



PROMOTING YOUR NEXT CHAPTER EVENT

Your Chapter's programming committee has been hard at work lining up a speaker for your next Chapter CPE event, or maybe made a group reservation at the hot new restaurant in town for a networking happy hour, now you just need to get members to attend.

Depending on the size of your event, your chapter may or may not have a marketing budget. That's okay, we have ideas that require expenses, and ideas that don't require a dime.

Use what you have

- **Event Registration:** Many Chapters use platforms such as EventBrite, Constant Contact, or JotForms to create registration for events. Create the registration page for your event to begin posting to your chapter website, social media accounts, and email marketing.
- **Update your website:** If your Chapter posts events to your website, be sure all the updated information is available. Be sure to include all the event details, contact information for questions, and a link to registration.
 - While you're at it, if you know of any other upcoming events on your Chapter's calendar, you update your site with those details as well. Even if you don't have all the details, a simple teaser is enough to start your promotion in advance (i.e. Mark your calendar for...).
 - Remove any old registration links. If you can post pictures or prepare a brief summary from your most recent events. Keeping some information of past events on your site will show visitors how active your Chapter is. This is where a site blog can be useful.
- **Social Media:** Utilize your Chapter's social media accounts to help spread the word about your event. Keep in mind, newsfeeds move fast, so you may need to post about your event several times to get the message across. Consider a Save the Date post, a general register today post, and a Last Call post. You can also maximize exposure by posting a wrap-up and/or photos following, or even during the event.
 - **Facebook Events:** As a Facebook user you have the option to create a Facebook event. The pro of Facebook events is that attendees can find out who else is coming to the event, invite others, and start discussions in advance. The con, Facebook events can get lost and users often forget whether or not they've responded. Also Facebook events can sometimes create confusion for whether or not an attendee has actually registered for the event (i.e. telling us you'll attend on Facebook is not the same as visiting our registration site and buying a ticket). Conclusion, give Facebook Events a try to see how your members respond, but posted updates in your news feed may be just as effective.
 - **AFWA National Accounts:** When promoting your events on Facebook and Twitter, always tag AFWA National (@AFWANational) in your post. We'll favorite your tweet and may even repost it to the National feed. Also consider posting your event to the AFWA



National LinkedIn Group page, especially if you're hosting a larger CPE workshop or retreat.

- **Need help starting a Social Media Account for you Chapter:** Refer to the *Social Media and Your Chapter: Getting Started* guide found in the Marketing Toolkit on the AFWA Member site.
- **Chapter Newsletter or Blog:** Think beyond promoting just the date, time, and summary of the event. Is this an annual event that members have attended in the past? Ask one of your members to write a brief article about their prior experience at the event. Or maybe your speaker has some content they could share with your members in advance, either about their presentation, or about other areas of expertise.
- **Pictures:** Be sure to take pictures at your event. Pictures can be posted on social media, to your website, or to your Chapter newsletter to promote the success of a recent event or promote an annual reoccurring event. People who are considering attending your events may be more likely to register if they can visualize what your events are like, or better yet, they see a familiar face in the crowd.

Reach Out

- **AFWA.org:** Did you know there is an events page on AFWA.org? We like to promote the activities of all our chapters to show visitors what our organization is all about. Send an email to marketing@afwa.org with the name, date, and registration or more info link/email for your event and we'll post it to the National website. For free! Better yet, add marketing@afwa.org to your Chapter's mailing list, then headquarters will always be in the know about your Chapter's events.
- **Network with other Chapters:** Is there a Chapter nearby that may have members interested in attending your event? Reach out to those Chapter leaders and ask them to help promote and spread the word about your event. Contact marketing@afwa.org if you need contact information for other chapters.
- **Joint Meetings:** Consider other affiliated or complimentary organizations within your community. Your meeting topics may be of interest to the members of these groups, or better yet you may connect with a group who will host a joint meeting with your Chapter.
- **Community Calendars:** Many cities have online community calendars that allow free posting of events in the area. This could include the local newspaper, a society magazine, a business journal, or local commerce site. Find these community calendars and post your event details.
- **Email Marketing:** Reach out to your members via email. If your event is big enough, it may deserve its own message. Not just a line item in your monthly newsletter.
- **Think beyond your Member List:** Your membership is the perfect target for promoting your next event. But think of the other businesses or individuals in your community who may benefit from the topic of your next event. Reach out these businesses and individuals with an email, a letter, or even a personal phone call.



If you have a Budget

- **Advertise:** Most of same sites that carry your community calendars also sell advertising in the print and online publications. Especially the business publications, can be a great channel to deliver your message to local professionals. You don't need a full page color ad, even a small ad can get your message across.
- **Direct Mail:** We get inundated with emails, so much so that nothing stands out any more like a nice postcard. Your monthly membership report should include the names and addresses of all your members. Have a nice post card or flyer printed and deliver your message directly to their mailboxes. You may work with a local mail service provider or make a night of it. Get a committee together and start addressing cards.
- **Social Media:** Most social media platforms offer advertising packages. The simplest form of advertising is to promote your event post. For a small fee, you can ensure your Facebook post or Tweet is seen by all your followers and their networks.
- **Offer a Door Prize:** You'll be amazed at how many people show up to your event just for the chance to win an iPad or other door prize. This not only gets people in the door, but keeps them coming back for more. Be sure to promote the door prize in advance!

Don't do it a Alone

Successful promotion of an event requires a significant amount of time. This can be a lot for one individual to take on. Start a committee and invite new members to join. For example, one person may be in charge of website and social media updates, while another individual will contact AFWA headquarters and community calendars. Sometimes giving a new member a single task can set them on the path to becoming a great Chapter Leader!

I have a few more questions

Feel free to contact AFWA Headquarters at any time for help with your Chapter's event promotions. You may call 859.219.3532 or email marketing@afwa.org.