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# National Association for Campus Activities

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## Strategic Long-Range Plan



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# INTRODUCTION

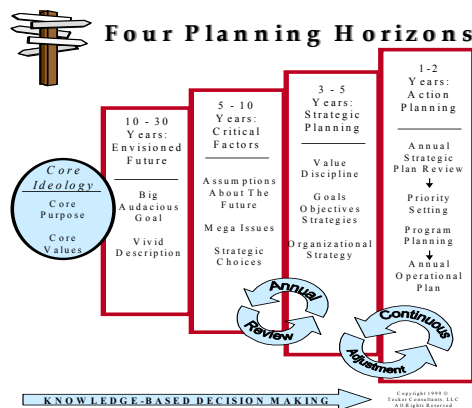
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NACA's strategic long-range plan describes a desired vision and what will be essential to achieving that vision. It is grounded in *core ideology* and driven by an *envisioned future* that realizes the full potential of NACA's ability to support its stakeholders and the industry. NACA's commitments are articulated in *goals* that declare the outcomes or attributes the organization intends to achieve. *Objectives* represent key metrics affecting NACA's ability to achieve the goal and articulate the direction in which these issues must be moved. *Strategies* will describe how NACA plans to commit its limited resources to make its vision a reality.

In the future, NACA will not be able to be all things to all people. As the plan evolves to meet the needs of a constantly changing professional environment, however, NACA may determine it needs to focus resources in new areas. Therefore, underlying this plan is the adoption of an ongoing process of planning and thinking strategically, designed to ensure relevance of direction and action over time.

In developing this strategic plan, a framework for planning was utilized, based on a model that organizes conversations about the future into four distinct planning "horizons." Tecker Consultants has found the use of this framework to be a powerful tool. It helps organizations in prioritizing and executing outcomes as well as in ensuring relevance of an organization's long-range direction over time.



**Envisioned future.** The “four planning horizons” framework consists of crafting a comprehensive strategic direction based on the balance between what doesn't change--the timeless principles of the organization's core purpose and core values (core ideology) -- and what the organization seeks to become within a 10- to 30-year horizon--what would be possible beyond the restraints of the current environment. The 10- to 30-year horizon is characterized by the articulation of an envisioned future--a BAG (big audacious goal)--and a vivid description--what it will be like to achieve the goal.

**Critical factors.** The articulation of the envisioned future guides the organization as it considers the factors that will affect its ability to achieve its goals. Building foresight about the 5- to 10-year horizon--assumptions, opportunities, and critical uncertainties in the likely relevant future as well as emerging strategic mega-issues--suggests critical choices about the potential barriers the organization will face. This foresight also suggests the responses the organization will need to consider in navigating its way toward achievement of its 10- to 30-year goal, or BAG.

**Strategic plan and operational planning.** The linkage continues into the 3- to 5-year horizon through the development of a formal long-range strategic plan, in which the organization articulates the outcomes it seeks to achieve for its stakeholders. How will the world be different as a result of what the organization does? Who will benefit, and what will the likely results be? Further, the articulation of strategies will bring focus to NACA's annual operational allocation of discretionary resources. Action plans, checkpoints, and milestones will be developed through a process of operational planning, indicating NACA's progress toward each goal in every planning year.

A strategic long-range plan is not intended as a substitute for an annual program or operating plan. It does not detail all the initiatives, programs, and activities the organization will undertake in the course of serving its membership and the industry, nor can it foresee changes to the underlying assumptions on which key strategic choices were based. Instead, the strategic plan identifies what NACA is not doing today, but must be doing in the future to be successful. Consequently, the strategic plan implies change--doing new things or doing more or less of current activities to ensure successful outcomes.

**Ongoing Re-evaluation.** Strategic planning for NACA should become the methodology for the organization's operations. If it is successful, this process will not have yielded a plan to be placed on the shelf, but will have served as a catalyst for the "process of planning strategically," at all times and at all levels throughout the organization. In order to achieve its vision, NACA must not look at strategic long-range planning as a one-time project that produces a milestone document of its best thinking at the moment. Instead, NACA must adopt strategic planning as an operational philosophy of ongoing re-evaluation of the critical knowledge bases that form the framework of its world, including:

- Sensitivity to member needs, insight into the future environment of the industry,
- Understanding of the capacity and strategic position of the organization, and
- Effective analysis of the ethical implications of policy and program choices.

NACA's strategic long-range plan represents a compass the organization will use to guide its work over the next five years. Each year of its life, the plan will be updated based on experience or new circumstances or as new opportunities or challenges emerge. In 2010, NACA should author a new strategic long-range plan based upon the new environment expected to exist in a rapidly evolving world.

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# 10-30 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON

## ~ CORE IDEOLOGY & ENVISIONED FUTURE ~

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*Core ideology describes an organization's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. Core ideology consists of two notions: **core purpose** – the organization's reason for being – and **core values** – essential and enduring principles that guide an organization.*

*Envisioned future conveys a concrete, but yet unrealized, vision for the organization. It consists of a **big audacious goal** – a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort – and a **vivid description** – vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.*

## CORE IDEOLOGY

### Core Purpose:

To advance campus activities and its contributions to higher education through learning and entertainment.

### Core Values:

*NACA shares a belief in and commitment to:*

- Supporting a collaborative environment among members and other organizations;
- Timely and effective communication;
- The development of an inclusive culture;
- Ethical behavior;
- Responsible fiscal management of the organization;
- Respect for individual points of view and philosophical perspectives; and
- Commitment to the timely use of appropriate technology to enhance programs and services.

## ENVISIONED FUTURE

### **Big Audacious Goal:**

To be the premier association for campus activities and essential to the success of our members.

### **Vivid Description**

- There will be universal recognition that campus activities are integral to the overall educational experience. Campus activities will exist in an atmosphere/climate of learning. Students will gain more knowledge about their responsibilities on their campus and also about their own leadership abilities. They will gain skills that they can transfer to their careers and life. There will be valid and useful research that student activities enhance the education of students.
- We will think of ourselves as “educators” as well as “programmers.” There will be an increased focus within NACA on research and publications of real substance, educational experts in the organization, schools referring to the organization to see where they should be going, leading the way in change and development.
- When people think of campus activities, they will think of NACA. We will be seen as the authoritative source for professionals working in campus activities. We will be identifying the latest trends in entertainment and the field of campus activities, on the cutting edge of programming, developing issue oriented programs and resources for member schools, and, enhancing educational components/workshops/sessions at the conferences.
- Within the association, there will be mutual understanding of the need to balance business and education, characterized by:
  - the effective use of cutting edge technology in ALL aspects of programs and services;
  - a consistently high level of volunteer energy and enthusiasm; and,
  - a dynamic staff that understands the industry and higher education and can support the vision.

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## 5-10 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON

### ~ ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE RELEVANT FUTURE ~

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*Assumption statements developed by the group will help NACA purposefully update its strategic plan on an annual basis. Since the outcome-oriented goals that will form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on the vision of the future that appears in this section, an annual review of this vision will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the goals.*

#### ***Social/Demographics:***

1. The diversification of the student demographic in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation will create a less homogenous student population/audience, resulting in the need for more diversified programming.
2. The increased variety of forms of education (e.g. 2-year, for-profit, distance) will result in changing needs and formats for student activities.
3. The end of the enrollment boom for traditional-age students may decrease student populations and further fragment the student audience.
4. Higher expectations from students, families, and administrators will place increasing demands on programs and activities staff.
5. Changes in the parental relationship with educational institutions will continue to challenge expectations of higher education and student activities.
6. Increases in political polarization and the influence of religion will impact student relationships and how and what is programmed.
7. Changes in technology will continue to affect entertainment delivery.
8. Changes in entertainment delivery will result in more rapid shifts in the types of entertainment students demand, and will challenge institutions and the association to remain current/relevant.
9. Student activities professionals must be able to demonstrate learning outcomes for assessment purposes.

#### ***Legislative/Regulatory Trends & Economic Climate:***

1. As society continues to become more litigious, the costs of insuring performers/events will increase resulting in rising costs to the budgets.
2. As institutions work to become compliant with relevant legal decisions institutions will be forced to implement more regulations of the use of student activity fees.
3. Because activity fees are becoming increasingly scrutinized, student activities professionals will need to demonstrate outcomes and/or communicate value to institutions.
4. Considering the rising costs of tuition, student activity fees will not keep pace with rising costs resulting in the need to secure supplemental funds.
5. Escalating regulations of e-mail will require the association to find new and legal ways to communicate with members.

6. Financial aid to students will decrease further causing students to seek employment to support themselves (and habits) resulting in a decrease in campus involvement.
7. Growth in the number of states changing entertainment taxes will result in increases in artist/event fees.
8. Higher travel and operational costs will greatly impact the access of entertainment to member institutions resulting in the emergence of more local services and talent.
9. Increased pressure from University administrations to build more residence halls will change/impact the student culture on college campuses resulting in the need for more student centered events.

***Collegiate Entertainment Industry Trends:***

1. Enhanced delivery and experiential technologies may result in less demand for live events and human interaction, as well as a heightened expectation for more immediate access to information, services and programs.
2. Increases in activities fees will not keep pace with the growing cost of entertainment.
3. Expensive entertainment will limit the ability of an individual school to hold major events.
4. Students will demand more recognizable talent (i.e., bigger names and/or niche groups with a following).
5. Tours of multiple artists will increase in number.

***Technology:***

1. Technology will continue to impact how we deliver entertainment.
2. Members will expect speedy and easy access to all types of entertainment and booking resources.
3. The ability to identify fads vs. long-term trends will be critical to success.
4. Delivery mechanisms will continue to evolve.

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## 5-10 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON

### MEGA ISSUES ~

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*Mega issues are issues of strategic importance that represent challenges the organization will need to face in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of the envisioned future and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing the organization. These questions can also serve as an ongoing menu of strategic issues that the Board can use – in a knowledge-based approach to gathering insights relative to NACA’s strategic position and directional choices – to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about the issues facing the profession.*

*The following **themes** were articulated as barriers to success by participants in the pre-session web survey.*

#### ***Overall Mega Issue Themes***

- **Membership Research: who does the Association serve, what do they need, how are needs determined, and how effective is the Association in meeting and forecasting those needs;**
- **What is the Appropriate Role of Volunteers Within the Association;**
- **How Should the Association Effectively Respond to and Utilize Changing Technology to Meet Member Needs;**
- **How Can the Association Improve the Educational Aspect of Its Programs and Services;**
- **How Can the Association Best Address Issues of Affordability and Funding.**

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## 3-5 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON

### ~ OUTCOME-ORIENTED GOALS ~

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*Goals are outcome-oriented statements that represent what will constitute the organization's future success. The achievement of each goal will move NACA towards the realization of its vision. The goals are not in any order of priority. Every goal will need to be accomplished if the organization is to fully achieve its vision.*

*On the next pages, each goal is accompanied by a set of **objectives**, which represent key issues affecting NACA's ability to achieve the goal and articulate milestones against which to measure progress. (note: Plan does not currently include strategies, so this information was deleted).*

#### **GOAL 1 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Through the development of a comprehensive educational strategy, NACA will be the preeminent learning source for its members.

#### **GOAL 2 – RESEARCH/OUTCOMES**

Through NACA's efforts, there will be a robust research agenda that advances campus activities in higher education.

#### **GOAL 3 – KNOWLEDGE SOURCE**

NACA will be increasingly considered the most credible and trusted source of information about campus activities among our members, higher education and the entertainment industry.

#### **GOAL 4 – INCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP**

NACA will develop and implement programs and services that support its diverse and inclusive membership culture.

#### **GOAL 5 – BUSINESS NETWORKS**

All NACA members will see increased value in their participation and access to business opportunities.

#### **GOAL 6 – ADVOCACY**

Through proactive advocacy NACA will increasingly influence the dialogue on campus activities issues.

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## **GOAL 1: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Goal:**

Through the development of a comprehensive educational strategy, NACA will be the preeminent learning source for its members.

### **Objectives:**

1. Increase engagement and participation of knowledgeable experts and seasoned professionals.
2. Increase value of educational experiences.
3. Expand and improve educational delivery mechanisms.
4. Increase selectivity of invitation to participate as a presenter/facilitator of educational programs.
5. Evaluate and increase resources directed to the educational strategy.

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## **GOAL 2: RESEARCH/OUTCOMES**

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### **Goal:**

Through NACA's efforts, there will be a robust research agenda that advances campus activities in higher education.

### **Objectives**

1. Increase awareness of the value of conducting research.
2. Increase engagement and participation of members and member institutions in the research process.
3. Increase the allocation of resources directed toward research efforts.
4. Improve and expand the production and publication of research data, findings and analysis, utilizing technology as appropriate.

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## GOAL 3: KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

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### **Goal:**

NACA will be increasingly considered the most credible and trusted source of information about campus activities among our members, higher education and the entertainment industry.

### **Objectives:**

1. Increase external awareness of NACA as a knowledge source.
2. Expand the use and application of research through a structure/mechanism.
3. Develop additional partnerships with other educational associations and associations within the entertainment industry.
4. Improve NACA's use of technology as a mechanism to share/support/increase our knowledge base.

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## **GOAL 4: INCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP**

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### **Goal:**

NACA will develop and implement programs and services that support its diverse and inclusive membership culture.

### **Objectives**

1. Increase the Association resources devoted to this goal, and expand access to them.
2. Strengthen partnerships within the education and entertainment communities.
3. Increase member participation in all association activities.
4. Increase recruitment and retention of more diverse membership.
5. Improve the perception the association is practicing its values.

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## **Goal 5: BUSINESS NETWORKS**

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### **Goal:**

All NACA members will see increased value in their participation and access to business opportunities.

### **Objectives:**

1. Increase opportunities to preview talent via technology.
2. Expand access to new and existing business opportunities.
3. Maximize opportunities to encourage and facilitate productive change, in part through reducing the cultural and operational barriers within the association which may impede change.
4. Increase member awareness of the changing dynamic of the talent booking process.
5. Increase member participation in and utilization of innovative methods of booking talent.

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## **Goal 6: ADVOCACY**

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### **Goal:**

Through proactive advocacy NACA will increasingly influence the dialogue on campus activities issues.

### **Objectives:**

1. Develop a method of identifying key issues, as well as an appropriate structure for managing the association's communication of its position on these issues and effectively leveraging that position to affect positive change.
2. Increase awareness of the value and benefit of advocacy activities to the membership.
3. Increase the association's knowledge of current and emerging campus activities issues.
4. Expand partnerships with relevant groups.