



Strategic Plan | 2018-2020

Excellence. Innovation. Community.

Mission Statement

The American Fence Association benefits fence industry professionals and consumers by promoting the highest levels of professionalism, ethics and product standards, through the education and certification of its members.

Board of Directors Message – *A Vision of Excellence, Innovation, and Community.*

Members of the AFA Community,

The board of directors is pleased to share the AFA Strategic Plan along with an invitation to join us on our shared journey to embrace *excellence, innovation, and community.*

This is a critical time for the fence industry, and specifically, for every professional involved in our nation's first line of defense of life and property. The industry is undergoing dramatic changes brought on by shifting demographics, innovative technologies, and new norms that are shrinking the world and connecting businesses to customers in new and exciting ways. And though our industry is experiencing a few difficult challenges, we see an abundance of opportunity.

This plan presents the thinking of some of the industry's **brightest** minds, exploring the issues and identifying solutions that will have the greatest impact on members.

Building on the strengths of our history and successes, we launch this plan with six strategic initiatives— the common theme among them— that we improve the *quality of engagement* at every level of the association. We must attract, develop and retain the best contractors in the industry, leaders with the technical expertise and professionalism our customers deserve. We must work closely with manufacturers and other partners in the industry who are driving innovation. We must cultivate new partnerships, which will allow us to fully deliver on the promise of the AFA Mission. Additionally, we must work collaboratively to improve our Certification, Government & Specifier Relations, and Membership programs so that we can provide our community with the expert leadership that it needs, and the clear return on investment our members expect.

Like the founders of the association who came together for fellowship, learning and community, let us work together to ensure our future success — striving for *excellence*, driving *innovation*, and continuing to build the family-like *community* our industry has become famous for.

We look forward to joining you on this journey.

Our Preferred Future: Six Strategic Drivers

The American Fence Association is committed to a vision of ***Excellence, Innovation and Community***. While this strategic plan articulates a preferred future in each strategic driver, the achievement of these objectives will require a series of adaptive moves — perhaps best described as organizational nimbleness, to achieve the transformative results our community expects.

There are six drivers critical to AFA's success.

Membership Growth & Engagement — AFA will increase membership by offering programs and services that deliver exceptional member benefits. Benefits will increase the profitability of, save time for, and/or reduce business risk for our members. AFA will be the primary source of consumer information about the fence and related trades industries. AFA will increase consumer awareness of, and preference to use, certified and accredited AFA members.

FENCETECH — AFA will produce the leading annual marketplace in the fence and related trades industries to learn, network, and link buyers and sellers. FENCETECH will be THE premier industry event to recognize industry leadership, innovation, and excellence. FENCETECH will be an engaging celebration of the history, as well as the future of the industry.

Chapter and Volunteer Leadership — Chapter and volunteer leaders will be responsible for the grassroots delivery of the AFA experience. Chapters will increase the value of membership through local programs that support the growth of the organization and the implementation of the strategic plan. AFA will provide direction, support and recognition for volunteer leaders who excel in their roles. Volunteer leaders will receive developmental leadership experiences that will help promote the AFA mission, and help them lead their businesses more effectively.

Government & Specifier Relations — AFA will develop and support standards and best practice guidelines that professionalize the industry and work for improved governmental regulations. AFA will collaborate with trade groups that have related advocacy issues. AFA will increase specifier, general contractor, architect, engineer, etc. awareness of, and preference to use, certified AFA members.

Certification & Accreditation — Develop and implement education and training programs for owners, managers, salespeople and installers at all levels of the fence and related trades industries. AFA will also accredit those companies that demonstrate a commitment to the values of professionalism and excellence.

Organizational Development — AFA leaders will implement systems and processes to develop leaders, track organizational progress toward goals, and strengthen a culture that reflects the mission, vision, and values of the organization. Leaders will create an organization where meaningful relationships are cultivated, and fun and professionalism go hand in hand.

Transforming Strategic Drivers into a Strategic Plan

Membership Growth & Engagement

Objective 1 | *Develop and implement a comprehensive membership development and retention plan.*

- 1.1 Develop a membership development plan that will include: comprehensive market data, segmentation strategies, membership value propositions, marketing collateral and resource requirements for board consideration NLT Q2 2018.
- 1.2 Ensure that AFA has a membership retention rate of 79% for FY 2018 and 85% for FY 2019. Staff will ensure that membership grows by 12% in FY 2018 and 15% in FY 2019.
- 1.3 The CPC will develop strategies to utilize the tools and marketing materials developed by AFA to increase each chapter's membership as outlined in 1.2 by end of FY 2019.

Objective 2 | *Develop and implement a social media based consumer awareness strategy including supporting marketing collateral for credentialed members.*

- 2.1 A social media based consumer awareness plan will be presented to the board at the 2018 Mid-Year Meeting. Recommendations will include channel strategies, target audience objectives, and resource considerations for a comprehensive multi-phase program.
- 2.2 A "soft launch" of the approved consumer awareness strategy by Q4 2018, with a hard launch by Q1 2019 and the comprehensive program operational by the end of FY 2019.

Objective 3 | *Evaluate all products and services offered by AFA and eliminate the poorest performing.*

- 3.1 Each year AFA will conduct a quantitative and qualitative review of all products and services and make programing recommendations to the board of directors.

FENCETECH

Objective 4 | *Establish a FENCETECH Advisory Group of manufacturers and suppliers to develop innovative strategies that will increase the value of the event.*

- 4.1 AFA will identify and recruit participants at FENCETECH 2018, and hold two (2) meetings in 2018, with suggestions being made directly to the FENCETECH committee.

Objective 5 | *Develop and implement a comprehensive growth strategy for FENCETECH.*

- 5.1 The FENCETECH Committee and Advisory Group along with staff will develop a two-year business plan to identify FENCETECH growth opportunities by (a) evaluating current partnerships and (b) exploring new opportunities with closely related trade organizations. The business plan will be presented to the board NLT Q1 2019.

Chapter and Volunteer Leadership

Objective 6 | *Provide chapter and volunteer leaders with support resources and leadership development opportunities.*

- 6.1 AFA and CPC will develop tools and best practice guidelines that will help leaders improve effectiveness. NLT 2018 Mid-Year Meeting.
- 6.2 AFA and the CPC will develop and launch an online portal for the sharing of resources. NLT 2018 Mid-Year Meeting.
- 6.3 AFA will launch a leadership development curriculum that supports current leaders and the recruitment and development of new volunteers. NLT 2018 Mid-Year Meeting.

Government & Specifier Relations

Objective 7 | *Develop and implement a comprehensive Government and Specifier Relations plan.*

- 7.1 Conduct an environmental scan for advocacy and Specifier-related issues. NLT Q2 2018.
- 7.2 Develop responses to opportunities identified in the environmental scan. NLT Q4 2018.
- 7.3 Develop partnership strategies to promote AFA certifications to specifiers NLT Q3 2019.

Certification & Accreditation

Objective 8 | *Update all certification materials through task force and committee work.*

- 8.1 Certification Committee will complete the update of all certification materials NLT Q3 2018.

Objective 9 | *Develop AIA continuing education modules for CFP and CFC.*

- 9.1 AFA will complete the planning of each module NLT Q3 2018, with a target of Q1 2019 for project completion.

Objective 10 | *Develop training partnership opportunities (Accreditation) for manufacturers to recognize AFA members with continuing education units.*

- 10.1 AFA will complete the planning of the accreditation program NLT Q3 2018, with a target of Q1 2019 for project launch.

Organizational Development

Objective 11 | *Develop an organization assessment plan to coincide with the review and approval of updated AFA Bylaws and Policies and Procedures documents.*

- 11.1 Staff will present an organizational assessment plan for board consideration. Plan may include: board evaluations, chapter satisfaction surveys, program assessments, etc. NLT 2018 Mid-Year Meeting.

Our Vision of Excellence, Innovation, and Community

There are six strategic drivers that will carry AFA into the future, but there is one shared theme that powers those drivers— the commitment that we as leaders will focus all our efforts to be the very best we can be and improve the *quality of engagement* at every level of the association.

We are committed to finding new ways to engage our members, to focus on the issues and the innovative solutions, which challenge our creativity and inspire new ways of thinking.

Finally, we are committed to the care and nurturing of our community.

- To recruiting and retaining the most ethical people and companies in our industry.
- To the identification and development of leaders and game-changers.
- The recognition of our industry's heroes.

Our Strategic Plan

A strategic plan provides focus and roadmap for the future. It is not a document set in concrete. It is a document that is used to help staff and volunteers understand the vision and direction of the organization. It is designed to provide focus and a common language for discussion about the adaptive moves necessary to move the organization toward the preferred future.

The board of directors may change aspects of the strategic plan: To take advantage of opportunities, to respond to unforeseen challenges. If the plan is changed, the objectives and the priorities outlined in the plan must change as well. This plan is designed to drive activities through two planning cycles, after which the organization will have to set new goals and priorities.

Not everything happens according to plan. Sometimes things move faster or slower than expected. The key is to stay focused on the Six Strategic Drivers -- the objectives and strategies that the staff and volunteers pursue might change from time to time. The key is to keep communicating about the preferred future for each strategic driver.

Working Plans

Once the strategic plan is approved, the staff will create a work plan that cascades from the objectives and timetables of the strategic plan. The Chapter Presidents Committee and any other working committees should do the same. Each Chapter's Activities should be linked back to a vision of *Excellence, Innovation* and *Community*, the mission of the organization, and specifically, this strategic plan. These objectives help to provide focus and improved communication.

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Summary of 2018-2020 Objectives

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Objective 2 | *Develop and implement a social media based consumer awareness strategy including supporting marketing collateral for credentialed members.*

Objective 3 | *Evaluate all products and services offered by AFA and eliminate the poorest performing.*

Objective 4 | *Establish a FENCETECH Advisory Group of manufacturers and suppliers to develop innovative strategies that will increase the value of the event.*

Objective 5 | *Develop and implement a comprehensive growth strategy for FENCETECH.*

Objective 6 | *Provide chapter and volunteer leaders with support resources and leadership development opportunities.*

Objective 7 | *Develop and implement a comprehensive Government and Specifier Relations plan.*

Objective 8 | *Update all certification materials through task force and committee work.*

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