

Why Your People Can Use a “Year in Review”

Associations Now | Mark Athitakis | December 19, 2025



Spotify’s popular year-end Wrapped has lessons for associations—track data, celebrate wins, give people reasons to stay engaged.

’Tis the season for wrapping it up.

This December has been crowded with apps and online services delivering year-in-review presentations about how we engaged with them. The music streaming service Spotify has been delivering its Spotify Wrapped summaries for years now, but this year other apps like YouTube and LinkedIn have recently gotten into the game—to the point where the “wrapped” concept is now the stuff of Saturday Night Live skits.

But even if these tools tell you more about your Celine Dion habit than you’re comfortable publicly admitting to, it’s not hard to see why they hold so much appeal. Year-in-review presentations are catnip for users: According to a Business Insider report, one in three Spotify users checked out their Wrapped last year, not bad for something that’s really just engagement data. It’s so popular now that developing Wrapped is a year-long, intense process: “What once took a handful now takes hundreds, from designers to engineers to data scientists.”

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And though associations don’t generally have access to dozens of data scientists, the idea is still easily transferable to your staff, members, and stakeholders. Indeed, charitable nonprofits have

been doing something like this for decades in their annual reports, which outline how contributed dollars help serve X many people. Associations can do much the same, whether it's letting them know how they engaged on message boards, attended events, maintained credentials, followed up on an advocacy call to action, and more.

Wrapped works not just because we love to measure everything about ourselves, but also because it's a reminder of what we're being offered. (Perhaps your association's Wrapped should be timed to renewal dates?) And it's not a bad reminder for your staff and others who engage with your organization about the value of what they do—attendees, people credentialed, members served in how many states/countries and more.

And even if you're not interested in a numbers-based wrap-up, there's value in conducting a year-end check-in with your teams. Writing at the Harvard Business Review, author and executive coach Frans van Loef recommends a "team wrap-up week" to assess where people review what is and isn't working. "Think of it as a Formula 1 pitstop," he writes. "Cars don't win by running nonstop; they win because pitstops keep them competitive. A Wrap-Up Week is the organizational pitstop that prevents burnout, creates closure, and sets the stage for a fresh start."

These aren't big strategic retreats. Rather, they're opportunities for organizational housecleaning: Discussion of tasks that people want to get off their plates, conversations that everyone has kicked down the road too often, standing meetings that have stood around for too long.

The trick with these kinds of year-end wrap-ups, whether done via app or meeting, is that the mood should be generally light and positive: They're meant to make your people feel energized after a difficult year and encourage them to feel refreshed for 2026. "By closing loops now and deferring new ones, you generate the mental space, sense of accomplishment, and collective energy that make a true year-end wrap-up meaningful," van Loef writes. Stress, in organizations, comes naturally. Alleviating it is a leader's work.