

Greetings

No doubt the Chamber world is always lively and busy, and this fall has been particularly active with events, awards, advocacy campaigns and for some, elections (some now past, but others happening next year). But with the holidays just around the corner, it got me to thinking about the stack of cards I send out each year and in correspondence in general.

As many of you know, communication/PR, has been my life's work—a profession that continues to grow and evolve with each passing year. And for the Chambers, it's a significant part of what we do, listening to and communicating with our members and networks.

Communication is a valuable and necessary component of building and maintaining interpersonal relationships. In business and at the chamber, these relationships are critical, and we continuously strive to communicate our value to those whom are important to us (members, customers, etc.).

But sometimes there can be simple breakdown in communications and those who matter most can't connect and engage with you. It's a simple thing, but we're human, we do 'human' things, like: deleting emails with people's numbers on it before saving them in our contacts or forgetting to put contact information on ads/websites (yes, I've seen it happen).

So as we get ready to spread the holiday spirit and connect with members, do a quick check to make sure there a number of 'human-proof' ways they can get in touch with you:

- Ensure your contact information is up-to-date and in several spots on your website.
- If you've had a change in staff, update your website and send a note to your contacts database with the new name, email and phone number to ensure your connection is maintained.
- Ensure email correspondence and signature blocks are part of your brand guidelines to ensure brand cohesion and consistency (this includes email font, size, color, logo, and tagline use).
- Have signature blocks for both 'outgoing' and 'reply' emails with your phone number and email in them. (This is critical for when you are not the originator of the message and your contact wants to call you—makes it easy for them).
- Ensure your signature block is not a picture. Many people copy and paste your information into their contacts and this makes it impossible to do so and increases the likelihood of errors in your contact information when it is being re-entered. Also include links to your social media feeds.
- Finally, make double and triple sure your Chamber's phone number or email and website is on all outgoing materials (letterhead, electronic updates, ads, posters, post cards, and even holiday greeting cards).

Happy Holidays everyone. I'm looking forward to an exciting and successful 2019 for our Atlantic Canada Chambers!

Sheri

~ The best way to predict the future is to create it. ~