

2021 BUSINESS REPORT

This report provides an overview of JALT business conducted at the national level in the prior fiscal year.

2020 International Conference – On line (Wayne Malcolm)

JALT2020 was the first time the international conference was hosted online. More than 100 volunteers worked together to plan and execute the conference. From vetting proposals to hosting rooms to programming the platform, JALT volunteers were the heart of the conference.

Our platform, Eventzil.la, created by Gary Ross served as the entry point into the conference. Overall, the feedback on the conference system was positive, and we look to work with Gary Ross for JALT2021.

Total paid attendees numbered over 1,000, with revenue being 5.6 million yen. After minor expenses, JALT was able to make a profit that allowed us to balance the budget more equitably.

Participants attended from 50 countries. In a face to face year the number is around 25. The extra exposure has allowed for the JALT community to build bonds with other organizations and people around the world.

Associate Members (Susan Meiki / Miho Tajima)

Current Associate Member (AM) membership as of April 30, 2021 totals 28, it was 35 in 2020 and 41 in 2019. The current Covid situation did not help. The national conference online EME was not as productive as planned and Zoom rooms for the AMs were sparsely attended. AM renewals are happening and no non-renewals so far have been recorded or discussed. However, no new AMs were recruited this past year due to the economic situation.

The relationship between current AMs and JALT is positive and constructive, Unfortunately, because of Covid restrictions in force in early 2021 we were unable to hold our annual lunch meeting with AMs which has traditionally been a great opportunity to share information and ideas in a comfortable environment. Instead we had 2 zoom meetings in preparation for the annual conference.

Regional Professional Activities Committee (RPAC) (Nathaniel Reed)

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Two portfolios we have been working on for a while (the presenters list and Outreach Chair manual) are reaching conclusions.

The new JALT website has provided a useful platform for the list to go on. The committee is working with the web development team to make this list less static and for people on the list to be able to edit their information as the need arises. In addition, we are exploring ways for this list to be reviewed annually to keep it up to date. We've received generous support in advertising this list and making sure Program Chairs are reminded of its existence when planning their Chapter and SIG events.

The Outreach Chair is a new, non-mandatory position that aims to bring awareness of JALT and local/international events to more people in education, research and related areas. Success and increasing the number of Outreach Chairs and adding their views and experiences into the manual has helped to define this role.

PanSIG 2021 planning has been incredibly smooth, and PanSIG 2022 is looking to build on this impeccable organisation. The date of PanSIG 2022 will be later than in previous years and the support from other groups, committees and members to adjust their conferences and meetings has been incredible. The JALT community is really here for each other.

Young Learners Subcommittee (YLS) (Caroline- Lloyd)

The YLS has been looking into having an online training programme for professionals in the field of young learners' education. Due to the current situation it hasn't been possible to

start the one-day training programme that had been planned at the beginning of last year. However, with all Chapters having online meetings it has meant that teachers of young learners have been able to attend a wide array of presentations that would not have otherwise been available to them. For more information please contact Caroline Lloyd @yls@jalt.org

Public Relations (Bill Pellowe)

This fiscal year started in the middle of reversing much of the event-related social media posts that had already been put in place, as events were cancelled and we all were learning in mid- and late-March just how affected our lives were going to become in the Coronavirus Pandemic. PanSIG was cancelled, then postponed, while the CALL SIG Conference was seemingly wrestled online in a matter of weeks by the heroic efforts of our most tech-savvy SIG, with Gary Ross furiously programming an online platform while the rest of the team leapt in, paving the way for an online PanSIG in June.

Social media posts about cancellations tapered off towards the end of June, as many JALT members became more adept at using a complex mix of technology to teach from home, and more of our chapters and SIGs began putting events online. Since many of these online events had shorter planning times than in-person events, the monthly newsletters were supplemented a couple of times with mid-month editions focused on events.

This past year, three investments have paid off for us. First, our subscription to Hootsuite allows me to schedule social media posts, which has helped in the lead up to our conference as well as our big deadlines such as the call for presenters. Second, our subscription to Canva has helped me create professional-looking graphics for social media. Third, we have occasionally “boosted” posts on Facebook and Instagram by paying small amounts to ensure that our message reaches a wider audience.

Our social media followers continue to grow:

Twitter:

@jaltorg	1,910 followers
@JALTconference	1,405 followers
@JALT_HQ	1,742 followers

Instagram

@jaltconference	593 followers
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Facebook

JALT.conference page	4,246 followers
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LinkedIn

JALT Annual International Conference page	236 followers
JALT Group	1,602 members

YouTube

1,225 views in the past 28 days
764 subscribers
689 public videos

One of the main reasons that our YouTube has expanded so much is the efforts of Mark Brierley and his team who have been uploading the JALT2020 conference videos.

Treasury (Michael Mielke)

The 2020 - 2021 Fiscal Year was unprecedented in the history of NPO JALT due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a lot of uncertainty around whether to hold the International Conference face to face

or online. The FSC determined that an online conference made the most sense financially as we could still safely hold the International Conference albeit with much reduced revenues coming in. However, the reduced revenues were offset by the very low expenses of putting on the conference, thanks to the efforts of so many volunteers and especially the free use of Gary Ross's Eventzila platform and his support and monitoring of the platform throughout the conference. The final result was that the conference was profitable. By holding the conference, as opposed to cancelling it, JALT was able to fulfill its mandate of supporting language educators and maintaining an international presence. Membership numbers saw a decline across all membership types. However, the decline may be attributed to the lack of face to face meetings where members can get together to form Group memberships more easily or be approached for renewal.

As anticipated in the 2020-2021 FY business report, travel expenses were much lower due to virtual Board of Director Meetings and EBM meetings. We were able to give a full grant to chapter and SIGs to help them maintain stability. We were also able to cover the added expense of building our new website and database, which has been completed. Our lower travel and conference expenses combined with a government COVID grant resulted in a lower deficit than expected.

Membership (Melodie Cook)

While membership numbers had been on a downward trend over the last year, we have initiated the ZPD which includes a new members' orientation and at monthly meetings, I have noticed new people signing up. In fact, at our first ZPD, a group of people got together and created a group membership. At the last ZPD, I hosted the new member orientation and was given positive feedback by the attendees as to the usefulness of the orientation. Also, new members mentioned that the ZPD activity made them feel welcome. I am in fairly regular contact with the membership chairs of chapters and SIGS and they feel free to write to me with issues. A few nights ago, someone else was trying to create a group and I gave her advice on how to do it successfully (she was having difficulty completing the process on an iPad, so I suggested she use a computer instead).

The Membership Committee has created a survey which we hope to distribute very soon. We are thinking of offering some kind of incentive to encourage members to take the survey. The DoM has talked to the BM about this.

Database Development / JCO (Robert Chartrand)

JALT Central Office (JCO) Staffing: Due to safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff at JCO have been mostly working from home and going to the office in Tokyo as necessary. We have two full-time team members including Office Manager, Junko Shirakawa, and Associate Member Liaison, Miho Tajima. We also have two part-time team members, Accounting Secretary, Hideko Hayakawa, and Membership Secretary Chie Kobayashi. JALT has purchased two laptop computers for the staff to support their work from home, according to their needs. We are grateful for their hard work during these difficult times.

Website and Database Development: In March 2021, the JALT website and database were updated and put online for greater access and ease of use by JCO, JALT members, JALT officers, Associate Members and the general public. Membership data and administrative functionality have greatly improved over the previous version of the website/database and we have implemented direct functionality so that membership officers can now have access to current membership lists without requesting the information from JCO. Other improvements include newly implemented accounting functionality and other administrative tasks that were developed in collaboration with the database developer and JCO. We are happy to report that the transition was completed in March and most of the problems have been worked out in the transition process. Previous problems related to online advertising and issues related to officer roles have been addressed and are now working smoothly.

Google Workspace: On January 1, 2021 JALT changed its email and other systems to Google Workspace (formerly known as G Suite). This includes all of the applications that are included in the NPO account including Gmail, Drive, Groups, and so on. By using a JALT.org email address, JCO staff and JALT officers will have access to all the Google Workspace applications. This change had been planned to be made for a long time, the start of a new BoD as well as the need to change our mailing system required

us to make this move. The change was made with minor complications and is currently working smoothly. It has made a positive improvement for JALT business with a more reliable mailing system and other positive changes.

Basecamp Integration: In collaboration with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the JALT BoD decided to subscribe to a project management software tool called “Basecamp.” JALT purchased a one-year license that allows unlimited access for JALT officers to organize “Teams” and “Projects” that could help with the communication flow within the JALT organization. Chapters, SIGs, Committees and other groups who are JALT members, can create groups and discussion topics. For example, a SIG can create a “Team” for regular discussions and then create “Projects” such as conference discussions or other specific items. There are various possibilities to use Basecamp for different types of situations and the BoD is investigating what those best practices might be. JCO, the BoD and various groups within JALT have already started using Basecamp and will benefit from greater ease of communication within the organization.

Susan Meiki
JALT Business Manager
May , 2021