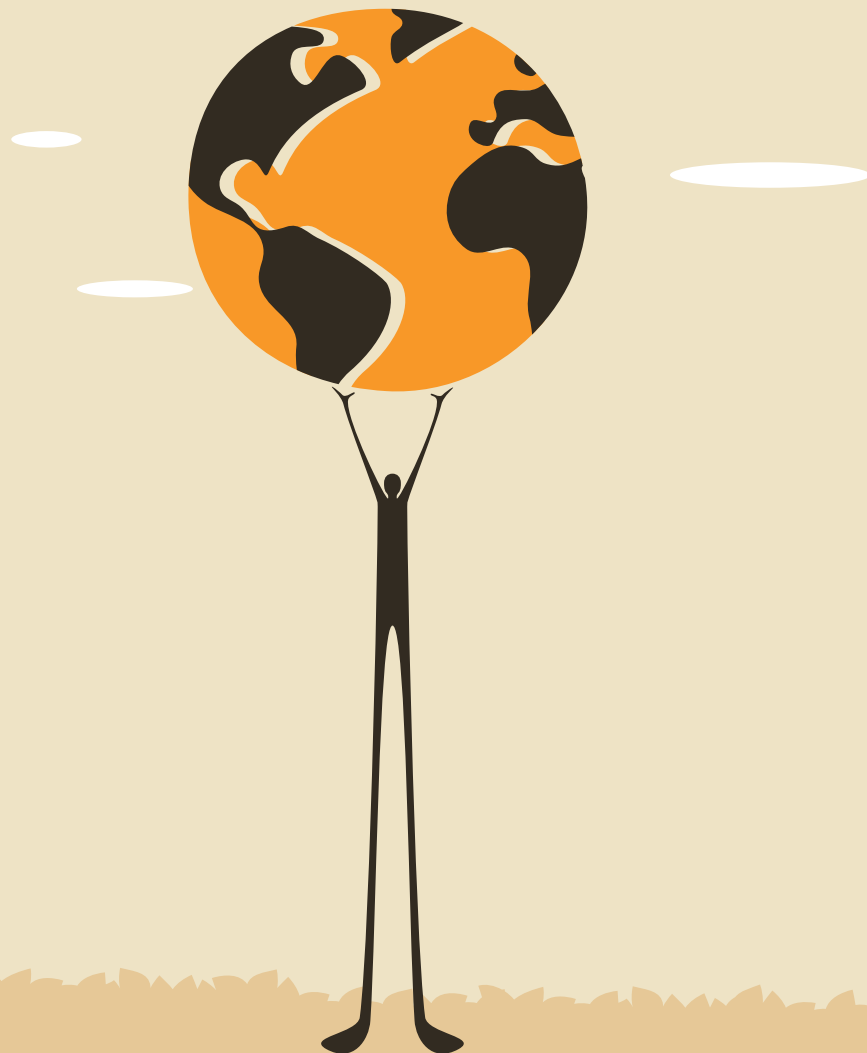


# GLOBALIZATION IS THE SINGLE GREATEST FORCE IMPACTING ASSOCIATIONS TODAY

„Global Growth Strategies. The International Association.“ ist eine Studie die Ende 2012 und Anfang 2013 von der amerikanischen Verbandsberatungs-Agentur Globalstrat durchgeführt wurde. Ziel der Studie war eine aktuelle Bestandsaufnahme zum Grad der „Internationalität“ nationaler und internationaler agierender Verbände. Über 340 Verbände aus 20 Staaten nahmen an dieser Untersuchung teil. Wir stellen die Ergebnisse der Studie auszugsweise vor.



**D**ie Kernfrage: Wie gehen Verbände mit den Themen Globalisierung und Wachstum um? Unter „Globalisierung“ verstehen die Autoren der Studie übrigens nicht das „Phänomen der Moderne“ im Sinne der zunehmenden weltweiten Verflechtung in allen Bereichen, sondern die Frage nach verbandseigenen Wachstumsstrategien auf internationalen Märkten. Konkret: Gibt es Strategien zur Expansion auf Mitgliedermärkte außerhalb des eigenen nationalen Umfeldes? Ein Thema, das aktuell in der US-amerikanischen Verbandswelt diskutiert wird.

En détail wurden diese Fragen untersucht:

- Welche Länder sind im Fokus einer Internationalisierungs-Strategie?
- Welche Dienstleistungen werden ange-

boten bzw. können angeboten werden?

- Ist „Globalisierung“ eine Notwendigkeit oder eine Herausforderung?
- Was unterscheidet schnell wachsende Verbände von anderen Verbänden?
- Ist eine internationale Strategie „Treiber“ für Mitglieder-Zuwachs?

#### INFORMATIONEN ZUR STUDIE

Der Teilnehmerkreis: 60 Prozent der untersuchten Verbände definieren die Initiatoren der Umfrage als „Professional Societies“. In etwa sind damit Berufsorganisationen (Personenverbände der Ingenieure, freien Berufe, Ärzte etc.) gemeint. 28 Prozent sind wirtschaftsnahe Verbände (Unternehmensverbände, Arbeitgeber- und Branchenverbände). 12 Prozent können den Fundraisern, Gemeinnützigen, klassi-

schen NGOs und anderen Interessengruppen zugeordnet werden.

Die Rückläufer kamen aus über 20 Ländern: darunter Belgien, China, Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien, Irland, Italien, Indien, Kanada, Kolumbien, Niederlande, Norwegen, Schweiz, Schweden, Slowenien, Spanien, Südafrika, USA ... Wobei die prozentuale Verteilung der an der Studie teilnehmenden Verbände das Gesamtbild weniger „bunt“ erscheinen lässt. Lediglich ein knappes Viertel – etwa 70 Verbände – hat seinen Hauptsitz in Europa (19 Prozent) und dem „Rest der Welt“ (4 Prozent). Mit dieser Studie ist es nach Aussage der Initiatoren erstmalig möglich, Verbände in den Vereinigten Staaten mit ihren europäischen Counterparts zu vergleichen. ■ (WL)

#### Wir stellten Terrance Barkan, dem Initiator und Leiter der Studie, einige Fragen:

**What is the difference between associations that grow faster vs. those that don't?**

**Mr. Barkan:** „One of the most important and interesting insights we wanted to get at from this survey was to understand what is the difference between the fast growing international associations, and those organizations that do not enjoy the same level of growth?“

In the survey, we asked participants to identify if their international membership was growing slower, as fast as, or faster than their overall membership rates. We also asked participants to declare what percentage of their current membership is international. The categories were a.) less than 5%, between 5%-14%, between 15%-24%, 25%-49% and at least 50% or more.

We then compared the results of the "fast growing" associations with the other

organizations in the survey. The answer we got is what we might expect, but also, it was far clearer than we imagined. The more international an organization already was, the more likely it was experiencing a higher level of international growth.

In fact, associations that had at least 15% or more international membership were

56% more likely to experience faster international growth than other associations!

While we cannot state that just having a higher percentage of international members will guarantee faster growth, the data is clear; those associations with at least 15% international members are far more likely to experience faster overall growth.“

ABBILDUNG 1:

#### HOW MANY INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS DO YOU HAVE?

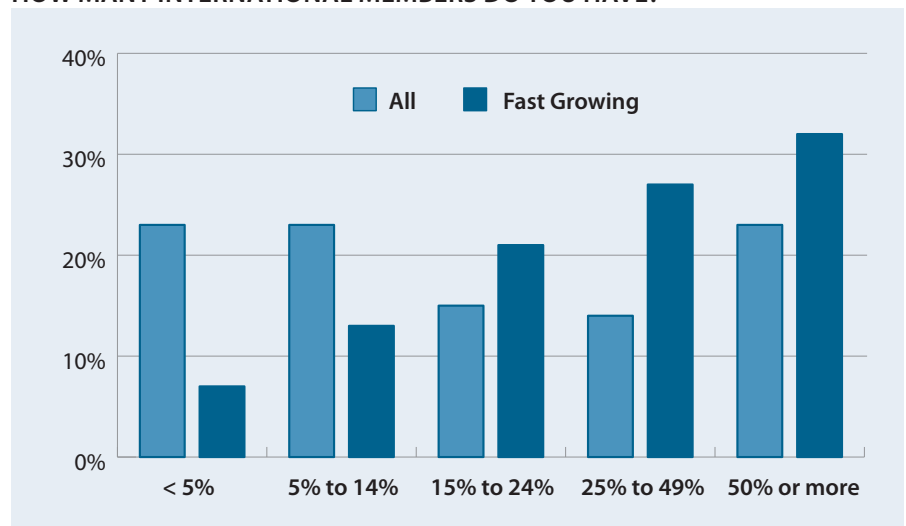
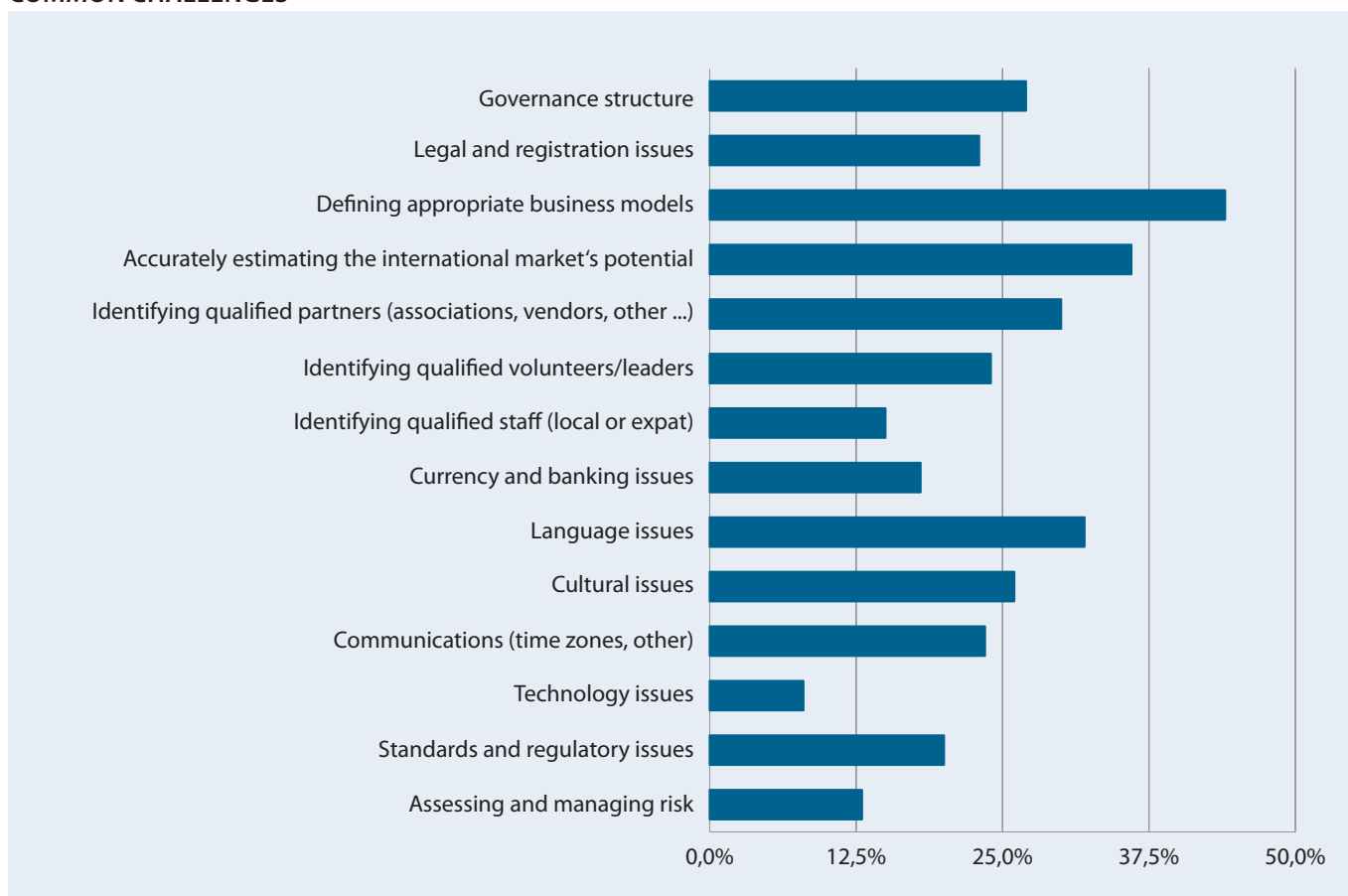


ABBILDUNG 2:  
COMMON CHALLENGES



## GLOBALIZATION IS CHANGING MEMBER EXPECTATIONS, INCREASING COMPETITION AND CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

What are the most significant problems facing association boards and CEOs?

**Mr. Barkan:** „We asked survey participants to list the different challenges they faced as they attempt to grow globally. The result is a list of the most common obstacles that almost every international association must address in one form or another. Your organization will have a specific set

of challenges that will differ depending on your specific sector, how international you already are, your resources, your capabilities and how many competitors you face.

The two most common challenges listed include a.) defining appropriate business models and b.) accurately assessing the real potential of international markets. What experience and

the survey results tell us is that the business model that has made you successful in your home market is probably not going to look like the business model you will need to succeed in other countries.

International growth strategies require a well thought out plan and market research to determine which markets hold real opportunity versus those that hold false promise. Associations are unique, each representing a specific industry or profession, and each faced with a unique set of competitors, challenges and constraints. It requires serious thought and effort to develop a coordinated plan that addresses each of these challenges.“

ABBILDUNG 3:

**FASTER GROWING ASSOCIATIONS**



*The faster growing associations were almost 50% more likely to have developed and implemented an international strategy compared to slow growth organizations. Of course, this is what we would expect, but for the first time we have real data from more than 340 associations and more than 20 countries that confirms having an international strategy makes a difference.*

*Over the past 4 years of global economic slowdown, emerging economy countries in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa have continued to prosper, typically growing at rates from 6-10% per annum.*

*With the U.S. representing just 4.5% of the global population, it is clear that the real opportunities for significant growth are in international markets.*

*The data shows us that the associations that have the highest percentage of international membership are much more likely to continue to grow at a fast pace, making them much more resilient when economic conditions change.“*

**Does having an international strategy make a difference?**

*Mr. Barkan:* „Common sense tells us that associations should be more effective and successful if they have a solid strategy and an implementation plan. Most associations start with an "ad hoc" approach to international growth. It is usually not until it reaches a critical point and demands attention that a dedicated international strategy

*is developed. How much more successful could an association be if it had a solid strategy and business plan for global growth?*

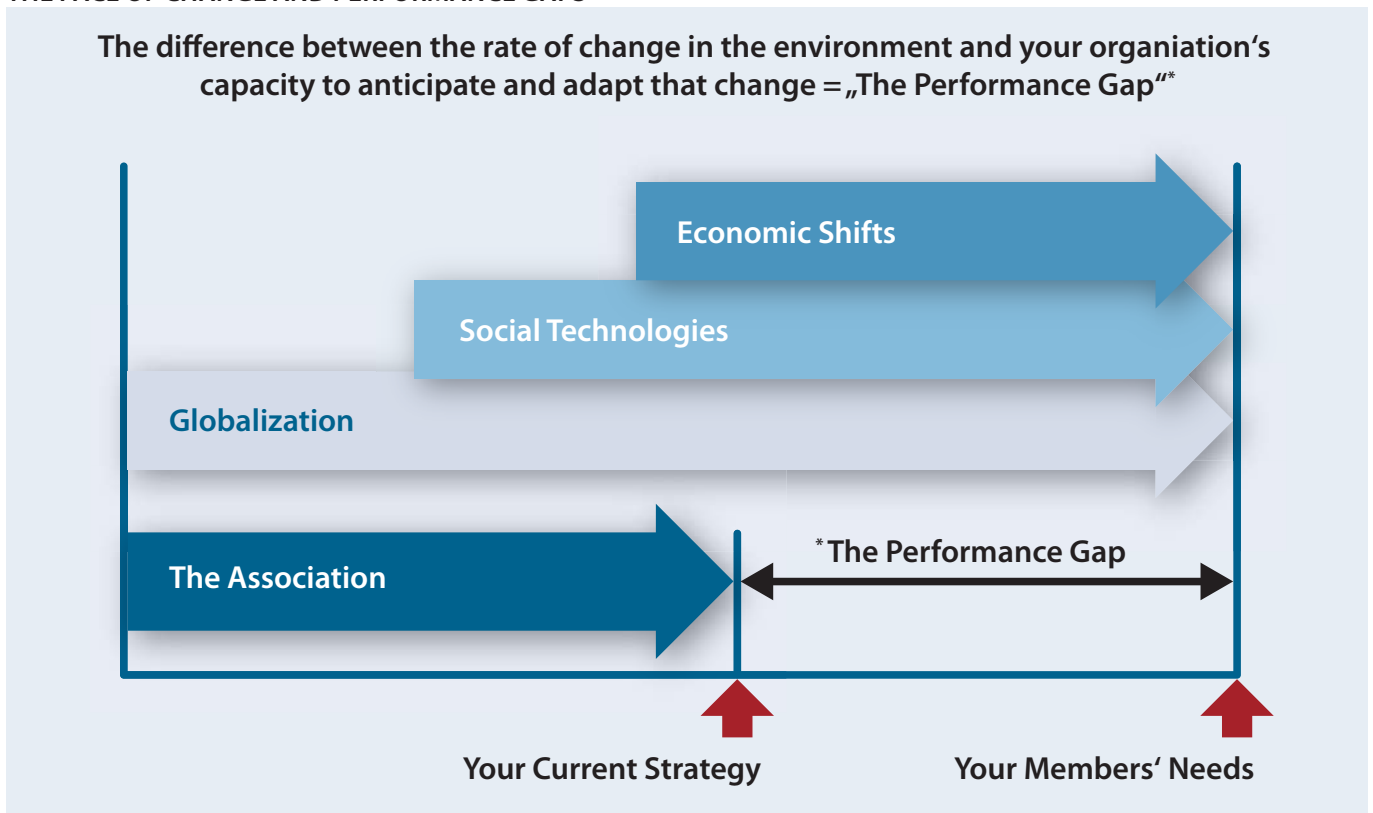
*Fortunately, we have data that gives us an answer. We asked respondents if they had an international strategic plan and if it was being implemented. We then compared the results of the faster growing associations with those that reported average or slower growth.*

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ABBILDUNG 4:  
THE PACE OF CHANGE AND PERFORMANCE GAPS



## GLOBALIZATION IS THE SINGLE GREATEST FORCE IMPACTING ASSOCIATIONS TODAY

Are associations prepared to adapt to today's environmental change?

**Mr. Barkan:** „When the rate of change in the external environment exceeds the ability of an association to react to that change, a gap develops. This disconnect between the rate of change in the environment and the capacity of an association to adapt to that change creates a serious threat to the future of the organization.

Gaps created by natural changes in the association environment do not last. Eventually they are filled. The critical question is, will these gaps be filled by your organization, some other association, for-profit companies or free peer to peer online communities?

Leading associations have recognized that international expansion represents one of the few real opportunities for significant growth.

However, trying to grow your organization internationally is fraught with obstacles and important questions:

- How will we define „success“ for our association in international markets?
- Which countries, with which products or services should we focus on?
- How do we measure the real market potential?
- How can we build our internal capacity to manage these new markets?
- How do we identify and assess the competitive environment?
- How can we leverage social media to recruit and engage international members?
- How do we avoid the mistakes and pitfalls that other associations have fallen into? “

## AUTOR

TERRANCE BARKAN CAE



has been a senior international association manager since 1991. Early in his association management career, he served as the Executive Director for international trade and professional societies based in Europe. Later, as the founder and CEO of Association Global Services, Mr. Barkan was the senior advisor and consultant on a global basis for AGS clients and staff. In 2009 he founded GLOBALSTRAT, a specialized consulting practice that uses a proven process management approach to developing tailored international strategic plans for associations. As a Certified Association Executive (CAE), he has been recognized as a Global Thought Leader on association management.

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