



AAF ORLANDO

The Unifying Voice for Advertising & the Creative Community in Greater Orlando

2025 - 2026 CLUB ACHIEVEMENT COMPETITION

Programs

INTRODUCTION

During the 2025–2026 club year, the AAF Orlando Board of Directors and Programs Committee implemented a clearly defined programming framework designed to educate, connect, and engage the Greater Orlando advertising and creative community. This strategy was guided by four core principles: (1) building a steady cadence of programs throughout the year, (2) removing barriers to participation, (3) using programs as a driver of membership growth and engagement, and (4) demonstrating program value through strong demand and non-dues revenue generation.

Rather than relying on a limited number of marquee moments, AAF Orlando focused on developing a balanced, interconnected approach to programming that combined frequent, low-barrier networking opportunities with meaningful professional development and community-building experiences (Exhibit A). Programs were intentionally designed to complement one another, creating regular opportunities for members and attendees to engage with AAF Orlando throughout the year.

Accessibility was a foundational component of this framework. By offering programs at varying times of day, across in-person and virtual formats, and in diverse locations, AAF Orlando reduced participation barriers and expanded opportunities for involvement. This approach allowed professionals at different career stages, schedules, and life circumstances to engage with the organization in ways that felt attainable and relevant.

To further support engagement, growth, and sustainability, AAF Orlando maintained a pricing model that preserved strong membership value while encouraging participation from the broader creative community. Most programs remained free or low-cost for members, with a modest fee for non-members—positioning events as both a member benefit and a clear indicator of program value. Strategic partnerships with member agencies, local businesses, educational institutions, and industry organizations amplified program reach and reinforced AAF Orlando’s role as a connector within the Central Florida advertising and creative community.

GOALS

1. Establish a consistent, inclusive year-round program schedule

AAF Orlando's programming strategy is intentionally designed to serve professionals across disciplines, backgrounds, and career stages by providing consistent, year-round opportunities to engage with the organization. Rather than relying on isolated events, the chapter focuses on creating an interconnected mix of low-barrier networking programs, educational experiences, and marquee moments that celebrate excellence and leadership within the industry.

This year, AAF Orlando delivered, that collectively ensured members and non-members could participate in ways that aligned with their professional needs and availability. By intentionally varying program formats, topics, and levels of commitment, AAF Orlando created meaningful opportunities for connection and learning while elevating diverse voices and professional paths.

This strategic approach strengthened community participation, encouraged repeat attendance, and supported sustained engagement across the full advertising and creative community in Greater Orlando, not to mention driving significant revenue for the organization.

2. Increase accessibility through varied formats and scheduling

Accessibility was a defining principle of AAF Orlando's 2025–2026 programming strategy. By intentionally offering programs across varied times, formats, and locations—including morning, evening, and virtual options—the chapter reduced common participation barriers related to schedules, transportation, and career stage. During the club year, AAF Orlando delivered ~32 programs spanning five distinct formats—in-person networking events, in-person educational programs, virtual events, signature events, and experiential or collaborative programs—hosted across ~25 unique venues.

By designing programs with accessibility in mind, AAF Orlando expanded the geographic diversity of event locations during the 2025–2026 club year while sustaining a consistent volume of programming. Events extended beyond Central Orlando to include locations

near the University of Central Florida and Full Sail University, as well as Maitland and Winter Garden. This broader footprint reduced location-based barriers and allowed more professionals to engage in ways that felt attainable and relevant, supporting strong participation and repeat attendance throughout the year.

3. Enhance membership through strategic, value-driven programming

A continued challenge for AAF Orlando has been expanding program participation beyond core members while converting engagement into long-term membership growth. During the 2025–2026 club year, programming was intentionally positioned as a strategic growth tool—designed not only to attract prospective members, but to clearly demonstrate the value of AAF Orlando membership through consistent, high-quality experiences.

By curating timely, relevant programs that appealed to professionals across multiple career stages—including new formats such as *AdX* and *Screen Society*—AAF Orlando maintained consistent monthly touchpoints that increased awareness and sustained engagement. During the 2025–2026 club year, AAF Orlando generated over 880 registrations and more than 730 total attendees, representing a 5% increase in attendance compared to the prior year (not including the American Advertising Awards).

Notably, 100% of new members who joined AAF Orlando during the 2025–2026 club year were converted following engagement with an AAF Orlando program, either through direct attendance or through participation by a member of their team.

4. Demonstrate program value through non-dues revenue

AAF Orlando’s programs also served as a meaningful driver of non-dues revenue during the 2025–2026 club year, reinforcing the perceived value and quality of the chapter’s offerings. By consistently bringing together top-tier talent, relevant topics, and an engaged creative community, programs attracted strong interest not only from members, but from non-members willing to pay to participate.

During the 2025–2026 club year, AAF Orlando generated nearly \$3,000 in evergreen program revenue (excluding the American Advertising Awards), representing a 3% year-over-year increase compared to last year. While modest, this growth reflects a consistent willingness—particularly among non-members—to pay for AAF Orlando programming, validating the quality and relevance of our events beyond membership benefits alone.

This steady non-dues revenue supported the sustainability of the chapter’s programming efforts and reinforced AAF Orlando’s role as a trusted convener of meaningful, high-quality experiences for advertising and creative professionals across Greater Orlando.

MOST SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

1. Social Networking Events: Caffeinated Creatives and Agency Apéritif

- **Event Details:** AAF Orlando hosted two monthly networking series: Caffeinated Creatives (Exhibit B), a morning coffee meetup, and Agency Apéritif (Exhibit C), an evening social at rotating restaurants and bars. Offering both morning and evening options increased accessibility, while expanded geographic reach and intentional venue rotation kept the events fresh and attracted new audiences.
- **Target Audience:** Agency and corporate professionals, freelancers, students, and creatives
- **Method of Promotion:** Social media, newsletter, Eventbrite, website, word of mouth
- **Attendance:** Caffeinated Creatives ranged from 6 to 20+ attendees per event, while Agency Apéritif ranged from 14 to 40+ attendees.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Informal feedback, word of mouth, and repeat attendance
- **Results:** Together, these flagship networking programs delivered high engagement at no cost (\$0) to the chapter, generating 390 attendees and more than \$1,400 in non-dues revenue while serving as a reliable entry point for prospective members. Notably, AAF Orlando’s programming model for Caffeinated Creatives and Agency Apéritif has been recognized as a best practice within the district, inspiring peer clubs to launch their own versions of these recurring networking events

(Exhibit D).

2. NEW! AdX Educational Event

- **Event Details:** AAF Orlando launched a brand new event format this year — AdX Orlando (Exhibit E), a TEDx-style speaker series for senior-level professionals, featuring three to four speakers per event (Exhibit F) discussing timely ideas shaping creativity, leadership, and innovation. AdX Orlando achieved the highest average attendance of any educational program this year, with an average of 32 attendees per event.
- **Target Audience:** Agency and corporate professionals, freelancers, students, and creatives
- **Method of Promotion:** Social media, newsletter, Eventbrite, word of mouth
- **Attendance:** More than 95 total attendees across 3 events
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Informal feedback, word of mouth, and repeat attendance
- **Results:** AdX Orlando generated \$1,250 in non-dues attendance revenue and \$250 in cash sponsorship support from Full Sail University, Vivid Creative Solutions, Metamorphosis Media, Florida Citrus Sports, Taylor'd Media, TLR Agency Operations, and Latitude. The series attracted senior leaders from across Central Florida—both as attendees and speakers, many of whom are active chapter members—drove strong repeat participation, and positioned AAF Orlando as a convener of high-level, forward-thinking conversations, demonstrating clear demand for elevated, insight-driven educational programming.

2. Screen Society

- **Event Details:** Building on its introduction late last year, AAF Orlando refined our Screen Society (Exhibit G) program during the 2025–2026 club year as a focused program designed to strengthen collaboration between agencies and the film and video production community. Presented through the Film Committee, Screen Society featured curated conversations with industry leaders (Exhibit H), networking, and industry insights centered on creative partnership, production collaboration, and the future of visual storytelling.

- **Target Audience:** Agency and corporate professionals, freelancers, students, and creatives
- **Method of Promotion:** Social media, newsletter, Eventbrite, website, word of mouth
- **Attendance:** More than 50 attendees across 2 events
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Informal feedback, word of mouth, and repeat attendance
- **Results:** Screen Society continued to grow as a recognizable AAF Orlando program, attracting an engaged audience and generating \$600 in non-dues revenue from attendance, plus \$250 in cash sponsorship from Production Hub and in-kind sponsorship from Adrenaline, Oxenfree, Valencia, and Full Sail University. With this financial and in-kind partnership support, the event operated at zero expense. The series reinforced the chapter's role in fostering meaningful agency–filmmaker collaboration within the local creative community.

SPECIAL EVENTS

1. Celebrating AAF Orlando Silver Medalist Chris Bare

- **Event Details:** AAF Orlando hosted a special celebration honoring Chris Bare, our Silver Medalist, at The Wildflower (Exhibit I). The event brought together industry professionals, colleagues, and friends to recognize Chris's achievements and impact within the advertising community.

Designed as an intimate and highly personal experience, the celebration incorporated live digital audience polls featuring playful questions about the honoree (Exhibit J), along with custom “Barely Appropriate” table-talk cards (Exhibit K)—a creative nod to Chris's name—that sparked conversation and laughter throughout the evening.

Ten sponsors—including Push Button Productions, Oxenfree Film & Motion, Rise Above Marketing, and Push—composed of past employers, current clients, and industry partners, generously contributed cash and in-kind services to support the success of the event.

- **Target Audience:** Advertising professionals, agency members, freelancers, corporate partners, and friends and family of the honoree

- **Method of Promotion:** Social media, newsletter, Eventbrite, word of mouth
- **Attendance:** More than 60 people attended
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Informal feedback, word of mouth and social media
- **Results:** More than four speakers honored Chris Bare with a mix of heartfelt tributes and good-natured humor, reflecting both his professional impact and the strong relationships he has built within the community. The intimate setting and candid remarks fostered connection, celebration, and enthusiasm for future AAF Orlando programming.

2. American Advertising Awards Reception

- **Event Details:** On February 20, 2026, AAF Orlando hosted the Orlando American Advertising Awards Celebration at Orlando Museum of Art (Exhibit L). The event celebrated excellence in advertising and recognized outstanding creative work from professionals and students across the region.
- **Target Audience:** Members of advertising agencies, corporate professionals, freelancers, community members interested in advertising, students, and emerging professionals.
- **Method of Promotion:** Social media, newsletter, Eventbrite, website, individual outreach, word of mouth
- **Attendance:** **More than** 130 people attended (150 registered)
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Word of mouth, attendee feedback, and post-event engagement.
- **Results:** Results: In alignment with broader national trends across AAF chapters, the 2025–2026 American Advertising Awards experienced a year-over-year decline in total entries. In response, AAF Orlando intentionally transitioned from a large-scale gala to a more intimate winner celebration—prioritizing financial stewardship while keeping member benefit at the forefront.

To preserve value for entrants, the chapter implemented an all-inclusive entry pricing model, ensuring all Gold and Silver winners received trophies and that all Silver winners advanced to the district level—expanding opportunities for local creatives to compete beyond

Orlando.

Despite the streamlined format, the Awards generated \$26,268 in entry revenue—nearly matching the prior year—along with \$5,145 in ticket revenue and \$3,200 in cash sponsorship support (Exhibit M), in addition to in-kind sponsorship contributions valued in the tens of thousands of dollars. Student participation remained strong (46 entries vs. 50 last year), reinforcing AAF Orlando’s commitment to elevating emerging talent while maintaining the integrity and prestige of the competition.

Beyond local impact, AAF Orlando’s American Advertising Awards educational webinars—“What’s an ADDY?” and “How to Win an ADDY” (Exhibit N) —were adopted by peer clubs within the district as replicable programming models, further positioning AAF Orlando as a leader in award education and sustainable participation strategy.

COLLATERAL

Exhibit X — 2025-2026 Programs Tracker / Event Calendar

Exhibit B – Caffeinated Creatives (Morning networking event)

Exhibit C – Agency Apéritif (Evening networking event)

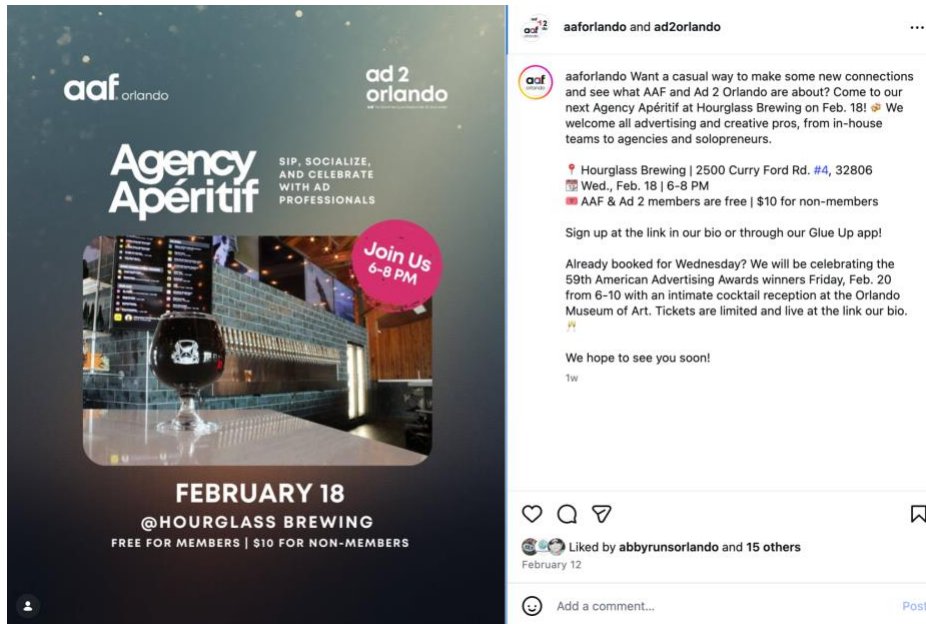


Exhibit D – Other Club Example - Space Coast Adoption of Caffeinated Creatives

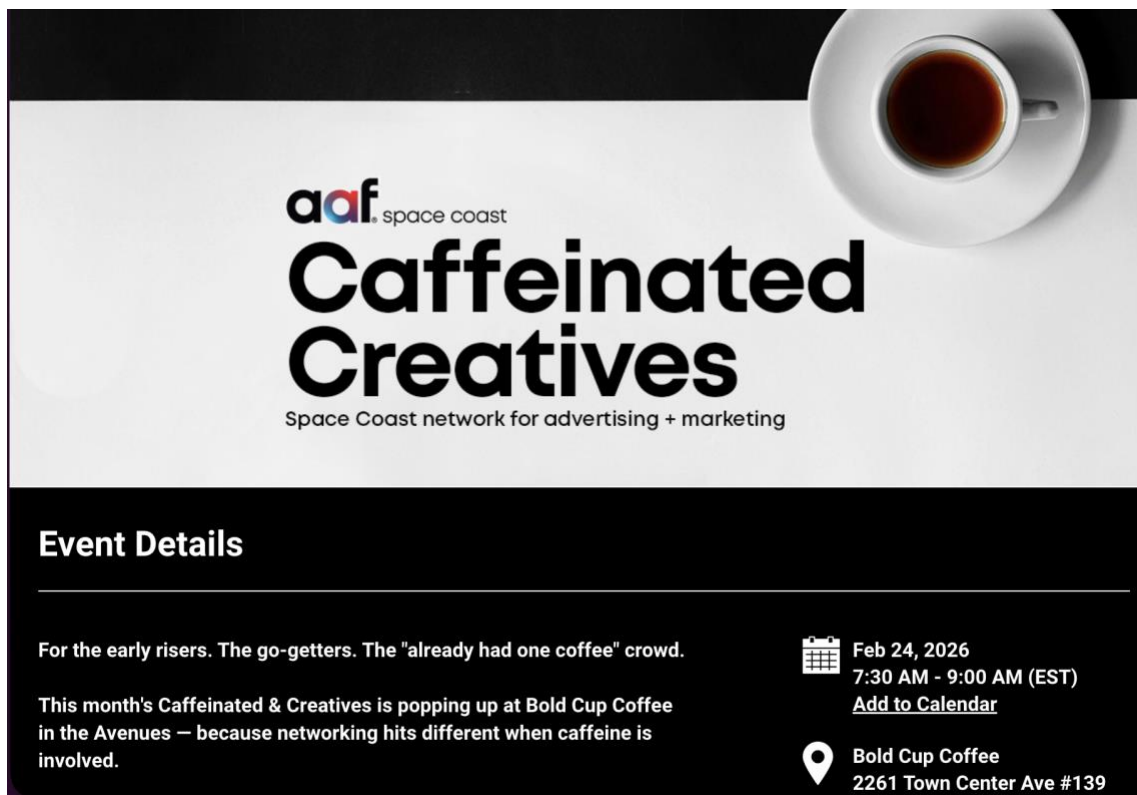


Exhibit E – AdX (Speaker Series)



Exhibit F - AdX Speakers Example



Exhibit G – Screen Society



Exhibit H – Screen Society Speakers Example



Exhibit I – Silver Medal Award Celebration - Winner and President



Exhibit J – Silver Medal Award Event - Audience Polls

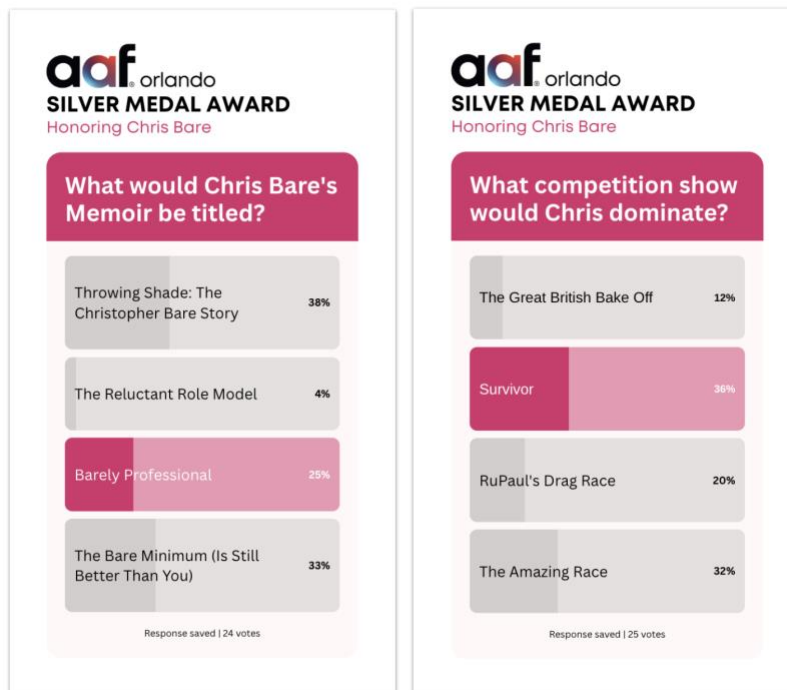


Exhibit K – Silver Medal Award Event - Table Talk Card Example

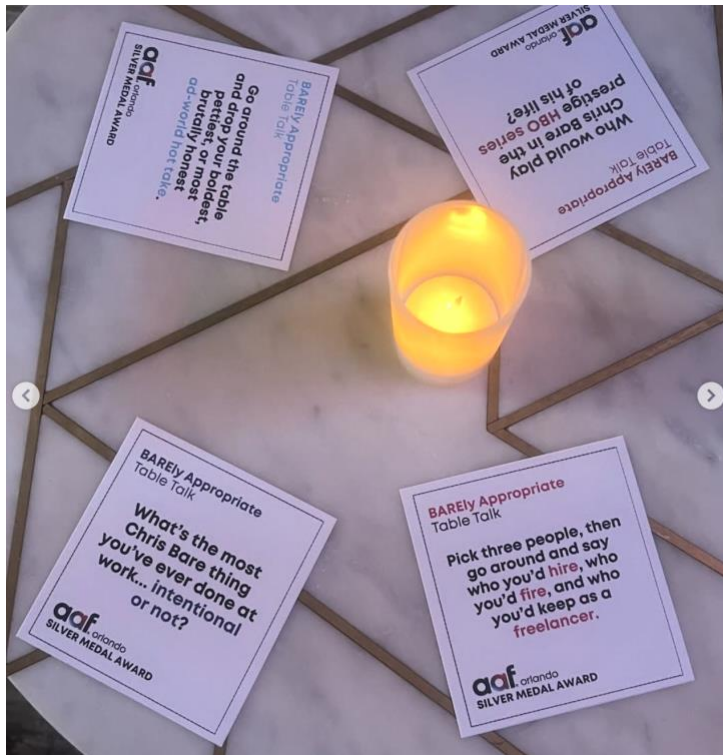


Exhibit L – American Advertising Awards Celebration

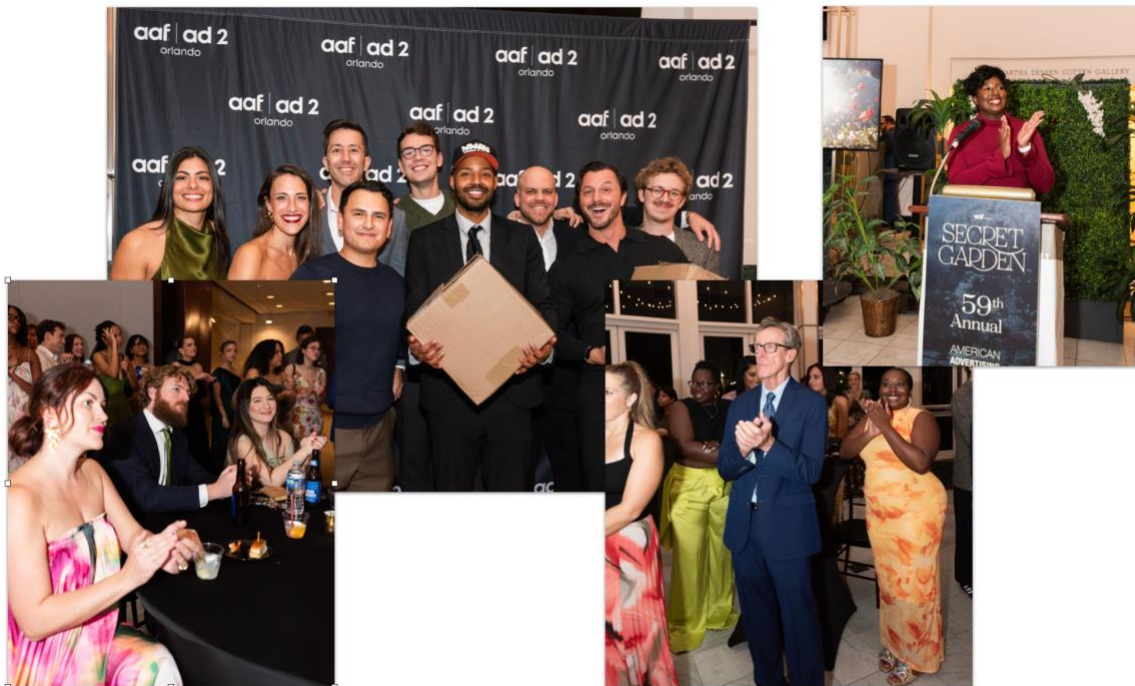


Exhibit M – American Advertising Awards Sponsors



Exhibit N – Other Chapters Adoption of “How to Win An ADDY” - Seattle Example

How to Win An Addy – Session 1

Tuesday, November 18, 2025
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

AAF Seattle
Seattle, United States (map)



Join us for an in-depth American Advertising Awards 101 Webinar led by Andy Farnum and Cindy Pennington, Seattle's American Advertising Awards Co-Chairs, designed to help you understand everything you need to know about entering and succeeding in the AAs.