The American Legion

Developing a Communications Strategy
E-mail services

- Gmail - gmail.com
- Hotmail - hotmail.com
- Yahoo mail - mail.yahoo.com

Tip: Use one username and password for all accounts
Developing a Communications Strategy

- Develop an effective website
- Create e-newsletters
- Use social media
- Continue publishing print products
- Move toward a mobile world
Developing an effective website
Developing an effective website

Know your audience

• Loyal members
• Members at-risk of membership renewal
• Non-members, but eligible to become members
• Non-members, non-eligible with affinity to the Legion
Developing an effective website

*Determine your content*

• Static content – our mission, history
• Occasionally changing content – target dates, leadership
• Frequently changing content – news, calendar
• Interactive content – sign up, comments, polls
• Downloads – speeches, brochures

Tip: Keep your website up to date
Developing an effective website

*Set goals*

- Increase communication
- Recruit new members
- Increase attendance at events or activities
- Increase donations
- Retain the at-risk member
- Provide help to newly discharged service members
Developing an effective website

Tips

• Make it EASY to Join or Renew membership
• Make it inviting to potential members
• Keep your content updated
• Keep it simple and easy to use
• Provide contact information
• Make the website mobile-friendly (50%)

Next: Good examples
The American Legion Department of Florida

No announcement available or all announcement expired.
Welcome! We are The American Legion Department of Florida, the Nation’s Oldest, Largest and Most Active Veterans Organization. We pride ourselves in taking care of our Active Duty Service Members as well as Veterans who defended the American way of life in the past. You may not be aware of all that the American Legion does, not only in communities like yours across the state of Florida, but across the country and around the world. “How?” you may ask. Well, let’s look a little closer.

The American Legion represents over 2 million members, and there’s strength in our numbers. We fight on Capitol Hill everyday to ensure that our troops not only get the equipment and training they need to fulfill their duties, but also to ensure they are treated properly and receive the benefits they deserve upon returning home. We know what it takes, being prior service members ourselves. You may have heard of the Montgomery G.I. Bill — but did you know that it was penned by The American Legion.
American Legion Department of Illinois

Join
Join the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization.

Join Now

Renew
Use our easy online portal to renew your membership online.

Renew

Donate
Your contributions can make life-changing differences for our veterans.

Donate

Upcoming Events

Enter now for a chance to win $20,000
for your local post when you sign up for a FREE USAA membership or when you log in using your existing USAA number.

ENTER NOW

Upcoming Events:
- **Sep 30** 10:00 am Fall Meetings @ Department Headquarters
- **Oct 7** 10:00 am Community Service @ Department Headquarters
- **Oct 9** all-day Fall Meetings - Indianapolis @ American Legion National Headquarters
- **Oct 21** 9:00 am Division/District Workshop (Div... @ Department Headquarters
- **Oct 22** 9:00 am Division/District Workshop (Div... @ Department Headquarters
'Jimmy Lanza Way' Honors Former Post Commander in Queens

Why Join the

Your Legion

Did You
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

- The American Legion Centennial Celebration
- Legionsites.com
- Website Builders
- Custom solution
Developing an effective website

**Website services**

**Centennial Celebration**

- Share your post history
- Calendar of events
- Photo galleries
- Need no coding knowledge

Go to: Legion.org/centennial
Developing an effective website

Website services

Legionsites.com

• Free domain name
• E-mail accounts
• Create your own pages
• Minimal coding knowledge

Go to: Legionsites.com
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

More on Legionsites.com

- Free upgrades
- Free technical support
- Connected to Legion.org
- View demo

Go to: Legionsites.com
Developing an effective website

*Website services*

**Website Builders**

- Choose a template
- Drag and drop
- Support
- Squarespace.com
- Wix.com
- Weebly.com
Developing an effective website

Website services

Custom solution

• Hosting
• Domain name (www.mypost.org)
• Minimal to advanced coding knowledge

Go to: GoDaddy.com, 1and1.com
Developing an effective website

Web coding resources

• W3Schools.com - Tutorials and reference
• Htmlgoodies.com - HTML tutorials and reference
• Codeacademy.com - Learn to code interactively
• Google and YouTube

• HTML, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, Bootstrap
Developing an effective website

*Please link to Legion.org*

<a href="http://www.legion.org/">Legion.org</a>
Developing an effective website

Tell people about your website

• Google - google.com/webmasters
• Bing - bing.com/toolbox/submit-site-url
• Entireweb - entireweb.com/free_submission/
• Legion - email cs@legion.org
Developing an effective website

Collect money online

Go to: Paypal.com
Developing an effective website

*Track results*

Go to: Google.com/analytics
Mobile apps
Mobile apps

*Terminology*

• Native mobile app
  • Downloadable via app stores and can work without an internet connection. Can use device’s native functionality allowing advanced features

• Progressive web app
  • Accessible via web browser, hybrid of a responsive website and native mobile app
Mobile apps

Pricing

• Publishing native apps to app stores requires a developer license
• Apple developer license: $99 / yr
• Google play developer license: $25 one time fee
Mobile apps

*Services*

**GoodBarber**

- $96 / month for native Android and iOS
- Push notifications
- Templates
- Easy to use editor
- Free trial

Go to:  GoodBarber.com
Mobile apps

Services

Shoutem

• $59 / month for native Android and iOS
• Push notifications
• Templates
• Easy to use editor
• Free trial

Go to: Shoutem.com
Mobile apps

Services

AppMachine

- $49 / month for native Android and iOS
- Push notifications
- Templates
- Easy to use editor
- Free trial

Go to: Appmachine.com
Mobile apps

*Services*

Other services

- Google “Best app makers”
Email marketing
Email marketing

Why e-newsletters?

E-newsletters are an effective means to drive traffic to your website, engage and inform your members and identify the needs of our community.

- Your members use e-mail
- Low costs
- Revenue generation
- Member retention
Email marketing

Services

• Easy to use
• Import e-mail lists
• Select templates
• Up to 2,000 subscribers
• Up to 12,000 emails / mo.

Go to: Mailchimp.com
Email marketing

More services

• Constant Contact
• iContact
• Benchmark
• Campaigner

Go to: Creativebeacon.com/the-top-10-email-marketing-services
Email marketing

Tips

• Subject line is **KEY!**
• Make it **Useful.**
• Make it **Interesting.**
• Keep it **Simple.**
• Link to **Web Site.**
Email marketing

*When to send e-newsletters*

Studies have shown the majority of inbox traffic and activities occur on working days – with the peak on **Thursday**. This is the top day for all metrics: percent sent, open rate and click through rate.
Email marketing

A look at our e-newsletters

Online Update

• Weekly on Thursdays
• Over 1M subscribers
• 20% Open Rate

Go to:  ➔  Legion.org/newsletters
Email marketing

A look at our e-newsletters

Flag Alert

• Flag at Half-Staff
• Over 40,000 subscribers
• 33% Open Rate

Go to: Legion.org/newsletters
Email marketing

A look at our e-newsletters

Commander’s Message

• ~ Quarterly
• Over 700,000 subscribers
• 20% open rate

Go to: Legion.org/newsletters
Social media
Social media

*Tips*

Online interactions with eligible non-members can become conversations and your best recruiting tool.

- Listen and respond
- Understand your goals
- Understand your audience
- Decide on platform(s) and use them
- Be professional, but be yourself
Social media

*Who should be in charge of social media?*

- Comfortable socializing online
- Attends events
- Enjoys taking photos and writing content
- Patient and attentive
- Knowledgeable of The American Legion’s values
Social media

Services

Twitter
An online service that allows users to send and read “tweets”, which are messages limited to 280 characters.

Go to: Twitter.com
Social media

*Why we use Twitter*

- Brand awareness
- Relevancy
- Keep people informed
- Opportunity for content to reach new audiences
- Relationship building with other organizations and news channels

Go to: Twitter.com
Social media

*Twitter tips*

- Fill out the "bio" section.
- Tweet frequently.
- Follow other Twitter accounts similar to yours.
- Provide a call to action such as, “Join The American Legion”
- Customize your Twitter background and theme.
- Advertise your Twitter account in other media.
Social media

**Twitter tip**

Use @AmericanLegion when tweeting to target the National Headquarters account. This will allow us to see your tweet and possibly re-tweet your message.
Content communities

*Why YouTube?*

- More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month
- Over 6 billion hours of video are watched each month
- According to Nielsen, YouTube reaches more US adults ages 18-34 than any cable network

Go to: Youtube.com
Content communities

*YouTube tips*

• Create compelling videos.
• Keep it short and to the point.
• Create a searchable title.
• Leverage other social media platforms.
• Review analytics.

Go to: Youtube.com
Content communities

YouTube: Our channel
Content communities

*YouTube: How to share videos*

Go to: Youtube.com/americanlegionHQ
Content communities

YouTube: How to embed videos

Go to: Youtube.com/americanlegionHQ
Social media

*Why we use Facebook*

- Brand awareness
- Relevancy
- Keep people informed
- Opportunity for content to reach new audiences
- Click to sign up or donate to a cause

Go to: Facebook.com
Social media

How to use Facebook

• Create an account
• Build a page
• Connect with members and non-members
• Engage your audience
• Influence your audience and their network

Go to: Facebook.com
Social media

Facebook: Build a page

- Choose a category (non-profit) and a descriptive Page name
- Choose a profile image people can associate with your post
- Write a sentence about your post
- Set a memorable web address for your Page to advertise in print
- Choose a cover photo that represents and showcases your post

Go to: Facebook.com/pages/create
Social media

*Facebook: Engage your audience*

- Write quality posts that are relevant to your audience
- Be friendly and conversational
- Share photos and videos
- Ask questions or seek input
- Be timely by posting about current events, holidays or news
- Ask your audience to share your posts

Go to: Facebook.com/pages/create
Social media

*Facebook: Influence*

When people “like”, “comment” or “share” your content on Facebook, their friends are notified in their news feeds. The more people interacting with your content the better.

Go to: Facebook.com/pages/create
Social media

Facebook tips

• Post at least once a week
• Include a photo as often as possible
• Vary your content: events, photos, honor & remembrance
• Provide a call to action such as, “Join The American Legion”
• Respond, be friendly and conversational
• Share articles and videos from National Facebook pages
• Provide content your audience cannot find in other media
Social media

A look at our Facebook pages

• National Headquarters
• Online Update
• Legion Riders
• Legion Baseball
• Honor & Remembrance
• National Convention

Go to: Legion.org/facebook
The American Legion Department of Massachusetts
@masslegion.org

Nonprofit Organization in Boston, Massachusetts
4.8 ★★★★★ • Closed Now

Upcoming Events

Department of Massachusetts
Announcing the return of training starting with
The Basics

Ever wonder when the American Legion came to be? What the 4 Pillars represent? Why we influence congress? Where it all began? How we make a difference? Who are we? Why we are a power force in our communities and nation?

The Basics covers it!

SEP 30
The Basics = American Legion Training
Tomorrow 10 AM - Vernon Hill Al Post 435 - Worcester, MA
You like The American Legion Department of Massachusetts...

Nov 18
Department Commanders Testimonial Dinner
Sat 6 PM - Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center
You like The American Legion Department of Massachusetts...
Over the past week, the victims of Hurricane Harvey have seen what The American Legion family is capable of and how it supports communities in times of need. Truckloads of food and toiletries have been donated and delivered by Legion family members from across the country to aid in relief and recovery efforts, while several posts in Texas have kept their doors open to serve as shelters and donation centers.

Texas Legion family remains steadfast in supporting hurricane victims

Relief items continue to pour in and posts are distributing the donations to those in need.

LEGION.ORG
The American Legion National Headquarters
September 8 at 5:00pm

We'll have coverage of the event next week.

Indiana to celebrate Legion Day on Sunday
American Legion family and community members invited to attend the event on Sept. 10 for 9/11 remembrance ceremony, food and games.

Upcoming Events
Let us remember & never forget their sacrifice. May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families. #POWMIAREcognitionDay
The American Legion National Headquarters shared
National American Legion Riders's video.
August 18 -

Want to take part in next year's Legacy Run? Join us and become a Legion Rider. www.legion.org/join

5,740 Views

National American Legion Riders
Published by Steve Brooks [?] · August 18 ·

The final leg of The American Legion Legacy Run brought riders safely into Reno, where they will take part in activities during The American Legion National Con...
See More

Like Comment Share

Call to Action
Social media

What is Instagram?

Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them on a variety of social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr.

Go to: Download the Instagram mobile app
Social media

*Other social media worth mention*

LinkedIn  Google+  Pinterest
MyLegion.org

MyLegion.org is designed to connect members of The American Legion to their Post and Department leadership.

• Membership information - view member renewals
• Data change forms
• Consolidated Post Reports
• Search for expired members

Go to: MyLegion.org
Download this presentation

Go to: Legion.org/publications