

Communicating with volunteers in an online world

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Internal comms 101



Human needs in the workplace

We all want to:

- feel valued
- understand what's going on and why
- believe we're part of something valuable
- feel connected

Satisfy those human needs

...and the paybacks are clear:

- enhanced job satisfaction / volunteer experience
- retention of good people
- positive impact on productivity and efficiency
- enhanced customer service

Volunteers matter!

- The lifeblood of many community organisations
- Your biggest advocate, defender, contributor



The role of internal communications

- “Here’s what’s going on; here’s what we’re doing and why”
- “Here’s how we do things around here”
- “Thank you – keep going”

It's not rocket science



Basic principles

- Communicate early
- Communicate often
- Be authentic
- Consider your audience(s)
- Make sure it's two-way



Well-tailored communications

- Communication isn't about you – it's about your audience(s)
- Who are your volunteer workforce?
- How do they engage with your organisation?
- Segmentation

Trends

- Online and mobile
- Visual storytelling
- User-driven content
- Meetups
- *Micro/episodic volunteering*
- *Virtual volunteering*



Tools

- Online collaboration or community building
 - Intranet, website
 - Facebook groups, Facebook Workplace, Yammer, Messenger, WhatsApp, Slack, Google hangouts/docs
 - HipChat

The screenshot shows the Facebook group page for 'Comms Collective volunteers'. The group is a 'Closed group' with 124 members. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Discussion, Members, Events, Videos, Photos, Files, and Manage Group. Below these are search and shortcuts sections. The main content area features a post by Gail Marshall from August 2nd, announcing a Wellington workshop. The right sidebar includes an 'ADD MEMBERS' section with a search bar, a 'MEMBERS' list, 'SUGGESTED MEMBERS', and an 'INVITED' list with email addresses and 'Send Reminder' buttons. At the bottom, there is a 'DESCRIPTION' and 'GROUP TYPE' (Club) section.

Comms Collective volunteers
Closed group

Discussion
Members
Events
Videos
Photos
Files
Manage Group

Search this group

Shortcuts

- Comms Collective volu...
- CCC Head Office
- Gladstone Vineyard
- Dame Malvina Major Fo...
- Community Comms Col...
- Leaders in Not-for-Profi...
- Lucas Journey
- Wellington Internal C... 1
- See more

Joined ▾ Notifications Share ...

Write Post Add Photo/Video Live Video More

Write something...

Photo/Video Create poll Feeling/Activity ...

RECENT ACTIVITY ▾

Gail Marshall shared Community Comms Collective's event.
2 August at 14:49

Hey all - this is our next Wellington workshop - CCC volunteers welcome 😊 Sarah ran the same session in Auckland earlier in the year to rapturous response... RSVP to comms@communitycomms.org.nz

ADD MEMBERS

+ Enter name or email address...

MEMBERS 124 members

SUGGESTED MEMBERS Hide

Lyn Stroud Add Member

Christine Kernohan Add Member

Jo Fisher Add Member

See More

INVITED See more

nz.chantelle@... Send Reminder

laura_j.a@... Send Reminder

DESCRIPTION Edit

A group for Community Comms Collective volunteers to share ideas, ask questions, build capability and support each other.

GROUP TYPE

Club

- Face to face
 - Events, team briefs, meetings, video calls
 - Doodle, Facebook events, Meetup, Skype Group video, Google hangouts
- Don't forget email, phone calls, texts, websites, noticeboards, newsletters, surveys, handouts, induction/training packs, thank you cards etc.
 - Mailchimp, Survey Monkey

Content first

Once more (with feeling):

- “Here’s what’s going on; here’s what we’re doing and why”
- “Here’s how we do things around here”
- “Thank you – keep going”

But also:

- “This is my story, these are my experiences”

Recruiting volunteers

- What are your goals/objectives?
- What are the opportunities?
- What's the message?
 - It needs to be more than 'volunteers wanted'
- What are the channels?

What's your volunteer opportunity?

- What are your goals?
- What can you offer volunteers?
- Who is/are your audience/s?
- What drives them?
- What do you want them to know?
- What channels can you use to reach them?



“We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.”

WINSTON CHURCHILL

