# Hosting an ALC Roundtable

for the Association of Language Companies

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Introduction

WHY HOLD AN ALC ROUNDTABLE?

Testimonials speak loud and clear!

“I feel it is important to network with other language company owners and directors. It is wise to learn where the industry is heading and what things work for us. If I have something that I have found that works, I share it!”

“The ALC Roundtable experience provided a peer-supported reminder to be driving for continuous improvement.”

“It removes the feeling of ‘Lonely at the Top’ and provides an abundance of friendships, support and objectivity.”

“Roundtables are like an instant Board of Directors – providing guidance from similar experiences and instilling a sense of confidence that you’re not alone with these industry challenges.”

Connecting with LSC leaders from your region is an invaluable experience. Sharing ideas from real-world perspectives, discussing industry challenges, offering sound advice and building networks all form the pillars of the ALC Roundtable Program. Even experienced business owners can sometimes feel isolated in business decisions. Until you have experienced it, you may find it difficult to imagine the value of having a group of peers who can exchange ideas with you, brainstorm solutions to your business problems, and use the experiences and strengths of others to make us better leaders.

While participants are asked to refrain from sales during all discussions and to adhere to Antitrust guidelines (attached), they are encouraged to build relationships that will help strengthen their networks in the LSC community and ultimately improve performance and profitability.

ALC Roundtable Mission:

ALC Roundtables strive to provide ALC members and non-members in different regions around the globe opportunities to meet with other LSCs in their locale to build networks, exchange ideas and work to build a better informed environment for language service companies.
Ten Easy Steps to Hosting a Meeting

**Step 1. Get Excited**

The Association of Language Companies is a great resource. Sharing your enthusiasm will show and you will be successful in helping add value to our industry through hosting an ALC Roundtable. Draw on your own experiences of how ALC has help you grow your organization and build connections. This is especially helpful when hosting non-members who are interest in joining the Association.

What is in it for YOU? Giving back is one of the hallmarks of success. With your leadership, you’ll gain immediate support from peers, learn valuable lessons from presenters, network with other LSC leaders in a secure space to discuss industry-related and business-related matters in a secure space much like a mastermind or professional sounding board. There is tremendous power in peer-to-peer sharing.

What is your immediate goal? Strive to have at least 8-10 attendees who are company owners or principals and who really want to grow and improve their leadership skills by sharing “best business practices” with peers.

What about long-term goals? As a leader in the language service industry, ALC wants to help you and other LSC executives build a stronger industry. ALC is your Association. By increasing participation and membership in ALC, programs like ALC Roundtables can offer resources and knowledge-share on a plethora of topics. With the continued growth of our industry, new technologies playing an increasingly important role, government regulations impacting the way we do business and many other challenges, ALC Roundtables afford opportunities to keep apprised of many topics throughout the year.

**Step 2: Decide on a Venue, Date and Time**

Historically, most meetings have been face-to-face gatherings at member locations or nearby venues. Roundtables can be held virtually. Consider holding your roundtable in a public setting like a centrally located restaurant or hotel meeting space. Most of these venues require little to no money for usage and your attendees can share in the expense. This also creates a level playing field for all-sized companies.

**Option 1:** In person meeting—such as a self-paid lunch meeting at a local restaurant. (Breakfasts, evenings, after work or dinner meetings are also possible if you wish to do a survey of preferences first.) Calling the restaurant in advance to ensure seating and reservations is wise. Reserve a table or room, if necessary. Include asking about food for groups of eight or more and make sure they can accommodate. Including a link to the menu and restaurant in the initial announcement is wise, which allows them to see cost per person in advance.

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Option 2: Virtual meeting--A video conference meeting for groups too geographically separated to easily meet for lunch. ALC does maintain a Zoom account, but advance reservations are needed in order to secure the date/time. Contact ALC Headquarters at info@alcus.org for more information.

Step 3: Decide on a Topic

Deciding on a topic will not only attract participants but will help formulate the discussions for everyone. Feedback from prior organizers and participants support this notion of establishing a direction for topics to be covered. First, determine your audience for your Roundtable: CEO, Sales, PMs, etc. Remember, your topic should match your audience. Once you decide what topics you want covered and who would best benefit from this Roundtable program, decide what format would work best. Some Roundtable leaders like to find companies of similar or larger size, not just those geographically close. ALC members span the globe and incorporating an international perspective may prove to be a beneficial approach, too. Finding companies who are doing what you do in other geographic areas can provide insights that maybe a local group would not offer. Weigh these things out, make a decision.

Here are considerations for your Roundtable topics:

Option 1: Select a Presenter to Speak on a Subject (recommended for First Time Hosts)

Suggestions include subjects pertaining to technology, worker classification, HR, sales and customer service. Clearly state the topic(s) in the invitation letter. CONFIRM speaker/topic(s) at least 60 days before, then 30 days before and then 5-7 days before your program. Option 1 is recommended for first timers, as it serves well to have a clear topic “draw” for newcomer.

Option 2: Create a Discussion Agenda Based on Group Interest (Without Prepared Presenter)

If you are a great facilitator, have experience doing so and are good at keeping meetings on track, you can choose this option. If you do this, you will still need to set an agenda in writing to get engagement and interest in attendance. Decide on the topic by vote (email or phone) in advance and have everyone do some homework or bring some information to share.

Sample ideas:

1. Each member shares a best business practice initiated within the last 12 months.
2. What business practice do you need help with today?

One method is to have the group self-pick topics, similar to ALC town hall events, and throw out a list of issues to discuss. Then everyone can vote on their favorites. Once tallied, one of the highest collective interests becomes the topic for conversation. A white board or even pen and paper helps to note the ideas and tally votes.
Option 3: A prospective vendor may offer to pay for lunch and be able to present on a topic if not a sales pitch to the group. This has been commented on by some hosts and it has worked, but requires the host to control content from drifting. Caution needed.

Step 4: Set an Agenda with Ground Rules

Keep it simple, and include all the information needed to attend: time, date, location address and name, with a simple schedule.

Agenda Suggestions:

- Participant Information (Name, Title, Company and Contact Information)
- Review of ALC Antitrust Policy
- Review of Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure (sample included with packet; verify for locale)
- Review of Discussion Format – introductions, topics to be covered, time allocated to participants and how discussions will flow
- A/V usage, if desired – video, white board, capturing remarks/suggestions
- Future plan, if any
Sample Agenda (fill in yellow with your own content):

**ALC Roundtable Presenter**
- Host Contact Name
- Host Company
- Address
- City, State, Zip/Postal Code
- Country

**Topic:** STATE YOUR TOPIC HERE
(Brief content bullets here with how it will help them)

**ALC hosted Roundtable Schedule**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sample Time</th>
<th>Sample Topic</th>
<th>Topic Owner</th>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Intros, networking, ground rules</td>
<td>Facilitator Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 noon–12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.–12:55 p.m.</td>
<td>Program Entitled: “TOPIC OR SUBJECT MATTER”</td>
<td>Presenters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>ALC Introductions – info about upcoming events and highlights of Data from the Annual Industry Survey &amp; networking</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
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**Step 5: Get a List of Companies from ALC**

Contact ALC Headquarters for a list of company names and contact information for your target area. Note that ALC members polled indicated that a maximum of 50 miles was the longest driving distance. A Google search for companies within a certain mile radius may return additional companies if not on the ALC listing provided. Please share these “new” contacts with ALC Headquarters so they can be added to the database. Be sure to target the Owners/CEO’s.
Step 6: Create a Tracking Form, Call and Send Invitation Letter (cc: ALC Roundtable Chair and ALC Headquarters**)

Based on feedback from other ALC Roundtable hosts and participants, people respond better to a phone call or text message or meeting invitation than a cold call email.

- Tracking form should include the following information:
  1. Name
  2. Title
  3. RSVP
  4. Direct phone number
  5. Their email
  6. Company name

- Call the invitees. Be sure to leave a voicemail.

- Send out invitation emails. Make sure you select “Read” and “Open” option in your email program’s send format. Two sample emails are included in this packet. Update the yellow highlighted sections as needed. **Attach the ALC Antitrust Guidelines and Signature Form** (included in this packet).

**Send a copy of this invitation to the ALC Roundtables and to ALC Headquarters so that we can make sure to include this on the ALC website and newsletters to help promote your ALC Roundtable.

Step 7: Make Follow Up Calls to Confirm with Invitees and Speaker

Open your tracking form and reach out to them by email and phone (better than assuming the email has reached them). If no answer leave a voicemail that reminds them of the time & date, and ask for an RSVP if they have not done so. Ask that they let you know of any changes in their circumstances. Confirm venue location, if applicable.

Step 8: Send Calendar Invites (Once) AND Reminder Emails to Attendees (twice)

For “confirmed” attendees, send them a calendar invite as an additional reminder. A short reminder email can just include the agenda (which would include date, time, address, etc.), a “thank you for responding” and a “looking forward to seeing you”.

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Step 9: Review Content and Prepare Host Part

Review your personal content, introduction of speakers, make an outline, include points from the ALC Antitrust Policy and add confidentiality reminders. Make notes to assign a scribe for post meeting minutes. Review the current ALC Survey and pick interesting highlights to share with the group along with dates of upcoming ALC events, as well as how to become a member for non-member attendees.

Step 10: Hold the Meeting & Keep a List of Attendees – send to ALC Headquarters

Please send your meeting minutes as well as attendee list to the ALC Roundtable email, so we can talk about it on our website. ALC will reach out to the non-members to provide information on joining ALC. Should the Host wish to conduct a follow-up survey, contact ALC Headquarters to facilitate this process.

In Conclusion

As Host, please reach out to the ALC Roundtable Committee with questions. We also know several others who have hosted successful roundtables that would be happy to share their experiences with you. If you have any suggestions for improvements on this document, please share them with the ALC Roundtable Committee.
Month XX, XXXX

Dear (Audience):

On Behalf of the Association of Language Companies (ALC), I am writing to invite you to an ALC Roundtable where you will have an opportunity to meet (Audience) of Language Service Companies located in your geographic area.

Day/Date
Start time
End time
Location
Address
Host Name/Phone

The ALC is the national trade association representing the interests of companies in our industry. I am certain that no matter the size of your Language Service Company you will appreciate taking the time to come—make the journey—and meet with all of us.

Only (Audience) are invited to this meeting. Email Roundtables@alcus.org with any questions.

For further information regarding our association or a registration form for any of the ALC Roundtables, call my phone xxx-xxxx-xxxx or email me at host email address. I will send a more detailed agenda once you respond.

For more information on the ALC, visit our website at www.alcus.org. The registration deadline is xxxx.

Sincerely,

Host Name
Host Title
Host Company Name
DATE, xxxx

Dear (Audience):

On behalf of the Association of Language Companies (ALC), you are cordially invited to a web-based meeting to network with fellow (Audience) of language services companies.

As a member of the ALC, I am gathering a group to discuss topics relevant to our industry and share information and resources.

This upcoming ALC Roundtable will have a brief introduction of the participants will discuss a presentation by presenter and topic. Then after the presentation, we’ll have time for Q&A.

Date:
Time:
Agenda: (change accordingly)
  • Idea 1
  • Idea 2
  • Idea 3
  • Q&A
  • Networking
Host: Name, Company, Phone

RSVP: (Host email)

Questions please email HOST EMAIL or call me at HOST PHONE NUMBER. Once you RSVP, additional information will be sent to you as well as instructions on how to join the “conference.”

Only (Audience) are invited to this meeting.

Sincerely,

Host Name
Host Title
Host Company
| ACTION* |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| ACTION*         | TIMING BEFORE EVENT | ASSIGNED TO | COMPLETE: by | STATUS |
| *refer to pages 1-9 for more detail | | | | |
| 1. Get excited | Now | | | |
| 2. Decide on a Venue, Date, Time | 60+ | | | |
| 3. Decide on a Topic | 60+ | | | |
| 4. Set an Agenda with Ground Rules | 45-60 + days | | | |
| 5. Get a List of Companies from the ALC | 45-60 + days | | | |
| 6. Create Tracking Form, Call and Send Invitation Letter | 60 days | | | |
| 7. Make Follow-up Calls to Confirm with Invitees and Speaker | 30-40 days | | | |
| 8. Send Calendar Invites Once and Reminder Emails to Attendees Twice | 15 days & 5 days | | | |
| 9. Review Content and Prepare Your Part* | 1 week | | | |
| 10. Hold the meeting. Keep list of attendees and send to the ALC Roundtable Chair and ALC HQ | 0-3 days afterward | | | |