

Engaging and Accruing Members with Communities

Using private social networking to foster collaboration and boost member retention

The New Jersey Society of Certified Public Accountants (NJSCPA) provides support, networking and professional development opportunities to more than 15,000 members. To best serve their varied membership base, the Society wanted to implement an enterprise-wide solution to increase member satisfaction and retention. As they were expanding to accommodate more members, events, and services the Society also wanted to improve the quality of the member experience.

Learn how the NJSCPA used Higher Logic's **Connected Community™** private social networking application to:

- Foster collaboration between members
- Retain and energize members
- Gain new non-dues revenue

THE CHALLENGE: Engaging members and increasing service levels

Members used the NJSCPA website to view upcoming events and news, and find resources. However, the website did not allow on-line interaction between members. In order to foster better interaction, the NJSCPA first turned to public social media networks — Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Initially, the NJSCPA received some positive results — accumulating 800 fans on Facebook and 400 members on LinkedIn. However, there were some major drawbacks:

- **Monitoring activity** on these public networks was difficult
- **Measuring engagement levels** across the different applications was not possible
- **Verifying and tracking participants** was complex and member names did not always match between these tools

Customer Profile



- Founded in 1898 and headquartered in Roseland, New Jersey
- Members include more than 15,000 Certified Public Accountants and accounting students
- Provides resources, opportunities and events for volunteer involvement and professional development

Visit www.njscpa.org and www.njscpa.org/connect.

THE SOLUTION: Professional social networking using Higher Logic's **Connected Community** product suite

The NJSCPA decided to focus on a private social networking strategy to better promote and measure overall member engagement. They needed a solution that would integrate their Aptify® Association Management System (AMS) and company website with a full-featured social network.

They chose Higher Logic's **Connected Community** application, the industry-leading suite of professional social networking, collaboration and mobile membership tools for associations and non-profits. **Connected Community** offers pre-built integrations to their Aptify AMS, which:

- Ensures data is transferred — not duplicated between systems
- Provides a single sign-on for both systems for members
- Saves staff and members' time by automatically creating member profiles
- Decreases implementation time

“This solution serves us well not just for today, but for the next decade. Our members can contribute, share and collaborate through our private social network, which is tightly integrated with our association management platform.”

Rachael Bell,
Online Communications Manager,
NJSCPA



Members now use their new ‘NJSCPA Connect’ community to:

- **Exchange** ideas and share best practices
- **Connect** and find other members based on similar attributes such as committees, geography, etc.
- **Share** documents, videos and slide shows

THE BENEFITS: More engaged members, increased retention and more

The Society saw positive results very quickly. Within the first two months, there were more than 1,700 active members using the new on-line community!

More Engaged Members:

Members are more active and engaged with the association. Their new social network lets them interact — anytime, anywhere — and provides easy-to-use tools for finding and contacting other members with common attributes.

The NJSCPA can track member involvement and reward members based on their activities within the community. Reward points can be accrued based on many factors including chairing committees and communities, posting questions and replies and sharing documents and blogs. Every interaction has a point value in the system, allowing the NJSCPA to quantify and track Member Lifetime Value, a valuable measurement which was not previously generated.

The NJSCPA then uses this information to create highly targeted and personalized communications to members, that further increases member involvement.

“NJSCPA.org/Connect is a cutting-edge social networking site, built around the needs and interests of our members. Unlike LinkedIn, Facebook and other public sites, our private social networking site has members’ interests in mind.”

NJSCPA member James C. Bourke,
CPA.CITP.CFF,
Partner at WithumSmith+Brown

Higher Member Retention:

More engaged members are more satisfied members, and the NJSCPA is now positioned to realize greater membership retention rates. Increased competition and a slower economy have presented challenges for associations to retain members. This new solution allows the NJSCPA to deliver a new dimension of value to their members by making it easier for them to collaborate with one another and the organization. By integrating this network with their AMS, the NJSCPA can better serve their existing members and attract new ones in the years ahead.

New Non-Dues Revenue:

By the end of this year, the Society plans to generate non-dues revenue through the sale of banner ads to cover the monthly cost of the community site. And within a year, the Society anticipates this will provide a net profit, and a new ongoing revenue stream to fund other initiatives.

About Higher Logic:

Higher Logic provides innovative professional social networking and mobile solutions for associations and nonprofits seeking to increase member retention and generate non-dues revenue. The **Connected Community** application suite empowers members to share best practices and collaborate — anytime, anywhere. Offer a new dimension of value to constituents with **Connected Community’s** prebuilt integration to leading association management systems and the **M² Mobile Membership™** smartphone app.

About Aptify:

Aptify is a leader in application software for enterprise-class associations, nonprofits and other member-based organizations. Aptify’s Association Management System (AMS) provides over 20 powerful applications and extensive out-of-the-box functionality, unparalleled flexibility and scalability, rapid implementation and an attractive Total Cost of Ownership (TCO).