

## **2023 BUSINESS PLAN (April 2023 ~ March 2024)**

### **Membership (Julie Kimura)**

I have continued tracking membership trends post-ZPD, but we are not getting a significant number of new members signed up after each event. Perhaps many language teachers in Japan are getting tired of socializing online, particularly since JALT is hosting more in-person events. Another problem is the opposite: many JALT members I have spoken with are unfamiliar with ZPD. When corresponding with colleagues, JALT members or not, I encourage them to sign up and invite a colleague. Membership Chairs are also helping with this. Another way in which Membership Chairs are helping is by confirming that members belong to both a chapter and SIG. Ensuring that members belong to both a chapter and a SIG increases the potential value that members derive from belonging to JALT. Also, from the membership survey conducted in 2021 (Cook, Carruth, Choong, Siew, 2023), it is clear that many members are unaware of JALT's services, including discounts on Apple products, JALT grants, and the Writers' Peer Support Group.

I continue to track new members monthly to get an idea of trends. Unfortunately, however, the number of new members is not consistent across all levels (AMs, Chapters, SIGs). We need to address post-COVID growth in 2023 with new initiatives and better communication with chapters and SIGs. The Membership Liaison continues working hard on the latter.

### **Conference (Wayne Malcolm)**

The plan regarding the conference is keeping it sustainable, while achieving the revenue needed to bring beneficial programs to the JALT membership, and wider language teaching and learning community. Moving forward, the Conference Planning Committee needs to lower overall operational costs, maximize our relationships with our corporate and organizational sponsors, and of course find more ways to attract unique conference attendees.

Using available technology JALT can lower the cost of doing business. As a volunteer organization JALT's greatest resource is its human resources. That said, we need to use our human resources wisely; work smarter not harder. Moving forward it may be more efficient and effective to employ contractors to do our live streaming as well as support our online conference component. Furthermore, using more digital technologies to do things like distribute our conference materials could see us raise our ability to bring a quality product to more people, and eventually gain a greater paying audience. Also, using a digital handbook, flyers, and other materials simply lowers printing costs and environmental burden.

Use of online technology raises the discussion of the online presence of a JALT conference. Not everyone who wants to attend a JALT conference can for various

reasons. The JALT mission statement states that we are an organization that brings communities together and provides a venue for that. Moving forward that venue needs to be digital as well as analog; online as well as face to face. This is not an overnight venture, but something that will need to be built out. Also, JALT must be careful not to take away from the inherent benefits of our face to face conference which is our marquee event. To achieve all these aims, conference programming will need to curate a high quality online program with an exclusive number of presentations geared towards online users, but also incorporate the face to face participant - a hybrid conference. This can be done by renting equipment and organizing a small number of physical presentations along with a number of digital presentations. With live streamed plenaries, this package can be a great option for the purely online participant. As time goes on and tools become more sophisticated it will be possible to build out capacities like networking features, interactions with sponsors, online meet and greets, etc. There is lots of promise, but what is definitely certain, JALT needs to maintain an online presence at the international conference in November. The opportunity for greater revenue are there, but more importantly it is our mission to do so.

Finally, and along with programming sustainability, it is important to consider how big the JALT conference needs to be. What if the conference were Friday through Sunday, with a limited number of presentations, and held in smaller more manageable venues? On the other hand, what would it mean for JALT to have a bigger conference with greater presence? These issues need to be discussed in order to create a vibrantly sustainable conference experience. In relation, such discussions connect with the strategic planning of JALT membership, revenue streams, and overall mission of JALT as an academic organization.

### **Treasury (Michael Mielke)**

The large deficit we incurred in FY2022-2023 means that JALT needs to work harder to manage costs and increase revenue in FY2023-2024.

To manage costs, we can expect reduced costs for our database and website administration, decreased JCO expenses due to the new virtual office, and also most of the expensive purchases such as computers for JCO staff to work from home were completed in the last fiscal year. Chapters and SIGs could see savings by taking advantage of using the JALT servers for hosting their websites, which only cost 5,000 per year. This would also result in increased revenue for JALT at the National level – a net benefit for JALT overall, so to speak.

With the full resumption of face-to-face meetings and conferences, we can expect to see increases in membership and conference attendance, but it is not guaranteed. We need to promote all our events at the Chapter and SIG level as well as the national level not only online, but to friends and colleagues every chance we get. The ZPD has had some modest success in bringing in new members and we need to keep building on that. The Business Manager(s) are working hard to keep our dear Associate Members within JALT by listening and responding to their needs in this time of reduced budgets everywhere, and at the same time branching out to try and include new types of AMs beyond the traditional publishing companies and universities. These types of AMs may

provide even more value to our members and provide a further incentive to renew membership or join JALT for the first time.

### **Administration (Kenn Gale)**

#### **JALT Central Office (JCO) Staffing:**

The staff at JCO has successfully moved out of long time office and into a shared office space. This integration has proven to be, not only cost effective, but also efficient as the staff is able to use it as necessary. Being located right at Tokyo station, the ServCorp office is conveniently located for all staff to visit and use the full service facility as needed. Currently the JCO staff works for home and visits the office as needed. The office supervisor visits usually on a weekly basis and the accounting secretary visits about two times a month for meetings. I also visit once a month and have meetings with the office supervisor to discuss upcoming JALT business. JCO still consist of two full time employees and two part time employees who's contract were just renewed and we look forward to their continued support and service to the JALT community.

#### **Contractual Work: 2023-2024**

Due to the technical nature and critical part of the JALT infrastructure, we employ some people to complete work as needed on a yearly basis. For the upcoming year, these people will be contracted as follows:

JALT Conference Publication Layout: Paul Mason

JALT Website and Database Development: Sean Barber

JALT Publications Website Maintenance: Sean Barber

JALT Miscellaneous Conference Publication Layout: Malcolm Swanson

JALT Postconference Publication Layout: Malcolm Swanson

JALT JJ Layout: Malcolm Swanson

JALT TLT Layout: Malcolm Swanson

### **Public Relations (Bill Pellowe)**

Over the past few years, PR has worked with the JALT Business Manager to monetize JALT Talk, the JALT monthly email announcements newsletter (<https://jalt.org/main/jalttalk>) by putting paid banner advertisements within the body of the email. Susan Meike has been able to sell one or two banner ads per issue of our monthly newsletter, both raising income for JALT and providing another way for our Associate Members to reach a wider audience.

Our presence on social media platforms continues to expand onto new platforms, and our audiences on each platform also continues to grow. Our complete list is on the JALT website (<https://jalt.org/main/jalt-social-media>). As with the newsletter, PR has been

working with the JALT Business Manager to explore ways of monetizing social media through sponsored posts. We have sold some sponsored posts.

We have also explored options for selling JALT goods (such as shirts and mugs) through print-on-demand services. The upside to print-on-demand is that JALT would not have to pre-order a large amount of stock to sell. We simply upload our designs to the online shop, and the company will create the items as our customers order them.

In the upcoming year, PR will continue its subscription to Hootsuite, which allows JALT 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 will continue to help us create professional-looking graphics for social media. Third, continued judicious use of “boosted” posts on Facebook and Instagram (paying small amounts to ensure that our message reaches a wider audience) will continue to help us get our messages to our audience.

### **Associate Members (AMs) (Susan Meiki / Miho Tajima):**

The Business Manager is always looking for additional revenue streams for the conference and JALT in general working with the Director of Public relations to start producing JALT goods ( hats, t-Shirts, mugs, stickers, etc) from on-demand production sites in Japan. We hope to introduce them at the conference in November.

Social media revenue is also under consideration and a goal of this year. Populating our youtube channel to get the required hits with interesting content to those in Japan and abroad is being discussed. We will be asking the chapters and sigs to produce videos in the near future to build a youtube community and as a result, bring in revenue. This is a long term project that does not bring revenue right away, but in the long term.

A call for contacts with non-educational related businesses is asked to all. We need names and email addresses of people to contact. All information leads are much appreciated.

The JALT AM website needs updating. It is not very attractive and it is difficult to update documents. We ask the BoD to budget funds for a redesign of this important space to attract more companies interested in introducing their products to the members.