

History of the IAA

1930's & 40's

In 1938, Thomas Ashwell, publisher of the Export Trade & Shipper magazine in New York, had a vision. Long aware of the need for an organization to coordinate and foster the practice of international advertising, Ashwell assembled twelve other export advertising executives for a luncheon meeting on 8 April 1938 at the Harvard Club in New York. Out of that occasion, the International Advertising Association was born.

The first public gathering, which attracted over 130 men and women from the export advertising business, was held that May. The first President, Shirley Woodell, described the new association as "an organization for the interchange of ideas and experiences, in order to promote the efficiency and scope of its members in the practice of their profession of foreign advertising". And he proposed its tripartite structure composed of advertisers, advertising agencies and the media and their representatives.

When the elected Directors applied to register as a not-for-profit corporation, they discovered their chosen name, the International Advertising Association, was already assigned. So they incorporated themselves as the Export Advertising Association on 3 October 1938, and by the end of the year had 67 members.

The organization held its first International Advertising Convention in October 1949 in New York City with the theme "Greater Foreign Trade Through International Advertising". Now some 300 members strong, it moved confidently into the new decade.

1950's

During the 1950's, great strides were made towards internationalization. In 1953, approximately one fifth of the 500 members were located outside the USA. The new broadening horizons hastened the discussion of a change of name to the International Advertising Association when that name became available, which it did on in October 1953. The change was officially made on 15 December of that year.

1955 marked an important year for the IAA. After the name change, the Board decided to give the IAA truly worldwide significance by introducing Regional Vice-Presidents and creating an IAA European Committee, and the first IAA conference to be held outside the USA took place in Zürich, Switzerland the same year. A second IAA European Conference was held in The Hague in 1957, and the IAA initiated important efforts to promote advertising self-regulation.

In the late 1950's, international advertising underwent many changes: a tightening of economic conditions, a recession in the U.S., and the evolution of the European Common Market all affected long-established marketing operations. The IAA also changed with the times. It modified its constitution and By-laws in 1959, by providing for the establishment of local Chapters and an increase in worldwide representation on the Board. By the time it celebrated

its 20th anniversary in 1958, it had 1,160 members, of which over 600 came from outside the U.S., representing a total of 58 countries. The first Chapters were formed and a European Council organized.

1960's

The IAA achieved many "firsts" in the 1960's. The first IAA Latin American Conference was held in Caracas, Venezuela in 1960. Young professional groups (now called Associates) within Chapters were proposed for membership, with the first organized in Venezuela in 1964. In 1963, the IAA World Congress and the IAA European Conference were combined for the first World Congress outside of the U.S. held in Stockholm. In 1966, Mexico became the first Latin American country to host the IAA World Congress and in 1969 Tokyo, Japan was the first in Asia. In 1964, Dr. Rudolf Farner of Switzerland was elected as the first non-U.S. IAA World President.

Perhaps the most crucial trend affecting the IAA's work at that time was the emergence of consumerism as a major force in the mid-1960's, with advertising soon becoming one of its prime targets. In the past, the IAA's main role had been that of teacher, observer and reporter. Now consumerism was seen as a vital challenge to the industry and the By-laws were redefined to set the IAA on a new path for its journey to the forefront of the defense of advertising internationally. At the end of the 1960's, IAA membership was up to over 2,100, with 15 Chapters.

1970's

With the approval of the new By-laws in 1971, providing for a more active role for the IAA, the Association began its search for greater resources. Corporate support of major projects and services became an important and necessary reality. In 1972, the Sustaining (later termed "Corporate") and Organizational Members program began and grew successfully thereafter.

An extensive publications program was initiated with studies covering different restrictions, problems and prospects in the worldwide marketing communications community. Regular summaries were circulated of such topical items as government legislation, developments in self-regulation, consumer trends, public service advertising activities and significant media changes. In pursuit of its objectives "to establish a common platform in building and sustaining the prestige of the advertising profession" and "to serve as spokesman against unwarranted attack or restrictions on advertising", the IAA formed a Public Action Committee, which met for the first time at the 1980 IAA World Congress in Durban, South Africa. This Committee assumed responsibility for monitoring the international advertising climate with regard to government regulation, legislation and consumerist actions. In this, the IAA worked closely with other organizations such as the European Economic Community, the European Advertising Tripartite (EAT) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

As the decade drew to a close, the IAA launched one of its most important efforts to date – its public service advertising program and in 1979, in cooperation with the U.S. Advertising Council, the IAA staged the first ever World Public Service Advertising Symposium in Brussels.

1980's

The 1980's presented the IAA with new and greater challenges – included among them mergers and restructurings on both the agency and advertiser sides, new advertising restrictions and bans, threats of taxes on advertising, developments in satellite broadcasting and so on. It was also early in this decade that the IAA Education Program was formed, announced at the 1980 IAA World Congress in Durban. As introduced, it developed requirements leading to two levels of IAA Certificates and an IAA Diploma in International Advertising, aimed at providing a much needed educational standard for the marketing communications business on a worldwide scale. Communications and joint activities between the Worldwide Service Center and the Chapters advanced considerably at this time, with Chapters being encouraged to develop a wide range of programs and activities for their members. The Public Action Committee was reorganized after the 1986 IAA World Congress in Chicago, with Chapter involvement becoming of paramount importance. Chapter lobbying efforts, directly and in cooperation with a host of other national, regional and international organizations increased markedly on such issues as taxation and product advertising and gained the support of many more Organizational Members.

And just as Chapters heeded the IAA's call to action, so too did its Corporate and Organizational Members, whose activities and participation grew steadily throughout the 1980's. By the end of the decade, approximately 40 Corporate and 10 Organizational Members had pledged their support of the IAA. And the creation of two Corporate Member Commissions – one on Media and one on Products and Services – enabled concentrated study of the problems and prospects in these areas and the release of important White Papers and Reports.

1987 marked the introduction of the IAA's new corporate identity and logo – underlining the Association's continuing commitment to build and strengthen its services and its membership.

The Association closed out the 1980's on an auspicious note under the leadership of World Presidents Alexander Brody (1986-88) and Clay Timon (1988-90). Brody was particularly successful in his strategy to attract highly placed marketing communications professionals to join the IAA Board and contribute strategic vision to the Association's forward development and activities.

Under the Timon Presidency, this strengthening of the volunteer leadership was furthered by the decision to add a new, higher level of professional management in the center at the Worldwide Service Center, with the coalition of a new post of Director-General (Norman Vale) with the Executive Director (Richard Corner).

1990's

As the 1990's dawned, IAA membership stood at 2,800 in 78 countries, with 39 Chapters, 93 Corporate members and 35 Organizational Members. For the Association, this decade was marked by a number of significant advances. One of these was its continuing international growth and influence, mirrored in the geographical origins of its World Presidents; Roger Neill (1990-92), a former Chapter President both in Australia and the UK; Mustapha Assad (1992-94), the first from the Middle East; Luis Carlos Mendiola Codina (1994-96), the second from Latin America; and Senyon Kim (1996-98), the first from Asia/Pacific.

This was a time of substantial growth in the Association's membership and in the focus and effectiveness of its programs. At the end of the nineties, membership, including the young

professionals or Associates, totaled 4,600 in 93 countries, with 61 Chapters, 98 Corporate Members and 64 Organizational Members. Membership had also continued to spread internationally, standing by area as 40% in Europe, 21 % Asia/Pacific, 18% Middle East/Africa, 11% Latin America & the Caribbean and 10% US/Canada.

At the beginning of the decade, the Board approved a concentration of the Mission into five main priorities: explaining the value of advertising; advocating freedom of commercial speech & of consumer choice; promoting advertising self-regulation; achieving state-of-art in professional development programs for the marketing communications professionals of tomorrow; and providing forums for discussion of emerging professional issues.

The period began with Roger Neill making the following pledge, when he assumed the World Presidency at the June 1990 World Congress in Hamburg;

“We, the IAA, plan to take the high ground in creating a total communications campaign for advertising, with the aim of raising awareness that advertising is a dynamic force behind all healthy economies. We want to turn around the misconceptions that advertising is ‘bad’ and instead promote to Consumers all over the world the reasons why advertising is ‘good’.”

This challenge was finally met in 1992, with the launch of the IAA Campaign for Advertising, directed and created by Norman Vale, Director-General and Barry Day as IAA’s Worldwide Creative Director.

Over the years, this “Right to Choose Campaign” as it came to be popularly called, built up an armory of 37 TV spots and 17 print advertisements. It attracted over \$ 650 million in pro-bono media time and space and millions in in-kind contributions and financial grants to cover production and distribution costs. From a series of early tracking studies, the campaign was soon judged “extremely effective” in carrying out its communications objectives.

A second major step to achieve the mission objective of explaining the value of advertising was taken in 1994 with the first IAA-commissioned study of the economic contribution of advertising to a country’s economy. Referred to as Economic Impact Studies, these were undertaken and presented to government, bureaucrats, the media and the marketing communications business in 15 countries.

With freedom of commercial speech and consumer choice increasingly under threat, the IAA recognized early in this decade the need in its advocacy to develop a bank of bedrock intellectual and sociological arguments to back-up the economic ones. This was done by the staging of a series of International Symposia under the theme *Advertising & the Media in an Open Society*. Outside experts, philosophers, sociologists, eminent journalists and editors were invited on to the “common-ground” provided by the IAA’s global tripartite constituency. There they spoke out on the issues from the stand-point of their own disciplines.

Starting in 1991, these events were held in a range of venues in Central, Eastern Europe and Western Europe, Latin America, the United States and Asia/Pacific. In the Middle East, one was held in January 1996 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, under the theme *Advertising & the Media in Free Economy Countries*. Sponsored by the Minister of Trade, it was staged in association with the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce & Industry and its National Advertising Committee.

Major support was given to advertising self-regulation in national markets and regionally to bodies such as the Brussels-based European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) and to SILEC, the Venezuela-based body for Latin America.

During this period, the IAA's Professional Development program was reorganized. It is now headed by a leading Professor, the syllabus has been updated and broadened, and the number of IAA Accredited Institutes has grown dramatically and includes an increasing number at the university level. A new hands-on international student advertising competition, InterAd, was introduced.

In the area of industry forums, the number of IAA conferences and events put on by Chapters regionally and by country continued to grow.

The IAA's Organizational Membership almost doubled. This is a mark of the IAA's policy of cooperating and working together with sister associations on matters of common interest.

A heightened level of effective, results-oriented actions, focused on a tight series of agreed mission priorities, was one of the distinguishing features of the Association's work during the nineties. This would simply not have been possible without the support of the Corporate Members. This support stems from their recognition of the fundamental relevance of the IAA's mission priorities to the future of their own business and of the marketing business as a whole and the need for adequate strategic input and resources to make it all happen.

Another feature of the nineties was the growth of Associate membership - the young professionals under the age of 35. From only a few, they grew to over 1,000 members in some 20 Chapters, with their own Newsletter and an international communications program.

There was also the dynamic contribution of the Chapters - almost doubling in number to over 60 during this decade, with individual membership increasing by almost 30%.

Grouped in the five IAA areas, some of the volunteer Vice-President/Area Director introduced the appointment of Sub-Areas Directors to ensure better contact and coordination within the larger whole, and regional meetings and gatherings of Chapter Presidents were scheduled regularly. Furthermore, the IAA's Board was also been increased from 60 to 73 Directors to ensure greater representation of the growing international spread of membership.

In the field of electronics, the IAA is kept abreast of the rapid advances in communications and informational technology, with state-of-art equipment at the Worldwide Service Center and a website (www.iaaglobal.org) which attracted an ever increasing number of visitors.

The IAA celebrated its 60th Anniversary in 1998 with the launch of its Give a Kid a Hand Campaign. Launched on the final day of the 36th IAA World Advertising Congress in Cairo and introduced by Madame Suzanne Murbarak as Chair of the Advisory Committee, this capitalized on the IAA's proven success in accomplishing global communications with its Campaign for Advertising. Give a Kid a Hand has attracted thousands of volunteers in dozens of countries, all willing to give their time to better the lives of children. Through an extensive online network of existing community agencies, the IAA referred volunteers to opportunities at hospitals, schools and recreation centers.

The nineties ended with major changes introduced to the elections process and management structure of the Association. Led by then World President Joe Cappo and a Managing Change group of World Board Directors, a series of changes were worked out through discussions at the November 1999 Executive Committee Meeting in Pattaya, followed by original survey work and a February 1999 Special World Board Meeting in London.

As a result, a special meeting of the World Council was convened in New York in May 1999, at which all members, present in person or by proxy, were asked to vote on a list of changes. This they did by near unanimity.

Major changes were made to the Board & Executive Committee and it was agreed that the total strength of the Board should be determined by its composition as follows:

- Chapter Representatives elected by each Chapter with 20 or more members.
- 26 Corporate Members, elected by the Corporate Members.
- 5 Officers: World President, Senior Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, elected by the out-going Board. Vice-President/Corporate Members chosen by the Corporate Member Board Directors.
- Vice-President/Area Directors selected by their Areas.
- Two Directors-at-Large elected by the in-coming Board. 3 Ex-officio members: the Immediate-Past World President, the Director General and the Executive Director.

This new formula increased the total strength of the Board from 70 to 90 seats.

In addition, it was agreed to dissolve the former World Council. Its responsibilities delegated to and vested in the new World Board.

The new General Assembly is to meet at least every two years and its “all-inclusive” membership includes each Chapter President or designee, a representative from each non-Chapter country, Corporate Member Representatives, Organizational Member Representatives, Accredited Institute Representatives and Associates Chapter Presidents or designees. Senior Chapters qualify for one further representative if they have 100+ members and another one if they are 150+.

2000's

The beginning of the new century brought substantial change to the by-laws that govern IAA board composition and association representation.

At their meeting held on May 5 2000 in NYC the World Council agreed on the proposal to re-align board representation and create a new General Assembly of the association (since dissolved in 2004).

In addition, the new board structure included direct representation of corporate members and Chapters. IAA elections, previously held to fill board seats, are now responsible for the election of Senior Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The first elections under the new system took place during the 2000 World Congress, held in London.

The IAA sustainable development program began in early 2005, in cooperation with ACT Responsible. As part of the program an annual competition is held where teams are challenged to develop an ad campaign on social/environmental issues. The winners of the competition are featured during IAA World Congresses as well as additional worldwide venues.

New newsletters were created to keep in touch electronically with members: EU News, Intelligence, EU NewsFlash, EU Insight and Network News. A new, uniform look was created with a common and recognizable letterhead. In 2003 and annually thereafter the Membership Directory was again produced in printed form.

Also in 2003 a new regional plan was developed to give each of the five world areas added strength to develop activities and network.

World Congresses took place in Beirut (2002), Beijing (2004) and Dubai (2006).

The IAA logo and visual identity system was re-designed in 2007 and Chapters were provided with new corporate identity toolkits. The visual logo and tag-line (“Inspiring excellence in communications worldwide”) were copyrighted and Chapters were asked to sign a trademark agreement that provided uniformity to the IAA brand worldwide.

The 2008 World Congress, the first congress administered solely by the World Service Center, took place in Washington D.C. and was the basis for the development of a new system of cooperation between the WSC and local chapters in administrating future congresses.

The 2010 Congress, held in Moscow and attended by over 1,200 delegates from both Russia and overseas, was successfully governed by this new co-op agreement.

In 2009 the “Hopenhagen” campaign was created by the IAA, representing the global advertising industry’s support of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15). A website “www.Hopenhagen.org” was created, where 6,172,820 citizens from around the world added their messages of hope. The Hopenhagen campaign was a great success with 197.9MM in reported media value and 50+ countries reached.

Also during 2009, the Digital Download Forum Series was created - an invitation-only state-of-the-industry traveling seminar where key industry experts were asked to share their views and expertise on what the real issues are behind the headlines in the digital/online industry. Forums were held throughout the year in Paris, Madrid, Mumbai, Sydney and Singapore. A second series is due to begin in late 2010.

The IAA Education Program was re-aligned in 2008, with a new accreditation format developed. It is the course, not the university, college or tertiary institution that is now accredited. Each accredited course is individually assessed and scored through a rigorous, benchmarked IAA Education Council process, ensuring an internationally recognized quality of formal content and teaching required by the global communications industry for its students and future young professionals.

The IAA-Dentsu Global Student Poster Competition was created in 2008, which builds on the ‘responsibility’ thread of the IAA mission. The competition, which asks undergraduate students to create a poster based on an environmental-impact theme, is in support of the United Nations action of climate change and made possible by a grant from Dentsu Inc.

The InterAd competition was re-launched in 2010 with the client-sponsor Canon providing the funding.

2010: The 2010 Congress, held in Moscow and attended by over 1,200 delegates from both Russia and overseas, was successfully governed by this new co-op agreement. Held at the historic Moscow Kremlin, it ends up as one of the largest ad industry gatherings of the year

The IAA celebrates its 75th Anniversary in 2013 with a Global Leadership Forum in London, 'What's Coming Next?' featuring the global road map of industry trends, issues and opinions. Industry forecasts, consumer engagement, the outlook for ongoing media disruption, winning creativity etc. form the main topics of discussion. IAA 'Champion' awards gets initiated and is presented to key members from previous decades who had contributed their vision, leadership and services to the advancement of the IAA locally and globally

In 2014 Beijing hosts IAA's 41st World Congress with the Gala opening event being held at the historic Great Hall of the People in the presence of China's leading dignitaries. Over 1,400 delegates from 45 countries attend the event to hear world leaders and experts provide intelligence on industry issues, developments and future directions.

In 2015 the IAA Inspire Awards is conceptualized to celebrate 'Champions' and 'Young Leaders' who accomplished leadership excellence and contributed their vision, ideas, and services to advance the IAA and enhance the marketing communications industry locally, regionally and globally

Also that year, the IAA conducts the Africa Rising conference; the first of its kind to bring together the advertising and marketing communications practitioners working in or doing business with Africa. Speakers from Unilever, Diageo, Coca Cola, SAB Miller, Bata, Zenith Optimedia, Starcom Mediavest, Google, Bharti Airtel, Omnicom Group, P+G, Reckitt Benckiser, Stanbic Bank, MTN, the United Nations grace the occasion and make the event a grand success

In 2018 the association celebrates its 80th Anniversary by launching a new logo and a new value proposition as 'The global compass of marketing communications' rededicating itself to serve the brand marketing industry. The event also inaugurates the IAA Golden Compass Awards which hailed visionary leaders for guiding their organizations through today's era of disruption and inspiring the industry at large by their achievements of global impact.