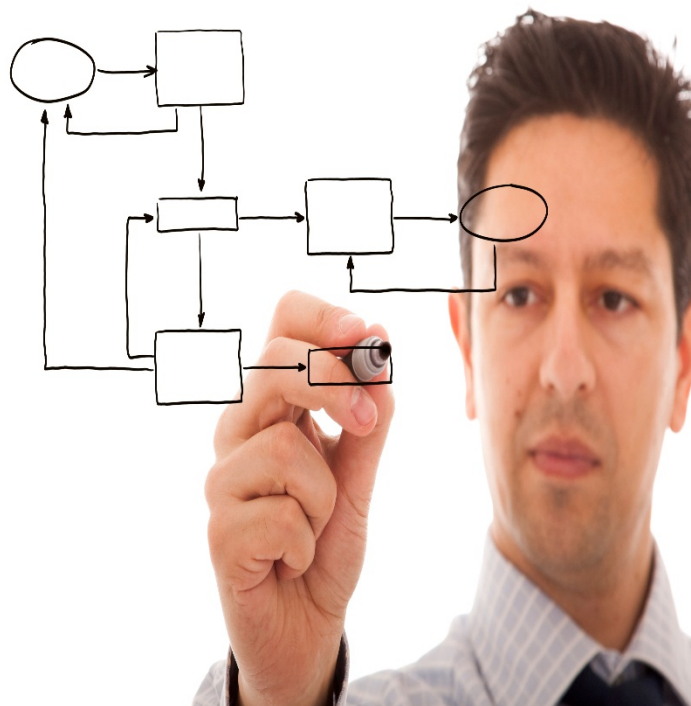


ORGANIZATION & MEMBERSHIP MODEL WORKSHOP REPORT



October 2, 2014.



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I. OVERVIEW

The Executive Council of the Canadian Library Association (CLA) met in Ottawa on September 28, 2014, to consider the results from The Portage Group's analysis of potential organizational structure and membership models. This analysis was commissioned by the CLA due to concerns that the association is facing a decline in membership, revenue, and perceived member value.

The Executive Council expressed its expectations for the workshop, notably, that there will be -

- One or two viable options for membership/structure that Council agrees are possibilities
- Consensus about the preferred membership/structural options
- Clarity on the next steps to implement and move forward with a proposed direction

Executive Council's agenda for the day addressed these fundamental questions:

What CLA Will Do

Whom Does CLA Serve

What Capabilities CLA Has to Deliver

What Must The Structure of CLA Accomplish

Structural Options and Preferred Options

Objectives & Next Steps

II. WHAT CLA WILL DO

The Executive Council had previously indicated that the future focus of the association will be in three areas: Policy, Research, and Advocacy. In discussion, the workshop concluded that advocacy and research are important foci. However, Values as a key strategic initiative better defines the intent around the proposed 'policy' focus.

The Executive Council enumerated what comprises each area of activity:

WHAT WE'LL DO – VALUES

- Best practice (to libraries) – define, develop, disseminate best practices
- International standards development and advocacy (e.g., copyright)
- Defining library values and foundational fundamentals and helping members to “live” these values

WHAT WE'LL DO – RESEARCH

- Research overarches all that CLA will do
- Information must drive decision-making in, and about, the sector
- Research-based policy papers will be created to generate discussion, e.g., the value of libraries (economic footprint and social impact); the consequences of government initiatives (legislation)
- Metrics: There is a need to have an economic impact analysis of the library community
- Operations related research, e.g., better operational practices, diversity and HR policies, graduates
- Public research around how libraries are perceived by the public

WHAT WE'LL DO – ADVOCACY

- To Government: Federal policy focus but also potentially going beyond to offer support at the provincial level
- To the Public: Communicating the value of libraries (by reaching a broader public audience this also influences government and other stakeholders)

- Internationally: Working with agencies (e.g. United Nations) and select, relevant groups (e.g., authors)
- Commercial: Influence the industry, publishers, etc.
- Key success factors for CLA:
 - CLA's advocacy work must be proactive
 - A sustained effort is required (constant presence and voice)
 - The library community's voice must not be diluted
 - CLA must have a core advocacy competency (internally, and with outside help where needed)

III. WHOM DOES CLA SERVE

The library community comprises many interests and players, individual professionals and organizations. The Executive Council identified the target audiences the CLA currently endeavors to serve (member groups identified in italics) -

- Individual librarians (MLS, etc.)*
- Associations*
- General Public*
- Library workers (not MLS)*
- Students*
- Trustees*
- Libraries*
- Vendors/Suppliers*
- Retired librarians*
- Government*

Executive Council then considered the interest level of these audiences in the proposed areas of focus for the CLA and specifically the value (high, medium, low) each group may perceive is delivered.

Who	Advocacy	Values	Research
	H = High M = Medium L = Low		
Individual librarians (member) <i>(Note: there was discussion on advocacy possibly being H, lots of questions about research value to individuals)</i>	M	H	M to L
Associations	H	H	H
Public – <i>Note: discussion around values</i>	L	M to L	L
Library workers, non-masters (member)	M	H	L
Students (member)	M	H	M
Trustees (member)	H	H	M to H
Libraries (member)	H	H	H
Vendor/Suppliers (member)	M	M	H
Retired (member)	M to L	M	M to L
Government	L	L	M

From the discussion, the Executive Council acknowledged:

1. If CLA decides to focus its value proposition in advocacy, research and values, the member categories most likely to respond favorably are *organizations* (e.g., library associations whether regional or special interest, and libraries/institutions).

2. These conclusions, while based on past support from members, and logic, have to be tempered by –
 - a. CLA’s past efforts in areas, notably advocacy, have not been particularly effective. A high profile, proactive and sustained advocacy presence that is effective may draw member support from other categories (not only organizations).
 - b. Research has not been done to ask existing or potential members where they see value and, most importantly, if a CLA that focuses on advocacy, research, and values will translate into member financial support for this work/the association.

IV. CLA'S COMPETENCIES & CAPABILITIES

Executive Council considered what strengths the association now has that should enable success in the proposed areas of focus for the CLA. Future members must feel the CLA's prospects of success in these areas are credible.

The identified strengths CLA may draw upon to deliver value to members include:

- The relationship with Impact Public Affairs
- There will be more people to mobilize (current, engaged members) through the provincial associations
- The proposed organizational membership focus suggests these members have resources to deploy on issues they see worthy of investment
- There is a history of collaboration across organizations in the library community
- Strategic relationships are already established with educators/faculty
- A national brand already exists – the CLA
- There is an established office in the national capital region and Ottawa is the appropriate location for a national library association
- There is a sense that the library community wants an effective national organization and therefore are willing to make this work

Executive Council concluded that to move forward, the following must be determined:

1. Who is prepared to belong and financially support the new vision of CLA?
2. A compelling case, and clarity around the 'return on investment' [CLA value], must be well defined for, and presented to, prospective members.
3. A consultative process to be started to share the vision, solicit feedback, and gather the information needed to make the case to others.

V. WHAT MUST THE CLA STRUCTURE ACCOMPLISH

In working groups, the Executive Council identified the outcomes that a new structure must bring. For example, the structure must result in a consistent, sustainable revenue base for the CLA. It must also have clarity on roles and responsibilities (what CLA does – it cannot continue trying to be “all things to all people”).

Executive Council developed the following structural characteristics as preferred elements:

- Communications –
 - Effective communication occurs among the bodies that have influence on the agenda and about execution of the strategy.
 - Effective and consistent communication to constituents of the CLA is the norm so they understand what is happening, why, and the results.
 - Members have a voice.
- The members/strategic partners must be representative of a collective of interest in, and the diversity of, the library community (e.g., regional, type of institution, interest groups, etc.). The provincial associations appear to meet this criterion.
- The structure needs to be simple; avoid complexity.
- Ability for the CLA to promote the values of the library community; expression of the values is ensured.
- Governance and decision-making -
- Enables consensus and conflict-resolution.
- The model of governance is defined and there is support.
 - Decision-making is nimble and responsive (ability to respond quickly to opportunity and not be mired in process).
 - Need to have governance continuity (not different representatives for member organizations at each meeting); good succession planning for leadership so there is continuity.
- Non-profit.

VI. STRUCTURAL OPTIONS AND PREFERRED OPTION

Executive Council reviewed and discussed several models that had been identified by The Portage Group. Currently, CLA is a direct membership model with individual and organizational members, including library professionals, suppliers to the sector, and others interested in library matters (e.g., trustees, students, the public).

The options to be considered –

What	Who
Federation (top-down)	CLA & Provincial Associations (CLA at the pinnacle)
Federation (bottom-up)	Provincial Associations & CLA (provinces as members & governors)
Chapter structure	CLA establishes local chapters across Canada
Hybrid federation model	Federation with a mix of provincial associations and other associations (e.g., CARL) as members (most if not all permanent members)
Alliance	Organizations/groups as members with the membership changing based upon each one's interest in the issue(s)

In considering all options, including the status quo, Executive Council reached consensus that a version of the Alliance model is preferred, with the "HEAL" model (Health Action Lobby) particularly attractive.

In the HEAL model, groups (organizations) pay a base member fee to be "at the table" and cover the costs for HEAL to function. As issues and projects (e.g., research) are identified for action, those member-groups interested in advancing the issue and/or project will pay extra to cover costs associated with the initiative. Indeed, much of the revenue comes from 'à-la-carte' activity. The other members may continue to sit as members even though they do not participate in a specific initiative.

The second structural option that is of interest and perceived to be a fit for the CLA is the hybrid model, where organizations are members but the membership group will include more than the provincial library associations.

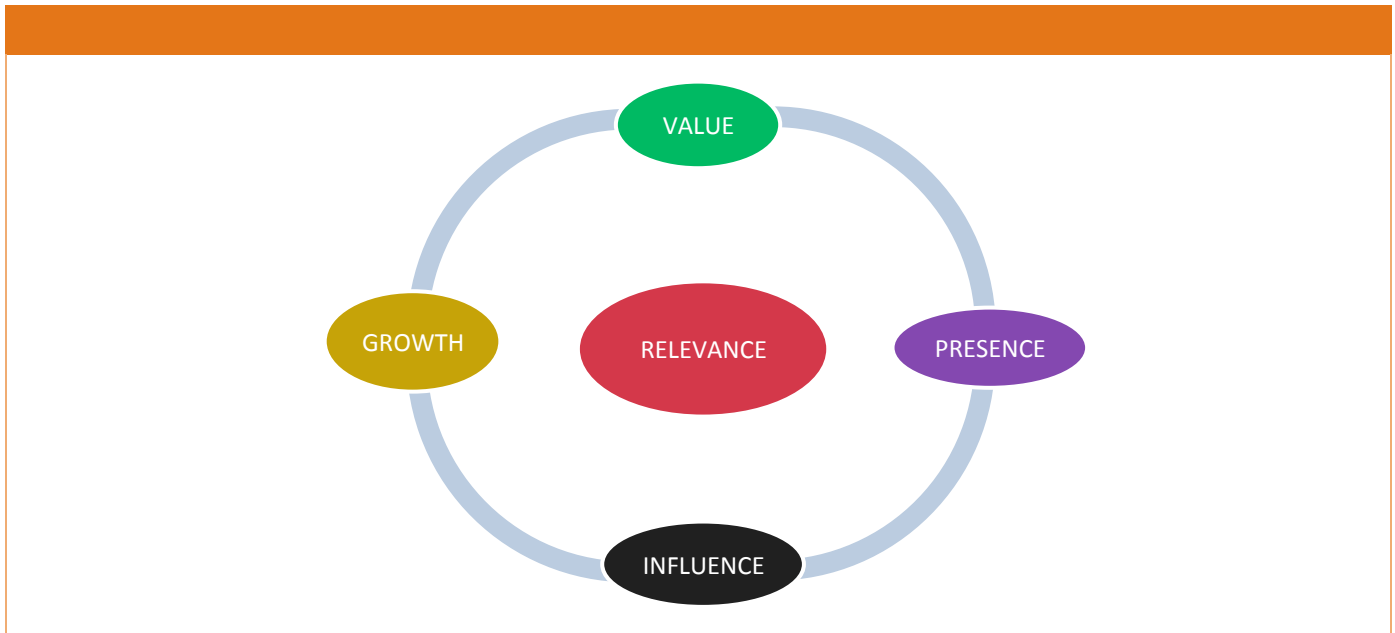
VII. OBJECTIVES AND NEXT STEPS

The Executive Council agreed that it needed to –

- Put the vision to paper and build the case as to why the preferred option(s) are in CLA's – and the library community's – interest. This will include what it looks like – members, member roles, etc.
- Develop financial models for the two structural options.
- Seek to identify potential 'champions' for the vision and proposed direction within targeted organizations (the future members), and among respected influencers in the library community.
- Propose to the Ontario Library Association that the Partnership Meeting in January 2015 include a day (or partial day) for a facilitated discussion among the prospective partners to discuss and refine the vision, and possibly commit to a go-forward plan.
- Develop a consultation plan to engage existing CLA members in the discussion, particularly as some current members may not, directly, be CLA members in the future.

VIII. POSTSCRIPT

Many associations face the following challenge on a constant basis.



GROWTH: Growth is perhaps better characterized as a by-product of other strategic gains. However, the trend lines are clear: without growth CLA will continue to decline.

INFLUENCE: Influence speaks to the need to be heard. CLA as the voice of the library community, fostering its values, is an important and unique advocacy role to pursue goals related to all constituencies: members, government, and the public.

PRESENCE: Also speaks to the need to be heard, but equally addresses the opportunity to involve and include stakeholders in a diverse professional community.

VALUE: Creating a compelling value proposition(s) is key to CLA's future. A truth is that members will define value differently. A key question then is *"If you cannot be all things to all people, what do you need to do...how do you create value for greatest impact, value that can be measured, with the available resources?"*

RELEVANCE: For many associations, continuing relevance is the essential core that enables all else. A strategy well crafted, appropriately challenged in the working process, supported by evidence/research and tied to what members want, and successfully deployed, is the recipe to strengthen relevance among stakeholders.

IX. APPENDIX – STRUCTURAL/MEMBERSHIP MODELS

