

ASIS&T Strategic Planning Report: Key Findings and Strategic Directions

Submitted by the ASIS&T Strategic Planning Task Force

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) was formed by the 2015 ASIS&T President, Sandy Hirsh, at the Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington in November 2014. The SPTF collected data over a six-month period, from November 2014 through May 2015. Data were collected through focus group interviews, surveys, feedback on strategic questions, review of documents, reports, and data, among other inputs. Participants included members from around the world and at all professional levels from students to ASIS&T leaders; input from non-members and non-renewing members was also solicited.

This report summarizes the methodology and data used to shape the strategic planning process, highlights key findings, and identifies five strategic directions that emerged from the analysis. The five strategic directions are: 1) Membership, 2) Programs/Services/Mentoring, 3) Publications/Communications/Social Media, 4) Publicity/Outreach/Advocacy, and 5) Institutional Knowledge. These findings and strategic directions were submitted to the ASIS&T Board of Directors for review and discussion at the Board Retreat in July 2015. Next steps in the strategic planning process are identified.

More details are available in the report:

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction.....	2
2. Methodology and Data Collection.....	3
3. Results.....	5
4. Discussion of Strategic Directions.....	13
5. Next Steps.....	18

1. INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) was formed by the 2015 ASIS&T President, Sandy Hirsh, at the Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington in November 2014, with the following purpose:

The Strategic Planning Task Force is charged by the President of ASIS&T to:

- review ASIS&T's mission, vision, and goals and translate these into clear actions that can be reported on;
- survey (using various tools, including focus groups, interviews, surveys and other instruments) ASIS&T members to ensure the association is meeting membership needs and being more transparent;
- develop a plan of action, with goals and objectives, that will provide strategic direction for the association, thus setting the association up for long-term success;
- assess resources to better align the association with the strategic goals and objectives.

To help execute the above Charge, the Strategic Planning Task Force will:

- review previous strategic plans and assess which elements, if any, should be retained;
- evaluate current membership data, including any recent focus group sessions and other feedback mechanisms to determine strategic themes and issues requiring further investigation;
- carry out further survey tools of the membership, as needed, and analyze the data gathered.
- identify key strategic priorities, based on member data (statistical as well as data gathered from the various survey instruments);
- submit a final report for review by the President and the Board of Directors.

The SPTF collected data over a six-month period, from November 2014 through May 2015, and submitted reports and preliminary strategic directions to the Board of Directors to review at their July 2015 Board Retreat. This report provides a summary of: the methodology and data used to inform the strategic planning process; the results, including key themes that emerged from this analysis; a discussion of the five strategic directions; and next steps.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

From November 2014 through May 2015, members of the SPTF collected and analyzed a range of data – including focus group interviews, surveys, feedback on strategic questions, as well as analyses of data, reports, and other documents (e.g., data from the membership database, committee reports). These data were analyzed to identify key themes, examples and quotes, and strategic directions.

A. Data Collection

1. Focus Groups/Surveys/Strategic Question Feedback

User needs and feedback were collected through 13 in-person and virtual focus group sessions (approximately 125 people), surveys with approximately 85 people from Taipei and Asia-Pacific Chapter, and four questions that were displayed on posters at the 2014 annual meeting (people shared answers and comments via post-it notes). A wide range of people participated in these sessions, including both members and non-members; practitioners (including those from the IA Summit and RDAP conference), academics, and students; and people from different geographic areas (including Europe, Asia, and North America). A summary is provided in the table below.

<i>Method</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>
Focus Groups	November 2014	Seattle, WA (ASIS&T Annual Meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 groups of practitioners (members 0-5 years and members 6+ years) ▪ 2 groups of academics/faculty (members 0-5 years and members 6+ years) ▪ 1 group of students (including masters and doctoral students) ▪ 1 group of ASIS&T leaders 	60
Poster question feedback	November 2014	Seattle, WA (ASIS&T Annual Meeting)	Annual Meeting attendees	n/a
Survey	March 2015	Asian-Pacific	Asian-Pacific Chapter members	21
Survey	March 2015	Taipei	LIS departments for the Taipei Chapter	65
Focus Groups	March 2015	Virtual/Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 group of student members 	25

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 group of European chapter members ▪ 1 group of non-renewed former members 	
Focus Group	March 2015	Boston, MA	Simmons Student Chapter	7
Focus Group	April 2015	Minneapolis, MN (RDAP Conference)	RDAP attendees (ASIS&T members and non-members)	9
Focus Groups	April 2015	Minneapolis, MN (IA Summit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 group IA Summit attendees: ASIS&T members ▪ 1 group IA Summit attendees: non-ASIS&T members 	20

2. Data/Reports/Documents

The SPTF also analyzed sections of the membership database, assessing changes in renewals by type, drop rates, transitions (e.g. from student to professional), and the effect of bundling membership in the Annual Meeting registration, etc.

The SPTF consulted numerous reports, which were prepared by other units within ASIS&T, including the Membership Standing Committee report of 2014, the International Relations Committee Report of 2013, feedback on the new website from 10 members in Africa, and the Academic Institutional School Membership Survey report. Furthermore, the SPTF also reviewed the Association’s Strategic Plan for 2006-2010.

The SPTF also looked at strategic reports by other related institutions, including the American Library Association, as well as reviewed association-membership research, such as “Membership Matters: Lessons from members and non-members,” a white paper published by Wiley.

B. Data Analysis

The written reports and results from surveys and focus groups were read and reviewed a number of times, looking for key themes, which were either highlighted or noted by a special character (e.g. “M” indicating occurrences of the word “mentor(ing)”). These key themes were then grouped by relatedness; notes on frequency (in a given report) and then breadth (across reports) were also made. Themes with the largest frequency and breadth were then examined to determine if they could be used in a strategic report, or were items that reflected what already works well, or were already “in the pipeline” in terms of being addressed.

3. RESULTS

Results are presented in terms of strategic directions and key themes, smaller themes or themes already being addressed by ASIS&T, and aspects that ASIS&T is doing well. Findings are supported by direct quotations from participants and/or the source of the finding (e.g., report, data, document).

A. Strategic Directions and Key Themes

Five key themes – membership, programs/services/mentoring, publications/communications/social media, publicity/outreach/advocacy, and institutional knowledge – emerged from the data. Quotes are included below to illustrate the findings.

1. *Membership*

The most common themes related to membership are:

- What benefits exist for the various classes of members;
- Lack of practitioners in the Association;
- Cost of membership;
- How to get involved/network.

Related to publicity/outreach/advocacy below, but a key membership issue, is a non-awareness of exactly what ASIS&T offers its members.

- Poor renewal rates (per membership stat reports)

There was widespread concern about the lack of practitioners in the association and about the lack of content at the Annual Meeting and benefits that would appeal to practitioners.

- Loss of practitioners as regular members (per membership stat reports)
- “I left for a number of reasons, but they all boiled down to: ASIS&T had a huge focus on academia and theory and research, but close to nothing for practitioners.” (Membership Committee Report)
- “...ASIS&T...was almost entirely academia in information science.” (Membership Committee Report)
- “In a nutshell, the association wasn’t offering what I needed. I’m involved with systems for the library...” (Non-renewing Members Focus Group)
- “...over the years, it’s just become very, very academic...” (Non-renewing Members Focus Group)

- “I was hoping to meet a lot of practitioners at the conference because that’s how ASIS&T showcases itself, and that is how it is different from other information science conferences and organizations. But unfortunately that didn’t happen.” (Non-renewing Members Focus Group)
- “It’s become, as far as I can see, almost exclusively academics. And I think that has limited the possibilities of its international activities.” (European Focus Group)
- “...lack of crossover with information management practitioners and consultants...” (European Focus Group)
- “ASIS&T is for tenure and the IA Summit is for reputation management.” (IA Summit Focus Group)
- “I didn’t get a sense that there was a blending of interests [between academics & practitioners]...” (European Focus Group).
- Among non-renewing members who were/are also practitioners, there is a current of “fatalism” that practitioners will never be allowed back in – “The Board is going to get a hold of this comment, wrastle for a day and a half, and come to no resolution” – referring to the “deliberate” restructuring of ASIS&T as an academic/scholarly association and not a professional association (Non-renewing Members Focus Group). From the same report: “ASIS&T needs to decide: is it a professional association? Or is it a scholarly association? Can it be both?”

Cost of membership is also prominently mentioned in a number of documents, including the “Draft Report on Academic Institutional Membership Survey,” the European Focus Group, the Taipei and Asia Pacific Survey, the African documents, as well as the “Membership Matters” report from Wiley.

2. Programs/Services/Mentoring

Programming is a key benefit and is frequently mentioned in the reports, focus groups, etc. The Annual Meeting is held up by many as a key benefit, EXCEPT for those looking for practitioner programs, panel sessions, etc. Webinars (see below) are highly regarded.

There are many requests for increased local and regional workshops, programs and meetings. There are mentions of “regional meetings” in almost every report, especially the regions outside the United States (although there is a clear need for “regional” meetings inside the U.S. too).

In a similar vein, the concept of joint conferences within ASIS&T (e.g., putting IA Summit and RDAP Conference “together” – one right after the other, or overlapping), and beyond ASIS&T are common amongst the data/reports.

Some respondents in the RDAP and IA Summit focus groups thought that ASIS&T was “a conference planning group.”

Student participants frequently note that there are not enough programs for their group – especially since most cannot afford to attend the Annual Meeting. Many requests are made for local and regional programs.

Nearly every focus group mentioned the need for more virtual programming; webinars (see below) are just part of that; others want to connect to the Annual Meeting and Summits virtually; requests for other virtual programs come from students and early practitioners/academics, who cannot afford travel expenses; this theme is also mentioned in the various regional (European; Taiwan; Asia-Pacific) reports.

There is some confusion and consternation about SIGs, especially their relationship to the Annual Meeting and Summits (see Non-renewing Member Focus Group & the Board Retreat from 2014).

There are some mentions about the program structure at Annual Meeting – and the appropriate length, mix of peer-reviewed papers, SIG programs, practitioner activities, etc. – but no clear consensus.

Other program ideas mentioned include:

- Set up a speaker’s bureau;
- Increase continuing education (mentioned by some practitioners; not academics);
- TED-like talks;
- Internships

Mentoring, as a service, is widely mentioned across nearly all the reports/data. This work, in various contexts, can be seen in: Membership Committee Report; Student Online Focus Group; Simmons Student Focus Group; Non-renewing Members Focus Group; IA Summit Focus Group; and Taipei/Asia Pacific Survey.

The forms of mentoring broke down into the following categories:

- Mentoring/guidance at meetings (e.g., IA Summit – “cardboard mentoring booth”);
- Career mentoring (mentioned in all the student focus groups, and also by “early professionals” – both academic and practitioner);
- Leadership mentoring (e.g., new student leaders, regional chapter leaders, SIG leaders; etc. asking for guidance and “hand holding” to get their “feet off the ground”);
- Peer mentoring (student and higher levels).

“Career coaching would be phenomenal. I teach at UCLA and this is something my students are constantly asking me for...” (Non-renewing Members Online Focus Group)

3. Publications/Communications/Social Media

One could summarize comments on ASIS&T publications this way:

- JASIS&T: “love it” or “not relevant”;
- Bulletin: most folks are not aware of it;
- Beyond those two, no other “publications” exist in ASIS&T (some will lament the “gone” publications, such as ARIST and the printed membership directory).

When practitioners (whether current members, former members, or non-members) were asked about publications, JASIS&T is “not relevant.”

When referring to JASIS&T, a European member noted: “There is no commentary about the crossover [into professional life]...” (European Focus Group)

“So there should be alternative publications for less technical articles...” (referring to JASIS&T)

In the Wiley report “Membership Matters,” having a “publication” that highlights “latest techniques and trends” is the third most appealing activity offered by an association.

4. Publicity/Outreach/Advocacy

Throughout the reports, there are mentions of “what is ASIS&T” or, “I’m not sure what ASIS&T is...” Examples include:

- “...very poor understanding about ASIS&T...” (IA Summit – Key Takeaways)
- “...has no idea what kinds of membership benefits are offered...” (RDAP Focus Group)
- “I’m hard pressed to know what ASIS&T does. I see webinars, I see annual conference, I see the journal. Beyond that, it’s hard to identify what ASIS&T does.” (Non-renewing Members Online Focus Group)

In the RDAP Focus Group, one attendee mentioned she “had no ideas that RDAP even existed and (she) studied data science at Syracuse.” Not only did she not know about RDAP until a colleague told her, she was unaware of ASIS&T, too. Another attendee only learned about the program via word of mouth.

As noted above, participants in both the IA Summit and RDAP focus groups thought that ASIS&T simply planned the conferences – they had no knowledge of ASIS&T as an association/membership group. One participant in the RDAP group knew about ASIS&T, but admitted not knowing if a local chapter existed or not.

From the Taipei and Asia Pacific surveys, ASIS&T is almost non-existent. Similar responses emerged from the various African documents.

5. Institutional Knowledge

Communication – especially the lack of – is mentioned frequently across all the reports. In many cases, these mentions are linked to other comments about program support, leadership support, lack of easily obtainable data (e.g. membership reports; financial reports), and membership benefits; this last item is addressed elsewhere in this document.

Chapters (both student and regional) mention not “connecting” with “HQ” or the “national” level; these respondents also mention not being able to access information/data from the ASIS&T web site (all comments received occurred before the new version of the website was launched).

In personal discussions, that Michael Leach has had with Chapters leaders since November 2014, nearly all say they feel disconnected from ASIS&T. Michael also chatted with a number of recent past presidents, many of which were not aware of “institutional knowledge” and support (e.g. travel budget; access to prior committee, task force and other reports) for the President.

Student members feel particularly “adrift”. [Note: this may also be due to the fact that many student chapter members do not have a membership in ASIS&T per se.]

The ASIS&T website does not have chapter event information; nor does it retain any prior chapter event information (aside from that captured by chapter websites).

B. Themes With a Smaller Response; Themes Currently “In Focus”

“In Focus” simply means the Board and/or other leadership groups within ASIS&T are addressing the issue(s) already.

One such theme is the “internationalization” of ASIS&T; many respondents mentioned the need to have conferences “outside the U.S.”; a few knew of the Copenhagen location for 2016, but many did not; others asked for membership dues to be payable in currencies other than the U.S. dollar; still others mentioned the need to stage membership dues, to reflect local economic realities (something the current Board is discussing). In the European Focus Group, there are numerous mentions about the Association still “feeling ‘American’” in a number of ways.

There was some mention that membership in ASIS&T is expensive. Related to this, some members dropped their membership when their institution discontinued paying for it; as a follow-

up, it might be worth determining how many members pay for their membership themselves versus having an organization pay for it.

Regional Chapters are mentioned time and again, primarily for the need to have local programming. This is addressed in the Programs/Services/Mentoring theme above, but also in the Institutional Knowledge theme. The student groups particularly made mention of this, especially the desire to connect with a regional chapters, or with other student chapters. Some comments from the Non-renewing Members Focus Group mention the demise of local chapters and how these grounded/connected the former members to the Association.

There are some mentions for the Association to be more “socially engaged,” from information policy development to standards.

C. What ASIS&T Does Well

While there are certainly areas for improvement within the Association, there are also several aspects that ASIS&T is doing well.

1. *Face-to-Face Networking Opportunities*

There are numerous examples that ASIS&T programs provide good networking opportunities; these points were mentioned in the following reports: RDAP focus groups, IA Summit focus groups, and the student focus groups.

Key to this are “face to face” opportunities that programs provide, especially the informal exchanges that occur between meetings. As some respondents noted:

“Meeting in person demystifies individuals whose research you may have read. Plus, you have the opportunity to bounce ideas off one another and find common ground.” (RDAP)

It is important to note that there are mentions by many that the academic feel of ASIS&T is good – and that there are other “practitioner” societies for people to join; “...there are a lot of practical associations (e.g., SLA) and I feel very well in a more academic environment...” (European Focus Group)

Some suggestions for improving networking at meetings/summits included: “speed dating” type programs; and longer breaks between sessions.

When a member's research area lines up with a primary SIG or other program within ASIS&T, that member expresses "attraction" to the Association; when this is not true, then interest is lacking from the member's perspective.

The word "family" appears across many of the reports indicating this as one of the strengths of ASIS&T – including IA Summit as well as chapters, SIGs, etc.

2. Webinars

Nearly all the reports have some mention on how much the webinars are enjoyed and valued. Folks wish to see this service increase. There were also a couple of mentions that – if "useful" webinars increased, a past member might renew, as the membership discount would be "worth it."

3. JASIS&T

The Association's journal is mentioned often; these mentions fall into one of two categories:

- A) The journal is useful and valuable;
- B) The journal is not read because it is not practical.

See other comments above.

4. Other items noticed in the various reports:

- It is important to understand what keeps academics coming to ASIS&T; should a focus move to practitioners, one would not want to lose the current academic members;
- The perception that academics and practitioners no longer have "areas of common interest" was mentioned a few times; there are opposite viewpoints mentioned elsewhere in the reports;
- Economic reality that many practitioners can no longer afford multiple memberships.
- There were a few mentions that ASIS&T faces stiff competition for memberships, both academic and practitioner (especially true for IT and IA/UX);
- A couple of mentions that ASIS&T "missed the boat" regarding new programs or international collaborations (iSchool conference is mentioned as a competitor to ASIS&T AM);
- Very hard to get new leaders, especially on the chapter and SIG levels;
- Access to meetings, peer support and discounts (publications & meetings) are key retention factors from the Taipei/Asia-Pacific surveys.
- ASIS&T website is only in English (number of mentions in African, Taipei and European documents);

- Navigation for ASIS&T DL is only in English;
- Structure of ASIS&T (governance) does not always fit the mission nor goals as stated.
- From the 2014 Board Retreat, there are ideas about re-envisioning the committee structure of ASIS&T.
- Is the number of awards “correct”; are there “too many awards”; should one body “manage awards”.

4. DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The SPTF first reviewed the existing mission and vision for the association, which are stated below; these serve as ASIS&T's guiding principles:

Mission

The mission of the Association for Information Science and Technology is to advance the information sciences and related applications of information technology by providing focus, opportunity, and support to information professionals and organizations.

Vision

Establish a new information professionalism in a world where information is of central importance to personal, social, political, and economic progress by: Advancing knowledge about information, its creation, properties, and use; Providing analysis of ideas, practices, and technologies; Valuing theory, research, applications, and service; Nurturing new perspectives, interests, and ideas; Increasing public awareness of the information sciences and technologies and their benefits to Association.

Upon analyzing the data, notes and statistics gathered and compiled, five key themes/strategic directions arose. These themes are not meant to be stand-alone, autonomous concepts, but should be viewed as the “strands of a fabric” being weaved into a harmonious whole. “Integration” may be considered a strategic direction in itself – but this specific process must be such that no person notices the integration – the whole must appear seamless – the Association must appear as one entity, even if it is made up of different “parts” – Special Interest Groups, Chapters, conferences, publications, etc. A member, a participant, at any level should feel part of the whole, not just part of that particular level.

It is important to emphasize that this Strategic Planning Report, including these strategic directions, is preliminary. The next stage in the strategic planning process is to circulate this widely to spark further discussion and conversations with the Information Science and Information Technology communities. History and research has shown that engaging participants in the strategic process is critically important – they, the members, whom the Association serves, must internalize this process and report and make it their own.

Additional work is needed to develop objectives and activities (those “SMART” criteria – specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related). Some preliminary goals are provided in this document and these are intended to be illustrative only – they are not necessarily the goals the SPTF will recommend and the goals are not meant to be comprehensive at this time.

Like the “hidden” sixth strategic direction, “integration,” another component that needs to be considered throughout this whole strategic planning process is fiscal responsibility. Many, if not all of the goals, when developed further into concrete, actionable objectives and activities, will require some form of financial support, which, as in any organization, is always “less than needed.”

This Strategic Planning Report does not evaluate goals based on either financial cost or potential financial gain. The Task Force does recommend, as the final version of this Plan is developed, that some attention be paid to both cost and potential gain.

Strategic Direction 1: Membership

The heart of any organization is its members. ASIS&T has long been known as a gathering place of the leaders in all facets of information science and information technology – and these leaders have been accessible to all. In an age of the Information Association, when jobs and careers in information-related areas are increasing, membership in ASIS&T has decreased, a pattern seen in many traditional groups in Association in general. Information is global and that requires a Association that is global in vision, with members reflecting this reality.

Programs and services are key factors that drive membership, attracting and retaining a broader range of membership - these will be addressed elsewhere in this report. Other goals are:

- Access to personal membership information should be integrated with other services on the Net to provide seamless access, with proper security features, whether from another social network provider (e.g. signing in to ASIS&T membership database using LinkedIn account) and regardless of device/technology being used (e.g. tablet, mobile device).
- The membership database should provide the capability of creating a “member profile” that can be ported to other services/technologies, and allow use within the Association for various purposes, such as the creation of “speaker bios” for use during conferences, easy identification of potential speakers for upcoming programs, and matching of mentors to mentees, and the creation of “stories” as part of the Outreach/Publicity strategic direction.
- The Association should develop “soft skills” and integrate them into the communication, programmatic, procedural and other avenues where members and leaders meet, interact and chat. These “soft skills” include such items as: developing a personal “welcome program” for new members; a leadership “welcome” program that introduces, guides and enables new leaders at any level of the Association; and meaningful “thank you” programs that celebrate the success of members and leaders within the Association upon completing of a program, publication, event, term of service, etc.

Strategic Direction 2: Programs/Services/Mentoring

Programs – meetings, conferences, webinars, workshops, social events, etc. - are the heart of ASIS&T. Members and non-members alike are drawn to the wide-ranging array of programs, and there is demand for more, both virtual and face-to-face programs. It should be noted that while many prefer asynchronous programs and learning opportunities, there is still a strong request – a need – for personal, synchronous, opportunities to gather, communicate and engage, especially at the local level.

- Develop regional programs, which can be “canned” and delivered to more than one location. These regional programs can and should involve regional chapters, student chapters, special interest groups and international leaders, as needed.
- Continue to develop “soft skills” programs, including topics such as: effective public speaking; program planning; assessment/evaluation tools (e.g. how to manage an effective focus group); running meetings (committees, task forces, work groups); and marketing/publicity. These programs should offer both an asynchronous virtual option and a face-to-face option, as needed.
- Assess and create structures that enhance collaborations within the Association, especially collaboration between regional and student chapters, which often have local logistical expertise to hold programs, and the Special Interest Groups, which hold the subject expertise and potential speakers. Methods could also be developed to match “luminaries” in our profession with local or regional programs.

“*Mentoring*, noun: The action of advising or training another person, esp. a less experienced colleague.” (Oxford English Dictionary – online version). Mentoring, the process where an experienced person “takes under her or his wing” a less experienced person and guides them, through dialog, interaction, coaching and sharing, is a successful structure for building expertise and leadership. Demand for this process is high, not only among students and new professionals, but also with mid-career professionals who are embarking into new territories.

Mentoring, though, is time-consuming and requires commitment on both sides – the mentor and the mentee. This reality, especially in the current information professions, which tend to be stressful, time-consuming entities in and of themselves, must be addressed:

- Develop a leadership mentoring program, where experienced leaders (not just a “past chair”) mentor new/developing leaders, to guide them through their first year “on the job” as a leader in the Association. All levels (student chapter, regional chapter, special interest group, standing committee, international) should be considered, then prioritized to determine which will have the “most impact.”

- Develop a student mentoring program matched with “new professions” – those who were recently students. The focus here is on smoothing the transition from student to professional.

Strategic Direction 3: Publications/Communications/Social Media

JASIST and the Bulletin are regarded as leaders in the field and should be maintained as such, but there is demand for more avenues to disseminate knowledge, experience and data, especially for practitioners. Dissemination in official streams is critically important, not only serving as an “imprimatur” of worth and substance, but also as vehicles that aggregate, evaluate and repurpose knowledge to save time in an era of “information overload.”

- Create a “practitioner publication” that offers opportunities to: highlight emerging technologies; discuss best practices; enable discussion via opinion pieces; and disseminate pilot project results. This practitioner publication would be virtual, taking advantage of new ways of delivering data, or software snippets, or visualizations, etc. Peer review would come from a practitioner’s perspective instead of academic criteria.
- Examine the potential of partnering with third party information professional publications, looking for opportunities to expand content within those publications, such as, say, creating “The ASIS&T Perspective” opinion blog/column in **Information Today** or a similar publication. Such an partnership would also support the Publicity/Outreach strategic direction.

Strategic Direction 4: Publicity/Outreach/Advocacy

The Association’s visibility to those in the information professions as well as to those outside the profession, whether closely related or not, has decreased. To some, this is a sign of dwindling importance, even if programs, publications and other actions by the Association remain strong. As the Matthew Affect (by Robert Merton) shows – a successful entity (person, group, Association, etc.) breeds more success. A publicity and outreach program by ASIS&T should not just improve name recognition, but it should encompass feelings of “I want to belong to that organization – I want to be part of that success!”

- Publicize & promote the work of the Information Professional Task Force (<http://infoprofessionals.org>).
- Conduct marketing research, focused on identifying media outlets that reach the most current and potential members (could be other conferences, radio ads, web advertising, etc.). This may also be prioritized based on regional considerations.

- Once outlets have been identified, create publicity and outreach programs that touch both “hard” assets (such as programs, publications) and “soft” assets (such as community, mentoring).
- In parallel to the above, develop assessment tools that will evaluate the success (or not) of any given publicity/outreach program.

Strategic Direction 5: Institutional Knowledge

As a knowledge leader, ASIS&T institutionally must improve its knowledge management (KM) procedures and processes, to enable leadership on all levels – internationally, regionally, and down to individual student chapters – to more effectively capture and assimilate “what has gone before,” thus enabling a faster and more informed decision making process.

KM is not a stranger to this Association; the principles of this field must be fully embraced and distributed throughout the whole organization, that all might benefit, from a newly joined student member, all the way to the Board of Directors.

- Identify areas where knowledge management practices will enhance communication, leadership and community within ASIS&T, then prioritize which areas are feasible to address within the span of this strategic plan, and which will fall outside this plan. A focus on “leadership/officer” levels in ASIS&T is a natural “first place to start” for this process.
- Develop knowledge management practices, procedures and technology and integrate these into the “culture” of the Association, so they are used to improve organizational memory, enhance continuity, and help guide services and programs, such as the Association’s web presence.

5. NEXT STEPS

The SPTF, in collaboration with the ASIS&T Board of Directors, will more fully develop the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives, applying SMART criteria (specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, and time-related) in August 2015. A series of virtual town hall meetings will be held in September 2015 and early October to engage membership in a discussion and capture their feedback. This is a very important step and our goal is to spark discussion and solicit input on the draft Strategic Plan. The SPTF will review and address feedback collected through this process in mid-October, and submit a revised Strategic Plan for the Board to review and approve. The new Strategic Plan will be voted on by the ASIS&T Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting in November 2015. The Strategic Plan will be a living document, which will be reviewed and revised regularly by the ASIS&T Board of Directors.

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