

CASE STUDY
International Cinematographers Guild Local 600
Strategic Guidance, Intra-industry Relationship Building

Challenge

The International Cinematographers Guild Local 600 (ICG) represents more than 7000 cinematographers, camera crew, and publicists working in professional entertainment. The union is home to the most experienced and knowledgeable feature film and TV crew members in the USA. Nevertheless, ICG was experiencing a loss of stature within the entertainment sector, and the causes included factors that lay outside of labor relations. I was asked to identify the extra-labor sources of the organization's reputational challenges and propose solutions.

Process

First steps involved pinpointing the problems by conducting interviews with ICG executives and staff, media, equipment and service suppliers, employers, and members. This qualitative research revealed that it was time for ICG to redefine its brand to reflect pivotal technology and business changes impacting entertainment. It also clarified that the Guild would benefit from establishing a wide-ranging, intra-industry communications program that carried the newly burnished identity forward into the community.

I performed a SWAT analysis to examine the organization's mission, services, benefits and selling points, short and long-term goals, values, culture, and more, and designed a strategic plan to communicate the brand. I also developed comprehensive messaging documents.

Solution

I identified entertainment industry organizations, trade groups, events, special projects, and other activities that feature the key decision makers, influencers, filmmakers, and crew that ICG needed to reach with its new messaging. I organized and facilitated get-to-know meetings with these stakeholders, laid the groundwork for fresh working relationships, and nurtured their growth.

Initiatives developed and realized with industry partners included curated trade show tours, new technology demos, panel discussions, master classes, networking events, and more. I wrote messaging documents and coached speakers for many of these activities. The media relations side of the picture was handled by the Guild's external agency.

Results

This intra-industry communications campaign enabled ICG to successfully refocus and reignite its brand and it continues until today. It enabled the organization to reposition itself at the forefront of new technology and production, and provides an ongoing platform to advocate for the unions position about timely issues and to herald the benefits of hiring members.

Today, industry stakeholders reach out to ICG to solicit its voice and active participation in activities. Networking events with FIND have seeded working relationships that have translated into real-world projects. The Guild now annually hosts a keynote that draws approximately 400 industry members at NAB, organizes technology demos for DGA members at the organization's annual Digital Day, collaborates with ETC on studio-led, emerging technology projects, among a host of other brand building activities.