

Summary: Communications & Technology Presentation

Communication & Technology – Jenn Rafael

10:45 - 12:00 p.m.

Friday, August 21, 2026

The presentation focused on **using communication tools intentionally rather than viewing technology as the mission itself**. The main message was to choose the right tool based on the communication goal and the audience.

Key Points

- **Technology supports communication; it is not the mission.**
 - The goal is to help federation leaders communicate effectively while reducing the time and effort required.
 - There is no single “best” communication method. What works for one federation or chapter may not work for another.
 - The emphasis is on **best practices, not mandatory standards**.
- **Start with the objective, not the tool.**

Before deciding how to communicate, ask:

 1. What am I trying to accomplish?
 2. Who am I trying to reach?
 3. Which tool is best suited to that purpose?
- **Use each communication tool for what it does best:**
 - **Email:** Best for prompting action—registration, renewals, volunteering, meetings, deadlines, and urgent requests.
 - **Microsite/Website:** Best for information members need to find repeatedly—calendars, conference information, documents, resources, and contact information.
 - **FedHub:** Best for discussion, questions, feedback, sharing ideas, and solving problems collaboratively.
 - **Social Media:** Best for awareness, visibility, recognition, recruiting interest, and directing people to websites or other resources.
 - **Texting:** Can be effective for reaching members quickly, particularly when internet access or email use is limited.
- **The tools work together rather than replace one another.**

A conference, for example, might be promoted through social media, registration handled through email, detailed information stored on a microsite, and questions/discussion conducted through FedHub.
- **Avoid overwhelming members.**

Instead of putting everything into one large email, break communications into purposeful messages with clear calls to action.
- **Personal and visual communication can be powerful.**

A federation president's short video was highlighted as an effective way to make communication more personal and engaging. Simple tools such as a smartphone and iMovie can be sufficient—professional production is not required.

- **Repeat important messages.**

One participant emphasized that repetition can make a significant difference. Members may not respond the first, second, or third time they see a request, but repeated communication can eventually generate action.

- **Use metrics to learn and improve.**

Leaders should look at available information such as:

- Email responses and registrations
- Microsite visits
- FedHub participation
- Social-media engagement
- Questions members are asking

The objective isn't to measure everything; it is to **learn what works and improve communications over time.**

Important Issues Raised by Participants

Digital access remains a major challenge.

The Kansas delegation noted that many members—particularly in rural areas—may have limited internet access and rely primarily on telephone numbers and postal addresses. The response was that traditional communication methods such as **postal mail and phone calls remain important**, while texting may be useful where cell service is available.

Social-media training was requested.

Participants expressed interest in training on platforms such as Instagram and LinkedIn, particularly because members may be comfortable with Facebook but unfamiliar with other platforms.

Microsite analytics are available.

Participants were told that performance information is available through the Microsite Working Group, including seven- and 28-day metrics.

Concerns were raised about email approval and timing.

A participant expressed concern that federation messages sometimes take several days to be distributed and that communications staff sometimes question or modify wording. The response emphasized that factually incorrect information cannot be distributed, while acknowledging the broader concern about federation leaders' ability to communicate with their members.

Access to communication/technology systems was discussed.

There was discussion about CAB representatives and others needing adequate access to systems such as AMS in order to provide technical assistance to federation leaders.

InForms access is relatively flexible.

The presentation explained that the link for submitting an InForms email request is available to key officers, but the actual submission link does not require a specific login. A federation president can have another person help prepare or submit a message.

Bottom Line

The central takeaway was:

Don't start by asking, "What communication tool should I use?" Start by asking, "What am I trying to accomplish, and who am I trying to reach?"

Once the objective and audience are clear, selecting the appropriate communication tool becomes much easier.