

ANNUAL CONVENTION: NINE DAYS IN JUNE

1. Description and Purpose The Annual Convention: Nine Days is a new service that merges the annual MSBA convention and the district outreach effort known as bench and bar conferences.

Article 2 of the MSBA's Articles of Incorporation identifies the purpose of the MSBA is to:
. . . conduct a program of continuing legal education; organize into the MSBA the entire Bench and Bar of Minnesota and correlate the activities of affiliated associations; provide a forum for the discussion of subjects pertaining to the practice of law, the science of jurisprudence and law reform, . . .

The Annual Convention: Nine Days in June will meet this mission and provide greater value to members.

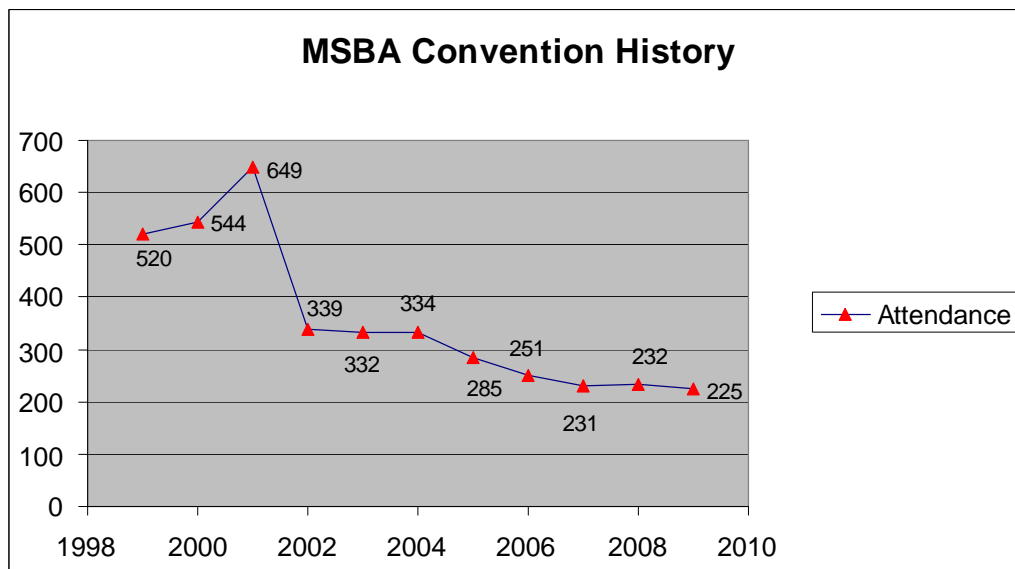
The primary goal of the Annual Convention: Nine Days in June is to take the best parts of current programs and turn them into a stronger, more viable long-term program of the Association.

Additional goals are to:

- ▲ Highlight quality CLE programs developed by MSBA sections;
- ▲ Promote member retention at a key point of the billing process;
- ▲ Promote programs and services, particularly practicelaw, MNDocs, and fastcase;
- ▲ Provide free CLE to members; and
- ▲ Bring together the bench and bar in a meaningful way.

2. Historical Information

The convention is the longest ongoing program of the Minnesota State Bar Association. A review of old issues of *Bench & Bar* would show you that at its peak it was **the** annual event of the Minnesota legal profession. Unfortunately, that is no longer true. Over the last twenty years participation has been in a steady decline. As the following graph shows, interest over the last several years has fallen dramatically.



Convention support by the MSBA leadership is also declining. In 2009, 49 members (40%) of the Assembly (121 total members) registered for at least a portion of the convention. Twelve (12) of those were members of the Council who receive free convention registration.

Over time the convention planning committees have made several attempts to revive interest in the annual convention. We have tried changes in the schedule, varying focus areas in CLE programming, shifting the days of the week the convention is held, location, and a variety of marketing efforts. None of these changes have had a significant or long-lasting effect on the interest of members in the convention.

During 2007, 2008, and 2009, the MSBA hosted half-day bench and bar conferences in judicial districts throughout the state. Although small changes were made, the general format was approximately four hours of CLE hosted by an MSBA officer and lunch. The conferences were held within a judicial district and all attorneys and judges – members and non-members – that have contact information on file with the MSBA were invited to participate. These conferences were free.

In addition to the CLE sessions provided by section members and MSBA staff, part of the programming was developed by the local judges and judicial administration staff. These gatherings of local lawyers and judges have been used as an opportunity to share information and ideas for enhancing and improving the local system.

The response was very positive. Attendance was high, averaging 17% in the ten events. In the districts closer to the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area, attendance was lower; 7% in the 10th Judicial District for our first conference, but increasing to 10% at the second event. It is important to note that even at 7%, that event brought together 110 lawyers and judges. In greater Minnesota, attendance is generally higher. The greatest percentage was in the 8th Judicial District with 44%; 86 judges and lawyers participating.

**District Outreach
Attendance Records**

Date	Location	Bar Districts	Total Invited	Attended	Percentage
October 27, 2006	Detroit Lakes	Surrounding Counties	284	32	11%
November 2, 2006	Eagan	1 st	1,519	132	9%
May 4, 2007	3 rd Judicial	3 rd , 5 th & 10 th	631	120	19%
July 12, 2007	10 th Judicial	18 th , 19 th , & 21 st	1,537	110	7%
March 7, 2008	8 th Judicial	12 th and 16 th	197	86	44%
April 25, 2008	9 th Judicial	14 th and 15 th	643	99	15%
September 12, 2008	6 th Judicial	11 th and Range	472	80	17%
September 17, 2008	5 th Judicial	6 th , 9 th , 13 th and 17 th	472	90	19%
January 8, 2009	10 th Judicial	18 th , 19 th , & 21 st	1,576	160	10%
January 30, 2009	3 rd Judicial	3 rd , 5 th & 10 th	748	132	18%
February 6, 2009	1 st Judicial	1 st and 8 th	1,892	232	12%
May 15, 2009	7 th Judicial	7 th	969	94	10%

In addition to the positive response demonstrated by attendance, the comments received have been overwhelmingly positive. Here are a few samples:

- ▲ I enjoyed the frank exchange of information by the judiciary.
- ▲ Plan on doing this on an annual basis.

- ▲ It makes you more involved with the association, want to continue with association, and feel that you're getting back more from the association.
- ▲ The content of this program was more thorough and valuable than most CLEs (esp free ones) I've been to.
- ▲ For CLE credits; locally held; chance to meet with local lawyers.
- ▲ Free CLE, lunch, proximity and a chance to practice social skills.
- ▲ It was nice to have a "regional" CLE live with time to socialize with area attorneys.
- ▲ I attended because this is a local CLE and I could attend for free as a law clerk.
- ▲ Thank you for coming to Greater Minnesota! I do remember back when all CLEs and meetings were held in Mpls...so thanks for the drive up North!
- ▲ Should at least be annual event – preferably semi-annual.

Six bench and bar conferences were held in the 2008-09 bar year. As these comments demonstrate, not everyone sees that as enough. Therefore, we are proposing a merger of the bench and bar conferences and the annual convention.

3. Personnel There are .60 FTE positions allocated to this program.

4. Report on 2009-10 Performance Standards

Successful implementation of the Annual Convention: Bench Bar Forum as approved by the Assembly.

As shown in the title of this document, the name of the program has changed since the 2009-10 budget was adopted by the Assembly in April 2009. Planning is well underway for 2010 Nine Days in June. Dates and venues for each of the eight state sessions have been selected and programming is nearly complete. The date for Day 9 in the metro area has been set for June 24, negotiations for a venue are underway, and the program is nearly complete and will include the Annual State of the Judiciary.

5. Three-year Plan Performance Standard

Successful implementation of the Annual Convention: Bench Bar Forum as approved by the Assembly.

6. Report on 2009-10 User Satisfaction

This event will not occur until June.

7. 2010-11 User Satisfaction

Attendees at each function will be asked to complete an evaluation. An overall satisfaction level of 4.5 on a five point scale will be achieved.

8. Market Penetration

The combined program will consist of eight one-day programs held in each of the outstate judicial districts and a one-day statewide conference in the metro area. Each day will consist of four to six one-hour CLE programs sponsored by sections and a one-hour program produced by the chief judge and court administrator. The one statewide conference would focus on the statewide judicial system and include the state of the judiciary message. Attendance will be free for members, although there will be a fee to cover lunch.

Using projections based on actual attendance at bench bar conferences over the last two years, we anticipate reaching at least 1,348 members through this combined conference. That is over 8% of our current membership. At the 2009 convention, just 1% of the members participated. In addition, based on the experience with the bench and bar conferences, we believe there is a greater chance for growth in this combined program than under the current convention structure.

Judicial District	Bar Districts	Potential Audience	Projected Attendees	
			Members	Non Members
1	1 & 8	1,892	171	18
3	3, 5 & 10	748	128	14
5	6, 9, 13 & 17	472	81	8
6	11 & Range	472	72	8
7	7	969	131	14
8	12 & 16	197	78	8
9	14 & 15	643	87	9
10	18, 19, & 21	1,576	100	10
Metro	Statewide		500	
Total Attendance			1,348	89

9. Current Issues and Challenges

The budget worksheet shows anticipated revenue and expenses. Based on current information we anticipate an annual cost of nearly \$19,000 in the first year. This would be more than recent conventions; however, we would reach more than five times the number of members and this expense would be a planned expense unlike recent convention losses.

Convention	
Year	Actual Net Profit/Loss
1993	(\$49,000)
1994	(\$17,500)
1995	(\$19,800)
1996	\$8,000
1997	\$21,731
1998	(\$17,473)
1999	(\$8,700)
2000	(\$11,740)
2001	(\$10,271)
2002	\$6,473
2003	(\$5,563)
2004	\$3,948
2005	(\$10,674)
2006	\$2,400
2007	(\$14,500)
2008	(\$6,500)
2009	(\$5,676)

There are several less tangible benefits to the proposed structure. They include:

- ▲ The opportunity to highlight MSBA sections and their best CLE programming.
- ▲ Enhances the bar's relationship with the judiciary.
- ▲ An opportunity for the MSBA to showcase its services to members and non-members.
- ▲ Provides the opportunity for Bar leaders to discuss key issues facing the MSBA and the legal profession with lawyers from throughout the state.

The schedule options are many, including:

- ▲ Nine days in June;
- ▲ Complete all conferences in the months of May and June; or

- ▲ Plan the statewide event for June and spread the remaining events over the rest of the year.

A major factor in the success of the bench and bar conferences is the support and involvement of the chief judges and administrator in each district. The events in the outstate districts were scheduled in consultation with the chief judge and court administrator in each district.

One of the outstanding issues at this time is the future of the Presidents' Reception. This social event has been a convention and Association highlight for many years. The 2009 Presidents' Reception had 350 guests; with an overall convention registration of 225. The Presidents' Reception will be a part of the statewide event held in the metro area. This would continue the tradition of honoring the outgoing MSBA president and welcoming the incoming president.

The Reception is being planned by the MSBA; and will serve as a fundraising for the MSBA's Civic Education program and Minnesota State Bar Foundation.

10. Explanation of Budget Categories The categories are self-explanatory.