Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
May 28 – 30, 2015  
Chicago, Illinois

Update on Progress Toward Council-Adopted Recommendations of the 2012 – 2013 Communications Task Force  
(Prepared by Staff Members Nancy Beaumont, Matt Black, Teresa Brinati, and Anne Hartman)

BACKGROUND

At its August 12-13, 2013, meeting the SAA Council reviewed the final recommendations of the Communications Task Force (0813-1-III-B), created in August 2012 to advise the Council on “practical ways to enhance SAA’s communications with a focus on three areas: intended audiences, content/messages, and tools/channels,” and unanimously adopted the following motion:

THAT the Council receives with gratitude the recommendations of the Communications Task Force,

THAT the Communications Task Force be disbanded with thanks, and

THAT the Executive Director refer the recommendations to pertinent bodies and forums for further input and implementation as appropriate and commensurate with SAA’s strategic planning tasks, and update the Council on the status of implementation at each Council meeting.

UPDATES

Beaumont, Black, Brinati, and Hartman “charted” the Task Force recommendations and have met periodically to review progress toward achieving them. See pages 2-6 for “Status of Implementation of Council-Adopted Recommendations of Communications Task Force.” Text appearing in red reflects changes since November 2014. This chart will be updated for each Council meeting.
### Status of Implementation of Council-Adopted Recommendations of Communications Task Force (0813-1-III-B-CommTF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Assigned to</th>
<th>Status/Notes (as of 0814)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Archival Outlook [1A, 1B]</strong></td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Projected implementation is October 2014 - January 2016. (See next.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement opt-in option for receipt of electronic only.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Digital edition of AO launched with Jan/Feb 2014 issue using Blue Toad Publishing tools. All six issues from 2013 retro-converted in February. Digital edition allows readers to share an entire issue or specific article via email or social media. Readers can access text-only versions of articles, which also can be shared or printed. Other features: zoom-in tool, option to download a PDF version of issue, option to add notes or mark “favorite” articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design electronic version so that each article and section is individually accessible and/or downloadable.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brinati, Hartman, Black</td>
<td>Embargo ended with implementation of digital edition of Jan/Feb 2014 issue. (Staff will continue to monitor extent to which end of embargo may [or may not] have an impact on membership.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End embargo.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brinati, Salgado</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In the Loop [2]</strong></td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>We continue to focus on brevity and clarity. In addition a new template, which debuted on April 30, provides for a better reading experience: larger text and increased spacing for those reading on desktop or laptop computers and a single-column format that allows readers to easily read and navigate on smaller smartphone screens. Ads now appear between sections rather than on the side. A handy navigation bar at the top allows readers to jump to specific sections and links are available throughout to bring them back to the top. Included are buttons to share ITL on social media. We moved to a new email service for ITL – Mail Chimp – which gives us detailed analytics that we are using to continue to improve and enhance ITL based on member preferences. We have tested optimal times to send out the newsletter and have found that it is best to send the newsletter first thing in the morning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reevaluate style and content to focus on brevity and clarity. Specifically:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brinati, Black, Hartman</td>
<td>We continue to make blurbs as concise as possible and provide links to further information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employ “view more” and “view less” to ensure concise visual flow.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consider less conversational, more journalistic style.</td>
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</table>

**Ongoing.**
- Discontinue “Miscellaneous” section. If item doesn’t fit in pre-defined category, either create broader or newer categories or re-evaluate if item is of sufficient importance. | Discontinued in August 2013.

- Rotate order of sections to distribute attention each receives. Consider “top story” section above others. | New template facilitates rotation of sections and includes “top story.” Top stories have bigger headlines and, when feasible, images to complement text and draw readers’ attention. Sections containing the most pressing information are moved toward the top of the newsletter.

- Move content from ITL to website or official blog and provide links via ITL to fuller content/story. | Already being done. Also added to SAA website an archive of back issues of ITL.

### SAA Website [3]

| “Tweak now, overhaul soon.” | Many minor “tweaks” are ongoing. Overhaul has begun!


- Reorganize content for basic usability:  
  - Increase visibility of Search box.  
  - Increase visibility of social media links.  
  - Move most frequently used content to top of home page. | H Black A major point not listed here is to review and improve the overall menu structure of site content, which is complete. Usability was also at the forefront of our work with the designer for look and feel.

- As longer-term priority: Reevaluate dissemination of website content via Global Newsfeed and other RSS channels. | M Black Redesign will move us forward on all of these issues. Major focus is on improving the site in terms of social- and mobile-friendliness.

  - Work to increase awareness of newsfeed.  
  - Direct content to blog featuring news content.  
  - Be more judicious in use of automatic updating of newsfeed; should not include every S/RT admin update, but limit to release of “major documents from SAA office.”  
  - Each “major document” release should include descriptive title metadata. | Included in redesign.

- Improve user experience for S/RT lists and microsites. | Black Underway. Phase 1, new “nav bar” for microsites, was implemented in January 2014. Phase 2, to streamline navigation to microsites from “top” navigation, was implemented in June 2014. Further attention will be given to this with redesign.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Increase usability of content creation modules for component leaders.</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Ongoing. One small step already taken is an admin menu that includes link to Drupal Manual on every microsite page.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Aggregate Content [4]**

- Create content aggregator “built into home page.”
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.
- Use other aggregators for Twitter, RSS feeds, new and/or less widespread communication channels.
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.

**Elected Leader Social Web Presence [5]**

- “Encourage [but do not require] elected leaders to develop their presence on various social media platforms.”
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.
- President to continue to use *Off The Record*.
  - Ongoing. Thirty-one posts (Bell and others) between 8/22/13 and 8/9/14. Twelve posts by Roe and others since 8/22/14.
- VP/PE to engage in similar activities.
  - Meissner engaged via 9/25/14 OTR post on data gathering.
- Leaders to create Twitter accounts, listen to and participate in discussion of SAA issues via Twitter.

**Annual Meeting Social Media [6]**

- Extend use of blogs and other social media pertaining to Annual Meeting content to correspond with requirement for a Host Committee blog. Program Committee to determine what is appropriate.
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.
- Example 1: PC blog populated by attendees’ session reviews and comments. See MAC example (http://2013.wordpress.com/category/program-committee/).
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.
- Example 2: “Designated Tweeter” program, in which volunteer provides “official” live-tweet of all sessions.
  - Black
  - Included in website redesign.

**Use of Twitter [7]**

- Continue/expand practice of “signing” tweets from official SAA account.
  - Ongoing.

**LinkedIn, Flickr, Facebook [8]**

- Ongoing.
• Establish timetable for revisiting functionality and reevaluating usefulness of these three platforms:
  - Are these communication channels assets to SAA?
  - How can we best use them?
  - Consider in light of recommendation 5 re: aggregation.

### The American Archivist [9]

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Brinati</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Brinati Hartman Cooper Cary Orchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Online supplement:**
  - Promote and expand if it is continued.
  - Consider benefits of different platform.
- **Promote various methods of interactivity with AA authors:**

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Progress Toward Communications TF Recommendations  
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0515-VII-E-7-CommTFRecs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue, and build on success of, special discussion sessions at Annual Meeting.</td>
<td>Brinati, Hunter</td>
<td>Brown Bag Lunch discussions during the Annual Meeting will take place again in Cleveland and are now a part of the regular offerings of the publishing program during the conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider AA article “book club” on SAA blog.</td>
<td>Brinati, Hunter</td>
<td>Will do!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider author talks and conversations on Reddit, Twitter, or live web chats.</td>
<td>Brinati, Hunter</td>
<td>Will do!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SAA Listservs [10]**

- Find a solution to generation of “out of office” replies.        | Done.                            |
- Does a fix require back-end changes?                             | -                                |
- Or are user-end reminders the only option?                       | -                                |

**Section/RT Communication Best Practices [11]**

- Distribute CTF’s “Communication Strategy Recommendations for Sections and Roundtables.” | Beaumont, Craig |
  - To staff office for consideration.                               | Ongoing.                       |
  - To sections and roundtables (via list and LOAF?).               | Initial distribution via Leader List in April 2014; included on Leadership Resources web page and in *Guide for SAA Leaders* (annually). |
- To TF-Member Affinity Groups.                                     | Done.                          |