



Newsletter of the Society for the Advancement of Consulting® - April 2020

Founded by Million Dollar Consulting guru Alan Weiss, the Society for the Advancement of Consulting is the premier association for independent consulting professionals who subscribe to an industry code of ethics and provide significant consulting results among their clients.

Clearly Ambiguous

The world as we know it has changed dramatically during the last few weeks.

The COVID-19 crisis has turned business upside down on a global level. While we are extremely distressed to see the growing number of illnesses and deaths, we also see this as a time when consultants can rise to the occasion and provide much needed support to their clients.

The question is who supports the consultants during this stressful time, while you are supporting your clients? That's what SAC is here for. Over the past two years, we've moved to a model where most of our programs are offered virtually and archived for ongoing access. We will be adding additional programs this year to support our members as we move through this challenging time.

Here's a summary of what we've put together for you as of today:

- All SAC in-person **Meetups** are cancelled until September.
- The **Best Practices** and **PRACTICUM** webinar series will continue as scheduled.
- Plans are being made for a **virtual meeting in Europe** in the new few months. If you're interested in participating, please contact [Hamish](#) or [Patrick](#).
- The **Alan Weiss Million Dollar Consulting Convention** in Sydney and the **Getting Started** event in Los Angeles have been postponed. For more information, please see [Alan's website](#).
- We are introducing a new web series called **Thriving through Ambiguity** that will specifically focus on tools and techniques to help you maintain and expand your business in this challenging time. Alan will be talking on this topic on May 4th, and we have an additional lineup of speakers through April. More information below.
- The **Annual Meeting** is still planned for October 20-21 in New York City. We are in touch with the hotel and will let advise you if there will be changes as we get closer to the date.
- We are moving ahead with the **Corrie Shanahan Memorial Advancing Awards** program. Nominations and applications are being accepted now. More information below.
- We're launching a new set of **special interest groups (SIGs)** to bring together SAC members with common interests and skills around the world to brainstorm, share best practices, and build alliances to help each other be more successful. More information below.
- We're making a **special offer** to anyone who wants to join the SAC community. See below.

- To give back to the community, we will also make a donation to a food bank for every **new member or renewal** we receive between now and May 15th.

This is what we've been able to launch in week one! Look for more to come!

In the meantime, please do what you need to in order to stay both safe and sane.

Lisa and Linda

Thriving Through Ambiguity

As you navigate uncharted waters, SAC is here to provide support, guidance, and expert advice. We've created this new webinar series with topics specifically focused on how you can not just survive the current economic environment, but thrive, too.

THRIVING THROUGH AMBIGUITY

There is no charge for SAC members to attend any of these webinars. Here's the schedule so far:

- April 2: **Build a Forever Transaction-What You Can Do Right Now**—Robbie Kellman Baxter
- April 6: **Maximizing Remote Work Effectiveness**—Courtney Casey
- April 10: **Leveraging Branding and Networking in Today's Online World**—Lisa Anderson and Linda Popky
- April 14: **Connecting with Customers During Times of Crisis**—David Priemer
- April 22: **Leadership Styles in Times of Uncertainty**—Janel Dyan
- April 29: **Making the Most of Your Money in Chaotic Times**—Henry Ford
- May 4: **Thriving Through Ambiguity**—Alan Weiss*

We have additional topics being planned, too. [More information](#).

*You MUST pre-register for Alan's webinar [here](#).

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN: Corrie Shanahan Memorial Advancing Consulting Awards

We're pleased to announce that nominations are now being accepted for the second annual Advancing Consulting Awards. These awards are presented annually to two SAC members (an established independent consultant and an emerging independent consultant) who have done the most to advance the profession in the previous year.

Know someone who should be considered? [Nominate](#) your proposed candidates now. Or nominate yourself by applying [here](#). Nominations close on June 2, 2020. The award will be presented at the Annual Meeting in October in New York City.



Who Can We Help? Special Offer on SAC Membership

We want to reach out to other consultants who could use SAC to be more productive and profitable during this tough time.

We're making a special offer to new members. **Between now and May 15th**, we will waive the application fee and offer a reduced price for first year membership. For every new membership or renewal we receive during this time, we will



make a [donation to a food bank](#) to help those less fortunate who are now struggling.

Please tell your friends and colleagues. [More information here.](#)

Special Interest Group: Supply Chain

Our first special interest group (SIG) will be focused on **Supply Chain**—which is a hot, hot topic given the repercussions of this worldwide pandemic. The goal is to bring SAC members with similar areas of focus together to connect, brainstorm, and share resources. If you are interested in joining this group, [sign up here.](#)

Are You Getting Everything You Can From Your SAC Membership?

Why not utilize SAC to increase your visibility and success? Take advantage of one of the following opportunities. We have a new social media campaign and will be including in our promotions:

- [Submit an article](#) for the [SAC blog](#)
- [Submit a quote](#) for our bi-monthly [press release](#). Our next release will be in February—see below.
- Join our [local, regional and global meetings](#). Check out [photos](#) and other news from our recent events.
- [Submit your book](#) to “[SAC in Print](#)”
- If you could be an editor, consider taking on the role for [SAC Press](#). This will provide great exposure for contributing members.
- [Access past webinars](#) through the archives. Both video and audio versions are available.

Please add/update your social media handles in your profile so that we can follow and tag you.

We've updated our website with the list of benefits available to SAC members. The list includes some items that are not being utilized by all of our members.

[Check this out.](#)

Meet Our Members: Sten Vesterli

This month we're profiling Sten Vesterli. [Contact Sten.](#)

Sten Vesterli helps IT organizations succeed by focusing on business value. For more than two decades, he has advised companies like Novo Nordisk, Maersk Lines, Novartis, SimCorp, Oracle, Nordea, and Swisscom on using the right technology and using the technology right.

He has won multiple speaking awards for his hilarious talk *Everything That's Wrong with IT*, writes the popular *Technology That Fits* newsletter and has just started the weekly podcast and newsletter *Beneficial Intelligence* providing pragmatic advice for CIOs and other IT leaders.



What is the one thing that most differentiates you from others in your field?

I never charge by the hour. For some reason, customers in IT have blindly accepted an inverted billing model where the longer it takes for the consultant to solve the problem, the more money the consultant makes. By discussing the business value of my help, I am helping IT leaders change their mindset towards a focus on business value, so even if we don't end up working together, they have still benefited from discussing a project with me.

What is something you've learned about business that you would have liked your younger self to know?

Learn as much as possible about the organizations you work with. I've worked as a consultant for more than 20 years across many industries, and initially, I just focused on the specific assignment. Over time, I've learned to appreciate that every organization is eager to teach you about their business. The more you know, the better you can help your customer, and over the years I've learned about clinical trials, university admission, water quality, container transport, and much more.

What do you find most valuable about SAC?

Access to smart people from a variety of fields. I like widening my horizon by reading the articles my colleagues share about challenges and solutions in areas I have not yet been exposed to, and I love the live events where you can get to talk to people from all over the world with very different experiences and viewpoints.

Want to Be Featured?

Complete your profile on the SAC website! Set up your profile now! If you don't remember your password, go to the Member Login and ask for a password reset. Any questions? [Contact us.](#)

Follow Us On Twitter - We're Following You!

Our twitter handle is @consultingassn. Our goal is to follow all of our active members and to retweet your posts when appropriate. If we're not yet following you, it's because we don't have your Twitter handle. Send us a DM and we'll add you to our list. [Follow us.](#)

May 11th Deadline for Next SAC News Release

Have you been quoted in a recent SAC press release? Why not? Here's the information for our next release. Join us!

Topic: *How will the ongoing change and volatility impact clients in 2020? What actions should businesses take to maintain or grow their leadership positions in this uncertain time?*

Use this [link](#) to submit your input of less than 150 words formatted into 2-3 paragraphs in the same format as the prior releases **no later than May 11th**. Please remember to check your grammar and provide your name with attribution!

Note that the word count **includes** your personal information. In order to keep the releases concise and readable, we are unable to accept contributions that are longer than the guidelines.

Next Accelerator Lab Postponed Until June

Our next business accelerator lab, focused on Write Now: How to Create Content That Drives Your Business in Today's Environment, is postponed until June 11th, so that we can bring you webinars on topics related to the current crisis. Interested in attending? [More information.](#)

[Weiss Advice:](#)

HOW DO YOU INTERACT WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS AND PROSPECTS IN TIMES OF CRISIS AND UNCERTAINTY?

I've long preached that not all customers are alike, and the customers

oneselves but certainly are *not* always right. (They often know what they want but not what they *need*.) In these parlous times, it's more critical than ever to understand your customers' diverse behaviors and preferences.

As much as I try to avoid "labels" I have to assign names to categories, but I'll try to be non-pejorative. I'm going to use "customers" to represent those who are "clients" as well.



- 1. Ideal Customers:** These are buyers who highly value your contributions (advice, products, services, responsiveness, etc.) and will tend to rely on you more than ever to guide them through tough times. They will have discretionary funds (that is, funds they can move if necessary, for the highest value return).
- 2. Hesitant:** These people are "on the fence," waiting for "developments" that may take 24 hours or 24 weeks. They need to be shown the high cost of *not proceeding* and the wisdom of being confident in the underlying structure of the economy and our institutions. The banks are not failing, transportation is accessible, technology is often saving the day.
- 3. Intimidated:** In this case, the buyers are understandably conservative and willing to wait for the longer-term "all clear" signals. The approach here is to demonstrate that you can't gain market share or return to business as usual from a "standing start" and that their inertia must be "in motion" and not "at rest."
- 4. Hunkered Down:** These folks are scared, and understandably, these can be scary times. My feeling is that it's best to stay in contact, offer value, share best practices, but not "pull" them beyond that. I've never tried to yank an ostrich's head out of the sand, and I'm not eager to try. Just leave food nearby.

© Alan Weiss 2020

Note: Check out how you can gain full access to virtually all my intellectual property on my [Growth Access platform](#).

[Stay in touch with Alan Weiss's events here.](#)

Upcoming SAC Events

April 1

Partner Event: **WIC Facilitated Discussion: New Working Environment with COVID-19** (Women in Consulting)

Wednesdays April 1 - April 29. 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. [More info.](#)

April 2

Robbie Kellman Baxter: Build a "Forever Transaction"t with Your Clients in These Unprecedented Times. What You Can Do Right Now.

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 10am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

April 6

Courtney Casey: Maximizing Remote Work Effectiveness

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 10am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

April 10

Lisa Anderson & Linda Popky: Leveraging On-line Branding & Networking

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

April 10

Partner Event: **SPC Virtual Meetup** (Society of Professional Consultants)

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. [More info.](#)

April 14

David Priemer: Connecting with Customers During Times of Crisis

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 10:15am PST. No charge for members.

[More Info.](#)

April 21

Constance Dierickx and Linda Henman: The Merger Mindset: What a Consultant Needs to Know

SAC Best Practices Webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

April 22

Janel Dyan: Leadership Styles in Times of Uncertainty

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

April 29

Henry Ford: Making the Most of Your Money in Chaotic Times

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

May 4

Alan Weiss: Thriving through Ambiguity

Thriving Through Ambiguity webinar; 8am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

May 12

Tanya Hall: Book Publishing Options - How to Choose the Right Path for You

SAC PRACTICUM Webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

May 19

Andrew Hollo: Mastering the Value Conversation

SAC Best Practices Webinar; 3pm PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

June 11

Linda Popky: Write Now: How to Create Content That Drives Your Business in Today's Environment

A Business Accelerator Lab: hands-on Zoom workshop; 11am PST.

[More info.](#)

July 21

Deb Zahn

SAC Best Practices Webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

August 11

Dwight Holcomb: The Top 5 Secrets to Accelerating Your Consulting Sales Using LinkedIn

SAC PRACTICUM Webinar; 11am PST. No charge for members.

[More info.](#)

Oct 20-21

SAC Annual Meeting in NYC

[More info.](#)

Mark your calendar!

Webinars are included in your SAC membership. [Join or renew](#) your membership now.

Society for the Advancement of Consulting

2058 N Mills Ave, #532, Claremont, CA 91711

consultingsociety.com - 909-630-3943 - info@consultingsociety.com

