



WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

Key signs an association may benefit from AMC support:

- Leadership Transition: CEO or ED retirement, turnover, or lack of succession planning.
- Rapid Growth: Membership or program expansion that outpaces staff or systems.
- Staff retention or acquisition. Finding it challenging to recruit or retain staff consistently, or scaling to the timing or experience needed.
- Decline or Stagnation: Declining membership, revenue, or engagement.
- Board or Volunteer Capacity: Boards struggling to balance governance with operations.
- Compliance and Risk Exposure: Increasing demands in finance, HR, or regulatory oversight.
- Event or Revenue Dependency: Overreliance on one major event or sponsorship stream.
- Technology or Innovation Gaps: Outdated systems that limit engagement, transparency, or efficiency.



WHEN AMCS TALK WITH TRUSTED ADVISORS (TAS):

Rapid Growth

“When an association grows faster than staff or systems can keep up, pressure shows in reporting, compliance, and member service. Advisors often notice financial inefficiencies or leadership fatigue. Those are natural moments to suggest an AMC – scalable staff and systems that let growth continue without breaking the foundation.”

Membership Decline / Relevance

“When participation falls, associations struggle to stay relevant. You may hear about shrinking budgets, weaker events, or volunteer burnout. That’s where an AMC steps in with fresh strategies, proven marketing, and shared resources to re-energize member value and stabilize finances.”

Leadership Transition

“Frequent CEO or ED turnover makes it hard to keep momentum. You may notice board frustration or staff leaving under the pressure. That’s a natural time to raise the AMC model – AMCs provide continuity and stability while leadership resets.”

Board / Volunteer Capacity

“When boards or volunteers are pulled into daily operations, strategy suffers. Advisors often see governance gaps, decision delays, or just plain burnout. That’s the moment to introduce the AMC model as a way to bring balance back and keep the board focused on leading.”

Financial / Compliance Issues

“If you see inconsistent reporting, weak controls, or repeated compliance struggles, that’s not just accounting, it’s structural. AMCs bring professional financial teams and strong controls, which makes your role as CPA, attorney, or investment advisor more effective.”

Event & Revenue Reliance

“Many associations lean too heavily on one annual meeting or a single sponsorship stream. If attendance drops or sponsors shift, the risk is clear. AMCs help diversify revenue and build more resilient models, making your advice even more valuable.”

Technology or Data Challenges

“When leaders vent about outdated systems, poor data, or clunky processes, those frustrations often land with their advisors. AMCs routinely audit, upgrade, and manage technology, and because they work across many organizations, they’re exposed to the latest practices and can help associations leap forward efficiently.”



WHEN TRUSTED ADVISORS TALK WITH THEIR ASSOCIATION CLIENTS

Rapid Growth

“You’ve said how exciting this period of growth has been, but also how it’s putting real strain on staff and the board. It’s tough when success creates as many challenges as it solves. One approach I’ve seen work well is partnering with an AMC. They can add experienced staff and proven systems that expand with you, so growth doesn’t outpace your ability to deliver value to members.”

Membership Decline / Relevance

“You’ve mentioned how discouraging it feels to see membership numbers slide and participation drop at events, while volunteers feel stretched thinner than ever. That combination can put a lot of pressure on an organization. One option to consider is that an AMC can help reframe the strategy, bring in additional resources, and revitalize the member experience so you’re not carrying it all on your own.”

Leadership Transition

“I know how frustrating it’s been to lose another Executive Director, or to see staff turnover keep slowing the board’s priorities. It’s hard to build momentum when leadership is always resetting. Some associations in this position turn to an AMC, not just for interim stability, but sometimes even to provide the ED role or fill critical staff functions. It may feel like a big shift, but it can create the consistency you need to move forward with confidence.”

Board / Volunteer Capacity

“You’ve told me the board is being pulled deeper into daily operations than anyone intended, and that’s left less time for the big-picture conversations you want to be having. Or, in your case, staff are running out of bandwidth as the requests pile up. I’ve seen organizations in similar spots partner with an AMC to take on that operational load. Because they bring a team with expertise across membership, meetings, and finance, they can support multiple areas at once, while allowing your board to refocus on leadership and your staff to get back to work they do best.”

Financial / Compliance Issues

“With limited staff and treasurer roles that turn over every year, it’s not surprising that financial best practices are hard to maintain. One way that could provide the consistency that you’re looking for is to talk to an AMC. They bring dedicated finance teams and proven controls, so you get consistent reporting and a level of accountability that makes it easier for the board to trust the numbers and move decisions forward.”

Event & Revenue Reliance

“You’ve raised concerns about depending so heavily on the annual meeting. It’s a big risk when one event has to carry the budget. AMCs can help broaden revenue streams - whether through new programs, sponsorship approaches, or partnerships - so the organization isn’t vulnerable if that one meeting doesn’t perform as expected.”

Technology or Data Challenges

“You’ve shared how frustrating it is to deal with outdated systems and unreliable data. Those challenges often hold back everything else. AMCs work with many associations and see the best tools and practices in action. They can help assess what you have, suggest practical upgrades, and manage the implementation so you end up with systems that actually support your goals instead of slowing you down.”



ABOUT ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

- Averaging 10% growth annually, AMCs represent a \$2B industry focused on building and sustaining strength and growth for associations and other nonprofits.
- AMC-managed associations experience 58 percent higher growth compared to non-AMC peers.
- AMC Institute's 180 members manage thousands of associations worldwide, with budgets ranging from \$500K to over \$20M.
- AMC Institute accredited firms adhere to the gold standard of industry best practices.
- Shared service models provide access to high-level expertise, scaled affordably to the association's priorities, needs, and budget. This translates to increased member value and proven results.
- Associations managed by AMCs stay resilient in periods of uncertainty, drawing on deep bench of specialists to maintain continuity and keep programs moving when staffing changes or external disruptions occur.



FAQS

What is an AMC?

A professional services firm that provides tailored management and operational support for associations.

How do I know if my client is ready for an AMC?

Typical triggers include leadership transitions, trouble retaining professional staff for an Executive Director, growth that outpaces capacity, declining membership, financial or compliance risks, or a need for specialized expertise.

What are the benefits compared to hiring staff directly?

Partnering with an AMC gives associations immediate access to a team of specialists across disciplines, supported by proven systems and economies of scale. Instead of relying on a single hire, you gain depth (e.g., multiple meeting planners or finance professionals) so the organization doesn't lose momentum during staff changes. That built-in bench also acts as a safety net during disruptions, allowing staff and boards to stay focused on mission and member value.

How large are the organizations managed by AMCs?

They range from small volunteer-led nonprofits to global organizations with multimillion-dollar budgets.

What services do AMCs provide?

In addition to full-service operational management, AMCs provide functional services ranging from strategic planning to membership, marketing, meetings, finance, HR, policy, governance, and more.

Are AMCs affordable for smaller associations?

Yes. The shared services model makes professional expertise accessible, reducing the costs associated with hiring full-time staff.

How do we evaluate whether an AMC is the right fit?

Start with a needs assessment: consider your financial health, staff capacity, governance challenges, and growth opportunities. AMCI provides tools and consultations to guide this process.

What if the association is hesitant about hiring AMC staff?

AMCs work with organizations to be a seamless part of the leadership team. By providing financial expertise, governance support, and shared resources, boards and staff are better able to focus on what matters most: advancing their mission and vision.

What's the process for engaging an AMC?

Associations often find having a discovery conversation with the AMC Institute or an AMC directly is quite helpful in learning about the process and the options available. We'd be happy to provide contacts for either option, just send us a note at info@amcinstitute.org.

Where can I find case studies or real-world examples?

AMCI's website includes case studies showing growth in membership, financial stability, and event revenue.

Where can I learn more?

Visit <https://amci.memberclicks.net/>, download the toolkit, or attend a Trusted Advisor briefing for additional insights.