

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE PROMOTION

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS &
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

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Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS

Table of Contents

Page 1 - What Qualifies as an SBOM Event?

Page 2 - Calendaring

Page 5 - Forms

Page 6 - Graphics and A/V Needs

Page 7 - What Does Calendaring Do?

**Page 8 - Limitations of Communications Office
Promotion**

Page 9 - What Can You Do?

Page 10 - Building an Audience

Page 13 - Summary

What Qualifies as an SBOM Event?

1 There is sponsorship or other financial tie.

A State Board event is an event the State Board of Missions pays entirely for or in some way contributes to the cost of the event.

2 Office has some input to the content or schedule.

In order for an event to be considered a SBOM event, there must also be some authority given to the representing office to make content or schedule decisions. There must be some kind of shared control with the partner if the event doesn't entirely originate from the representing office.

If both criteria above are met, the event qualifies as a State Board event and can be promoted. However, there are some other considerations.

- Demonstrate clear ties to the State Board of Missions.
 - Even if the criteria above is met, the State Board connection must be communicated to other event sponsors and attendees. Make sure there is language explaining the connection to the State Board and that the SBOM logo is present in some fashion to visually create the same connection.
- Know your ministry partner(s).
 - Make sure you know your ministry partner(s) well so that an easily correctable mistake doesn't happen (such as a problematic speaker or stance that would reflect negatively on the State Board).

What if my event doesn't qualify as a State Board event?

- Reconsider your event using the above requirements and adjust your event so that it qualifies (i.e. pay for attendee registrations).
- Promote the event on your personal social account and office specific channels.
- Cite or share the event as a valuable resource to your audience.

Consider: Events promoted personally and through office channels should be handled with the same scrutiny to protect the State Board of Missions' brand.

Calendaring

1

Thoroughly Consider Event

2

Locate Event Submission Form

3

Answer Each Question

4

Consider Registration

5

Confirm Email Receipt

1 Thoroughly Consider Event

- Plan through as much of the event as possible before you submit it for calendaring. This will help you design the event and provide us the information we'll need for promotion.
- Events will follow different timelines. You could calendar an event a year out, a couple months out, etc. A good rule of thumb to follow, however, is establishing all the event information and design so that it can be promoted at least 3 months in advance.

2 Locate Event Submission Form

- Once you have thoroughly worked through the details and elements of your event, you will be ready to submit the initial form for getting your event approved and promoted.
- The form is located at alsbom.org/forms. This link takes you to a webpage with all the relevant forms regarding events, this document, and other related forms including graphics/facility request form. (If you have any issues, contact the Communications Office.)

Calendaring

3 Answer Each Question

- Every question on the form, whether required or not, is intentionally included to help us in the promotion of your event. Please carefully consider each of your answers and answer every question possible/applicable.
- **Special Note:** This is a good time to make sure the name you select for the event is suitable to be used across all channels it may be presented. In other words, make sure before submitting the event that you consider what the event's name will be and stay consistent with that usage.

4 Consider and Create Registration

- You already worked through this a bit in step 1 when you decided if this event would be free or require a cost to attendees. However, there are several benefits you might consider when deciding if you need registration or not, even if it's a free event:
 - It assists the host venue in coordinating registration, making decisions about room set-up, preparing for breaks or meals, etc.
 - It allows you to collect email addresses to contribute to your growing audience, so you can follow up with them and promote future events.
 - It establishes immediate contact for direct communication to attendees or registrants about changes to the events.

Because of these potential benefits and others not listed, **we always recommend creating registration.**

- As you think on what you need to collect from your attendees, make sure it correlates to your event's design. This includes thinking through things such as:
 - Contact information
 - Attendee characteristics (such as age, gender, etc.)
 - Church and association information
 - Group registration options
 - Shirt sizes or other gear
 - Lodging and commuter options - see Shocco note, next page.

Shocco Springs Note

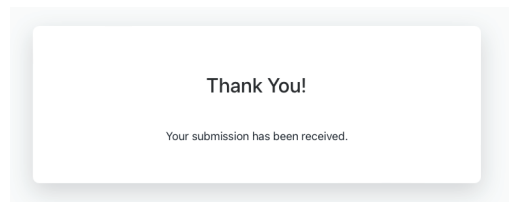
As of 2023, Shocco Springs announced it will no longer assist with attendee registration for State Board events held in their facilities/housing. Shocco's commitment is to assist you in selecting how your event will be held in their facilities. This could include: helping select the venues at camp, helping select your housing facility, and coordinating logistics and meals on campus. The responsibility of attendees has shifted to the State Board in regards to arranging what your attendees need and pricing the event to meet your budgeted cost. Some examples of what the State Board is now responsible for:

- Assigning prices for registration to cover desired costs
- Selecting Shocco lodging options and rates, including if you want to provide options for pricing such as commuting rates

Recommendation: If you decide to use Shocco as a venue for your event, it is a good idea to simplify the registration process as much as possible. Complicated pricing structures will be impossible to accommodate in our normal processes and make it more difficult for you.

5 Confirm Email Receipt

- After your form submission, you will be taken to a screen that thanks you for your submission. This is your confirmation that your form was actually submitted.
- Once your form is submitted, the Communications Office will email you a copy of what you submitted to the form. If you do not receive it in a timely manner, email Amy for your copy.



Completing this 5 step process thoroughly and passionately is the most effective way to help ensure a successful event, protect the State Board of Missions, and begin the cycle of timely promotion. It is best for every party involved for this procedure not to be treated as part of a checklist but with high importance.

Calendaring

- Forms -

You need to be aware of multiple forms outside the Event Submission Form for calendaring. All of these forms are available at alsbom.org/forms. Below is a brief outline of the forms and their purposes.

Event Submission Form

- Necessary for Executive Office approval of event and to begin promotion process
- Supplies information the Communications Office needs to promote your event
- Provides opportunity for you to specify what A/V needs you have (such as event recording or onsite AV assistance) and possible promotion ideas

SBOM Facilities Request Form

- Required for events being held in the SBOM office facility
- Communicates your needs to the Facility Services Office and secures the room to avoid space conflicts
- Note: Events at the SBOM facility will not be fully approved until after the Facilities Calendar Process is complete.
- Pre-approval is required for after-hours/weekend events in the facility.
- This is where you specify your conference layout, including tables and chairs.

Graphics Request Form

- Used to submit projects for graphics, in accord with or unrelated to events
- Provides way to submit concepts including sketches, rough ideas, etc. for discussion in the exploratory meeting
- Requires the submission of a due date by which you need the project completed. Please provide enough lead time to have project completed.

Blog and Website/Event Edit Form

- Used to submit blog posts, edit office websites and edit events or registration forms after they've been submitted, approved and created

Calendaring

- Graphics and Audio-Visual (A/V) Needs -

Although sometimes used interchangeably, the two terms mean very different things. Here are some helpful definitions, distinctions and examples as you begin submitting forms and asking for assistance.

Graphics -----

Graphics can refer to anything visual across a variety of media types. It is not purely digital or print, but generally involves a combination of both. If you are considering any kind of visual element, you will most likely need graphics.

A/V -----

A/V includes both the tech needs you might have for the event itself as well as the process of recording the event for distribution afterwards. It also includes the videos you might desire to create ahead of time for your events or other media-related ways to drive promotion.

Here are some examples of both types:

Graphics

- Banners/stand-up and tabletop displays
- Posters
- Logos
- Print mailers
- Stickers/buttons
- Brochures
- Ads

A/V

- Videos for event itself
- Event recording
- Event photography
- Live streaming
- Equipment rental
- Promotional videos
- Zoom option for meeting

Calendaring

- What Does Calendaring Do? -

1 Gains Executive Office Approval

Every SBOM event is approved by the Executive Office. Once an office has submitted their event through the calendaring process it is sent to the Executive Office for approval to ensure there are no calendar conflicts or other issues.

2 Begins State Board Promotion Process

Once an event has been approved by the Executive Office, it is processed by the Communications Office, which includes proofing event descriptions and providing additional promotional copy. This is the stage of the process where it is crucial to have already provided detailed information so that we can more effectively promote your event.

Promotional Tools:

- Social Media
 - Your event is regularly promoted roughly 3 months out with submitted artwork and information numerous times on SBOM Social Media accounts including Facebook, Instagram and X.
- SBOM Event Email
 - Monthly email to a general SBOM audience of around 18,000 subscribers through Mailchimp, highlighted by a video from Dr. Lance and promoting events happening in the month and a general listing of events in the following month.
- TAB News
 - Columns in each issue of TAB (twice a month) promoting 4-6 events or emphases at the discretion of the Communications Office.
- TAB Advertising (per request)
 - Paid advertising space available to SBOM offices to promote events. Contact Keith Hinson for pricing info and to reserve the space.
- Special initiatives promoted by Dr. Lance by request
- Pre-Roll Event Slides
 - Event information and art shown before events held in the SBOM facility and elsewhere.

Calendaring

- Limitations of Communications Office Promotion -

1 Broad Audience

Posts about events and initiatives from our offices are sent to everyone that follows the State Board accounts. While this can be helpful, it doesn't provide the specific messaging to the audiences more likely to be interested.

2 Secondary Voice

Our promotion comes from a secondhand account of the event and is not as powerful as when it comes directly from the office. Since Communications doesn't create office events, promotion is based only on what is supplied through the calendaring process.

3 Too Much to Share

There is so much going on through the SBOM that it is impossible to devote adequate amounts of energy, attention or space on platforms to each office's work or events and still be effective. This means that much gets lost in SBOM communications that would be present in direct communications from each office.

4 Tailored Messaging

Tailoring promotion to the audience most likely to engage and support your content and work is always more effective than advertising everything to everyone in the hopes that some would react. The general audience that the SBOM interacts with is too large to effectively segment. For example, Men's Ministry communicates much more effectively by designing their promotion for men rather than men and women.

Promotion

- What Can You Do? -

1 Be a Promoter

The first thing your office can do is to be sure that you own all your events. That means taking care, time and attention to assist in getting the word out about the ministries and events for which your office is responsible. The worst thing you can do is think that simply by calendaring an event, your promotional work is done. Be your office's biggest cheerleader and look for ways to promote your events well beyond what the Communications Office will do.

2 Build an Audience

Cultivate raving fans for your office. Identify people who want to buy into the ministries of your office along with those who have already been active participators, so you can easily communicate with them. The avenues to build and communicate with your raving fans include but are not limited to:

- Engagement of associational missions strategists
- Direct email
- Social media
- Mailers
- Word of mouth

3 Network

Networking is connecting yourself into a larger group. Taking advantage of what is already going on around you to connect your office to the people who need its ministry is an effective way to get the ear of your target audience. It also provides you an opportunity to be an authority in the same space that will garner better response to what your office is trying to accomplish.

Promotion

- Building an Audience -

1 Associational Missions Strategists

You already have a collection of raving fans: associational missions strategists. This group extends your ministry to the state and already wants to be aware of and partner with you in your work. Make sure they are connected with you during the planning of your events and when promoting what your office is doing. As you build your audience, be sure to gather their contact information and include them into all your communications.

2 Email

One of the easiest ways you can resource and encourage your audience is through an email newsletter. As you produce content that will benefit your audience they will be drawn in to what you are accomplishing. Then email will become an easy way to promote and recruit people into your office's ministry.

Please note that spam laws prohibit organizations from regularly sending out mass emails, even to your own audiences. We have a process through which your office can legally and effectively send emails to large groups using a resource called MailChimp. Not only does this method improve your emails, but it also provides for analytics to know who is reading your emails and how much they are engaging with them. We are encouraging at least one individual per office to be trained in MailChimp for office control of this method.

3 Social Media

- Personal Accounts
 - Your personal social media accounts are perfect platforms to share about your office's ministry. Genuine story sharing and passion about what you do will make this a great place to win fans and grow your audience.
- Corporate Account
 - Creative approaches sent to the SBOM social account and to your office account (if your office has one) can be very effective. Consider using social media videos from your event personalities shared to your account and theirs or working with Communications to create a video promotion.

Promotion

- Building an Audience -

Note: Social media is not as effective as it once was. Your organization and personal page ought to share standard content such as photos or links but will be more effective if a creative approach is taken.

4 Mailers

The prevailing mindset for marketing at present is to use a variety of media options. This means promoting events in many places across multiple platforms, both print and digital. Mailers are still a valuable tool in achieving that. In addition, portions of our Alabama Baptist audience find it difficult to interact with us digitally due to some technical challenges such as internet access. Mailers may be the only way you reach some audiences. The same rule of creativity applies here as with social media. You want to think out of the box so that your particular design will get noticed.

Process for requesting a mailer:

- Submit a Graphics Request Form
- Submit Addressing Request Master Form (Print Services Office)
- Get Executive Office approval
- Work with Communications or preferred contractor to finalize concept, art, copy and production/mailing.
- Schedule mailing and deliver final print/production piece to Communications for archive

5 Networking

Going to events for your target audience builds relationships with that audience and will encourage a greater chance of buy-in. Additionally, becoming an exhibitor, setting up a booth and taking office materials such as a simple brochure explaining who your office is and what it does helps build authority for your office. This authority inclines people to take interest and participate in your office's ministry. Examples include Collegiate & Student Ministries' presence at Conclave, an event designed for youth ministers, or the Global Missions Office represented at missions celebrations in local churches and associations.

Promotion

- Building an Audience -

6 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is a promotion avenue that is made more powerful once you have begun building an enthusiastic audience. As you begin to build influence and gather an audience, those attending and connecting will speak to others about your office and ministry on your behalf, adding their sphere of influence to support your office's ministry. In other words, word of mouth is more effective after you have established a routine in the avenues above.

Word of mouth is also a principle that should affect the way you select personalities for initiatives and events. Look for personalities with ties to Alabama Baptists that will benefit from connectivity and people sharing about your event or bringing more people with them.

Characteristics of Word of Mouth:

- Happens organically once a person sees you as an authority or has excitement about your office's ministry
- Requires the most work to be effective
- Most influential avenue in seeing the number of people engaging with your office.

Summary of Handout

- Know who you are, what your office does and how you relate to Alabama Baptists. Ensure that your entire office understands this and represents this wherever they are. This will help you promote your office well and to the correct audience.
- Take ownership of everything your office does. Take time to meticulously approach your ministry - events or otherwise - so the Communications Office can effectively partner with you and your office can be more successful.
- Remember that these procedures are in place not because we love rules but because they will help everyone involved and will allow us all to be more effective in our communications efforts.

Please contact the Communications Office with any questions about calendaring or promotion.

- Amy Nelson, anelson@alsbom.org, ext. 2231



3 Month Promotion Checklist

- Have I completed a SBOM Facility Request Form (if my event is in the building)?
 - At this point, this is long overdue and required before the remaining checklist elements can be considered.
- Is my event on the calendar? (alsbom.org/events)
- Is my event listed on additional webpages, if applicable, such as a list of upcoming events under my specific office's website?
- Is my event graphic posted/complete?
- Is my event clearly branded as a State Board of Missions event?
 - If you need a logo or a reminder of branding guidelines, visit the public drive for the ALSBOM Logos folder.
- Does my registration form collect all the information I need for my event?
- Have I notified Communications of my desire to record, take photos or livestream my event?
- Have I completed the Graphics Request form AND Addressing Master Request form if a mailer/brochure/other printed advertisement is to be sent in the mail?
- Have I enlisted 'influencers' (such as Associational Missionaries, previous attendees, core group, etc.) to help share/promote my event?