Communicating With Your Members Using OrgSync

Overview:
OrgSync offers a variety of methods you can use in communicating to members within your organization’s portal. Whether it’s direct messaging your entire portal, messaging specific account groups (such as officers, committee chairs or members), starting a discussion, posting a newsfeed item or sending out a poll, you have several ways to engage your members between meetings and share what’s happening with your organization!

Note: some users may not have access to all of the Communication features; your group may have certain features enabled for different account groups. Users in the Administrator account group are able to access these features and grant permissions to other user groups.

The Communication Tab:
Clicking the “Communication” tab in your group’s portal will load the following options:
- Contact Books – not covered in this resource
- Disclosures
- News (feed)
- Polls
- Messaging
- SMS/Texting

Discussions:
The “Discussion” tool is used to create open discussions for members to share their thoughts on various topics. Outside of a regular meeting, members can weigh in their opinions and discuss matters related to the organization. This allows informal ideas exchange and can collect a record of the discussion, whereas in a meeting, this level of discussion would take a good deal of time and a record of ideas or thoughts may not be accurately collected. An example of a discussion topic for SAC could be, “How can we better serve our adult learners who contribute to the student activity fee but may not be interested in or attracted to late night events?” An example for Children’s Charities Club could be, “What charities in the Cincinnati area should we approach to collaborate on a philanthropic/fundraising event?”

News:
“News” tool allows you to post original articles to your organization’s newsfeed. When you work with a large organization that does not often meet as an entire body, such as Alternative Breaks, or an organization with a lot of members who may not actively attend meetings, such as Xavier Alliance, posting brief news with brief updates from the most recent meeting will be helpful in communicating with all of your members. In a paragraph, you can summarize the most recent business, preview upcoming activities and post a related photo.

Polls:
The “Polls” feature allows your organization to conduct a quick, efficient poll to the members, giving them multiple choices on a decision outside of a meeting, such as “Where should the Business Leaders for Tomorrow go for their social event?”
- Bowling at Stones Lanes
- AMC Movie at Newport on the Levee
- Dinner at Gordo’s
- Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens

This tool also works great when you have want to quickly get feedback from the entire group on something without having to collect email responses and without bringing together members to meet formally and discuss a topic. Another example may be “Alliance has a Queer Cinema Night next Thursday. Which movie would you like to see?”
- Shelter
- Imagine Me & You
- Latter Days
- Kissing Jessica Stein
- The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert
Messaging:
The "Messaging" feature allows a user to communicate with the entire portal, certain members within the portal or certain account groups within the portal (such as Admins or Officers), provided they have permission to do so. Most portals, by default, only allow administrators to communicate to all of the members within the group – helping to reduce the amount of spam emails that group members receive.

To message the entire portal, you can select the “Everyone” button to message all users. To select individual members in the group, you can click their profile to add them to your recipient list. This can be a good way to contact members in the group portal that have not been present at meetings for a while to check in and see how they’re doing or to share updates about what the organization has been planning recently.

Messages sent through OrgSync Messaging will automatically go to the user’s OrgSync inbox (yellow box in the image above). By default, users will receive an email notifying them of any message they receive in their OrgSync mailbox. Some users may have disabled this feature, but most have not. Let your organization members know that they should re-enable this feature to receive updates from the group through OrgSync.

SMS/Texting:
Another feature OrgSync offers is SMS/Texting for your organization. Administrators can send a brief text message instantly to all members of the group. This feature should be used sparingly. For example, if X-treme Fans were to make a last minute change to an event due to weather where hundreds of students were expected to attend, they can instantly text message everyone to let them know that the event is cancelled, moved or rescheduled. If an organization has a popular weekly or monthly activity, such as CFJ Community Night, a text message could be sent reminding everyone, “CFJ Community Night starts in 15 minutes in the GSC Clocktower Lounge. Join us for free food and fellowship!”

Enabling Features in OrgSync:
With all of the features in OrgSync, each portal administrator can decide which tools are turned on or turned off. If you are an administrator for your group’s portal and do not see one of the above mentioned functions in Communication, click on the "Settings" admin tab in your portal to see which features another (or former) administrator may have disabled.

Have a question or need help? Contact Dustin Lewis (lewisd6@xavier.edu) in the Office of Student Involvement for your OrgSync troubleshooting.