

ITE WESTERN DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Introduction

Goal: Create an effective communication system that provides appropriate, relevant and timely information.

This includes a general description of the information distributed through each tool based on the strengths of each tool, a list of responsibilities distributed among the officers and committee chairs, and a series of deadlines to ensure timeliness.

Communication Tools

Printed Media

Style:	Formal
Best Suited For:	Formal notifications (bylaw changes/updates, candidate announcements, etc.), long-form articles that aren't time sensitive or require long development time
Perceived as:	High value; this is a tangible result of the dues members pay
Frequency:	Biennial full issues, Special issue during the annual meeting
Responsibility:	<i>WesternITE</i> Editor, additional distribution by PR Chair
Advertising:	Yes

The *WesternITE* will be produced three times per year: Spring, Fall and for the Annual Meeting. All full issues will contain:

- a President's message
- updates from the Sections and Chapters
- an update from the International Board
- applicable Western District Board meeting highlights
- professional and technical services advertisements

In general, the Fall issue will contain:

- a summary of events at the Annual Meeting
- award winner profiles including full profiles of the Lifetime and Individual Achievement Award winners
- a technical article (potentially from the winning Technical Paper at the Annual Meeting)

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The Spring issue will contain:

- candidate statements and ballot information
- key events of the upcoming annual meeting
- a technical article, perhaps related to the upcoming meeting
- **Option 1** –*candidate statements and ballot information only, thus reaching out to all members regarding the election but reducing the cost of a full issue.*
- **Option 2** –*serve as a primary marketing to for the Western District Annual Meeting.*

The *WesternITE* editor will issue a call for content for the full issues on the 1st of the month prior to publication (ie, March and September) and content will be due on the 20th of that month. Reminders will be sent on the 10th. Late content will not be accepted. The newsletter will be printed on the 15th of the issue month and should reach members by the 20th.

Forty-five days prior to the Annual Meeting, the *WesternITE* editor will request content from the Local Arrangement Committee Chairs of the current year's meeting and the following year's meeting. The format of the newsletter shall be a four-page document highlighting the key events at each meeting. The document shall go to print at least 14 days before the Annual Meeting.

Email

Style:	Headline news, sound bites, brief and frequent
Best Suited for:	Time sensitive information, can be used to direct members to other communication resources
Perceived as:	Expected; members take getting this kind of information for granted and expect it on a regular basis. Flexible – can easily be forwarded.
Frequency:	Monthly or as needed for major announcements
Responsibility:	<i>WesternITE</i> Editor, additional distribution by PR Chair
Advertising:	Yes

Emails should be issued monthly at a minimum. Content will vary depending on what is happening around the District with a few exceptions. The March through June emails will contain the names of the candidates for Western District offices. The April and October emails will contain links to digital versions of the *WesternITE*. The *WesternITE* editor will request information for the monthly email on the 10st of each month, and it will be sent on the 20th of each month.

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Website

Style:	Resource, reference library
Best Suited for:	Resource information, newsletter and e-news backup (“pull” media – the member has to seek it out and pull it to them, so many won’t see it in a timely way)
Perceived as:	Expected; members expect to be able to find what they’re looking for on an easy-to-use, up-to-date website.
Frequency:	Monthly or as needed for critical updates
Responsibility:	Webmaster
Advertising:	Yes

The website serves as the information clearinghouse for the District. It is a resource for District leadership, members and outside parties interested in the profession. Content should be updated monthly, at a minimum, and more frequently depending on the type of content and availability of the webmaster. Effort should be made to keep all on-line materials current. In addition, all pages within the website should have a consistent look and be simple to navigate.

Social Media

Style:	Conversational, casual
Best Suited for:	Networking, initiating conversations among members, reminders and notifications
Perceived as:	May be perceived as extraneous, but has significant value for networking and encouraging conversation among members
Frequency:	Frequent, particularly if employing Twitter
Responsibility:	President, <i>WesternITE</i> Editor, Committee Chairs
Advertising:	No

Social media should be utilized to initiate conversation among members. Photos should be posted during and following District events and after officer visits to Sections and Chapters. Announcements regarding District events should be posted regularly. Congratulations should be offered to District members when they are recognized for awards. The media could also be used to provide live updates during events. The tone of posts should be casual, conversational and/or provocative. In order to be effective, posts should be fairly frequent. Guidelines and policies for posts should be developed regarding content. The website should be updated to allow easy connections to social media.

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Content Matrix

Regardless of the type of information, timeliness is the most important element. People need to see information when it is relevant, which generally means as quickly as possible. This means employing all the different forms of communication (listed below) as appropriate to the time sensitivity of the information. Some items can wait for the next printed newsletter, others should be pushed out via email or posted to the web immediately.

Content	Print	Email	Web	Social Media
Technical information	F	T	F	
Legal/regulatory/legislative information		T	F/L	
Meetings and Events	T	T	F	T
Election Materials	F	T	F	T
Bylaw Changes	F	T	F	T
ITE programs	T	T	F/L	
Member Updates	F		F	T
Educational Opportunities	T	T	F	
Post Event Photos	T	T	F	T
Lifetime/Individual Achievement Award	F	T	F	T
Award Winner Profiles	T	T	F	T
Call for Candidates/Volunteers	F	T		T
Endowment Fund Updates/Profiles	F	T	F	
Student Data Collection Results	T	T	F	
Student Program Announcements		T	F	T

F = Full Version

T = Teaser for a full version on the *WesternITE* webpage

L = Link to another webpage

Audience Matrix

	Print	Email	Web	Social Media
Current Professional Members	X	X	X	X
Student Members		X	X	X
Prospective Members		X	X	X
Leadership of Affiliated Organizations		X	X	X
Other Affiliated Professionals		X	X	X
Vendors and Business Contacts			X	
The Public			X	X
Elected Officials			X	X
Members of Other Districts		X	X	X
Leadership of Other Districts		X	X	X
International ITE Staff		X	X	X
International ITE Leadership		X	X	X
Media			X	X
Academic Institutions		X	X	X
Federal Government Officials and Key Staff		X	X	

Advertising

Multiple opportunities exist in the various communication media for advertising. The matrix below provides a summary of possible advertising types and the most appropriate media. This is not, however, intended to be an exhaustive list. Other opportunities may be available and should be pursued.

When considering possible advertising resources, the audience matrix above should be considered.

	Print	Email	Website	Cost
Banner Ads			Front Page	
Sponsor Profile	Yes	Yes		
Professional Services Directory	Yes – Traditional		Organize by location or service?	
Spot Ads	Yes		Front Page, Others?	Varies by size
Positions Available	Yes, with consideration for timeliness	Yes, with links to website	Yes	
Education Services	Yes	Yes, with links to website	Yes	

Format Requirements

All media should have a consistent look and color scheme. This will, in essence, brand the Western District materials and make them easily recognizable to the average member. A logo developed for the District should be utilized on all materials.

All materials will be provided to the *WesternITE* Editor and the Webmaster in digital format. This includes articles, advertising, photos, etc. Where possible forms should be prepared and regularly employed to allow for the consistent delivery of material, particularly for advertising.

Emails should be easily readable on a smart phone or tablet and could be created to mimic a newsletter style. Printed materials should be easily converted to PDF or other reader format so that it can be attached to an email or posted on-line.