




NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS

 Think Green! Please do not print unless absolutely necessary

NSBE Professionals Chapter Communications Toolkit

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Introduction

The purpose of this toolkit is to serve as a resource for the communication zones of National Society of Black Engineers' (NSBE) Professionals Chapters. While this toolkit will not cover every possible resource available to you, you will have a good path forward to execute communications within your chapter. This resource is intended to be used by active NSBE Professionals Chapters. If you are a chapter that is trying to charter, please contact pebmembership@nsbe.org first.

Please send suggested revisions to this document to pebsecretary@nsbe.org.



Understanding Your Role

The communications zone can be made up of various positions. The common four (4) positions within this zone are Secretary, Publications Chair, Public Relations Chair, and Telecommunications Chair.

Secretary is a required position for a chapter to be considered active, and is also considered to be one of the chapter executive officers (this role provides you with discounts to certain conferences). The Secretary should write and publish minutes from meetings; work with the other chapter executive officers to ensure they have the communications support; manage the workload of your zone (Publications Chair, Public Relations Chair, and Telecommunications Chair); and serve as the editor for any external communications.

Publications Chair serves as the primary source for print and digital content (newsletter would be an example). This role, generally, should not be developing the content themselves as they should receive content from the responsible party on your board. This position should define clear deadlines for board members to meet and develop a calendar of when final products will be available.

Public Relations Chair serves as the primary contact for external interactions. This person can make official statements on behalf of the chapter. They also tend to be the person who manages social media, although the Publications Chair can also do this. The Public Relations Chair should engage with other local organizations for marketing and communications collaboration and should have contacts for all the local media outlets.

Telecommunications Chair serves as the primary website developer. This person should work closely with the Publications Chair and Public Relations Chair to ensure content on the website is consistent with content in the newsletter, social media, etc.

***Note: On the National Professionals Executive Board, the role of Publications Chair and Public Relations Chair was combined into one position now known as Publicist. Also, the Telecommunications Chair is now known as the Technology Officer.**

Branding

Branding is very important for chapters and the organization. It is critical that all chapters follow the NSBE Professionals brand and move away from the NSBE Alumni Extension brand.

Chapter Names should be NSBE <Chapter Location> Professionals, i.e. NSBE Boston Professionals, NSBE San Diego Professionals, or NSBE Atlanta Professionals. If there is more than one chapter in the city/state, then consider using some other location-based distinction, such as NSBE South Florida Professionals or NSBE Silicon Valley Professionals.



If you are a corporate-based chapter, consider using the company name and chapter location, i.e. NSBE IBM-San Jose Professionals.

Chapter URLs should reflect the name of the chapter such as www.nsbeboston.org or www.nsbedenver.org. Twitter and Instagram handles should follow the same naming convention but may need to be abbreviated due to the length of the chapter name, i.e. @nsbedc or @nsbedfw.

Google for Non-Profits

Google for Non-Profits is a highly recommended resource for chapters to use. This essentially provides your chapter with the Google for Business Applications that normally cost money, for free. One of the major benefits is the email addresses that you can have for your chapter. We recommend not having an @gmail.com and going with a more professional look with an @<chapter>.org (an example would be @nsbehouston.org). You also have the ability to purchase your website domain through there if you need one.

For more information go to: <https://www.google.com/nonprofits/>

***Note: Access to certain NSBE Professionals Marketing and Communication resources may be restricted if you are using email addresses that end in @gmail.com, @aol.com, @yahoo.com, etc.**

Email

Email can serve as a primary form for engaging internally and externally. As such, your email address should have a professional look that is representative of your chapter. Many services provide email addresses for you when you purchase a website domain. If you need a professional email address, refer to the Google for Non-Profits section above.

MailChimp and Constant Contact are email marketing systems that provide a higher level of engagement primarily for external use. In these systems, you can upload and manage a distribution list, create targeted marketing campaigns for a specific demographic, and track metrics for your marketing campaigns. These systems provide you with the ability to create templates to enhance the viewing experience of your content. You can search Google for other email marketing systems, but these two (2) are the most popular ones that chapters tend to use. Please do your research as to which one is best for your chapter. Please note that Mailchimp has a free version in addition to paid levels of access. Constant Contact also comes at a cost.

Mailchimp: <https://mailchimp.com/>

Constant Contact: <https://www.constantcontact.com/index.jsp>



Calendar of Events

A calendar of events can be as simple as using the google calendar plugin for a website and ensuring all your events get posted to the calendar. You can do a Google search to find the correct plugin for your specific website. You can also create a Microsoft Word or Excel document that highlights the event, date, time, and location. The intent is to have event information readily available to those searching for it.

Newspaper & Digital Outlets

In the communications zone, making connections is very important. Often times, marketing in newspapers and digital outlets is overlooked by chapters that want to grow and establish themselves in the community though they need to reach a larger, external audience. It is recommended to build a relationship with the newspaper, media sites, blog sites, company newsletters, etc. You can build this relationship by searching for a point of contact and communicating with them about your chapter and the great things you are doing. In most cases, these outlets will be happy to print or share content about your organization. This should be a continuous relationship and not a one-time engagement. Engaging with external partners like this actually helps increase the visibility of the brand of your chapter and introduces new connections to the chapter that may be of value.

Social Media

Over recent years, the impact of Social Media, as it relates to marketing, has tremendously grown. It is critical that you invest time in being active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. You have the potential to reach way more people on these outlets. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter have live video capabilities that chapters often use to live stream events like meetings, presentations, or conferences.

Facebook: Facebook (FB) allows you to create a page or a group for your chapter. It is recommended that you create a page because you will have the most visibility on FB. It is also important to make sure your security settings are set appropriately. You do not everyone to have the ability to post to your page, and potentially damage your brand.

<https://www.facebook.com/>

Twitter: Twitter allows for quick engagements. Twitter has a character limit (240 characters) that forces you to be succinct and creative when writing Tweets. Pictures are a good way to grab people's attention.

<https://twitter.com/>



Instagram: Instagram is a picture-dominant platform. This is another good platform for advertising events, recognizing members, and capturing pictures from your events to share. Instagram does not allow individuals to copy and paste from your post so when posting links, it is also recommended to include those links in your bio and direct people there to click. Note that this platform has a website-based application for viewing purposes but is primarily a mobile application.

<https://www.instagram.com/>

LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a platform centered on professional. Here you can engage with new professionals that may be in your area or just have a general interest in what your chapter is doing.

<https://www.linkedin.com/>

Website

Having a website can seem a bit overwhelming because many people do not have experience building websites. However, your chapter's website is a cornerstone of your brand as a chapter. Your website should contain all the information an individual needs when searching for you online. It should also remain up-to-date at all times. When developing a website, think about how much time you have to invest into maintenance because that will determine the type of information you place on the website and the frequency at which you update it.

Web Domain: Your web domain is your website address. This should be reflective of your chapter's location (e.g. www.nsbedc.org). Google for Nonprofits (mentioned earlier) allows you to purchase a domain or you can go to a website like www.godaddy.com to purchase your domain.

Web Hosting: Web hosting allows you to host (store) your website on a server and make it available on the internet. www.godaddy.com also provides you with hosting services.

WordPress: WordPress is an option for developing your website.

<https://wordpress.com/>. Here is a link on how to get started with WordPress:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cbvZf1jIJM>

Joomla: Joomla is an option for developing your website. <https://www.joomla.com/>. Here is a link on how to get started with Joomla:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiPzliTWnLM>



Wix: Wix is an option for developing your website. <https://www.wix.com/>. Here is a link on how to get started with Wix: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aa6JS_8QtNI

Between WordPress, Joomla, and Wix there are many templates and plugins that can be used to develop of your website. These are only three of many options. It is recommended that you research the features to see what is best for your needs. There are also costs associated with developing and maintaining a website that should be accounted for in your chapter's budget.

Communication Consistency and Planning

Having the tools to effectively communicate is useless, if you are not communicating consistently. Chapters should create a plan for how often they will communicate through the various channels (monthly, weekly, bi-monthly, etc.). The plan should also include all login information to pass on to future Communication Zone members.

Chapter Content

Chapters now have the ability to submit content to the National Professionals Communications Zone for consideration in newsletters and on social media. Please submit content at least two (2) weeks prior to an event. The submission form can be found at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/15fd765661fa4d68896ea7c2178b9b31>.

Miscellaneous

There is a Google Drive folder that has been created for chapter communications zones that stores templates. These templates include letterhead, business cards, and meeting minutes. It also contains the logo policy as well as the NSBE Professionals logos that can be used in your marketing materials. The drive will be updated throughout the year with other materials as they become available.

Google Drive Folder:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1OyMdxrYv3gmhRiGTcvchV2Y_PDPXuHWa.

If you need access to the google drive, contact pebsecretary@nsbe.org.

If you have any corrections or suggestions for the toolkit, contact pebsecretary@nsbe.org.