

Application: 276

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Page: Entry Information

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Chapter

Illinois

Chapter Size

Very Large (over 750)

Category

Membership

Goals and Objectives: 30 Points

Describe the main goal(s) of this program. (15pts)

For many years, we have been faced with the challenge that we do a good job of communicating with our members who know about CAI, but we struggle to find people, especially homeowners, who are unfamiliar with CAI and what the association can do for them.

The Common Interest Podcast was developed with three main goals in mind:

1. Reach more potential members and introduce them to the concept of CAI, the education we offer, and pique their interest for further engagement.
2. Engage with potential new members in a meaningful way with information that is presented in a new and different format.
3. Provide existing members a vehicle for sharing their stories and expertise, drawing on members who aren't as involved or aren't comfortable making a formal presentation or writing an article.

Define the strategies used to attain your goal(s). (15pts)

Much thought went into the planning of this program. For it to be a success, the chapter executed the following strategies:

1. Develop a bi-weekly podcast, with initial release at the chapter's Conference & Expo in February, 2019. This included purchasing equipment and working with podcast apps to upload them.
2. Recruit new and long-time members as guests for the podcasts to share interesting stories and what they've learned over the years. There were a few early adopters willing to be guests on the initial podcasts and as the program gained popularity, more and more members became involved.
3. Promote the podcast online and through social media streams like Facebook and LinkedIn to reach non-members and expand our membership base.

Development & Implementation: 45 Points

In the next 3 sections, describe how the program was organized and executed within the areas of budget and marketing.

Budget Development (5pts)

The chapter budgeted \$950 to purchase podcast equipment in January, 2019 (see attached budget). There were no other hard costs, but the chapter's Membership & Marketing Coordinator, who produces the Common Interest Podcast, budgets approximately 10 hours per week to execute the program.

What marketing techniques were used? (10pts)

To market the podcast successfully, the chapter first developed a logo to brand it and create visual awareness (see attached logo). Every episode displays the logo online and in social media.

For initial rollout, we published an article in the chapter's e-newsletter and posted it online. It referenced the chapter's radio show which had been popular over 10 years ago and gained the attention of our legacy members. It also explained the format and tone for the new podcast going forward. (see attached article)

We also created a flyer which was distributed in 750 trade show bags and placed at each exhibitor booth at the 2019 Conference & Expo to announce the launch of the podcast that week.

As each podcast was released, it was published in the chapter's weekly e-newsletter, posted online <https://www.cai-illinois.org/blog/> , and promoted in social media.

Who was your target audience? (10pts)

The Common Interest Podcast has three main audiences:

1. Non-member homeowners, community association managers, and business partners, especially those who don't know about CAI and what the association can do to help them build better communities.
2. Current members who don't attend many functions due to time constraints or because they are looking for new ways to engage with the chapter.
3. Current members who have knowledge and expertise but who don't want to share it through traditional means by writing articles or presenting to a group.

Describe in detail how your program was implemented. Include deadlines, responsibilities and the implementation process. (20pts)

The chapter's Membership & Marketing Coordinator took the majority of the responsibility for implementing the podcast. He first gained budget approval and purchased the equipment. He then learned and tested the equipment in preparation to record the first four episodes to launch at the Conference & Expo on February 22, 2019.

He repurposed the chapter's speaker agreement to include specific podcast guest guidelines, scheduled guests, recorded, edited, and prepared to release the first episodes. (see attached guest agreement)

He is responsible for marketing the podcast and has seen a steady increase in listeners over the 22 episodes recorded in the first year.

Recently he purchased and installed acoustic sound panels in his office to improve recording quality.

Results and Evaluation 25 Points

Using specific examples, describe the methods used to determine the program's success as it relates to your goal(s) (15pts)

We have tracked downloads, listeners, guest type, and membership data related to the podcast throughout the year. This data shows the program is a success as it relates to our initial goals. (see attached report)

There were over 2500 downloads in the first year, 57.5% of which came from non-members. That's a reach of almost 1,500 non-member touches. Homeowners made up over 23% of the listeners which is a significant reach to a group who is traditionally less engaged in the association. With an average episode length of 30 minutes, more than 400 hours of education was delivered to these potential members.

The highest engagement platform was through our website, at 1/3 of listeners. These listeners not only engaged with CAI in a new way through the podcast, they were also exposed to other offerings on the website. They read other blog posts and viewed upcoming events.

Facebook was another significant platform with over 23% of listeners downloading through social media. This increased social media exposure added followers for other events.

The guest engagement has also been a success. 40% of guests in 2019 were homeowners or service providers, member groups who typically don't have as much opportunity to speak. Even the 13 attorneys and managers who participated in the podcast were members who have not presented for CAI recently, so we reengaged those members too.

How can the program be improved to use for the future? (5pts)

Now that the goals have been met to expand the potential membership base for the chapter, the next step is to pull them further through the membership funnel. They have been exposed to one offering, now we need to engage them further by making them aware of other education and networking opportunities. Additionally, the membership committee will begin reaching out to non-members to answer questions and invite them to other events, the ultimate goal being to have them join CAI.

How did this bring overall value to the chapter? (5pts)

The Common Interest Podcast brought value to our chapter in several ways:

1. Over 1500 non-member downloads occurred over the course of the year, reaching a tremendous amount of potential new members and allowing us to expand our membership base.
2. The podcast is a new, fresh take on providing information and education and helps our current and potential members engage with the chapter in a different and meaningful way for them.
3. The podcast helped develop current members as valued information resources. Our podcast guests were not the same members we typically see as presenters and authors. This vehicle helps to further develop our members as experts.
4. With 1/3 of listeners downloading from our website, we have seen an increase in "Join Now" click throughs by 7%.

Supporting documents including flyers, postcards, pictures, videos etc. can be uploaded below. While they aren't required for your submission we certainly encourage it.

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