Developing a Communications Strategy
E-mail services

- Gmail - gmail.com
- Hotmail - hotmail.com
- Yahoo mail - mail.yahoo.com

Tip: Use one username and password for all accounts
Developing a Communications Strategy

• Develop an effective website
• Create e-newsletters
• Use social media
• Continue publishing print products
• Move toward a mobile world
Developing a Communications Strategy
Developing an effective website
Developing an effective website

Know your audience

• Loyal members
• Members at-risk of membership renewal
• Non-members, but eligible to become members
• Non-members, non-eligible with affinity to the Legion
Developing an effective website

Determine your content

• Static content – our mission, history
• Occasionally changing content – target dates, leadership
• Frequently changing content – news, calendar
• Interactive content – sign up, comments, polls
• Downloads – speeches, brochures

Tip: Keep your website up to date
Developing an effective website

Set goals

- Increase communication
- Recruit new members
- Increase attendance at events or activities
- Increase donations
- Retain the at-risk member
- Provide help to newly discharged service members
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

- The American Legion Centennial Celebration
- Legionsites.com
- Custom solution
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

**Centennial Celebration**

- Share your post history
- Calendar of events
- Photo galleries
- Need no coding knowledge

Go to:  ➔  Legion.org/centennial
Developing an effective website

Website services

Legionsites.com

• Free domain name
• E-mail accounts
• Create your own pages
• Minimal coding knowledge

Go to: ➔ Legionsites.com
Developing an effective website

Website services

More on Legionsites.com

• Free upgrades
• Free technical support
• Connected to Legion.org
• View demo

Go to:  Legionsites.com
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

Custom solution

- Hosting
- Domain name
- Minimal to advanced coding knowledge

Go to: GoDaddy.com
Developing an effective website

Please link to Legion.org

<a href="http://www.legion.org/">Legion.org</a>
Developing an effective website

Tell people about your website

• Google - google.com/submityourcontent
• Yahoo - submit.search.yahoo.com
• Bing - bing.com/toolbox/submit-site-url
• Legion - email cs@legion.org
Developing an effective website

Web coding resources

• Webmonkey.com  -  News, tutorials and reference
• W3Schools.com  -  Tutorials and reference
• Htmlgoodies.com  -  HTML tutorials and reference
• Codeacademy.com  -  Learn to code interactively
Email marketing
Email marketing

*Why e-newsletters?*

E-newsletters are an effective means to drive traffic to your website, engage and inform your members and identify the needs of our community.

- Your members use e-mail
- Low costs
- Revenue generation
- Member retention
Email marketing

Services

• Easy to use
• Import e-mail lists
• Select templates
• Up to 2,000 subscribers
• Up to 12,000 emails / mo.

Go to: ➡️ Mailchimp.com
Email marketing

More services

• Constant Contact
• iContact
• Benchmark
• Campaigner

Go to: Creativebeacon.com/the-top-10-email-marketing-services
Email marketing

*Tips*

• Subject line is **KEY**!
• Make it **Useful**.
• Make it **Interesting**.
• Keep it **Simple**.
• Link to **Web Site**.
Email marketing

*When to send e-newsletters*

Studies have shown the majority of inbox traffic and activities occur on working days – with the peak on **Thursday**. This is the top day for all metrics: percent sent, open rate and click through rate.
Email marketing

*A look at our e-newsletters*

**Online Update**

- Weekly on Thursdays
- Over 450,000 subscribers
- 30% Open Rate

Go to: Legion.org/newsletters

*Online Update*
Email marketing

A look at our e-newsletters

Flag Alert

• Flag at Half-Staff
• Over 35,500 subscribers
• 125% Open Rate

Go to: Legion.org/newsletters
Email marketing

A look at our e-newsletters

Commander’s Message

• ~ Quarterly
• Over 450,000 subscribers

Go to: ➔ Legion.org/newsletters
Social media
Social media

*Tips*

Online interactions with eligible non-members can become conversations and your best recruiting tool.

- Listen and respond
- Understand your goals
- Understand your audience
- Decide on platform(s) and use them
- Be professional, but be yourself
- Execute
Microblogging

Services

Twitter

An online service that allows users to send and read “tweets”, which are messages limited to 140 characters.

Go to: Twitter.com
Microblogging

*Twitter tips*

- Fill out the "bio" section.
- Tweet frequently.
- Follow other Twitter accounts similar to yours.
- Customize your Twitter background and theme.
- Advertise your Twitter account in other media.
- Avoid arguments.
Microblogging

Twitter tip

Use @AmericanLegion when tweeting to target the National Headquarters account. This will allow us to see your tweet and possibly re-tweet your message.
Content communities

Why YouTube?

• More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month
• Over 6 billion hours of video are watched each month
• According to Nielsen, YouTube reaches more US adults ages 18-34 than any cable network

Go to: Youtube.com
Content communities

YouTube tips

• Create compelling videos.
• Keep it short and to the point.
• Create a searchable title.
• Leverage other social media platforms.
• Review analytics.

Go to: Youtube.com
Content communities

YouTube: Our channel

Go to: Youtube.com/americanlegionHQ
Content communities

*YouTube: How to share videos*

Go to:  Youtube.com/americanlegionHQ
Content communities

*YouTube: How to embed videos*

Go to:  ➔  Youtube.com/americanlegionHQ
Social networks

*How to use Facebook*

- Create an account
- Build a page
- Connect with members and non-members
- Engage your audience
- Influence your audience and their network

Go to: Facebook.com
Social networks

Facebook: Build a page

- Choose a category (non-profit) and a descriptive Page name
- Choose a profile image people can associate with your post
- Write a sentence about your post
- Set a memorable web address for your Page to advertise in print
- Choose a cover photo that represents and showcases your post

Go to: Facebook.com/pages/create
Social networks

*Facebook: Engage your audience*

- Write quality posts that are relevant to your audience
- Be friendly and conversational
- Share photos and videos
- Ask questions or seek input
- Be timely by posting about current events, holidays or news
- Ask your audience to share your posts

Go to: Facebook.com/pages/create
Social networks

*Facebook: Influence*

When people “like”, “comment” or “share” your content on Facebook, their friends are notified in their news feeds. The more people interacting with your content the better.

Go to:  ➔  Facebook.com/pages/create
Social networks

Facebook tips

• Post at least once a week
• Vary your content: events, photos, honor & remembrance
• Be friendly and conversational
• Provide calls to action
• Make it “sharable”
• Provide exclusive content they cannot find in other media
Social networks

A look at our Facebook pages

- National Headquarters
- Online Update
- Legion Riders
- Legion Baseball
- Honor & Remembrance
- National Convention

Go to:  ➡️  Legion.org/facebook
Social networks

Other social media worth mention

LinkedIn  Google+  Pinterest
MyLegion.org

MyLegion.org is designed to connect members of The American Legion to their Post and Department leadership.

• Membership information - view member renewals
• Data change forms
• Consolidated Post Reports
• Search for expired members

Go to: MyLegion.org
Download this presentation

Go to: Legion.org/publications