



AMCI REGIONAL MEETING · ATLANTA · SEPTEMBER 22–23, 2026

The LAUNCH Framework

A roadmap for guiding association clients through non-dues revenue program launches and relaunches

Angela Robbins, Ph.D.

VP, Global Business Development & Learning Solutions · Mission Fuel AI

MISSIONFUEL.AI

Where Is Your Client Right Now?

01

Launching something new right now

02

Trying to revive a program that stalled

03

Asked for a program you're not sure they need

04

Not yet — but the conversation is coming

Hold onto your answer. The framework maps to all four — and the first stage is telling them apart.

Six Stages. One Hour. One Playbook.

Every non-dues revenue launch — or relaunch — moves through the same six stages, whether the client calls it a certification, a course, or a credential.



Use it as a working checklist — not a rigid sequence. Most engagements move a little of everything at once.

You Wear Every Hat on This Project

01

Strategist

Diagnosing what the client actually needs

02

Instructional Designer

Shaping content into a real program

03

Tech Consultant

Steering platform and integration decisions

04

Marketer

Building the plan that fills the seats

05

Board Advisor

Arming the client to win internal buy-in

One client relationship. Five distinct disciplines. This session gives you a shared vocabulary for all five.

THE REAL COMPETITOR IS INERTIA

The Cost of Doing Nothing

61%

of associations name non-dues revenue
their #1 challenge — three years
running

NAYLOR 2025 ASSOCIATION
BENCHMARKING REPORT

39%

of association CEOs report financial
decline, vs. roughly 10% reporting
improvement

ASAE · STATE OF ASSOCIATIONS

60%+

of associations are actively diversifying
revenue; over half are launching new
offerings

ASAE · STATE OF ASSOCIATIONS

From Dues-Dependent to Diversified

1950s

95.7%

of nonprofit revenue came from a single source: membership dues.

SOURCE / ASAE

TODAY

Boards increasingly expect non-dues revenue to fund half or more of the operating budget — and rank it their top financial pressure, year after year.

Doing nothing isn't neutral — it's a bet that the old model still works.

STAGE 1 OF 6



Landscape & Strategy

Diagnose before you design.

Start With Diagnosis, Not Design

Relaunch Diagnostics

- Why did the last program actually stall?
- Did content age out, or did the platform fail people?
- Was there ever a real internal champion?

Launch Diagnostics

- Is there real member demand — or assumed demand?
- What does the competitive/industry landscape look like?
- What capacity does staff actually have to support it?

The Discovery Checklist

01 Member demand signals

Surveys, event attendance, past enrollment data — not assumptions

02 Competitive & industry scan

Who else already serves this need, and how well?

03 Internal capacity audit

Staff bandwidth, SME availability, an actual champion

04 Budget & timeline reality check

What the board will actually approve, and by when

What Clients Say Before They Say Yes

"Our members won't pay for this."

THE REFRAME

They already are — to someone else. Your competitive scan names who.

"We tried this before and it flopped."

THE REFRAME

Name what actually failed. It is almost never the content.

"Staff doesn't have the bandwidth."

THE REFRAME

Then the pilot is smaller than they are picturing. Phase it.

"The board will never approve the spend."

THE REFRAME

Lead with break-even enrollment and the cost of doing nothing.

From the Field (Anonymized)

THEY ASKED FOR

A full curriculum redesign.

DISCOVERY FOUND

The content was fine. The internal champion had gone quiet, and the delivery platform was aging out.

WE DELIVERED

Two focused workstreams on an 8-week phased roadmap — not a redesign.

(One to re-engage the champion; one to replace the platform. Content untouched.)

THE LESSON

The stated ask and the real need are often two different projects.

STAGE 2 OF 6



Architecture & Design

Build a roadmap, not a monument.

Match the Format to the Goal

Certificate Program

A defined curriculum proving completion — strong for onboarding new-to-industry professionals.

Certification / Credential

Assessment-backed, often renewable — strong for professional standing and employer recognition.

Continuing Education

Credit-bearing units tied to licensure or renewal requirements.

Microlearning / On-Demand

Short, modular content for just-in-time skill needs and busy members.

The Failure Point: Chasing “Perfect”

THE TRAP

The Perfect Program

- Every module planned before launch
- Scope grows to cover every edge case
- Launch date keeps slipping

THE MOVE

The Sequenced Roadmap

- Pilot → Expand → Scale
- Ship the core, iterate with real data
- Momentum the board can see quickly

Content sourcing follows the same logic: internal SMEs bring credibility but limited bandwidth; contracted development brings speed and capacity but needs strong SME review checkpoints.

Who Actually Builds the Content?

OPTION 01

In-House

- SME credibility built in
- Full control of voice and IP
- Limited staff bandwidth
- Timelines slip when day jobs win

OPTION 02

Outsourced

- Speed and production capacity
- Instructional design expertise
- Higher up-front cost
- Needs firm SME review checkpoints

OPTION 03

AI-Assisted

- Drafts outlines, scripts, assessments
- Cuts first-draft time dramatically
- Consistent voice across modules
- Never ships without SME review

Most programs land on a blend: AI drafts, SMEs validate, a production partner finishes. AI accelerates development — it does not replace subject-matter authority or accreditation review.

STAGE 3 OF 6

U

Underlying Tech Stack

Match the tool to the program, not the trend.

Platform ≠ Platform

PLATFORM TYPE	WHAT IT IS BUILT FOR
LMS	Structured courses, tracking, and compliance/CE credit — the default for certification programs.
LXP	Discovery-driven, content-library experience — fits broad, self-directed member learning.
Authoring Platform	Purpose-built for building and licensing your own branded course content.

BUILD vs. BUY vs. LICENSE

The right call depends on internal dev capacity, how fast the client needs to launch, and whether the platform itself needs to be a member-facing asset — not on which option is newest.

The Vendor-Neutral Checklist

01 Integration

SSO and AMS/CRM sync — e.g., Fonteva, iMIS —
not bolted on after the fact

02 Reporting & tracking

Completion data the client can actually report to
their board

03 Multi-tenant needs

Chapter- or affiliate-level access, if the org has that
structure

04 True cost of ownership

Total 3-year cost, not just the license quote

From the Field (Anonymized)

THEY ASKED FOR

An LMS for a national association with state chapters.
(Every chapter needed its own licensed access, not one shared login.)

THE EASY PATH

Buy from whichever vendor was already in the room.
(A demo sized to that vendor's strengths.)

WE DELIVERED

A structured, vendor-neutral evaluation against the org's real requirements.
(Scored on integration, chapter access, reporting, 3-year cost.)

THE LESSON

Neutral advisory earns a level of trust a vendor demo never can.

STAGE 4 OF 6

N

Numbers: Pricing & ROI

Speak the board's financial language.

Pricing Models Worth Comparing

01

Per-Course Rate Card

Predictable, scalable pricing tied directly to content volume.

02

Subscription / Licensing

Recurring revenue for the client; ongoing relationship for you.

03

Member vs. Non-Member Tiers

Reinforces membership value while still opening a public revenue line.

04

Fixed-Price vs. Concierge

Fixed price for defined scope; concierge hours for evolving needs.

Boards Think in Dues, Not Tuition

01

Break-even enrollment math

Show the exact number of registrants that covers the investment — boards trust a number over a narrative.

02

Retention value

A member who completes a program renews at a measurably higher rate — that's ROI even with zero net-new revenue.

03

Cost of inaction, quantified

Staff hours spent propping up an outdated program, registration revenue already walking to competitors.

STAGE 5 OF 6



Communicate & Market

The launch plan is part of the product.

A Simple 3-Phase Launch Plan

1

Pre-Launch

Build awareness, open a waitlist, recruit internal champions before doors open.

2

Launch

Multi-channel push across email, social, and events; early-bird pricing to drive urgency.

3

Post-Launch

Retention nurture, testimonials, and a clear path into the next renewal cycle.

| Internal marketing — to staff and board champions — matters as much as anything aimed at members.

STAGE 6 OF 6

H

Hand Off: Board Buy-In

Arm your client to sell it internally.

Anatomy of a Winning Board Deck

01

Problem

02

**Cost of
Inaction**

03

Roadmap

04

Investment

05

**ROI
Timeline**

WHAT BOARDS ACTUALLY PUSH BACK ON

- No clear cost of inaction
- the status quo looks “free”
- One option presented, with no phased or scaled-down alternative
- Investment shown without a matching ROI timeline

From the Field (Anonymized)

THEY ASKED FOR

A new procedural training curriculum for a medical specialty society.

(Strong content, credible SMEs, clear member need.)

WHAT STALLED IT

The board heard “a new course” and saw a cost line.

(No ROI model, no retention case, no phased alternative.)

WE DELIVERED

A board-ready presentation with ROI modeling attached.

(Reframed the ask as a retention and revenue-diversification investment.)

THE LESSON

The board deck is often the real deliverable, even when the client asked for a curriculum.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

The LAUNCH Framework, End to End

L

Landscape
& Strategy

A

Architecture
& Design

U

Underlying
Tech Stack

N

Numbers:
Pricing &
ROI

C

Communicate
& Market

H

Hand Off:
Board
Buy-In

One shared vocabulary — for the next conversation with every client on your roster.

Take the LAUNCH Checklist Back to Your Clients

A one-page version of every checklist in this session — landscape discovery, tech evaluation, pricing models, and the board-deck anatomy — built to hand straight to your next client conversation.

L

Landscape &
Strategy

A

Architecture &
Design

U

Underlying Tech
Stack

N

Numbers: Pricing &
ROI

C

Communicate &
Market

H

Hand Off: Board
Buy-In

Thank You

Angela Robbins, Ph.D. · VP, Global Business Development & Learning Solutions · Mission Fuel AI

MISSIONFUEL.AI

SOURCES

Data Cited in This Presentation

Naylor Association Solutions & Association Adviser, “2025 Association Benchmarking Report” (August 2025)

ASAE, “State of Associations” report — CEO-reported financial performance and revenue diversification data

ASAE — historical membership dues share of nonprofit revenue (1950s benchmark)
