



The Information Architecture Institute

2014

Annual Report

Annual Report 2014

(Published in February 2015)

Scope of this report

The 2014 Annual Report covers the period from January 1, 2014 until December 31, 2014.

During 2014, the following strategic goals were used to manage the scope of the institute.

1. **Reduce administrative spending:** With our current business model we are not able to support much in terms of General and Administrative Costs. We reengineered the entire budget during 2014, reducing it by 2/3 overall.
2. **Adjust to free membership:** Having never had free membership as an option before, we had a lot of “wait-n-see-what-happens.” We were most concerned because month-over-month we were seeing a 25-50% decline in dues received. We had to decide how to look at things like renewal ratios and the declining student membership through this new reality. As a result of this shift, we made a major push to diversify our income this year and managed towards being 50% membership dues supported / 50% donation and sponsorship supported. We reached a ratio of 62/44 in 2015.
3. **Prepare for Replatforming:** Our board has been quietly updating content all over our website, taking down old websites, removing dead links, battling spam bots in our many mailing lists, changing contact information for local leaders, streamlining content paths and updating the mentor list. But in 2014, from our outside facing perspective, we haven't changed anything major. This is because we have also been in the background researching, formulating and circulating requirements for a total technology replatforming effort in 2015. (See page 6 to read all about it)
4. **Improve Scalability of World IA Day:** At 38 locations in our upcoming 2015 event, we needed to spend a significant amount of effort on making sure this amazing event would be able to scale up that fast. (See page 8 for the story)

2014 Numbers that Matter:

- Membership is up 25.49% (up from 1.9% in 2013)
- Our renewal rate up to 64.02% (up from 56.5% in 2013)
- Our expenses are down to \$22,405 (from \$60,264 in 2013)
- Our revenue was \$41,295 (up slightly from \$40,825 in 2013)
- We added 3998 twitter followers
- We raised \$21,241 dollars in donations (up from \$2600 in 2013)
- The third annual World IA Day took place on February 15, 2014 in 24 cities, across 15 countries worldwide. World IA Day allows us to focus on developing local communities of practice throughout the world.
- During 2014, we were also able to successfully recruit 38 cities across 26 countries across the globe to create local events in 2015.
- We hosted six editions of our online education initiative with Kent State University's IAKM program “UXconnect” and continued our participation with Reframe IA workshops at the IA Summit.

Organization

2014-2016 Board of Directors:

- Abby Covert, President - New York, NY, USA
- Daniel Romano, Treasurer - Los Angeles, CA, USA
- Kate Wilhelm, Membership Director - Guelph, Ontario, Canada
- Judy Siegel, Development Director - Atlanta, GA, USA
- Erin Stratos, Acting Secretary & Events Director - Ann Arbor, MI, USA
- Cassandra Moore, Strategic Planning and Projects Director - Washington, DC, USA

In October of 2014, Rhonda Ranney resigned her post as Secretary and Erin took over her responsibilities in lieu of running an emergency election over the holidays. We will seek to fill this spot in Q1 2015 by election. We will be also be opening 2 other voting seats in the 2015 election:

- Director of Operations (acting Treasurer)
- Director of Communications (acting Secretary)
- Director of Education

This will bring our board of directors to a total of 7 voting seats, plus the president.

The prior board voted to eliminate the staggered, two-year terms, seeing them as a barrier to effective management of long-term Institute goals. The current board has elected to reinstitute staggered terms after finding the 100% turnover too chaotic, even with the three-month hand-off between boards. Please note, the 2011-2013 board did not upload the changes to the bylaws eliminating staggered terms, so no changes are needed here. However, given that the bylaws have not been republished since 2007, the 2014/16 board intends to refresh them in time for 2015 elections.

Professional Services

The board engages the services of the association management firm Supporting Strategies to manage our back office activities, such as mail handling, bookkeeping, and records storage. Supporting Strategies serves as our permanent mailing address: 800 Cummings Center, Suite 357W, Beverly, MA 01915, USA.

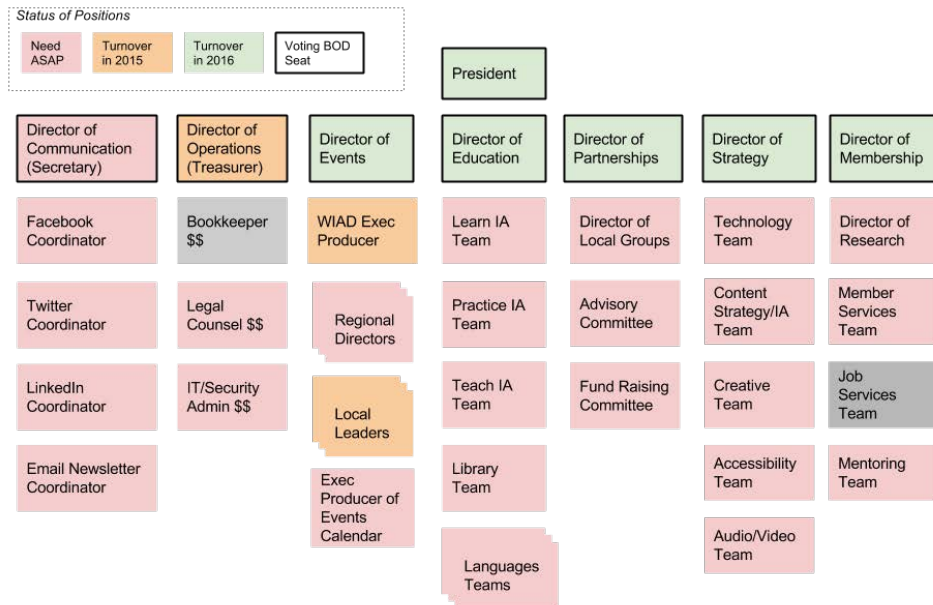
We had to let go of Noreen Whysel as our Operations Manager after a wonderful relationship with her dating back to September 2005. We thank Noreen for her years of service to us professionally. We are excited to transition to working with her on a more strategic volunteer basis.

For the foreseeable future we will not support paid administrative positions and will instead seek to fill our needs with volunteers, especially students. We have budget allocated for the following paid services in 2015:

- IT Security and Admin
- Legal Counsel
- Association Management

Volunteers Recruitment

In 2015, we will be seeking to have over 30 positions filled within the institute. Below is a management hierarchy proposal for laddering all volunteers under the Board of Directors. We have broken the roles out as you see here to make more small roles, as opposed to the few large roles we have had in the past.



Major changes include:

- Agency Services Model:** We have many initiatives, each of which comes with its own technological and creative challenges. Historically it has been the job of whoever drives an initiative to recruit and manage a team of web developers, creative designers, writers and social media moderators. In 2015 we want to experiment with the idea of recruiting volunteers on the basis of them having a creative or technological skill to donate. We will then staff our initiatives with those volunteers that match the challenge and have availability.
- Regional Directors for World IA Day:** For the past 4 years, the work of communicating between cities has fallen on one person's shoulders. In 2015, we are seeing interest from our 38 current locations plus a growing waitlist of other cities who can't wait to sign up for 2016. Given the cultural, currency, network, language and time-zone challenges involved with this growing responsibility, we seek to find regional directors to help the Global Executive Producer to recruit and manage locations with certain geographic regions.
- Research & Education will be more of a focus:** We are adding a voting board seat for a new role called "Director of Education" in our upcoming election. We are also adding a position called Director of Research who can help us to keep strategically iterating based on feedback from our members, the community and our partners. Dr. Craig MacDonald of Pratt Institute has been serving as Director of Education since April of 2014 and we intend to nominate him for a voting seat in our upcoming election.

Members

In 2014, we processed 930 new memberships and 879 renewals. 494 memberships expired and were not renewed. We ended the year with 1895 members in 73 countries.

Overall membership increased by 25.49% in 2014 versus 1.90% from 2012 to 2013. The last time we saw growth like this was when membership increased by 25% between 2007 and 2008. The renewal rate is a member loyalty measure, which we calculate as the number of renewals divided by the sum of renewals and expirations. In 2014 the renewal rate was 64.02%, an increase over 2013 rate of 56.5%.

We had 618 individual Professional membership subscriptions in 2014; 154 new Professional members joined, and 464 Professional members renewed their memberships. 365 Professional members opted to go free this year.

We had 94 Student membership subscriptions in 2014. 44 were new and 50 were renewals.

We had a total of 13 Professional Group membership subscriptions, which is exactly the same as in 2013. The following chart shows our membership trends over the last three years:

	2012	2013	2014
Total members of the IAI	1385	1412	1895
Professional Members	1148	885	618
New Pro Members Added	420	610	154
Pro Renewals	393	760	464
Student Members	179	143	94
New Students Added	93	82	44
Student Renewals	20	61	50
Group Members	21	13	13
Free	NA	368	1143
Free Members Added	NA	368	732
Pro members that went free	NA	NA	365
Founding Members	27	27	27
Renewal Rate	37.00%	56.50%	64.02%
Overall Growth	-0.10%	1.90%	25.49%
Memberships that expired	NA	586	494
Countries Served	55	55	73

Technology and Systems

In 2014, we invested in doing research into our audience and potential audience for membership. We worked with two students at Pratt, Samantha Raddatz and Kate Merlie, to conduct some user research resulting in personas.

A large focus on their research was uncovering what people were looking for from the IAI. In 2015, our website and marketing materials will be redesigned with these findings in mind.

A major focus of their findings was the need to replace the aging and outdated technology currently supporting our members and our business.

Our websites are not integrated, their (varied) platforms are brittle and difficult to update, and our membership management system is expensive and its performance is sub-optimal. As much as possible we need the work of planning and developing the new system to be accomplished by volunteers rather than paid staff or consultants. In the past ten months we have explored many options for accomplishing this task.

In order to meet all of these challenges, we have decided to build on the Drupal platform. The core functionality of Drupal is a WCMS that will easily accommodate our content management needs. The Drupal core is open source technology developed and tested by thousands of volunteer coders and used by millions of websites.

We were very fortunate to have our project selected by a group of Masters students at University of Michigan School of Information as a class project. Mallory Anderson, Sybil Boone, Michael Taborn II, and Allyson Mackay, supervised by their instructor Michael Hess, began the process early in January 2015. Their aim is to deliver a working website with documentation by the end of April 2015.

A central feature of the site will be the integration of the World Information Architecture Day (WIAD) site which is currently housed separately from the Institute website, thus fragmenting their impact relative to being a single coherent site. As WIAD cities can change from one year to the next, it is crucial to have a flexible system that can be modified by volunteers with limited administrative, than programming skills. A modern content management system will support current assets, provide an archive for retired content, and deliver a stable, safe, easy to use system for the future. Content both internal and external will be structured and tagged to optimize consumption regardless of user device or media.

Membership management, however, is out of scope for the project undertaken by the UMSI team. To address this need we have selected a modular, open source Drupal contact relationship management system (CRM). CiviCRM was designed for non-profit organizations, and emphasizes communicating with individuals, community engagement, outreach, managing contributions, and managing memberships. It is respected within the Drupal community and has been used by non-profit organizations like ours for 10 years. Clearly individual privacy and online security are big concerns, so we take full advantage of outside services such as PayPal and Stripe to limit our liability and provide optimal security. As well as managing membership, we will leverage CiviCRM to manage the mentorship program, the job board, newsletters, surveys and donations.

We are currently in negotiation with several Drupal development companies, and actively attempting to recruit volunteers to provide guidance in setting up CiviCRM and connecting it to the website this spring.

Communications

Email newsletter

As of year-end 2014, there were 3384 subscribers (down from 3,866 in 2013) to our email newsletter, which highlights IAI news, volunteer opportunities, and events from our calendar and news from our sponsors. The newsletter is available free to any subscriber. Our open rate has increased to 27% (2013 range was 19.3-23.6%) – note we did not send nearly as many emails in 2014 as in past years. This was largely due to Rhonda Ranney's resignation.

iaoinstitute.org

In 2014, website improvements focused on home page cleanups and core page old content removal. No major changes to the overall design or structure of the website were completed.

Members discussion list

The Members discussion list had 75 posts in 2014. Subscribership has not changed much since last year, but there was a decrease from 199 in 2013 and part of a mostly downward trend since 2001

Free discussion lists

The IAI also hosts discussion lists that are available to members and non-members. Each list is moderated by an IAI volunteer with support from IAI staff. Lists can be region-specific, such as Australia-New Zealand and Portuguese-Brazil lists. They may be topic-specific, such as the UX management list and the Enterprise IA list. Volunteer Marianne Sweeny continues to provide a job-listing digest to any interested subscribers.

LinkedIn

The IA Institute LinkedIn group ended 2014 with 7,962 members (up from 7,218 in 2013 and 5,967 in 2012)

Twitter

The Institute maintains three Twitter accounts: @iaoinstitute, @WorldIADay and @IAisIN. To date, @iaoinstitute has seen an impressive response, with a steady growth of active followers with 13.4k followers (up from 9,502 in 2013). The @IAisIN account had 301 followers (up from 271 in 2013) and the @WorldIADay account had 1897 followers (up from 1,302 followers).

Facebook

The Information Architecture Institute Facebook Page reached over 577 likes (up from 300 in 2013) however, most Information Architecture discussion takes place in the Information Architects group, which we helped to create and heartily support. The Information Architecture Facebook group had 710 members (up from 445 in 2013).

Initiatives

World IA Day

The third annual World IA Day event took place on February 15, 2014 at 24 sites worldwide. Through this event, we foster links within local practitioner and educational communities on a global scale. We're sharing information, ideas and research.

Kaarin Hoff produced the 2014 event, along with a team of website producers and many local coordinators. World IA Day 2014 focused on exploring the "Using Information Architecture to make the World a better Place."

2014 World IA Day events were held in:

<u>Buenos Aires, Argentina</u>	<u>Barcelona, Spain</u>
<u>Antwerp, Belgium</u>	<u>Bristol, United Kingdom</u>
<u>São Paulo, Brazil</u>	<u>Ann Arbor, MI, United States</u>
<u>Zagreb, Croatia</u>	<u>Chicago, IL, United States</u>
<u>Budapest, Hungary</u>	<u>Charlotte, NC, United States</u>
<u>Hermoupolis, Syros, Greece</u>	<u>Des Moines, IA, United States</u>
<u>Tehran, Iran</u>	<u>Los Angeles, CA, United States</u>
<u>Milan, Italy</u>	<u>Miami, FL, United States</u>
<u>Siracusa, Italy</u>	<u>New York, NY, United States</u>
<u>Tokyo, Japan</u>	<u>Portland, OR, United States</u>
<u>Warsaw, Poland</u>	<u>Washington, DC, United States</u>
<u>Bucharest, Romania</u>	<u>Johannesburg, South Africa</u>

Approximately 2,400 attendees participated in World IA Day 2014, with single locations ranging from 35 participants up to 300. We continue to encourage communities both small and large to take an active role in the event. The average cost per city in 2014 to host a World IA Day event was approximately \$3,000, ranging from \$600 to \$9,000 depending on the specific community needs. The total cost across cities for World IA Day 2014 is estimated at \$64,000.

Due to the incredible variation between cities with regards to financial need, access to local resources, and fundraising ability, we have implemented a grant-style process for the 2015 event. We are confident that this new process will ensure that each city receives the right level of financial support for the unique situation.

Major sponsorship funding for World IA Day and giveaway items were contributed by Rosenfeld Media, Axure, Usertesting.com, UXPin, UIE, The Understanding Group and Goldman Sachs.



In March of 2014, Lara Federoff was elected as 2015 WIAD Global Executive Producer.

Our global team was able to commit 38 locations to producing an event in 2015.

Local Groups

In 2014, we observed local groups emerging around those working on World IA Day. In 2015 we plan to foster this activity by providing monthly resources encouraging local leaders to run smaller monthly or quarterly meet-ups to help involve new people in World IA Day production. We currently have 43 local groups across 18 countries on our local groups page.

IA Institute Sponsored Webinars

The IA Institute and Kent State University launched a webinar program featuring speakers in the field of information architecture. These webinars called UXconnect@KentState, are held on Mondays at Noon, Eastern time. The 2014 program included the following presentations:

- Starting Out or Bulking Up: UX Circuit Training for Any Fitness Level
by Kate Wilhelm
- A Web for Everyone: Designing Wayfinding and Orientation We Can All Use
by Whitney Quesenbery
- The Age of Customer Discovery: Crossing Silos to Deliver Success
by Marianne Sweeny
- Making More UX Designers: Practical UX Apprenticeship
by Fred Beecher
- Making More UX Designers: Practical UX Apprenticeship Part 2: Apprentice Perspective
by Heather Wydeven and Claire Bailey
- What Really Matters: Presenting Information so People Care
by Jared Camins-Esakov

Gifts and Donations

There were two gift-based development commitments of note this year:

- In March of 2014, Jorge Arango & Andrew Hinton donated the proceeds of their IA Essentials Workshop to the Institute, this \$7500 donation came at a time when we needed that money to keep paying basic operating expenses, and we thank them so much for that.
- In the fall of 2014, Lou Rosenfeld, Christian Crumlish and Jonathan “Yoni” Knoll paid the first of two payment milestones based on the implementation of free membership. This resulted in a \$5000 donation.

Partnerships with Member Benefits

In 2014, many of the previous relationship and partnerships from 2013 (and earlier) continued into 2014.

- The Information Architecture Institute (IAI) remains a named contributing sponsor of *IA Summit*, along with *ASIS&T (the Association for Information Science and Technology)*. Members receive a discount on attendance. Additionally, IAI always hosts a pre-conference workshop on IA.
- IAI maintained a working relationship with *OWASP (Open Web Application Security Project)* that includes newsletter and social media mentions, logo placement on OWASP's website and member discount for registration to AppSecUSA 2014.
- IAI continued a working partnership with *Web Visions*. Members receive 20% off registration (in any of the Web Visions cities) while IAI enjoys cross promotion of events as well as two free conference passes for board members and/or students.
- IAI continued a partnership with *Optimal Sort*. The IA Institute has negotiated a special discount of 25% with OptimalSort for our members.
- IAI continued a working relationship with *AIIIM (Association for Information and Image Management)* As an education partner, IAI provides member access to AIIIM Training materials.

Partner Events

January 2014:

- "Gamification in UX: Ultimate Tool or Ultimate Hype," New York Technology Council, January 8, 2014
- ATIA (Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference) 2014 Orlando Conference, January 29 - February 1, 2014

February 2014:

- Interaction14, IXDA Annual Conference, February 5-8, 2014, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 3rd annual World IA Day, IAI, February 15, 2014, 23 cities globally
- 3rd Annual Symposium on Communicating Complex Information (SCCI), February 24-25, 2014, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, USA

March 2014:

- UXConnect@KentState, "Making More UX Designers: Practical UX Apprenticeship," presented by Fred Beecher, March 3, 2014.
- UXConnect@KentState, "Making More UX Designers: Practical UX Apprenticeship Part 2: Apprentice Perspective," presented by Heather Wydeven and Claire Bailey, March 17, 2014.
- Architecture and Interactions, Mutually Human Software, Grand Rapids, MI, March 20, 2014.
- IA Summit 2014, San Diego, CA, March 26-30, 2014.
- Information Architecture Essentials@IA Summit, Information Architecture Essential, Full Day Workshop, San Diego, March 29, 2014.
- School Leadership Summit, Library 2.0. Online event, Thursday, March 27th.
- IA Summit, "Teaching Information Architecture The 2nd Academics and Practitioners Round Table," San Diego, CA, March 27, 2014.
- IA Summit, IA Institute Annual Members' Meeting, San Diego, CA, March 30, 2014.
- ClickZ Live, "How to Architect Search Friendly Blogs," presented by Shari Thurow, New York, NY, March 31 to April 2, 2014.

April 2014:

- Webvision New York, April 3rd - 4th, 2014.
- Computers in Libraries, "Human and Computer Interfaces: How to Maximize Usability & Findability," presented by Shari Thurow, Washington, DC, April 8, 2014.
- INTERSECTION Conference for Strategic Enterprise Design, Paris, France, April 16-17, 2014

May 2014:

- WebVisions Portland, Portland, OR, May 7-9, 2014.

June 2014:

- UXConnect@KentState, "What Really Matters: Presenting Information so People Care," presented by Jared Camins-Esakov, June 2, 2014.
- UX LX: User Experience Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal, June 4-6, 2014.
- Society for Experimental Graphic Design (SEGD) Annual Conference: Convergence, Atlanta, GA, June 5-7, 2014.
- Giant UX, Charleston, SC, June 11-14, 2014.
- WebVisions Barcelona, June 19-21, 2014.

July 2014:

- User Experience Professionals' Association (UXPA) Annual Conference, July 21-24, 2014.

September 2014:

- WebVisions Chicago, September 25-26, 2014.
- Euro IA Summit, Brussels, Belgium, Sept 25-27, 2014.
- WebVisions Berlin, Berlin, Germany, October 24-25, 2014.

Job Board

In 2014, the Job Board posted approximately 217 full-time and contract positions, a 31% drop from 2013 and 71% drop from the 2012 peak of 775 positions. This comes with little surprise as the number of site postings UX and IA jobs has increased along with the number of positions.

Library

Our library is in a state of disrepair. Dorian Taylor lent a hand in determining the quality of the links contained within the current library. 157 of the 493 (30+%) unique links within the current library are ostensibly dead. In 2015 a major focus on our efforts will be on cleaning up, replatforming and revitalizing the library. Despite its dis-repaired state, it stands as the largest information architecture centric library online today. We will be assembling library teams around three main focuses:

- **Need-based curation teams** working to find the best of the best to support: Students, Practitioners and Teachers.
- **Language-based curation teams** working to identify works in their local language as well as translate popular and useful works into their local language
- **Subject-based curation teams** working on making sure we have deep specialty and diversity of subjects covered and authors reached out to

Translations

The Translation of Information Architecture (TIA) is our effort to promote IA internationally. Lots of key IA documents are available in our Library. The team is constantly expanding to involve new language. All translators are volunteering their time in translating and we thank them for their efforts.

Mentoring

In 2014, we received 92 mentoring applications from prospective protégés (however, 21 were from non-paid memberships, which are ineligible for the mentoring program). We also increased our mentor roster to 176, of which 26 registered in 2014. This is up from 16 new mentors in 2013. The IAI-Mentoring, and the UX-Management lists, are not frequently used. We will revisit the value of these lists, and possible alternatives, when we review our communication channels in the coming year.

IA Research Grants

Due to financial constraint, we were unable to fund any grants in 2014. We hope to see 2015 changing that, with a focus on student scholarships for event attendance.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet December 31, 2014

December
2014

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Checking Account		\$694
Savings Account		\$23,269
Paypal 02		\$1,185
Total Current Assets		\$25,148

TOTAL ASSETS **\$25,148**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$72	
Total Liabilities		\$72
Equity		
Retained Earnings	\$6,182	
Net Income	\$18,894	
Total Equity		\$25,076

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **\$25,148**

**IAI
Income Statement
December 31, 2014**

	YTD 2014
Revenues	
Membership Dues	\$25,978
Events Income	\$21,241
	\$47,230
Cost of Services	
Events Expense	\$5,934
	\$41,295
Expenses	
Subcontractors	\$5,700
G & A	\$11,443
Marketing	\$52
Professional Fees	\$4,503
Travel Expenses	\$707
	\$22,405
EBIT	\$18,891
Net Income/(Loss)	\$18,894

Expense Detail:

G&A Expenses

Bank Service Charges	\$460
Gifts/Grants	\$1,650
Hardware & Software (non-cap)	\$1,458
Internet & Telephone	\$5,319
Insurance	\$893
Postage & Delivery	\$144
Paypal Membership Cost	\$360
Paypal Merchant Fees	\$1,107
	\$18,887

Professional Fees

IAI
Income Statement
December 31, 2014

	YTD	
	2014	
Bookeeping/Accounting	\$3,832	
Legal Fees	\$671	
Other Professional Fees	-	
	\$4,503	
 Travel & Entertainment		
Airfare and Rail Expense	-	
Lodging	-	
Meals and Entertainment	-	
Other Travel	\$707	
	707	