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Sample: Strategic Communications Plan

BOARD IN A BOX PRINCIPLE

- ✓ Develop a strategic communications plan.

There are many ways to approach creating a strategic communications plan. Several examples have been provided to generate ideas and get your chapter started.

SAMPLE I

[Chapter Name] AMA PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE PLAN

A. Program Promotions

1. Large Postcards
 - a. AMA Members
 - b. Special Interest Groups
 - c. Other Business Associations
2. Chapter Event
 - a. Announce Speaker Series/Introduce New Board/Logo
 - b. Networking at Inexpensive Restaurant [NAME OF FACILITY]
3. Fax Info Sheet
4. Write Articles for [PRINT PUBLICATIONS, WEB]
5. Volunteer Jobs
 - a. Research Special Interest Group Mailing Lists
 - b. Research Other Business Association's Mailing Listserv
 - c. Coordinate Chapter Event/Develop Plan
 - d. Develop Fax Info Sheet and Fax on Demand

B. Program Publicity

1. Calendar Listings
2. Press Releases to Special Interest Publications
3. Press Releases to Comprehensive Media List
4. Speaker Press
 - a. Radio
 - b. TV
 - c. Newspaper: Plus Special Interests
5. Media Advisories
6. Volunteer Jobs
 - a. Develop Calendar Listing/Special Interest Group Publications
 - b. Write Program Press Releases:
 - c. Distribute and Follow Up on Press Releases
 - d. Write Interview Advisory, Distribute and Set Up Speaker Interviews
 - e. Write and Distribute Media Advisories

C. AMA Publicity

1. Business Wire: [Contact Name] [Telephone Number]
2. Comprehensive Media List
3. Calendar of Releases

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- a. New Logo
 - b. New Board
 - c. Speaker Series/Sponsorship Packages/Membership Drive
4. AMA Case Study
 5. Spotlight on Members
 6. Volunteer Jobs
 - a. Develop Comprehensive Media List
 - b. Write Releases, Distribute Releases

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SAMPLE II

Objective

Provide members, prospects, sponsors and media frequent, consistent communication to keep our chapter top-of-mind, reinforce the benefits of membership and to provide timely and relevant information, so they can experience {Chapter Name} events.

Goals

- Create visibility and strengthen networking interaction between members with a strong social media presence.
- Promote all programs with appropriate communications to support individual committee goals, as well as gain recognition for our chapter.
- Keep website fresh with timely and relevant content.
- Distribute four e-newsletters to inform members of accomplishments, upcoming events and membership benefits.
- Support all board committees with communications regarding their individual activities/goals, including the Awards Program, Agency Crawl and CMO/Senior Executive Panel.
- Maintain relationships with sponsors who support our communications efforts and thereby reduce communications costs.
- Create and maintain a yearly communication deadline calendar to help foster healthy board communication and ensure timely delivery of information to members, prospects, and stakeholders.
- Add at least one member volunteers to the communications committee.
- Work with CEA Submissions Team to be sure the Communications Committee is meeting requirements for awards submission.

Strategies/Tactics

Social Media

- Social Media Director will create monthly social media calendar and assign all communication team members to specific social media tasks, as well as provide deadlines.
- Twitter: All communication team members are responsible for posting relevant and timely information for members and prospects, per the social media calendar. Coordinate live tweeting from monthly luncheon and communicate this tactic to speaker to avoid any perception that audience members are not being respectful or paying attention. Communicate hashtag for monthly luncheons and encourage attendees to live tweet.
- Facebook: All communication team members are responsible for adding our events to the events tab and for developing content unique to Facebook, including photos/videos, per the social media calendar. Continue to utilize Facebook syncing tools to automatically publish Twitter and blog posts.
- LinkedIn: All communication team members are responsible for adding our events to LinkedIn's Events and for developing unique member-only communication, per the social media calendar. Continue to utilize LinkedIn syncing tools to automatically publish Twitter and blog posts.
- Blog: All communication team members are responsible for at least one blog post per month, per the social media calendar. Post at least two blog posts per week; use e-newsletter, luncheon slides, social media and quarterly emails to encourage members to submit blog topic suggestions.

Monthly Luncheon & SIG Meetings

- Work with Media sponsor to finalize and distribute news release to local media outlets highlighting date, time, location and speaker/sponsor information, as well as link to online registration.
- Work with Media sponsor to submit meeting information to area community calendars.
- Mail postcard to member/prospect list highlighting date, time, location and speaker/sponsor information, as well as info regarding online registration.
- Distribute three emails (initial, two weeks prior to meeting and reminder to register) to member/prospect list highlighting date, time, location and speaker/sponsor information, as well as

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link to online registration. Format reminder email as text-only to avoid spam filters and add “Last Chance” or similar copy to subject line.

- Support Programming Committee’s efforts to promote programming schedule on the website.
- Promote programming schedule via social media channels.
- Support Programming Committee in the development of luncheon slideshow presentation.

Awards Program

- Work with the Awards Program Committee to coordinate communications for the event in an effort to meet attendance and entries goals.
- Work with the Awards Program Committee to schedule, produce and communicate program details, call for entries and post-event information via media relations, postcard, email, website and social media channels. The committee should identify one or two individuals to work with Communications Team.

Website

- Keep website updated monthly with timely information on chapter’s programs, activities and membership opportunities, as well as up-to-date contact information and links.
- Designate one member of the Communications Committee as Website Manager; this person will be responsible making changes requested by committee VPs, as well as conducting a quarterly audit of the site to look for needed updates.

e-Newsletter

- Distribute e-newsletter four times during the program year.
- Work with Membership Committee to include member benefits.
- Include testimonials from new and experienced members about the benefits of membership.
- Work with Leadership Committee to include board/chapter accomplishments.
- Repurpose content from social media channels.
- Add a recap of SIG and monthly meetings with link to speaker information on the AMA website.
- Spotlight board members.
- Create a benchmark and analyze stats to determine value of e-newsletter and provide recommendation for the program year.
- *Stretch goal:* Add a “getting to know” section for members and sponsors. Will require members and/or sponsors to willingly participate and provide information.

Media Relations

- Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with local and regional media by pitching timely, localized story ideas based on programming schedule.
- Invite reporters/writers to monthly luncheon and offer access to speakers for interview.
- Stretch goal: Submit a minimum of four board members in the program year for “You Should Get to Know” (Register) and/or “A Closer Look” (Business Record) profiles. Again, is subject to publications’ picking up and placing the information.

Vendor Sponsorships

- Work with the Sponsorship Committee to maintain mutually beneficial relationships with communications sponsors.
- Identify new opportunities for sponsorships and communicate needs/ideas to Sponsorship Committee.

Internal/Board Communications

- Create and maintain a yearly calendar with all communication channel deadlines; communicate timeline to all Board Members to clarify roles and ensure timely creation/distribution of communications.
- Provide monthly statistics on web traffic using the monthly dashboard.

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Volunteers

- Coordinate with Membership Committee to tap into pool of potential volunteers to assist with a variety of communication needs.
- Work with Membership Committee's Collegiate Relations to locate students eager to gain experience and assist with execution of the Chapter's communication strategies (social media in particular).

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SAMPLE III

Methods of Communications

Email – email distribution list includes all members and prospects

Basic schedule for promoting monthly luncheon events – other chapter events are primarily promoted within this schedule to avoid email “burnout” for mail recipients

- 6 weeks before event – preview of event alongside current month’s event
- 5 weeks before event – preview of event alongside “Last Chance to Register” for current month’s event; include preview in “What You Missed” about event
- 2 weeks before event – event features in email blast
- 1 weeks before event – event features in email blast
- Monday before event – “Last Chance to Register”
- 1-2 days after event – “What You Missed Email” including picture previews linking to Facebook album, membership value messaging, and a preview of next event

Social Media – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Slideshare

Event-specific social media strategy and timeline:

- 2-3 weeks before event: Receive event cover photo from Graphic Designer and create Facebook event (and update cover photo of the Facebook page); send pre-scripted messages promoting event to board (see samples) and schedule posts to all accounts for next two weeks. Send updated scripts to board to drive registration based off analysis of RSVPs from membership and programming. Like and follow speaker to tag speaker in posts, and post on speaker’s page where possible.
- Day-of Event: Communication team tweets with #{Chapter Hashtag}, supported by board. Sponsor messaging as necessary.
- 1-2 days after event: post pictures to Facebook, post thank-you messages, engage with audience.
- After registration link is live online, the Communications team shares pre-scripted social media posts with board to share on main social media channels using a trackable ow.ly link, and taking into consideration things like pushing registration by the deadline, sharing with your own network, and leaving room for retweets within the 140 character limit on Twitter.
 - o Message to Board: “As the event approaches, please help the Communications team spread the word by encouraging people to register for the event. For your convenience, please use the prepared social media posts below for your preferred social network, with a condensed link to the registration page. Don’t forget to RSVP on Facebook and to share the event there too!”
 - o Sample for Facebook/LinkedIn: Are you going to be one of the first to know who {Chapter Name}’s best marketers are? Register now for the AMA’s exclusive celebration of the Marketing Excellence Awards on May 23, starting at 6 p.m. at the {Event Location}. Let us know you’re coming and register now! {ow.ly URL}
 - o Sample for Twitter: Be the first to know the best marketers in {Chapter City} at the Marketing Excellence Awards on May 23. Register today! {ow.ly URL}

Web – managed by Webmaster; coordinates between Programming and Communications to post event copy, pictures, and create and share registration links

Postcard – only direct mail, primarily used to drive registration within 7-10 days before event

- Graphic Design prepares draft 3-4 weeks before event; sends to VP of Communications for review; to printer and in the mail 2 weeks before event

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Newsletter – two-page newsletter distributed at monthly luncheons with current and upcoming event information, social media platforms and hashtags, volunteer opportunities and other news and announcements

- Graphic Design 2-3 weeks before event; VP of Communications and Leadership provide news and announcements 1 week before event and review drafts; to print 2-3 days before event

Powerpoint – displays membership value, current and upcoming event information, social media platforms and hashtags, volunteer opportunities and other news and announcements

- Template is updated 1-2 days before event

Public Relations

3-4 weeks out

1. Request programming committee for quote from presenter/speaker
2. Request quote from chapter president or member about speaker and/or event.
3. *Thursday by 5p.m.:* Draft of press release (and media alert) for review/proofreading

2-3 weeks out

1. *Monday by 5p.m.:* Edits due, after proofreading. Quote from chapter President or member about upcoming event or speaker.
2. *Tuesday by 2p.m.:* Submit press release to media list, add to local online event calendars
3. Upload press release (and media alert) to Box.com. Send webmaster link to press release so it can be posted on our website.

1-2 weeks out

1. Check Google Alerts for potential news coverage
2. *Tuesday by 2p.m.:* Resend press release (or submit media alert if needed) to media list

Week of event

1. Check Google Alerts for potential news coverage
2. Follow up with media that have shown interest by phone or email. Invite to event at member rate if he/she shows an interest.
3. *By registration deadline:* Provide membership committee with list of all media persons to attend.

Day of event

1. Check Google Alerts for potential news coverage
2. Be available at event to direct press attendees and to answer questions, as needed.

If you come across any media that covers our event, please provide the webmaster with the following so it can be posted to our website:

- Story headline
- URL link to story
- Media – (i.e., publication name)
- Author – [Name]
- Date - Month DD, YYYY

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SAMPLE IV

GOAL: TO INCREASE MEMBER RETENTION BY 10%.

COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS	SUCCESS METRICS	OWNER	SUPPORT FROM
Further develop website features and create members-only resource center.	Completed by September 1	Communications	President <i>Give strategic direction</i> President Elect <i>Sponsor and coordinate project</i>
Review newsletter and revamp to better communicate with subscribers.	Completed by September 1	Communications	President <i>Give strategic direction</i> President Elect <i>Sponsor and coordinate project</i>
Use social media platforms to better interact with members/non-members (Twitter lists to follow members, retweet, Facebook posts, more images, more interaction, more organic followers, etc).	Increase by 15% social media followers by EOY	Communications	Sponsorship <i>Secure tools as sponsors</i>
Share student, volunteer and member spotlights on website.	10 by EOY	Communications	President Elect <i>Provide member spotlight</i> Volunteers <i>Provide volunteer spotlight</i> Collegiate <i>Provide collegiate spotlight</i>

GOAL: TO INCREASE MEMBER VALUE BY PROVIDING TANGIBLE BENEFITS AS WELL AS EVENTS, NETWORKING & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS	SUCCESS METRICS	OWNER	SUPPORT FROM
Create blog strategy with weekly posts that include guest blog opportunities for members, Board member posts, newsletter articles, spotlights, marketing leaders reposts, etc.	1 blog/week	Communications	Sponsorship <i>Secure tools as sponsors</i>
Have photographers at each event and post pictures on social media.	1 photographer/event	Communications	Sponsorship <i>Secure sponsor</i>
Develop a plan for monthly webinars that are recorded and shared in the members-only resource center of website.	Completed by EOY	Communications	Member Relations <i>Assist with logistics</i> Programming <i>Assist with presenters</i> Sponsorship

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			<i>Secure sponsors</i>
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GOAL: TO INCREASE THE VALUE OF INDYAMA AS AN ORGANIZATION IN THE INDIANAPOLIS COMMUNITY BY INCREASING VISIBILITY, SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, AND PARTNERSHIPS.

COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS	SUCCESS METRICS	OWNER	SUPPORT FROM
Take advantage of free calendar listings.	8 free listings by EOY	Communications	
Create two videos to promote {Chapter Name}.	2 videos by EOY	Communications	Sponsorship <i>Secure sponsor</i> President <i>Provide strategic guidance</i> President Elect <i>Act as lead for project</i>
Add a Press Release section to the website and send out 1 press release per month.	10 press releases by EOY 5 media mentions by EOY	Communications	Programming <i>Provide content</i> Special Events <i>Provide content</i> Sponsorship <i>Secure media sponsor</i>