

Workhorse Technology: How One AMC Grew to 14 Associations on i4a

Patrick Farrey · CEO, Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE)

In 2000, Patrick Farrey co-founded an association management company with only one client. In ten years, the AMC had grown to 14 global and national clients. Farrey credits the Association Management Software platform i4a with making that growth possible. Farrey is now CEO at the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE), also an i4a client.

Under 30 days

from handshake to up and running

14

association clients on one standardized, affordable platform

90%

of annual tech costs saved at SPE

AT A GLANCE



ORGANIZATION

Association management company; grew from one client to 14 global and national associations

TIME TO LAUNCH

Under 30 days from handshake

ONGOING LICENSE

About \$2,000 a year

AT SPE

Moved off a \$200K+/year technology stack in 3 months, saving about 90%

PRIOR SYSTEM

Another AMS vendor; nearly \$60K spent before it was let go

COST TO SWITCH

Under \$7,000 all in, including data migration

GROWTH

14 AMC clients on i4a, plus at least a dozen more associations transitioned

SUPPORT

Laura, still the i4a contact 24 years later

Where we started

Admittedly, I was not an association expert when I founded an AMC. Our first client, a global professional society, was a prior client of our B2B publishing company. They were nearly bankrupt from mismanagement and needed a fresh start. We stepped in to help.

I did know that a solid AMS was vital for their success. Unfortunately, I initially chose wrong. Association management software can be like the wild west, with some (many!) vendors overpromising and under-delivering. I was wowed by a fancy presentation, and after spending nearly \$60K that the client didn't have, we fired the AMS vendor without a Plan B. I was desperate.

Why i4a

I saw an ad about i4a and called for a demo. i4a was developed as an integrated platform at a reasonable price point. It didn't charge for upgrades, and it had all the features we needed – and more. It was clearly a well-thought-out system. We saw a demo and made the switch right away.

What won us over was that it just worked. Web pages with content management, membership administration, e-commerce, revenue reporting, calendars. Functionality the other platforms charged extra for or sold as add-ons were all there from day one. We were never fighting modules that didn't talk to each other. It was intuitive, and my staff learned it quickly.

The transition

From handshake to up and running took less than 30 days. i4a's support team did in a month what the other company couldn't do at all. An i4a team member, Laura, even came on-site to train our staff. All in, the transition and data migration cost us under \$7,000, with an ongoing license of about \$2,000 a year. That's the moment I became forever loyal.

What it meant as we grew

I insisted that every new AMC client use the i4a platform. With it, we were able to manage 14 association clients on one standardized, affordable platform. Each client had different needs, different membership types and programs. But with i4a's flexibility, we could configure each installation to fit each client. My staff didn't have to learn a different system for every association. And it worked for all of them!

Most of all, it became something we never had to think about. You don't need technology to be one of your headaches, and i4a never was. Plus, the platform kept getting better. It grew on its own, with new capabilities and upgrades rolled out almost constantly. Best, I was never charged a penny more for upgrades or new versions. Not ever!



"It's workhorse technology, managed by really smart, nice people."

Patrick Farrey, CEO, Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE)

What I'd tell anyone comparing systems

When people look at i4a, it can sound "too good to be true." I, and my team, will tell you that it is as good as it sounds. Better even!

Besides my 14 association clients, my team has transitioned at least another dozen associations onto the platform. After my AMC was acquired by a bigger AMC, I inherited dozens of other clients struggling with the AMS gorilla (you know who I mean). Each of them moved seamlessly into i4a.

When I left the AMC business, and became CEO of Society of Plastics Engineers, I found a technology stack costing over \$200K a year – a behemoth of consultants and plug-ins. Within 3 months we transitioned into i4a, saving 90% of our annual tech costs. Plus, it was manageable in-house. Goodbye consultants! I even know how to navigate the admin interface.

After you hear the fancy sales pitch from one of the conglomerate AMS companies, take a look at i4a. It does exactly what it's supposed to do, and the team is always there. It's workhorse technology, managed by really smart, nice people. Including Laura, who is still our i4a contact, 24 years later!

Since finding i4a, I never needed an AMS Plan B again.

About i4a

i4a is association management software for associations, societies and management companies: membership, events, payments, communications and website in one platform and one member database. Unlimited members at every tier, priced by staff users rather than membership size. Founded in 1996 and never venture-backed, i4a is a product of D. W. Rome, Incorporated, headquartered in St. Petersburg, Florida.

See how i4a would work for your association.

**Schedule a
personalized demo**

www.i4a.com · 800-292-5809