



# GBA Membership Survey Results

**Big Picture Summary**

Using results from Marketing General Incorporated  
August 2013

# Why?

- Attitudes and perceptions toward new name
- Understanding GBA's Image
- Understand value of membership, and the drivers of association membership
- How can GBA “do better” in meeting membership goals?

# Overview

- Completed in August 2013 by MGI
- 4839 requests to complete survey sent out
- 555 responses (12%)
  - 510 complete
  - 45 partial
- Response breakdown
  - 503 current members
  - 25 former
  - 27 prospective

# Demographics

- 86% male
- 60% over 45; 16% under 35
- 90% bachelors degrees, 56% masters degree
- 61% hold a P.E. or P.G. license
- 85% have some form of ownership in their company (including ESOPs (32%))
- 73% consider their firm to be regional or state/locally focused

# Who?

- 57% in geo-profession more than 20 years
- 17% less than 10 years
- 76% reported to have PM responsibilities
- 90% of firms geotech. services
  - 72% environmental
  - 63% CMT&I
  - 37% civil
- Equal representation based on these slots
  - Less than \$10M
  - \$10M to \$25m
  - Greater than \$25M

# Experience with GBA

- 31% reported being responsible deciding which associations to join
- 26% are primary contact with GBA
- 67% indicated that GBA is well known in their firm
- Large majority of people learn about GBA from others in their firm and in the industry, not advertising, emails, articles, etc.
- Primary reason for joining GBA:
  - 45% risk management
  - 36% improve business practices
  - 29% unsure

# Why Stay? Why leave?

- Reasons for staying
  - Materials and resources
  - Educational opportunities
  - Elevate practice levels
  - Open sharing and networking
- Reasons for leaving
  - Don't know; not involved in the decision
  - Reduce company expenses
  - Get information and materials elsewhere
- 77% of **former** members want to renew
- 80% of **current** members think value exceeds cost
- 97% of **current** members believe membership is valuable to them and their company

# Perceptions of GBA

- 28% heard of name change thru the survey
- 57% think name change is positive
- 22% think name change is negative
- More than 80% think it is representative of what we do, is inclusive, and appropriate
- 70% think it is better than ASFE and that it is understandable to those outside the profession



# Main Focus of GBA

- 95% agree with the central tenets
  - Maximize importance and value in the marketplace
  - Achieve business excellence
  - Optimize performance
  - Confront and manage risk
- What do you think of when you hear GBA?
  - Business
  - Beneficial for growth
  - Geotechnical engineering
  - Advocacy
  - Sharing and networking
- What is the current image of ASFE/GBA?
  - Geotechnical
  - Educational
  - Bachner
  - Beneficial for business and professional growth

# In the future . . .

- GBA should focus on:
  - Business growth
  - Professional growth
  - Education
  - Networking and sharing
- GBA should avoid being viewed as conservative and exclusive

# Other Associations

- Member firms tend to belong to
  - ASCE
  - ASCE Geotechnical Institute
  - ACEC
- Regardless of where they belong, the following associations are viewed as most important
  - GBA
  - ASCE
  - ACEC

# Challenges

- Professionally
  - Leading change
  - Leadership in general
  - Adapting to change
  - Remaining current
- Business-wise
  - Recruiting talent
  - Retaining talent
  - Commoditization and fee-based selection

# Summary and Conclusions

- Respondents were predominately older, male, well educated, owners of geotech firms of all sizes
- Joined for risk management and business optimization
- Membership exceeds cost
- Continue membership for materials, education, and networking
- Cancel membership to reduce expenses – get info elsewhere
- Supportive of the name change and think it is a positive step
- Current image tied to geotechnical, education, business and Bachner.
- Future image should be business and professional growth, education, and networking and sharing (less emphasis on geotechnical and less on Bachner)
- ASCE and ACEC are common associations for our membership
- Leadership, change, adaptation, and remaining current are professional concerns
- Concerns include building and maintaining quality rosters and price competition in a price-based environment