

Nebraska OES Publicity Committee Online & Social Media Guide

Overview of Contents:

Introduction

Facebook

- Pages vs Groups
- How to Create an Event

Evite for Events

Nebraska Masonic Calendar

Website Solutions

Google Solutions

- Shared Calendars
- Shared Docs/Surveys

SignUpGenius.com

Introduction:

There are a lot of free online tools at your disposal to help you promote your Chapter and its activities. We will cover the basics some of these tools in this enclosed document. If you need assistance or would like more in-depth information on these tools, please contact the Publicity Committee, and they can help! You can also contact the State Webmaster, Kerri Straub, at webmaster@neoes.org.

Facebook

Facebook is the most widely used social media tool that many of our members are already utilizing, and it's a great way to publicize your events not only to members but also to the media.

Creating a Facebook Page or Group for your Chapter

When creating a presence for your Chapter on Facebook, you need to decide if you want to create it as a Page or a Group. What's the difference?

- **Facebook Page**
 - A page is more of a public atmosphere to post your happenings.
 - Anyone on Facebook can find and like your page, and your posts will show in their newsfeeds.
 - Anyone can post to your page, and you sometimes have to watch for spammers.
 - You can invite people to like your page, but you can't add people to your page - you have to hope that visit your page and like it.

- **Facebook Group**

- A Group has more privacy settings.
 - Public Group - anyone can see and join
 - Closed Group - anyone can see group and members, but not posts
 - Secret Group - Nobody can see group, its members or posts
- You can add people to your group, and set it up so that you must approve all members who request to join a group, or that other group members add
- Spammers will still try to join your group - when people request to join, look at how long ago they joined Facebook and if you have any mutual friends and/or how many groups they belong to.
 - Spammers typically have not been on Facebook long, will belong to a lot of groups, and you will not have any mutual friends. If in doubt, ignore those requests.
 - If someone does get through who is a spammer (they will try to post about their page), you can go into your group settings and remove them.

How to use Facebook to promote your Chapter

Your Facebook Page or Group can be used to post photos of your Chapter's happenings, as well as reminders for different activities you have going on. It's an easy way to supplement any emails you send out to capture your members' attention in a different venue.

- Keep your posts short - 2-3 sentences are all you need to use or you will lose your audience
- Post links to your website or Grand Chapter's website to drive your members to areas of interest that you're posting about
- Share pictures from your events to drive interest in coming to future events. It's a great way to engage your members who might be out of town or live far away.

Facebook Events

This is a great way to utilize Facebook for specific events, such as Fundraisers, Installations and Meetings.

- Include all the details of your events, including times, location and a short description.
- Encourage your Members to use the event to invite their friends and families. Events can be a great way to build attendance at your events if used properly, as it makes it easier for your members to share.
- If it is an RSVP-only event, include information for them to send in their RSVP so they know that additional steps must be taken in addition to their response on Facebook (many times you will have more people say they are attending on Facebook who do not actually attend the day of the event).

Evite for Events

Evite.com is another great way to promote your event if you do not have a lot of members on Facebook, but you have a lot of email addresses for your members.

- Evite is Free, and has many different themes that can be used depending on the type of event you are hosting.
- It is easy for people to RSVP for an event using Evite, and then it will email you a few days prior to the event to let you know how many people said they were coming.

Nebraska Masonic Calendar

The Nebraska Masonic Calendar is a tool that has been created and shared by the Nebraska Grand Lodge. Events include those for all the Masonic Families and is a great way to promote your event across the State. Email the Grand Secretary to ensure your event is updated to this online calendar.

Creating a Website

Obtaining and creating a website isn't as hard as it used to be. There are many free solutions out there that will allow you to easily setup a basic website that will allow you to share information about your Chapter.

- Weebly.com is one of the easiest Website Creating Websites out there.
 - Creating a website and using a weebly.com URL (web address) is free (free versions will include a created by Weebly tag in the lower corner of your site)
 - You can also create your own URL (yourchaptername.org for example), and link it to your Weebly site
 - There are many free templates and styles available to use
 - Creating and editing web pages is similar to creating a flyer in Microsoft Word
 - Free and low-cost graphics are available, or you can upload your own images
 - Contact forms, maps and surveys can all easily be created within weebly.com

Google Documents & Calendars

If you have a gmail account, as well as your members, it will provide an easy way to share and collaborate in a variety of ways.

Shared Calendars:

- You can create additional calendars from your calendar on Gmail/Google, and simply edit the settings to share that specific calendar with other members of your Chapter. This will provide an easy way to keep your members updated on your events.
- You can also edit the settings so that your members, if desired, can edit or add events to this shared calendar.

- If members pull the calendar up on their Smart Phone, they can also add the calendar from that view, so that it will show up on their phones or tablets as well.
- Additionally, your calendar can be embedded into your website fairly easily so that you can share it publicly if desired.

Shared Documents:

- Google Drive is a wonderful tool that will allow you to create documents, spreadsheets, surveys/forms and more!
- You can share these documents with your members (either by sharing the folder or the specific document).
 - Permissions for people you share with can be set to either view only, comment only or edit.
 - If you give them editing permissions, they can make changes to the document, which will be tracked so you can see what changes were made by whom.
- Surveys can be shared by sending an email with a link, or linking it to a website/FaceBook, etc. Answers will automatically be entered into a spreadsheet/matrix within Google Docs.

SignUpGenius.com

If you have functions where you ask your members to sign up to bring items, Sign Up Genius is a wonderful free site to gather and track this information. Great examples of ways to use this is for refreshments after meetings or project dinners where you ask members to bring side dishes or other items.

- A variety of themes are available for different functions, or you can upload your own image to create a signup that more matches your event.
- You can upload email addresses for your members and have an email generated through signupgenius.com, or share a link to the signup in an email or on FaceBook.
- You can create a signup for one day/event, or create recurring dates for meetings throughout the year.
- Each item listed can have a quantity needed, and members can sign up for all or some of each quantity.
- You can also set up a reminder, so that each member signing up will receive a reminder about the items they signed up to bring a few days ahead of the event.