

The Definition of 'We'

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Often owner/operators within our industry will call and ask whether to join their state or their national self storage association. Our answer is simple: PLEASE JOIN BOTH. The benefits of each, for any industry, are distinct and equally important to your business.

With the SSA, as is the case with thousands of other trade associations, members gain a national perspective through a collective common ground, enabling operators to grow utilizing the industry's best practices. Expertise is unique with staff and professionals who help you connect the dots on the pressing business issues of the day. The national SSA has been the driving body behind more than 30 state law improvements and/or successfully-avoided threatening laws. The SSA connects members through a national industry magazine and holds two national conferences providing participants with advantages to help their businesses operate efficiently and successfully.

The national SSA enjoys affiliations with 28 state associations where, together, common goals are pursued. Certain aspects of association business are best handled through a local organization, such as grass roots support of legislative activity. Many state self storage associations have unique benefit packages, offering creative programs to help their members' businesses. Here are just a few examples of the ways state associations are doing things right:

Michigan – After listening to similar efforts made by the California SSA, the SSAM recently created a "Transfer and Release of Personal Property in a Self Storage Unit" document for its members. It allows Michigan self storage facilities to offer late-paying customers the opportunity to release the contractual rights of the unit contents to the company, in consideration of non-payment and forgiveness to the facility. It references Michigan law and should allow the process to move smoothly. This has the potential to save an owner many hours of frustration when trying to simply clear out a unit in order to rent it again.

Georgia – The Legislative BBQ. Utilizing contacts within the Georgia legislature, the Georgia SSA secures space at its state capitol each year to hold a barbeque. They'll feed anyone, but only legislators can come, sit down and enjoy lunch. In between meetings the state reps enjoy the break; and it gives the association leadership and members a unique opportunity to slap backs, shake hands and talk about the self storage industry with the decision-makers in their state.

Arizona – When the AZSA realized there was a need for a single location online for its members to advertise auctions, it created the Arizona Self Storage Auction website. It's the most current and comprehensive auction site in the state. This site is intended to assist self storage operators in advertising all upcoming auctions as well as to engage and inform the general public as to where and when these auctions will occur. It's free for the public to search and easy for the facility owners to use and to keep their information updated. It has saved their members both time and money, adding significant value to the AZSA membership.

There are so many more examples of creative ways that state associations are serving the industry at the local level, although we can't list them all here. We encourage you to become active in both your national and state self storage associations. Check out WWW.SELFSTORAGE.ORG for a list of affiliated state associations. ❖