

The American Legion Media & Communications Commission

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The American Legion Media & Communications Commission oversees the majority of print and digital media products and services delivered from National Headquarters, including the monthly magazine, website, podcast, social media channels, e-newsletters, documents, physical displays and more. Division staff members are also called upon to assist leadership, as well as other commissions in the organization, with special projects and initiatives.

In addition to fulfilling obligations for dozens of print and digital media products, Media & Communications staff members are called upon by the commission to promote initiatives of the national commander, volunteer leadership, American Legion departments and other National Headquarters areas. Resolutions passed by The American Legion's National Executive Committee and national convention are also converted into media elements to inform the organization's various audiences. The Media & Communications Commission also supports and helps coordinate marketing initiatives, charitable giving outreach and corporate relationships.

The flagship of the media program is *The American Legion Magazine*, the nation's best-read and most widely circulated veterans magazine, according to an independent audit. With a circulation of nearly 1.6 million households and a monthly readership exceeding 3 million, *The American Legion Magazine* ranks No. 1 in readership frequency, according to independent researcher GfK MRI. That means subscribers have read three out of the last four issues more often than readers of the other nearly 200 U.S. magazines surveyed. Its content is general interest, driven by the organization's main areas of engagement – patriotism, defense, veterans, children and youth, national and international affairs.

The Media & Communications program draws most of its revenue from advertising sales into the magazine while additional revenue comes from the website, e-newsletters, its Tango Alpha Lima podcast and other media products. A \$3 per-member allocation offsets a portion of the magazine's production and distribution cost.

The American Legion Media & Communications Commission's primary responsibilities include:

- **Print.** This category includes *The American Legion Magazine*; the American Legion Annual Report; the American Legion National Convention Guide; the National Commander's Testimony

to Congress; brochures and internal documents, along with additional print media as assigned from national leadership, including event programs; and other specialty products. Additionally, the division fulfills editing and design needs of more than 200 brochures and documents.

- **Web.** The American Legion national website at www.legion.org is the nation's most-visited veterans service organization website and serves as a gateway to virtually all American Legion media products and channels, receiving approximately 600,000 unique monthly visitors and growing. The website offers news, videos and photography; entry points for transactional engagement through donations, membership and merchandising; entrance to special-interest microsites such as Legiontown USA, where veterans and family members are invited to create and share their own content; and the American Legion Basic Training module. Legion.org is also the gateway to the organization's interactive and transactional platform supporting American Legion Baseball. The American Legion's video portfolio, called LegionTV, houses the organization's current video content in one microsite.
- **E-mail.** The commission oversees delivery of a portfolio of popular e-newsletters, including the American Legion Online Update and the Commander's Message, which reach more than 1 million subscribers three times a week. Other e-newsletters include the monthly digital Dispatch, Flag Alerts, the American Legion Riders, the American Legion Baseball Dugout and Tango Alpha Lima.
- **Social.** The American Legion has a fast-growing network of social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and Threads. The American Legion's Facebook community is a little over 194,000 followers, and the national Twitter following has more than 116,000 followers. The Legion's Instagram following has grown to nearly 20,000, and LinkedIn followers number more than 44,000.
- **Podcast.** The American Legion's Tango Alpha Lima podcast features hosts who are American Legion members and post-9/11 veterans. Weekly episodes typically alternate between a roundtable discussion covering issues of interest to the military community by the co-hosts, to interviews with featured guests, along with scheduled special episodes addressing timely topics, such career transitions or veteran suicide prevention. The number of audio downloads to the podcast has grown from 27,048 in 2021 to 45,155 in 2022 to 63,186 in 2023.
- **Smartphone apps:** The American Legion Media & Communications Division has produced and developed a portfolio of smartphone mobile apps, including a general American Legion app introduced in 2014 that has generated more than 75,000 downloads; an American Legion World Series app, which has been downloaded more than 17,000 times; an annual national convention app; and a Sons of The American Legion app. The national convention app soared in download numbers in 2023, from 1,293 to 6,272.

- **Speech writing and other functions.** The commission oversees Media & Communications staff support in drafting sample speeches for local use, as well as remarks from the national commander and other top leaders. Also among the functions of this area of work is the crafting of logbooks – or scripts – to guide national conventions, meetings, conferences and other national events.
- **Supporting posts, departments:** The commission directs staff members to work with American Legion departments and posts with media tools and resources to promote various events, programs and activities of The American Legion, including Buddy Check toolkits, videos, posters, flyers and other materials.
- **Physical.** The American Legion Media & Communications Commission directs staff to produce a variety of physical displays, including parade floats, plaques, billboard designs, convention booths, banners, posters and other forms of physical media for the organization.

The goal of this integrated approach to American Legion media is to maximize efficiencies, resources and talents to deliver the organization’s message in a well-branded, effective strategy that aims to improve awareness, generate membership, inform visitors, stimulate interactions and ease transactions.

Overall, the media and communications program is built to replicate and represent the values and interests of The American Legion, from the individual member to the local post to the state department to National Headquarters, and beyond.



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