

June 26, 1998

APCO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE REPORT

NAME

Communications Task Force

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Communications Task Force was threefold: To examine all of APCO's communications needs regarding printed materials, marketing styles, logo uses, public relations, etc.; to develop a means to assist the association's departments, subsidiaries and chapters in presenting a consistent, enhanced, professional image and awareness to the public safety arena; and to develop more member benefits through better communications with chapters.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

- Ann Hashagen Managing Dir., APCO Services
- John Ramsey Deputy Executive Director
- Dennis Divine Information Services Director
- Cheryl Harrer AFC Deputy Director
- Barbara Lawrence Membership Director
- Arla Beck Visual & Web Site Design Manager
- Cindy Lorow Deputy Ed./Publisher
- Terry Diehl Advertising Sales Manager
- Yucel Ors Research Analyst

PROCESS

The task force met five times. Using the expertise of each member, communications concerns regarding marketing, membership promotion chapter relationship, association database, research surveys, media conveyance, i.e., the web, stationery, new releases, etc., were researched and discussed. Each member of the task force submitted their own written conclusions concerning communications issues from their perspective based on the research and discussions. These opinions unanimously identified the need for much greater emphasis to be placed on marketing/communication, and the conclusion that APCO should apply more resources to it.

FINDINGS

The task force was in agreement that the association would benefit from the establishment of a dedicated marketing/communications department to manage APCO's image, and to market and promote its efforts to members, prospective members, and the association's other relevant audiences.. *The APCO Insider* newsletter concept originated from this committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop logo(s), slogans, themes and a uniform association message for use by the association departments, subsidiaries and chapters.
2. Regulate use of the above.
3. Standardize all communications vehicles such as stationery, promotional print materials, the association's monthly magazine, news releases, brochures, web messages, videos, etc.
 - Develop and maintain media kit for use by the association's headquarters, subsidiaries and chapters re #1 and #2 above.
 - Develop and maintain process by which the association's departments and subsidiaries submit promotional print materials, monthly magazine articles and ad layouts, web messages, video ideas, television and print media, etc., for graphic, editorial, grammatical, review and standardization. In coordination with the association's departments and subsidiaries, develop creative graphic artwork and layouts for use in promotional print materials, monthly magazine articles and ads, web messages, video ideas, television and print media, etc.
4. Develop and maintain a standardized, consolidated database of APCO's universe for the purpose of providing accurate member and prospective member information for for association marketing purposes.
 - Database would incorporate all membership records, magazine mailing lists, prospective members, students, attendees, exhibitors, advertisers, etc., for use by headquarters departments for billing purposes, member records, sales, promotions.
 - In coordination with headquarter departments and subsidiaries, target markets best suited to accomplish goals set by the individual department's various projects.

5. Create and disseminate general association public relations/service announcements, notices, etc.
 - National Telecommunicator Week, regulatory matters, national events and/or crises, etc.
 - Member achievements to hometown media.

6. Suggested present activities to be included in the new Marketing/Communication Department:
 - Advertising
 - Magazine/Newsletters
 - Marketing
 - Membership
 - Research

7. Suggested staff needed for new Marketing/Communications Department:
 - Director (new position)
 - Database clerk
 - Editor/Writers
 - Marketing Researcher
 - Media/Public Relations Manager
 - Membership/Chapter Relations Manager

Note: All but the new director are existing positions.

Date sent: **Mon, 27 Jul 1998 13:02:39 -0400**
From: **JOE MCNEIL <jmcneil@capecod.net>**
Send reply to: **jmcneil@capecod.net**
To: **Nancy Pollock <npollock@minn.net>**
Copies to: **JACK KEATING <jack.keating@westcov.org>**,
JOHN RAMSEY <ramseyj@appointl.org>,
Chris Bevevino <bevevinoc@appointl.org>
Subject: **Association Software**

Hi Nancy - I have finally gotten an opportunity to respond to your inquiry about the association software. I knew that I had a briefing on the situation during our Board meeting at mid year. At that time staff was dealing with the inequity of the system. The following is John Ramsey's response to your inquiry. I am afraid that we (the association) were led down a path fraught with peril and it found us.

Subject: Association Software
Date: Wed, 22 Jul 1998 10:14:34 -0700
From: John Ramsey <ramseyj@appointl.org>
To: "JOE MCNEIL [jmcneil@mailhost.capecod.net] (E-mail)"
CC: Chris Bevevino <APCO/APCOPO/ChrisB@appointl.org>

Joe:

We have been inundated with tasks for the past few months and did not realize that a report on this topic had been requested. Our position is exactly what we reported to the Board several months ago. The software was being used (not to its promised capacity) until December of last year. We experienced a crash which Smith Abbott offered to repair for thousands of dollars. After spending the \$80,000 for the package, and close to another \$20,000 for upgrades and repairs, I said enough is enough. We went straight to our lawyers and found that Hudson had never had them review the contract prior to the software purchase. The attorneys informed us that we had little or no recourse because of the way the contract was written. I inquired to members of ASAE about Smith Abbott and I got several responses indicating we were not the only victims of this company. I was also informed that our controller had released the final payment to Smith Abbott without verification that the software worked (previous to Tim Ryan). This put us in a position where by we "accepted" the software as complete when, in fact, it was not.

We are still trying to recoup some of our money - but with the importance of the AFC system, I cannot use Dennis to track down whether or not it is bad source code that creates the problem or if it is a "bug". The lawyers tell me that, due to the contract, it is our burden to prove that it is bad source code, otherwise, we have no recourse and will have a total loss. There is not much else I can do at this point. Our attorney says that civil suit against Mr. Hudson (for false information disclosure) is not feasible because he did not sign the contract, Ronnie did. Of course, Ronnie simply trusted that Kevin had performed in good faith, which is obviously not the case.

One of the reasons that Lana was let go is because she had indicated that the program was at full capacity - which was, again, false information. If there is anything else I can do, please let me know. For the record, every staff member BUT Kevin was against purchase of this system.

John

Nancy I hope this answers your question. I am certain that John will keep the Council informed of any progress that might be made on the issue in the future. Thanks so much for your continuing interest in the problem.

Joe McNeil PS: See you in Albuquerque.....