
USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

TEAMING TOGETHER.... To spread the word

BLOCK #3 MEETINGS

Communications, Marketing, Publications, Registration
Friday September 13th, 8:30-10:30 am
Meeting Room – ENTERPRISE 7-8

COMMUNICATIONS

Meeting Room – CONSTELLATION 3

Committee Chair: Hugh Moore

Vice Chair: Michael Moore

Committee Members: Rich Barkan, Helen Bayly, Hill Carrow, Katherine Casey, Kelly Cooper, Craig Dewing, Betsy Durrant, Tracy Grilli, Marty Hamurger, Cindy Hawkinson, Sarah Hromada, Kenn Lowy, Esther Lyman, Dennis McManus, Sandy McNeel, Nancy Miller, Robert Oppenheim, Meg Smath, Steve Young, Ex-officio: Jim Matysek, Bill Volckening. Executive Committee Liaison - Lynn Hazlewood.

ANNUAL REPORT

I would like to open this report by thanking Tracy Grilli, USMS Executive Secretary, Jim Matysek, USMS Webmaster, and Bill Volckening, USMS Magazine Editor. These three swimmers are responsible for a significant amount of communications within USMS. We should all congratulate them on the fine jobs that they perform.

The communications committee has been busy in many different arenas. Meg Smath, Kathy Casey, and Nancy Miller help proof articles submitted to SWIM Magazine. Michael Moore led a project to help keep the LMSC address list up to date. Since the list of LMSC officers is dynamic and LMSCs often don't promptly report changes to the national office, Michael became pro-active in contacting LMSCs to make sure that we have the latest information. Betsy Durrant, Meg Smath, Sandy McNeel, and Bill Volckening formed a committee to select the Newsletter of the Year.

Various committee members helped Jim Matysek test the new discussion forum site before it went public. Members also monitor the discussion forums for inappropriate posts as well as answer questions and correct inaccurate statements. The committee also makes recommendations to Jim on new features to add to the web site. An example is the "Newsletter Exchange, which is a private forum for Newsletter Editors to share articles. If you are a Newsletter Editor and did not receive a notice about the new forum, please contact me at weswim@mindspring.com. The committee has held email discussions regarding methods to better manage the workloads of the USMS Webmaster and USMS SWIM Magazine editor.

As chair of the committee I have served on both the database project and the "search committee". The purpose of the USMS database project is to create a comprehensive database system that will maintain the data we use to support our organization and the swimmers it serves. The search committee was formed to develop expanded job descriptions for the USMS Webmaster and USMS Swim Magazine editor, make recommendations for new compensation levels, and potentially be involved in the screening and interviewing process for candidates. I have had regular conversations with Jim Matysek and Bill Volckening. I also communicate regularly with Lynn Hazlewood, Executive Committee liaison.

The committee is considering many new tasks during the remainder of the year, including providing better resources to aid LMSCs in communications and helping to establish the annual editorial calendar for SWIM

USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

Magazine. If you have any ideas on how USMS can improve communications, please send me a note at the address listed below.

AGENDA

1. Introductions (5 minutes)
 2. WebMaster Report (15 minutes)
 3. SWIM Magazine Editor Report (10 minutes)
 4. SWIM Editorial Calendar for 2002 (10 minutes)
 5. National Office Communications (10 minutes)
 6. Email Distribution lists (10 minutes)
 7. LMSC Communications (10 minutes)
 8. Tasks for upcoming year and beyond (10 minutes)
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MARKETING Meeting Room – ENTERPRISE 7-8

Chair: Richard Burns

Vice Chair: Doug Garcia

Committee Members: Joan Alexander, Clay Evans, Mel Goldstein, Bob Kolonkowski, Dan Kornblatt, Mike Laux, Jane Masters, Debbie Morrin Nordlund, Randy Nutt, Robert Oppenheim, Melissa Rinker, Jeannette (Jett) Vallandighm, Bill Volckening. Ex-Officio – Barry Fasbender. Executive Committee Liaison – Nancy Ridout

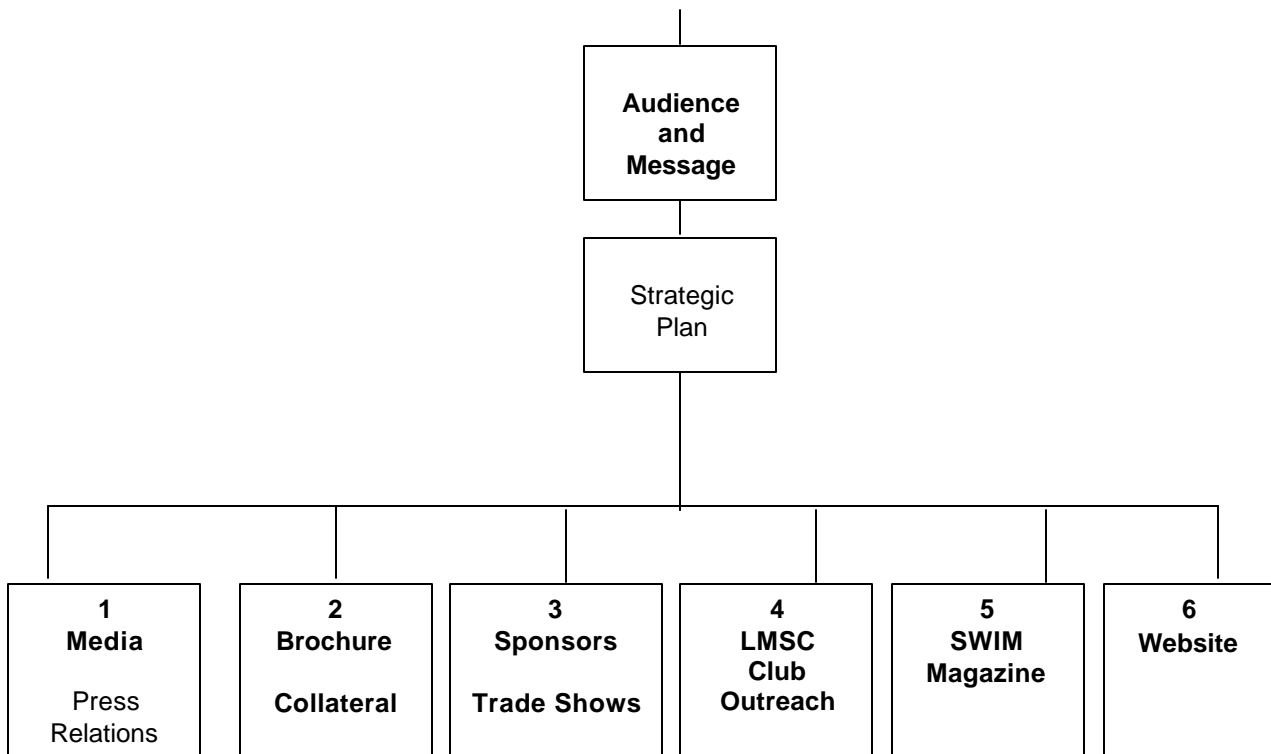
ANNUAL REPORT

The marketing committee has spent the year launching a number of initiatives. As we hoped, the PR role has done a wonderful job of reaching out to lots of other places and people in the organization, not to mention some very real early successes with the public at large. A considerable amount of Aimee Fitzgerald's initial efforts have been communicating and coordinating with people throughout the organization to enhance her knowledge and understand the breadth of resources available. The addition of the professional public relations role has added a level of discipline and accountability to the committee's charge, and the marketing of USMS. I think this is one of the greatest benefits of the PR contract. It mandates an unprecedented level of professionalism and structure to USMS's marketing. The committee is committed to significant progress in the following areas of activity.

USMS Marketing Initiatives for 2002

Research
and
Planning

USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS



This chart describes six distinct elements of a promotions program for USMS. All but media relations are elements that USMS has historically used as a part of its communications mix. The intent has been to dramatically increase the effectiveness of each of these components with greater integration of all, through a cohesive strategic program of targeted audiences and messages.

How have we done?

1. Media and Press Relations: (see Public relations report that follows)
2. Brochures and Other Collateral: The materials that USMS uses have been reviewed and are being revised to refine the messages and presentation. A new brochure reflecting the changes will be printed by the end of the year. We are also printing a new poster and have developed an advertising format and stock ads that are available for member use and a hang-tag program for use by our sponsors.
3. Sponsors and Trade Shows: While we have included the sponsor and trade-show activity in this report, the programs are actually under Mel's stewardship. We continue to coordinate our efforts, as the sponsors are an important part of the organization's outreach. Mel has kept the USMS exhibit in good use and we have been represented among a variety of audiences. See Sponsor Liaison report. We are pursuing a program where certain of the sponsors would include information about USMS with their products.
4. LMSC Club Outreach: Everyone acknowledges that our clubs are the front line of membership growth. We have been looking at ways that the marketing committee can more effectively support the local levels. Public relations support through a new set of guidelines and hands on support are in the making.
5. SWIM Magazine: As the official publication of USMS, and a benefit most valued by members, we are interested in exploring ways in which SWIM can be used to enhance the marketing program. We have begun to coordinate with the SWIM editor and have been contributing to the editorial calendar and with story ideas and content where appropriate.
6. Website: The website has become a foundation of our organization's communication. The committee has begun to work with the Communications Committee for ways in which the site can even more effectively serve as a marketing tool for those who are not already members of the organization and provide greater effectiveness in its outreach for the organization.

USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

Aimee Fitzgerald

Work began in earnest in mid-February after a period of logistically getting ready. On a summary level, much of the energy and time has been devoted to the challenge of understanding the USMS organizational structure and inner workings, and to identifying some of the key individuals – one by one – who can be of most assistance in our communications outreach work. The initial program focused on three important areas - internal organization, members and media. We identified six focal target audiences where we believe we can have significant impact - seniors, facility management, running, triathlon, and general fitness. Our activities have included the following:

Organization-level communications

- Developed key messages to help describe USMS clearly, concisely and consistently.
- Established communication with, and spoke at length with, members of the executive committee and marketing committee liaisons to codify clear objectives.
- Worked with Webmaster to incorporate key messaging on Web site home page
- Worked with Webmaster to add “News Room” on Web site, which will include member access to synthesized organizational communications information, press materials.
- Developing electronic photo library (for member, marketing, and press relations purposes).

Member communications

- We began series of regular email updates on PR and Marketing Committee news – for executive committee, coaches, LMSCs, clubs, newsletter editors.
- We've established an on-going relationship for source information with approximately 50 individual members throughout the organization.

Editorial news media relations/communications (as of mid-June)

- Developed initial comprehensive list of media outlets through research in target markets (senior, facility management, running, triathlon, general fitness).
- Identified individual editor(s) at the 300+ media outlets identified for purposes of relationship-building.
- Developed broadcast email list of more than 2,000 lifestyle, fitness, and sports editors at mass-market daily and weekly media outlets in top 40 U.S. media markets for purposes of occasional non-targeted distribution of news/information.
- Began to cultivate key sources of information for target markets with USMS members possessing press-accepted credentials.
- Researched, drafted, and pitched/distributed informational news releases as follows:
 1. Online workouts: triathlon, running, general fitness publications
 2. Using swimming to improve running: triathlon, running, general fitness publications; blast, non-targeted email to 2,000+ fitness, lifestyle, sports editors
 3. Open-water swimming tips: triathlon, running publications
 4. Pool drills for open water: triathlon, running publications
- Developed topical ideas for additional story pitches and possible news releases
 1. Safety tips for ocean swimming this summer – lifestyle/fitness editors
 2. Seniors – physiology impact of swimming: seniors' publications, lifestyle/fitness editors
 3. Women's focus – physiology: women's fitness publications, lifestyle/fitness editors
 4. Men's focus – physiology: men's fitness publications, lifestyle/fitness editors
 5. Web site/Places to Swim – general announcement for all publications
- Began to develop experts' database for internal and press relations use.
- Developed Excel-based documentation form for press coverage results of which we learn.

Results

The points above speak for themselves in terms of results achieved. Since the internal communications structure must be in place before external audiences can be expected to react positively, it has been crucial that we complete these critical elements. And given that the most cost- and time-efficient means to increase

USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

membership is by leveraging the existing body of members, that internal communications becomes even more valuable for USMS.

From an editorial news/media relations standpoint, it is typical to start seeing results in six to nine months. We've begun to see results almost immediately upon issuing our first releases. This speaks well for the potential and the compelling nature of the story we have to tell. More than that, the reaction we are getting from editors so far is extremely positive, looking for ongoing news and interesting story angles to consider (that we must research and develop one by one to pitch). We continue to prioritize our agenda to meet our resources while maximizing the media and other outreach opportunities.

Future

Now underway with a good foundation on which to build, the next months should capitalize on ongoing editorial news media relations and internal member communications. USMS has demonstrated the attractiveness of its program and messages and we intend to continue to capitalize on the positive responses in building a media communications program that supports the organization's membership growth goals.

AGENDA

The following are the agenda items that need to be addressed by the committee. It is not clear how the group sessions will be organized and structured. The marketing committee will work with the other committees to develop a common agenda but will seek to conduct a follow-up meeting to complete and proprietary business of complete agenda items that do not get covered in the group meeting.

1. Media and Press Relations – review of PR consultant program and discussion of coming year.
 2. Collateral Program – review
 - Brochure
 - Poster
 - Advertising format and stock ads
 - Hang tag program
 - Planner
 3. Sponsors and Trade Shows –
 - Presentation by sponsor liaison
 4. LMSC Cub Outreach –
 - Discuss ideas for program
 5. SWIM Magazine –
 - Review editorial calendar and discuss potential contributions
 6. Website –
 - Discuss role of website in marketing and define coordination role with communications committee and webmaster.
 7. Budget –
 - Discuss and ratify budget request.
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USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

PUBLICATIONS Meeting Room - UNIVERSE

Committee Chair: Meg Smath

Vice Chair: Steve Peterson

Committee members: Debbie Cavanaugh, Marilyn Fink, Cheryl Gettelfinger, Tracy Grilli, Lil Haneman, Mary Lee Watson. Executive Committee Liaison –Sally Ann Dillon.

ANNUAL REPORT

The Publications Committee is the former Rule Book Committee. The committee is still charged with designing, editing, and producing the annual USMS rule book, but our duties have been expanded to include “other materials or media, as approved by the House of Delegates.” Since the last convention, we’ve been busy with the following projects:

1. As soon as convention was over, we began to get the 2002 rule book ready for printing. It was a particular challenge this year because of the compressed time frame. The new legislation passed in the 2001 House of Delegates was entered, the appendices were updated (including new records and new committee assignments), and changes to parts 1 through 6 were proofread (there wasn't time to proofread the appendices). The rule book files were sent to the printer on CD just before Christmas, and the rule books were available for distribution by February. A PDF version was posted at the USMS website in early January.
2. Meg Smath worked with members of the History and Archives Committee to design a brochure describing the committee's History Project, and how contributions may be made to it. The brochures have been sent to all LMSCs, and are available electronically as well.
3. Before the next rule book is published, the committee will update the index.
4. A notice in SWIM magazine solicited cover designs for the 2003 rule book, and several designs have been received so far. The committee will choose a cover and announce its decision at the 2002 convention.
5. The committee will submit housekeeping proposals to the Rules, Long Distance, and Legislation Committees.

AGENDA

1. Announce cover design winner.
2. Discuss dedication for 2003 rule book.
3. Make assignments for 2003 rule book.

REGISTRATION Meeting Room – CONSTELLATION 4-5

Committee Chair: Anna Lea Roof

Committee members: Jack Buchannan, Dee DeLong, Jim Lewis, June Mather, John Pilger, Adrienne Pipes, Tracy Grilli, Esther Lyman, Janet Renner, George Simon, Delpfine Welch. Executive Committee Liaison – Nancy Ridout.

ANNUAL REPORT

Tracy and Esther continue to amaze us with their efficiency at processing registrations at the National Office. Esther's system for tracking elusive swimmers works quite well and has aided us all in identifying swimmers whose names may have changed.

USMS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPORTS

ONGOING DISCUSSIONS AND PROJECTS

1. **Redesign of USMS card:** Nancy Ridout volunteered to investigate a redesign of the USMS card. The current card does not fit well into a window envelope. Her goal is to make mailing the cards easier and more efficient.
2. **Permanent Swimmer IDs:** As part of the USMS Database Project, the Registration Committee began a discussion of Permanent Swimmer IDs. The consensus was that a swimmer's ID number (USMS number) should NOT contain any personal information (such as a birthdate).
3. **Verification of a swimmer's birthdate - driver's license?** There have been several cases this year of swimmers who lied about their birthdates on their USMS registration forms. In both cases, the swimmers changed LMSCs and correspondingly changed their birthdates. Do we need a statement such as "USMS reserves the right to verify any of the supplied information," on the USMS registration form? This would allow USMS to request proof of age, such as a copy of a driver's license, on questionable registrations.
4. **Non-registered or one-event swimmers making Top Ten:** Every year there are a few instances of swimmers making the Top Ten listings either without having a USMS number at all, or having only a One-Event registration. Currently the errors are caught "after the fact" when the Top Ten list is sent to the USMS National Office. The Top Ten software currently does not require the swimmer's USMS number. Adding a required "USMS number" field to the Top Ten software is the first step in solving this problem.
5. **How long to keep records:** This was discussed by the Legal Counselors Committee at the 2001 Convention. Their minutes state: "Since there are different statutes of limitations among the states, it will be difficult for us to make a definitive recommendation to the registrars as to how long they should retain information. It may be possible to scan this information so as to make storage easier. Motion was made, seconded, and passed that our committee recommend to registrars that they scan the registration information and store it digitally. Registrars should check with local counsel to see what statute of limitations is in their state. The digital information should be kept at least as long as the relevant limitation period and if possible should be kept perpetually."

In response to this, some registrars have raised the question of who should pay the costs of scanning - the LMSC, or USMS? One registrar commented, "Whose backsides are being covered by stored records? If it predominantly is USMS's then USMS should probably exert some control and bear some or all of the cost. I don't perceive that the LMSC's will be likely targets in any litigation (shallow pockets, at least in OUR LMSC). Same for the Meet Directors and Officers. I would think that USMS is the most likely target and has the most to lose if record retention is largely unaddressed and left entirely to the devices of the LMSCs."

6. **Swimmers registered in two countries:** A swimmer registered in New Jersey moved back to his native country, Germany, last July. He wrote to his LMSC registrar asking for a written "release" stating that he was free to swim for his German team the second half of the year. Is this a problem? Is there such a thing as a transfer to another country? What if the swimmer sets a USMS national record in September, while swimming for his German team? Does it count as a USMS record?

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. National Office Report: Tracy and Esther
3. Registration Software
4. Verification of a swimmer's birthdate - driver's license?
5. Non-registered or one-event swimmers making Top Ten - how to prevent?
6. Permanent Swimmer IDs - effect on Registrars
7. Swimmers registered in two countries
7. Other business