



# The Top Association Tech Trends for 2023

Discover the association trends that will make your communities stronger next year.



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The 7 Top Association Tech Trends of 2023</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Trend 1: People–Centered, Tech–Enabled Strategies</b> Strategic planning becomes a priority; managed services over transactional services	<b>5</b>
<b>Trend 2: Personalized Giving Experiences</b> Leveraging member data to deliver personalized campaigns; mobile giving	<b>8</b>
<b>Trend 3: Member-Empowering Technology</b> Community-building on members’ terms; learning & career opportunities take center stage	<b>10</b>
<b>Trend 4: Prioritizing Data Security is Essential</b> Access data from anywhere, collaborate at anytime	<b>13</b>
<b>Trend 5: Curated Events for the New VIPs</b> Young professionals = The New VIPs; curated event experiences	<b>15</b>
<b>Trend 6: Investment in Tech Talent &amp; Training</b> Data training takes center stage	<b>17</b>
<b>Trend 7: Economic Concerns &amp; Recession Prep</b> Recession prep for your members	<b>19</b>
<b>Get Started with Your Tech Planning for 2023</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>About Personify</b>	<b>22</b>



Another year, another look ahead at “association trends.” A lot of people get really excited at the idea of putting a year behind them, dreaming and planning for the new year.

But others look at e-books and articles declaring “what’s next” for our association teams and members with some apprehension and skepticism. Can we really know what the next year is going to hold for our missions and our members? Didn’t the last couple of years of “unprecedented times” teach us that we can never know what awaits for us?

The truth is, when it comes to the desire to plan for the future, both viewpoints are valid. At Personify, we view “trends” as an opportunity to acknowledge where we’ve been, while being hopeful about the future.

To that reflective and optimistic end, we’re excited to dive into the top association tech trends for 2023! Here’s to a year ahead full of stronger missions, closer communities and technology that works for you and your members.

**85%**  
of nonprofits surveyed said  
technology is the key to the  
success of their organizations.

[Source: Salesforce.org Nonprofit Trends Report](#)

# The 7 Top Association Tech Trends of 2023

[Trend #1: People-Centered, Tech-Enabled Strategies](#)

[Trend #2: Personalized Giving Experiences](#)

[Trend #3: Member-Empowering Technology](#)

[Trend #4: Prioritizing Data Security is Essential](#)

[Trend #5: Curated Events for the New VIPs](#)

[Trend #6: Investment in Tech Talent & Training](#)

[Trend #7: Economic Concerns & Recession Prep](#)



# Trend #1: People-Centered, Tech-Enabled Organizational Strategies

It's difficult to talk about "strategies" and "planning" after all the changes of last year. On one hand, you could say that the big lesson learned is that developing organizational strategies and planning is a bit of a fool's errand after many of us saw our best-laid plans fall to the wayside.

But since many of us also quickly realized the value of contingency and [resiliency planning](#), 2023 looks like the year of strategic planning, even for small associations and organizations that have struggled to organize and execute a strategic plan in the past.



## Strategic planning becomes a priority

A big part of strategic planning and budgeting will be centered around technology that puts its people — association staff and members — first.

In 2023, strategic planning will be something that larger organizations prioritize throughout the year and smaller organizations look to outside partners to help them develop.

Selecting technology that is integrated into its larger database or choosing an association management system (AMS) that offers automation and reliable reporting will be key.

Additionally, building processes that are easily documented and agile as well as selecting staff that are both skilled and resourceful will help shape the strategic plans for 2023.

## Need help with your strategic planning? You have options!

- 1 ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT COMPANIES**  
For-profit businesses that manage associations to help them grow and prosper. They can offer a la carte or full services.
- 2 CONSULTANTS**  
Individuals or small groups that can be hired on a project basis to help choose and implement technology or kept on a retainer to provide strategic consultation.
- 3 COACHES & MENTORS**  
Leaders that make themselves available to meet and share their knowledge and experiences with others seeking advice, usually in a common industry or with common interests.

## Managed services over transactional services

As our organizations become more technology-driven and members require more (and better!) digital experiences, associations are looking for technology that comes with managed services baked into agreements.

These managed services can take different forms and include different types of services including 24/7 tech support, dedicated professional service contacts, ongoing training and tech consulting, just to name a few.

**But the bottom line is that 2023 will see associations look for a tech partner, not simply a tech vendor.**

**“Good providers of managed services offer comprehensive “as a service” solutions at a fixed price...This model flattens costs, increases security and reduces outages.”**

— Ripley Tate,  
[Web Fire Communications, Inc., Forbes](#)

# Trend #2: Personalized Giving Experiences

## Leveraging member data to deliver personalized campaigns

For organizations that do any type of fundraising, personalization is the name of the game in 2023.

With the help of a robust AMS at their side, associations and nonprofits can gather and segment member data by demographics, preferences, job titles, and what pieces of content they interact with (blogs they read, events they attend, emails they open, etc.), just to name a few things.

This depth of data allows staff to build fundraising campaigns for the people that are most likely to give based on past activity, preferences, etc. These personalized giving

campaigns can be delivered via email, social media, events or whatever channel your membership prefers.

Once you've identified a segment of your membership that may be more willing to give to a seasonal campaign, like a holiday or GivingTuesday campaign, or you notice a segment that's more likely to directly contribute to a recipient, maybe through a scholarship fund, **you can send your messages with the right copy that delivers an opportunity to give that will be meaningful to them.**





## Mobile giving

While there has been a steady interest in mobile giving over the last few years, it saw a marked increase during the pandemic. Of course, many point to this rise in mobile giving as a result of only being able to connect and give remotely.

Still, the research indicates that mobile giving is here to stay. Whether it means ensuring that your website is mobile-friendly and/or implementing an event or app that makes mobile giving easy and safe, the organizations that go mobile will thrive in 2023.



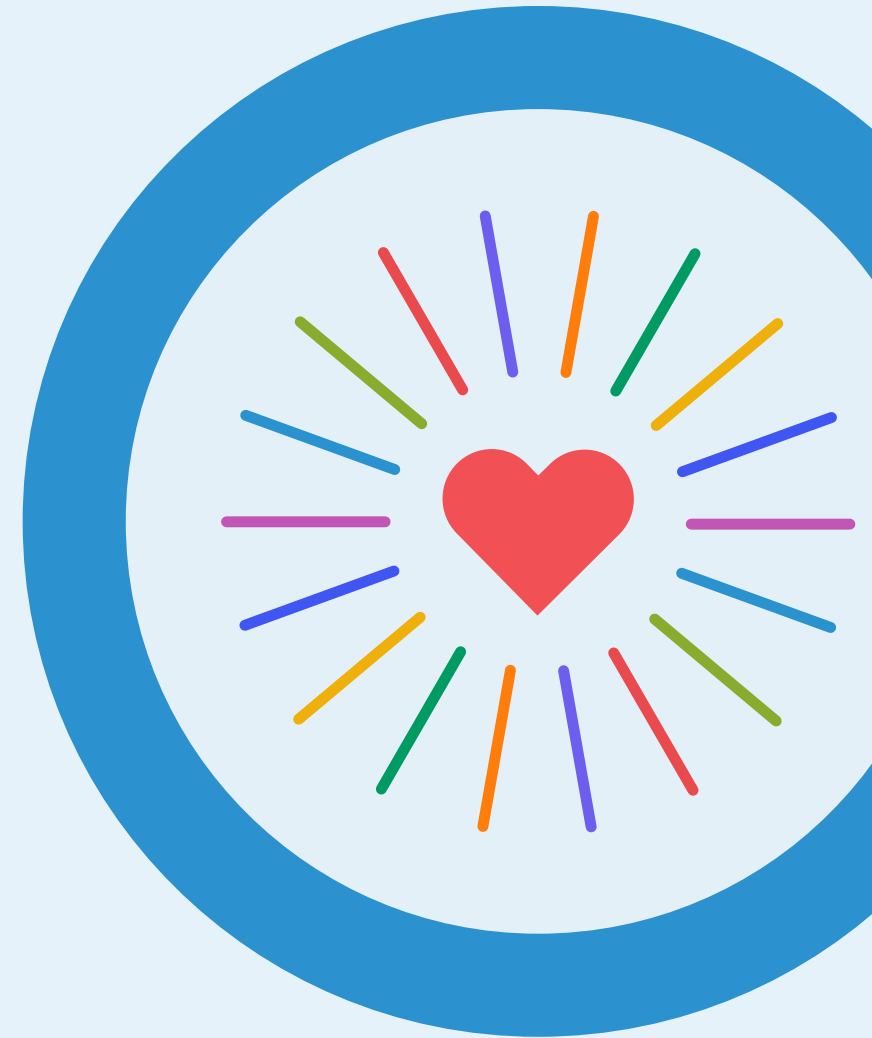
[Source: Donorbox](#)

## Trend #3: Member-Empowering Technology

The Nonprofit Trends Report released by Salesforce.org reveals that 75% of nonprofits reported an increase in demand for programs. And it also revealed that 74% of nonprofits report that constituents' desire to participate in their organization's work has increased over the last five years.

This tells us that members want more benefits from their associations — but they also want to be active participants in your mission. This is music to our ears!

**2023 will be the year of technology that not only allows organizations to reach and engage with members in new ways, but will actually empower members to be active participants in the programs they're asking for.**



**75%** of nonprofits reported an increase in demand for programs. [Via Salesforce.org Nonprofit Trends Report](#)

## Community-building on members' terms

Over the last two years, we've seen that social distancing doesn't keep us from gathering together. Thanks to the magic of the internet, communities can thrive.

While online spaces have been around since the days of AOL chat rooms and online forums, many organizations turned to the built-in community features that social media platforms offered through features like Facebook Groups. These social media groups were especially appealing to smaller organizations.

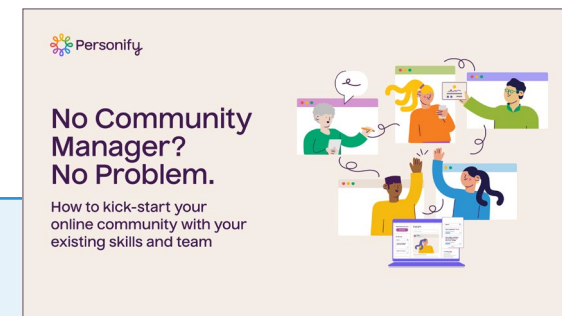
But things like data breaches and unexpected policy changes from social media companies have many associations turning to online community platforms that they can build themselves and provide exclusive access to their members.

**In 2023, it will be very important for members to feel protected and have ownership of the connections and the value that they receive from their associations,** and online community platforms are unique tools that can give that to members.

### WANT TO BUILD AN ONLINE COMMUNITY YOUR MEMBERS LOVE, BUT DON'T KNOW HOW TO MANAGE IT?

Read "No Community Manager? No Problem." to see how the [National Association of Nutrition Professionals](#) built a thriving online community without a Community Manager on staff.

[Read the E-book](#)

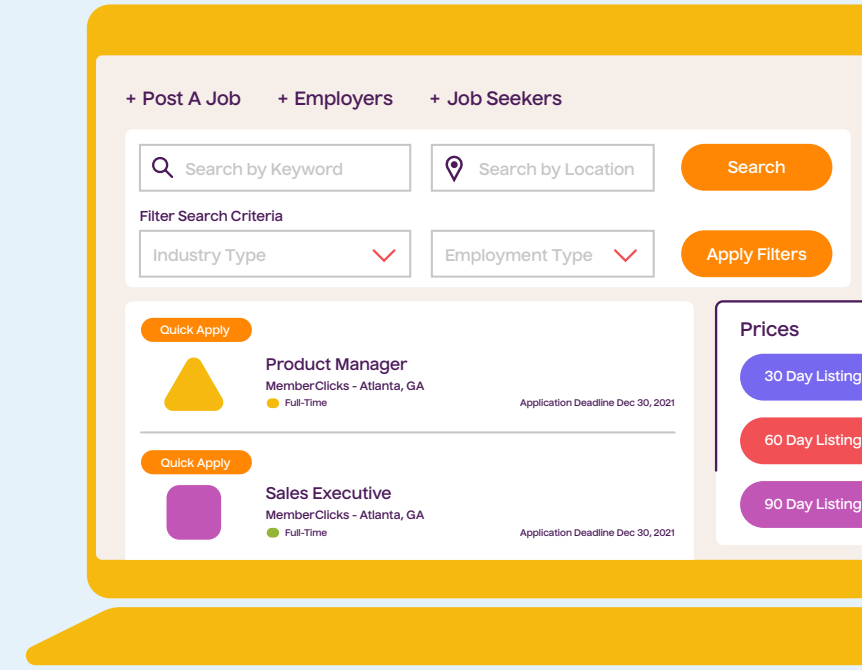


## Learning & career opportunities take center stage

People associate membership to nonprofits and similar organizations as mainly altruistic — people join member-based organizations because they want to further a mission that means something to them.

And that's very true! But people also join associations for opportunities to grow with a community of like-minded people they know and trust. Who better to learn from and work for than peers and mentors in an industry you care about?

Job boards and directories are an area of investment we see growing in 2023. That could look like investing time to build a strategy to store and promote jobs using existing tools. You could also add job board tech that makes it easy to recommend jobs to members based on profiles and allows members to pay for a featured job posting, which increases non-dues revenue.



# Trend #4: Prioritizing Data Security is Essential

As the digital world becomes more vulnerable to cyber-attacks and people are becoming more aware and protective of their data, 2023 will bring a reinvigorated effort by associations to ensure data is safe and accessible.

In addition to technology that enables better data security, [ASAE points to strategies like ongoing security training, multifactor authorization and antivirus software](#) and firewalls as additional efforts associations will turn to for a safer 2023.

The good news is that there are low- to no-cost steps associations can take to protect their organizations against cyber-attacks. In addition to tools like antivirus software, real safety will come when leaders create a culture of cybersecurity by talking about the importance of security in regular meetings, offering training, etc.

**Executives will lead the way in creating a culture of security by talking about security strategies and tools in meetings and encouraging and attending training themselves.**



**“The financial positions, the chief executive officer, those are the ones getting targeted for the hacks and phishing scams,” said Christina Lewellen, executive director of the Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools. “So it has to start at the top.”**

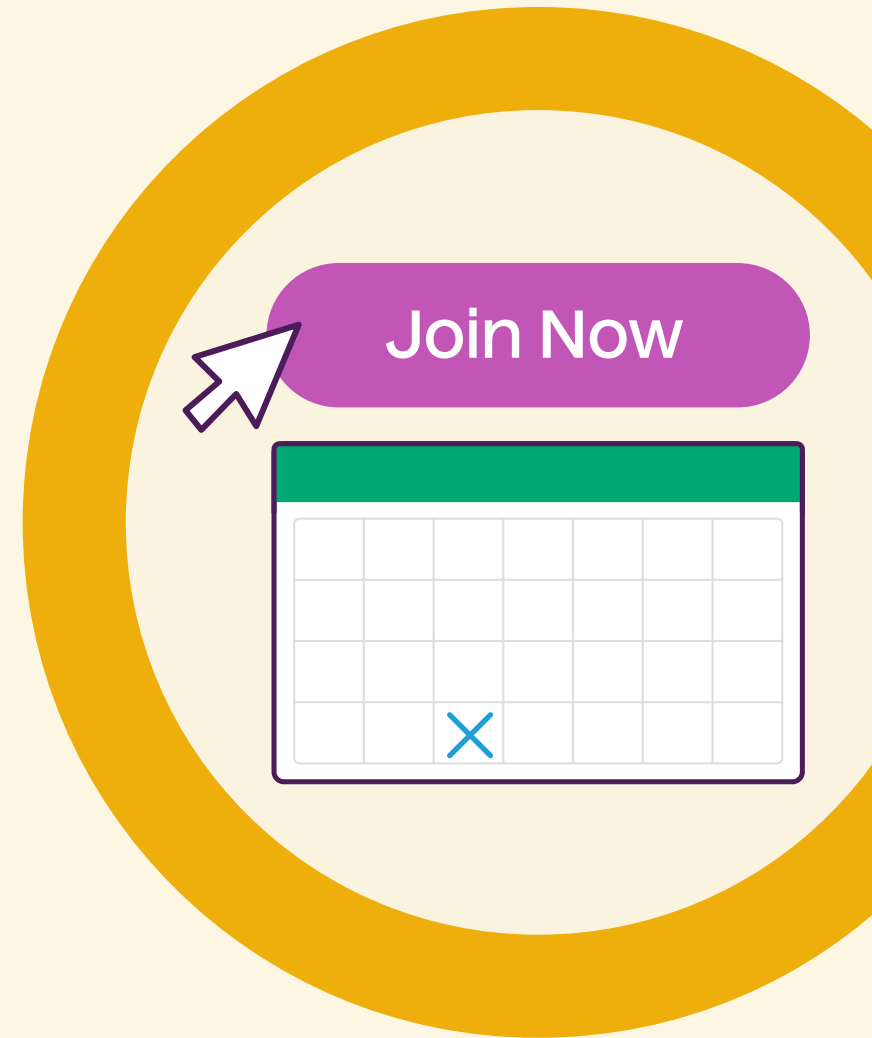
# Trend #5: Curated Events for the New VIPs

## Young professionals = The New VIPs

There has been a mutual interest growing between young members and associations for the past few years. Younger generations take pride in activism and advocacy, and their professional lives are filled with more remote work and more “job shopping” than previous generations of members.

These changes in work culture mean young professionals are turning to associations and events for sources of networking, learning and career opportunities in a way they never have before.

**2023 will be the year that event planners dedicate planning, tech and budget to listening to young attendees’ needs and wants and delivering on a few of their biggest requests.**



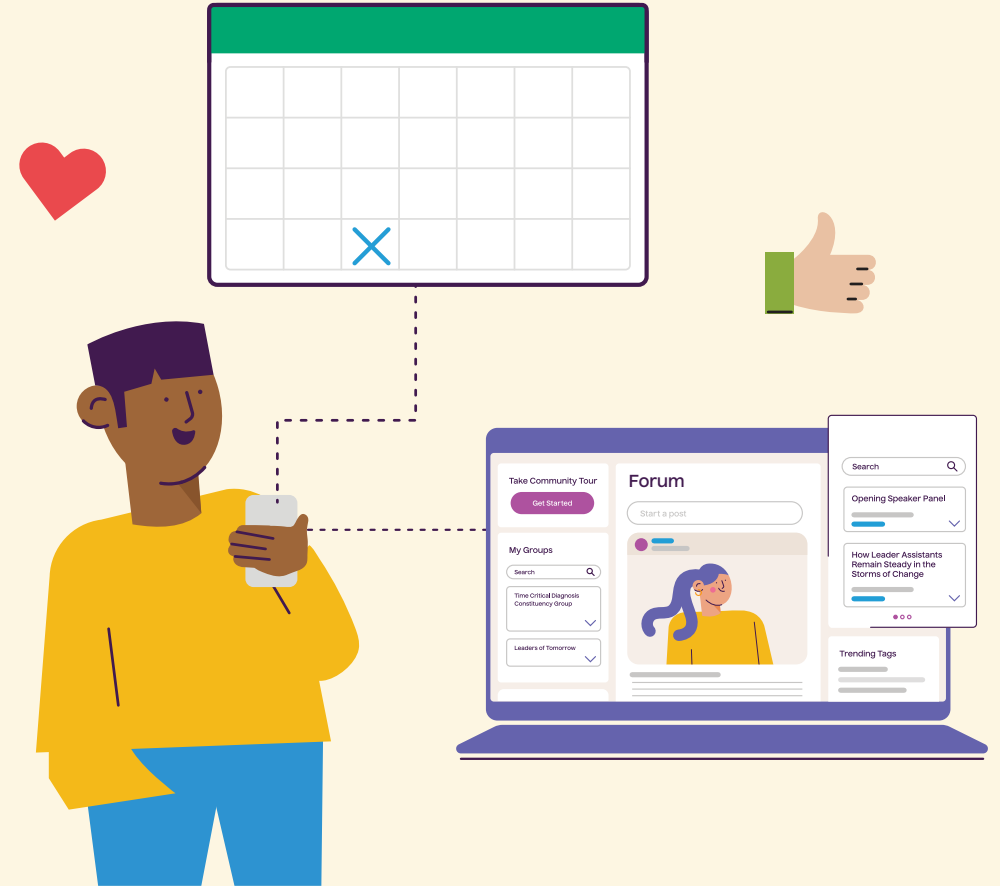
## Curated event experiences

The traditional trade show attendee likes to wander.

The younger attendee wants a curated experience. Thanks, Netflix.

They want to know which parts of the events are most relevant to them, personalized or curated agendas and the ability to engage with their events (before, during and after the big day) in digital formats, like through mobile sites or apps.

**Data will enable event planners to drive these curated in-person and digital experiences from matchmaking to other attendees and exhibitors to recommending educational content.**





## Trend #6: Investment in Tech Talent & Training

Since technology is becoming an essential building block to the success of our organizations, the need for skilled workers and continuous training opportunities for association staff will be a big priority across associations of all types and sizes.

While some organizations may prioritize hiring a web developer or a data specialist to join their staff full-time, others may budget for freelance or contract technical work.

And if hiring tech talent, whether on a full-time or contractual basis, isn't in the cards for some associations in 2023, we've talked to many who say they will ensure that their staff receives regular tech training.



## Data training takes center stage

This training could be developed by the organization and built into their LMS, as part of the services their tech partner offers or through a paid course from outside sources that the organization pays for.

### **The technical skills and learning that will be the most sought after by staff members and their associations will be related to data.**

No matter the database used, associations will continue to dive into data to better understand their members, which will mean team members will prioritize learning about how to access and use their data, together.

**“You don’t need to be a data scientist in order to learn how to make data-based decisions.”**

**Mike Cohen**

Udemy Data Science Instructor

### **According to Cohen, “Developing in-house data requires a two-pronged approach”:**

- 1** Provide ongoing training and continuous development in the latest data science advances, but also reinforce foundational skills like math and statistical analysis.
- 2** Develop data literacy in all employees so they understand what type of data they can access and where data might be flawed.

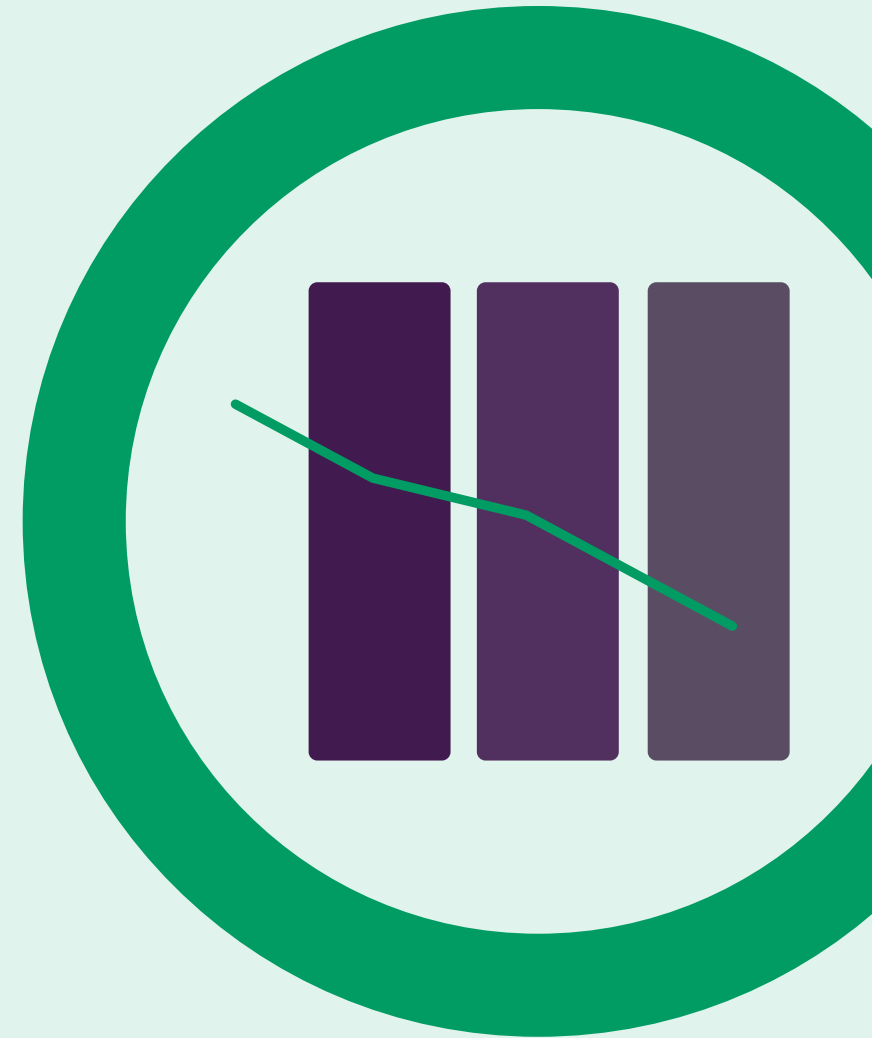
[Source: Udemy 2023 Workplace Learning Trends Report](#)

# Trend #7: Economic Concerns & Recession Prep

For the past several months, experts have debated if or when a recession will hit. You can find articles ranging from economists calling for extreme measures by organizations to prepare for the worst recession in decades, and you can find just as many economists writing articles assuring us that the word “recession” is way too strong, and we have nothing to fear.

**If these last couple of years has taught us anything, it’s that it’s better to be prepared.**

We believe it’s best to prepare for a [“reasonable chance of a recession”](#), but one with a “soft landing,” as some economists are predicting.



While labor has improved slightly, recession concerns or a recession mindset, inflation (8.4% this past quarter) and supply chain issues will impact your events and everyone involved with your event.

## Recession prep for your members

For your members, a recession could mean layoffs from their jobs. It could mean your members have to tighten their budgets and cut back on expenses. It could even mean your members may need assistance paying for bills, food, tuition or other necessities.

### HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TECH AND STRATEGIES CAN HELP MEMBERS THROUGH A RECESSION:

- 1** Create surveys to send to your members to see how your organization can be most helpful and post them on your website, social media profiles and in your online community.
- 2** Make it easy for members to donate to special campaigns or sign-up for help from your association by creating an easy-to-use form or including a “Donate Now” button on your website.
- 3** Offer support groups using discussion forums in your online communities where your members can connect over different types of support needed, post job opportunities or simply connect with others during difficult times.
- 4** Develop opportunities for members to gain new knowledge, certifications and even find a new job by creating learning opportunities or promoting certifications by trusted partners and circulating open roles by posting on a job board or creating a job listing newsletter.

# Get Started with Your Tech Planning for 2023

If you and your team have been researching any of these tech trends for the upcoming year, or you're starting to develop your tech implementation plan and strategies, we'd love to hear from you.

Reach out and let us know if you have any questions or thoughts about the tech trends for the new year and if Personify can help you reach your goals and engage your members through association management, member engagement and event management software.

We wish you a year of growth for your members and your mission.

**LET'S TALK**



**We build strong connections with our customers so they can build strong connections with their communities.**

**70K+ organization staff** use Personify solutions every day.

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**25% of the U.S. population** interacts with Personify through associations, events, and nonprofits.

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**20 years of industry leadership** make Personify the trusted choice for a technology partner.

# We're in the relationship- building business.

## ABOUT PERSONIFY

Looking for a committed, understanding partner to help you grow? Let us mix, match, and mold our Community Experience solutions to meet your emerging needs and help you create better relationships with your community. We love to listen, and there's nothing we find more gratifying than deepening the connections that drive your success. For more information, visit [www.personifycorp.com](http://www.personifycorp.com).

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