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Improved communication with members in 2014

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The 2014 New Year marks the rollout of ABC MA's initiative to improve communication with our members with a blog, updated weekly news, a redesigned monthly newsletter, a new format for event registrations, and an overhaul on our social media pages such as Facebook and Twitter.

Our blog, <http://abcmablog.org/>, The Workbench, will provide tips and resources; information on upcoming events; and the latest government, industry, and business news. It will streamline all public content in a branded, easily accessed and shared medium, and provide an efficient way for ABC MA to present information that can be linked to on all other platforms.

The blog will not include sensitive information, since it is available to all who are interested. But it will refer to members-only information to prompt prospects to join.

Members-only information will be communicated via redesigned weekly news emails that have been condensed to include the most important information on three topics: Member content and resources, upcoming events, and government issues. The weekly news will be sent out every Tuesday.

ABC MA's monthly newsletter also has a new look. It will continue to include this message, as well as streamlined information on member news, recaps of events with photos and video, and government and legislative updates. Newsletter space is available for sponsors or advertisers interested in reaching the ABC community.

ABC MA has listened to members' request for easier event registration and renewals. Registration can now be completed online with immediate online confirmations where PayPal payments are accepted. Once registered, members will receive follow-up event emails such as reminders, and a Google Map with directions to event locations.

Our online social media presence has been strengthened thanks to major updates of our Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages. Our Facebook page has been redesigned as a "business" page and will include a navigation tab that leads to our website, blog, events and registration.

The Facebook page will be integrated with our LinkedIn page, which will also include links to our events, blog posts, videos and photos. It too will offer advertising opportunities. Like LinkedIn, Twitter will include important content, images and videos, as well as promote upcoming events.

ABC MA has created a YouTube channel which will feature videos of chapter events. In the future, our YouTube channel will include informative interviews on important industry topics.

Speaking of events, our next one is a breakfast on January 22 at 7:30 a.m. at the Café Escadrille in Burlington. It will feature Grapevine Marketing, the firm ABC used to overhaul member communications. They will detail the changes we made and help you get your marketing plan ready for 2014. We encourage all of you to attend this informative event to learn how to use email marketing and social media to grow your business.

To coordinate these new tools, ABC MA will keep our content ideas and materials organized in a

weekly editorial calendar. Staff will determine the most important information and we will also address any issues members bring to our attention.

Our goal is to provide members with all the content you need and want in the most convenient way. We will continue to strive for new ways to give you information that will give your company a competitive edge.

Thomas Descoleaux is the chairman of ABC MA, Woburn, Mass.

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