



Communications Objective

Improve communications vehicles, content, frequency, reach and strategy to engage and inform ACEC/NC's stakeholder groups in a timely and effective manner.

Goals

1. Build awareness of ACEC/NC mission, vision and value among:
 - Members
 - Members' Employees
 - Potential Members
 - Partner Groups
 - Media
 - Legislators
 - Influencers
 - Other Stakeholder Groups
2. Reach more employees at member firms
3. Engage with and help encourage a greater diversity of membership
 - Age, especially young professionals age 25-40
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Location
 - Professional roles
4. Raise profiles of member firms in North Carolina
5. Strengthen relations with community and industry partners
6. Grow attendance at events, especially outside of Raleigh
 - Particularly Charlotte and Greensboro

Implementation Plan

1. Website

The ACEC/NC website is its most critical communications tool. It's the "central" information hub for members, partner, potentials members, media and anyone seeking information from or about ACEC/NC. The website is THE most important part of ACEC/NC's brand and nearly all of its marketing efforts.

The association recognizes that a new, modern website is needed in short order. The following are objectives for the website that would support the communications plan and its components.

- a. Goals
 - i. Function as a consolidated and effective online source of information
 - ii. Represent the ACEC/NC brand well
 - iii. Serve as a "home base" for social media and other electronic communications
 - iv. Effectively drive action and engage people in the following areas:
 - Become a member today
 - Sign up for our newsletter or email alerts
 - Register for/Learn about upcoming events
 - Donate to the PAC
 - See pictures from events
 - Download the content from member events or meetings
 - Follow us on our social channels
 - Read the latest news (about ACEC/NC, legislative issues, key projects in the state, videos, etc.)
 - Join a committee
 - Support our legislative agenda
 - v. Provide a platform for member feedback on a variety of issues
 - vi. Provide useful analytics to more fully understand members' interests, needs and activities

2. Social Media

- a. Branding: Support and enhance the identity of ACEC/NC as a valuable key organization for North Carolina engineering professionals.
- b. Providing information: Fulfilling the role as the source of engineering news and opportunities in NC for current and potential members.
- c. Engaging current members: Enhance the value of their memberships and deepen their engagement/relationship with the organization.
- d. Generating new membership: Encourage others in the NC engineering community to join ACEC/NC as a relevant, valuable professional association.
- e. Spreading awareness of opportunities in NC: Increase positive awareness of professional development among key audiences and members of ACEC/NC.

- f. Encouraging participation in ACEC/NC activities: Increase awareness of and interest in meetings, events, the ACEC/NC website and social platforms, professional development activities and so on.
- g. Mobilizing the ACEC/NC membership: As needed, social media will be used to activate membership around pertinent legislative efforts and the like.

3. Newsletter

- a. Goals:
 - i. Provide an effective communication by email that is timely, relevant and engaging – to as many member-employees as possible, on a regular basis.
 - ii. Support all of the communications goals

4. Earned Media

- a. Goals
 - i. Increase positive coverage of engineering industry in NC (impact, special projects, etc.)
 - ii. Position ACEC/NC as an expert in key media interviews/coverage on a variety of relevant topics
 - iii. Increase member/potential member awareness of ACEC/NC throughout key markets
 - iv. Support ACEC/NC's legislative initiatives with earned media, as appropriate
 - v. Increase member reviews and testimonials
 - vi. Increase mentions, shares and retweets on social media surrounding ACEC/NC and relevant member content
 - vii. Increase exposure to members and potential members regarding events, education opportunities and industry news

5. Direct Email

- a. Goals
 - i. To reach individual members directly through their inboxes to inform, engage and encourage participation in ACEC/NC events.
 - ii. Include sharing of surveys, important or timely news and other non-event items.

6. Videos

- a. Goals
 - i. Utilize videos across communication platforms to:
 1. Increase member engagement
 2. Increase reach to current and potential members
 3. Increase reach and engagement with other stakeholder audiences, including industry influencers, media, the public
 4. Elevate ACEC/NC's voice in the industry as a source of credible information and influence

7. Legislative Advocacy

- a. Goals
 - i. Demonstrate ACEC/NC's leadership in advocating for its members and the industry
 - ii. Inform members about the status of an initiative
 - iii. Activate members to support legislative efforts as needed
 - iv. Improve Advocacy Section of ACEC/NC website to be more effective for all audiences

8. Member Events

- a. Goals
 - i. Build event attendance
 1. Build Charlotte attendance by 100%
 2. Diversify attendance to reach broader groups of members
 - a. Same core people are attending all of the events (20% of members make up 90% of attendance)
 - b. Events present great networking opportunities for all members, but especially should be of interest to younger professionals
 - ii. Leverage impact on membership

9. Strategic Partnerships

- a. Goals
 - i. Build and leverage partnerships for the good of ACEC/NC, members, organizations and the industry.
 1. Increase visibility of ACEC/NC within these organizations
 2. Broaden reach of ACEC/NC's voice within industry
 3. Create synergies with complementary organizations.