

CASE STUDY

CATALOGS + PUBLISHING

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE – CAI ILLINOIS



THE CHALLENGE

In 2011 CAI Illinois had been producing COMMON INTEREST, a quarterly magazine for the members of CAI Illinois, for quite some time.

The magazine's editorial content was created and edited by a volunteer board and contributing authors, overseen by an association staff that was stretched thin. Even with a 3-month turnaround, the job of producing a well-designed, timely and valuable resource, on a consistent and cost-conscious basis, was quite the challenge.

THE JOURNEY

In 2011 Custom Direct began work on COMMON INTEREST

Since 1992, Custom Direct's team has created and produced monthly, quarterly, and annual publications, ranging in page count from 24 to the 100's, in magazine and catalog formats, and has the expertise needed to determine a publication's areas of improvement and strengths.

Eleven years and more than 44 issues later, the partnership between Custom Direct and CAI-IL remains as strong as ever.



Summer 2022 Issue

THE DISCOVERY AND SOLUTION

Custom Direct began by redesigning the overall look and feel of the publication including development of a workflow to better manage editorial and advertising deadlines

Generally, the improved process includes:

- CAI chooses an editorial theme for each issue; articles are written based on the theme.
- CDI creates an overall cover and inside graphic treatment, based upon the theme.
- Creative workflow requires CDI read each article to understand the message and provide relevant editorial creative that is engaging and reinforces the message.
- While the first round of creative takes place, CAI provides additional content, consistent with each issue: member spotlights, industry news, awards recognition and CAI specific content that pertains to their services or offerings.
- There are three rounds of revisions built into the schedule but it's rare that any pages require three rounds. We proof all content before submission. Once final approval is given, we produce final high-resolution files and upload to their printer.
- CAI-IL manages the print and mailing – although this is a service which CDI offers to all clients.

KEY RESULTS

Seamlessly incorporating new branding, increased ad revenue and a vibrant new look through a collaborative process

COMMON INTEREST has a circulation of over 3,500 to its more than 1,500 members and member companies, which include 22% businesses, 25% community associations Board members and unit owners, and 53% community association managers and management companies representing the interests of over 3.5 million homeowners in 18,000 community associations.

CAI Illinois members see the magazine, in both its digital and print formats, as a truly valuable perk of being a dues-paying member. Association members and volunteers value the insight and knowledge shared in the articles, business partners and association sponsors appreciate the truly targeted and responsive readership.

Ads in the magazine provide a highly targeted, effective, and unobtrusive method of reaching association members, helping offset the costs of design, production, printing, and mailing. Advertisers are encouraged to provide ads which not only sell but are substantive and informative in nature. **Recent ad counts, for the Summer 2022 issue included a total of 58 ads:**

- 9 full page ads, including inside covers and back cover.
- 7 half page ads
- 17 quarter page ads
- 25 deluxe classified ads

Each issue consists of between 52-60 full color pages of valuable content.

“Custom Direct designs and publishes our quarterly membership magazine, **Common Interest**, which is one of our main member benefits. We have won an award from our National organization for the magazine and our members continue to compliment the magazine and its styling.”

“The Custom team are professional, detail-oriented, creative, and overall very pleasant to work with. I have had nothing but positive experiences working with Custom Direct. I hope to continue the relationship for years to come.”

- Cheryl Murphy
Chapter Executive Director
Community Associations Institute, Illinois Chapter