PROMOTING YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

Institution of
MECHANICAL
ENGINEERS

Improving the world through engineering

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1. INTRODUCTION

Making sure your events are being communicated to the right people is essential to their success. Promoting your activities in a logical and consistent manner increases the chances of your event being well attended and well received.

By using the volunteer communication tools at your disposal, you can ensure your events complement the Institution's objectives to build a strong international brand and continue to offer a vast range of support and resources to IMechE members at a local level.

The following guide details the various communication tools available to your group and how to make best use of them to promote and advertise your group's activities.

You can find out more about the Institution's brand identity, view event templates and download our logos by visiting www.imeche.org/brandidentity

2. MAKING YOURSELF HEARD

Our volunteer communication tools enable you to make contact with your local members at a more personal level than ever before. Implementing the tools in unison means you can improve the promotion of an event resulting in better awareness of your local activities. Used correctly, the tools can mean the difference between delivering an average event and an outstanding event.

IMECHE EMAIL ADDRESS

A dedicated email account with all the functionality you would expect, plus your own IMechE email address.

NEAR YOU WEBSITE

Display your activities and contact details online to keep your members informed of the latest news and events happening in their area.

MASS MEMBER EMAIL

Your direct link to every IMechE member in your locality. Send updates to engage and inform your audience straight from your inbox.

TEMPLATES AND LOGOS

Access a range of templates, logos and guidelines to help you deliver effective and engaging material to promote and deliver your activities.

3. IMECHE EMAIL ACCOUNT

IMechE network email accounts allow volunteers to send and receive emails via an IMechE affiliated address, in this case: volunteerrole@imechenetwork.org

Access to a specific IMechE email account and mailbox allows a volunteer to keep track of Institution correspondence and have a safe and identifiable IMechE address to contact members in their locality.

IMechE network email works in the same way as any other email account, the user logs on with a username (their email address) and password from which they can access an array of functions to create, view, send, store and manage their email communications.

"Using the IMechE email address clearly identifies you as an IMechE recognised contact, ensuring those people you contact are fully aware of your credentials."

"It's incredibly easy to set up and use – allowing you the freedom to compose, store and manage your volunteer communications safely and efficiently."

IMechE email accounts have been set up for Chairs, Secretaries and Treasurers (and where they exist, Administration Officers) of Regions/Branches, Young Member Panels/Sections and for Country Representatives.

Each email address has been set up to ensure that when an individual steps down from a post, the email account can be transferred to their replacement simply and with minimal disruption to anyone using the contact address.

Any active member can request an email address if it is needed for their position, it is not limited to the above roles.

Contact regions@imeche.org to find out more about IMechE email

"Your events will gain added exposure by appearing on Near You."

Near You is essential to the activities of a volunteer group. It offers specific, custom made online areas for a volunteer group to display their activities, contact details, news and events listings.

These areas are vital in communicating with the membership. With the right level of content and consistent updates Near You can become a member's first port of call when looking for Institution interaction.

Near You is the location that people can view your events online. It is the place members in your area will look first to find out more about what is going on in their area. By making sure details of your events are up to date you'll be able to ensure that everyone looking at your site is fully informed on events, lectures, professional development workshops and the various other activities coordinated in your locale.

Near You can be used, in conjunction with the Ambassador vacancy page, to advertise vacancies on your committee. It can also be used to detail your objectives and strategies, to highlight past events or key outputs or simply to promote the benefits of active volunteer membership.

"Use your Near You page to demonstrate the huge range of activities going on in your area."

4.1 Central Events Database

Once your event is on Near You it automatically becomes part of the central events database.

The central events database links all events held by IMechE groups whether local or organised by Engineering Programmes. It is a great tool to see what other events are happening local to you or with a similar theme. It is an effective way to plan future events as well as promote your activities at relevant events that might be happening elsewhere.

To log in go to:
http://nearyou.imeche.org/support/CED+Page.htm
Username: imeche
Password: events

Have you read the Near You user guidelines? www.nearyou.imeche.org/support/Near-You-User-Guide

Visit Near You http://nearyou.imeche.org

The mass email facility is in place to help volunteer groups notify their members of activities in their area through email.

Volunteers can send out email notifications to members in their locality through a nominated email account, safe in the knowledge that the data is coming directly from the Institution's up to date corporate database.

The mass emailing facility has risen in prominence in recent years to become the principal way for volunteer groups to notify their local members of their events, often including a weblink to the event listings on Near You. Using the mass emailing facility allows a volunteer group to communicate with their entire local community of members without the need to maintain their own records, lists or data.

"Communicate with your entire local membership through a single email."

"Advertise, remind and follow up your events using the mass mailing facility."

The mass emailing system is directly linked to the Institution's member database so each time a message is sent the system ensures that the right people are being targeted in the correct areas, taking into account the most up to date contact details according to their membership record.

Lists have been set up for each committee and is usually operated by one member. To find out your representative, email regions@imeche.org Sending a note is simple and users can specify their preferred email address to send out notes from (ideally this would be their IMechE network email address). Those receiving the email can see it is from an identifiable IMechE source and have the choice of opting out if they no longer wish to receive information via this format.

Guidelines for using the mass member email system

As the emails being sent out to your members are personalised (i.e. they include a salutation), it is not necessarily appropriate to design them in exactly the same way as HQ communications such as Agenda or event emails. Consistent branding is important for members though, and along with the new header and footer, a standard font size and style should be used if possible.

1. Think about an introductory line for each email. Something like 'Welcome to your monthly update from xx Region' / 'The xx Area would like to invite you to our next event…' and so on.

2. All text should be written in Verdana, black, size 10pt. Colour should not be used, and other formatting such as bold kept to a minimum.

3. If you have more than one event or update for your email, use bullet points. Use bold text for the event's name, and plain for the description.

4. Link with other Areas and YM Panels in the Region if applicable – co-ordinate your mailouts so that updates are spread out consistently.

5. Try not to use the email as merely a list of upcoming events; by all means include links to Near You and posters, but give details and an idea of the event's flavour.

6. Sign off with a signature, again in Verdana 10pt:

   Your name
   Your role and committee
   Contact telephone number
   Contact email address
   Link to your Near You page, and to Facebook/Twitter etc if applicable
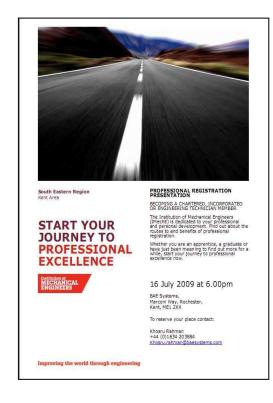   'Improving the world through engineering'

7. Where possible, make a poster for events using the IMechE template and link to that in your email or Near You page.

8. Remember to send your emails to the chairs of neighbouring areas for information and for them to circulate to their members, and to include your events in their regular mailings.

Every volunteer group has access to a vast range of resources to help them advertise and promote their activities. These resources include posters, flyers, newsletters, programme cards and business cards as well as our various logos.

The templates are very user friendly and designed to ensure that you can easily add your own content to the various templates. Although they do have set parameters to work within, they have been put together to allow you the freedom of including your own contents and images. All we ask is that you make reference to the brand guidelines when adding imagery or text to ensure the Institution has a consistent identity across its various channels.

7. OTHER IDEAS FOR PROMOTION
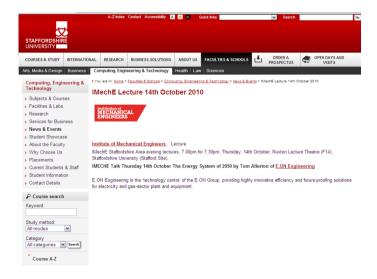
Business card event listings

Small wallet sized cards with events and committee details, easy to hand out and store. (Thanks to the Staffordshire Young Members Panel for this idea)

Other ideas

- Local newspapers and what's on sections
- Local libraries
- Posters in supermarkets (must supply the charity number)
- Graduate pages on company intranet
- University notice boards/websites
- Newsletters using the branded template (see below example)

An example of the newsletter template in action (left) and a lecture advertised on a University website (above).

8. SIMPLE STEPS TO EVENT SUCCESS

01 Use an appropriate template to produce engaging marketing material

02 Create a Near You listing for your event

03 Use the mass member email to publicise the event to local members

04 Utilise the different networks and groups to help publicise your event

05 Send reminders via the mass member email

06 Deliver your event

9. CONTACTS

For more information about any of the volunteer tools, contact
Regional and International Operations by emailing regions@imeche.org or by
calling +44 (0)207 973 1303

Support your volunteer activities by accessing a range of templates to
create posters, flyers, programme cards and badges by visiting
www.imeche.org/brandidentity

You will also find the Institution's brand guidelines and downloadable logos here.