

Strengthening your chapter with social media

Are you ready to party?

“Are you ready to party?” was part of an actual tweet our chapter sent out. We flooded social media sites, we collaborated with other student groups on service projects, and we threw a Masquerade Dance Party for the entire university. What are the outcomes of our year? Hundreds (thousands?) of students learned about Alpha Chi through social media, we made new friends, we raised money for Habitat for Humanity and World Bicycle Relief and inducted 112 new members at an elegant induction ceremony that was photographed and shared on Facebook (4,790 people reached).

Why Change our Strategy?

- ✓ Alpha Chi is a student-centered organization.
- ✓ Policies should reflect the needs of students, not the administrative convenience of the advisors.

Millennial Core Values

- ✓ Belonging
- ✓ Recognition
- ✓ Need for Ease

How does social media allow Alpha Chi chapters to meet these needs?

- ✓ Belonging
 - Creates a sense of identity on a large campus
 - Feel like part of the group with shared interests and goals
- ✓ Recognition
 - By affiliating with Alpha Chi online, students can publicize achievements they may not mention otherwise
- ✓ Need for Ease
 - Social media reduces information costs regarding important deadlines and activities
 - Easy to share information in real time... like to promote events

How do people at your school know you are in Alpha Chi?

- ✓ Do you tell them?
- ✓ Is a list published somewhere?
- ✓ “Um. I don’t know how to put this, but I’m kind of a big deal. I’m in Alpha Chi.”

Question: What’s the most important thing your chapter does in a year?

Using social media for chapter building

- ✓ Build relationships inside the chapter
 - In a larger school, students may not know each other at all
 - For example, several members of our Convention Team did not know each other (except on Facebook) before this trip
 - Sites such as Facebook can help people feel a sense of belonging even when they have never met; “Friends” without being friends
- ✓ Across Campus
- ✓ Branding...
 - Alpha Chi v. Greek organizations...
- ✓ Marketing to prospective future members
- ✓ “No, Alpha Chi isn’t a sorority or fraternity. It’s an Honor Society.”

Our Social Media Presence

- ✓ Facebook page and group
- ✓ Twitter
- ✓ Tumblr
- ✓ Snapchat
- ✓ Instagram

How have your chapters used social media?

Chapter Activities

- ✓ General meetings to plan year
- ✓ Officer elections
- ✓ Bike and hike
- ✓ T-shirts
- ✓ Masquerade dance party
- ✓ Fall induction
- ✓ Convention planning
- ✓ Fall honors graduation ceremony

General Meeting to Plan Year

- ✓ Solicitations for involvement and ideas were done exclusively through Facebook and email
- ✓ Of about 250 members, only about 10 came to the meeting
- ✓ We need another way to build our chapter when people can’t come to face-to-face meetings

Officer Elections:



Pro Tip:

- ✓ You don't have to add new activities to your chapter
- ✓ Just take pictures of everything you do!

Bike and Hike

- ✓ We raised money for World Bicycle Relief to buy a bicycle for a child in a developing country to ride to school
- ✓ Promoted through Facebook. Photos on Facebook raised Alpha Chi's profile on campus



T-shirts: Branding your club

- ✓ Promoted on Facebook and paid for on customink.com
- ✓ We use the same design every year but a different color scheme



Tiger Moms

- ✓ In collaboration with Advising Center
- ✓ Promoted through Facebook

Promote other groups' events

- ✓ Builds Alpha Chi visibility
- ✓ Collaboration builds good will on campus as groups help each other

Celebrate Success



A screenshot of a Facebook post from the "Alpha Chi of ECU - Oklahoma Gamma Chapter" page. The post is dated May 1, 2016, and is located at East Central University. The text of the post reads: "Congratulations George Nigh Finalists and winners! Once again, all are Alpha Chi members!". Below the text is a photograph of six people standing on a stage. From left to right: a woman in a black blazer and red top holding a white certificate; a woman in a dark blue dress holding a white certificate; a woman in a dark blue dress holding a gold award; a man in a brown suit and tie holding a gold award; a woman in a floral dress holding a black award; and a woman in a green dress holding a white certificate. The background features a banner with the year "2016" and the "George Nigh" logo. Below the photo, it says "254 people reached" and there is a "Boost Post" button.

Masquerade Dance Party

- ✓ We thought of this during our general meeting and surveyed our members through Facebook to see if people would come
- ✓ Held on the night of fall induction
- ✓ Networking opportunity for new members to socialize with existing members
- ✓ Raised the profile of Alpha Chi on campus among non-members
- ✓ The even cost \$300 (for the DJ) and 125 students attended
 - Mainly Alpha Chi members, but many non-members as well



Fall Induction

- ✓ How does your chapter send out invitations?
- ✓ In the past, we:
 - Sent a paper letter to the student's permanent address
 - Email to the school email address
- ✓ Could we boost our acceptance rate with social media?

What percentage of prospectives join your chapter?

- ✓ What causes this to vary?
- ✓ Size of school
- ✓ Institutional support

Social media campaign to increase invitation acceptance

- ✓ Each officer in our chapter provided a quote regarding why they joined Alpha Chi
- ✓ We shared these on Facebook, twitter, school email, and in printed posters
- ✓ By tagging each student on Facebook we appealed to the people in his or her network
- ✓ How did I make these? In PowerPoint saved as jpg files.

Students' reasons on why you should join Alpha Chi

"When I first received my Alpha Chi invitation, I wasn't sure how to respond until I realized it was a national honor society. I questioned paying the membership fee, but since it's a one-time fee, I decided to join! Initially, I wasn't set on being involved with ECU's chapter until I saw the first-hand benefits of being a member. Alpha Chi not only looks good on resumes and graduate school applications, but it also provides opportunities to present research that you are interested in on a national level, as well as taking part of service projects on campus. Simply by joining Alpha Chi, I have expanded my social circle and have made a lifetime of unforgettable memories."

- MaryBeth Cox, Senior Chemistry Major

"Joining Alpha Chi was one of the greatest decisions I have ever made. When I first received the invitation to join Alpha Chi, I deleted the email instantaneously because I thought it was spam. A week later, I received the same email and this time I decided to open it. It was only then that I started to research more about Alpha Chi and discovered how much of a prestigious organization it is. I, then, decided to join Alpha Chi because of the life changing opportunities it offers. Alpha Chi provides you with an opportunity to present research, apply for regional and national scholarships, and network with students who are also high achievers and share the same drive for success. As outstanding students, we do need honor societies like Alpha Chi to encourage us to continue working hard. I believe that once you join Alpha Chi you will never regret making that decision. So, don't ignore the first email like I did."

- Lynette Muhwati, Senior Accounting Major

“I decided to join Alpha Chi immediately after learning it was a highly prestigious organization – how could I turn that opportunity down? With only select students being accepted into the program, I realized this chapter of Alpha Chi would be a great way to get to know other students on campus who are devoted to their education just like me. Also, the fact that I could present my undergraduate research at the Alpha Chi National Honors Society National Convention made joining the organization an easy decision.”

- Linzi Thomson, Senior Chemistry and Environmental Health Sciences Major

Did our social media campaign boost our acceptance rate?

- ✓ Before social media campaign: 35%
- ✓ After social media campaign: 46%

Has anyone done paid ads on Facebook?

- ✓ Usually \$5.00-\$20.00 for 3-10 days of sponsored ad
- ✓ It might be worth it depending on how many of your prospective members are heavy Facebook users

At Induction each student is pinned and introduced by a special professor

- ✓ Approximately 75% of inductees attend the induction
- ✓ We take photos of each pinner and pinnee
- ✓ We posted those photos on Facebook



Fall Honors Graduation Ceremony

- ✓ We publicized the ceremony through Facebook and published photos afterwards

Take Home Message

- ✓ Social media can help your chapter stay relevant to millennials:
 - Belonging
 - Recognition

- Need for Ease
- ✓ We need to give students a reason to join when many organizations and opportunities are competing for their time and resources

Should your chapter crank up its social media?

- ✓ Pros:
 - Students expect it
 - It's cheap
 - It's easy when you have the right people committed to keeping up with it
- ✓ Cons:
 - If someone doesn't find it fun to keep up, it can be a drag to maintain
 - It's hard for old people (like me) to change their ways

Pro tips for your chapter:

- ✓ Listen to students about technology; tell your advisors about technology
- ✓ Create events that can be tweeted
- ✓ Have an officer or advisor who does social media
- ✓ Collect "Testimonials" and share them
- ✓ Encourage members to tweet/share/snapchat as events are happening
- ✓ Take photos constantly. You will be mocked and loved.

Thank you!

Dr. Christine Pappas

East Central University