2019 VSPA Strategic Planning October 24th, 2019 Saratoga Springs NY

***Attendees:***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jayde Quigley | AERC | Courtney Hubrecht | FSVS |
| Karen Reynhout | AERC | Eva Sikorska | PVC |
| Leah Wilson | AERC | Emily Wu | UVS |
| Matt Hernandez | AVS | Aaron Wey | UVS |
| Jack Henderson | CARE | Kristin Kesnowski | UVS |
| Danielle Russ | COVE | Todd Bishop | UVS |
| Jen Meads | COVE | Pam Stevenson | VSPA |
| Jen Lowry | FSVS | Tammi Morrison | VSR |
|  |  | Megan Rector | VSR |

***Brief Review of VSPA Vision, Mission, Values***

Mission: What a company does

* VSPA is a defined membership of veterinary specialty hospitals where members actively participate in creating benchmarks and tools through communication and collaboration

Vision: What a company aspires to be.

* To be leaders in and advance the delivery of specialty veterinary services

Values: Those attributes that support your vision and shape the culture.

* Commitment to excellence through camaraderie, passion, and trust

How do we describe the ideal VSPA member? Member practice?

Redefine our cause in words that are meaningful and empowering for our membership

Currently, there is far more emphasis on recruiting individuals for each member practice, and some demand for VSPA to do marketing, social media tasks to promote individual practice. It is our job to guide our members to appreciate the value of the collaboration and networking opportunities that VSPA provides. There seems to be a lot of needs, but limited individuals willing to commit the time to get those requests to come to fruition.

***Process for communications with nontraditional members – what we learned from PVD membership***

* **Practice owner attendance** VSPA needs practice owners and decision makers to attend the conferences to reinvigorate a commitment to VSPA and for the sponsors. We are a small group and need maximum clout to bring in sponsors. Our conferences cost ~50+k per year and coving these costs ourselves would create prohibitive dues. Discussion of allowing designate decision makers to substitute for owners with a heavy emphasis on the importance of owner attendance. Add decision make box to the application and statement regarding the decision makers' ability to sign contracts, purchase large equipment and software and make other commitments for the practice (with appropriate discussions with the practice principals just like an owner would do. Revise Rules and Regs document to require Owner/Decision Maker attend once per year.
* **VSPA purchasing group** – Created a GPO exploration task force – Mo Good (VSC), Jen Meads (COVE), Anne Feltmate (UVS), Jen Coler (UVS), Delainey Gorne (AERC), Rona McElroy (FSVS). GPO Task force to continue conversation with Patterson, possibility of negotiating with other purchasing groups (PSI?), and joint Purchasing group with IVPA. Board Liaison = Vice President, Jen Meads to run the calls. Pam to add a thread to Slack on GPO Inquiry/Updates.
* **Plan for VSPA website and social media** – see business meeting notes regarding ExpertVet. Focus on VSPA Facebook (add Instagram?) and VSPA website. Increase exposure and marketing of these avenues. Kimberly Brisk is creating a VSPA badge for member websites. We have a VSPA QR code already. Leah Wilson to put presence on Linked In via her own feed.
* Should practices share recruiting expenses evenly – (see business meeting notes 1k, 1.5k, 2k)
* Should VSPA consider a base # of designated representatives for membership for them to meet attendance requirements? How to handle single service members until we have multiple members in that service? See preventing competing members below
* Benefit versus expense of VSPA membership, including the cost involved with a meeting twice a year. $ 5500-$6000 a year plus lost revenue for the 6 days of meetings per year. A concern for single service or single owner practices See conference format notes below

***Membership classifications, names, definitions***

At the business meeting yesterday, a 3rd member classification was added and voted in by members.

* Single (Exclusive) - a single specialty service or ER only
* Intermediary – multiple specialty services, specialty service(s) with after-hours ER (not 24/7)
* Traditional – one or more specialty services with 24/7 ER receiving
* After *another* lengthy discussion, the group settled on Level 1, 2 & 3 for the member types.
  + 1 = single boarded specialty service ***or*** ER only (after-hours or 24/7)
  + 2 = multiple boarded specialty services w/out ER ***or*** single boarded specialty service with after-hours ER
  + 3 = one or more boarded specialty service with 24/7 ER

***Preventing Competitive Members***

Initially, VSPA had a 125-mile anti competition perimeter, which proved to be ineffective in densely and sparsely populated areas. Next VSPA determined a 10% zip code overlap maximum to prevent competing practices. This has not yet been an issue but would be problematic with a new or pre revenue hospital that had few clients at the time of joining VSPA. Discussed a combination of population density and distance to be most appropriate. Matt Hernandez will assist with developing metrics to begin the revision of our anti competition perimeter and will need data. Additional discussion of single specialty having a smaller protective area or creating single specialty elements when/if needed (Derm? Cardio?) with concurrent conferences and overlapping sessions as appropriate. Also, review if specialty is near corporate specialty practice, such that it isn’t likely to expand, thus borders may be smaller.

***VSPA financial future and long-term stability***

***Budgeting, forecasting, member dues, sponsor fees & benefits***

* The current financial forecast indicates VSPA is in critical need of new members
* Discussion of conference budget shortages – if this happens, discuss with the members a shared cost of the overage plus attendees that cancel short notice or do not attend to represent their hospital. Example – Saratoga - break even, Denver - loss of $1,834, Minneapolis – profit $1,089.
* Meal count commitments are due 5 days before the conference and cannot be reduced (only increased). A brief discussion of a ~$200 fee is an attendee cancels less than 5 days before the conference. It is not adopted at this time.
* Dues beginning January 2020
  + Level One $2,000
  + Level Two $3,000
  + Level Three $4,000
    - Grace period of 2 billing cycles for members currently having been quoted the 2019 dues rate and for any practice less than 3 years old.
      * New members and members open less than 3 years will receive a 1k discount for their 1st two billing periods (pro-rated 1st year and 2nd year full 12-month year)
* Sponsorship levels and fees have not changed in 10 years. Sponsor levels are currently $2,500, $5,000 and $7,500 – leave as is until VSPA has more members, add a 20% discount for new (1st year) sponsors. If a new sponsor is also a speaker sponsor, then 25% previously published discount, not cumulative.

***Future of VSPA Member and Colleague Acquisition programs***

The business meeting yesterday voted in the following colleague acquisition contribution for 2020:

Level One $1,000

Level Two $1,500

Level Three $2,000 (new members, any level, may opt out 1st year if desired)

***Conference format, dates, venue, hotel contracts, meals, etc.***

* What are the best days for VSPA conferences? Weekdays, weekends? Rotating between the two. Conference format – venue, hotel contracts, food, etc. with the goal of leaner expenses. Ten years ago, when the decision was made to do all weekday conferences, VSPA had multiple mature practices; now, with our current member mix, it is difficult to have producers away during weekdays. Begin with alternating Wed – Fri with Thurs- Sat for 2020. The fall conference in Santa Barbara will have the BOD meeting Thursday morning followed by the member's conference from 1pm Thursday to 5pm Saturday. Encourage all attendees to stay over Friday/ Saturday night respectively. Continue with host hospital rotation, as available.
* Collaboration with IVPA on a joint conference? – Pam to contact Bonnie to begin discussion. Joint location to cost share, most sessions separate, a few together plus at least one social event +/- lunch & breakfast.

***Revision of VSPA Vision, Mission, Values***

**Vision:**

Promote prosperity and ensure the sustainability of independent veterinary practice ownership.

**Mission:**

Nourish leadership within privately-owned emergency and specialty veterinary hospitals by developing benchmarks and sharing innovations for optimal organizational success and well-being.

**Values:**

* Camaraderie
* Education
* Collaboration
* Catenation
* Trust