

Company: The American Institute of Architects / Washington, DC

Company Description: Founded in 1857, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) is a global network of 100,000+ architects and design professionals. With 200+ chapters, AIA advances the profession through high standards, policy advocacy, and a commitment to a zero-carbon, resilient, healthy, and equitable built environment.

Nomination Category: Marketing Campaign Categories - Industry

Nomination Sub Category: Marketing Campaign of the Year - Non-Profit

Nomination Title: AIA Membership Marketing Campaign

1. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this first question: Specify the date on which this campaign or program was launched:

October 2023

2. Which will you submit for this nomination, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the nominated campaign or program, OR written answers to the questions for this category? CHOOSE ONE:

Written answers to the questions

3. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.

4. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this second question: Describe the genesis of the nominated campaign or program: the reasons it was initiated, the challenges it was created to address, the problems it was developed to solve, etc. (up to 250 words):

Total 201 words used.

The 2024 AIA membership campaign took a data-driven, omni-channel approach to recruitment and retention—aiming to re-engage lapsed members, attract new audiences in the architecture community, keep our current members engaged, and maintain a 90% retention rate. We reached a historic milestone: 100,000 members by year-end.

Key challenges we faced included rolling out a brand refresh, tailoring messaging across channels, and re-thinking outdated marketing assets. The campaign was designed to inform and inspire current and prospective members while aligning AIA's value proposition and content pillars with the evolving needs of the architecture community.

To overcome these challenges, the marketing team rolled out a fully integrated campaign anchored by re-imagined creative, personalized email journeys via Salesforce Marketing Cloud, paid media, a membership referral program, enhanced digital conversion paths, and setting up the infrastructure to launch a new member benefits focused newsletter in Q1 2025.

By refreshing our message—AIA is its members—we focused on amplifying the value of membership at every touchpoint. Our multi-channel strategy delivered a more scalable, measurable framework that drove 532k impressions across paid media, 47% average email open rate and 4.45% click through rate, and over 126k unique website visitors to meet our record-breaking goal of 100k+ members.

5. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this third question: Describe the development of the campaign or program: the planning process, the goal setting, the creative and media development, the scheduling, etc. (up to 250 words):

Total 237 words used.

AIA membership has maintained steady growth since 2021 and the organization's goal was to sustain that increase and hit a record breaking goal of 100,000 members. The development of AIA's 2024 membership marketing campaign began with a collaborative planning process bringing together key stakeholders from marketing, membership, and brand and creative teams.

We conducted a comprehensive review of past campaign performance, insights from our member needs survey, and industry trends to inform our strategy. Our primary goals were to increase overall year-end membership by 1.85% and reach a retention goal of 90% by re-engaging lapsed members and improving the overall lead conversion through a more personalized, multi-channel approach.

We mapped out a campaign schedule aligned with key renewal deadlines, join promotions, and member behavior patterns. Our creative strategy focused on clarity around the multitude of member benefits with compelling, digestible messaging not only at the national level, but at the local chapter level as well. This led to the refresh of multiple landing pages across aia.org with the incorporation of new technology integrations like Ceros, and the creation of our Chapter marketing toolkit, which is a resource for 200+ chapters.

The team established quarterly KPIs tied to recruitment, engagement, and conversion, and created real-time dashboards and reporting tools to monitor performance across channels. The campaign rollout was timed to maximize visibility during peak decision-making periods, with flexibility built in to allow for mid-campaign optimizations.

6. If you are providing written answers to the questions for this category, you must answer this fourth question: Outline the activities and concrete results of this campaign or program since the beginning of 2019. Even if your initiative started before 2023, limit your response to activities and results since the beginning of 2023 only (up to 250 words):

Total 240 words used.

AIA's membership marketing campaign has evolved into a coordinated, multi-touch effort focused on recruitment, engagement, and brand consistency. Beginning in 2023, we launched a phased approach anchored in updated messaging and a redesigned user experience across aia.org.

Key activities included enhancing high-impact landing pages using Ceros to streamline content, elevate calls to action, and add interactivity—resulting in a 506% YoY increase in active users and a 46% decrease in engagement time, indicating quicker access to relevant information.

We built segmented email journeys in Salesforce Marketing Cloud and PropFuel, targeting prospects, lapsed, and active members with tailored messaging. A/B tested subject lines and messaging formats led to an average open rate of 47%, well above industry benchmarks.

Our digital strategy expanded with dynamic paid media and search campaigns, supported by on-site member interviews and testimonial videos. These videos showcased key benefits like the AIA designation, advocacy, and resources—driving a 7,205% YoY increase in paid conversions.

We also launched a targeted print campaign that repurposed authentic member stories from our Future Focused series. Recruitment postcards were sent to over 60,000 prospects, featuring promotional offers and a clear call-to-action to join the AIA community, further amplifying brand awareness and web traffic. Most recently we launched a new, interactive recruitment poster for prospects to color and share with the community on social media.

Together, these integrated efforts delivered measurable outcomes and helped establish a more consistent, scalable framework for membership growth.

7. You have the option to reference here any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 46 words used.

www.aia.org/membership

The re-vamped AIA join page serves as a central, interactive hub for prospective and returning members to explore the value of joining AIA.

www.aia.org/membership/renew

The AIA renewal landing page was redesigned to make the renewal process simple, informative, and member centric.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

AIA Membership Marketing Campaign

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]



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