



Defying Gravity: The New Rules for Global Association Impact

17 August 2026 | Sagamore 4 | 1:30 – 3:00 PM

AUGUST 15-18, 2026 • INDIANAPOLIS, IN

A person wearing a yellow and black suit with a long black cape is flying through a large, circular opening in a dark, textured ceiling. The person is positioned in the center of the frame, with their arms outstretched. Below them, a crowd of people is visible, looking up in awe. The scene is dramatically lit with purple and blue light beams radiating from the opening, creating a sense of wonder and magic. The overall atmosphere is one of a grand, cinematic event.

Welcome!

**Defying Gravity: The
New Rules for Global
Association IMPACT**



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The three outcomes we're focused on today:

1

Assess your readiness

A practical framework for global growth that accounts for geopolitical, economic and operational constraints.

2

Design flexible engagement

Models that maintain member value despite travel restrictions, visa challenges and regional instability.

3

Diversify your revenue

Strategies built for fragmented international markets – drawn from associations executing global expansion right now.

The associations that are winning right now aren't the ones with the biggest budgets. They're the ones willing to think differently about what their association actually is, who their members really are, and how to serve them—regardless of geography or geopolitics

Panel Introduction



Jeanne Sheehy, MBA, AAiP

Bostrom · Moderator

Convening the conversation



Avital Rosen Topel

VP Business Development, Kenes Group

35 years · 28 associations globally



Louise Gorringer

VP Association Management, Kenes Group

15+ years · leads a team of 40+



Peter Doherty, CAE

Executive Director, Int'l Biometric Society

39-region global organization

**Q4 Can
associations
still grow in
today's
environment?**

MYTH OR FACT

Q1 Raising dues is a sustainable growth strategy.

Q2 Most associations are financially thriving right now.

Q3 Membership decline is the biggest challenge associations face today.

The ground is shifting under associations

The latest numbers are a stress signal, not a strategy.
ASAE The State of Associations 2026 | MPI's Meetings Outlook (Q1 2026)

38.5%

of association CEOs
report financial
decline

68%

cite declining
meetings revenue

65%

cite declining
membership

2×

dues increases have
more than doubled
year-over-year

38%

now less likely to host
multinational
meetings in the U.S.
than they were six
months prior

Not all associations are declining. Some are defying gravity. Some are building global communities. Some are transforming disruption into competitive advantage.



bostrom
solutions for success.



kenes
group

What's the biggest barrier to expanding international reach?

0

Don't know where to start

0

Fear of financial loss

0

Logistical/visa nightmare

0

Don't understand member
needs across regions

0

Lack leadership
commitment

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Readiness Self-Assessment

Rate each statement from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

Rate the following statements 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree

My organization has revenue stability to invest in international growth even with 18-24 month ROI timeline

Our key systems (AMS, payment processing, communications platforms) can support international operations

Board and Executive leadership are aligned on the value of global strategy

We deeply understand why international members join, what they need, where they struggle

Our culture can handle building something new with uncertainty before seeing proof points

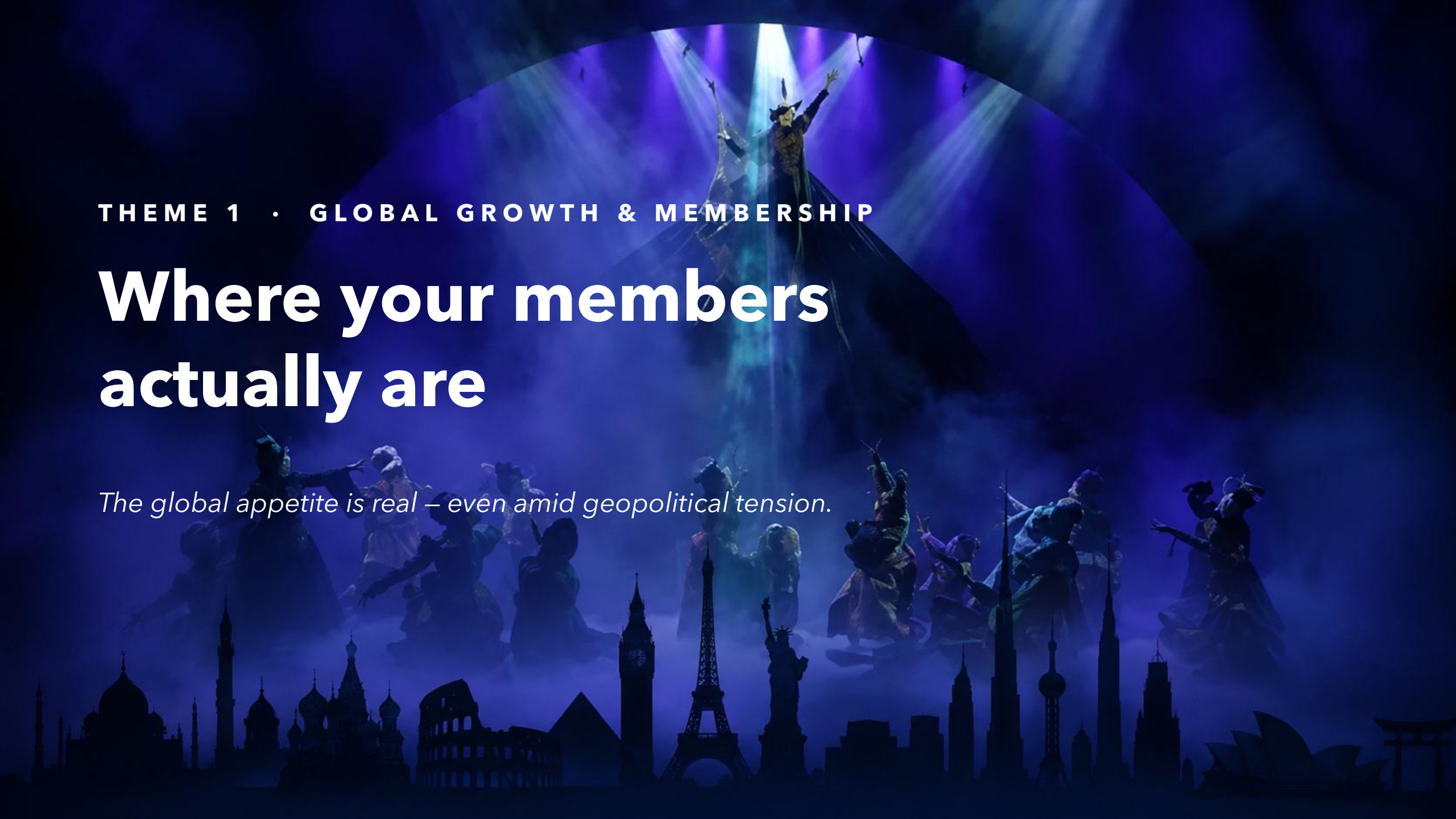
Strongly disagree

Strongly agree



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THEME 1 • GLOBAL GROWTH & MEMBERSHIP

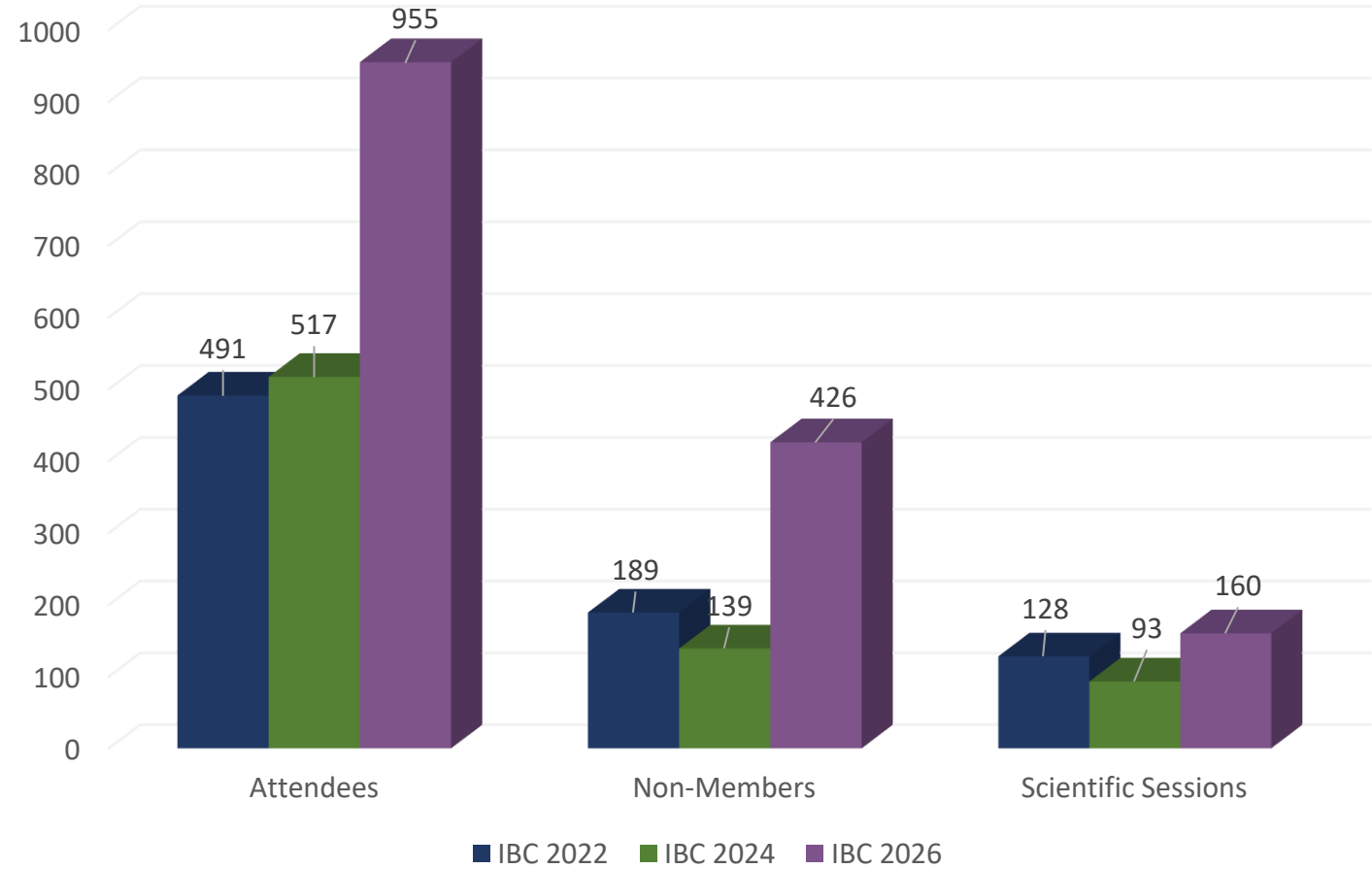
Where your members actually are

The global appetite is real – even amid geopolitical tension.



International
Biometric
Conference **IBC**
12-16 July 2026
Seoul, South Korea

OPENING STORY



CASE STUDY • IPVS





50%
of members from
Africa/Asia

↑ Up from
underrepresented



Louise Gorringe
VP Assoc. Management, Kenes

- Country Ambassadors
- Tiered Membership
- Conference Linked Packages
- Year-round Comms
- Early Career Programming

Should a professional credential mean exactly the same thing everywhere in the world?



 **Mentimeter**

JS 

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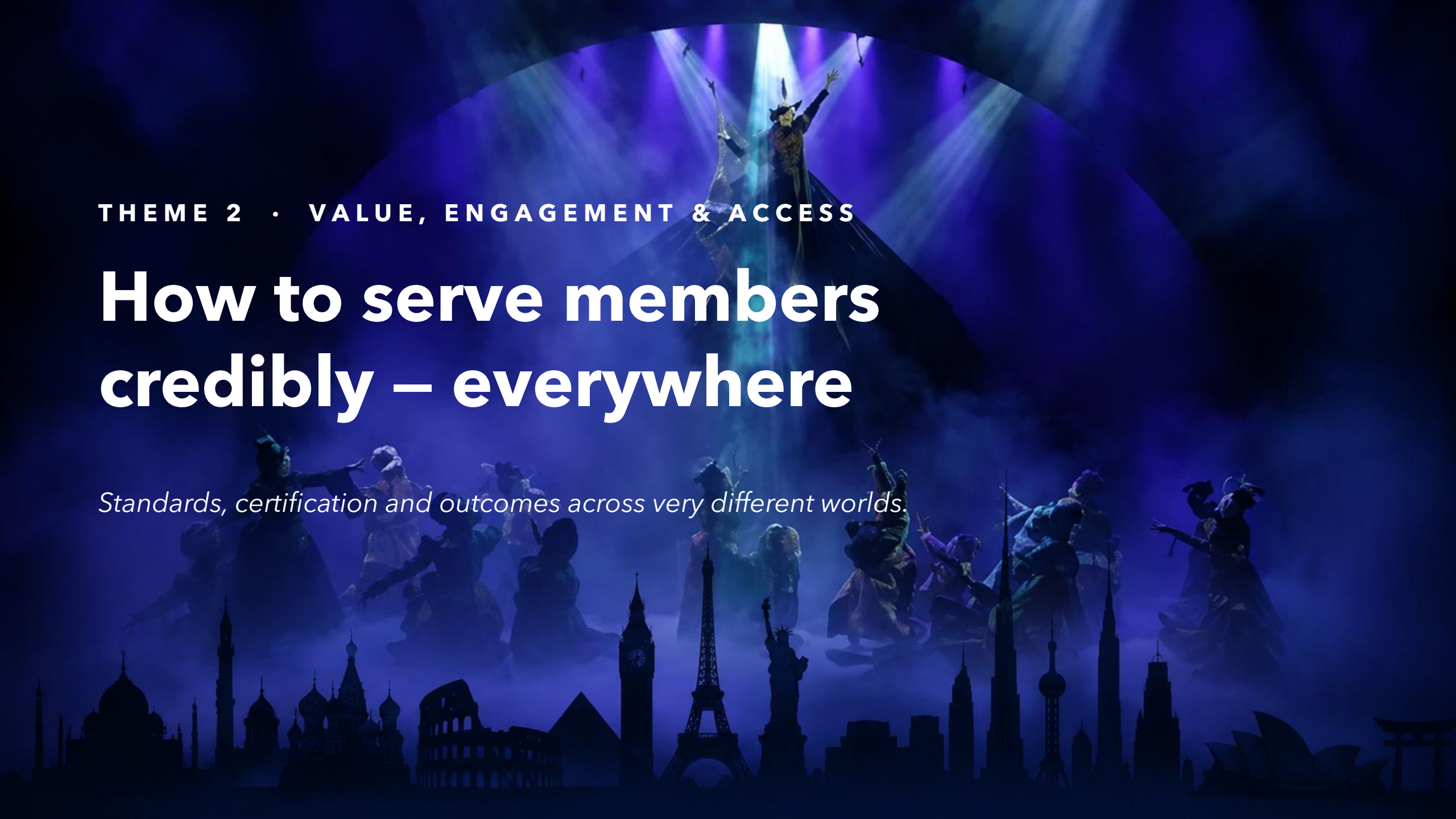


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THEME 2 • VALUE, ENGAGEMENT & ACCESS

How to serve members credibly – everywhere

Standards, certification and outcomes across very different worlds.

STANDARDS & ACCESS

“Members everywhere want the same things – credentials they can use, clear standards, access. But what works in North America doesn’t always work everywhere else. How do associations rethink this globally?”

Global Standards. Local Reality.

What Must Stay Consistent	What Can Be Adapted
Mission	Delivery model
Quality standards	Learning format
Scientific integrity	Language
Core competencies	Access pathways
Outcomes	Regional implementation

“Loosening control doesn’t dilute standards.”



Advanced Technologies
& Treatments for Diabetes

Avital Rosen Topel

VP Business Development, Kenes

YEAR-ROUND ENGAGEMENT

- Courses & videos on demand
- A digital community of HCPs
- AI powered and interactive modules
- Use of emotional recognition + generative AI to simulate real life clinical conversations
- Monthly live webinars and live virtual learning formats,
- Content converted to accredited e-learning
- Microlearning blocks, diploma courses, and certifications

~~events drive engagement~~ → ***year-round value drives retention***



GROUP DISCUSSION AND Q&A

**What aspect of your
business model is
keeping you up at night?**



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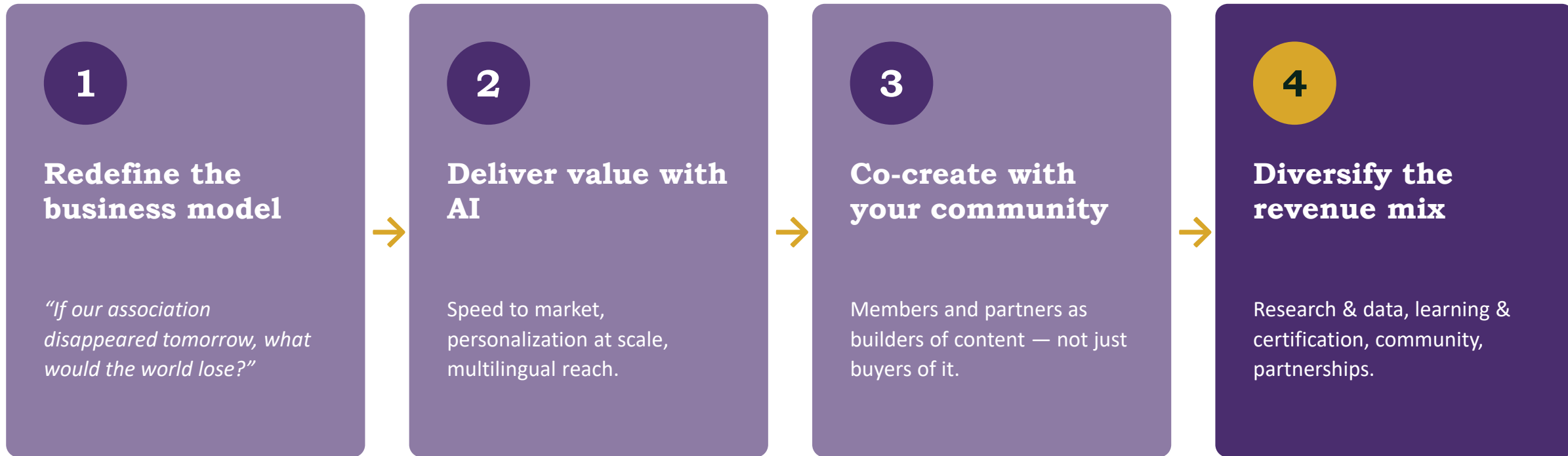
THEME 3 · REVENUE DIVERSIFICATION & SUSTAINABILITY

Why going global is economically viable

Revenue diversification, accelerated by AI.



From disruption to durable revenue



The four-step path — each step compounds the last.

1

Redefine the business model

"If our association disappeared tomorrow, what would the world lose?"

STEP 1 • REDEFINE THE MODEL

"If your association disappeared tomorrow, what would the world lose? How do you get boards past "we're a membership organization"?"

WHAT ASSOCIATIONS DISCOVER THEY ACTUALLY OWN

Research data

Certification frameworks

Workforce surveys

A trusted brand

2

Deliver value with AI

Speed to market,
personalization at scale,
multilingual reach.

STEP 2 • AI-POWERED VALUE

“Most associations use AI to save time. The winners use it to build revenue. What are they actually doing differently?”

87.5%

of associations use AI
for efficiency

15-20%

use it to build
new revenue

***That gap is
the opportunity.***

3

Co-create with your community

Members and partners as
builders of content — not just
buyers of it.

STEP 3 • THE APPROACH

You're not just hosting an event; you're
building a content ecosystem around it.



*Everything created before, during, and after the
event is where sustainable revenue lives.*

4

Diversify the revenue mix

Research & data, learning & certification, community, partnerships.

STEP 4 • THE OUTCOME

“You’re no longer dependent on one meeting or one revenue stream. What does a diversified model actually look like – operationally and strategically?”

Research & data licensing

Learning & certification subscriptions

Community & peer networks

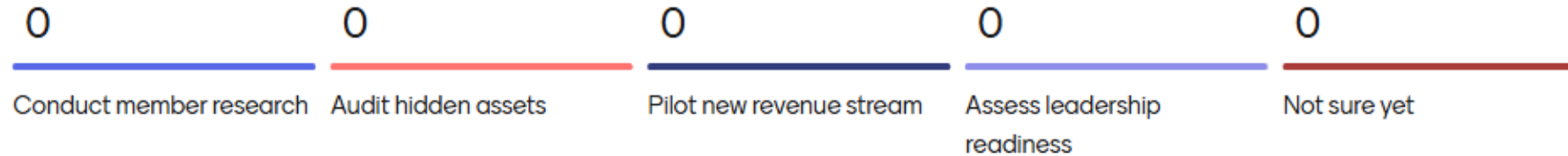
Partnership evolution

23% higher renewal rates – IBS year-round engagement model

GROUP DISCUSSION AND Q&A

Questions?

Which strategy will you prioritize in the next 90 days?



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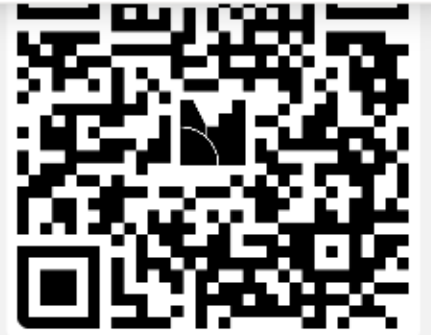
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Do this Monday...



Assess your readiness

- **Score yourself for real, not just live.** Take the same five-dimension readiness assessment from the Menti poll (financial health, operational readiness, leadership alignment, member intelligence, risk tolerance) back to your leadership team as an actual audit. Identify your single lowest-scoring dimension and name one 90-day action against it — *that's your entry point*, not all five at once.

Design flexible engagement models

- **Pilot tiered access in your weakest region.** Borrow IPVS's playbook: Country Ambassadors plus tiered dues for lower-income markets and pressure-test it against just one region where you have low penetration. A single-country pilot is enough to bring a real case to the board, without asking them to approve a global overhaul.
- **Turn one flagship program into a year-round ecosystem.** Following ATTD's shift, pick one signature session or course and rebuild it using the content-ecosystem model from Step 3: on-demand replay, a community layer, and a certification or credential path. Don't try to do this to your whole portfolio at once — prove it on one asset first.

Implement revenue diversification strategies

- **Audit what you actually own.** Using Step 1 of the four-step framework, inventory your hidden assets like research data, certification frameworks, workforce surveys, brand trust and test just one against the real question: would members pay for this on its own? That's the difference between "sounds good" and validated.
- **Reframe one sponsor relationship as co-creation.** Identify a partner who's a genuine candidate to move from logo placement to content builder using the Step 3 ecosystem model (research, tools, learning, community) as the pitch and have that specific conversation before your next renewal cycle.



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Resources | Q&A

- Readiness Assessment
- IPVS & ATTD Case Studies
- Content Audit Guide
- AI Guides for Associations



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Thank you!





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Where are you from?



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What % of your members are outside of the U.S.?

Statement 2

Statement 3

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree



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