



MARKETING and COMMUNICATION PLAN

2009





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MISSION

of the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce

To be the voice of business, to promote and initiate responsible economic growth and to address community challenges in the Rogers-Lowell area and the region.

AUDIENCES/STAKEHOLDERS

The audiences served by this plan include:

Internal

- Chamber members
- Board of Directors, committee members, volunteers
- Chamber staff members

External

- Potential members
- Business and community leaders
- Government and elected officials
- Developers & site selectors
- Media
- General public

KEY MESSAGES

General Key Message:

- Growing Business, Building Community.
- The Chamber is the “keeper of the Vision” for the future of Rogers, Lowell and the region.

Economic Development Key Message:

- The Chamber works to attract and grow jobs to grow business in the community.
- The Chamber helps members grow their businesses through business-building programs, events and services.

Government Affairs Key Message:

- The Chamber is the voice of business, advocating for and protecting local businesses at the federal, state, regional, county and local level.
- The Chamber takes a regional approach to issues that impact the quality of life in northwest Arkansas.

Community Key Message:

- The Chamber leads the community with a vision of quality, growth and opportunity.
- The Chamber supports the development of future leadership for the community.
- The Chamber promotes a healthy and safe community.

COMMUNICATION METHODS & SCHEDULE

The Chamber utilizes the following modes of communication:

Print

Chamber Voice

full color, 12-16 page monthly publication mailed to approximately 4,000 member representatives. Contents include news and information on Chamber programs, events and services, along with recognition of sponsors, new members, renewed members and ribbon cuttings. The newsletter features display and insert advertising opportunities for members.

Annual Report

full color, 12-page publication distributed to all members of the organization annually by mail, and all new members throughout the year. Reports on accomplishments by the Chamber over the previous year.

Annual Business Plan

full color, 6-16 page publication distributed to all members of the organization annually by mail, and all new members throughout the year. Describes the goals and plan of work for each of the Chamber's divisions.

Calendar of Events

black & white, two-page flyer inserted into the monthly "Chamber Voice," providing basic information on Chamber events and committee meetings for the following two months.

Shopping & Dining Deals Coupons

black & white, two-page flyer inserted into the monthly "Chamber Voice," featuring member-to-member discount coupons for local restaurants, service providers and retail shops. Members may place coupons on the sheet free of charge.

Event registration forms and flyers

Forms and flyers are created throughout the year for many of the Chamber's programs and events to facilitate registration.

Event invitations & "Save the Date" cards

Printed invitations or "save the date" cards are provided for special events throughout the year.

The Good Life Tourism and Relocation Guide

full-color, 60-page annual magazine featuring tourism and relocation information for visitors and new residents. Approximately 40,000 are distributed through the Chamber and statewide tourism outlets, at trade shows and conferences and in area hotels. The magazine features display advertising offered to members at a discounted rate.

Rogers-Lowell Area City Maps

full-color, fold-out maps featuring up-to-date street maps of Rogers, Lowell, eastern Benton County and Beaver Lake. Approximately 11,000 maps are distributed annually through the Chamber, at trade shows and conferences and in area hotels and businesses. The maps feature display advertising offered to members.

New Member Packets, featuring Membership Certificate

full-color pocket folders are provided to all new members throughout the year, featuring information on member benefits and Chamber services, including publications and upcoming event information.

Press releases and media advisories

news releases, announcements and invitations to upcoming events are distributed to the local and regional media throughout the year.

Office stationary

the Chamber's logo and brand are used consistently on letterhead, envelopes, business cards, pocket folders, fax sheets, memo sheets and many other materials throughout the year.

Event Signage

signage used at events throughout the year to recognize sponsors; may be banners, coroplast or foamcore signs.

Electronic

Web sites

www.RogersLowell.com - main site for the Chamber, featuring up-to-date information about the Chamber, members and the community. A major feature of the site is the online membership directory, featuring maps, hyperlinks and product/service descriptions about members. The site offers advertising through banner ads and enhanced listings to members.

www.BuyNWA.biz - site to promote a "shop local" campaign, featuring coupons and listings of local retail and service providers.

www.NWALead.com - site serving as a portal for members of the NWA Emerging Leaders program of the Chamber, offering information on membership, events, and programs of the NWA Emerging Leaders.

www.VoteForNWABusiness.org - site hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce featuring local information on elected officials, voting and elections.

www.NWABusiness.org - site developed for the annual NWA Business Conference & Expo hosted by the Chamber. The site features event information on speakers and sponsorships, and facilitates event registration.

Email newsletters

[Weekly Email Update](#) - email sent each Tuesday to approximately 2,800 member representatives to provide news and upcoming event information, facilitating registration with direct links to event pages. The Weekly Email Update features banner ads offered to members.

[News from Vilma](#) - email sent biweekly to approximately 2,000 individuals to provide news on upcoming community programs and events. The email is targeted to the minority population.

[Government Affairs E-News Update](#) - email sent 2-5 times per week during state legislative sessions, and as needed during other times of the year to approximately 1,700 individuals who sign up for the list.

Event email promotions

messages sent throughout the year to targeted groups of members who have opted to receive information about upcoming events and sponsorship opportunities.

Social Media

the Chamber and several divisions of the Chamber maintain accounts on Twitter and Facebook to provide brief bits of information on news and events; the Chamber and several divisions also manage groups on LinkedIn; account holders include the Chamber, NWA Emerging Leaders, Drug Free Rogers-Lowell, Government Affairs, Rogers Convention & Visitors Bureau and Leadership Benton County.

SMS Text Messaging

messages are sent to members of the Ambassadors Committee who have opted-in to the service; messages are sent only to relay emergency information, such as cancellations or changes for a ribbon cutting event.

Chamber Blog

informal, conversational posts several times a month provide up-to-date information and an opportunity for readers to offer feedback.

Public Relations

Media relations

staff members maintain updated lists of local media contacts, and work regularly with members of the media to provide story ideas and information about the Chamber and its members. Several staff members are authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the organization.

Press releases and media advisories

news releases, announcements and invitations to upcoming events are distributed to the local and regional media throughout the year.

Event advertising

print (newspaper and magazines), TV, Radio, internet advertising is used throughout the year to promote Chamber events that are open to the public. Depending on the target audience for the event, advertising may appear outlets serving Rogers-Lowell, the immediate area, Benton County, Washington County, northwest Arkansas, Fort Smith, and the entire state. Several Chamber programs (Rogers Convention & Visitors Bureau, Drug Free Rogers-Lowell grant programs) utilize regional and national advertising options.

Chamber advertising

advertising to promote the Chamber as a resource for local businesses, tourists and new residents is placed in a variety of local publications, including Yellow Pages, theater programs, event programs, newspapers and special publications.

Networking groups/events

members of the Chamber staff and volunteers utilize word-of-mouth advertising to promote Chamber events, programs and services at regional networking events and group meetings throughout the year.

Speaking engagements

members of the Chamber staff frequently serve as guest speakers at civic clubs, luncheons and other meetings, sharing news and information about Chamber programs, events and services.

Trade Shows

members of the Chamber staff exhibit in various trade shows to promote the community, the Chamber or the Rogers Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Billboards

in order to reach a broad demographic, the Drug Free Rogers-Lowell program of the Chamber places billboard advertisements throughout the year; billboards are located along the regional interstate corridor.

Screenvision

in order to reach a targeted demographic, the Drug Free Rogers-Lowell program of the Chamber places Screenvision advertisements throughout the year at the local movie theaters.

GOALS & METHOD STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: Implement strategies to promote business-building programs, events and services to Chamber members.

Strategy: Utilize WebLink and www.RogersLowell.com to promote Chamber events with up-to-date detailed information and secure, convenient online registration.

Strategy: Promote registration/attendance for upcoming events and programs through all applicable Chamber communication methods (emails, newsletter, calendar of events, press releases, social media).

GOAL 2: Build awareness of and attendance for the Chamber's public events.

Strategy: Utilize WebLink, www.RogersLowell.com and special event Web sites to promote public events with up-to-date detailed information and secure, convenient online registration.

Strategy: Promote registration/attendance for public events through all applicable Chamber communication methods (press releases, social media, event advertising, networking groups/events, speaking engagements).

GOAL 3: Use effective forms of online social media to communicate with members, support existing marketing efforts and expand our membership/customer base.

Strategy: Create and maintain active discussion groups on LinkedIn; send brief bits of information with links to more through Twitter; maintain a conversational informal tone on the Chamber blog.

Strategy: Explore Facebook and other forms of social media, evaluating their effectiveness and potential usefulness.

Strategy: Host regular training seminars for members on the use of social media to encourage participation and engagement with the Chamber through Twitter and LinkedIn.

GOAL 4: Position the Chamber as a leader in providing access and information about social media tools to members.

Strategy: Host regular training seminars for members on the use of social media to encourage participation and engagement with the Chamber through Twitter and LinkedIn.

GOAL 5: Get and keep members engaged and informed in a timely manner on Government Affairs.

Strategy: Develop a regular email newsletter to be sent to a targeted readership, providing up-to-date news, resources, and calls-to-action as needed.

Strategy: Develop and maintain a separate Web site featuring local information on elected officials, voting and elections.

Strategy: Design and distribute collateral materials to provide information about the Chamber's Government Affairs program and legislative agenda.

Strategy: Keep the Legislative Agenda and issues in the forefront with members by featuring articles and information in the Chamber newsletter and blog.

Strategy: Create and maintain active discussion of Government Affairs issues, projects and events through LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook posts.

BUDGET

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Net</u>
Event Advertising*		\$6,860.00	(\$6,860.00)
Newsletter & Email	\$24,975.00	\$38,697.33	(\$13,722.33)
The Good Life	\$86,936.67	\$30,222.67	\$56,714.00
Web site	\$71,433.33	\$38,830.00	\$32,603.33
TOTAL	\$183,345.00	\$114,610.00	\$68,735

* Event Advertising sponsorship trades not included above totaled \$165,005.00

EVALUATION

The success of the Chamber's communication and marketing strategies can be measured by increases in the following:

- Membership figures
- Member utilization of Chamber services, programs and events
- Attendance at public events of the Chamber
- Web site unique page visits and online member referrals
- Media coverage
- Members engaged through the Chamber's social media networks
- Member participation in legislative issues and government affairs
- Awareness of the Chamber's position on political issues that impact the business community.