

Managing Chapter Communications



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The new and improved virtual communities allow you to easily send emails to all of your chapter members without worrying about managing those who unsubscribe or purchasing a separate email system. Each month, ONS will upload your most current chapter membership email address file to your virtual community. From there, you'll just need to follow the instructions below.

The messages you send will be in HTML format, and they'll automatically include a footer with the unsubscribe language that's necessary to comply with CAN-SPAM legislation (see sidebar on the next page). All you need to worry about is writing your message and hitting the send button.

How to Send an Email to Your Chapter Members

- Go to the Announcement tab on your chapter virtual community.
- Click the link to post new announcement.
- Enter a title for your message into the subject field.
- Either type directly into the HTML input field or paste your content into the field. You may use the HTML module controls to add bolding, italics, centering, heading styles (for titles), font colors, horizontal lines, tables, bullets, indents, or images to your announcement.
- To attach a file to your message, click the "Add a file" link, and then select your file to upload.
- To include an image, click the tree icon and paste the link to the image into the image URL field.
- Consider running spell-check on your message before clicking finish.
- When you are ready to send out your email click finish.

Adding Images to Your Emails

Follow these simple steps to add images to your email.

- Upload the images you wish to use into the shared files on your site.
- Right click the image name and select copy shortcut to put the image URL on your clipboard, then paste the URL into the image URL field.

Many users find it useful, when adding multiple images, to open a second browser window to display shared files to make it easy to copy the links for multiple images. Also, if the image you've added is too big in relation to your newsletter content, select the appearance tab in the add image pop-up to change the image display size.

Note: If you're using Dreamweaver, click the HTML link in the announcement HTML controls then paste in your code and click update.

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How to Access Your Chapter Roster

As a designated chapter officer, you can download your chapter's membership roster under the Chapter Member Directory tab of your chapter's virtual community:

- Click Export Membership Data. A window will open to display the default name where the data will be stored as well as whether the field separator will be comma or tab. Leave the setting at comma.
- Click Finish. Ready Portal, the virtual community platform provider, will send you an email titled Exported User Data within a few minutes, depending on database size and other requests in its queue. If the email doesn't arrive within a few minutes, check your spam folder.
- When the email arrives, click the link; when the pop-up window opens to ask if you want to open, save, or save as, click Save As and choose the name and destination for the file.
- Open the file, and view the member database. You may leave it in csv format, or you may save it as an Excel document.

Note: When doing this, we recommend using a browser that prompts you on whether to open or save downloads for this activity.

What Is the CAN-SPAM Act?

In a nutshell, the CAN-SPAM Act is a law that sets rules for commercial email and gives recipients the right to have you stop emailing them. ONS, like all organizations, is committed to adhering to this legislation out of respect for its members' privacy and because failure to do so can result in significant penalties.

As a component of ONS, chapters must also comply with the rules and regulations set forth by this legislation.

Don't worry, though, we've made it easy for you to do the right thing. The footer that is automatically attached to your email messages through the virtual community system takes care of providing your recipients with the opt-out options required by law.

If you would like to learn more about the CAN-SPAM Act, visit <http://www.business.ftc.gov/documents/bus61-can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>.