COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
of North Carolina

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.