How Neighborhood Assoc Websites Can Increase Participation

Communication and participation are two of the biggest challenges in building a strong neighborhood association. An effective website can facilitate these two things and do a whole lot more!

Leverage the Power of the Internet

The Internet has revolutionized how neighborhood associations operate. No longer do printing and distribution costs determine how often neighbors get their news. No longer is community dialogue constricted by the ability to attend a scheduled meeting. And, no longer is time-sensitive information limited by word-of-mouth communication.

If good communication and active participation are the two biggest challenges to building a strong neighborhood association, then an effective website might be the solution. For neighborhood associations, a good website can decrease costs, increase effectiveness, and enhance participation.

Basic Website Features You Will Need

How can a website do all these things? An effective website for a neighborhood association would include basic features such as: document storage for new and archival information, contact information and/or a more extensive directory, an online newsletter, an online calendar, a discussion forum, a map, and the ability to post links to other sites. Enhanced features might include the creation of private or password protected areas, the ability to create surveys, classified ads, and the ability to sell advertising on the site.

How would these features actually decrease costs, increase effectiveness, and enhance participation in a neighborhood association?

6 Features That Save Money and Increase Communication & Participation

1. Document storage is a feature the association can utilize to post information (and photos) regarding community events, ongoing projects, safety concerns, official documents, and anything else you believe to be relevant to the community. This can be accomplished by either uploading a PDF and/or using the website's document creating tools.

2. A significant cost savings for the association would be the ability to publish, distribute, and continuously update its newsletter – at no cost! The newsletter can be created and continuously updated by either uploading a PDF and/or using the website's document creating tools.

3. An online calendar would enable the association to post dates, times and information about meetings, events, garage sales, birthdays, road closings, etc. The calendar can be open for anyone in the community to post information, or can be restricted to selected editors.

4. A discussion forum would enable everyone in the community to voice their ideas and opinions about issues related to their community – whenever it is convenient for them! It is a place where the entire community can dialogue, share ideas, and build relationships.

5. The addition of a map on the website, with association borders clearly delineated, can help new neighbors and prospective neighbors find your neighborhood association.

6. And lastly, the ability to post links to other sites would enable other community-related groups with websites to become easily accessible to their neighbors. Groups such as local schools, the PTA, Neighborhood Watch, historic preservation, Mom's Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, etc.

All of these website features help to build a neighborhood association that grows stronger, more tightly knit, and more active, because everyone can access information when they need it, and participate when they have time.

The Internet has truly revolutionized how neighborhood associations communicate with their community and how the community communicates with the association and with each other. If good communication and active participation are the two biggest challenges to building and maintaining a strong neighborhood association, then the solution is an effective website.

Get Started!

Ready to see what a Neighborhood Association website can do for you and your association? Great, NEIGHBORHOOD LINK has been providing free websites to Neighborhood Associations since 1997. Your Neighborhood Association's free website is fully programmed and designed. Besides being free, they are also easy to set up, simple to use, and ready to go! For more information: Free Neighborhood Association Websites