



Enhancing Association Communication

Gold Eye Marketing

Practical Strategies for Enhancing
Community Communication and
Engagement for Association Boards

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Empowering Association Boards with Content

As a board member for over a decade, including six years as president, I've experienced firsthand the challenges of fostering effective communication within our community. Insufficient communication often led to decreased meeting attendance and a lack of resident engagement. However, through trial and error, I discovered that transparent and consistent communication was the key to transforming our community dynamics.

Drawing from my background in business marketing and years of practical experience, I've developed a comprehensive approach to enhance association communication. This guide is designed to equip association boards with practical strategies to plan communication effectively, select compelling content, and design engaging layouts. By implementing these strategies, boards can cultivate a culture of transparency and collaboration within their communities.

Imagine a community where every resident feels informed and empowered, where meetings are well-attended, and ideas for improvement flourish. Effective communication not only reduces complaints but also inspires residents to contribute actively to community initiatives. By mastering these strategies, your board can create a thriving community where communication strengthens bonds and fosters a sense of belonging.

Nikeisha Weems

Building Bridges

First, when we effectively build the bridge between supporting the association board and informing residents, we enhance community engagement.

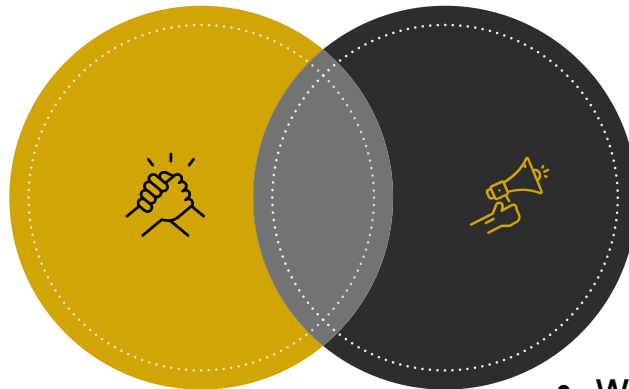
Supporting the Association Board

Boards require steadfast support to function optimally. Board members often face challenges such as burnout from extended tenures or external work pressures, which can diminish their mental capacity and energy. Moreover, diverse community needs may overwhelm the board, necessitating support for various tasks.

Informing the Community

Communities crave transparency and information. Residents frequently inquire about the board's activities, seek clarification on specific concerns, and inquire about the allocation of dues. Clear and proactive communication addresses these queries and fosters trust and engagement among residents.

Support



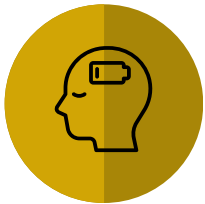
Inform

- Burnout
- Time restrictions
- Overwhelmed with priorities

- What does the board do?
- What are they doing for me?
- Why are we paying dues?

Why Supporting Boards Matters Now More Than Ever

If we take a moment to explore why boards need support now more than ever, we find these statistics:



Workplace Stress and Burnout

77% of workers report experiencing work-related stress (American Psychological Association, 2023 Work in America Survey). Many volunteers, despite their dedication, experience burnout due to stress from their full-time jobs, which can impact their ability to contribute effectively to associations.



Volunteer Decline

In Florida, formal volunteering decreased from 22.8% in 2017 to 15.9% in recent years (AmeriCorps). Nationwide, formal volunteering through organizations dropped from 30% in 2019 to 23.2% in 2021 (AmeriCorps).



Overwhelmed Parents

Parents of children under 18 are significantly more likely to experience overwhelming stress compared to other adults (American Psychological Association, Stress in America™ 2023).



Recruitment Challenges

Nearly half of organizations consider recruiting enough volunteers a major issue, which represents a 62% increase since 2003 (National Council of Nonprofits).

Why Informing Fosters Community Engagement

Homeowners often express dissatisfaction with community associations. It's a prevalent issue, with a common complaint. When the community is well-informed, their engagement increases.

Here is why informing the community is important.



Informing Brings Visibility of Activities

Highlighting the behind-the-scenes efforts ensures transparency and fosters understanding of the board's activities. Residents often do not see the meetings happening or projects in progress, which can lead to misconceptions or dissatisfaction.



People Have a Desire for Information

Recognizing residents' thirst for information underscores the importance of proactive communication from associations. People want to be informed about decisions that impact their community and their lives.



Changes the Value Perception

When residents are informed about ongoing projects and meetings, they perceive greater value in their association dues. Understanding where their money goes enhances their appreciation for the community's efforts.



Building Trust Through Communication

Prioritizing communication to keep residents informed about ongoing projects and meetings is crucial for fostering trust. When residents feel informed and included, it strengthens the bond between the board and the community.

Engagement through Effective Communication

Now let's explore how to engage through effective communication and how to use marketing techniques specific to association communication.

There are three areas to highlight.

1. Planning Your Communication

Effective communication begins with a well-thought-out plan. Strategize and schedule your communication efforts to ensure consistency and relevance.

2. Choosing What to Share

There is an art to selecting compelling content that resonates with your community. From important updates to engaging stories, keep your audience informed and interested.

3. Designing Your Layout

Visual appeal matters. Create communication materials that are clear, visually appealing, and easy to navigate. Design plays a crucial role in enhancing engagement and comprehension.

Mastering Planning Your Communication

Embarking on a communication journey can be both exhilarating and daunting. One might ask, 'where do we start?' or 'what should we inform the community about?' Planned communication is the opportunity to connect with your community, convey your message, and drive meaningful action.

However, without a solid plan in place, even the best ideas can falter.

Here are the 5 key features for planning your communication



1. Research

Why does your community need this?

Research involves gathering insights into community needs. Through research, you can identify opportunities, outline community challenges, and refine your approach to align with these needs.



2. Setting Goals

What is the best structure that will work for your community?

Every communication plan should have clear goals that outline desired outcomes. Whether it's increasing awareness of community activities or fostering engagement, defining your goals provides a map for success.

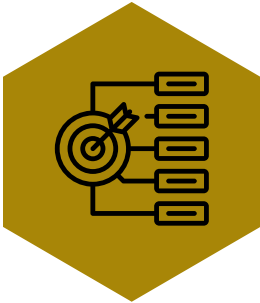
Mastering Planning Your Communication



3. Determine Approach

How do you plan to leverage communication channels?

An outlined approach serves as the blueprint for achieving your communication goals. It should detail how you plan to leverage various channels to deliver your message and resonate with your community.



4. Establishing Objectives

How do you determine success?

Objectives translate your approach into measurable actions with specific targets. These should be quantifiable, enabling you to gauge the success of your effort, such as increasing community website traffic or meeting attendance.



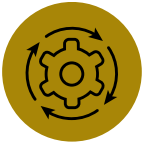
5. Selecting Tactics

Which forms of communication to use?

Tactics encompass the message for the channels and tools you'll utilize to execute your communication plan. This includes social media, email, events, and flyers—each chosen based on relevance to your community and alignment with your objectives.

Preparing a communication plan requires planning, research, and execution. By incorporating these five key features, you can maximize the impact and effectiveness of your plans. Remember, success lies in preparation and dedication to delivering value to your community.

Choosing What to Share



Understanding Communication Flows

The flow of communication influences what content to share. Understanding these flows helps you draft appropriate content for your community.

- *Upward Communication:* Neighbors communicate concerns or thoughts to the board.
- *Downward Communication:* The board communicates updates and decisions to neighbors.
- *Lateral Communication:* Neighbors interact and communicate among themselves.



Identify Pain Points

Frame your content around the challenges your community faces. For example, "Connecting with Landscape Vendors" addresses a common concern and encourages residents to learn more.



Create Intrigue

Pose content that sparks curiosity, such as "Guess who won Yard of the Month?" This engages residents and encourages them to seek more information.



Personalize Your Approach

Tailor content to resonate with specific community segments. Address their unique interests, concerns, and needs directly to make the content more compelling.

A sense of relevance can elevate your communication plan to new heights. Experiment with questions to develop engaging content that connects with your community.

Designing Your Layout

Captivating content is the key to engagement. However, not all content is created equal. This section covers intricacies of crafting compelling marketing content that captivates.

The Importance of Concise Descriptions

In a world inundated with information, brevity is paramount. A short, impactful description can prevent content from being overlooked. Crafting attention-grabbing summaries in your communication entices readers to explore further.

Mastering the Art of Bullets

Bullets enhance readability and streamline information, but an excess can overwhelm. Use 3-4 bullets when content is scannable to keep it focused and engaging.



Tell Your Story Visually

Visuals are crucial for captivating content, drawing users in and leaving a lasting impression. Whether showcasing your community entrance, sharing behind-the-scenes photos from meetings, or narrating your community's story, visuals connect on a deeper level.

Adding the Wow Factor

Inject fun, intrigue, or utility into your content to transform it from mundane to must-read. Share little-known facts, recent community highlights, or upcoming events that inspire your community.

Leverage visuals to resonate with residents and foster meaningful connections.



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Crafting compelling content is a valuable practice. From concise descriptions to injecting the wow factor, each element plays a crucial role in capturing attention. Understanding the science behind captivating content and implementing best practices can elevate your communication and forge meaningful connections with your residents. Embrace experimentation, listen to feedback, and continuously refine your approach. Remember, mastering the art of content creation is not just about what you say but how you say it.

Through content development, leaders are equipped with the knowledge and strategies needed to foster stronger relationships, encourage active engagement, and cultivate a sense of belonging among residents.

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