Chapter Emailing

Using email communications will help grow or enhance your relationship with local UNA-USA members. This cost-effective approach allows for regular and timely contact, while also giving your members more opportunities to stay engaged with the chapter.

Why should my chapter email its local UNA-USA members?
- It's cost-effective. Email tools are cheaper than postage or telemarketing.
- It's immediate. Urgent appeal to contact your member of congress? Email! Last minute change to an upcoming event? Email!
- It allows for deeper engagement with your members and supporters.
- It's accessible. Nearly everyone has an email address now.
- It can drive traffic to your website.
- It can easily be forwarded to help reach new audiences.

What should I do first?
Build an email list! Do you have an email address for every member in your chapter? If not, start collecting.

Helpful Hints:
- Have a sign-up sheet at every Chapter event.
- Call members without emails listed, ask them for their email, and add it to your list.
- Add an email sign up page prominently on your website if you have one.
- Make sure to communicate the benefits of being added to your email list.
- Receive timely communications on upcoming events
- Get insight into the happenings of other members
- Stay up-to-date on the vital work the UN does

I have a distribution list. Now what?
Set an editorial calendar. How often do you want to email your list? What upcoming events do you have that you need to communicate? What big UN rallying points to do you want to highlight to your list?

Helpful Hints:
- Identify email dates and deadlines; share with others who are helping you.
- Have more than one person proofread the content before it goes out to prevent mistakes.
- Frequency matters. The 'more is better' rule doesn't apply here. Be mindful of people's inboxes.
- In your emails, regularly request information and updates from members. It will help you stay connected with your membership and allow you to promote their work in later emails.

Best emailing practices

Keep the subject line short. If possible, keep it below 50 characters.

Design a clean, but graphical email template. Most email tools have a WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") function so you can create an email in HTML without knowing how code.

Add links back to your website. It helps boost website traffic.

Most important items go in the beginning. Most email browsers allow the reader to preview the first 25% of an email without opening. That's your chance to reach your member!

Keep your messages short. Too much information can overwhelm the reader. The shorter, the better.

Make a clear call to action. Need help defeating an anti-UN bill in the state legislature? Say it! Looking for volunteers to help with an event? Spell it out! Use action verbs to grab attention and to allow members to engage with a next step.

Use images, but not too many. People love emails with images or a graphical approach. But try to pick strong images. If your choice is between one strong image and using 3 ok images, just use the one strong one. The stronger the photo, the more impact the email will have.
- **There should be a good image/text ratio in each email**. No email should be more than 50% images; this will help prevent your email from going into the spam folder.

Be mindful of image size. The ideal image size of an email should be maximum 100KB or 600 pixels wide. Anything larger may be harder for people to download in their inbox.
- How do you check the image size? Locate the folder where your image is stored. Place the cursor over the image icon and right-click if you are using a PC or Ctrl-click if you are using a Mac. Choose 'properties,' and the 'size' line shows the image's file size.

Test the email before sending. Check links, read the text, and make sure it doesn't go into your junk folder.

Most importantly, don't be afraid to experiment. Most email tools have a way for you to measure open and click-through rates. Use this data to experiment with subject lines, action items, days of the week, and times of day. The more you experiment, the more you'll know what your members are most interested in reading.

Example of possible email marketing services

- Constant Contact
- iContact
- Benchmark Email
- Mail Chimp
- ActiveCampaign
- Campaigner