

Sharing Our Success (SOS) Submission Form

Chapter Name: Chicagoland

Chapter Membership Size: Large (250+)

Chapter Contact Person: Peter Plumlee

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Chapter Board Position: President

Chapter Website URL: atdchi.org

Submission Title: From Followers to Future Attendees: Using Chapter Data to Grow Engagement

What did you do? (a 2-3 sentence summary of your effort): ATD Chicagoland developed an emerging chapter analytics practice that combines LinkedIn audience data with WildApricot membership, registration, and attendance records to better understand how people move from online engagement to event participation and deeper chapter connection. We went beyond standard social media reporting to create a more complete view of who we are reaching, who is engaging, and where opportunities exist to strengthen outreach, re-engagement, and community growth.

Who benefitted from this effort (Target Audience) Check all that apply:

- Chapter Members
- Board Members
- Chapter Volunteers
- Potential Chapter Members
- Non-Chapter Members

Why did you do it? What chapter needs were addressed? We wanted a clearer and more connected understanding of engagement across the chapter. Rather than looking at social media, membership, registration, and attendance data separately, we wanted to better understand who we are reaching, who is participating, who may be under-engaged, and where stronger outreach and re-engagement opportunities exist. This effort helped address chapter needs around smarter marketing, more informed membership strategy, stronger event insight, and better cross-functional decision-making.

What were the measurable outcomes? (May include data regarding financial gains, membership increases, target audience satisfaction levels, publicity for the chapter or for the profession, etc.)

Because this is an emerging chapter practice, the most immediate measurable outcomes were the creation of a repeatable process, a stronger baseline for future measurement, and a more complete view of chapter engagement. We established a method for combining LinkedIn audience insight with WildApricot membership, registration, check-in, and attendance data so we could better understand who we are reaching, who is engaging, who is actually attending, and where opportunities exist for stronger outreach and re-engagement.

This effort also expanded our ability to go beyond standard social media reporting. We are now able to examine when individuals began following the chapter on LinkedIn, compare that timing with membership join or return dates, and review how information members provide in WildApricot aligns with what they share professionally on LinkedIn, which is often more current. This gives us a stronger picture of audience behavior, professional identity, and the relationship between online connection and formal chapter engagement.

In addition, this process created a practical framework for analyzing engagement over time, including visible activity and participation on LinkedIn, event registration, in-person check-in, webinar attendance, and broader off-platform involvement with the chapter. Together, these insights give us a more meaningful foundation for tracking follower-to-attendee movement, understanding member and nonmember participation, identifying under-engaged segments, and supporting future growth in both chapter engagement and broader community connection.

What steps did you take to implement this effort? (Remember that other chapter leaders will use this to replicate the effort. Be specific)

We implemented this effort by connecting multiple chapter data points that had previously been viewed separately. First, we gathered LinkedIn follower and audience data, including available profile, timing, and engagement information, to better understand who was connected to the chapter online. We then pulled membership and event-related data from WildApricot, including membership records, event registrations, in-person check-in information, and webinar attendance tracking, so we could compare online engagement with actual chapter participation.

Next, we organized the data in spreadsheets so we could compare followers, members, registrants, and attendees across the full engagement cycle. This helped us identify overlap and gaps, such as who follows the chapter but is not yet a member, who registers but does not attend, who attends but may not be fully engaged beyond events, and who may be returning after a lapse rather than joining for the first time. We also reviewed how information submitted through WildApricot compared with what individuals share professionally on LinkedIn, which often provided a more current view of role, employer, or professional identity.

When helpful, we also used AI as a support tool to assist with organizing the data, identifying insights, and generating spreadsheet formulas or step-by-step directions for comparison and analysis. Whenever using AI in this process, we first removed personally identifiable information before entering data whenever possible. In cases where we needed help working through the structure of the data itself, we relied on clear descriptions of the spreadsheet layout, including column, row, and cell references, so we could still receive useful formulas and guidance without unnecessarily sharing sensitive information.

We went beyond standard platform exports when needed by using additional manual and practical data-gathering methods to capture and organize information for analysis. Once the data was assembled, we reviewed it through a chapter strategy lens: who we are reaching, who is responding, what demographics or professional segments appear to be engaging, and which parts of our community may need more intentional outreach or re-engagement. This work was led through the President and Marketing Committee, with insights also informing Membership and Finance conversations around member lifecycle, returning members, and how national membership activity aligns with chapter records over time.

Is there anything you would do differently?

If we were doing this differently, we would first spend more time clarifying how WildApricot membership and income reporting align with what is coming from the national portal, especially since those data points do not always sync at the same time. We would also want to dig deeper into how membership lapses affect the way "new" membership is reported, since there is an important difference between someone who is truly new to the chapter and someone who is newly active again after a lapse of a month, a year, or longer. Clarifying those definitions and timing issues earlier would make the analysis even stronger.

We would also like to strengthen the tracking and visualization side of the process. While this effort gave us a much clearer and more connected view of audience and participation data, the next step would be to create a more standardized dashboard or scorecard that makes it easier to monitor follower-to-attendee movement, registrations versus attendance, re-engagement trends, and under-engaged audience segments. That would make the process even more efficient and easier for chapter leaders to use regularly.

We would also continue refining how we use AI and chapter data together. The experience reinforced the importance of protecting personally identifiable information, being intentional about what data is shared, and using clear spreadsheet structure and descriptions when asking for support. With more time, we would document those practices more formally so the process is even easier to replicate safely and consistently.

When did you start working on this effort?	Feb 23, 2026
When did this effort go live?	Mar 06, 2026
Approximately how many hours were spent working on this? Include an estimate of hours spent across all board members and volunteers.	10
What resources did you use? Check all that apply:	Volunteers Board Members Other: Chapter Administrative Support, LinkedIn analytics, WildApricot membership and event data, spreadsheets, and AI-assisted analysis support

How many volunteers were you able to recruit?	1
Which board positions were involved in the effort?	President, VP of Finance, Marketing Committee, Membership Committee
Do you have any additional insights to share with other chapters implementing this effort?	<p>One of the biggest takeaways for us was that the most useful insight came from connecting data points that are often viewed separately. Looking at follower activity, membership records, registrations, attendance, and re-engagement together gave us a much fuller picture of who we are reaching, who is participating, and where stronger outreach or reconnection may be needed. Even a simple process can reveal a great deal when those pieces are reviewed side by side.</p> <p>It was also helpful to think of this as more than a marketing exercise. When social, membership, finance, and event data are considered together, a chapter can start to see the full engagement cycle more clearly - from follower to registrant to attendee to deeper community connection. That makes the work much more actionable for planning, outreach, retention, and long-term community growth.</p> <p>We also learned that a chapter does not need expensive tools or a perfect system to get started. Existing chapter platforms, spreadsheets, manual review, and thoughtful use of AI can go a long way in helping organize data and surface meaningful insight. What matters most is being clear about the questions you are trying to answer, protecting personally identifiable information, and creating a process that is practical enough to repeat and strengthen over time.</p>
How did you become familiar with the Sharing Our Success (SOS) program? Select all that apply:	National Advisors for Chapters (NAC) NAC Area Call
Would you be willing to apply to present on this submission at the ATD Chapter Leaders Conference (ALC)? *Request for Proposals (RFPs) open in October of each year at td.org/alc. Selected session facilitators receive complimentary registration.	No
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