



ASB Strategic Research:
In-Depth Telephone Interviews Report

September 2011

ASB Strategic Research: In-Depth Telephone Interviews Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Report	3
<hr/>	
I. Introduction	7
<hr/>	
A. Purpose of Research	7
B. Methodology	7
II. Results	9
<hr/>	
A. Description of Participants	9
B. Why a Member/Not a Member?	11
C. ASB: Top-of-Mind	13
D. Baked Goods Categories Targeted by ASB	14
E. Attracting New ASB Members	18
F. Interest in Additional ASB Services	26
G. Additional 'Members Only' Questions	32
<hr/>	

ASB Strategic Research: In-Depth Telephone Interviews Report EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

Cypress Research Associates conducted research on behalf of the American Society of Baking (ASB) to determine how ASB can better serve the needs of its current members and attract new members. The following methodological approaches were used:

- 1) Conference evaluation survey
- 2) In-depth telephone interviews with key ASB members & eligible non-members
- 3) Online survey of ASB members & eligible non-members

Results from the conference evaluation were presented in an April 2011 report. This report presents findings from the in-depth interviews. Results from the online survey are presented in a separate September 2011 report.

II. METHODOLOGY

Telephone interviews were conducted in January through May 2011 with the following target groups: Current members (n=11) and eligible non-members (n=10). ASB provided Cypress Research Associates with an Excel database of current & potential members to include in the interview process. Interview protocols for customer segments were developed based on collaboration with the ASB research team.

III. RESULTS: ONLINE SURVEY

A. DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Interviews were conducted with 11 members and 10 non-members. ASB members had been members of the association for an average of 10 years (range: 3-15 years). Members and non-members were primarily from large and medium-sized companies. The principal products produced by respondents' companies include: cookies and crackers, bread, buns and other fully-baked items, and cakes and sweet goods. Interview participants were primarily from technical/R&D/QA and operations/manufacturing job positions, although a range of other job positions were also represented. The average age of members was 48, compared to non-members at 47. Members had been employed in the baking industry for an average of 23 years, compared to non-members at 17 years.

B. WHY A MEMBER/WHY NOT A MEMBER?

MEMBERS ONLY: Why did you become a member of ASB?

- ✓ Referred by co-worker, industry colleague, father [baker] (n=8)
- ✓ Networking/industry contacts (n=8)
- ✓ Industry education/technical resource/hot button issues (n=6)

NON-MEMBERS ONLY: Why are you NOT a member of ASB?

- ✓ ASB focus not a good fit (n=6)
 - 'Baker' organization
 - No direct career benefit
 - Focus on engineering, operations/manufacturing, sanitation, R&D
 - Focus too broad; prefer discipline-specific association membership
- ✓ Prefer other industry associations/conferences (n=4)
 - AACC, ABA, IBIE, IFT, New Products Conference
- ✓ Budget limitations (n=3)
- ✓ No membership promotional materials from ASB (n=3)
- ✓ No ASB membership support from executive management (n=2)
- ✓ Dislike timing of ASB conference (n=2)

C. ASB: TOP-OF-MIND

What comes to mind when you think of ASB?

- ✓ Annual BakingTech meeting
- ✓ Valuable networking opportunities
- ✓ Focus on baking industry (non-members thought of wholesale vs. retail)
- ✓ Old membership/old white males
- ✓ Engineering group/name change (*non-members only*)
- ✓ Primarily bread and bun bakers; other segments not well-represented (*members only*)
- ✓ Technical group
- ✓ Need to update image/improve industry reputation to attract more members (*non-members only*)
- ✓ *Very little understanding of ASB; don't receive information on ASB (non-members only)*

D. BAKED GOODS CATEGORIES TARGETED BY ASB

Which baked goods categories do you think ASB *primarily* addresses?

- ✓ Bread and buns*
- ✓ Some focus outside bread and buns
- ✓ Various company sizes/commercial and retail presence

Is there a need for ASB to broaden its focus to other areas of grain-based foods?

- ✓ Majority of respondents said AIB needs to broaden its focus

E. ATTRACTING NEW ASB MEMBERS

How can ASB attract more members among YOUNGER BAKING PROFESSIONALS?

- ✓ Educational program content targeted to young professionals
 - that offers direct career/job benefits
 - that demonstrates that industry is forward thinking so young professionals stay in baking industry
- ✓ Adopt electronic forms of relevant educational content and communication
- ✓ Member companies encourage younger employees to join ASB
- ✓ Trend of young talent outside of baking – convince them of association value
- ✓ More outreach at KSU & AIB
 - Program involvement
 - With graduate interaction
- ✓ ASB outreach to baking company executives & suppliers
- ✓ ASB mentorship program
- ✓ Change old boy image
- ✓ Miscellaneous
 - Young membership fee reduction, other member perks
 - Members bring friend/colleague to meeting
 - Recruitment efforts for production positions as well as technical
 - Young professionals advisory board

How can ASB attract more members among NON-TRADITIONAL BAKERS?

- ✓ Provide ingredient and engineering-focused information/education; hot-button issues like sustainability; show application to multiple segments
- ✓ Membership drive – involve ASB board members; target large bakery employees, which will attract smaller bakeries, non-traditionals, allies
- ✓ Focus on education for cakes, muffins segment (not cookie/cracker, which has BCMA)

How can ASB attract more members among SENIOR-LEVEL BAKING EXECUTIVES?

- ✓ Include prominent keynote speakers at BakingTech as a draw for senior-level executives
- ✓ Market ASB as an improved organization with valuable benefits for senior-level execs
- ✓ Give one year of free membership; encourage members to share the newsletter with non-member colleagues

F. INTEREST IN ADDITIONAL ASB SERVICES

What additional services are you interested in receiving from ASB?

- ✓ Offer online education/webinars
 - Convenient and cost effective
 - Topics should be focused on important trends and issues affecting the industry
 - Would attract younger members
 - Should be provided to non-members as well
- ✓ Develop a Young Executives Chapter of ASB
 - Offer ideas for career development
 - Provide a forum for young executives to exchange ideas, knowledge
- ✓ Consider offering individualized professional mentoring
 - Set clear goals and structure around the mentoring relationship
 - Avoid conflicts of interest by setting ground rules
 - Market the advantages of the program
- ✓ Regional ASB meetings were viewed as a cost-effective alternative to the national meeting (particularly among non-members)
- ✓ Social media networking would appeal to younger executives
- ✓ Several felt that regional ASB meetings might dilute the impact of the national meeting
- ✓ Offer opportunities for more active idea exchange about best practices, new ideas, new products, industry trends
- ✓ Offer a searchable database of members via Facebook or LinkedIn

G. ADDITIONAL 'MEMBERS ONLY' QUESTIONS

MEMBERS ONLY: In your opinion, how can ASB improve its member experience? What would increase the value of membership?

- ✓ Improvements to Baking Tech
 - Promote shift in BakingTech from focus on networking to equal focus on education
 - Focus on new technologies
 - Continue to play the role of bringing together the various baking industry segments (ABA, AIB, BEMA)
 - Have more breakout sessions
- ✓ Be more of an informational resource to the industry
 - Distribute a technical e-newsletter
 - Provide additional website tools, such as Consultants Corner

MEMBERS ONLY: If the ASB's Annual Professional Recognition Program were reinstated would this be of interest/value to you? [individual members given awards for outstanding industry work]

- ✓ Primarily 'Yes'
 - Need strict criteria for recognition
 - Inform members of criteria during recognition program
 - Bakers Hall of Fame good model, well respected

MEMBERS ONLY: If the ASB's Annual Professional Recognition Program were reinstated would this be of interest/value to you? [individual members given awards for outstanding industry work]

- ✓ Primarily 'Yes'
 - Need strict criteria for recognition
 - Inform members of criteria during recognition program
 - Bakers Hall of Fame good model, well respected

MEMBERS ONLY: Should ASB allied/supplier members be eligible to become society chairman?

- ✓ **Yes** (n=6)
 - Ingredient and equipment companies are big supporters of ASB and big stakeholders in the baking industry.
 - The baking industry is consolidating, so the pool of companies is shrinking.
 - Talented suppliers should be allowed to be society chairman; need good selection process and criteria.
- ✓ **Qualified Yes** (n=2)
 - Talented suppliers should be allowed to be society chairman; need good selection process and criteria.
 - Supplier chairs would need to be monitored to insure fidelity to mission of ASB.
- ✓ **No** (n=3)
 - Equipment suppliers have their own society.
 - Allied chairs could dilute the ASB's mission.

MEMBERS ONLY: Should ASB allied/supplier members be given sponsorship opportunities during BakingTech?

- ✓ **Yes** (n=6)
 - Other associations (e.g., ABA, IBIE, IFT) allow sponsorship opportunities and there's no perceived conflict of interest.
 - Eliminating the non-commercialization policy of ASB would fully engage supplier talent.
- ✓ **Qualified Yes** (n=3)
 - Need to control sponsorships
 - Need to have affordable sponsorship opportunities for smaller companies
- ✓ **No** (n=3)
 - Like the non-commercialization of ASB
 - Increase conference fee if necessary instead of generating revenue through sponsorships.
 - Conflict of interest issues

ASB Research: In-Depth Telephone Interviews Report

I. INTRODUCTION

Cypress Research Associates conducted research on behalf of the American Society of Baking (ASB) to determine how ASB can better serve the needs of its current members and attract new members. Specific questions of interest included:

Expectations of association membership:

- ✓ What conference content is of most interest to ASB members and eligible non-members (including members in industry sectors such as pizza, tortilla and ingredient manufacturing)?
- ✓ What other conferences do members and non-members attend? Why?
- ✓ In addition to conferences, what other types of services (e.g., networking opportunities, young professionals group, social media, mentoring, continuing education, webinars) are members and non-members interested in receiving from a baking industry association?
- ✓ How aware are eligible non-members of ASB? What is their perception of ASB?
- ✓ Why do baking industry professionals choose NOT to become members of ASB?
- ✓ What would entice non-members (particularly younger professionals) to become members of a baking industry association (like ASB)?
- ✓ What types of media do younger professionals in the baking industry prefer using?

The following methodological approaches were used:

- 1) Conference evaluation survey
- 2) In-depth telephone interviews with key ASB members & eligible non-members
- 3) Online survey of ASB members & eligible non-members

Results from the conference evaluation were presented in an April 2011 report. This report presents findings from the in-depth telephone interviews. Results from the online survey are presented in a separate September 2011 report.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. In-Depth Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted in January through May 2011 with the following target groups:

Target Groups	Number of Interviews Conducted
Group 1: Current members (from midsize and large companies)	11
Group 2: Eligible non-members	10
Total # of Interviews:	21

ASB provided Cypress Research Associates with an Excel database of current & potential members to include in the interview process. Current and potential ASB members who are contacted for interviews were informed that ASB enlisted the services of Cypress Research Associates, an independent research firm, to conduct the research. They were further informed that all comments will be held in strict confidence by Cypress Research Associates and that responses will not be attributed to specific individuals or organizations in the reporting phase of the study. Interview protocols for customer segments will be developed based on collaboration with the ASB research team.

Interviews ranged from 24 minutes to 67 minutes, with an average length of 42 minutes.

B. Online Survey

An online survey was conducted in August and September 2011 with a broad sample of current ASB members and eligible non-members. Specific online survey items were developed based in part on results from the telephone interviews and through collaboration with the ASB research team.

ASB provided Cypress Research Associates an Excel database of member names, company names, job titles, member status, and e-mail addresses of the appropriate contact person at each company. Cypress Research Associates acquired a list of recent AIB International School of Baking graduates for use as the Non-Member database.

The following methodological approach was used:

- An e-mail invitation was distributed by Cypress Research Associates to the sample of ASB members & eligible non-members. The invitation explained the purpose of the study and the confidential nature of results, and informed members and non-members that the study is being conducted by an independent research firm. The e-mail invitation contained a hyperlink to the online survey.
- Non-respondents were e-mailed up to 4 additional invitations (4 to 5 days apart) in order to increase response rates.

Results from the Online Survey are presented in a separate report.

III. RESULTS: IN-DEPTH TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

A. DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Interviews were conducted with 11 members and 10 non-members. ASB members had been members of the association for an average of 10 years (range: 3-15 years).

	Member	Non-Member
Interview Participants	11	10

Members and non-members were primarily from large and medium-sized companies.

Size of Company	Member	Non-Member
Large	3	5
Medium	6	4
Small	2	1

The principal products produced by respondents' companies include: cookies and crackers, bread, buns and other fully-baked items, and cakes and sweet goods.

Principal Products	Member	Non-Member
Cookies & crackers	5	2
Bread, buns and other fully-baked items	4	3
Cakes & sweet goods	3	2
Bars	3	1
Bread, buns and other par-baked items	3	-
Frozen dough	2	1
Salted snacks	2	1
Ingredient/mix manufacturing	1	3

Interview participants were primarily from technical/R&D/QA and operations/manufacturing job positions, although a range of other job positions were also represented.

Job Role	Member	Non-Member
Corporate management	-	2
Operations, Manufacturing	4	1
Engineering	1	1
Technical/R&D/QA	3	6
Sales & marketing	2	-
Consultant to the industry	1	-

The average age of members was 48, compared to non-members at 47.

Age of Participant	Member	Non-Member
35-39	2	2
40-44	1	2
45-49	-	2
50-54	7	2
55-60	1	2
Average age	48	47

Members had been employed in the baking industry for an average of 23 years, compared to non-members at 17 years.

Years Employed in the Baking Industry	Member	Non-Member
6-10 years	-	4
11-15 years	4	1
16-20 years	1	2
21-25 years	2	-
26+ years	4	3
Average years	23	17

B. WHY A MEMBER/WHY NOT A MEMBER?

MEMBERS ONLY: Why did you become a member of ASB?

- ✓ Referred by co-worker, industry colleague, father [baker] (n=8)
- ✓ Networking/industry contacts (n=8)
- ✓ Industry education/technical resource/hot button issues (n=6)

NON-MEMBERS ONLY: Why are you NOT a member of ASB?

- ✓ ASB focus not a good fit (n=6)
 - 'Baker' organization
 - No direct career benefit
 - Focus on engineering, operations/manufacturing, sanitation, R&D
 - Focus too broad; prefer discipline-specific association membership
- ✓ Prefer other industry associations/conferences (n=4)
 - AACC, ABA, IBIE, IFT, New Products Conference
- ✓ Budget limitations (n=3)
- ✓ No membership promotional materials from ASB (n=3)
- ✓ No ASB membership support from executive management (n=2)
- ✓ Dislike timing of ASB conference (n=2)

Example quotes of themes:

ASB focus not a good fit:

"I'm not a member of ASB because I'm not a baker per se. All the people I work with are the members and have a direct need. I know who to tap for answers without needing to go to ASB's annual meeting."
(Non-member, Bakery, Medium)

"I strongly associate ASB with bread. I work in R&D for the cookie dough segment. ASB doesn't seem as focused on this. It is still in baking." (Non-member, Bakery, Large)

"ASB's focus seems to be with engineering. The content they're delivering doesn't seem to be a good fit."
(Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"Since ASB deals with sanitation, manufacturing and R&D it's not as worthwhile to send an R&D person to this kind of show. It is more cost effective to send an R&D person to an exclusively R&D focused conference and membership like AACC." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"I am not a member because my responsibilities are mainly in product development and R&D and I belong to quite a few associations related to those disciplines. Another key reason is because of the specificity of the trade. ASB only focuses on certain areas. It is more operationally focused than R&D and technology. It doesn't necessarily fit into my career path. My background is cereal chemistry so I still have an interest in AACC. My company produces spices. ASB is probably not one of the baking industry associations I would join because the work we do in that segment isn't enough to justify the expenditure."
(Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Prefer other industry associations/conferences:

"I have always been involved in AACC, IFT and IBIE. These are the ones my colleagues attend."
(Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"I stay involved in the ABA and that meets my need between that an IBIE. It's enough for my networking needs. I send my people to ASB." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"I am currently a member of IFT, AACC and I attend their conferences along with the New Products Conference every other year." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

Budget limitations:

"We are a big company but we limit our budgets. We have to be careful and choose one or two conferences to attend." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"The main reason I'm not a member of ASB is company resources. Everyone is tightening. We've made decisions about who needs to go where." (Non-Member, Baker, Large)

No membership promotional materials from ASB:

"I'm not a member because I am so busy with my job there's always something else to capture my attention. I need someone to approach me. I haven't received any materials from ASB." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"I don't get any promotional materials from them." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"I'm not a member because no one has contacted me. I knew a bit about ASB when I was a student. After that, no one approached me." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

No ASB membership support from executive management:

"I don't know that ASB will get my boss's strong attention to pay for the membership and allow me to attend the meetings." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"I don't have as much negotiating power internally to attend the ASB meeting. Overall, upper management isn't as supportive of ASB. They want us to get POs rather than network and develop relationships over time. We've taken a much more conservative approach to membership and look for a short term benefit for those investments. This precludes our involvement in having a booth at IBIE. In the past we saw little direct return for such activity." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Dislike timing of ASB conference:

"I don't like the weather in Chicago in March. Why do they hold it then?" (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"I always have something to do at the time ASB has its show. It's a busy time for the business. I've consistently have conflicts over the years." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

C. ASB: TOP-OF-MIND

What comes to mind when you think of ASB?		
Themes:	Members (n=11)	Non-Members (n=10)
Annual BakingTech meeting	7	7
Valuable networking opportunities	8	3
Focus on baking industry (non-members thought of wholesale vs. retail)	3	3
Old membership/old white males	3	-
Engineering group/name change	-	3
Primarily bread and bun bakers; other segments not well-represented	2	-
Technical group	-	2
Need to update image/improve industry reputation to attract more members	1	1
<i>Very little understanding of ASB; don't receive information on ASB</i>	-	4

Regarding the **annual BakingTech meeting**, the following additional themes came to mind for **members**:

- ✓ Speakers/presenters (n=4)
 - Good speakers (n=3)
 - Need better speakers (n=1)
- ✓ Good educational information (n=3)
 - Technical information (n=2)
 - Not very technical but interesting information (n=1)
- ✓ Breakout sessions (n=2)
- ✓ Main sessions (n=1)
- ✓ Recognition of industry leaders (n=1)
- ✓ Opportunities to interact with customers (n=1)
- ✓ ASB trying to modernize conference (n=1)
- ✓ Entertainment (n=1)
- ✓ Good linkage with BEMA (n=1)

The following additional themes came to mind for **non-members** when discussing BakingTech:

- Good educational information (n=2)
- Sessions more technical than necessary (n=1)
- ✓ Ingredient suppliers present at sessions – good promotional opportunity for suppliers (n=1)

D. BAKED GOODS CATEGORIES TARGETED BY ASB

Which baked goods categories do you think ASB *primarily* addresses?

Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
✓ Bread & buns	10	4
✓ Some focus outside bread & buns	3	2
✓ Various company sizes/commercial and retail presence	2	3
✓ Unsure	0	2

Bread & buns:

“There’s heavy bread and rolls slant. I know there are a lot of people who come from other industry segments. But I don’t see a lot of education about cake, cookies, cracker manufacturing.”
(Member, Allied, Medium)

“ASB is always addressing bread and rolls. They also have technical papers on what they see out there. They have research done with consumers on the consumer perspective on what they want in the marketplace.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

“They touch on a little bit of everything. But the preponderance is commercial bread and rolls. Cookies, retail RBA folks are there.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

“ASB attracts more bread operators than cake.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“When I have gone to an ASB show I haven’t gotten a lot on frozen dough segment which is really going.”
(Non-Member, Allied, Large)

“ASB is for manufacturers of breads and dinner rolls.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

Some focus outside bread & buns:

“ASB has offered a little more education for the tortilla industry recently. They don’t focus on cookies and others as much.” (Member, Baking, Medium)

“I would say ASB is trying to reach every facet of the industry.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“Mainly bread and buns. But cookies, retail RBA folks are there.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

“It seems ASB reaches out a bit everywhere.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I think ASB is very broad. They address bread and cookies, crackers and some of the snack items.”
(Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Various company sizes/commercial and retail baking presence:

“ASB is focused on mid-and small-size operators as well as the big guys.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I would say they’re reaching out to small and large companies.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“ASB has more mid-size and smaller bakers as members. They’re not just reaching out to the large wholesale industry. Sometimes larger companies have their own resources to understand industry issues. Therefore, ASB is reaching out to much smaller members who are retail and smaller commercial bakeries.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“I would guess that ASB is more for the commercial bakery versus niche.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)
 “It seems that ASB is more focused in the direction of large commercial baking.” (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Is there a need for ASB to broaden its focus to other areas of grain-based foods?		
Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
✓ Yes	9	7
✓ No		
○ Already doing this	2	2
○ Broaden educational categories not product categories		
✓ Unsure	0	1

Yes:

“I would say yes. There are some new product categories out there. If it's baked in an oven ASB needs to be looking at those folks for membership.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“Yes. ASB primarily focuses its attention on large wholesale baking companies. There are very few of those left. We need to look to other product categories and to other operators, even small retail bakers and offer them benefits of membership. Over the past few years ASB has done a good job of broadening their presentations at Baking Tech to appeal to product categories outside of bread. But they need to continue to expand. For example: With the table tops, suppliers like Caravan and Danisco will be sure to bring along a cookie cracker specialist if they start getting questions from cookie cracker members at the table tops. Right now, there aren't many cookie cracker members. If we start to appeal to them and they come to the conference, the suppliers will just naturally respond by having the right personnel at the table tops to answer those questions.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“I think it's a big opportunity to expand beyond bread into snacks and cookie/cracker categories. There is no reason to not expand even beyond that. I think there have been attempts by ASB to broaden the focus. But it could go a lot further. As with a manufacturer, ASB should be delivering a lot more in these other categories. I work for a multi-national company. We do business in multiple product categories. And I think their lack of a broad focus has kept us from being active in ASB.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“We're primarily a cookie organization so we're in the minority. ASB does some for other categories but it would be nice if they got more into the sweet goods, cakes, muffins, cookies. But their focus seems to be more into bread. This broader focus wouldn't cause them to lose members. As a matter of fact, it would be a good opportunity to gain new members. Most of the bakeries do more than just bread. They do cake, muffins, donuts.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“They do touch on some other categories. But I think they could continue to expand. Most members produce products in other categories besides bread. It could broaden their member base to expand into other product categories.” (Member, Allied, Small)

"I would like to see ASB focus more on cookies, granola bars, snack cakes, baked snacks of all kinds. Talking more in the presentations about other product categories would be helpful. It's not that they're not delivering in those areas. But there could be more in other categories from an educational perspective. If you get more multi-nationals there –almost all of them –you'll get the other players – The Krafts, General Mills, and others. Those companies may not know what ASB has to offer their companies. ASB has to let them know. They might send more of their people if they know the educational content is there for them."
(Member, Bakery, Small)

"I think the association will be well served by focusing on the main product categories like bread, rolls, cake, cracker, tortilla and flat breads. Those are big portions of the baking industry now."
(Member, Allied, Medium)

"It's a hard thing to answer. If I were selfish I'd say no. I'm not in those other fields. However, there's not a lot of difference in manufacturing some of those other product categories. And there's cross over legislatively, equipment wise, and manufacturing wise. I don't see why they couldn't expand. This is something to look at."
(Member, Bakery, Medium)

"You can't be stagnant. If there's a positive response from members on this issue, maybe add a few more educational segments. If you have a session on sweet good formulation and controls and only 2 people sign up it tells you something. I know with AIB, we would run test modules to gauge interest. If it sold out in the first two weeks we'd know it's a good idea. Send promos to ASB members with that programming included, to see if there's interest. It wouldn't be of interest to me if they move into sweet goods. But as long as ASB continues to have educational tracks for me on the bread side that's fine. There are allied manufacturers who deal only on the sweet goods side. That could pull them in. However, the ASB table top is spilling out in the hallway. What does this strategy mix do to the overall table top? Does it make it better or too big? At IBIE, there was a conscious effort to keep all allied together that carried the same type of equipment. It could be a good thing - they just need to think through it."
(Member, Retailer, Medium)

"I don't know about tortilla because they have their own association. But cakes, crackers, cookies, there is a need for more of a focus there on the part of ASB. Many of the bakers manufacture touch several baking categories."
(Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"I am with a multi-national food company. If ASB had more focus on cookie, frozen dough or refrigerated dough it would be a big plus for our participation."
(Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"It's always a tough question because it depends on your audience. As a research person I would appreciate a broader scope. But I can see that a lot of the audience is manufacturing and they can have a more narrow focus."
(Non-Member, Allied, Large)

No:

"They've already made those changes. They need to stay on track with what's happening in the industry and really be one step ahead and work with other organizations to deliver the right information. I think they're already doing a good job with this. But they need to stay focused."
(Member, Bakery, Medium)

"ASB already focuses on other product areas. I don't think the members will be interested in too much of a focus outside of bread. There are a lot of bread and bun makers out there. Not a lot of people are making cakes anymore. If you go too far outside of bread ASB will marginalize the largest part of its base."
(Member, Retailer, Medium)

"I think they do this already. You don't have to broaden your product offerings if you broaden your categories - sustainability and food safety are all issues we're dealing with."
(Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

“If you try to make it too broad it lessens the importance for those in attendance. Core issues like cleaner labels (how do you respond to shorter labels while working in large commercial baking), sodium reduction, freshness, dietary, regulatory issues is more important than talking about tortillas too much because you can get that through TIA meeting.” (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Unsure:

“I’m not in a position to really speak to this. I’m a bread guy and don’t really know what ASB does.
(Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

E. ATTRACTING NEW ASB MEMBERS

How can ASB attract more members among YOUNGER BAKING PROFESSIONALS?		
Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Educational program content targeted to young professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ that offers direct career/job benefits ○ that demonstrates that industry is forward thinking so young professionals stay in baking industry 	2	3
✓ Adopt electronic forms of relevant educational content and communication	2	2
✓ Member companies encourage younger employees to join ASB	3	0
✓ Trend of young talent outside of baking – convince them of association value	2	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More outreach at KSU & AIB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program involvement ○ With graduate interaction 	1	1
✓ ASB outreach to baking company executives & suppliers	2	0
✓ ASB mentorship program	2	0
✓ Change old boy image	2	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Miscellaneous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young membership fee reduction, other member perks ○ Members bring friend/colleague to meeting ○ Recruitment efforts for production positions as well as technical ○ Young professionals advisory board 	4	0

Adopt electronic forms of relevant educational content and communication:

“The very young professionals are starting their careers and are into electronic communication. So, ASB needs to provide them content that's useful online or white papers, webinars, etc. Expanding those offerings will attract a younger group.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“ASB needs to provide more online services and information; more ways of getting information through like social media, webinars, etc. BCMA does a couple of webinars a year. That might be a good idea for ASB.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I know a lot of groups are struggling with getting younger people interested in working in bakeries and by extension demonstrate an interest in trade associations. If I'm young, I'm already putting in all this time and effort. If I go, what can they teach me? A lot of older guys use associations more for networking. Younger people have different ways of networking. They use social media. ASB needs to use a presence with electronic communication through email, Facebook, etc. to connect – to communicate better with the younger generation.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

“Perhaps ASB can publish once a month a magazine or online version with industry trends, top level trends, giving some updates on new flavor trends, etc. I am always looking for new developments and new product concepts. We sell a lot to the restaurant business. I look for some kind of information like that. And I will share it with others in my organization.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

“I don't know what ASB is doing on their websites. But if the website can deliver value like finding vendors, and various needs like industry trends, etc. They might need to do more promotion of update briefs via email to members, and also get to the top of browsers when someone searches for commercial bakery equipment, that would be of value.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

Educational program content targeted to young professionals:

“The ASB meeting itself isn't targeted to the young professional. ASB needs to target the information to young professionals. Modify the content.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“What ASB has to do is focus on ways that they can help young, newer bakers coming into the industry learn and network quicker than if they spent time in the bakery for 10 to 15 years. Help them be part of the broader ASB organization through education, networking, teaching them about new technologies, innovation. Any educational component that we can bring to company's employees from a management or technical standpoint, those are important.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“I want to have some benefits to my career growth. I mentioned a strong social bonding, I need information so I know about the value of ASB conferences or webinars or regional events so that when I talk to my boss about ASB I can let him know it's related to our business. If I can't tell him that ASB is giving me information about our product category, I won't convince him of the value. Currently at IFT meetings, there are a lot of ingredient suppliers there. IBIE has more manufacturers there. ASB needs to have a specialized area so that we can know that all the right players are there and can justify the expense and time.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“I want professional career development. Help make the baking industry more forward thinking so younger people are willing to get into it. It's not easy to get into any profession or industry that you can count on to take you for a whole career. It's common to jump 3 to 5 jobs in different industries to get where you eventually want to be. If the baking industry can somehow show it's a viable industry with a lot of promise and different talents can fit in their operations, R&D, sales, this might attract potentially young, bright people to go into the industry and be members of ASB.” (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

“As a company we are struggling to attract younger talent to the company. Help young professionals see that the baking industry can provide them with a career. ASB can play a role by offering interesting education programs targeted to them.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

Member companies encourage younger employees to join ASB:

“One thing is make sure that all the member companies are encouraging their young members to join and attend the meeting.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“In order to attract younger baking professionals ASB must rely on the companies that are already members, in part. I think it's going to have to be people who go to encourage others to attend. I worked for a company that told me I need to go to ASB.” (Member, Bakery, Small)

“In getting young new members, there's no follow through after the meeting back to specific companies about recruiting new membership from within their organizations. There needs to be a member mentor that a new recruit could call on.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

Trend of young talent outside of baking – convince them of association value:

“There's a lot of shifting in the industry now where people don't have the same passion for baking as those who came up in the baking industry. Outside talent within baking industry is changing things. We have to convince the non-bakers that there's a benefit to being active in ASB.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

"I'm retiring first of April 2011. My replacement is from outside the manufacturing part of the business. I've already talked to my replacement and told her to join these organizations. She said, no. I won't join. She doesn't want to do it for the customer benefits or for any reason. I can't talk her into it. She's smart but isn't interested. We are getting a new QA exec. He's young and talented. And I suggested that he join ABA. He said he doesn't have time and isn't interested. The young kids - at 30 years - if they come from the outside of the baking industry they don't bring with them a passion for baking and they don't want to take their personal time to 'socialize' and know what happens in the industry. They can care less if Sara Lee is bought out by Bimbo. They just want to do their job. Why do they care about that? Only those young execs who were brought up through the ranks of the baking industry who care to join associations. If you have a young MBA from Stanford to run 3 facilities, and say you want to put them on a smaller committee at ABA or be on the board at ASB they say why? They don't see the benefit of networking. They figure in 5 years they'll be doing something else. Why put in that time? The 30-year old who gets money from dad to open a boutique cupcake store. There's no interest in joining an association. He doesn't open the store early. He just makes the money and fronts the business. We have to begin to show them the value in the baking industry and find ways to make associations relevant to these young executives. Find out what they want and deliver it." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

More outreach at KSU & AIB:

"I think that one challenge ASB has is that the talent pool is dropping. There is less investment on company's part to send people to meetings. I would do more intense outreach at KSU and AIB to catch people when they're on their way up in the industry. There is a mix of senior management, plant managers or supervisory people and once they're out of AIB's school they'll be higher in their organizations. You have the baking professionals in R&D and technical positions coming out of KSU. If you can work harder to get them involved it will pay dividends 10 years out." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

"ASB could directly participate in some way in the AIB residential baking course. ASB members/representatives could go there and give lectures on baking trends and future of the industry and throw 2 or 3 one-year memberships for the top graduating students." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

ASB outreach to baking company executives & suppliers:

"Most of the fresh bakery people are coming. ASB needs to talk to those companies and convince them of the value of ASB's meetings. Maybe it's your mix operator you want to send to better understand how to do their jobs. To get new blood, it's going to come from making sure ASB is working with large suppliers in the industry, having close relationships with the universities, and talking to the baking companies to build value proposition for them to send their young execs to the show." (Member, Allied, Medium)

"ASB needs to identify those 15 to 20 companies we want better participation from and set up meetings with top management - not just the bakers themselves." (Member, Bakery, Large)

ASB mentorship program:

"Maybe ASB could develop a mentoring program to open up the society to younger professionals." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

"There needs to be a member mentor that a new recruit could call on." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

Change old boy image:

"AIB needs to reinvent their image and not come across as a good ole boy's club." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"There's a click of old bakers that hang out together and aren't too warm to the younger people. This culture has to change if young professionals are going to feel truly welcome." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

Miscellaneous:

“ASB might be able to provide new members free membership for a year. Give them an opportunity without the money issue, to take off time to attend meeting. A company may not want to pay for a younger exec to go to one of these events. They're younger and the company may not view them as ready to invest this money. If the young person perceives ASB as a value these young people will pay and stay. All the issues around young people today wanting more relationships, camaraderie, and networking fuels that. ASB needs to keep them there with luncheons and other opportunities.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“We need younger bakers. There has to be a way to bring incentives to members to get younger bakers there - bring a friend to the meeting. You always see the same people there every year. But people are retiring and you need to have new faces.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“ASB needs to focus on production position who have been with a company for a year. They're the target not just the new graduates from the baking colleges in Kansas City.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“ASB should try to form a 'youth advisory board' of young professionals in the industry. It would be a bunch of kids who can give their opinions and be heard by the board of ASB.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

How can ASB attract more members among NON-TRADITIONAL BAKERS?		
Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
✓ Provide ingredient and engineering-focused information/education; hot-button issues like sustainability; show application to multiple segments	3	-
✓ Membership drive – involve ASB board members; target large bakery employees, which will attract smaller bakeries, non-trationals, allies	1	1
✓ Focus on education for cakes, muffins segment (not cookie/cracker, which has BCMA)	2	2
✓ Miscellaneous comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target more supplier involvement to grow ASB membership ○ Appeal to a new type of baking profession 	2	1

Provide ingredient and engineering-focused information/education; hot-button issues like sustainability; show application to multiple segments

“If you can have some way to provide them with ingredient expertise - that would be helpful. Provide them with a place to go find out about new, special ingredient technology, how to use them, and what the advantages are. Non-traditional operators tend to be smaller and not using large, automated equipment. They're smaller shops that don't necessarily have the expertise in their bakery. If they can find out about those ingredients and how to use them, how it helps improve their cost structure and quality. That would be the way to get to them.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“I think if you're going to target those types of people - owners of mid-size companies, operations directors - they'll want to know how to improve through-put, save them money, or result in higher revenue for them. What those types of people want to see is, if it's from an ingredient standpoint, information about emulsifiers, or from an engineering standpoint, information about new types of lines or modifications to existing lines. You can make this in general, regardless of whether it applies to cookie/cracker, tortilla or fresh baked product or frozen. There would need to be breakout sessions on fresh bakery products with breads, rolls, or one for cookies/crackers, or one for tortilla and flatbreads.” (Member, Allied, Medium)

“I've seen the conference program evolve to start picking up on hot industry issues both internally and externally. Where we have the disconnect is somehow we need to be able to communicate to smaller segments of the industry is that there are important things they need to know about, like environmental sustainability. If you say 'environmental sustainability', they look at you like you have 3 heads. We have to tell them that it creates dollar savings and a competitive advantage for them. They don't understand it. ASB can fill that niche and others like it.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

Membership drive – involve ASB board members; target large bakery employees, which will attract smaller bakeries and allies

“I think if you get those bigger companies coming and presenting and networking, the smaller mid-sizers will come. I would encourage the current members to invite their colleagues in the industry. Have the supplier and bakery members really talk to other industry folks about joining. Invite people... I don't know if it needs to be a formal program or if it just takes members taking their own initiative to talk about joining and attending the meetings. ASB members are some of the strongest assets in getting new members. ASB has been getting bigger with more members. For a couple of years it was driven directly by the chairman like the guy from Flowers who sent a lot of people that year. But I think it's growing and adds excitement when people attend in higher numbers and we see new faces.” (Member, Bakery, Small)

“If you really want to attract membership you have to have a member drive campaign. You've got to have board members assigned to make calls on them. You have to offer incentives to join. Revamp membership a little bit so you don't lose income. What are you trying to do? Raise more member numbers? Or are you trying to get more executives in so suppliers can sell more wares? Bakery-level memberships might work better for getting executives in so suppliers can sell more wares. If they just want to increase income, individual memberships are the better way to go. When ASB dropped the engineers part of their identity, it may have created issues. If engineering is still where it's at, they should go back to that and get more focused. It's certainly a need for the industry.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

Focus on education for cakes, muffins segment (not cookie/cracker, which has BCMA)

“For cookie/cracker they probably can't do much to compete with BCMA. Cookie manufacturers for the most part don't do bread. So, I think you'd have more opportunity focusing on cake and muffins - these wholesalers may want to join ASB. This way, you might attract some cookie bakers who want to know how to bake up a brownie or that kind of thing.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I went to BCMA this past year to get more info on cookie/cracker. We also do salty snacks and there's SFA for that segment. People can't afford in this economy to go to multiple events. A company won't send you to that many. Chicago is a very expensive city. So, branching into already established areas with association coverage ASB may not see the return. In the midwest, Schwebels, Nickels, Perfection, they're already attending ASB. I see them there every year. My opinion, ASB has the top mid-size operators. In the past few years, attendance has been up. In the last few years, the education tracks have been very well attended. Speakers are good and hold people's attention.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

Target more supplier involvement to grow ASB membership

“Suppliers are one resource to really grow the society. But it's a double edged sword in a society of bakers. This changes the view of the society of bakers and engineers and not have the trade organizations involved too much. But these folks allow the information to be spread throughout the baking community. Partnering with other large baking expos or putting up opportunities at other events may be of benefit. For example, a yeast supplier is giving yeast to many different industry segments (e.g., cookie/cracker). They bring information and other options, education, networking. Suppliers are good for the society.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

Appeal to new type of baking profession

“ASB has traditionally gone after executives in large wholesale companies. 20 years ago, when I joined ASB, the membership was comprised of baker families and their friends. While the membership was somewhat ethnically diverse (because ethnic families ran their own bakeries) the members were from blue collar families that educated their kids. So, most of the young executives were pretty well educated. And everyone originated in the baking industry. Today, this is not the case. Within our company, we promote not just from within our company but from across the food industry, with executives coming from beverage (soda) and salty snacks (chips). Me and one other colleague in these office have masters degrees and started within the baking industry. That's it. Our executives - and many other companies are doing the same thing - are coming from outside baking. What is that message? The message to baking is that we're bringing execs from the outside because the baking folks are stupid and need to be shown how to effectively run a business. At the plant level, we're promoting people without advanced degrees who might also not speak English very well. This is the new and upcoming workforce. If ASB is going to attract new members, they will have to appeal to these kinds of people. Then you have the snooty, ivy league senior executives who are being hired at large wholesale companies. What can you give them that will make them interested?” (Member, Bakery, Large)

How can ASB attract more members among SENIOR-LEVEL BAKING EXECUTIVES?

Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
✓ Include prominent keynote speakers/critical topics at BakingTech as a draw for senior-level executives	3	-
✓ Market ASB as an improved organization with valuable benefits for senior-level execs	2	-
✓ Give one year of free membership; encourage members to share the newsletter with non-member colleagues	-	1

Include prominent keynote speakers/critical topics at BakingTech as a draw for senior-level executives

“One of the things ASB has done in the past few years is have a round table with top baking executives where the audience can ask questions and hear the perspective of talented leaders. A couple of years ago they had a guy from Sara Lee and Flowers. That’s a good venue to get other senior executives there. Pull execs in from other product segments for those round tables - that would be valuable. They might work in different parts of the industry but there are common issues we all deal with. Find those topics and bring them in.” (Member, Bakery, Small)

“It’s going to be hard to get them away from ABA or to go to both ABA and ASB. There are only a few engineers. Even our corporate QA people aren’t interested either. I think instead of looking for other seniors go for the corporate QA. ABA and ASB are a week apart and senior level people are going to choose ABA in Boca Raton. Then ASB has an ABA speaker come in and tell us what they were talking about at their meeting. Corporate types might go for a day or so, go to the private meetings then leave.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

“It’s probably a matter of getting in front of them. The presentation of the keynotes and state of the industry presentations are impressive. This gives them a chance to find out what the big guys are doing. When you have Wal-Mart there and other big players you’ll attract these guys. (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“From a senior executive level, ASB might want to partner with a 'branded school' that could deliver a course in 'financial cost management' or a course to help them turn around a business and make it run more efficiently. If you can provide that kind of information, it would interest that group. (Member, Bakery, Large)

Market ASB as an improved organization with valuable benefits for senior-level execs

“Senior-level baking executives are a tougher nut to crack. You need to do provide them with value that will justify their time to participate. I don’t know whether there’s something ASB can do like ABA with regulations, etc. It’s a different value than you provide for lower level execs and young professionals. Some of it is that you build in those values as people move up within the association, they tend to stay.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“They need to market ASB as something new and different for senior execs, as well. Lots of senior level execs remember the days when it was a party time at the annual meeting. There were some seniors who loved that meeting because there were 'fond' friendships with the hair salon association folks that developed during those times. Shedding the old image is good for young and senior execs. It wasn't enough to drop 'engineer' from their name to get a new image and shed the old. The leadership at the time didn't do this kind of research to see what members felt. Doing this research helps with the image, too.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

Give one year of free membership; encourage members to share the newsletter with non-member colleagues

“Letting them experience what it would be like to be a member would probably keep some interest. Give a free year of membership for some executives in some companies to see what the membership is like. When the time expires, see how many of those involved would like to formalize their membership. Start asking members to recommend and invite others. They already do this – it’s how I got involved. Encourage members to share the newsletter with their colleagues who aren’t members. One-on-one introductory meetings with ASB management as part of a free year of membership program would be effective.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

F. INTEREST IN ADDITIONAL ASB SERVICES

What additional services are you interested in receiving from ASB?		
Themes among responses:	Member (n=11)	Non-Member (n=10)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offer online education/webinars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convenient and cost effective ○ Topics should be focused on important trends and issues affecting the industry ○ Would attract younger members ○ Should be provided to non-members as well 	6	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop a Young Executives Chapter of ASB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offer ideas for career development ○ Provide a forum for young executives to exchange ideas, knowledge 	5	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider offering individualized professional mentoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set clear goals and structure around the mentoring relationship ○ Avoid conflicts of interest by setting ground rules ○ Market the advantages of the program 	5	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional ASB meetings were viewed as a cost-effective alternative to the national meeting (particularly among non-members) 	1	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Social media networking would appeal to younger executives 	3	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Several felt that regional ASB meetings might dilute the impact of the national meeting 	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offer opportunities for more active idea exchange about best practices, new ideas, new products, industry trends 	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offer a searchable database of members via Facebook or LinkedIn 	-	1

Offer online education/webinars

“Everything is online with kids today. For younger executives, it's a perfect fit. Two young people on my staff would rather learn from an online experience than sit in a classroom. I just participated in 2 webinars to get more information on a couple of vendors' products. It was a great way for me to learn from my desk. I have 2 young executives that work for me. And they both prefer webinars and online education to in-class learning. ASB should develop these formats.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“Younger professionals like to get their little bite size pieces of information. Maybe an hour long class might be too long. They want to multi-task and get to the next issue or problem. They have information coming at them from multiple sources, they have IM conversations, computer, phone, TV - and listen to it all.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

“Some webinars might be good if focused and targeted. With one of the magazines I get I am bombarded by webinar opportunities. It seems like I'm getting 2-3 emails about webinars that seem too advertiser driven. It might be useful if they're directed correctly and not overpopulated.” (Member, Bakery, Small)

“Outside the meeting – do a webinar update. Maybe promote the website better and have relevant information like trends or meeting topics that they got great feedback on and do some follow through with webinars, and more information on the website.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“ASB would need to do something that's not in conflict with AIB. But there could be training that's outside the pure technical area that ASB could offer - management training, etc. - that AIB doesn't currently offer. (Member, Bakery, Large)

“Online training would be of value. This should be open to non-members as well. There might be certain issues that are better suited for members only - to create exclusive member value. But some should be opened to non-members as well.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“It's a way to get closer to members and provide some value and disseminate new information and provide new insights. Webinars certainly are a cheaper way to deliver a program and have higher attendance. The webinars can be good for more people - not just members. For my associates that report to me - say I need them to know something about BRC food safety inspections. ASB could provide a webinar that I could open up to colleagues. I would say that the cost for the webinar shouldn't be significantly higher for non-members.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“If ASB can do something throughout the year and find topics that are interesting to members, that would be valuable. Today, webinars are what it's about. All this stuff needs to be promoted. They need to get the message out.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“Webinars are really helpful. Sometimes I learn about free ones or those with a minimal fee. It helps us a lot. It's very cost effective way of getting this information. When you go to the annual meetings then you will meet those webinar speakers, industry experts. Sometimes they want to do some self-promotion so it's good for the experts. Sometimes it's good for the ingredient companies to promote themselves by doing a product innovation webinar for ASB. It helps them too.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

“It's possible that this could interest members. I myself haven't attended webinars. If it's issues where it's more of a lecture or informational it could be interesting. You could avoid the need to travel. If it's hands-on product specific for R&D folks, you need to follow up with opportunities to do baking in a facility. It's topic dependent with their success.” (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Develop a Young Executives Chapter of ASB

“A Young Executives Chapter would be helpful and appealing depending on how they structure it. That could always be beneficial to anyone coming into the baking industry - or good for anyone no matter what job you're doing, regardless of age. There are different things that come along with work - different work ethics, etc. that young execs need to know about.” (Member, Allied, Medium)

“A young professionals group is a great idea. There is probably an informal group of younger executives that hang around with each other during the ASB Baking Tech and stay in touch afterward. ASB should formalize that somehow and let the young executives know they have a voice within the organization.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“A young professionals group will be key to the success of ASB in the future - show them the benefits of being a member. Being on the ASB executive committee, I know about how the program is developed. There could be more open dialogue in the development process and making sure the relevant topics are put on the agenda. I don't know that this has anything to do with how many years you're in ASB. The people who are developing the shows would listen to anyone in the society. But it's probably not transparent enough to the full membership when we're preparing the agenda for topics for the conference for members to have a voice in what are the right topics to cover.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“A young professionals group would attract some people, but I'm not sure how much. BakingTech seems to be focused on older members. It sometimes doesn't go to the basic training, which may be given through AIB or others. So, there may be an opportunity around quality and food safety issues to bring in young professionals. They're coming to baking through these types of issues. Because baking is becoming more automated you have less actual bakers. Fewer bakers means fewer society members unless you open yourself to other options. Food safety and quality has not been focused on in the past at the plant level when it's something bakers are being required to have higher level food safety systems. ASB hasn't addressed this very well. They're a little behind the times on those issues, in my opinion.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"It's a small enough organization that it may not be necessary to have such a group, but it would be worth trying." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"That would be helpful. However, it depends on how you define the level of the executive. Would it be at a director type position or R&D managers? You'd have to be clear about the type of management position they want. Focus on what execs can do in terms of either your knowledge and/or networking to get to the next level. People who are higher in an organization aren't as concerned about career development as those like myself in middle management. You have to be well versed in nutritional issues in the baking industry, and operational issues in baking. If there's a forum for hot issues to be aware of and things to help impact your organization, these would be helpful." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

"I think so. I think at least they need to find out what is it that draws young people to go into baking or into any association. Older bakers are very proud about the years and number of hours they have committed to their jobs. That may not be attractive to younger professionals. So, we need to find out how to outline the attractive investments to get young people - a focus on expertise that required perhaps than the long hours that aren't as attractive to younger professionals." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

"During the annual meeting, they could do some product competitions with students and professionals. At the New Product Conference, they have a new product competition with judges and a panel. That's always well attended. They could have some technical sessions. Also they could do some vendor presentations. Career Skill Building idea is very interesting." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

"I would find it beneficial to attend a breakfast or other social event that involves young professionals." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

"This would be helpful. Some of my staff are part of other associations young executives groups." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

Consider offering individualized professional mentoring

"If the ASB leadership would talk to the leadership of mid-size companies about mentoring and sponsoring young bakers, that would be well received." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

"I have a couple of 30-somethings that work on my staff with me. And I relish mentoring and developing their skill set. I think it's an excellent idea. It would provide more value-added services that ASB can provide for the industry." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"There could be a conflict of interest with this, depending on how the mentoring program is designed. In theory it sounds outstanding. It would bring people closer. But for large companies, they wouldn't want their executives coaching a junior executive from a competitor. And the mid-size companies might lose their talent to another company through a close mentoring program. It might make companies feel very vulnerable." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"As long as the mentor and mentee are full engaged to make it work, it would be valuable. We have mentoring programs within our company. But both need have a disciplined approach to the relationship so that when there are scheduled calls or meetings that the mentor can provide meaningful insights to the mentee. If it's done right, it's extremely valuable. Conflict of interest issues can be avoided by setting ground rules. It may take some time to develop the rules. People may be less than 5-7 years in the industry and will be matched with a senior executive or baker that can help guide their career development." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"I don't know if they'd want one-on-one or if they'd want a small group. Shoot an email and ask a case study question - I'm faced with this dilemma, what would you do? Individualized mentoring might be scary." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"I definitely think there's value. But I also know that as a group, the bakers I deal with are a very proud lot. Sometimes when I know that one has info that could greatly benefit the other one, sometimes the receiver of the information doesn't take it seriously because their pride gets in the way. I think the program would need to make sure the group that is being mentored is receptive to the idea. How do you open that door to make sure the program is successful? You have to market the advantages and help the younger group understand the benefits, otherwise it won't work. It is sometimes frustrating to me, there's an individual who struggles to get the product right, but he won't reach out and get the answer. He wants to do it himself because of his pride." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"Mentoring program might give companies a chance to steal my employees. I wouldn't jump to participate in a program like that. Over the years, I've had guys who go to ASB because I'm afraid they might take my employee. I don't think it's ever happened. But it's always a concern." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

Consider offering regional ASB Meetings

"If you have good attendance from the bakers, the vendors will show up. If they don't show up the first or second year it will dry up fast. Local IFTs are well attended. Our company sends people to almost all of the local IFTs, especially during the summer time. So we're really busy. They have local IFTs non-stop between now and October. Our company, (a supplier), will send folks to those because they're really well attended." (Member, Allied, Medium)

"Yes and other organizations have started seeing success with that. IFT has periodic meetings in Kansas City. When you look at company resources there's a big advantage to that. The main reason I'm not a member is because of company resources. If there were a more economical way to meet, there could be a lot of advantages to that." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

"It would be nice. It depends on the subjects. But it sounds like a good idea. It would be more affordable since we're located in Georgia." (Non-Member, Bakery, Medium)

"Yes - maybe they need to start locating elsewhere instead of just Chicago. It can be hard for ... this is a very good idea. Frankly speaking with the current economic times, every industry is cutting back cost. I don't know how many are willing to send people. I'm not sure if people will send them. ASB could have a regional and annual meeting in Chicago." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

"I am for that. I think that is an excellent way of reaching out. When you're at the regional area you would attract some people even from allied industries to come to things if they don't have to travel too far. A fixed location, unless you have a high degree of loyalty from a member, it discourages some people from attending." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

"Regional events and webinars are both efficient ideas for cost effectiveness and keeping in touch outside of the annual meeting." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

Concern that Regional ASB meetings could dilute the impact of the national meeting

"I'm not interested in a regional meeting in addition to the annual meeting. The regional would water down the impact and effectiveness of the annual meeting with its speakers." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"In practice, it will be just as difficult for me to get to one of those as get to the annual meeting. Even if they do it in my area, the whole idea of ASB meeting is that you go to be with everyone. Will this dilute the attractiveness of going to the annual meeting? If I went to a regional meeting I wouldn't go to the annual meeting. Also, that time of year in Chicago is a tough sell. Summer time in Chicago is much better. I'm sure it's slotted to avoid conflicts for their date. It gets more interesting when you can do more things outside. If you're there for several days there's a lot that happens in the evenings with social dinners. It may be something to take a look at - go to Chicago in March or summer or fall?" (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Social media networking would appeal to younger executives

"I do Facebook so I see that value. Twitter - not so much. I know they were doing that at IBIE. But I doubt they had a lot of success with that." (Member, Bakery, Small)

"Yes, they should communicate through these methods. But, I don't know that it would be effective for all companies. Our company doesn't allow us to access Facebook or Twitter. They allow us to access LinkedIn." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"LinkedIn will appeal to older, white guys like me. It's not threatening. Facebook and Twitter is the way of the future. It's the way young executives want to communicate. ASB should jump aboard with those." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"Apparently Twitter and Facebook are important in the industry. Prior to IBIE 2010, there was a lot of passion for these. The younger generation sees a lot of value in that. LinkedIn - I do this a lot with IFT. People start publishing challenges with product development and others start responding to them. They would like to interact with more suppliers and vendors. It helps out with their knowledge building. Presenting their products and ingredients and seeing innovation. You can develop those relationships on both sides." (Non-Member, Bakery, Small)

"Younger executives will be attracted based on the media they choose to use and what they're familiar with. I think from what I remembered ASB used to be, it tends to be a fairly well networking group. The old timer can always connect with each other in first names. It appears to be fairly tight. With different generations this remains to be seen. There's quite a generation gap. The old timers are there who know everyone and know more detail about running their businesses that anyone can imagine. You almost feel inadequate as a young professional by comparison. It's difficult to get younger people involved at different levels." (Non-Member, Allied, Large)

Offer opportunities for more active idea exchange about best practices, new ideas, new products, industry trends

"I am interested in those professional organizations that are related to my job. If there is more communication or social events in addition to the annual meeting with the ingredient suppliers and our business competitors in frozen dough industries to get together and share information and get more familiar with what's going on now and future trends that would be great. Research, new ideas, new products, that would be great. I know that socializing is very important. The food industry is a small group of people. When I was a student, I appreciated that experience at ASB. I went to the meetings and met new people, including older bakers who liked to talk to us young emerging professionals. I think we got the registration fee waved and only had to pay our expenses to attend. KSU has a good deal with that through our student organization to help us cover our expenses. It ends up being a free trip through KSU student organization and ASB eliminating the registration fee." (Non-member, Bakery, Large)

"I think that more active information exchange among members and also from association to give more to members would be beneficial. The Corporate Strategy Board is an association that focuses more on benchmarking for many different industries not just baking. That strategy they follow is something that would be very beneficial for ASB to search for best practices, analyze and start talking about the evolution of the industry. They provide educational programs and specific trainings. For instance, in the nutritional area there are big concerns about the future of the bread industry - flour and carbohydrates. There are two big roads in which this should be addressed. ASB role would be the research to guide bakers to have a more healthy products. But also have some word upfront with the consumers and also try to correct all the misinformation that's out in the market. Sometimes, consumers are misled for commercial reasons. So, a conversation would be a good instrument to counterbalance that thing. It's expensive and very exposed activity. But an association is what this is for. Right?" (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

Offer a searchable database of members via Facebook or LinkedIn

“The benefit of the annual meeting is meeting people, but it’s a challenge to keep those relationships through the following year and years to come. Outside of the meeting in terms of creating more value, I guess having some sort of database of members that’s searchable so if you’re trying to find someone or make that connection, you can search their database. They should have their own LinkedIn page or Facebook page because sometimes I talk to someone from, for example, Sara Lee and I forget his name. If I could go onto a networking page and connect with him to continue a conversation. I think AACC and IFT has the feature on their website. To be able to allow members to search that database would be helpful. A job board might also be helpful. For bakery people, some of the biggest websites is CareersInFood.com. There’s no real place where you can go and look to find bakery professionals. Maybe that’s an area ASB could exploit. IFT might have something like that.” (Member, Allied, Medium)

G. ADDITIONAL 'MEMBERS ONLY' QUESTIONS

G1. Suggestions for Improving the Member Experience

MEMBERS ONLY: In your opinion, how can ASB improve its member experience? What would increase the value of membership?

- ✓ Improvements to Baking Tech (n=6)
 - Promote shift in BakingTech from focus on networking to equal focus on education
 - Focus on new technologies
 - Continue to play the role of bringing together the various baking industry segments (ABA, AIB, BEMA)
 - Have more breakout sessions
- ✓ Be more of an informational resource to the industry (n=2)
 - Distribute a technical e-newsletter
 - Provide additional website tools, such as Consultants Corner

BakingTech

"It's been difficult to come off the old reputation that ASB was 50% meeting and 50% social or working with other vendors, going to dinners. It's a misconception that needs to be changed for future. It's more dependent on the company and the agenda that they put together and follow when they're there. You could get caught up with hospitality and go out with vendors until late and miss the entire next day with educational offerings. The organization needs to change the message with their history. They've done a good job of this in the past 5 years. But if someone is not disciplined an attendee could get side tracked with Chicago offerings." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"I tell people BakingTech is not just a big networking thing now. I tell people if you go you'll get something out of it. You should really go. I tell them, I go, it's on my calendar. Certain people have a certain perception about ASB and you may not change their minds. But I've seen the shift to it being better. Now they have table tops for 3 days with people wandering around for 3 days. Now they changed it so that the final day is a networking event. That's much better. They're changing for the better every year and adapting good strategies. I think the committees are in tune with the members and they're cognizant of who is in their committees and leading the conference. They have good leaders over the past several years to keep the organization moving forward in the right direction." (Member, Bakery, Small)

"For me, it seems like sometimes the presentations are too general, maybe not that informative. Sometimes they're too low level. The information is sometimes not very helpful. I think focusing on new technologies and brand new information would be helpful. I think people need to feel that the information is more useful." (Member, Allied, Medium)

"You have ABA that plays in the political arena. AIB is the more technical. BEMA is equipment and allied people. ASB needs to keep highlighting the fact that they have the tool and use it to bring everyone together in March for 4-5 days under their umbrella - and not allow one of those segments to dominate. Keep ASB in control, but allow the participation of other segments. They don't allow one segment to wield more influence than another. They don't allow AIB, ABA, or BEMA to overwhelm their event. The role of ASB is to continue to orchestrate the industry in this way." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

"At BCMA, instead of people going to one big program at one time, they had smaller presentation rooms that hold 50 people with 8 different papers going on at the same time. I went to a cracker session. And they did it on a smaller format and you could pick and choose what you wanted to go to. Instead of sitting in one room and listening to one guy at 9am, then another at 10am, and then later in the afternoon another. I liked multiple sessions going on at one time. I liked that a lot more. More information was being shared. They had a particular session more than one time so that you didn't miss a session because of overlap. They made a smaller room so you could drill down and ask the types of questions you wanted to." (Member, Retail, Medium)

“The conference doesn't appeal to our engineering people at all. There's no equipment to look at. It's just table top with people to talk to who have literature. They say it's not for us. At the table top you have major equipment sponsors. Engineers want to look at the actual piece of equipment. There will be an engineer or two do a paper and present it. There isn't enough substance in the meeting to keep engineers interested. They don't want to be bakers. They want to be engineers.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

Be more of an informational resource to the industry

“I think more communication on technical information throughout the year - engineering, or on the ingredient side or processing. Distribute a more technical e-newsletter a couple or 3 times a year.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“I think their website provides tools for us outside of the meeting. They have Consultants Corner and several things on their website to get useful information. More of that would be helpful.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

G2. Reinstatement of Annual Professional Recognition Program

MEMBERS ONLY: If the ASB's Annual Professional Recognition Program were reinstated would this be of interest/value to you? [individual members given awards for outstanding industry work]

- ✓ **Yes** (n=9)
 - Need strict criteria for recognition
 - Inform members of criteria during recognition program
 - Bakers Hall of Fame good model, well respected
- ✓ **Maybe/Unsure** (n=2)
- ✓ **No** (n=1)

Yes:

“Yes. There would be a little bit of value. I think that's of interest. I don't know that it would be a huge industry service. But it's always good to recognize people who are doing good things especially the ones that are doing volunteer work in the industry as well as recognizing their career accomplishments.” (Member, Allied, Small)

“I think maybe so. I can tell you that I've been impressed with the whole ASB Hall of Fame program. It's interesting to see their histories, lifetime contribution to baking. For a professional recognition program they would have to expand that outside of bread and bun. There could definitely be value in individual awards as long as they don't overdo it. ASB would have to do just as well as with the Hall of Fame.” (Member, Bakery, Small)

“Yes. They would have to be careful with the selection process. I think it would help the organization and the company that's recognized.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“Yes, there would be value. Everyone likes recognition. But there would have to be qualifications for it. I see recognition programs every year at different shows and I have no idea how you even get your name in the hat for something like that. It's not well communicated to the members on how you qualify for those awards. The association has to push the industry to support it and encourage involvement and make sure it's well respected. ASB has to convince the industry why they should spend the time and energy to submit one of their employees for it.” (Member, Allied, Medium)

“Absolutely. Everyone wants to be recognized and appreciated for the work they do. ASB used to have a professional certification program for bakers, suppliers and maintenance/engineering or something. That should also be reinstated but with more difficult criteria. In the past it became too easy to qualify and so it lost its appeal. If they reinstate it, they need to make it very difficult to achieve certification or recognition.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“It could be, if it's done right. 50 awards being given out that seems like a ‘who-knows-who’ program would not be effective. But if others nominated you and they gave 3 to 4 out per year – that would be valuable. I think the Hall of Fame program is a good model and possibly has good criteria that could work.”

(Member, Bakery, Large)

“It certainly wouldn't hurt. It depends on how much effort goes into it and how many resources it requires for the organization itself to do this.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“Yes – I think there would be some value in this. I don't think there would be a ton of value but some.”

(Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I think it's always nice to see recognition of people who have done a good job. It can be viewed cynically from someone outside the company that's receiving the award. Criteria must have high expectations and implemented objectively so everyone respects those who receive the awards.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

Not sure

“I would say that that's a very dangerous strategy to get interest from the membership because of several things. It's difficult because it has to do with screening process on that. It needs to be a serious screening criteria/process not just nominating someone you know. It probably shouldn't be annual. If we're talking about the baker or engineer of the year it shouldn't be every year. Maybe one person gets recognized every year from a different functional area like operations, logistics.” (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

“I'm not sure. With the current structure, it would harken back to the good ole boys network. I like the Baker's Hall of Fame. It's a great way to recognize leaders of the industry. I love the recognition idea. But it would go back to the same group of people who will be recognized - the clique - the same people from Flowers and Bimbo. How do you recognize someone in small companies? I would see the same people who already get the recognition receiving awards. Another thing I saw at BCMA was an intense correspondence course. They recognize the outstanding student from that in front of the entire group at BCMA. They're given a plaque for their work. The top student award that completed the course that year. You can be anyone and take the course and get a chance to win the award. It was my first meeting but I was very impressed with it. They're moving their show from the fall into May. (Member, Retailer, Medium)

No

“I don't think we'd see value in that. From a large, wholesale baking perspective, not too many people want to talk about business things too much because it gets the attention of competitors. Bimbo doesn't share a lot because we feel we need to take care of our business and move through the industry as we see fit. But for mid-size or smaller companies, it might be nice to be recognized. For the large players, that's not a value-add.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

G3. Allied Members as Society Chairman

MEMBERS ONLY: Should ASB allied/supplier members be eligible to become society chairman?

- ✓ **Yes** (n=6)
 - Ingredient and equipment companies are big supporters of ASB and big stakeholders in the baking industry.
 - The baking industry is consolidating, so the pool of companies is shrinking.
 - Talented suppliers should be allowed to be society chairman; need good selection process and criteria.
- ✓ **Qualified Yes** (n=2)
 - Talented suppliers should be allowed to be society chairman; need good selection process and criteria.
 - Supplier chairs would need to be monitored to insure fidelity to mission of ASB.
- ✓ **No** (n=3)
 - Equipment suppliers have their own society.
 - Allied chairs could dilute the ASB's mission.

Yes

“It seems logical to me. First of all, our industry is shrinking, condensing. Your ingredient and equipment companies are one of the biggest supporters of ASB.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

“I don't have a problem with that at all. There's a selection process and criteria for that and you might have a pest control guy who can bring value and speak on behalf of the industry. It should be available for allied and bakers.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I think if those people put in time they should be allowed. The suppliers want to see the industry succeed as much as the bakers do. I don't see anything wrong with it. I guess it will keep you from always pulling from the same pool of companies - Interstate, Sara Lee, Bimbo, Flowers. They can also pull from regional bakers. The allies would give you a different perspective on issues. I've never been on a production line for my job working.” (Member, Allied, Medium)

“Absolutely. This is a partnership. Suppliers need to have as much skin in the game as we do in this business. I didn't know this restriction existed.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“There's no reason they shouldn't be society chair.” (Member, Bakery, Large)

“Yes - if you look at many sub-chairs and coordinators, they're BEMA-types. I have no problem with this idea and I'm a baker. That would be like BEMA, who invites industry speakers, not inviting bakers. It's refreshing to hear supplier side information. If someone is talented and interested, allow them to be chair.” (Member, Retailer, Medium)

Qualified Yes

“I hear all the arguments in my head for pros and cons. For the future of the society I would have to lean yes. But understanding where the society is and who's been running it, it might be a difficult barrier to break down. It goes back to where the society wants to go. It has to be monitored and watched. I've seen a supplier take over and the society goes in a different direction. It has to be monitored closely and handled correctly.” (Member, Bakery, Medium)

“I think they should allow this. But I think if you have the passion to do it, it will be handled well. There are some people dynamic enough in the industry to do this. It would probably be more advantageous to have a baker hold that position in order to attract people to the meeting. The baking companies are bigger and send more people. I don't know that a rule keeping supplier members from being chair is necessary. But I see the benefit of it being a baker. You might have someone in that position that could do some dynamic

things and might miss out on good things by eliminating them because they're a supplier." (Member, Bakery, Small)

No

"I would say not. I think the way the industry is structured - we have BEMA to represent the equipment manufacturers. That's enough to keep the suppliers recognized and engaged in the industry. I think it would dilute the society is there was a particular supplier leading the organization. It would be harder to sell than a bakery competitor running the organization." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"I don't know. I tend to say no. But it's from all the dynamics of what would be going on. The focus could be potentially more on how do we make this more beneficial for the vendors. Some of that would be okay - a little bit. But you can't move the focus of the entire organization. You'd have to be careful." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"That is a difficult question. Sometimes the vendors they are bakers themselves, but not all the time. If you ask me, I would say no. I would say that chairman should be a baker." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)

G4. Sponsorship Opportunities during BakingTech

MEMBERS ONLY: Should ASB allied/supplier members be given sponsorship opportunities during BakingTech?

- ✓ **Yes** (n=6)
 - Other associations (e.g., ABA, IBIE, IFT) allow sponsorship opportunities and there's no perceived conflict of interest.
 - Eliminating the non-commercialization policy of ASB would fully engage supplier talent.
- ✓ **Qualified Yes** (n=3)
 - Need to control sponsorships
 - Need to have affordable sponsorship opportunities for smaller companies
- ✓ **No** (n=3)
 - Like the non-commercialization of ASB
 - Increase conference fee if necessary instead of generating revenue through sponsorships.
 - Conflict of interest issues

Yes

"Sure they should. This goes back to this good ole boy's way they used to do things. When you go to an ABA function, there are lots of sponsors and there's no perceived conflict of interest. ASB needs to change." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"I don't know why they shouldn't do it. Everybody does that in other associations - IBIE, IFT. It's about educating the bakers and putting them in touch with the suppliers. If the suppliers want to pay to advertise, let them. The biggest thing they can do at ASB is to limit their educational breakout sessions with advertising products. They've done a pretty good job of that for the most part. It's a difference between sitting and listening to a 30 minute advertisement about a company's product and seeing a company's name on a lanyard." (Member, Allied, Medium)

"I would like that. Last year in Vegas, Caravan had the lanyards. Even a smaller company could afford something like that." (Member, Retailer, Medium)

"Absolutely. It goes back to the problem with the non-commercialization policy of ASB. Get rid of it. We don't have the luxury of a large pool of members and we need to fully engage the supplier talent and sponsorship opportunities with them." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"I don't see any harm in that." (Member, Allied, Small)

"Yes, that would be fine." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

Qualified Yes

"I don't have a problem with sponsorship as long as you don't have 3 lunches and they're all competing with each other. It needs to be controlled." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"If it's done in a professional manner I don't see that as a negative. I think as a society we need to look at ways to spend our money as efficiently as possible it may be a way to spread those costs out." (Member, Bakery, Large)

"You know, the only thing is that freezes out the small operators. It skews it toward the big players. Now you can have the company logo on during table tops but nowhere else - the last couple of years they're getting lax about that. I could care less about that. But now, let's allow ConAgra to have sponsorships. How does that allow small players to get the recognition? There needs to be opportunities for smaller operators." (Member, Retail, Medium)

No

"I'd rather not go there. ASB has been non-commercial in the past and I kind of like that. I say that because everything else is so commercialized that it takes the focus off what it is they're trying to do. What they've asked in the past is that when you do the presentations you don't put your company name on it. You're not there to tout your company name, commercially. You do that on the side. So, don't schedule meetings during our meetings. So, if you open sponsorships and start naming your cocktail hour you're opening the flood gates. It won't be the end of the world. But there should be enough money there from your conference fee to cover these things. If you need to bump up the conference fee to keep from these sponsorships, then do it." (Member, Bakery, Small)

"It undermines the value of the society and could cause problems. I would be worried about a supplier beginning to put undue influence or pressure on the society and also on some of its members. Suppliers will have a tendency to cut off networking when they run an event. A supplier may not want to go to another event that's sponsored by their competition. There may be work rules against that and therefore you have fewer people taking part in networking opportunities. If there's sponsorship of educational tracks, there may be attempts to keep some information out of the presentation. Or there may be some information shared that a competitor doesn't want it discussed - back lash." (Member, Bakery, Medium)

"Would that represent a conflict? For example, if I have two suppliers that offer approximately the same kind of products for the industry, that might represent a conflict. One company would be sponsoring the lunch or reception - what would be the role of the competitor? Would they be invited and allowed to do networking or not? The idea would need to be thought through. It's an ethical question to keep the playing field even. It would be an easy way to get funds. But it could bring ethical problems with it, as well." (Non-Member, Bakery, Large)