



Chapter Management Awards 2019 Communication Management

INTRODUCTION

Our small chapter of International Association of Business Communicators is located in Newfoundland and Labrador – a Canadian island in the North Atlantic and inspiration for the award winning Broadway musical *Come from Away*.

After centuries of making a living and raising families in a harsh ocean environment - a place referred to by many as “The Rock” - we have a work ethic known throughout the world and a culture that embodies the human spirit with warmth and creativity and humility.

It is in this environment - on the craggy rocks of the North Atlantic - that our small chapter thrives – bobbing and weaving with the economy that fluctuates with commodity prices and out-migration of our people who have gained a footing in business, industry and the arts throughout Canada and the world.

Here at home, our dedicated board of directors at IABC NL are helping to advance the profession, create connections, and develop strategic communicators in our province.

We are proud of our approximately 65 members who are the professional communicators at the heart of every organization and shine brightly throughout IABC nationally and internationally.

Newfoundland and Labrador has aligned with International’s #IABC1720 Strategy, adopting the vision, mission, and three core components as our own to guide our chapter. We are interested in gathering feedback on the new strategy through our membership survey which will be undertaken in spring 2019.

We continue to learn so much from our IABC colleagues and we are delighted to have the opportunity to present our work through the Chapter Management Awards Program.

This submission outlines how we effectively communicate with members – also described in our annual report (**Work Sample 1**).

Internal Communications

Our members are at the heart of everything we do. To ensure we are meeting their needs, our strategic planning and decision making processes are aligned with the feedback we receive from members through surveys, social media, email and informal discussion.



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A recent membership survey helped us plan the best way to use these vehicles for 2017-2018. Close to 50 per cent of membership responded.

When asked how information is currently received from IABC NL:

- 96 per cent of respondents said email;
- 57 per cent said Facebook;
- 35 per cent said Twitter; and
- 35 per cent said the website.

When asked about the preferred way to receive information from IABC NL:

- 79 per cent said email;
- 14 per cent said Facebook;
- 3 per cent said Twitter; and
- 4 per cent said the website.

Consequently, strategically-timed emails are sent to members regarding news, professional development and membership events, followed up with postings on social media and the website.

Our content is always centred on the three components of the 17/20 Strategic Plan, sharing information that will help create connections, develop strategic communicators and help advance our profession. Whether it's a job posting or information about outstanding work completed by another member, we monitor our response and open rates closely to ensure we are talking about what matters most to our members.

External Communications

IABC NL understands the importance of celebrating the fact that communicators are in fact, at the heart of every organization. As such, it is a practice that news and accomplishments from members should be celebrated both internally and externally. To do this, we rely on social media, traditional media and our events that may attract non-members such as our annual Pinnacle Awards.

Speaking of the IABC NL Pinnacle Awards, this is a major annual opportunity for IABC NL to share and celebrate with the community the good work that is completed each year by communicators in Newfoundland and Labrador. This helps build credibility in our profession, and establish the important and diverse roles communicators hold within a variety of organizations.



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Branding

After our Communications Director audited our Chapter's templates and tools at the beginning of the 2017-18 fiscal year, IABC NL determined it was following International's Brand Standards within most platforms and templates, but required some adjustments. As such, enhancements were made to publications and some digital platforms to align more closely with the brand. A tool kit was also created in the IABC NL's Board of Director shared Google Drive with variations of acceptable logos for different applications, as well as the International Brand Guidelines and the downloadable Myriad font family.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This year the goal of communications management was to engage members by maintaining regular communications, increase member participation and attendance at IABC events using multiple communications platforms, and to raise the profile of the communications profession.

This year, the communications portfolio forged forward with three main objectives:

- To grow interest in the work of our chapter both internally and externally;
- To celebrate the success and accomplishments of the chapter and our members; and
- To promote IABC NL's events, news and opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION

To successfully execute all of our goals this year, we equipped ourselves with the necessary content, and pushed it out using a number of mediums including Gmail, Eventbrite, Mail Chimp, social media, our website and news releases. We also ensured our content aligned strongly with the IABC brand. From updating our sponsorship package (**Work sample 2**) to aligning our social media content and imagery, we weaved IABC International's graphic standards into our publications and digital platforms.

Most importantly, Communications worked in conjunction with other board members to strategically communicate information appropriately to various audiences including membership, media and the business community. We shared information on professional development events, as well as signature events, such as the Innovations in Communications 4.0, the Pinnacle Awards and the member coffee breaks.

Growing Our Tribe



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This year, to align with IABC Internationals theme for Membership Month, we looked for creative ways to grow our tribe. This meant supporting both recruitment and retention activities, such as member profiles, but also engaging our members and community through enhanced use of digital media. For one, we grew our digital reach through the introduction of an IABC NL Instagram Account and LinkedIn account.

While we continue to work on growing our LinkedIn reach, we are pleased with the growth we have already experienced on Instagram. After only launching in February, our Instagram account already has 140 followers, and we expect further growth as we enhance utilization of this platform.

During leadership institute in San Diego, our attending board members provided real time updates through social media platforms engaging members and the community using Twitter and Instagram during the sessions (**Work Sample 3**).

During our Pinnacle Awards Gala and Innovations in Communications 4.0, we engaged other networks tagging participants on social media and extending our reach both within and beyond Newfoundland and Labrador (**Work Sample 4**). This year, we had over 75,000 tweet impressions, with approximately 25,000 achieved in June through recognition of Pinnacle Award winners. Additionally, winning organizations also shared news of their awards, helping build respect for the role of communicators in our communities.

Celebrating Success

Communications also utilized digital platforms to celebrate and promote a number of achievements realized by the chapter and its members this year.

At the Chapter Management Awards in San Diego, our team shared with members and the community in real time that the chapter won two Awards of Excellence and Small Chapter of the Year! We then followed up on this excellent news through an e-blast to members and friends of IABC NL, as well as a news release that was distributed through Cision and on our website.

We were also pleased to share news of the accomplishments of our members this year through e-blast, social media and news releases. Some accomplishments we celebrated included the Rooms and Fortis Inc.'s Gold Quill Awards, two members being the first to complete the SCMP designation in Atlantic Canada and Pinnacle Award winners (**Work Sample 5**).

Promoting Events, News and Opportunities



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We kept our members informed this past year through regular e-blasts, updating them on events, certification, jobs and more. Previous discussion and surveys of members determined email as the preferred means of contact, and the open rates show us this remains the case.

In total, we sent out 37 e-blasts, with an incredible open rate ranging from 79.3 to 24 per cent, well above the 19.3 per cent industry average. In fact, 24 of the emails sent had an open rate of more than double the national average.

We were pleased to see a strong interest in certification amongst members, with a 69 per cent open rate for an informational email.

We've also seen a continued interest from members in receiving job opportunities, with these emails having the highest open rates. As such, we were pleased to more than double our jobs postings, with eight positions advertised this year, as well as two volunteer positions. All positions were also reinforced through social media teasers as this is a member only benefit.

Digital media remained an important part of our communication equation, with frequent updates to the website to ensure relevant information is available to members. Our social media platforms also continued to do well, and helped us promote our Pinnacle Awards Gala, professional development and networking events, which were all attended well.

Communications also increased the number of news releases issued by the chapter by 50 per cent, and all releases were also shared with members through email and social media. We were pleased with the uptake, having most items picked up by local media, helping us advance our profession even further (**Work Sample 6**).

BUDGET

Expenditures:

The communications budget required minimal expenditure to cover costs related to the communications function. Website costs totaled \$713, while a promotional budget of \$300 was used.

Revenue:

The only source of revenue for the Communications budget would be job posting, which total \$600.



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MEASUREMENT & RESULTS

- Engagement with E-Blast: Total of 37 e-blasts, with an open rate ranging from 79.3 to 24 per cent, well above the 19.3 per cent industry average. In fact, 24 of the emails sent has an open rate of more than double the national average.
- Social Media Growth:
 - Facebook Likes +14.4%
 - Total Facebook Reach 16,518
 - Total Tweet Impressions 75,844
 - Twitter Followers +9.7%
 - 2 new platforms added
- Media Response: The number of news releases issued by the chapter increased by 50 per cent. Media coverage also increased from the previous year by the same amount.
- Increase in membership: we have seen growth of over five members, securing a new corporate membership during a difficult time financially in our Province.
- Increase in the number of job postings from three to eight, demonstrating a stronger understanding of our Chapter in the business community.

WORK SAMPLES

Work Sample 1: Annual Report 2017-2018

Work Sample 2: New In-Brand Sponsorship Package

Work Sample 3: Celebrating Our Chapter and Members through Social Media

Work Sample 4: Media Coverage and Sample News Release from 2017-18

Work Sample 5: Final E-blast from President to members through Mail Chimp