

Associations and music

The 233-member Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCAAE), the “association of associations” in the country, which I co-founded in November 2013 with the support of the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) and my organization, the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP), held its fourth annual Association Summit (AS4) on November 23 and 24 at the PICC. Over 150 board members, executive directors and professional managers of association and other membership organization attended.

The two-day event was themed “Race to Innovation: Winning in the Age of Disruption” and featured 23 educational tracks presented by practitioners, thought leaders and speakers from here and abroad, 36 tabletop exhibitors from association suppliers, conference organizers, event managers, hotels, venues and destinations, as well as nine winning institutions and individuals of the Ang Susi Awards 2016.

The learning plenaries and concurrent sessions covered a wide range of day-to-day topics and issues that associations face—from board governance, leadership, membership, business models, technology, branding and communications, products and services, millennials, relevance, finance and investments and, yes, even music.

You may wonder what music and the music industry have got to do with associations. Interestingly, our closing keynote speaker was Fernando “Dingdong” Avanzado, singer, actor, politician and TV host who is currently the corporate secretary of the Organisasyon ng Pilipinong Mang-Aawit (OPM).

OPM’s purpose is to protect, promote and professionalize local musicians, artists and talents. Like any membership organization, OPM has struggled in the past and then reinvented itself through a purpose-driven leadership, partnership with like-minded organizations, and continuous innovation on programs for its members and stakeholders. Among these are the performers equity program, Pinoy music summit, Linggo ng Musikang Pilipino, and the OPM spotlight program for upcoming artists.

Asked during the Q&A session after his inspiring speech by one of the attendees on how music is relevant to nonmusic-related associations, Dingdong was philosophical and practical in a way in his reply.

He said music permeates in anything that one does, that associations can use music to spice up their events, and that they can even compose an association anthem or song to rally members to the organization. I agree with him. After all, music is a universal language that can be understood, felt and enjoyed by everyone.