



AAF Nebraska // Club Operations 2025-2026

Introduction

With a legacy spanning more than 120 years, AAF Nebraska stands as one of the oldest and most influential chapters in the American Advertising Federation network. Serving a state that stretches 430 miles east to west and 201 miles north to south, our chapter is uniquely positioned to connect and support Nebraska's diverse advertising and marketing community. This year, our guiding theme—**Connect. Engage. Grow.**—shaped every aspect of our operations, from board leadership and committee work to member programming and outreach. The theme reinforced our commitment to building meaningful relationships, increasing engagement across the industry, and creating sustainable growth for the organization. It also provided a clear strategic framework for strengthening connections with current members while welcoming new voices into AAF Nebraska and positioning the chapter for continued success.

Strategic Planning & Leadership

Long-Term Planning for Sustainability

Our fiscal planning for 2025-2026 began two years prior to July 1, 2025, allowing us to anticipate membership trends, programming needs, and financial stability. (*Exhibit A - Budget*) Our local AAF chapter starts long term planning well in advance anticipating membership trends, programing, special events and most importantly the health of our chapter. Following the challenges of the pandemic and post-pandemic era, leadership two years ago focused on Adapt, Innovate, and Transform,—redefining AAF Nebraska's relevance and last year leadership focused on Create, Elevate, Celebrate – a journey

from ideation to achievement . This year, we're building upon that momentum, ensuring our programming and member engagement evolve with industry changes. (*Exhibit B - Club Goals*)

Board Development & Succession Planning

To ensure long-term stability, leadership continuity, and strong governance, AAF Nebraska prioritizes intentional board development and succession planning.

Executive Board Succession Model

Historically, AAF Nebraska operated under a four-year Executive Board succession plan. In the past year, we strategically transitioned to a three-year leadership model designed to better align with volunteer capacity while maintaining strong leadership preparation. Under this structure, leaders serve one year on the Executive Board before advancing to President in year two and Chair of the Board in year three, ensuring continuity while creating a more accessible leadership pathway.

To further strengthen leadership development, we invited a past president to return to the Executive Board in a mentorship role, helping bridge institutional knowledge with emerging leadership. This approach allows AAF Nebraska to honor the wisdom of past leadership while empowering new voices to guide the organization forward and make strategic improvements to programming and operations.

Balanced Board Composition

Each year, we intentionally build a board that includes both returning members and new leaders, maintaining institutional knowledge while bringing fresh ideas and perspectives that strengthen decision-making and innovation.

Statewide Representation

As a statewide chapter, AAF Nebraska is committed to recruiting board members from across Nebraska. Expanding leadership beyond the Omaha and Lincoln metropolitan areas strengthens our ability to build connections, deliver programming, and support professional development opportunities for advertising professionals throughout the state.

Board Retreat & Team Building

Our annual July Board Retreat (*Exhibit C - Board Retreat Photo*) set the tone for the year with:

- An engaging team-building session, including breaking into small groups to network and get to know each other.
- Strategic discussions on how to **Connect. Engage. Grow.** the future of AAF Nebraska.
- A collaborative atmosphere in a creative coworking space, reinforcing our commitment to innovation. This set the tone for us to continue planning chapter events at new creative venues.
- Introduced the AAF Nebraska Board to the AAF national Ovation Awards and Club Achievement Programs – (*Exhibit D - Ovation Awards Tracking*)

Club Goals & Key Initiatives

We categorized our 2025-2026 club goals into four strategic priorities:

1. **Mission & Culture Enhancement**
2. **Professional Development & Engagement**
3. **Financial Stewardship & Communication**
4. **Operational Excellence & National Alignment**

1. Mission & Culture Enhancement

Goal: Strengthen AAF Nebraska’s mission by fostering diversity, inclusion, and accessibility across all initiatives.

Key Actions:

- Ensure events feature diverse speakers and are geographically accessible.
- Offer affordable/free programming to remove barriers to participation.
- Advocate for the industry through engagement with Nebraska Broadcasters Association, ANA, and Nebraska Press Association.

Impact:

- 27 programs hosted, reaching professionals and students from middle school to college statewide.
(*Exhibit E - Event/Program Calendar 2025-2026*)

- Active participation in legislative advocacy to continue to fight a proposed ad tax in Nebraska and privacy related taxes.

2. Professional Development & Engagement

Goal: Deliver high-quality, engaging events that provide value to members and attract new audiences.

Key Actions:

- Host a mix of in-person and virtual events to accommodate members statewide. *(Exhibit F (a) - ON Brand 2025 & Exhibit F (a) & (b) - ON Brand 2025), (Exhibit G (a) & (b) - AdReads)*
- Expand programming with students. *(Exhibit H (a) & Exhibit H (b) - AdVenture+ with college students and AdVenture high school students)*
- Leverage four key committees for professional development:
 - ON Brand Conference: Large-scale, full-day regional event. *(Exhibit I(a), Exhibit I(b) & Exhibit I(c) - ON Brand 2025)*
 - Meet the Pros: Student-focused, career-prep initiative, two-full day conference. *(Exhibit J - Meet the Pros 2026)*
 - Professional Development: Ongoing professional development programming for industry professionals both in person and virtual events. *(Exhibit K (a) & Exhibit K (b) - Professional Development AI Panel Discussion)*
 - Community Outreach: Engagement with students from middle school through college. *(Exhibit L - AdVenture+), (Exhibit M AdVenture DECA Conference)*

Impact:

- New events launched, including Arts & Crafts, while continuing member favorites like Bowl-a-Rama and Lessons with Legends. *(Exhibit N - Arts & Crafts), (Exhibit O (a) & Exhibit O (b) - Bowl-a-Rama), (Exhibit P - Lessons with Legends)*
- Positive feedback (via a Membership Survey and individual event surveys) & increased participation at events reinforcing AAF Nebraska's role as a leader in professional growth.

(Exhibit Q - Membership Survey), (Exhibit R (a) - Event Survey & Exhibit R (b) Survey Comments)

- Average attendee event at all programs/events was 45 attendees this year (goal was to hit at least a 25-attendee average).
- Board Members working with goals for the Ovation Awards Program tracking allowed us to see noticeable increases in event attendance, as well as recruiting efforts for members and the American Advertising Awards entry. *(Exhibit D - Ovation Awards Tracking)*

3. Financial Stewardship & Communication

Goal: Maintain financial stability while improving outreach and engagement.

Key Actions:

- Regular budget reviews to ensure financial sustainability.
- Regular Membership reviews to ensure membership retention by providing member benefits, professional development and engagement. The Membership team took a more active role in all areas of the club – member and event surveys were shared across the full board of directors regularly.
- Securing and retaining sponsorships have been key to meeting our overall financial goals the past several years while providing valuable exposure and engagement opportunities for our partners. By supporting AAF Nebraska, sponsors connect with a diverse network of industry professionals, gaining brand visibility and demonstrating their commitment to the advertising community. A sponsorship, with a leading media company, was secured and provided insulated water bottles, zipper totebags with baseball caps, and portable chargers (a member perk) for our members and students attending both our Chilli Cookoff and Lessons with Legends events. *(Exhibit S - Nexxen Member Perks)*.
- Engagement with students to increase students wanting to apply for AAF Nebraska Scholarships.
- Creative cost-saving measures, including expense reductions and new fundraising initiatives (e.g., Chilli Cookoff and Arts & Crafts Fundraisers).

- Strengthen communication through:
 - A content calendar for strategic social media management. (*Exhibit T - Social Media Calendar*)
 - Advanced event promotion, starting at least six weeks in advance.

Impact:

- Anticipated break-even fiscal year, despite financial challenges.
- Through targeted outreach and grassroots efforts, we achieved a 75%-member retention rate and anticipate increasing overall membership by 1–2% by the end of the fiscal year with continued focus on recruitment and diversity.
- Increased digital engagement:
 - Facebook followers up 3% (from 726 to 749).
 - LinkedIn followers up 15.8% (from 613 to 710).
 - Instagram followers up 4% (from 785 to 817).
 - Top-performing posts: member features, event highlights, and scholarship winners.
- Increased student participation at events boosting scholarship eligibility. AAF Nebraska awarded 8 scholarships valuing \$5,000 in scholarship funds to students planning to enter the advertising profession.

4. Operational Excellence & National Alignment

Goal: Align club operations with AAF National’s Club Achievement criteria and Ovation Awards outline to enhance Nebraska’s standing as a top-tier AAF chapter.

Key Actions:

- Monthly review of AAF Club Achievement Ovation Awards benchmarks to integrate into committee goals.
- Enhanced tracking of event success and impact measurement for all programs.
- Expanding non-member engagement at professional development, networking, and fundraising events to grow awareness of AAF Nebraska.

Impact:

- Stronger club-wide alignment with national best practices.
- Increased visibility & credibility at the regional and national levels.

Conclusion:

Through strategic leadership, financial discipline, engaging programming, and a commitment to diversity and innovation, AAF Nebraska continues to be a model for AAF excellence. Our ability to adapt, grow, and inspire makes us a strong American Advertising Federation chapter.

As we move forward with **Connect. Engage. Grow.**, we remain dedicated to shaping the future of advertising in Nebraska and beyond.

Exhibits

- Exhibit A - Budget

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	American Advertising Federation Nebraska										
2	Budget July 1, 2025 though June 30, 2026										
3	Budget proposed September 4, 2025 (budget Income/Expense & Difference)										
4	Actual Numbers July 1, 2025 - September 29, 2025			Proposed budget to be reviewed September 4 and approved at October 2 board meeting							
5											
6				Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual		
7				Income	Income	Expense	Expense	Difference	Difference		
8											
9	American Advertising Awards			\$51,950.00		\$30,740.00		\$21,210.00			See - AAAwards tab - will make changes on entry fees this year
10											
11	Professional Development (based on 3 inpersc			\$2,000	\$ 805.00	\$1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 805.00		Aug 12, October 2, April & May
12	Programs			\$1,500.00				\$ 1,500.00			Sponsorship-Oct+May
13											
14											
15	Communications/PR										
16	Admuse					\$0					
17											Domain Renewal & Securty costs - Envoy has us covered for keeping us clean with a few new changes. This may lower to just domain renewal.
18	Website (Site Expense)					\$ 350.00		(\$350.00)			\$45 per month currently (charges went up a few months ago)
19	MailChimp					\$ 540.00		\$ (540.00)			Sponsored links - put in events/programs or in Communications for income - didn't
20											
+ ≡ Budget at a Glance ▾ AAAwards ▾ Special Events ▾ Programs ▾ MTPs ▾ Membership Events ▾ Membership Dues ▾ Admin ▾ Ne											

- Exhibit B - Club Goals



2025-2026 Ad Club Goals & Responsibilities

Club Goals

1. Demonstrate and highlight that AAF Nebraska is living its mission and beliefs through purposeful outreach, events, programming and initiatives. Continue to weave diversity, equity, and inclusion into the culture of the club through membership recruitment, educational and event opportunities, community resources, and beyond.
2. Provide unique opportunities to our members and the community for professional development and networking - both virtually and in person events throughout the year with events happening in the Omaha Metro and beyond.
3. Ensure all events are confirmed and included on the club calendar with target dates set at least 8 weeks in advance to allow for effective planning and promotion.
4. Maintain the federation's cash reserves and continue to look at creative cost reduction in AAF Nebraska's annual overhead costs.
5. The Executive Committee will review all income and expenditures at each of its meetings.
6. Develop consistent, creative and timely communication with members and non-members, increasing social media engagement by the use of the content calendar and plan. Promotional materials should be ready for distribution at least 6 weeks prior to the event.
7. Maintain membership and retain at least 85% of membership by renewal. This includes increasing diverse and younger membership from advertising agencies, corporate marketing departments, media representatives, and vendors.
8. Expanding our outreach with non-member engagement at professional development, networking and fundraising activities.
9. Make sure to continue to put all materials in club Google Drive for documentation and use for AAF National

- Exhibit C - Board Retreat Photo



- Exhibit D - Ovation Awards Tracking with Board Activities

2025-2026 Board Directory													
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help													
100% Arial 10													
Name	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
	July 10, 2025 Board Retreat	July 17, 2025 ON Brand Conference	August 5, 2025 Executive Board MTG	August 7, 2025 Board MTG	August 12, 2025 Annual MTG & Program	Off Right: Leadership Tips & Tricks	September 2, 2025 Executive Board MTG	September 4, 2025 Board MTG	webinar AI - Government Affairs Committee	2025 AdVenture+ & AdConnect in Lincoln	President Idea Exchange: Budgeting & Finances	September 26, 2025 Executive Board MTG	October 2, 2025 Board MTG
Executive Board:													
Chris LaCroix	Absent			Absent	Absent	X		Absent	Absent	X		X	Absent
Cody Felber	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X
Brad Eubanks	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X	X
Teresa Lauver	X			X	X	X	X	X				Absent	Absent
Cassi Warren									X	X		X	X
Board of Directors:													
Theresa Thiel	X	X						Absent					X
Eric Hanneman	X	X			Absent			X					X
Nikki Whitehead	X							X					Absent
Marissa Jackson	X					X		Absent					Absent

- Exhibit E - Event/Program Calendar 2025-2026

Date	Event	Description
April 3, 2025	Arcade Night	Networking + competition event at a new Omaha venue (Omaha)
May 5, 2025	Arts and Crafts	Networking + hands-on crafting, art silent auction (LaVista)
May 13, 2025	AdConnect: Challenge Accepted!	In-person case-study night + Q&A (HopCat, Lincoln)
June 12, 2025	AdReads: Culture + Typography	Virtual author session + facilitated discussion (Zoom)
July 17, 2025	ON Brand 2025	Full-day regional conference with keynotes + breakouts (Omaha)
August 12, 2025	AdBites Professional Development with Coach Sandy Spady/Annual Meeting	Networking + professional development + club award presentations (Omaha)
September 9, 2025	D9 Webinar Stay Creative as an Inhouse Designer	Webinar hosted by our district - collaboration in planning with D9 leaders and local chapters- professional development (Zoom)
September 25, 2026	Adventure+	Half-day student engagement event with keynote, panel discussion + networking (Lincoln) - fostering the next generation of advertising professionals
October 2, 2025	AI in Action 2025	Networking + moderated panel on AI's impact across industries (Lucky Bucket, Omaha)
October 14, 2025	AdVenture State DECA Conference	Full-day student engagement event - collaboration with Nebraska State DECA leadership - panel discussions + hands-on student activities - offering insights to the advertising industry
November 13, 2025	Chili Cookoff	Networking + professional development + fun competition (LaVista)
December 2, 2025	D9 Webinar AI with Intention	Webinar hosted by our district - collaboration in planning with D9 leaders and local chapters - professional development (Zoom)
December 9, 2025	How to Win an ADDY	Webinar hosted by our district - collaboration in planning with D9 leaders and local chapters (Zoom)
December 13, 2025	Holiday Party "United for the Holidays"	Membership Engagement, Special Event/Fundraiser, Community Outreach + Silent Auction (Omaha)

January 7, 2026	AdTax Webinar	Legislative panel discussion (Zoom)
January 14, 2026	AdReads: Untangling Spaghetti	Virtual author session on brand clarity + purposeful messaging (Zoom)
January 22, 2026	Bowl-A-Rama	Networking + competition event at a new Omaha venue (Omaha)
February 20, 2026	American Advertising Awards Creative Nebraska	Networking, Awards Show + Honoring Advertising Community (Omaha)
March 12, 2026	Lessons with Legends	Networking + Professional Development (LaVista)
March 26 & 27, 2026	Meet the Pros 26: Live	Two-Day Student Conference meeting area professionals, hands-on activities, panel discussions, keynote speakers, resume and portfolio reviews - fostering the next generation of advertising professionals
March 26, 2026	AdConnect	Member and Student networking event fostering the next generation

- Exhibit F(a) & Exhibit F(b) - ON Brand 2025



- Exhibit G(a) and G(b) AdReads

aaf nebraska

AdReads

Professional Development

Untangling Spaghetti

A Branding Fable

Learn how to craft meaningful and purposeful brand messaging with **Lyn Wineman** as she discusses her book.




Wednesday, January 14 | 12:00 PM via Zoom

aaf nebraska

AdReads

Professional Development

Culture + Typography

How Culture Affects Typography

Gain type inspiration and explore how the culture around us shapes everyday type with **Nikki Villagomez** as she discusses her book.




Thursday, June 12 | 5:15 PM via Zoom

- Exhibit H(a) and Exhibit H(b) - AdVenture+ & Adventure

aaf nebraska presents




thursday september 25
UNL experience lab
students FREE

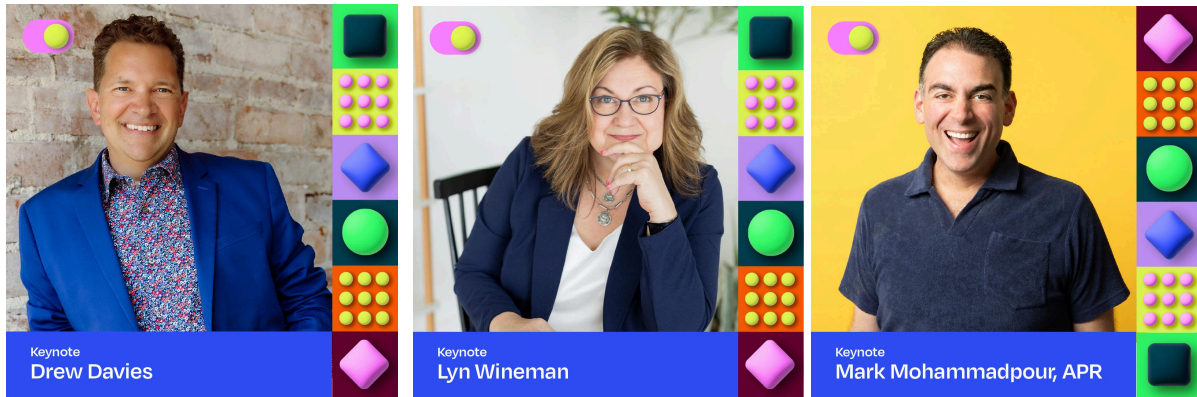
keynote speaker
Anthony Galvan, Vice
President of Marketing
at Hudl

SPONSORED BY:





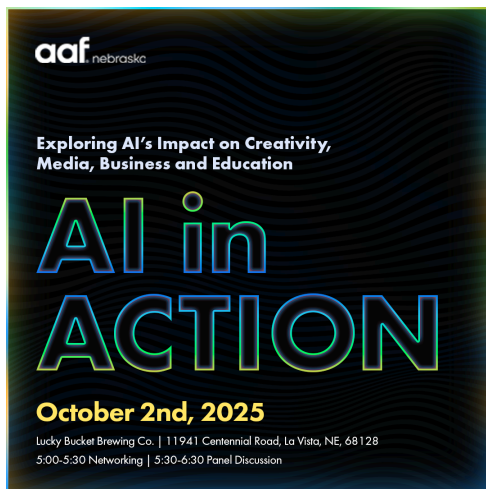
- Exhibit I(a), Exhibit I(b), Exhibit I(c) - ON Brand 2025



- Exhibit J - Meet the Pros 2026: Live



- Exhibit K(a) & Exhibit K(b) - Professional Development AI Panel Discussion



- Exhibit L - AdVenture+

Exhibit M - AdVenture DECA Conference



- Exhibit N - Arts & Crafts



- Exhibit O(a) & Exhibit O(b) - Bowl-a-Rama



- Exhibit P - Lessons with Legends



- Exhibit Q - Membership Survey Snapshot

1	Timestamp	Email Address	What type of membership do you hold?	Where are you in your professional journey?	Where do you learn about upcoming future AAF Nebraska events and networking opportunities?	Where are you website, now AAFNebraska.org?	When was the last time you visited the AAF Nebraska website?	How many AAF Nebraska events did you attend in 2025?
229	1/1/2026 12:04:17	1qe7fwgr@bin.xintaitong	Student	Associate to Middle L	AAF Nebraska Website, AAF Nebraska's newsletter	Lincoln	One Month	Three
230	1/3/2026 5:56:05	mz6t5jaiw@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Associate to Middle L	AAF Nebraska Email	Omaha	One Day	One
231	1/3/2026 6:00:44	urryyxthy@zsz.xintaitong	Student	I'm in college	AAF Nebraska Website	Lincoln	One Week	One
232	1/3/2026 6:06:42	c8sdjevod@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email, AAF Nebraska Website	Kearney	One Day	Three
233	1/3/2026 6:10:46	63hhmrpfv@trt.rehearsal	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Omaha	One Day	Three
234	1/3/2026 6:14:32	54h2zxp6@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email, AAF Nebraska Website	Lincoln	One Week	Two
235	1/3/2026 6:16:39	4p05gn2u@kku.rehearsal	Student	Senior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Kearney	One Month	One
236	1/3/2026 6:18:44	cxy87ca2g@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email, AAF Nebraska Website	Omaha	One Day	Two
237	1/3/2026 6:21:33	a8ygbah@kku.rehearsal	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Website	Lincoln	One Week	One
238	1/3/2026 6:28:55	umwzodgc@trt.rehearsal	Student	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Kearney	One Week	One
239	1/3/2026 6:34:20	dx0uwqcyb@trt.rehearsal	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email, AAF Nebraska Website	Omaha	One Day	One
240	1/3/2026 6:38:49	minku2ey@kku.rehearsal	Student	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email		One Week	One
241	1/3/2026 6:43:02	sm6kyl0qk@trt.rehearsal	Student	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Kearney	One Day	One
242	1/3/2026 6:47:34	5a2ll7zro@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email, AAF Nebraska Website	Lincoln	One Day	Two
243	1/3/2026 6:52:59	kl75uxc73@zsz.xintaitong	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Lincoln	One Day	Two
244	1/3/2026 6:56:22	k9puzu7l2@trt.rehearsal	Student	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Omaha	One Week	One
245	1/3/2026 7:01:33	fu2f8odo@kku.rehearsal	Professional	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Omaha	One Day	Two
246	1/3/2026 19:46:15	mzc48j742@trt.xintaitong	Student	Junior Level	AAF Nebraska Email	Lincoln	One Month	Three

- Exhibit R (a) & (b) - Event Survey and Event Survey Responses Holiday Party



AAF Nebraska Holiday Party Survey | December 16 | Field Club of Omaha

B I U

Thank you for joining us at the AAF Nebraska Holiday Party! We'd love your feedback to help us continue creating meaningful, fun, and valuable events for our members and community. This survey should take just a few minutes to complete.

1. Overall Experience

How would you rate your overall experience at the Holiday Party?

Form Responses 1					
Timestamp	1. Overall Experience How would you rate your overall experience?	2. Networking How would you rate the networking opportunity?	3. Fun Factor How fun was the Holiday Party?	4. Luncheon How would you rate the luncheon and venue?	5. Silent Auction How appealing were the silent auction items?
	1 - Not at all valuable 2 - Slightly valuable 3 - Moderately valuable 4 - Very valuable 5 - Extremely valuable	1 - Not fun 2 - Slightly fun 3 - Moderately fun 4 - Very fun 5 - Extremely fun	1 - Not appealing 2 - Slightly appealing 3 - Moderately appealing 4 - Very appealing 5 - Extremely appealing		
12/16/2025 17:46:04	★★★★★ Excellent	5	5	5	
12/16/2025 17:55:36	★★★★★ Excellent	4	3	5	
12/16/2025 18:20:27	★★★★★ Excellent	5	5	5	
12/16/2025 19:19:43	★★★★★ Excellent	4	5	5	
12/16/2025 19:21:32	★★★★★ Excellent	5	4	5	
12/16/2025 19:55:34	★★★★★ Very Good	3	3	5	
12/16/2025 20:46:19	★★★★★ Good	2	2	3	
12/16/2025 22:02:26	★★★★★ Excellent	3	3	5	
12/17/2025 7:55:44	★★★★★ Excellent	4	4	5	
12/17/2025 10:26:56	★★★★★ Very Good	4	4	4	
12/17/2025 14:03:15	★★★★★ Excellent	3	4	4	
12/19/2025 13:45:47	★★★★★ Excellent	5	5	5	

- Exhibit S - AAF Nebraska Member Perks from Nexxen



- Exhibit T - Social Media Calendar

