

# TOP 10 BEST PRACTICES EXPANDED - SOCIAL ACTIVITIES CAN STRENGTHEN YOUR ASSOCIATION.

In the 2023-2024 Missouri Angus Directory, we released the work of the Missouri Angus Association Industry Relations Committee's, "Top 10 Best Practices" for Regional Association Consignment Sales. The items are not listed in any particular order and are meant to aid consignment sales in running more effective, higher grossing sales that better fit the needs of buyers. This month, we expand upon the tenth item.

*By Julie Conover, Missouri Angus Association*

Our tenth and final best practice is rather simple – social activities can strengthen your Association.

Thinking back just a few years, working through the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic made the word "social" seem improbable. Some groups pivoted, some postponed, and some have never been heard from again. Just like we witnessed in the restaurant industry, there are sales that faded off into the sunset when faced with gathering restrictions.

Pre-sale functions have and continue to be a cornerstone of the success of many production sales in bringing in new buyers and making current customers feel like they are part of the team.

From meals to dances to educational forums to gathering opportunities, the approaches have taken different turns over the years with the opportunity for fellowship taking the lead. Breeders across the state continue with different avenues to gather both current and prospective customers.

Kenny Hinkle, Former Missouri Angus District 7 Board of Director and owner and operator of Hinkle's Prime Cut Angus, mentioned the approaches they have tried over the years for their customers. Hinkle stated, "We've tried some different things. In the end, I wanted to change to a true customer appreciate function. I just wanted people to have a fun evening."

He mentioned that the most important item he's observed is that it's not about the food or entertainment, it's about the relationships. Hinkle reiterated, "It's the importance of getting interaction between producers."

Another family that has been a cornerstone to customer and member engagement would be the Sydenstricker family. Eddie Sydenstricker was involved in forming the very first junior Angus association in the United States, serving as their first President in 1956 for Missouri Junior Angus Association. The following year, Eddie's father, Ralph, served as President of Missouri Angus Association. Eddie also served on the American Angus Association Board of Directors, contributing to discussions on member culture and shaping the future role of customer engagements with Certified Angus Beef®.

In Mexico, Missouri, the Sydenstricker Genetics pre-sale function continues to gather one of the largest crowds. Eddie Sydenstricker states, "The people are the most important part of the Angus breed. The events and sales that bring us together, and allow us to get to know each other, are the glue that holds the Associations and the breed together."

In looking specifically at the Association level, the Missouri Angus Association Industry Relations Committee recommends the following:

- Membership allows opportunities. Make sure members are engaged and their voices heard.

This topic continues to be a focus of the Missouri Angus Association Board of Directors. They recognize that continuous improvement is imperative to future success. In 2024, we look forward to hosting our third annual Missouri Angus Ladies of Autumn Sale which will again allow new opportunities and help fulfil the all-important fellowship need.

As a board, we will continue to look for ways to meet and exceed the expectations of our members, and engaging the membership is one of those ways. We look forward to continued conversations at the state level and encourage our regional associations to do the same.

As we conclude this series of best practices, we know there is not a one-size fits all approach to marketing cattle. We are blessed to live in a state with numerous production and consignment sales almost year-round, and each will have a different approach to meet the needs of their clientele. We hope members are able to gain insight and ideas from each article to continue to improve their program. As a reminder, all articles can be viewed at [www.missouriangus.org/boards/regional-associations/](http://www.missouriangus.org/boards/regional-associations/)

In addition to the written words, on Saturday, February 24, during the Missouri Angus Breeders' Futurity Weekend, we hosted a panel discussion around marketing cattle with an emphasis on the consignment sale setting. The discussion was moderated by Clint Hunter and included four previous Missouri Angus Herdsman of the Year Recipients including Teela Sadowsky, Jennifer Russell, Reed Gooden and Cash Langford. The video can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NbE3bUacpw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NbE3bUacpw).

