



MEMBER INSIGHTS REPORT

What We Heard from You

Key Takeaways from ECIA's February Member Focus Groups

In early February, ECIA brought together members for two virtual focus groups to discuss what matters most in 2026 and beyond.

We explored various core areas: Artificial Intelligence (AI), in-person events, social media and industry resources. The conversations were thoughtful, candid, and incredibly valuable — and the themes were remarkably consistent across both groups.

This article relays important details about communication methods, marketing, tools and resources that our members find useful in this high technology era.

Members want to move forward with AI — but responsibly.

Artificial Intelligence: High Interest, With Important Guardrails

AI generated the most energy in both sessions. Members recognize that artificial intelligence is not a passing trend — it is a competitive reality. From forecasting and customer engagement to supply chain optimization and internal efficiencies, companies are actively exploring practical use cases.

Members are not looking for introductory AI education. Instead, they want applied industry-specific guidance, including:

- Real-world case studies within distribution, manufacturing, and the supply chain
- Clear implementation frameworks and governance models
- Legal, regulatory, and compliance guardrails

Risk and privacy concerns surfaced repeatedly — covering data security, IP exposure, customer data protection, misinformation risks, and evolving regulatory requirements. ECIA is taking this opportunity to provide balanced programming that addresses both innovation and risk mitigation.

In-Person Events: The Power of Human Connection

In a world of constant digital communication, members emphasized that face-to-face interaction offers something technology cannot replicate. In-person events are viewed as relational, not just informational.

- Relationship-building and trust
- Candid, unscripted conversations
- Peer benchmarking and shared problem-solving
- A stronger sense of community within the industry
- Structured roundtables and smaller discussion groups
- Industry association events are viewed with high regard and trust

The takeaway: the human element is not optional — it is essential.

Social Media & Communications: Focused and Efficient

The consensus was clear: LinkedIn is the platform of choice. Members want concise, high-value content that keeps them informed without adding to information overload.

- Industry news summaries
- Regulatory updates
- Market insights and thought leadership
- Event highlights

There is little appetite for overly promotional or lengthy content. Efficiency and relevance matter.

Industry News & Resources: Trusted, Filtered Intelligence

Information overload is a real challenge. Members described being inundated with reports, regulatory updates, and data from multiple sources. What they are seeking is not more information — but better filtering.

- Regulatory and compliance developments
- Policy updates and supply chain trends
- Economic outlook and market data
- Industry risk factors

Association events are viewed as a trusted source of information.

ECIA is viewed as a neutral, credible voice capable of synthesizing complex developments into clear, actionable insights. This trusted role is highly valued and should continue to be strengthened.

These insights will guide ECIA programming, communications, and strategic initiatives throughout 2026 and beyond. Thank you to everyone who participated — your feedback is shaping the future of ECIA.