

## **Communications Committee Report and Recommendation**

### **Committee Members**

Lenell Nix-Chair

Liza Dunkle

Erin Gorney

Katie Skilton Rendina

Cody Sulewski

### **Brief Background**

I wanted to take the opportunity to provide a brief insight into my thought process with the formation and selection of committee members. When President Van Tassell called and asked me to chair this committee, I had in mind the group of members listed above for a variety of reasons. First, I wanted to provide an opportunity for younger members of the club to serve and gain experience working on a national level committee. It is my thought that younger members are the future of our club and whom will one day be carrying out the business and functionality of the club. Second, these members are very fluent with current technologies in the digital age in which we are living. Third, I wanted to select members from various geographic areas.

### **Scope**

The President charged us with the task of developing a method in which the club could increase reach to the membership for the purpose of increasing knowledge of what is happening within the club and the direction of the board or President. Additionally, there needed to be a way that in the event that important or emergency information needed to be disseminated, it could be done in a quick manner.

### **Action**

The committee met on several occasions to discuss the task requested. After much discussion to carry out the scope of what the President had asked us to consider, the committee determined that email is the most efficient and expeditious option. While realizing that all members do not have email, but upon checking we came to find that the number of those who do not are less than 103 memberships out of approximately 1400 memberships. It is the feeling of the committee that those without memberships are still valued members of the club and should receive any information disseminated, and those falling into this category would still need to receive such information from their respective district director or director at large. The committee also would stipulate that any input from the information disseminated would need to be returned to member's respective director.

The committee then discussed the options in which we could utilize email. Due to the size of the database to send out approximately 1300 emails, an outside source such as software or a paid online method would need to be utilized.

The software route would require the club to purchase a software program to be used on the machine of the individual sending out emails. There are several disadvantages with this option.

- Disadvantage-Software cost to handle this capacity would be \$500-\$1200 for one licenses. These cost are determined by email database size. There would be additional cost for annual upgrades.
- Disadvantage-Only having one license would prevent others from access in the event that the person responsible for the emailing was out of town or incapacitated.
- Disadvantage-Purchasing additional licenses would not be cost efficient.
- Disadvantage-In the event the host computer crashed, without proper backups data could be lost.
- Advantage-Database would be “in house”.

The second option is utilizing an online email provider. While there are also disadvantages, we feel that advantages would outweigh the disadvantages.

- Disadvantage- There is still an annual cost. (Various options below)
- Advantage-Database is maintained online securely.
- Advantage-Emails can all be sent at once
- Advantage-Reports as to how many people opened email.
- Advantage-Multiple people could hold access with sharing of log in information if needed.
- Advantage-Less likelihood of loss of data.
- Advantage-Support staff of provider.

### **Reccomendation**

**The committee recommends the option of utilizing an online provider.** While we still understand there will be cost, we feel that the club would be best served with this method.

**Below are three options for board consideration.**

#### **1. Constant Contact - Email Plus.**

- \$60.00 per month 501-2500 contacts.
- Basic email function.
- Unlimited emails
- Ability to add surveys with feedback.
- Tracking of numbered of emails viewed.
- Online storage of documents to attached to emails as links.
- Ability to compile separate list. i.e Ask are you going to attend the Nationals, click this link. The respondents are placed into a list so that any correspondence pertaining to the nationals are targeted to that list specifically if desired.
- 3 logins- Could be utilized.
- Dedicated account manager
- Technical support team to help anyone with account access throughout the process start to finish.
- Ability to build specific campaigns. i.e again Nationals, Rescue, Events, etc
- Ability to add a donation link if ever needed.
- Template with logo.

- **\*\* In the even the newsletter wanted to ever go electronic\*\*** Team will help build a template in format very similar to our newsletter.
- 10% discount with six months prepaid, 15% discount 12 months prepaid.

As a second option with this company is: **Basic Plan**

- \$35.00 per month 501-2500 contacts.
- Basic email function.
- Unlimited emails.
- Dedicated account manager.
- Technical support team to help anyone with account access throughout the process start to finish.

**\*\* NOTE: While Email Plus with Constant Contact is the most pricey, we feel that the added functionality substantially justifies the added cost.**

## **2. Vertical Response**

- \$38.30 monthly Introductory Rate up to 2500 contacts
- Unlimited emails.
- Dedicated contact person.
- Template with logo
- Delivery rate review.

## **3. Icontact**

- \$29.00 per month. With up to 2500 contacts.
- Tracking availability
- Emails limited to 6 times number of contacts. After that rate is per email which is based on tiers of the number of emails. For example (as explained by rep) If there are 1000 contacts and 6 emails were sent out to all 1000 contacts the allowance of 6000 would be met. This could get pricey.

Should any of the of the methods above be considered, we would like to the remind the board there will be a cost associated with such choice. Ultimately, the decision comes down to the following question. Is it worth the cost to be able to disseminate information to the membership in a more streamlined manner? We as the committee feel that the answer is yes! The board and membership could feel otherwise and choose to maintain the current methods in which we operate. In either choice, the committee would like to thank everyone for opportunity to serve the club and also the board for its consideration.

Respectfully,

Lenell Nix on behalf of the Communications Committee.