Section 1

Member communications
01. Member communications

AIA works with state and local components to provide members with valuable resources, products, and benefits. Communicating their value helps ensure members take full advantage of all the offerings and are engaged in products, services, and events.

GOALS FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Provide AIA member value through communications and promote AIA resources to members
2. Support the AIA brand
3. Offer touch points to members and the public
GOAL 1

Provide AIA member value through communications and promote AIA resources to members

To effectively promote the value of membership, it’s essential to develop a plan to communicate AIA benefits to your members. Your plan should also provide them with what they need to thrive – before they even realize they need it.

PLAY 1: SHARE INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC AIA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

As part of the Core Member Services, your component must communicate information about key benefits, products, and services offered by your chapter and AIA National.

REQUIREMENT:

Your component must provide regular, visible promotion of AIA products including AIA Contract Documents, AIA Career Center, AIA Conference on Architecture, and AIAU in the component’s electronic and print media communications.

PLAY 2: CREATE A MEDIA PLAN

As a first step, determine the specific AIA product, service, or event you want to promote—and when you should promote it. Creating a media plan helps you stay focused, leverage the appropriate media effectively, and avoid legal pitfalls. Be realistic about the amount of time you can dedicate to developing and implementing your communications strategy and media plan, just as you would any other important initiative.

To ensure your plan is effective:

• Create a timeline.
• Cover your component’s benefits and initiatives, as well as those that AIA national offers.
• Coordinate the promotion of products or services with events, webinars, and other engagement opportunities.
• Encourage feedback through firm visits, online forums, blogs, meetings, and surveys.
• Use the feedback to shape upcoming communications.
• Share the feedback with your staff, board, and members to ensure that messages are as clear as possible.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

How to Ask for and Receive Member Feedback

PLAY 3: TOOLS FOR MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Once you determine and prioritize what you want to promote and when you should promote it, you need to establish how. You can use a variety of media to communicate about AIA products, events, and services.
TOOL: NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters (digital or print) can be great tools to engage and inform your members. If you create a newsletter, plan to send it regularly—at least once a month.

AIA Architect, AIA’s member-only biweekly newsletter, includes highlights on award recipients, industry features, and important updates. You can share articles by linking to the newsletter.

Access the current issue of AIA Architect at architectmagazine.com/aia-american-institute-of-architects/.

TOOL: WEBSITES

REQUIREMENT:

Components must contribute at least one upcoming event to your website or AIA.org hosted on the AIA digital platform. A dedicated point of contact should be identified to engage with members and the public.

The ultimate goal is to draw members to your website. Keep your members engaged by updating your website regularly with fresh, practical content targeted specifically to them—local events, continuing education opportunities, or new policies that affect their work, for example.

Components can use AIA.org in addition to – or in place of – their own websites. The AIA’s component website allows components to incorporate both AIA national and component activities on one website. For more information on the digital platform contact Brian McLaren at brianmclaren@aia.org.

Components can also add their events to AIA.org. Please contact componentrelations@aia.org for more information.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

AIA Kentucky on AIA.org

TOOL: SOCIAL MEDIA

Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram provide easy ways to communicate with members, prospective members, and architecture and design enthusiasts.

Before you choose which social media platform you’ll leverage, consider which ones your members use most often. To find out, visit Hootsuite, a platform for managing social media platforms. It offers guidance on how to conduct an audit so you can get a closer look at how your members use social media. Start your social media audit at http://bit.ly/2q3oCL5.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Social Media Audit Template
Social Media Dos and Don’ts
Support the AIA brand

Components are a key part of AIA’s brand. That’s why component communications (both print media and electronic) should look, feel, and sound like AIA. When we present a strong message with consistent tone and imagery, we amplify our voice and impact.

PLAY 1: ADHERE TO AND REGULARLY REVIEW THE BRAND GUIDELINES

REQUIREMENT:
Your component must follow the AIA Brand Guidelines consistently across all the component’s electronic and print media to ensure members experience AIA as a unified organization.

The Brand Guidelines define the standards for using AIA and component logos, typefaces, color palette, and more. They are designed to help you communicate with members and the public in friendly, efficient, and cohesive ways that support the AIA brand, your component, and the architecture industry. Access the AIA Brand Guidelines on the Brandfolder website, brandfolder.com/aia-chapters.

The AIA Brandfolder is your one-stop shop for templates, logos, the Architype typeface, and campaign assets, along with AIA’s official guidelines on imagery, content, and brand tone and voice. Access the Brandfolder at brandfolder.com/aia-chapters.

The AIA Brand Shop is where components can order branded chapter stationery including letterhead, envelopes, business cards, mailing labels, folders, and more. Access the Brand Shop at brand.aia.org. To receive your login credentials, please email brandteam@aia.org.

ONLINE RESOURCES:
- Brandfolder
- Brand Shop

GOAL 3

Offer touch points to members and the public

Communication plays a critical role in the success of your component. Components should also establish a proactive communication process using a variety of communication channels and establish a permanent location.

REQUIREMENT:
A dedicated point of contact, for both internal and external communications, must be identified to engage with members and the public. Components should establish a proactive communication process using a variety of communication channels.

PLAY 1: SET UP A LOCATION

Components should also establish a permanent address for your component. If you’re looking for options beyond renting your own space, consider creative solutions such as using donated space within a local architectural firm, negotiating with another component to provide a point of contact and services, or sharing space with other nonprofits.