





AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter Leans on MemberClicks to Prove Value to Members Throughout Pandemic and Beyond

At a glance

Organization name AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter		Type Trade Association	Solution(s) used Atlas AMS, MC LMS
Industry  Building & Construction	Staff Size  26	Member Count  806	Annual Revenue  \$5.6M
Challenge <p>AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter was in search of an association management system that was easier to use and wouldn't cost them more money every time they needed help or a fix.</p>		Solution <p>By using the Atlas AMS and MC LMS by MemberClicks, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter found integrated, intuitive solutions that allowed robust management of dues, event registration, and event execution, resulting in the enhancement of membership value and protection through the hardest moments of the pandemic.</p>	



When the pandemic hit earlier this year, we were all caught off guard. Many institutions didn't know what to do or how to react. Many associations, on the other hand, leaned into the crisis, spending hundreds of hours assessing critical member needs and answering the call to protect the interest of their industries. The Associated General Contractors (AGC) Oregon-Columbia Chapter was one of those organizations.

“At the beginning of the pandemic, people were beating our door down, particularly in terms of safety and legislative stuff,” said Member Engagement Manager Ali Gadbaugh. “We were really busy because people were coming to us for questions and training asking, ‘How do we navigate this?’”

Strengthening Value At All Times

As the Oregon chapter representing the entire commercial construction industry, AGC had always presented a strong value proposition. Its 806 member companies agree, as their member number has held strong for a long time. In addition to copious educational opportunities, events and networking functions, AGC offers various insurance programs, the most popular of which is their workers comp program.

“We have a partnership with a local workers comp carrier called SAIF — State Accident Insurance Fund — Corporation,” said Gadbaugh. “And participants of that group are offered upfront discounts on their workers comp premium along with annual returns based on how the entire group performs. And usually the return on that is about four to one. So that usually covers people's dues plus some based on the savings that they get.”

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Traditionally, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter also hosts a handful of events throughout the year, including an annual business meeting in January, a 3-day summer convention, three golf tournaments and a shooting competition. Needless to say, the 26-person staff at AGC Oregon stays very busy catering to the maintenance and quality of member benefits.

Of course, as an organization with so many moving parts and high member satisfaction expectations, having the technology to enhance their efforts was key. Unfortunately, the tool they were working with wasn't cutting it.

Making Changes

According to Executive Assistant Kari Schoonover, a 30-year employee of AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter, their previous system, ACGI, was clunky and difficult to use, especially for communications and events. And any time they needed assistance, there was a cost associated with the fix. They'd had enough. It was time to start the search for a new association management software — the staff and board were aligned on that one.

Through the efforts of a consultant mixed with existing relationships and awareness, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter started looking into GrowthZone and MemberClicks, ultimately choosing the Atlas AMS by MemberClicks.

"One of the reasons that we really went with MemberClicks — I mean, I think there's several, but one of them, for me, at least — was that there were other AGC associate chapters that are with MemberClicks," recalls Schoonover. "So I felt like that spoke volumes of the product, what the company can do, and the solutions that MemberClicks builds for associations."

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Adapting to Changes

The AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter team was excited and ready to get started with their new technology. That was in March...of 2020. That's right; When "it" happened. What better way to go into a global emergency than armed with a new management system? It certainly helped the team answer the call of so many members. The AGC team was equipped to shine.

AGC staff traded in the cumbersome nature of their previous software for workflows that lasted only a few steps. Gadbaugh noted that parts of their previous system were so difficult to utilize, they just didn't bother. One of the areas that was highly manual was event registration.

With the cancellation of in-person events, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter saw an opportunity to take existing events online and even create new online resources in response to member inquiries around COVID. Having a seamless event registration process was key to that effort.

"We have had the opportunity to utilize registration with Atlas for online events, and our members have noticed the ease in which they can register for an event," said Events Manager Viktoria Schulz. "Atlas allowed us to streamline our event registration process. On the backend, we are now able to set up events more easily and track registrations/special fields within the database, rather than having miscellaneous Excel sheets."

Staff is also saving a ton of time by using Atlas for events.

"Sponsors and other special registration rate recipients are now able to register themselves through our website, rather than filling out paper forms and staff having to manually register them," said Schulz. "Thank you promo codes!"

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Getting Creative to Meet Member Needs

In addition to wins associated with event registration itself, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter saw huge opportunity in MC | LMS, the integrated learning management system offered by MemberClicks. When it was clear in-person events were not in the card, AGC creatively utilized MC | LMS to host its virtual events.

“We researched a lot of virtual event platforms but moved forward with MC | LMS for two reasons,” said Schulz. “One, the seamless user experience for our members – they have one login. Two, the versatility of the MC | LMS platform. We were able to use it for our largest event of the year.”

At the time, MC | LMS was the perfect platform (Editor’s Note: MemberClicks has since developed a dedicated virtual event platform. Interested? [Click here.](#)) to pivot in-person events virtual and then host on-demand content after the event elapsed. AGC used the LMS for its Summer Convention, which they transitioned from a 3-day event to a month-long speaker series. The integration between Atlas and MC | LMS made things easy on staff, but also provided a seamless experience for attendees.

“Due to COVID-19, we transitioned to a virtual event for the entire month of August,” Schulz said. “We hosted 12 education sessions and 2 networking happy hour events and were able to give members access to all of this via MC | LMS. We received great feedback from our members on our post-event survey regarding the ease of using or registering and using this platform. Sponsors were recognized in multiple places in this platform, giving them a great ROI as well.”

Going forward, Schulz said they plan to continue using MC | LMS for its virtual events, but they will also unlock more of its potential in other ways.

“We are in the process of transitioning it to be a hub for chapter and council materials,” she said.

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Making Lemonade

In addition to being ready to offer events uninterrupted, AGC was also a go-to resource for members looking for information and materials.

“There’s only one good thing about COVID for us,” said Schoonover. “And that is the fact that when it hit, we actually were able to step forward. We put together a lot of information and a lot of data within a very short amount of time. We were kind of the leading edge association or group out there that was providing all of the safety-related info that people needed. And we became the hub.”

Communications tools within Atlas were a big part of that.

“Speaking to my favorite feature in the platform, in the previous AMS we had, I never used the communication module because it was just so convoluted and clunky,” said Gadbaugh. “And so I’ve used the communication module a ton since implementation. It’s a huge time saver and it’s just nice to use and seamless.”

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Looking at the Next Steps

After navigating through a tough year quite successfully, the AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter team is looking forward to the future, where perhaps some business-as-usual may come back into view. But they feel confident and equipped to handle what’s to come thanks to their partnership with MemberClicks.

While Gadbaugh relishes in the ease of communicating with members, as well as how simple it is for members to jump online, access their profiles, and pay their dues, Schulz is giddy about the deep connections between their AMS and LMS and how that will translate into time saved for staff and a smoother experience for members.

For Schoonover, what makes her happy is the very thing that frustrated her in the past with previous tech partners: customer service.

“The customer service that you guys provide is just amazing,” she said. “It’s just so good. There’s great follow up and follow through. The transition and the onboarding was awesome. It was seamless. And everything that we have a question about or need help with does not cost additional money. Same with the user groups that are available for us to participate in. And you have a process in place for us to tell you what we think you should be working on. It’s all very collaborative, and you guys are extremely open to the users.”

Here’s to 2021 bringing less turbulence and uncertainty in 2020. But, no matter what lies ahead, AGC Oregon-Columbia Chapter is certainly positioned with the experience, creativity, and technology to ensure it’s another great year in service to the organization’s members.

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