

Facebook, blogs, and other internet communication

Most of us have known of issues that have arisen as the result of the use of information sites such as facebook.com, blog sites that capture people's journals and largely unedited thoughts, or other ways of communicating through technology. All of this activity makes electronic mail and instant messaging seem positively "old school" by comparison.

Kappa Kappa Psi lived well before these tools were available, but we also live in the modern day. Our Brothers need to know how to use these means of communication

smartly, so as to advance their bands and fraternity in a positive way without creating unneeded drama, usually unintentionally but hurtfully.

Technology will continue to change, but issues of civility are constant. We'll discuss these throughout this issue.

As always, if you have questions, contact me at mamatney@umich.edu. Your thoughtfulness now can build stronger relationships throughout this year.

Malinda

Communicating – the importance of the details

There are plenty of reasons to be concerned about electronic communication. However, there are wonderful uses for websites, blogs, journals, Facebook, and other applications.

- Websites can be used effectively to advertise large scale projects. A website, with companion email and postal mail notices, can be updated through the year for large projects such as festivals, conventions, or a series of service projects.
- Journals can be used to practice effective writing. Whether as individuals or as chapters, journals can report the best of what is happening currently.
- Blogs can be used effectively as chapter or district websites. If managed appropriately, these can remain current without requiring a high level of web authoring skill.
- Pictures can be shared, showing the best parts of Kappa Kappa Psi and energizing Brothers.

One thing to keep in mind is that electronic communication should not be used as the only form of communication.

While electronic communication is nimble, it doesn't save things consistently in the way you might want for historical purposes. Don't let yourself be written out of the national history as a result of not planning for your historical records. Instead, use electronic means to collect even more history.

- Compile a compact disk of photos, minutes, and written reports for each chapter member each year, and keep one in your files.
- Keep backup paper binders or files so that as technology changes, your materials are not lost.
- Every year or two, check all your electronic media to make sure you can still read files and that they are in the most current form. If you have floppy disks, translate them to compact disk now.

Finally, electronic files can give a head start to the work of future Brothers by saving reports and records of events. Being able to start from previous information can help your chapter focus on advancing bands, rather than reinventing wheels.

By using electronic communication as a part of a strategy, rather than mistaking it for total communication, you will make it work best. It can be a valuable tool, rather than a headache.



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Strive for the Highest

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.kkpsi.org

What could possibly go wrong with our writing online?

It is tempting to think that when we write in a journal online, or even in email, that we are only writing to a few friends. However, the "World Wide Web" has that title for a reason. Anyone in the world can get to what you write, and often read what you write before you know it.

Some things to keep in mind:

- You receive funny forwards in your email. Don't think your words aren't being forwarded as well. What you take seriously or humorously may be taken by others in a different way, perhaps hurtfully.
- There are sites that track, flag, or archive blog entries. No matter your intent or actual deletion of what you post on the web, somebody somewhere probably has a

Final tips

It is easy to forget that, when using electronic communication, real people will receive the messages.

- Don't drink and blog. There is a reason you shouldn't use heavy machinery while under the influence. What seems funny on Saturday night may not be so fun to address on Monday.
- Do not forget all the other means of communicating. Not everyone will read any particular form of communication. Effective communication involves variety – don't forget phone, postal mail, face to face contact, electronic mail, or being an active part of listservs.
- Keep *all* of your contact information current with chapter members, National Headquarters, and your campus. Keeping your information current is your responsibility.
- Don't give revealing information to people you don't know, and don't post it on websites. ID numbers, birth date, home address, class schedule, or relationship status

copy of your first version.

- You may find a lack of proper grammar to be cute. Lack of proper usage in writing leaves a bad impression, and may lead to unintended interpretations.
- You often find yourself telling stories in different ways for different audiences. Blogs and other online journals do not give you that ability to tailor comments to your audience.
- Your family, faculty, friends, law enforcement, potential employers, and others are reading. If you wouldn't say something to one of these audiences, it is not likely to be appropriate to post.
- No security level keeps away this scrutiny. We live in a small, small world.

can be used in ways that are hurtful at best, and may have financial or criminal costs.

While there are a lot of questions you can answer online, remember that you should control information about yourself and you should control your communication. You shouldn't simply defer to the wishes of a software designer living in another time zone. Just because the authors of "Facebook" want to know a detail about you is not reason enough to publish it for all to see.

Like any other powerful and new medium, there is reason for great excitement about internet sites. They are fun, and can connect thousands of Brothers. However, they should work for you, and not against you.

At the end of the day, your communication should reflect our fifth purpose in our preamble:

*To provide a **pleasant and helpful** social experience for all engaged in college band work and to cooperate with other musical organizations in any manner **consistent with the purposes of the institution** at which chapters are located.*