

5 Association Chapters with Strong Virtual Presence



COVID-19 put association chapters to the test, pushing their ability to continue to meet members' needs when they can't be in person. Many association chapters responded, making changes that made it easier for members to get what they needed from the chapter virtually. Several stand out when it comes to their association chapter engagement best practices of the past 18 months, and we've gathered five here. Be sure to visit their websites to see all they've been doing for their members lately. Maybe some of their practices would work well for your association chapter and be appreciated by your membership.



The Dallas Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)

It's simple to find information on the PRSA Dallas website, like their virtual events, volunteer recruitment needs, member directory, and member spotlights with their "40 under 40" program. For an added personal touch, the chapter presented some of their member nominations and awards through "porch drop offs." And for the second year in a row, PRSA Dallas is holding "Unsummit," a virtual half-day conference. Like many industries, PR is experiencing a high level of burnout this year, so the theme focuses on the whole PR practitioner (the majority of their membership): physical, mental, work, financial, family, social, leisure and spiritual.



The Financial Planning Association of Nebraska (FPA)

FPA Nebraska keeps members up to date on chapter and industry goings on, with easy-to-access information on their website on chapter events and continuing education. They also have an online association chapter newsletter with a linked table of contents that allows readers to go right to an article of interest. Their website is simple and clean, and has a members-only section, as well as a section that lists sponsors and links to information about becoming an FPA Nebraska sponsor.

The Society for Human Resources Management St. Louis (SHRM)

SHRM St. Louis has an easy-to-navigate website. Upcoming events, in-person and virtual are listed on their home page. Their engaging events meet a range of member and chapter needs and include virtual happy hours and committee meetings, a mentorship program, volunteer recruitment program, online directory and newsletters, and resources for their business partners. Their job board is open to everyone and the volunteer opportunities section of their website is robust. They've made it easy for members to get involved, with descriptions of their volunteer programs and who to contact for more information. And their president's monthly video is a great way to let members know what's going on in the chapter and what they should be aware of in their industry.

The Institute of Real Estate Management, San Diego (IREM)

The San Diego IREM chapter has a number of resources to give members easy access to what they need. Their COVID-19 resources page takes web visitors to links for their financial hardship application and COVID relief fund, developed to make it a little easier for association chapter members who could benefit from financial assistance during these difficult times. Other association chapter member engagement best practices they've implemented include virtual events, a member directory, online volunteer recruitment and resources for industry partners.

The Project Management Institute Houston (PMI)

PMI Houston makes it easy for their members to engage virtually, with a clear list of virtual events, blog posts and a job board. And on their home page, one of their slider images link goes directly to the PMI Hardships provisions and hardship application. Another slider focuses on recognizing members in their member-of-the-month program and a third focuses on their upcoming members-only virtual hiring event.



Each of these chapters has done a highly effective job of engaging with members when there's an increased need to do a lot virtually. They've expanded and added to their websites and their programming meets their members' needs (They know, because they've asked). We look forward to seeing how these chapters, and many others, continue to engage with their members.

