



Communications Committee

Thursday, August 27th @ 4:00 p.m. ET

Chair: [Melinda Brooks](#) Vice Chairs: [Stacey Fields](#) and [Timothy Ezell](#)

Attendees: Melinda Brooks, Janet Cornell, Timothy Ezell, Dr. Giuseppe M. Fazari, Stacey Fields, Whitney Freeze, Mankinta Holloway, Kelly Hutton, Jay Keller, Peter Kiefer, Teshnie Kalichman, Nathaniel Mingo, Sara Miles, Andra Moytka, Dawn Palermo, Erica Payne-Santiago, Roger Rand, Carlene Redmond, Susan Teyssier, Jeffrey Tsunekawa, and Creadell Webb.

1. Welcome and Committee Overview

Chair Melinda Brooks welcomed members to the first Communications Committee meeting of the 2026-2027 Board year.

- Committee members introduced themselves and shared their involvement with NACM.
- Committee leadership for the year includes:
 - **Chair:** Melinda Brooks
 - **Vice Chairs:** Stacey Fields and Timothy Ezell
- Vice Chairs will assist the Chair with overall committee coordination.
- Timothy Ezell will assist with:
 - Preparation of committee agendas
 - Preparation of meeting minutes
 - Coordination with committee and Board leaders to identify updates and potential agenda items for upcoming meetings
- Stacey Fields will assist with:
 - Development and maintenance of a running calendar of NACM events and activities.
 - Coordination with the Social Media Subcommittee to develop a monthly communications forecast.
- The committee's subcommittees include:
 - **Website Subcommittee:** Erica Payne-Santiago, Chair
 - **Social Media Subcommittee:** Sara Miles, Chair
- Members were encouraged to actively participate in committee discussions and projects throughout the year.

2. Member Feedback and Communications Visibility

The committee reviewed feedback from a recent member survey and discussed opportunities to improve the visibility and effectiveness of NACM communications.

Survey Feedback

- Approximately 100 survey responses were received.

- Feedback indicated that some NACM emails may become lost among other messages or are not readily recalled by recipients.
- Some respondents expressed uncertainty regarding the distinction between *Court Manager* and *Court Express*.
- Limited time to read publications was identified as another challenge.
- Members recognized that the survey responses represent only a portion of NACM's membership.
- The committee discussed considering survey results together with publication analytics, participation data, and other measures of member engagement.

Opportunities Discussed

- Improve coordination of NACM communications across different channels.
- Reduce unnecessary competition or overlap among emails, publications, webinars, conferences, and other announcements.
- Use social media to provide advance notice of:
 - Publications
 - Calls for articles
 - Webinars
 - Conferences
 - Committee initiatives
 - Other member opportunities
- Explore a monthly communications forecast highlighting significant NACM activities scheduled for the upcoming month.
- Continue identifying ways to make NACM communications easier for members to recognize, access, and engage with.

3. 2026-2027 Communications Roadmap

The committee discussed development of a broader **2026-2027 Communications Roadmap** to improve coordination across NACM's communication channels.

The proposed roadmap would connect work involving:

- *Court Manager*
- *Court Express*
- *Court Leader's Advantage*
- Website
- Social media
- Webinars
- Conferences
- Committee initiatives
- Membership activities
- Calls for content and member participation

Rolling Communications Calendar

The committee discussed developing a rolling 30-, 60-, and 90-day communications calendar.

Potential benefits discussed included:

- Increasing visibility of upcoming activities across NACM committees.
- Identifying competing or overlapping communications before distribution.
- Allowing earlier planning of social media content.
- Creating opportunities for cross-promotion among NACM communication channels.
- Improving coordination between publications and conferences.
- Supporting development of a monthly communications forecast.
- Providing committee leaders with greater awareness of upcoming NACM activities.

The committee will continue developing the roadmap and calendar concept during the committee year.

4. Website Subcommittee

Erica Payne-Santiago provided an update from the Website Subcommittee.

- The subcommittee discussed development of NACM's **new member portal**.
- Work is underway to design a **new welcome landing page** intended to improve the experience of members accessing NACM's online resources.
- The subcommittee is considering how the landing page can help members more easily identify and navigate available information and resources.
- Website work will continue to support broader efforts to improve the accessibility and visibility of NACM communications.
- Members interested in contributing to the website work were invited to attend Website Subcommittee meetings and become involved with its projects.
- The Website Subcommittee will also participate in discussions regarding an NACM-controlled platform for future *Court Express* audio content.

5. Court Leader's Advantage

Peter Kiefer provided an update on *Court Leader's Advantage*.

Current Reach

- Episodes average approximately **373 clicks per episode**.
- The series has accumulated more than **38,000 total clicks since 2018**.

Upcoming Episodes

- **September:** Aggressive Media and the Courts
- **October:** Employee and Manager Burnout

Survey Feedback

- 38 respondents indicated a preference for shorter episodes.
- 29 respondents indicated that they do not listen to podcasts.
- 11 respondents indicated that they had not received or recalled receiving notification when an episode was released.

Ideas Discussed

- Explore shorter-form content while maintaining substantive programming.
- Consider whether shorter content could help fill the space previously occupied by Tiny Chats.
- Continue exploring conference-based recordings and interviews.
- Increase awareness of transcripts available for episodes.
- Promote transcripts through other NACM communication channels for members who prefer reading to listening.
- Explore positioning *Court Leader's Advantage* more broadly as a content series rather than relying solely on the "podcast" designation.
- Use conference screens to promote *Court Leader's Advantage* alongside other NACM resources.
- Explore short video excerpts and social media clips to introduce members to individual episodes.

Considerations

- Members cautioned against making significant format changes based solely on a relatively small number of survey responses.
- Existing usage data should be considered alongside survey feedback.
- The current approximately 30-minute format may remain useful for members listening during commutes, lunch periods, or similar periods.
- Engagement should continue to be evaluated before significant changes are made to the format.

Sara Miles and Peter Kiefer will continue discussing opportunities to use short-form social media content to promote episodes.

6. Court Express

Janet Cornell provided an update on *Court Express*.

Publication Update

- *Court Express* is published quarterly.
- Distribution is approximately **1,700 to 1,800 recipients**.
- Recent open rates have ranged approximately **69 to 74 percent**.
- The most recent issue was distributed **July 9**.
- The next content deadline is **November 13**.
- The next issue is scheduled for publication in **December**.

Member Interests

Survey feedback indicated particular interest in:

- NACM announcements
- Committee information
- Association updates

Publication Distinction

The committee discussed improving members' understanding of the respective purposes of NACM's publications.

- *Court Express* provides timely Association news, announcements, updates, and shorter content.
- *Court Manager* provides more substantive professional articles and journal-style content.
- Future communications should help reinforce the distinction between the two publications.

Audio Initiative

- Andrea Ribando and Brandon Kimmel are recording content from the current issue.
- Current recordings are being hosted through personal accounts.
- Members identified the need for future audio content to be housed through an NACM-controlled account or platform.
- Andrea and Brandon will complete the current recordings.
- Following completion, the Website Subcommittee, Janet Cornell, Peter Kiefer, Andrea Ribando, and Brandon Kimmel will evaluate platform options.
- The goal is to identify a sustainable NACM-controlled solution that can support future audio content and integrate with other NACM communication channels.

7. Court Manager

The committee received an update regarding *Court Manager*.

Summer Issue

- Final editing is underway.
- Publication is scheduled for **September 1**.
- Featured topics include:
 - "Data Serving with Compassion"
 - "Gamification and Court Administration"
 - "Why Specialty Courts Still Matter in the Era of Expanding Deflection"

Fall Issue

- Two to three articles have been confirmed.
- **Soft deadline:** September 24
- **Final deadline:** October 1
- **Anticipated publication:** November 19

Content Development

- Continue recruiting NACM members and court professionals as prospective authors.
- Continue exploring appropriate Institute for Court Management Fellows papers that may be adapted into *Court Manager* articles.

- Coordinate the 2027 publication calendar with conferences and other NACM communications.
- Continue identifying opportunities to strengthen the pipeline of future content.

8. Social Media Subcommittee

Sara Miles provided an update from the Social Media Subcommittee and reinforced several priorities discussed during the subcommittee's recent meeting.

Social Media Priorities

The subcommittee is focused on strengthening the consistency, coordination, and reach of NACM's social media presence.

Discussion included:

- Using social media earlier in the communications cycle rather than only after content has been published.
- Providing advance promotion of:
 - *Court Manager*
 - *Court Express*
 - *Court Leader's Advantage*
 - Webinars
 - Conferences
 - Calls for articles
 - Committee activities
 - Other member opportunities
- Developing a monthly forecast highlighting major upcoming NACM activities.
- Using short-form content to direct members to longer NACM resources.
- Exploring short-form video opportunities to promote *Court Leader's Advantage* and other NACM content.
- Coordinating social media planning with the proposed Communications Roadmap and rolling communications calendar.

Additional Takeaways (NACM's social analytics):

Facebook

1,598 total followers with 40 new followers since beginning of July (up 90%)

43,904 views for reels, posts and stories in last 60 days

4,592 engagement (up 278%) in last 60 days

LinkedIn

2,668 total followers with 145 new followers in last 60 days

35,634 impressions (up 32%) in last 60 days

1,411 reactions (up 186%) in last 60 days

Instagram

600 total followers with 18 new followers in the past month

1,400 interactions in last 60 days (up 211%)

In July, there were 24K views up 644% from June
43,400 views in last 60 days

Volunteer Opportunities

- The Social Media Subcommittee is seeking **additional volunteers to assist with developing social media posts and content.**
- Committee members interested in communications, content development, or social media were encouraged to become involved.
- Additional volunteer participation would help:
 - Expand the pool of content contributors.
 - Support more consistent posting.
 - Bring different member perspectives into NACM's social media content.
 - Distribute content-development responsibilities among additional volunteers.

September Forecast

- Sara Miles will need a consolidated list of September NACM activities to prepare the monthly forecast.
- Sara Miles and Stacey Fields will coordinate development of the September calendar and forecast content.

9. Webinars

The committee reviewed upcoming webinar programming.

Upcoming Webinars

- **September 10:** Disability Inclusion in the Courts
- **October 1:** Tyler Technologies sponsored webinar
- **Late October/Early November:** Potential Scale Justice partnership webinar
- **December:** Proposed social media webinar

Presenter and Content Review

Members discussed concerns arising from content presented during a previous external webinar and opportunities to strengthen advance review.

Ideas discussed included:

- Requesting presentation slides and related materials from external presenters in advance.
- Allowing sufficient time for review before the webinar.
- Identifying potentially inappropriate or unrelated content before presentation.
- Ensuring webinar content remains relevant to NACM members and consistent with the purpose of the program.
- Establishing an expectation that external presenters provide presentation materials at least one week before the scheduled webinar.

Webinar Presenter Protocol

Following the committee discussion, a protocol was established for initiating discussions with prospective webinar presenters. The introductory communication will:

- Advise presenters that presentation materials must be provided at least seven days in advance of the scheduled webinar for review and approval.
- Reinforce the expectation that presentation materials and webinar content reflect NACM's organizational values.
- Advise presenters that webinar content should abstain from political speech.

10. Sponsored Webinar Discussion

The committee discussed the role of sponsored webinars within NACM's communications and educational programming.

Considerations Discussed

- Participation levels for sponsored webinars compared with NACM-developed webinars.
- Approximately 150 to 200 registrations were reported for sponsored programming, with approximately 100 participants remaining through a full session.
- Financial contributions associated with sponsored webinars.
- The relationship between individual webinars and broader sponsorship arrangements.
- Member value provided through sponsored programming.
- Appropriate content review and quality controls.
- The balance between sponsored programming and NACM-developed educational content.

Follow-Up

- No recommendation regarding future sponsored webinars was finalized.
- Communication Committee Chairs will seek additional information regarding:
 - Sponsorship revenue associated with webinars.
 - What is included within the broader sponsorship arrangement.
 - Other relevant sponsorship obligations or benefits.
- The committee will use this information to inform future discussion and any recommendation requiring further consideration.

11. Conference Promotion and Cross-Channel Communications

The committee discussed opportunities to use NACM conferences to increase awareness of NACM communications resources.

Conference Promotion

Roger Rand will develop a conference slide concept highlighting:

- *Court Manager*
- *Court Express*

- *Court Leader's Advantage*

The concept may include:

- Publication or program images.
- Brief descriptions.
- QR codes directing attendees to the respective resources.

Conference Alignment

The committee also discussed:

- Aligning publication timing with conferences when beneficial.
- Using conference programming to identify potential publication content.
- Promoting upcoming publications during conferences.
- Using publications and social media to extend the reach of conference content.
- Incorporating conference deadlines and promotional opportunities into the Communications Roadmap.

12. Next Meeting

The next Communications Committee meeting is scheduled for:

Thursday, September 24, 2026

4:00 p.m. ET

Prepared by:

Timothy Ezell, Vice Chair
Communications Committee