

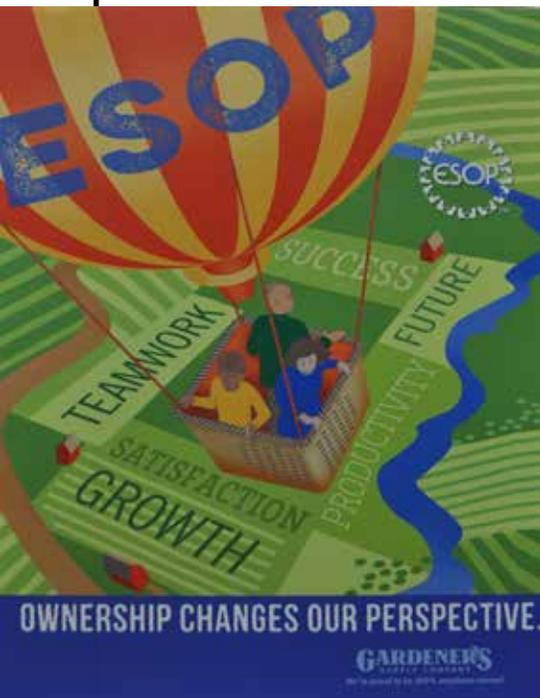
# The ESOP Association Entry Form

for

*the Annual Award for  
Communications  
Excellence*

and  
the

*Employee  
Ownership  
Month  
Poster  
Competition*



## To Our Corporate Members:

Welcome to the start of our most important and prestigious competitions: the Annual Award for Communications Excellence and the Employee Ownership Month Poster Competition.

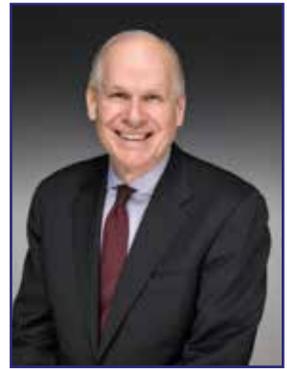
This year, we have made a concerted effort to simplify and streamline the process for entering both of these competitions. We know you spend tremendous energy creating educational events and content for your employee owners; you shouldn't need to spend that amount of energy preparing your entries.

Please read this updated form carefully to ensure you follow this new, modified process correctly.

Some of the changes to this year's process include:

- One form for entering both the EOM Poster and AACE Competitions.
- Using one box to submit AACE displays and EOM posters, which saves on postage and better safeguards your entries.
- A digital entry form, enabling you to type your entry and copy and paste complicated text such as URLs.
- E-mailing your digital entry form, which provides a way for us to check all entries and ensure your physical materials arrive in good order.
- The chance to provide a brief explanation about your entry, which provides the judges with valuable context.
- A limit on the size of display boards and the number of boxes that can be submitted. This ensures consistency and fairness among entries.

Please let us know if you find these changes useful. Good luck entering this year's competition, and be sure to come to the Annual Conference in May to see your display and those of your fellow Corporate Members. In my opinion, this is the greatest way to learn how to communicate even better with your employee owners.



J. Michael Keeling  
President, The ESOP Association

# AACE Rules and Guidelines

## Eligibility

Any current Corporate Member of The ESOP Association is eligible, with one exception: Winners from the previous year may not enter that category the following year.

## Deadline

All entry forms and materials must be received by Feb. 3, 2017.

## Cost

There is no entry fee, but all companies participating

in the competition must pay to ship their materials to The ESOP Association.

## Judging

Judging is conducted by a five-person panel consisting of members of The ESOP Association. Entries will be judged based on:

- How clearly, powerfully, and effectively they convey employee ownership and ESOP concepts to employee owners, customers, and the greater community.
- How well received and effective the communication is.

tion efforts were among the intended audience(s). (Did the communication efforts address a knowledge gap among employee owners? Did they increase participation in some measurable way? Did they engage the community in a measurable way?)

- The amount of creativity and originality evident in the communication.
- The technical quality of the communication.
- How involved employee owners were in creating and executing the communications efforts.

Please note: This is a communication competition, and clear communication counts! The more clearly and concisely you explain your entry to the judges, the more highly it will be scored.

## Prizes

Winners in each category receive:

- The AACE Obelisk crystal award, with the company name engraved on the nameplate.
- A certificate of award, with custom calligraphy
- Two complimentary registrations to the Annual Conference in Washington, DC. (Each registration includes admission to the Awards Ceremony on May 10, 2017).
- AACE Winner's Ribbon for all Conference attendees from your company, and Rosette Display Ribbon.
- Recognition at the Awards Ceremony, in the *ESOP Report*, and on TEA's web site.

Runners Up in each category receive:

- Certificate with custom calligraphy.
- One complimentary registration to the Annual Conference in Washington, DC. (Each registration includes admission to the Awards Ceremony on May 10, 2017.)
- AACE Runner Up Ribbon for all Conference attendees from your company, and Rosette Display Ribbon.
- Recognition at the Awards Ceremony, in the *ESOP Report*, and on TEA's web site

## Entry Categories

There are seven entry categories. Each category is split into two divisions, based on company size. (*Division A is for companies with 250 or fewer employees; Division B is for companies with more than 250 employees.*)

Within each division, there typically is one winner and one runner up. However, the judges—at their discretion—may refrain from naming a runner up if no clear second choice emerges.

The categories are:

### Category 1: Videos

This award recognizes excellence in the use of original video to explain or promote the ESOP concept to employees or the public.

**Requirements:** Videos must be uploaded to YouTube and be no more than five minutes long. Only one entry is allowed per company.

### Category 2: Printed Materials

This award recognizes excellence in the use of original, printed materials to explain or promote the company's ESOP to employee owners, customers, or the community. Consider entering a variety of printed materials, such as brochures, newsletters, books, etc.

### Category 3: Intranets

This award recognizes company intranets that excel at educating employee owners about the company ESOP, and excel at spurring employee owners to engage in the company's ownership culture.

**Requirements:** Provide either a link to your intranet (with a password, if needed), or print outs of your intranet pages. In the interest of security, it is acceptable to black out private information on the print outs.

### Category 4: Employee Ownership Marketing

This award recognizes excellence in advertising and marketing the benefits of employee ownership to customers, the community, and the public. Materials must reference the ESOP or employee ownership.

All media are accepted for this award. Examples include brochures, marketing materials, marketing videos, advertisements, information on company vehicles, banners, posts on social media, and company web pages.

Note: Company web sites that score highest will be those that prominently show that the company is employee owned, and clearly explain why being employee owned benefits both employee owners and those outside the company. (For example, by showing that employee owned firms provide better customer service, are empowered to solve customers' problems, etc.)

## Category 5: One Special Event

This award recognizes excellence in organizing and executing one significant ownership event, such as a special celebration, ESOP community service day, etc. While events from any time of year are eligible, many companies find that their Employee Ownership Month events are excellent options for this category.

## Category 6: A Series of Special Events

This award recognizes excellence in organizing and executing a series of ownership events. As with Category 5, Employee Ownership Month events typically are excellent options for this category, but any series of events from anytime throughout the year is eligible.

## Category 7: Total Communications

This award recognizes overall excellence in a company's efforts to educate the public and employee owners about a company's ESOP and ownership culture.

Note: Materials submitted in other categories automatically will be considered in this category. You also may submit additional materials specifically for this category, in a separate binder or binder tab.

The materials you submit for this category may be in any medium, including print, digital, websites and intranets, images, words, audio, video, etc.

Examples of potential items to submit include: orientation information on ownership culture for new hires; training on culture and behavioral expectations; materials explaining ESOP benefits; advertisements; documentation of special events and meetings; materials explaining the company stock, finances, and valuation; press releases; and the like.

## What to Send

You are encouraged to submit a tri-fold display board as a backdrop for your entry. This board may contain words, images, and other information that give the judges a sense of your company's employee ownership culture, or that illustrate specific aspects of one or more of your entries.

**New this year, displays must be no larger than 3'x4' when folded.**

If relevant, you may wish to submit materials (shirts, bumper stickers, items given away to employee owners, etc.) that illustrate your communication efforts.

Paper materials that support your entry must be submitted in three ring binders. Each entry should be organized in a separate tab or separate binder.

The first page in each entry should be a short description (up to 400 words) that provides context about your entry to the judges. Consider addressing questions such as:

- What issue or problem was this communication intended to address? (For example, did new employees not understand how an ESOP works?)
- Who was this communication intended to reach? (Employee owners? Customers?)
- What challenges were present in addressing this issue? How were these challenges overcome?
- How were employee owners involved in identifying the problem and working to develop a communications solution?
- What were the results, if any, of the communication? Measurable results receive higher grades from the judges. (For example, did surveys show that after seeing new educational materials employee owners' better understood key ESOP concepts? After a special event, did employee owners comment about how much they enjoyed it? Did customers comment on the fact that company trucks show your business is employee owned?)

All entries and tri-fold boards will be displayed at The ESOP Association's Annual Conference in Washington, DC, May 11-12, 2017.



The entry from BL Companies Inc., winner of the 2016 Total Communications award for companies with more than 250 employees, offers an example of what to submit.

## Packing and Shipping

Entries must fit in no more than two boxes—one for your display, one for your binder(s) and supporting materials. No box should weigh more than 30 pounds.

If you submit an entry for the poster competition (see below), ship it in the box with your tri-fold display.

If you submit CDs, DVDS, or thumb drives, please clearly mark the category to which they belong.

## Questions?

Contact Patrick Mirza, ESOP Association Communications Director, at [Patrick@esopassociation.org](mailto:Patrick@esopassociation.org).

# Employee Ownership Month Poster Competition

## Eligibility

Any current Corporate Member is eligible to enter.

## Deadline

All entry forms and materials must be received by Feb. 3, 2017.

## Cost

There is no entry fee, but all participants must pay to ship their materials to The ESOP Association.

## Judging

The five-person panel of ESOP Association members that judges the AACE competition also selects the winner of the poster competition. The winner will be announced at the Annual Conference Awards Ceremony on May 10, 2017 in Washington, D.C.

Entries will be judged based on:

- How clearly, powerfully, and effectively they convey employee ownership and the ESOP concept.
- How involved employee owners were in creating and executing the poster design.
- The technical quality of the communication.
- The amount of creativity and originality evident in the poster entry.

## Prizes

The Corporate Member that wins the Employee Ownership Month Poster competition will:

- Receive one non-transferable registration to the 2017 Annual Conference.
- Have the company name appear on the poster and promotion for the poster.
- Receive a certificate at the Awards Ceremony.
- Receive publicity in the *ESOP Report* and on the web site.

## Rules

All poster entries must:

- Incorporate at least three colors.
- Be 18 x 24 inches in size and mounted on foam-core for display purposes.
- Use a combination of words and images to communicate the concept of employee ownership.
- Be available via a digital file with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
- Have a sheet of paper taped to the back of the poster and listing company name, contact name, and phone number.

## Guidelines

Poster entries:

- Should include the name and/or logo of the submitting company on the poster.
- May be vertical or horizontal.
- Should take into account that they may be screened on a product sold by TEA celebrating Employee Ownership Month.

By submitting an entry, you agree that:

- All images or art that appear in the poster are fairly purchased and do not violate any copyright or trademark laws.
- TEA has the right to display all entries at any TEA event, online, and in any TEA publication or promotion.
- TEA will, at its sole discretion, select the printer for the winning poster entry.
- If chosen as the winning poster, you will provide TEA with a digital file of the poster, with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
- You are responsible for all costs associated with creating the design and shipping it to TEA.

# Form for Submitting AACE and EOM Poster Competition Entries

Save this form to your computer and e-mail it to [media@esopassociation.org](mailto:media@esopassociation.org). Subject line: AACE/EOF Poster.

Company \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shipping Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 ESOP Association Chapter Select your chapter \_\_\_\_\_

I am submitting # boxes  Return my materials to the contact above

### AACE Entry Section

Company Size:  
 250 or fewer employees  
 More than 250 employees

### Categories entered:

1 Videos  
 YouTube URL: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Printed Material

3 Intranet  
 URL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Password: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Employee Ownership Marketing  
 URL (if needed) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Password (if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

5 One Special Event

6 Series of Special Events

7 Total Communications

### Employee Ownership Month Poster Contest

I am submitting a poster entry (Please attach a small jpeg of your entry when you e-mail this form.)

- By submitting my entry, I agree that:
- All images or art in the poster are fairly purchased and do not violate any copyright or trademark laws.
  - The ESOP Association (TEA) has the right to display all entries at any TEA event, online, and in any TEA publication or promotion.
  - TEA will, at its sole discretion, select the printer for the winning poster entry.
  - If my entry is chosen as the winning poster, I will provide TEA with a digital file of the poster, with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
  - I am responsible for all costs associated with creating the design and shipping it to TEA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature Date

Mail materials to: **The ESOP Association, Attn: AACE/EOM Poster Competitions, 1200 18th St. NW, Ste. 1125, Washington, DC 20036-2506.** When mailing, print the label(s) below and tape them to the outside of EACH box you send. This will help us process your entry.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Size A  B   
 Categories entered  
 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  
 Return entry materials  
 EOM Poster entry included

Box #: 1 / 2 of 1 / 2 (Please circle)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Size A  B   
 Categories entered  
 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  
 Return entry materials  
 EOM Poster entry included

Box #: 1 / 2 of 1 / 2 (Please circle)

Note: **Display space is limited. Only two boxes allowed**—one for display board (and Employee Ownership Month poster, if applicable), and one for additional materials. **Boxes must not weigh more than 30 pounds.**