

What is “ROL” and why should I care?



Most people have heard of ROI (return on investment). Ultimately, it's a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment. But what's "ROL"? By definition, return on learning is a derivative of ROI used to evaluate the efficiency of an organization's learning investments. More broadly, ROL can be used to demonstrate product and service value.

Whereas event success was once measured by budgets and attendance alone, organizations now realize they must provide and consistently demonstrate value to attendees given an environment of significant competition, particularly when it comes to professional development.

Thankfully, mobile technology will soon play a major role in this transformation to ROL-driven event and association management.

That's right! A new return on learning mobile application (#ROLapp) has been developed to quantify the value of organization meetings and events, and to then convert these outcomes into year-round membership lifecycle benefits. Additional outcomes include:

- Putting an end to the “Firefighter Syndrome,” a destructive cycle that impedes strategic, innovative and collaborative thinking and erodes morale, productivity and business outcomes.
- Developing enduring mobile technology and best practices association staff can rely on to more deliberately launch and sunset products, services and programs.
- Promoting member engagement and success via a strategy of mass customization and supported goal setting.
- Leveraging real-time data to aid industry partners in creating and effectively marketing valued product lines.

Consider, for a moment, how engaging your members via a robust mobile application throughout the year (as opposed to at one disconnected touch point during your annual meeting) could significantly increase the real-time feedback you're able to collect and leverage within each organization department, including membership, marketing and education. For associations, additional objectives of the #ROLapp include:

- Crowdsourcing high-demand industry subjects worthy of resource deployment.
- Illuminating professional goals and objectives critical to association members.
- Connecting association members with personalized resources to support goal attainment.
- Establishing a robust resource forum curated by an engaged community of members.
- Evaluating the continued effectiveness of the association's resource pool.
- Increasing efficiencies baked into the organization's process and procedure.
- Generating measurable ROL data for signature programs.

So, why a mobile application? That's simple. According to [Morgan Stanley](#), 91 percent of people have their phones within three feet of them 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This suggests association members will routinely have contact with the mobile devices necessary to download and use this app.

Likewise, conference, expo and meeting apps are already widely accepted as a better alternative to glossy paper guides. Not only do they provide a significant cost savings, but they also offer individuals stronger engagement opportunities. ❖

#ROLapp - What's in it for me?

Think back to when you first joined ASAE - or any other association, for that matter. Chances are that professional development - and access to quality education programs - ranked high in your decision-making process. But simply having access is often not enough these days. Actively planning and tracking both personal and professional learning and networking goals can be the key to career success.



Scan for more on the patent pending ROLapp

Did you know your mobile phone could be a key enabler to goal setting and tracking, expense tracking and, ultimately, improved learning and networking outcomes? That's right! You can now schedule conference activities (e.g., attend a breakout session or connect with a specific exhibitor) that align with your personal/professional improvement plan - all from the palm of your hand.

As you likely know, event apps are already prevalent at major events worldwide. In fact, chances are good you used an app at a tradeshow or a conference within the last year. Perhaps you even used the OSAE or ISAE conference app last year. Ultimately, event apps help you prepare for conference attendance and allow you to plan activities that will further your progress toward goal completion.

Additionally, they can help you:

- Sift through the breakout sessions and select those best aligned with personal goals and objectives.
- Identify the attendees, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors most likely to solve an organization challenge.
- Build a custom conference agenda with automatic reminders and prompts that promotes professional development and career advancement.
- Determine which handout materials and resources are worth a closer look.
- Turn an otherwise overwhelming event into a completely personalized and member-centric experience.

Results at Hand's ConferenceBeat mobile conference app can also be combined with its new #ROLapp to help members and event managers determine return on learning data, measures and statistics. For members using the app, the goal-setting feature can be used to:

- Guide in setting specific and attainable goals you feel to be most critical to individual, team and organization success (before, during and after an event).
- Build and implement basic strategic plans.
- Provide visual feedback on goal progress.
- Suggest resources or other support mechanisms for goal completion.
- Collect data to measure and demonstrate success.
- Store measurable outcomes in a central location.
- Increase productivity (both in the workplace and onsite at events).

Ultimately, the return on learning mobile application (#ROLapp) has been developed to quantify the value of organization meetings and events, and to then convert these outcomes into year-round membership lifecycle benefits. We hope you'll find it worthwhile and will consider its application within your own organization. ❖

results
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To learn more about ROL, scan the above QR code. Be sure to also request a copy of the official #ROLapp whitepaper and plan to attend the best practices webinar currently in development by Aaron Wolowiec of Event Garde. tinyurl.com/ROLnow for more!