IABC Meeting Notes:

- Basic types of members with IABC involves all of the below and they are trying to speak to the needs of all of them:
    - 'The Specialist': comms specialists focus on a narrow piece of the pie (eg. Media relations specialist that purely deal with reporters for eg, or an internal comms specialist that just writes newsletters for employees, or an investor relations specialist). Typically comms people from large organizations fit this category.
    - 'The Generalist': in smaller org's you'll find one comm's team member who is more a generalist doing a little bit of everything and usually even doing more than what is in the typical comm's scope.
    - 'The Leadership': the executive level comm's people, usually doing the strategic advisory and sometimes even integrated the senior leadership table.
- Who is IABC, What do they do?
    - What they strive to do: They are a membership association to promote the profession as a profession, and to provide members opportunity to grow through best practices, continued learning, they offer cyclic annual based accreditation (fairly new) that needs to be maintained. Offer opp's to learn, to grow and to connect. International chapter offers networking opp's with people in the industry internationally.
    - As the Regina chapter: they strive to provide the above stated opp's for their membership within southern Sask. Mostly comprised of professionals working within Regina but there are some located outside like in Moose Jaw, Yorkton etc. Look for ways to learn from each other. Professional development conferences through sharing stories amongst each other or even gathering multiple involved parties to discuss crisis management (eg humble broncos crisis).
    - They have members in various stages of their career: **student memberships, new to industry members** who look to network to develop and advance their careers & prof development, **mid-level career profs** who look for the same as previous members but also some more leadership skill growth opp's, and more **senior level members** who look to give back (be mentors to new members, provide professional development opp's through presentations and sharing their own experiences).
    - Two levels of accreditation: one for entry-mid level members, and the other more geared towards senior level members.
    - IABC has a competitor org: Canadian Public Relations Association. They focus on public relations component of comm's and therefore have a narrower scope within the profession. They aren't as big as IABC in Canada. Usually members are part of one or the other org. So IABC tries to market themselves by showing the breadth they cover within the discipline.
    - Do they want accreditation info on the website? Absolutely yes. Worth noting the **IABC Regina does not actually manage the accreditation** - that is done by International Org.. Point of confusion for people is when to go to which site IABC/International - who offers what. 'iabc.com' is a very robust site.
    - Tim asked how they would want their site to differ from International's? A: they want to know what info people are looking for that exists on iabc.com and point them in that direction to avoid duplication fo information, and they have IABC regina-specific things that they want to share.
    - IABC regina-specific site aspects, all reasons why people hold a membership with their org (regina-IABC):
        - 1. Careers page (significant source of revenue, orgs can ad on their career page, they know job seekers go there). With regards to accepting payments they would like a

better system for doing so related to this section. Current systems is needs improvement. Seems to be an online submission form for a posting, but then related payments are disconnected from the site complicating the process.

- ‣ 2. Unique events content. Lunch and learns, after work gatherings, virtual events (new opportunity since they haven't done this much in the past, and the plus side it helps widen reach further into southern Sask).
- ‣ 3. Future want: to have a section that allows people to register (sign up) and pay for events, which is not a current feature they have. Though they have security concerns associated with accepting online payment. They have used eventbright in the past for signing up and paying for events.

- ○ Board members are very busy outside of IABC as it is. They want systems that allow more streamlined and efficient processing of required activities to allow board members to spend time on areas returning the highest value.
- ○ One important consideration is that IABC members turn over frequently so having an interface that allows new members to complete tasks simply and easily without much assistance is important. Also these members typically don't have much technical knowledge, yet still need to be able to create new job postings and/or event listings. Typical expectation for comm's people is a low-mid level of understanding with respect to the technicalities of websites. Comm's people are very familiar with Word processor for example so a content management system that mimicked the layout and functionality of a word processor would be familiar and easy to use for a comm's person.
- ○ Tim advises: we will be exploring WordPress which is already a content management system in and of itself but to configure it to get it into a useable state is really what we will focus on. Many plugins to enhance core fxnality, so it'll be our job to explore these things.
- ○ Configuration and customization are both things they'd be looking to us to make work for them without much effort so that they can focus on just creating/manipulating content.
- ○ They'd like different ways to engage with their membership. Mentioned they don't have a blog but something along those lines to bring back some engagement to their website. Maybe we could consider some feedback communication channels (two-way communication cycle). Traditionally they talk at people and have a passive single sided communication path.

- **The site as it is now:**
    - ○ What they like:
        - ‣ Top Nav bar has some of the right topics in terms of what users would be looking for. But the question comes up of what is the best way to organize that content (for eg. By the entry level, mid level, and senior level career professionals or other ways which better cater to the needs of users?)
    - ○ What they don't like:
        - ‣ Main page feels a bit messy, tricky to find what you're looking for. Too cluttered. Too much duplication.
        - ‣ Maybe too many layers of navigation (ie top bar, left side menu is unnecessary).
        - ‣ Site doesn't seem to display well on mobile.
    - ○ Comments:
        - ‣ Careers is big section for them. Want a way to make that process simpler. Current operation: IABC either gets posting info through filled out form or in an email. Then they have to manually enter all that info in a new posting (through Adobe catalyst).
        - ‣ Priority to make a simple navigation that's easy for members to find what they're looking for
        - ‣ Make site look visually appealing yet keeping it simple.

- Keeping back end configuration as simple as possible is wanted so that it keeps things easy for new members operating the processes on the website.
- They want people looking for any info already on IABC to be directed that way instead of duplicating info. Maybe a good question here is what are the most looked for things they know of that are usually found on iabc.com instead?
- Everything on the current site is fair game to try something different.
- Saskatoon chapter's site stood out to them as being simple and clean look. Refer to this as an example.
- They'd like to be able to have the ability to track user behaviour to try determine what their audience is engaging in most - Tim mentioned to keep WordPress JetPack in mind.
- Huge consideration is to design for mobile as well.
- IABC Regina is one of the largest chapters within the organization. Partly due to Regina being a public service city with government located here. And government org's typically have lots of communications personnel. They are just over 150 members.
- Accreditation is important because they want people accredited so that they 1. Have to keep paying annual dues to make use of their accreditation, and 2. Remain engaged within the org.
○ Class Questions:
  - Have they gotten any feedback from users/members specifically? A: No. With regards to user surveys it was mentioned that comm's people can suffer from survey fatigue but they would still be interested in methods of gathering user information that is not intrusive and is actually helpful.
  - Budget allocations/ Restrictions? Especially when looking at online payment solutions. A: they are looking for very economical solutions. Their budget is in the realm of four figures, not even into 5 (so around $10,000.Tim mentions if we are going to discuss paid plugins that's fine but justify them and also mention alternate options along with those pros/cons.
  - What % of people visiting site are newcomers looking to join vs existing members? A: hard to track but from Jenn's perspective, site traffic is mostly from existing members and from job posters.