



American Legion Auxiliary Public Relations – Zoom Chat #2 (10/29/25)

This presentation guided us through the fundamentals of effective public relations, branding, slogans/mottos, membership growth, and virtual meeting (ZOOM) best practices. It combined strategic advice with real-world examples and highlighted upcoming opportunities for engagement.

The goal of this presentation was to provide an inspiring and practical guide to strengthening the American Legion Auxiliary's and the Legion Family's voice and visibility.

Led by the Wisconsin Department Public Relations Team, the session wove together the power of branding, the art of storytelling, and the energy of community outreach to show how every member can become a confident ambassador for the mission of serving veterans, military, and their families.

Through examples and actionable strategies, the Zoom presentation highlighted how consistent branding builds trust, how memorable mottos and creative events foster recognition and pride, and how strategic public relations fuels membership growth.

Special guest Christina Petranovich added a personal touch, sharing her deep commitment to service and illustrating the heart of the Auxiliary's values.

We hope that this presentation served as a call to action—please remember to embrace your roles as Unit/Post/Squadron storytellers, leaders, and champions of the ALA brand so that its promise of *Service Not Self* resonates in every community.

PR Team Introduction

- Led by Natalia Genovesi King (Department Chair), with Jenna Smith and Julie Deleeuw on the committee, and Bob Shappell as Of Counsel.

Please Send Us YOUR Contact Information (Stay Informed!):

- **Please send us the following:**

Name

District

Unit/Post/Squadron #

**State, if other than WI*

Email Address

Interested in Requesting a Visit?

To request a visit from the Department President, Sue Hembrook, or from any Department Chairperson, please fill out the “Department President/Chairman Visit Request,” which may be found at: www.amlegionauxwi.org/forms

Stay Up To Date & Follow Us on Facebook

- **Web Address:** www.facebook.com/groups/aladepartmentofwipr/
- **QR Code for Facebook Page:**



- While you are there, check out our post: **“Seven Days, Seven Ways to Serve & Inspire.”**

Let’s make our stories shine all week long. Each day has its own catchy theme. Pick one, snap a photo, and inspire others to support our veterans and communities.

Branding: Why It Matters

- Sets your organization apart in a crowded nonprofit landscape
 - To be recognized for the meaningful work you do, your nonprofit must stand out in a crowded field. A strong, distinct brand is essential—it reflects your unique mission, values, and the difference you’re making.

- Builds trust through consistent, authentic visuals and messaging
 - Consistent, authentic branding builds credibility. It reassures people that your organization is legitimate, reliable, and worthy of support. The more they encounter your logo or hear your name, the stronger the trust.
- Raises social awareness by increasing visibility of your mission
 - Increased visibility through strategic branding helps spread the word about your mission and amplifies your cause. The more people see your brand, the more they'll understand the impact of your work.
- Strengthens reputation and encourages community advocacy
 - A well-executed brand that resonates with your community positions your nonprofit as a trusted, respected leader. It makes supporters more likely to rally behind your cause and champion your reputation.

Key Considerations for wearing/displaying your Branded Items

- Logo recognition from a distance
- Proper use of the ALA Emblem and branding marks – Make sure you check out YOUR Branding Guide online!
- Consistent use of patriotic color scheme (red, white, blue)
- Approved templates for a unified look across channels
- Messaging consistency—avoid changing yearly themes

BE Proud. Wear OUR Brand.

- Branding is about making your organization or company instantly recognizable, whether it's through logos on apparel, signs, hats, business cards, coffee mugs, or even something as small as M&Ms. The opportunities are endless — from a massive billboard to the tiniest promotional item.
- When you're at an ALA unit meeting, event, or mission outreach and you're not wearing the emblem on your shirt, hat, or jacket, or if your signs fail to communicate your mission, you're missing a key opportunity. These simple elements function as advertisements for both our organization and your unit, highlighting your role in supporting veterans, military personnel, and their families.

- Effective branding lets people immediately know who's in charge, who's running the event, and who to approach with questions. It's a chance to make connections and even recruit new members, either on the spot or afterward!
- **Remember**, how you act inside and outside of the ALA reflects on our brand identity, which is our reputation and promise. Protect it. Promote it.
ALA National Headquarters (NHQ) staff members are available to help with any branding questions that you may have. Contact them at alahq@ALAforVeterans.org
- The **ALA National Branding Guide** may be found at: <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/guides/branding-guide>

Slogans & Mottos: The Heartbeat of Brand Identity

Why Slogans & Mottos?

- Encapsulate core values and mission in a single, memorable phrase
- Differentiate your organization in a competitive environment
- Foster long-term loyalty by becoming part of the cultural lexicon

Mottos & Slogans: The Heartbeat of Brand Identity

- A well-crafted slogan is more than just a catchy phrase; it's the heartbeat of a brand, the one sentence that encapsulates everything it stands for. In a world flooded with competing messages, a strong slogan can carve out a unique space for a brand, making it instantly recognizable and emotionally resonant. Think of it as your brand's first impression—simple yet powerful.
- Our Heartbeat? Rallying cries that capture the essence of the Legion Family mission. Examples such as “Be The One,” “Service Not Self,” and “Veterans Strengthening America.”

Building Identity and Setting the Tone

- A great slogan helps to establish a distinct personality for a brand, making it stand out in an overcrowded market. It also describes the mission, indicates values, defines a brand's mission, and creates a lasting emotional connection with the audience. Take “Be The One,” for example. It's not just a slogan; it's a call to action. It

embodies empowerment, grit, and perseverance, motivating everyone to act, be the change they want to see, and make a difference.

AGAIN! Differentiation in a Crowded Marketplace

- In a world where competition is fierce, a strong slogan is an invaluable asset. It distinguishes one brand from another by conveying something unique about the brand's offering, its values, and its vision.

Building Recognition and Fostering Loyalty

- Slogans build long-term success and are vital in cultivating both recognition and loyalty. When done right, a slogan becomes a part of the cultural lexicon, something consumers not only remember but identify with. The power of a strong slogan lies in its ability to stick in the minds of customers. This repetition builds brand familiarity, making consumers more likely to return and choose the brand time and time again.
- Slogans function as a rallying cry, forging a deeper connection with the community. The Legion Family's use of memorable slogans fosters a sense of belonging and pride among its community members, ensuring that their association with them is both meaningful and lasting.
- Are you using approved templates to effectively provide a consistent look and feel in websites, social media, and other branded materials? <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources>

PR & Membership Strategies

Special Guest Spotlight

Christina Petranovich, ALA Department 1st Vice President & ALA Membership Chair

- 22-year Paid Up-For-Life member with multiple leadership roles
- Deeply connected through family military service
- Passionate advocate for veterans, youth, and military families

Auxiliary Membership Eligibility Updates (Education)

Vice President Christina shared insights about membership eligibility changes, noting that great-granddaughters can no longer join the Auxiliary, a rule implemented in 2019. She highlighted successful membership drives in small communities, where misinformation

about eligibility was corrected, leading to increased interest and participation. Christina emphasized the importance of educating members and the public about eligibility criteria and encouraged conversations with posts and schools to foster collaboration and recruitment.

Storytelling & Content Campaigns

- Spotlight member stories to humanize your mission
 - One highly effective approach is to spotlight the unique stories of existing members. These narratives humanize your organization, bringing your mission to life through authentic, relatable experiences. Real-life stories illustrate the tangible value of membership, helping prospective members see themselves as part of your community.
- Use short videos, infographics, and live events to engage prospects
 - Campaigns that combine compelling content with short, engaging videos can be persuasive. Highlighting the diversity of your activities and the strong sense of community your organization fosters not only builds credibility but also inspires action—encouraging both volunteerism and membership uptake.

Interactive Events

- Another impactful strategy is to host interactive, high-value initiatives such as events (both in person and virtual), webinars, and expert panels. These experiences provide a firsthand glimpse into the insights, networking opportunities, and support available through membership. They're also an excellent way to gather qualified leads, allowing you to follow up post-event with tailored marketing that nurtures interest and drives conversions.

Ambassador Programs

- Recruit enthusiastic members and external supporters as campaign voices
 - To amplify your campaign's impact, bring in "ambassadors"—enthusiastic voices who can lend credibility and expand your reach. These might include current Auxiliary members, Legion, SAL, or Legion Rider members, or well-

known supporters. Featuring them in your campaign allows you to humanize your message and extend its influence. Ambassadors can share personal stories, participate in events, or co-create content that resonates with a broader audience, making your campaign feel more authentic and compelling.

- Feature testimonials from notable figures to legitimize initiatives
 - For instance, if you're advocating for a specific veteran cause or a policy change, consider spotlighting testimonials from respected figures or dedicated members who are deeply invested in the cause. Their support can legitimize your campaign and attract new allies. Likewise, Auxiliary, Legion, SAL, or Legion Rider members sharing their success stories can powerfully illustrate the long-term value of being part of your organization, encouraging deeper engagement from both current and prospective members.

Referral Incentives

- Encourage current members to refer peers
 - Here's the secret: word-of-mouth is a powerhouse when it comes to growing your membership base. Studies show that recommendations from trusted friends and peers influence 20-50% of buying decisions—even for memberships. Your current members are your best advocates because they already understand and appreciate what your organization offers.
- Offer meaningful benefits (event discounts, gift cards, special seating at LLF events) to drive organic growth.
 - To tap into this organic marketing potential, incentivize your members with referral benefits. Whether it's discounts on upcoming events or thoughtful gift cards and baskets, make it rewarding for them to bring in new faces. The incentive doesn't have to be huge—just meaningful enough to encourage a ripple effect that spreads organically within their circles.

Partnerships

- Collaborate with like-minded nonprofits or businesses and leverage shared networks and sponsorship opportunities
 - Imagine what you could achieve by joining forces with another organization—whether it’s a nonprofit or a thriving business that shares your mission and values. The possibilities are endless! Collaborating with like-minded organizations means *bigger impact*, *more resources*, and *stronger connections*. You’ll also tap into their network of sponsors, who could become your next members! It’s a win-win—building relationships, expanding your community involvement, and growing your influence together. Let’s make waves together and reach new heights!

Optimizing Digital Presence

- Transform your website and Facebook page into membership magnets
 - Your website is more than just a digital brochure—it’s a powerful tool for attracting new members! Make sure it’s clean, easy to navigate, and packed with exciting information that shows what your organization is all about. Highlight the amazing benefits your membership offers and how it makes a real difference in both people’s lives and the community.
- Highlight benefits, streamline sign-up, and pin “Join Us” calls to action
 - Have dedicated pages for events, membership benefits, and your inspiring story, with a bold, attention-grabbing tagline on the homepage to communicate your mission instantly. Add a “Join Us” section front and center so visitors know exactly how to get involved. Streamline the membership sign-up process to make joining as easy as a click! And on Facebook, pin that “Join Us” info to the top of your page so anyone visiting can instantly see how they can become part of something great.

Need Ideas?

- Creative ideas for community engagement:
 - Hosting Red Cross CPR/First Aid classes

- Red Cross Blood Drives
- Organizing pet adoption events in partnership with local shelters or Petco
- Vice President Christina also shared a successful membership strategy where the Unit uses a photo frame initiative and members were encouraged to display their reasons for joining or their WHO/WHY, which has led to increased engagement and recruitment. VP Christina encouraging district presidents to implement similar initiatives and challenges to boost membership and visibility.
- Fun activities
 - Trivia nights
 - Cornhole tournaments
 - Karaoke or open-mic nights
 - Scavenger hunts
 - Bingo
 - Chili cook-offs
 - Cupcake wars

Resources Ready, Mission Steady!

- The National American Legion Auxiliary Resource Page offers Membership Tools You Can Use. <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources>
- Have you watched the National ALA Recruitment Videos?
 - <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources/recruitment-videos>
 - Watch these two videos for additional inspiration:
 - “A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families - The American Legion Auxiliary,” and the
 - “ALA Awareness Campaign Video.”
- The Department American Legion Auxiliary Resource Page offers Membership Tools You Can Use, Too!
- Visit: <https://www.amlegionauxwi.org/membership>
 - Where You Will Find:

- ❖ Resource Materials
- ❖ Membership Forms
- ❖ Instructions
- ❖ Awards Forms

- Department of WI includes new and exciting ideas to incentivize your membership in the Bi-Monthly “Unit Mailing.”
- Visit: <https://www.amlegionauxwi.org/unit-mailings>
- The Bi-Monthly is the Department Newsletter/Newspaper “The Wisconsin,” which is part of the Badger Legionnaire, and contains tips for Units to attract new members.
- Visit: <https://www.amlegionauxwi.org/the-wisconsin>

Zoom Etiquette: Dos and Don'ts

(Please note a quick reference guide is included at the end of the summary)

Why Etiquette Matters

- Ensures clear communication and active listening
- Demonstrates respect and maintains focus
- Builds a positive group dynamic

Common Pitfalls

1. Forgetting on-camera attire
2. Starting without video or audio ready
3. Taking calls in inappropriate locations
4. Using distracting filters or backgrounds

Best Practices

- Dress and frame your camera professionally
- Mute when not speaking and avoid multitasking
- Choose a neutral background or approved ALA backdrop
- Engage actively—use chat and reaction features appropriately

How to Use Zoom Beginners Guide 2025 (Full Guide)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VomOzeE7Z-k>

Fun Holidays for November Social Media

Here's a fun and engaging way to celebrate each of these November holidays on social media:

Nov 1 – National Authors Day (#nationalauthorsday)

Spotlight LLF members who love to write or share their favorite authors. Ask your audience to post a book that changed their life or a quote that inspires them.

Nov 4 – National Candy Day (#nationalcandyday)

Host a sweet poll: chocolate vs. gummies vs. hard candy. Share photos of your members enjoying their favorite treats and ask your followers to do the same.

Nov 8 – International Tongue Twister Day (#tonguetwisterday)

Challenge your audience to record themselves saying tricky tongue twisters. Post a few classics and ask for submissions—fun, laughter guaranteed!

Nov 10 – Sesame Street Day (#sesamestreetday)

Celebrate childhood memories by asking members to share their favorite Sesame Street character or lesson. Bonus points for photos with plush toys or themed outfits!

Nov 13 – World Kindness Day (#worldkindnessday)

Highlight acts of kindness by your LLF members. Invite your audience to share stories of kindness they've witnessed or experienced. Kindness is contagious!

Nov 14 – National Pickle Day (#nationalpickleday #dillversusbreadbutter)

Start a playful debate: Dill or Bread & Butter? Share pickle-themed recipes, photos, or even pickle jokes. Encourage your followers to vote and share their pickle preferences.

Use these themes to spark community engagement and create shareable content.

Next Zoom Chat

- **Date:** January 28, 2026 (Wednesday, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM)
- **Topics:** S.M.A.R.T. Public Relations Campaigns, Event Marketing & Post Event Strategies
- **Special Guests:** To be announced

Have questions or feedback?

Share your thoughts on new topics, valuable takeaways, and how we can keep elevating ALA's public relations impact. Let's keep the momentum going and make every member's engagement opportunity count.

ZOOM ETIQUETTE – A QUICK REFERENCE

ONLINE MEETING ETIQUETTE

To have meetings wherever you are does not mean there aren't basic guidelines you should follow. Here are some meeting etiquettes everyone should observe

JOIN EARLY



Make sure your microphone and camera are working properly.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY



You'll also put yourself in the right headspace to be productive.

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS



Make sure your background is tidy, professional and work appropriate.

MUTE YOUR MICROPHONE WHEN YOU'RE NOT TALKING



Avoid noisy distractions while others are speaking.

STAY SEATED AND STAY PRESENT



Sit up straight, don't make big extraneous movements and always give your attention.

MINIMISE DISTRACTIONS



Avoid rustling papers, eating or making other distracting noises in the background.

GIVE GRACE



Be patient with participants and allow some grace to any miscommunications.

PLAN FOR AN EFFECTIVE WRAP-UP



End with a quick recap providing decisions made and actions agreed on.