



CONNECTING CHAPTERS.
**GROWING
LEADERS.**



Effective Communications: Rising Above the Noise

Amy Barnett and Christi Dixon

IABC Pacific Plains Regional Board members

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About Amy Barnett, ABC Communications Director

Amy Barnett, ABC, directs external and internal communications programs as the communications manager for the City of Savage, Minn., a suburb of Minneapolis. Prior to joining the City 15 years ago, Amy was a reporter and editor for several Minnesota daily and weekly publications. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.



Amy has served as a Bronze and Silver Quill judge for many years, and has been the judging coordinator for IABC Minnesota's Bronze Quill Awards for the past three years. She also serves on her school district's board of directors.

Amy lives with her husband and two young children in the rural community in which she was raised. Her latest adventures have largely involved her family's new German Shepherd puppy, two "free" kittens and the pets' countless visits to the vet. She loves country living; playing golf; and exploring new territory by foot, bike or car.



About Christi Dixon Chapter Advocate

Christi Dixon recently joined Monsanto Company as the Corporate Media Relations Lead. She's managing media relationships on behalf of the Monsanto corporate brand and sits on the company's corporate engagement team. She was previously vice president of Standing Partnership, where she led the firm's sustainability practice. She has specific expertise in sustainability initiatives, media relations, crisis communications, strategic communications planning and long-term issues management.



Her work on behalf of clients has earned national and regional recognition, including Bronze, Silver and Gold Quill awards from IABC. She holds degrees in Business Administration-Marketing and Communication Arts-Public Relations from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. She also is a graduate of Coro Women in Leadership (Class 51). She has served as director-at-large on the board of PRSA-St. Louis, and is active in a number of St. Louis organizations. She also volunteers with her local church, and enjoys traveling with her husband and two daughters.



Top Four Issues – What we're hearing

- No clear basic communication plan for getting event information and chapter news to members
- Too much chatter – Communications overload from International, Region, Chapter, Others
- Lack of chapter online presence for membership (including a website or social media engagement).
- Confusion on how to take advantage of PPR resources



What We're Hearing: No Basic Plan

- Chapters vary in the tools and methods used to communicate with members
- New board members and volunteers struggle to identify processes: nothing to guide them
- Technology is an ongoing issue



Benefits of a basic plan

- Newcomers can hit the ground running, eliminates guesswork
- Efforts are consistent, recognizable
- Targeted approach is more effective than shotgun approach
- Having a guide makes taking on board role less daunting



What you can do

- Ask members what information they need and how they want to receive it
- Review chapter membership demographics at MMA
- Conduct an assessment to determine available tools; what's already in place?



What you can do

Don't recreate the wheel:

- [IABC Chapter Marketing Plan](#)
- Leader Centre at iabc.com
- Review winners in the Communications category of [IABC's Chapter Management Awards](#)
- Access resources at ASAECenter.org or AssociationAdvisor.com



Let the Conversation Begin

Creating a Basic Communication Plan

- What has worked for you?
- How is your plan connected to your goals?
- How can the whole board support your communication goals?



What We're Hearing: Too Much Chatter

- Members are on information overload with communication coming from all IABC levels
- Chapter messages are getting drowned out by messages from International, the Region and competing interests
- Chapter leaders are struggling to find ways to stand out and get their messages heard



What you can do

- Use your advantage – focus on *personal* communication over digital
- Go where your audience is, and where others are not (don't always default to email)
- Really USE events to promote upcoming opportunities



What you can do

When using email:

- Follow a schedule – be consistent
- Be visual, tell stories
- Include a call to action – don't just inform



What you can do

A word about social media

- Don't try to do it all
- Use the SM tools that your members are using
- Consider social media as a way to amplify the messages your are promoting elsewhere
- Remember to ask yourself what you want to accomplish before jumping in



Let the Conversation Begin

Rising Above the Chatter

- What has worked for you?
- Is social media effective?
- How have you maximized email?



What We're Hearing: Chapter is Lacking an Online Presence

- Site is sparse and not up-to-date
- No consensus on what to post
- Lack of resources to create content



What you can do

Make your website a priority

- Your chapter's website is your organization's "home base" – don't let it fall into disrepair
- Find a volunteer who will "own" the website
- Develop a plan that identifies what type of content and who is responsible



What you can do

Make your website a priority

- Repurpose existing content
- Feature content that is engaging – invite members to blog what they know
- Provide members with content they can use or that helps them in their career, in their workplace
- View award-winning sites for ideas (ex. San Diego IABC)



Let the Conversation Begin

Lacking an Online Presence

- What has worked for you?
- How do you ensure your website is fresh?
- Who is responsible for updates?



What We're Hearing:

How Can PPR Help With Marketing?

Chapters are invited to submit their news to PPR for cross- marketing:

- Calendar of Events
- Region News (Photos Welcome!)
- Chapter Cityscapes



What you can do

Tap IABC PPR resources

- Talk with your chapter advocate
- Leverage great ideas from others
- Check back often at IABC PPR site



Let the Conversation Begin

Cross-Marketing through PPR

- What has worked for you?
- How can we make it easier for you to use PPR's resources?