

PSIA-AASI Executive Summary

Spring 2016 Survey Wave

“PROFESSIONAL ISSUES” SURVEY

- 1. Professional identity - although they consider it a hobby (43%) or secondary career (19%), most members identify strongly and positively as snowsports instructors.** Most members believe it is very (47%) or somewhat (39%) important for an instructor to belong to an association. They are generally optimistic about the state of snowsports (78%), and find the role very (78%) or somewhat (20%) rewarding. They are proud of the field (90%), find the work meaningful (83%), would go into the field again if faced with the choice (78%), and feel that the leadership/ interpersonal / management skills they've learned have benefited their lives (66%). A large number also believe the same skills have benefited their professional career outside of snowsports instruction (49%).
- 2. On the job - most members are satisfied with their work, but they lag in areas of fulfillment and recognition.** Members are satisfied with their relationship with co-workers (84%), the joy and meaning in their job (80%), their clients / customers (76%), and their job overall (65%). However, they are also dissatisfied with their compensation from lessons (48%), recognition (19%) and opportunity for growth (16%).
- 3. Membership in PSIA-AASI:** Most are members to enhance teaching (37%) or riding skills (37%), to maintain certification (34%), and for members-only discounts (30%). They agree that PSIA-AASI is an important resource for professional development (80%), has the premiere standards for certifications (66%) and that snowschools value the certification (69%). However, some members *did not* agree that PSIA-AASI has certification and training standards that are consistent across Divisions (26%), that the Association understands its members (34%), and that certification standards are upheld across the country (38%). More, 27% did not feel PSIA-AASI is responsive to their needs. In an open-text follow-up question, respondents indicated that they felt there was a lack of responsiveness due to their experience at events (quality, consistency) and expense-related concerns.
- 4. Satisfaction with benefits/programs:** Members are most satisfied with Pro Deals (69%), *32 Degrees* Magazine (68%), the *Accessories Catalog* (56%), and face-to-face educational offerings (51%). They are dissatisfied with promotion to the public about PSIA-AASI members (36%), promotion to resort management about PSIA-AASI members (40%), social media (48%), and online education offerings (28%).
- 5. Member Profile:** Most member respondents have worked in snowsports for over 10 years (64%) and are between the ages of 50 - 69 (62%). They have some college/2 year degree (17%), a 4 year degree (41%) or Masters Degree (31%). Membership is less diverse than the country as a whole - most are Caucasian/White (84%) and males (68%). Thirty-seven percent (37%) hold a household income of over \$100,000. They generally instruct in alpine (87%), while significant proportions also instruct snowboarding (33%), and adaptive (25%). And they are active - common hobbies members participate in are biking/mountain



look



learn



plan



deliver

biking (61%), camping/hiking (54%), boating/sailing (38%), walking (37%), and aerobic exercise (35%).

NEW MEMBER SURVEY

- 1. Word-of-mouth is how the majority (83%) of new members find out about PSIA-AASI.** This includes through another instructor in their organization (65%), from a family member or friend (10%), board or staff member (4%), or instructor in their organization (4%). Direct promotions, exposure to events or web searches account for only 5% of respondent exposure to PSIA-AASI.
- 2. New members join PSIA-AASI for skills enhancement, for affiliation/reputation, and for discounts.** They join to enhance their teaching skills (56%), obtain certification (55%), enhance their riding skills (43%), enhance their professional profile (20%), and for members-only discounts (16%). Additionally, 15% also are encouraged or required to join by their employer. Note, while maintaining certification is an important reason among tenured members, it represents a very insignificant draw to join for new members. Instead, “obtaining” a certification is a more popular reason.
- 3. The highest anticipated form of engagement or participation with PSIA-AASI is certification (94%), usage of manuals, guides and videos (81%), and member discounts (78%).** Also popular are the other methods of engagement, such as *32 Degrees* (59%), the *Accessories Catalog* (46%), the career center (30%), the online community (24%), and events (between 29% and 49%).
- 4. There is low familiarity of the roles of National and Division offices.** However, new members tend to be slightly more familiar with their Division office (19%) compared to National (6%). Similarly, new members are slightly more satisfied with their Division office (70%) compared with National (60%).
- 5. Although value ratings lag (only 17% feel value outweighs cost), overall word-of-mouth is favorable among new members – a crucial metric since it is the principle method of exposure to the association.** New members demonstrate a strong word of mouth statistic of + 22. This is a similar score to for-profit brands Overstock, Samsung, Starbucks, Pizza Hut and Google. McKinley’s average among all associations is 19.
- 6. PSIA-AASI has a brand image of effectiveness and competency among new members.** The most common “brand terms” new members agreed with, with respect to PSIA-AASI, are respected (39%), helpful (34%), and effective (29%). Also popular were competent (26%), community building (23%), and welcoming (21%).
- 7. Compared with more tenured members (i.e., “Professional Issues” survey respondents), new members are less likely to instruct in alpine (78% to 87%) and more likely to instruct in snowboarding (42% to 33%).** Most new members have worked in snowsports for 1 year or less (41%) or 2-5 years (37%); prefer Division/local events (87%) for interacting with other professionals; and prefer online/electronic formats for receiving information. Similar to more tenured members, they consider instructing to be a hobby (43%, for both new members and tenured) or secondary career (29% of new members, 19% of tenured). They are in a part-time paid position (60%), and have some college/2-year degree, (22%) a 4 year degree (43%) or Masters Degree (18%). They are



from a range of ages (46%, or about half, are under 34 years old) and incomes (over one-quarter earn more than \$100k per year), and 65% are male.

READERSHIP SURVEY

- 1. Topics of interest:** The most important topics to members are alpine skiing instruction (87%), certification (55%), children's instruction (44%), information about news and events in the field of snowsports (40%) and product reviews (36%). Less popular are niche topics such as cross country skiing instruction (11%), telemark instruction (14%), and entry-level instructor information (14%). Several topics on the PSIA-AASI website were also listed as having high interest among members, including teaching/instruction-related content and modules (70%), how to instructional videos (60%), equipment and gear related information (59%), tips and how to-type articles (57%), and education videos (54%).
- 2. Articles focused on techniques and teaching are considered most important** – a substantial portion of members indicated that articles about teaching and instruction, articles to improve their personal skills, and articles to improve their students skills are very important (72%, 58%, and 63% respectively). Less important are employment resources (16%), general interest articles (16%) and general updates from PSIA-AASI (25%).
- 3. Changes that would improve PSIA-AASI's communications:** Consistent with other findings that underscore the importance of teaching skills, the most popular suggestions for improving PSIA-AASI's communications are more information about teaching and instruction (69%), more practical information that the member can use in their day-to-day work (51%), more information on techniques to improve sliding skills (47%), and more information about events and training opportunities (40%). Notably, a majority of members agree that they have received ideas to use in their own teaching from reading *32 Degrees* (75%), that PSIA-AASI is the first place they turn to for info/resources related to snowsports instruction, that they are kept well informed about benefits and resources (64%), and that PSIA-AASI's news and information updates are timely (59%).
- 4. Communications:** The most preferred methods for receiving communications are email (72%), through *32 Degrees* (69%), and website updates (42%). Similarly, in terms of usage, many or most members indicate that they have read or viewed *32 Degrees* (94%), emails/email newsletters (81%) and updated on TheSnowPros.org (46%) in the past 12 months.
- 5. 32 Degrees:** About half of members that have read *32 Degrees* in the past 12 months (readers), read the publication either frequently (29%) or regularly (22%). Surprisingly half of this group (50%) is unaware of the digital version. Most readers rate *32 Degrees* as "excellent" or "good" in terms of ease of reading (74%), accuracy and reliability of information (72%), overall quality of writing (69%), frequency of issues (69%), depth of information (65%), enjoyment of reading (64%), relevance of content to everyday needs (56%), and relevance of content to their teaching discipline (59%). After reading *32 Degrees*, many readers have applied information from an article in their instruction (54%) or skiing/riding (53%), bookmarked or saved an article (45%), and/or engaged in a conversation with colleagues as a result of the content (44%).



6. **PSIA-AASI Accessories Catalog:** The vast majority of members (87%) have read/reviewed the *Accessories Catalog* in the past 12 months and most (55%) rate its value as either excellent (16%) or good (39%). Ten percent (10%) rate value as poor or very poor. Twenty-eight percent (28%) have made purchases from the digital version, while 21% purchased from the print version.
7. **TheSnowPros.org:** Most members access the PSIA-AASI website on a weekly (15%), monthly (27%) or “few times a year” (49%) basis, about 10% accesses it once a year or less. The most common reasons for accessing the website include to renew membership (67%), to access information about events and programs (62%), education and training resources (58%), and news and information (33%). Interestingly, members use a variety of tools to access the website, including laptop computers (63%), desktop computers (42%), smartphones (34%) and tablets (30%). A slight majority rate the website as either “excellent” or “good” in terms of overall quality (53%), relevancy of content (63%), and usefulness (58%). Slightly less than half (48%) rate the website organization and appearance the same.
8. **Division website:** Most members have accessed their Division website weekly (11%), monthly (26%) or a few times per year (49%). Fourteen percent (14%) have accessed it once or less in the past year. A majority that have accessed it rate it excellent or good in terms of relevancy of content (60%), usefulness (59%), overall quality (58%), and organization and appearance (52%).
9. **Online Community:** Half of members (50%) have accessed the online community in the past 12 months; however, satisfaction lags compared to other publications resources. For example, excellent/good ratings are relatively low for quality of discussion (37%), relevance of content (37%), overall value (33%), and frequency of participation of other instructors (30%). The online community was rated highest in terms of opportunity to share one’s voice/opinion (50%) and opportunity to stay connected to other members (49%). More, half of all members (50%) agree that it provides an opportunity to participate in the association. About one-third (36%) believe it is useful for generating content for *32 Degrees*.
10. **Keeping in touch with students:** About one-third (34%) of instructors keep in touch with their students after lessons. Popular methods include email (68%), SMS/text (54%), social media (28%), and telephone (21%). They indicate that students frequently ask them about gear – including on a daily (22%), weekly (28%) or monthly (11%) basis. They are also asked about resorts/travel on a daily (14%), weekly (28%) or monthly (14%) basis.

EDUCATION / TRAINING SURVEY

1. **Alpine instruction is most commonly offered by members** – about 90% offer alpine lessons, compared to 14% that offer snowboard, telemark (8%), cross country (7%) or freestyle (7%). Members were asked to provide input/feedback for resources offered by PSIA-AASI for each type of instruction.
2. **General resources:** Nearly all members have heard of Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors (92%) and the Movement Matrix (85%). Nearly half consider the resources to be “very” important (58% and 48%, respectively).



3. **Alpine resources:** Out of those that instruct alpine skiing, most have heard of the Alpine Technical Manual (97%), the Adult Alpine Teaching Handbook (70%) and the Alpine Skiing: Tip Card of the Day (60%). Awareness lags for Visual Cues to Effective / Ineffective teaching (51%), Tactics for All Mountain Skiing (46%), and Visual Cues to Effective / Ineffective Skiing, 2nd Edition (40%). A majority of those who are aware of each resource rated the Alpine Technical Manual (69%), Adult Alpine Teaching Handbook (57%), Visual Cues to Effective / Ineffective Skiing (57%), and Visual Cues to Effective / Ineffective Skiing (50%) as “very important.” Fewer rated Tactics for All Mountain Skiing (35%) and the Tip of the Day Card (13%) as “very important.”
4. **Other resources:** Members indicated differing levels of awareness for resources within instructing disciplines.
 - a. **Telemark:** Most members that instruct Telemark were aware of the Telemark Technical Manual (96%) and many of those (84%) find it to be “very important” as a resource. Fewer expressed awareness and high importance levels for Telemark Tip of the Day Card (39% and 10%, respectively), which was launched last year.
 - b. **Children’s Instruction:** The most popular Children’s Instruction resources (among all members) were the Children’s Instruction Manual (73% aware, 64% “very important” among those aware of the resource) and Children’s Alpine Teaching Handbook (61% aware, 62% “very important”). Less popular were Captain Zembo’s Ski & Snowboard Teaching Guide for Kids, 2nd Edition (44% aware, 31% “very important”) and the Children’s Ski and Snowboard Movement Guide (27% aware, 48% very important).
 - c. **Entry Level:** About one-third of all members had heard of the Entry-level Instructors Guide (27%) and New Instructors Guide (30%). About half of those that were aware of the resource indicated that they were “very important” (51% and 46% respectively).
 - d. **Snowboard:** The majority of snowboard instructors were aware of the Snowboard Technical Manual (80%), Snowboard Teaching Handbook (73%) and Tip of the Day Card (53%). The Snowboard Technical Manual was rated as very important by 63% of those who were aware of it, while the Teaching Handbook and Tip of the Day Card lagged at 51% and 20% respectively.
 - e. **Cross Country:** While most cross country instructors were aware of the Cross Country Technical Manual (87%), fewer were aware of the Tip of the Day Card (48%). While the Cross Country Technical Manual was seen as very important by 79% of those who were aware of it, only 20% felt the same of the Tip of the Day Card.
 - f. **Freestyle:** About three-quarters (74%) of freestyle instructors were aware of the Park and Pipe Instructor’s Guide, though awareness of the Freestyle and Freeskiing Tip of the Day cards was less (35% and 17%, respectively). About half of those familiar with the Instructor’s Guide felt it was very important. None of the very few who were familiar with the Tip Cards felt those resources were very important.

