of a judicial decision and that friend did not want to go by himself. Most interviewees were pleased with the wide range of answer options provided and felt they were reasonably exhaustive, but one did ask whether the option “judicial system” would include a lawyer, or whether that option should be changed to read “legal system” or whether “lawyer” should be listed as a separate possibility. Another found the answer option “A.A. member” confusing, as it initially sounded to that respondent as if they were referring themselves, and suggested instead phrasing this option as “Referred by a member.” Several suggested adding “podcast” to the list of media provided (“newspaper, magazine, radio, or tv”) and/or adding “social media” either along with or as an answer option separate from “internet.”

Questions 13a. and b. and 14a. and b., were similarly comfortable and familiar to respondents. One did suggest changing the language of 13.b. from “Did it [the treatment or counseling you received before coming to A.A.] play an important part in directing you to A.A.?” to instead read, “Did it influence you to come to A.A.?” (emphasis added to highlight proposed changes) as she reported that it was the *lack* of results she attained from other efforts to achieve sobriety, before coming to A.A., that led her to find and join A.A. She did not feel that the failures of these other efforts meant that they had “played an important part” in her experience, but did think that they had “influenced” her decision.

Finally, respondents readily scanned and could easily answer questions 15 and 16. Although I had wondered whether the phrase “your doctor” in question 16 would be meaningful to respondents given the institutional and bureaucratic nature of much contemporary healthcare – not to mention its inaccessibility to some – every person I interviewed was immediately able to answer this question with no difficulty. One did comment that they have multiple doctors and that not every doctor they see knew of their A.A. membership, but in general, respondents perceived this question as clear and did not see it as problematic (and generating a list of all the possible health care providers an individual *might* see and asking about each individually would not appear to add much utility to the information collected through the Survey, and would add significantly to its length).

In short, most of the question items on the Survey are readily understood by the members I interviewed, and were straightforward to answer. Interviewees also saw the relevance of these items and seemed to feel comfortable providing this information. Only minor changes to question wording and/or small edits or additions to the answer options provided are recommended for these items.

D. Survey Items – Changes Recommended

While most items on the Survey need no, or only minor, modifications, a few invite more extensive and/or substantive revisions. Questions 2, 3, and 4, about gender, race, and ethnicity, in particular, address topics about which the thinking and our understanding have changed over the years. I described the reasons these changes are needed in the document in which I provided the a draft of proposed revisions, and incorporated the proposed changes into the draft I used in interviews with A.A. members, so they saw revised rather than the original

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wording for these items. Interviewees also suggested useful changes to item 12, employment status. Below, I present each revised item, restate the reasons for the changes I recommend, and then describe member reactions to these changes.

Gender identity – question 2 in the original questionnaire – has been modified to read:

Which of these best describes you:

- Male
 Female
 Prefer to describe _____

This change moves from asking respondents their sex (the existing questionnaire’s approach), a biological characteristic, to focusing on their gender, a social characteristic that may be more relevant to members’ lived experiences within (and outside) A.A. It also recognizes that while many people continue to understand gender as a binary pair of alternatives – male or female – that some have an awareness of and may identify as having a different gender, such as binary or transgender. Providing the “prefer to describe” option in addition to the traditional male/female dichotomy achieves the following:

- It avoids presenting identities distinct from the traditional male/female options as outside or “other;”
- For respondents who prefer *not* to contemplate alternatives that differ from male and female, this format does not draw their attention to a long list of such alternatives;
- Relative to a long list of possible gender identities, it saves space;
- It avoids the problem of providing a list that may, however exhaustive, offend a respondent by failing to include an identity that they hold.

This recommendation is consistent with practices recommended by the UCLA School of Law Williams Institute, which has researched them extensively.¹

Member reaction to this change was uniformly positive. Many interviewees commented that the inclusion of non-binary and transgender issues is a significant issue in A.A. at present; one told me that the language of the A.A. Preamble has recently changed from describing a “... Fellowship of men and women” to a “...Fellowship of people,” as one step toward this goal. Four interviewees did ask about the possibility of including a list of options in addition to “Male” and “Female” – beyond just providing an open-ended “Prefer to describe” option, but most recognized immediately (and without my input) the challenges involved in generating such a list and ensuring its inclusivity in the contemporary context. One pointed out that historically “Male” has been the privileged gender and suggested changing the order of the answer options, perhaps even listing, “Prefer to describe” first, and certainly this would be possible. Many respondents will be accustomed to the current sequencing and unfazed by it, and respondents who take a more traditional understanding of gender might be offended by placing an option other than “Male” or “Female” first, but the answer options are few enough that a changed sequence should not make it difficult for respondents to identify the category with which they identify.

Moving to the next item where changes are recommended, item 3, originally labeled Domestic Status, the revised draft of the Survey presented it to interviewees as Marital Status and added several answer options so that it read:

Marital status:

- Single, never married
 Married or Life partner
 Divorced
 Separated
 Widowed
 Other (please specify) _____

¹ See The GenIUSS Group. (2014). Best practices for asking questions to identify transgender and other gender minority respondents on population-based surveys. J.L. Herman (Ed.). Williams Institute. <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/geniuss-report-sep-2014.pdf>.

These changes focus the language on “marital” rather than “domestic” status, consistent with the language of many large-scale, carefully constructed questionnaires such as the General Social Survey² and the American Community Survey.³ The answer options it includes are similar to, though not verbatim repetitions of, the language in the two questionnaires cited (which themselves differ slightly, one from the other). The rephrased item provides respondents two answer options that were previously unavailable, Separated and Widowed, options that it may be important to some respondents to be able to select.

Most interviewees liked this question item and expressed no concerns about its phrasing or the list of answer options. However, one pointed out that it combines legal (Married) and relationship (Life partner) into a single category and suggested that rather than asking about “Marital status” it be rephrased to mention “Relationship status.” Given the presence of “Life partner” this – or a return to the original “Domestic Status” phrasing used in the 2014 version of the questionnaire – seems a reasonable modification, potentially more inclusive and unlikely to confuse or offend respondents. I prefer the phrasing “Relationship Status,” as that seems to focus on commitment to another person, over “Domestic Status,” which seems closer to living arrangement and of less interest, but either achieves the goal of moving away from a focus on legal marital status, and “Domestic” has the advantage of not changing the extant wording.

In reviewing this item with interviewees, I realized that the “other” language used here (with a fill-in-the-blank) option is inconsistent with the “prefer to describe” language introduced for the gender item. Consistency has value, and I recommend adopting the “prefer to describe” language throughout, for demographic items that include an open-ended option.

Turning to Race and Ethnicity, originally question 4, I broke these into two distinct questions items – they were previously grouped as one – that read as follows:

Race: (Check **all that apply**)

- White
- Black or African American
- Native American or Alaska Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes No

Examining each of these in turn, several changes in how we understand and measure racial and ethnic identity these have occurred since A.A. first began administering the Survey. First, race and ethnicity are now generally understood as distinct concepts, though they are complex and clearly inter-related. Thus, they are commonly asked as separate question items (however, see below for further thoughts on this point, based on interviewee feedback). Second, we have come to recognize that many, many people have more than one racial or ethnic group that is part of their background, and that limiting answers to one can confuse and frustrate respondents. For these reasons, these items are now generally asked separately, with respondents being invited to provide multiple answers to the question about their racial background. This increased flexibility in responses can complicate analysis, a frustrating effect of the more detailed and accurate approach to collecting responses to these questions, and does complicate comparing answers over time, but may also improve respondents’ willingness both to provide responses to these items, and to fill out and hand in the Survey itself.

Interviewees reacted somewhat neutrally to the revised items. A number accepted them and recognized them as a common approach to asking these questions, but approximately half asked why they *are* broken into two sections, given the “select all that apply” nature of the Race question, pointing out that they could easily be combined, with “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin” included as a category one might check as part of one’s

² See e.g. http://gss.norc.org/Documents/quex/GSS2020panel_Ballot1_English_WEB.pdf .

³ See e.g. <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/questionnaires/2020/quest20.pdf> .

E. Survey Items – Additions to Consider

As noted above (see “Section 3. Process – Review of Survey and Interviews with Members” of this report), in addition to asking interviewees about their reactions to the questionnaire overall and to the specific question items, I asked them whether there were additional pieces of information they would like the Survey to gather, or question items they thought should be added to the Survey. Many had a number of suggestions, based on their own experiences and/or on the kinds of information they think it would be helpful for A.A. to have about the needs and expectations of its members. Without wanting to downplay the value of keeping the Survey short, below I list key items that were suggested by more than one interviewee as possible additions, and where interviewees presented clear and compelling (at least to me!) explanations for why the additions merit consideration.

The single most frequently recommended additional item – suggested by approximately a third of interviewees – is a question about virtual meetings. Many noted that virtual meetings have become common during the pandemic. Some commented negatively about their value relative to in-person meetings, but others pointed out that they are essential to some members’ participation (particularly, but not necessarily exclusively, during the pandemic). A number reported that such meetings are being phased out or may be phased out and advocated learning more about how members in general feel about and use them.

Several members also suggested adding questions about what members seek and/or need in order to choose meetings to attend. The exact phrasing of members’ suggestions varied, ranging from language spoken, to needs for accessibility (e.g. by people using wheelchairs) to the presence of support through such services as sign-language interpreters. One noted that she has a sponsee who identifies as non-binary and who strongly prefers meetings that use the gender-inclusive they/them pronoun convention.

One or two members also suggested additional items that seem relevant. One recommended asking whether members *have* sponsees, or when they got their first sponsee, as an addition to original question 7, “How long did it take you to get your first sponsor.” Another suggested asking about other addictions members navigate, and/or whether they participate in other 12-step programs such as Narcotics anonymous, noting that alcoholics often do navigate multiple addictions and that this information might help A.A. better understand the needs and experiences of its members. One commented that finding out how openly members discuss their sobriety and recovery with people outside A.A. would be helpful to know.

Based on these suggestions, I have drafted two additional question items addressing the most frequently suggested additions, as follows:

Have you attended an A.A. meeting virtually (online or by phone)?

Yes No

(If yes) Do you prefer virtual meetings or in-person meetings?

In-person Virtual Both equally

What attributes do you prefer or need in meetings you attend?

accessibility (such as no stairs, or served by public transportation)

held in a particular language (please list language)

other members similar to me (please describe how)

additional characteristics (please describe)

An alternative would be to combine these two items, incorporating information about virtual meeting preference in the question about meeting attributes, which might provide space for one additional item (perhaps about sponsees or other addictions) while retaining the one-page length of the Survey.

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F. Updating Survey Items – Understanding the Impact on Data Collected

As has already been discussed, modifying survey items, as well as survey design and layout, can affect how respondents answer questions, even when the underlying facts have not changed. Two simple examples from changes recommended above include race, where, clearly, inviting respondents to select more than one response (if appropriate) will enable many more individuals to identify as multi-racial. Conversely, some respondents who have always identified as multi-racial may have left the question blank when it instructed them to provide just one answer. Similarly, adding “Widowed” and “Separated” to the list of Relationship Status options will allow individuals to select those items where, in their absence, they might instead have selected “Married” or “Single” (for those who are Widowed but do not see their status available), or “Single” or “Divorced” (for those who are Separated but cannot choose that option). And again, individuals who are widowed or are separated but do not see that category listed may simply have left the question blank.

Thus, changing question wording changes the data that result, even when underlying facts remain unchanged. Because of this, when change does arise following an update to a questionnaire, it is impossible to know whether the change reflects real changes in the world, or simply changes in respondent behavior that result from the modified questionnaire.

In the case of the triennial Survey, this may not be a major problem. Though the Survey has been conducted and reported for many years, I am unaware of efforts to track changes in the patterns detected over time. If the GSO does not undertake such efforts, then knowing how much of a set of changes resulted from changes to the questionnaire, and how much from real changes in the membership, is probably not important. However, if the GSO does want to be able to assess this issue – how much change resulted from each source – then a straightforward way to do this is to employ a co-administration of both questionnaires, where some groups receive the original questionnaire and others, the updated one. Of course, enough of each must be administered to generate meaningful estimates, they must be administered at the same time, and they must be randomly distributed using sampling designs similar to those used previously (and consistently applied across each of these two questionnaires’ distributions) for this to be effective. If there is real interest in distinguishing between different sources of change in the data collected, then I would recommend adopting this strategy, but the investment of effort and resources it requires may not be necessary for the purposes of the Survey.

5. Reporting Survey Findings

A.A. uses the survey data it collects to inform a pamphlet that it provides to professionals who work with still-suffering alcoholics. The pamphlet is intended to allow those professionals to communicate effectively about what A.A. is and does. The GSO seeks to better understand how professionals perceive and use the pamphlet; to assist in this process, I interviewed seven such professionals about their knowledge, perceptions, and use of that document. Below, I provide an overview of these interviews and make recommendations based on the information the professionals provided.

6. Process – Interviews with Professionals about the Pamphlet

Using a procedure similar to that I employed with members regarding the Survey, I conducted interviews via Zoom with 7 professionals who work with still-suffering alcoholics. These professionals come from a range of disciplines, including social work, counseling, clergy, the judiciary, the corrections industry, and the treatment industry; their contact information was provided to me through the GSO. All interviews took place between December 20th, and 29th, 2021. Each lasted between 20 and 35 minutes. Every interview involved – after a short introduction and overview of the purpose of the conversation – examining the pamphlet (in pdf form) via Zoom’s Shared Screen tool. I asked each interviewee to look over the pamphlet and share their thoughts with me, and probed for further information, including asking questions shaped by these topics:

- How do you use the pamphlet?
- How do you talk about A.A.?
- Are there things you wish you knew that are not included in the pamphlet but should be?
- Are there materials included that should not be?

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- What do you think about the presentation of this info? For professionals? For those you share it with (if applicable)?
- What is your overall reaction to the pamphlet?

Below, I provide a summary of my key findings.

7. Professionals' Reactions

Overall, professionals reported finding the pamphlet useful for background information and liking its graphic format, but many stated they do not use it frequently and are not deeply familiar with it. One commented that it contains great data, but that they were unclear what the pamphlet's intent is – what it is trying to communicate and to whom. Many said that the the pamphlet's contents seem to be of more interest to A.A. members than professionals or still-suffering alcoholics. Most of the those I spoke with report that while they may share some of the information it contains with clients, they do not provide the pamphlet to clients, or do so only rarely. Also (in contrast the members interviewed about the Survey), professionals reported a lack of familiarity with, and uncertainty about the meaning of, key terms used in the pamphlet and central to A.A.'s organization and activities, such as “home group” and “sponsor.”

Overall, comments about the pamphlet's general usefulness were at most lukewarm. One interviewee commented that the pamphlet is, “not a lot of use for a professional working with someone considering whether they have a drinking problem.” This interviewee reported finding other approaches, such as connecting a client directly with a member of A.A., more useful. Several made reference to Intergroup as their main resource. Another described the pamphlet as “moderately useful,” but noted that they can only use it for direct outreach in a personal situation where they can hand it to the person they are advising. Yet another remarked that the pamphlet is “too old and doesn't help me to know what to do with a Spanish speaker in my town. I [already] know what to do with the white men in my town.” Several commented that the pamphlet makes it appear that A.A. is an organization comprised of old, white men and while some of the professionals I interviewed believe that to be the case, others believe A.A. is more diverse than the pamphlet suggests. There was agreement that, whether accurate or not, the fact that the pamphlet shows A.A. as having limited racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, as well as few younger members, is a problem.

Despite their misgivings, interviewees did note that some of the information contained in the pamphlet can be helpful. One stated that the pamphlet illustrates how alcoholism is something that affects people “beyond the stereotypes.” Several appreciated the information provided about the factors that shaped members' decision to attend their first A.A. meeting. One noted that this part of the pamphlet makes it clear that “external motivators” are important and that “only 30% get there of own initiative.” Another commented that it is important to understand that many A.A. members do rely, in addition to A.A., on treatment and counseling and that use of those resources continues after they become members, stating that it is helpful to know that it is “not either/or, not A.A. instead of treatment or counseling,” and that the pamphlet shows that more members actually use these resources after they join A.A. than before. One commented that prospective members often wonder what going to A.A. involved and that the information about how many meetings members attend on average is helpful for addressing this question. More generally, several interviewees suggested providing one or two sentences describing why the information provided in each graphic might be valuable for someone considering attending an A.A. meeting.

Professionals also commented that there is information not available in the pamphlet that it could be useful to add. One noted that some alcoholics may attend a number of “first” meetings before achieving sobriety, and that some information about stops-and-starts could be helpful. Another said that many of the people she refers to A.A. complain that it is too religious, and that she does not feel this is accurate, though she notes that where she lives there are many “god- and even Christian-focused groups.” She would like more information on the religious makeup of groups, and believes that having this information would show greater diversity on this dimension than many of those she works with believe exists. Another interviewee commented that in the pandemic, many meetings have gone online, and said that it would be helpful to know more about the different kinds of meetings members attend. Other professionals commented that information to help individuals connect with a group that is a good fit for them, such as what language is spoken, whether there are interpreters, and knowledge about a group's general makeup and atmosphere, whether that means it is young, LGBTQ+, atheist, or Spanish-speaking is important.

8. Recommendations

As it stands now, the pamphlet appears dated – its cover refers explicitly to 2014, and the information about how to connect with A.A. provided on p. 5 refers to a phonebook. Per the professionals I spoke with it is not broadly useful to them, though it does have some value. I recommend considering the following as ways to improve the pamphlet’s utility:

- Update the pamphlet. Consider removing the year the data reported were collected from the front page, and perhaps selecting a title more descriptive of the pamphlet contents. One interviewee suggested something as simple as “Important Information about Members of A.A.”
- Include short definitions or explanations of common A.A.-specific terms, such as “home group,” “sponsor,” and “fellowship,” as this makes the pamphlet more accessible to non-members.
- Add short descriptions about the information the pamphlet provides. For example, for the data in the current pamphlet “Length of sobriety” might be preceded by a short sentence that says, “About one in four A.A. members have only recently achieved sobriety. Others have been sober for years or even decades.” “Introduction to A.A.” might read, “Many different things influence members’ decision to come to A.A. Though about one in three is self-motivated, others come to their first meeting because an A.A. member, treatment facility, or someone in their family suggests it.”
- Add more detailed, and more contemporary information about how to connect with A.A. All the professionals I spoke with emphasized the importance of helping people connect with a meeting that is right for them, and most described useful resources for doing so, including Intergroup and the meeting-finder app. Provide information about these tools and remove or minimize reference to more dated communication methods, such as the phone book and U.S. mail.
- Consider refraining from including in the pamphlet detailed data that suggest that A.A. is not inclusive or diverse. Rather than reporting statistics about such variables as race, ethnicity, gender, and age, if the data show that key groups are underrepresented in A.A. overall, consider reporting that A.A. includes (e.g.), “Black, White, Asian, First Nations, Hispanic, and ... members, who range in age from under 21 to over 70. There are people like you in A.A. To find a meeting that serves your needs, consult the meeting-finder app, or reach out to the A.A. Intergroup near you.”
- While the quantified data provided in the pamphlet are informative, we know that people like and respond to textual information and stories. Consider adding a few quotes from members – ideally members from diverse backgrounds – that illustrate what A.A. offers and how it helps its members.

9. Concluding Reflections

In closing, I will note that the existing A.A. questionnaire has much to recommend it. It is short and focuses directly on key attributes and experiences of the A.A. membership relevant to the organizational leadership; its brevity and focus are laudable. At the same time, as with any instrument and particularly any instrument used over decades, it does offer room for carefully considered modifications which may make it more contemporary and the data it provides more meaningful. I have provided recommendations regarding changes that can improve the Survey, along with the basis for those recommendations. I have also explored the ways in which the data are reported and put to use, and identified possible strategies for improving those processes and increasing the data’s usability and impact.

Recognizing the value that understanding and being able to describe its membership accurately provides to A.A. and those interested in the organization’s work, I hope that this report proves useful. As it considers the recommendations the report contains, the GSO will need to weigh their value and the tradeoffs implementing each of them entails, and decide which to adopt and which to reject, as well as how to adapt and apply them. If I can provide useful insights into the advantages and disadvantages of different options under consideration, or into the recommendations themselves, I would be pleased to have the opportunity to meet with you to do so.

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2014 A.A. SURVEY

FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

(THIS IS AN ANONYMOUS SURVEY • PLEASE DO NOT SIGN)

Meeting Name: _____

Town/City: _____ Province/State: _____ Date: _____

THE REASONS FOR THIS SURVEY are to inform A.A. members of the characteristics of their Fellowship; to identify trends in membership characteristics; to provide information about A.A. to the professional community; and to inform the general public. Information provided by this questionnaire will not be used by A.A. for any follow-up studies of its members.

IMPORTANT: If you have filled out this survey at another meeting this year, do not fill it out again.

- My age is _____ years
- Sex: Male Female
- Domestic Status:
 - Married or Life partner
 - Single
 - Divorced
 - Other (please specify) _____
- Race: (Check **one** only)
 - White, not of Hispanic Origin
 - Black, not of Hispanic Origin
 - Hispanic
 - Native American
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Other (please specify) _____
- I first came to A.A. in _____ / _____
Month Year
- I had my last drink in _____ / _____
Month Year
- How long did it take you to get your first sponsor? _____
No. of Months
- Do you have a sponsor now? Yes No
- Do you have a home group? Yes No
- How often do you normally attend A.A. meetings?
(fill out one line only)
 - _____ times a week
 - _____ times a month
 - _____ times a year

- Please indicate no more than **two** of the following entities that you feel were most influential in your decision to come to your first A.A. meeting.
 - A.A. member
 - On my own
 - Treatment facility
 - Family
 - Counselor or Mental health professional
 - Judicial system
 - Medical professional
 - Employer or fellow worker
 - Non-A.A. friend or neighbor
 - Al-Anon or Alateen member
 - A.A. literature
 - Correctional facility
 - Newspaper, magazine, radio or TV
 - Internet
 - Member of clergy
 - Other (please specify) _____
- What is the nature of your employment status now? (Check **one** only)
 - Manager/Administrator
 - Educator
 - Health professional
 - Service worker
 - Professional/Tech.
 - Homemaker
 - Sales worker
 - Craft worker
 - Laborer
 - Clerical worker
 - Transportation and material moving occupations
 - Retired
 - Unemployed
 - Disabled (not working)
 - Student
 - Skilled trade
 - Other (including self-employed)
- Before** coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 13b) Yes No
 - Did it play an important part in directing you to A.A.? Yes No
- After** coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 14b) Yes No
 - Did that treatment or counseling play an important part in your recovery from alcoholism? Yes No
- Did a counselor, medical or mental health professional ever refer you to A.A.? Yes No
- Does your doctor know you are in A.A.? Yes No

Appendix B

DRAFT A.A. SURVEY

from the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous
(THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS • PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME)

Meeting Name: _____

Town/City: _____ Province/State: _____ Date: _____

A.A. USES THIS SURVEY TO

- tell A.A. members about their Fellowship;
• observe patterns in the A.A. membership;
• provide information about A.A. to the professional community;
• inform the public about what A.A. does.

The information you provide will not be used for any follow-up studies.

IMPORTANT: If you have filled out this survey at another meeting this year, do not fill it out again.

1. Please select no more than two of the following that you feel had the most influence on your decision to come to your first A.A. meeting.

- ___ A.A. member
___ On my own
___ Treatment facility
___ Family
___ Counselor or Mental health professional
___ Judicial system
___ Medical professional
___ Employer or fellow worker
___ Non-A.A. friend or neighbor
___ Al-Anon or Alateen member
___ A.A. literature
___ Correctional facility
___ Newspaper, magazine, radio or TV
___ Internet
___ Member of clergy
___ Other (please specify)

2. When did you first come to A.A.? Month/Year ___ / ___

3. When did you have your last drink Month/Year ___ / ___

4. How long did it take you to get your first sponsor? ___ Months

5. Do you have a sponsor now? ___ Yes ___ No

6. Do you have a home group? ___ Yes ___ No

7. How often do you normally attended A.A. meetings? (fill out one line only)

- a. ___ times a week
b. ___ times a month
c. ___ times a year

8a. Before coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological r spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 8b)

___ Yes ___ No

8b. Did that play an important part in directing you to A.A.?

___ Yes ___ No

9a. After coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 9b)

___ Yes ___ No

9b. Did that treatment or counseling play an important part in your recovery from alcoholism? ___ Yes ___ No

10. Did a counselor, medical or mental health professional ever refer you to A.A.? ___ Yes ___ No

11. Does your doctor know you are in A.A.? ___ Yes ___ No

12. What is your age? ___ years

13. Which of these best describes you:

- ___ Male
___ Female
___ Prefer to describe

14. Marital status:

- ___ Single, never married
___ Married or Life partner
___ Divorced
___ Separated
___ Widowed
___ Other (please specify)

15. Race: (Check all that apply)

- ___ White
___ Black or African American
___ Native American or Alaska Native
___ Asian or Pacific Islander

16. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

___ Yes ___ No

17. What is the nature of your employment status now? (Check one only)

- ___ Manager/Administrator
___ Educator
___ Health professional
___ Service worker
___ Professional/Tech.
___ Homemaker
___ Sales worker
___ Laborer
___ Clerical worker
___ Transportation and material moving occupations
___ Retired
___ Unemployed
___ Disabled (not working)
___ Student
___ Skilled trade
___ Other (including self-employed)

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Appendix C

DRAFT A.A. SURVEY

from the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous
(THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS • PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME)

Meeting Name: _____

Town/City: _____ Province/State: _____ Date: _____

A.A. USES THIS SURVEY TO

- tell A.A. members about their Fellowship;
• observe patterns in the A.A. membership;
• provide information about A.A. to the professional community;
• inform the public about what A.A. does.

The information you provide will not be used for any follow-up studies.
IMPORTANT: If you have filled out this survey at another meeting this year, do not fill it out again.

1. Please select no more than two of the following that you feel had the most influence on your decision to come to your first A.A. meeting.

- ___ A.A. member ___ Non-A.A. friend or neighbor
___ On my own ___ Al-Anon or Alateen member
___ Treatment facility ___ A.A. literature
___ Family ___ Correctional facility
___ Counselor or Mental health professional ___ Newspaper, magazine, radio or TV
___ Judicial system ___ Internet, or social media
___ Medical professional ___ Member of clergy
___ Employer or fellow worker ___ Other (please specify)

2. When did you first come to A.A.? Month/Year ___ / ___

3. When did you have your last drink Month/Year ___ / ___

4. How long did it take you to get your first sponsor? ___ Months

5. Do you have a sponsor now? ___ Yes ___ No

6. Do you have a home group? ___ Yes ___ No

7. How often do you normally attend A.A. meetings? (fill out one line only)

- a. ___ times a day
b. ___ times a week
c. ___ times a month
a. ___ times a year

8a. Before coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 8b)

___ Yes ___ No

8b. Did that play an important part in directing you to A.A.? ___ Yes ___ No

9a. After coming to A.A., did you receive any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (if yes, answer question 9b)

___ Yes ___ No

9b. Did that treatment or counseling play an important part in your recovery from alcoholism? ___ Yes ___ No

10. Did a counselor, medical or mental health professional ever refer you to A.A.? ___ Yes ___ No

11. Does your doctor know you are in A.A.? ___ Yes ___ No

12. Have you attended an A.A. meeting virtually (online or by phone)? (if yes, answer question 12b) ___ Yes ___ No

12b. Do you prefer virtual meetings or in-person meetings? ___ In-person ___ Virtual ___ Both equally

13. What attributes do you prefer or need in meetings you attend?

- ___ accessibility (such as no stairs, or served by public transportation)
___ held in a particular language (please list language)
___ other members similar to me (please describe how)
___ additional characteristics (please describe)

14. What is your age? ___ years

15. Which of these best describes you:

- ___ Male
___ Female
___ Prefer to describe

16. Relationship status:

- ___ Single, never married
___ Married or Life partner
___ Divorced
___ Separated
___ Widowed
___ Prefer to describe

17. Racial and ethnic background: (Check all that apply)

- ___ Asian
___ Black, or African American
___ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
___ Native American, Alaska Native, First Nations, or Indigenous
___ Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native
___ White, Caucasian, or European American
___ Prefer to describe

18. What is your employment status now? (Check one only)

- ___ Employed full time ___ Student
___ Employed part time ___ Retired
___ Unemployed and looking for work ___ Homemaker
___ Unemployed, not currently looking for work

19. If you are employed, what is your job? _____

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2022 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM M: Review content and format of P.I. Kit and Workbook.

Background notes:

Kits and Workbooks for C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference Committees during each General Service Conference.

Workbooks and Kits are service pieces. Any suggested changes to their content from the Conference committee are put forth as Committee Considerations rather than recommendations.

Between Conferences, ideas for changes to a Workbook or to the contents of a Kit may be received. These may be reviewed by the appropriate trustees' Committee and implemented, or the trustees' committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference Committee for review.

Typically, service kits are updated annually each fall. Due to pandemic-induced supply chain and paper shortage challenges, implementation of the updates has been delayed.

From the January 30, 2021, report of the trustees' Committee on Public Information:

The committee noted receipt of a memo from the A.A.W.S. Board in response to the 2020 P.I. committee consideration that shared concerns on the relevancy of a print copy workbook and kit for P.I. committees. The board also noted the P.I. Committee's suggestions to explore the development of an A.A. service committee app and the possible creation of a new digital PDF version of the P.I. Workbook. The committee asked that the staff secretary include the memo as background to the 2021 Conference Committee on Public Information.

From 2021 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee discussed the content and format of the P.I. Kit and Workbook. The committee noted the memo regarding recent A.A.W.S. Board discussions on the possible development of an A.A. service app and new digital PDF version of the workbook. The committee encourages G.S.O. to move away from a "print-first" approach to publishing so that service material and resources on aa.org might be updated more quickly and efficiently with the most up to date resources for local committees.

From the December 6, 2021, memorandum on the 2021 Annual Update of Public Information Kit:

As part of the annual service kit update process, please find attached:

1. Current P.I. Kit Content List (F-65/FF-65/SF-65) in all three languages.

CONFIDENTIAL: 72nd General Service Conference Background

2. Kit Update Request Form for any changes to the kit.

The request was to provide a Kit Update Request Form to Group Services. We suggested the following updates:

Add item(s):

- **A.A. Guidelines:** MG-13 Sharing the A.A. Message with the Alcoholic who is Deaf
- **Pamphlet:** P-83 - Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers

Remove item(s)

- M-271I Radio and Audio Public Service Announcement Scripts (Rev.12/21) We combined the English, French and Spanish scripts into one document (M-721D)

Replace item with updated/revised version:

- **List of Kit Contents** (Rev. 12/21) (F-65)
- **Estimates of Groups and Members** (Rev. 12/20) (SMF-53)
- **Anonymity Online and Digital Media** (Rev. 02/19) (SMF-197)
- **A.A. Fact Sheet** (Rev. 09/21) (SMF-94)
- **Anonymity Letter to the Media** (Rev. 1/22) (F-21)
- **Suggestions for Working with your Local Radio and TV Stations** (Rev. 09/17) (M-271A)
- **Radio and Audio Public Service Announcement Scripts** (Rev.12/21) (M-271D)

Other notes: For this item, make the title black font color and the link live and blue.

Anonymity in the Digital Age Poster

https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_anonymityplacard.pdf

Background:

1. Public Information Workbook and Kit Content Lists available to view at the links below:

Workbook:

- [ENG](#)
- [FR](#)
- [SP](#)

Kit Content Lists: *revisions will be handled post Conference*

- [ENG](#)
- [FR](#)
- [SP](#)

2. Public Information Kits (provided to Conference Committee on Public Information members only)

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