

Taking On Tomorrow Today

Recognizing we are in the midst of a fundamental change in the way IPA members interact with their clients as well as the types of services they provide, the IPA Board directed the staff to form a Strategic Task Force. Their charge—to determine if IPA's current structure meets the emerging needs of its current and future membership. The Task Force was chartered to evaluate everything from the association's name to products and services offered—with an eye toward recreating IPA to better serve its members. The Task Force was assembled in the fall of 2008 and has already crafted new language to represent the essence of a newly defined association—with renewed purpose and membership makeup.

The task force was composed of industry leaders representing all elements of the graphic supply chain, from creative through delivery. They met regularly through conference calls, and recently conducted an all-day planning session with the full IPA Board of Directors. What follows are definitions and action plans, agreed upon by the task force and under consideration for adoption by the IPA Board of Directors.

The Task Force recommended that IPA be defined as an organization of thought leaders in marketing execution and media production. IPA members are brand stewards assuring the quality and efficiency of the marketing ideation and execution process. IPA represents professionals who understand the power and direct relationship between a company's potential and the efficient, focused production of its marketing communications.

The Task Force believes IPA members are unique in their understanding of how the efficiency of the media production process is directly tied to the strategic potential of the brand owner and service provider. They indicated the future member of IPA will be uniquely capable of:

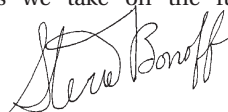
- ▶ Effectively managing brands and marketing campaigns;
- ▶ Improving quality of digital and print media production;
- ▶ Streamlining marketing execution activities;
- ▶ Reducing time from ideation to market delivery;

▶ Understanding the relationships and dependencies between traditional print and digital media and creation processes.

The Task Force recommended IPA create individual and corporate membership categories for: creative agencies, studios, printers, publishers, premedia, in-house and brand owners. It suggested IPA technical programs serve media production managers seeking to improve marketing execution through efficient media production. Business management resources should serve business managers seeking to profit from improved marketing execution and efficient media production. The association's resources should no longer be print centric but instead focus on best practices and processes that support the efficient production of all forms of media.

At its recent planning session, the IPA Board created three long-term strategic planning groups to continue the Task Force's work and map a plan to refine and execute the recommendations. The three groups are composed of: **Leadership**, which will design the appropriate governance, staff and volunteerism necessary to achieve the revised mission; **Marketing**, which will craft new messaging and membership categories that will drive increased revenue and membership growth; and **Resources**, which will oversee the development of products, services, events and programs that express our new mission and vision.

I commend the individuals on the task force for their commitment of time and energy, especially in the face of current economic pressures. These very pressures are what make their work so important. As we move toward adoption and the creation of a newly defined association, your input is critical. Please email me your thoughts on this proposed language. Does it describe the association that will serve us today and tomorrow—as we take on the future?



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