



## Summary of PCC Membership Cafes

November 30, 2015

### Discussion Question: What can we do to make members feel welcome?

#### Events

Jean Lovejoy, Northeast Florida PCC, talked about the holiday open house that her PCC holds. They email and mail to companies, and highlight the value of this networking opportunity with postal management. Others did "post-holiday" parties to ring in the New Year, due to the busy mailing season.

Judy Antisdell, Greater Baltimore PCC, feels that sharing food and laughter makes people feel comfortable and ready to engage. Her PCC has a "PCC Hall of Fame", and uses games to engage members. Several people spoke about the value of awards, whether through a ballot box, email or just for special service. And Kathi Roy, from New England, spoke of a Yankee Swap for gifts (under \$10) for Executive Board members to feel more a part of a team.

#### Meetings

Jean Lovejoy spoke of highlighting a different company for each meeting. By asking new members to talk about themselves, they have felt more involved, and the PCC has actually gotten new board members. This was reinforced by Nettie from San Antonio. She said that at the beginning of each meeting, all postal employees and new attendees are asked to stand up and say a few words about themselves.

**Suggestion:** *Identify ways to incorporate new members in your meetings and in your newsletter, to help others get to know them. Maybe even have a 90-day mentor program (PCC Buddy) between board members and new members!*

Greater Omaha PCC talked about the value of having good speakers (especially from HQ.) By marketing their programs around a great speaker, and offering certificate programs, they are getting better attendance at their quarterly meetings.

A number of PCCs find that highlighting the connections that can be made with postal resources is a good draw. Roundtables with subject matter experts seemed one of the most popular ways to get information and networking combined in one meeting. Add in a facilities tour, and you have a great program that adds value to mailers and their organizations.

Gilbert Buszek, Erie PCC, spoke to the value of having board members get to know new members, so they have someone to talk to. **Suggestion:** *Many spoke to the value of having board members reach out to new members at each meeting, making it part of the board responsibilities. This includes sitting at different tables, etc.*

We talked about the timing for meetings, and determined that consistency is the most important factor. A lot of people thought morning was best because once a mailer gets to the office, they are busy from then on. The key ingredient for success is good programming. Locations are sometimes the same, other PCCs rotate locations, but having at least quarterly meetings was seen as a key to keeping members engaged.

#### Webinars: Help or Hurt?

Many attendees spoke of webinars as a "necessary evil." Webinars provide good information, can be topical and low cost, and keep the time needed to "attend" to a minimum. However, they do not help people feel a sense of belonging or allow members to actually meet other mailers. Carla from Kansas City reminded people that it is easy to multi-task during webinars; therefore, all of the information may not be absorbed. And, June Patton asked that the schedule for 2016 webinars (subject to change) be sent out soon so they can be incorporated into PCC program planning. Topics should include the Price Case,

Small Business Shipping and Mailing Opportunities. (Cathy Rupard, Central Missouri, suggested PCCs use portions of the USPS's "Deliver the Brand" presentation with role playing for a live event.)

**Suggestion:** *Using the PCC Advisory Committee (PCCAC) for national webinars that educate on specific topics means that local PCCs can focus on their own local events and issues more. Make sure all PCC members get the webinar invitations – even if that means “re-mailing” them from your PCC.*

### **Challenges**

Jane Patton said her PCC is having a hard time growing (or even maintaining) membership, since there are a number of state agencies that need strong reason for attending events. Networking alone will not work, but it is an important part of member retention. Discussion centered on sending out surveys to better gauge members' interests; making sure the newsletters incorporated articles on members; and developing lists of growing industries – like small businesses. **Suggestion:** *The PCCAC should consider developing a physical reminder of membership – like a member ID card. Also, are there discounts that mailers could get (in addition to the NPF discount) to entice more member sign ups?*

Another PCC commented on the lack of marketing and postal support, saying it is a struggle to even get their website up and running without USPS support. Knowing there are many businesses that do not know about the PCC is frustrating, so he was looking for help on how to reach out in the community. While the PCCAC has already addressed his specific concerns, the outpouring of ideas that were generated is worth mentioning – especially from Frank Raso out of the Albany District. **Some of the suggestions** for postal involvement include: *having PCC kits that postal carriers can give out when a new business enters their route; including Postmasters in PCC event announcements – with the understanding that they should bring one new customer with them to the event; sending out relevant “Tip of the Week/Month” to PCC members, based on what the BMEU is finding issues with; using USPS Sales Reps as event speakers; letting members know that their USPS Marketing Manager is available to come visit with them.*

Thanks to all of the attendees and participants. Hopefully, between suggestions and sharing, you all feel a part of the PCC organization. And, if there are other Membership ideas you would like to share, please contact us directly at [PCC@usps.gov](mailto:PCC@usps.gov).

### **PCCAC Membership Subcommittee**