A Note From the Chair

Kelley Jones King – Deputy Executive Director, State Bar of Texas

Why do you belong to the NABE Communications Section? Maybe it is the listserv or the workshop or maybe it is just because your predecessor was a member? I would say that over the years I have used those reasons and they are all valid. Over the past five or six year, I have been more active in the section and I encourage you to think about your level of participation. The collegiality and the amount you can learn from our colleagues and the contributions you can make will serve you well.

I have worked at the State Bar of Texas for 28 years – yes, longer than some of you have been alive! I peripherally attended workshops, sometimes joined the section, and sometimes did not. I want to encourage you to not be me! Get involved and stay involved. I am always energized after I have been at the annual or midyear meetings and even more excited about my chosen profession after attending our annual section workshop. When my work is challenging and it seems like the obstacles are overwhelming, I guarantee you that I always talk to one of you who is facing – and overcoming — greater challenges. When the State Bar of Texas is doing something creative and I am energized and enthusiastic, I talk to another section member who is doing a project or program that we had not thought of or added some new facet to an already great idea. I am encouraged and inspired.

That connection is what it is all about. Professional development, networking, an empathetic shoulder, or a cheering friend — we are fortunate to have each other and I want to thank each of you for the support and inspiration you have provided me over the years. For those of you who have not been as involved as you might like, let me know. It takes a lot of care by a lot of people to ensure the section meets its mission and serves its members and our respective organizations.

Master the Circus!

In this overworked, overtired economy, managing all your communications duties can feel like a regular three-ring circus. No need to fret! The NABE Communications Section is here to help. Most communications professionals at bar associations wear many hats and the rewards of membership in the Section are many:

- **Annual Communications Section Workshop**: A three-day conference for bar communications staff that covers everything from the fundamental to the philosophical (and it’s always fun). Don’t miss 2011’s Nashville Conference from October 19-21!
- **Section Listserv**: Members share tips and advice on bar communications and activities on this members only listserv.
- **Member Resource Directory**: Section members are listed in an online directory at nabenet.org.
- **Annual Recognition**: The Section annually recognizes the work and contributions of outstanding Section members with several awards including the Luminary Awards, the Richter Award and the Anne Charles Award.

For more information, visit [www.nabenet.org](http://www.nabenet.org)!
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Inside This Issue

Communicator Partnerships:
Bar & Court.............................................3

50,000 Watts of NABE Goodness............5

8 Tips for Tweeting a Live Conference .................7

Choosing Social Media.............................8

Using Social Media to Connect to Current and Future Members ............9

To Tweet or Not to Tweet......................10

Killing the Dead-Tree Edition...............11

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Communicator Partnerships: Bar & Court

Dan Wise – Director of Communications, New Hampshire Bar Association

Communications between the state courts and the bar association in New Hampshire have improved a lot since then. While technologic advancements have played a role, of course, progress has been aided by the relationship I’ve developed with the court system’s public information director, Laura Kiernan, and, as a consequence, with many judges, clerks, and administrators throughout the system.

Kiernan, who began working for the Judicial Branch in January 2001, was the first person to direct public information efforts for the NH courts. She and I have known each other since the early 1990s when we crossed paths at the local public radio station. She brought to her job at the court extensive experience as a newspaper reporter at The Washington Post and the Boston Globe, as well as stints in public broadcasting and New England Cable News. She covered the state and federal courts for the Post and has a master of studies in law from Yale Law School. She had also assisted the NH Bar with focus group projects before she came to the court, so she was familiar with the Judicial Branch, the organized Bar, and what we do. Most importantly, she brought to her court job an openness to cooperate with me through a two-way partnership which has greatly enhanced the effectiveness of our efforts for the court, the bar and the public at large.

We have worked together on many projects, and cooperated on different levels. I have assisted her with a “Law School for Journalists” program, held every other year. I have helped her recruit attorneys to assist the court’s “On the Road” program where it conducts oral arguments in school auditoriums around the state. She has assisted me in reaching the court’s decision-makers to enable them to communicate directly with the Bar. She gives me a heads-up on major announcements and we often discuss events, story ideas and developments that are important to the bench and the bar. Our two-way relationship helps us both do our jobs better.

Over the years, I have developed practical, trusting relationships with many people in the court system. Getting them involved in communicating through the Bar, not just to the Bar, is essential to maximizing the Bar’s value to its members. And we provide a service to the court system by helping them effectively deliver their messages – whether they are policy directives or administrative details.

Perhaps you do not have the privilege of collaborating with a media-savvy professional in the court system, but there are always ways to improve your relationship with key figures in your court system. Here’s a few:

- **Cultivate contacts at all levels.** Communicating with the bar is the responsibility of the chief justice or other leaders, but others in the ranks have needs too. Our associate justices on our Supreme Court, for example, have administrative assignments that are of interest to the bar. Plus, clerks and administrators can be very helpful at providing “news you can use” information to members. You can help them realize what your members value. (One of our most-clicked links in our e-mail newsletter is the trial court judicial assignment list, which until a couple of years ago, was not widely circulated.)

- **Make it person-to-person.** Try to forge personal relationships. Taking a clerk or judge out to lunch might not be possible or appropriate, but in your dealings, be yourself and take an interest in your outside contacts as people.

- **If possible, spend time shadowing court personnel on the job.** Even if it isn’t for a specific article or program, you can gain priceless insights. You don’t know when your understanding of how things really work behind the counter or the judge’s bench will come in handy. It might not be that hard to arrange – as a bar staff person, your presence behind the scenes will be less problematic than that of a practicing lawyer.

- **Emphasize what you can do for them.** Be proactive in talking to court personnel about how to help them communicate news through the Bar. They need to realize that even though they are THE COURT, not everyone is tuned in to their wavelength. For example, I was surprised to discover that the Court’s opinions listserv – the first source for
Supreme Court opinion releases, is dwarfed by the size of our e-mail newsletter list (We have more than 6,000 names and theirs is less than 2,000.)

– Explain why the message might need to change.
Courts are accustomed to doing things the same way each time, but that does not always apply to communication. For example, when our Family Division was in the midst of expanding from a two-county pilot to statewide reach over several years, we encouraged Family Division officials to write articles and answer questions as the rollout continued. The rollouts that took place in the largest counties in the outer years have been the smoothest of all, in part because of the lessons court administrators learned about what information needed to be shared, and when.

Dan Wise is director of communications for the New Hampshire Bar Association. Before joining the Bar Association in 1996, he worked as a reporter for several daily newspapers, as a copy editor for Dow Jones Publishing Co., and as editor of a monthly business magazine in New Hampshire. He also paid the mortgage as a freelance writer and editor for four years.

8 1/2 Ways the Division for Bar Services Helps NABE Comm Members

1. Annual State and Local Bar Dues, Fees, and Member Benefits Survey
   • Comprehensive listing of the dues and fees of state and local bar associations
   • Cost to practice rankings state
   • Member benefits, affinity programs, non-dues sources of income
   • Statistical comparisons on market share, retention, revenue stream
2. Web Resource Pages that Help You and Your Leaders on Communications Issues
   • Social Media
   • President’s
   • Disaster Recovery
3. Clearinghouse and Library – So You Won’t Have to Reinvent the Wheel
   Email: molly.flood@americanbar.org
   Bar Services Clearinghouse
4. Bar Leader – The Only Magazine Covering Issues of the Organized Bar
5. Summaries of Listserv Topic Threads – You Never Know When You’ll Need It
   Email: joanne.oreilly@americanbar.org
6. Customized Bar Activities Inventory – Discovering How Your Bar Stacks Up
7. Twitter – Follow @ABABarServices for the Latest News from the Bar and Association Worlds
7.5 By Following You and “Liking” You
8. Behind Bars – The Blog of Bar News, Resources and Reflections
Even if you don't have a song to pitch or a voice like Taylor Swift, make plans now to be in Nashville this October 18-21 for NABECOMM 2011.

As host for the annual Communications Section Workshop, Music City USA is the perfect place to jumpstart your creativity and tune in to the latest developments in communications. It's also a great place to discover great live music, whether on the storefront stage at the world famous Tootsie's Orchid Lounge << http://www.tootsies.net/index.cfm?browse=about >> or at a neighborhood bar like the Family Wash << http://www.familywash.com/ >>. And if you end up getting called up on stage and inking a fat recording contract, just enjoy the ride and don't forget your NABE friends.

Programming
A group of more than 20 NABE Communications Section members have jumped in to shape the programming for NABECOMM 2011, so the workshop promises to be fun and well-rounded. A central effort for the educational sessions will be to have programming that both provides big-picture views of trends and developments, and skills sessions where you can pick up ideas that you can put to use right away.

While all of the programming is tentative at this point, the committee is now working on several pieces, including:

• Bringing together a team of songwriters for an interactive session that will spark your creativity and bring new energy to your projects

• Getting a take on the new media landscape from a local publisher who has put together a stable of print products, online magazines, blogs and more under one big umbrella.

• Learning public relations and grassroots organizational lessons from the leaders involved in rebuilding Nashville and the Nashville brand after devastating floods swept through the city in 2010.

• Putting together a series of hands-on sessions on everything from webcasting to staffing issues in the new media era to membership marketing tactics and ideas.

Entertainment
Perhaps you've noticed that we have a bit of a Music City theme going here – “50,000 Watts of NABE Goodness” coming your way – and we're busy scouting out options for the best showcase event we can provide. We may not get Keith Urban, Lady Antebellum or Kings of Leon, but maybe you'll hear … the next Keith Urban, Lady Antebellum or Kings of Leon.

We're also lining up interesting restaurants for the always popular dine-arounds and we're planning some after hours “honky-tonk-arounds” so you can dig those boots and hat out of the closet and get in touch with your inner cowboy.

Lodging

The hotel is located in the heart of the city, within an easy walk to dozens of popular clubs and restaurants as well as the historic Ryman Auditorium – longtime home to the Grand Ole Opry – the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Schermerhorn Symphony Hall, the Frist Art Center and the Tennessee State Capitol and Museum.

We were also able to negotiate a great rate for the event – $138 per night – so attendance should be easy on your budget.

Registration will open soon for the workshop, but mark your calendar now and make plans to be in Nashville Oct. 18-21 for NABE COMM. 
50,000 Watts of NABE Goodness

Live from Nashville!!!

Oct. 18 - 21, 2011

Come to Music City, U.S.A.
where you can tune in to the latest in communications,
network with your colleagues — and hit the honky-tonks at the
National Association of Bar Executives
Communications Section Workshop
8 Tips for Tweeting a Live Conference

Carissa D. Long – Assistant Director of Communications, Indiana State Bar Association

Can’t get to a conference? Get on Twitter! Association members can keep up with what’s happening at your conferences by following a simple #hashtag to get short, timely messages. Because it offers up-to-the-minute information on speakers, presentations and social events, a Twitter feed “tagged” specifically for a conference offers great value to both the attendees and to those members unable to attend. Discover the most effective ways to showcase your social media platforms at conferences to add value for your entire membership.

Create a Hashtag & Promote Heavily
Hashtags are widely used to promote live coverage at conferences because it’s a way to organize your specific event and content. Choose your hashtag early and promote it heavily in all conference promotional materials (e.g., registration brochure, e-newsletter, e-mail correspondence with speakers, etc.). Visit www.hashtag.org for an overview of popular hashtags and to find out if your hashtag of choice already exists.

Preparation is Key
As most of you know, conferences often consist of multiple sessions taking place simultaneously. So, how can you appear to be in more than one place at a time and avoid leaving a presenter out? In most cases, all speaker materials (to include CLE hand-outs, PowerPoint presentations, etc.) are submitted beforehand and perhaps even uploaded on your bar association’s website. As the official broadcaster of the conference, I prepare a text file with prepared links to presentations, bios, speaker blogs and other social links. It’s helpful to skim through these materials to anticipate great sound bites and key takeaways.

Show It Off
If your bar association can accommodate the AV requirements, showcase your Tweetwall near the registration area on a flat-screen TV to provide your entire membership the chance to participate in the Twitter experience. You can customize your Tweetwall with free website applications such as www.tweetwally.com, www.twitterwall.me and www.tweetchat.com. Other creative marketing ideas to help showcase your social media are to create business cards with social media links to pass out to attendees, provide a leaflet to help people sign up for a Twitter account, and display social media signage.

Provide Links in all Tweets
If a speaker at the conference says something brilliant or controversial, tweet it! But, in order to make tweeting a live event successful, it’s important to provide links (often via tiny URLs) to additional information so followers can learn more. Also, keep in mind that your association’s website is the one place on the Internet that you control. A homepage should be just that – home. Use your social media content to drive followers to resources on your website.

Cram 1,000 Words into 140 Characters
Everyone knows the famous saying, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” You can dramatically increase the impact of your posts with visuals. Your members and the extended legal community love pictures and are likely to click on a link to photos twice as often as any other. This is a great opportunity to include links to your association’s Facebook photo albums.

Set-Up “Get Connected” Stations
To help your members get signed up to your social media sites, set up a “Get Connected” station at your conference where attendees can access a laptop and get assistance from either knowledgeable attorneys and/or staff. For those members who are still hesitant to experiment with social media, extending this how-to service might just be enough to get them engaged on the Web.

Create a Wrap-Up Report of Conference Coverage
When the conference is over, revisit the Twitter stream to create a social media report for your executive director and/or members of your bar’s board to summarize your coverage at the event (see sample report here: www.tinyurl.com/isbassfreport). Also, check out this free Twitter printer: http://twitprint.com/. This is a great way to promote the value and effectiveness of the association’s social media to your leadership. Also, include a “What You Missed” column in your next e-newsletter that highlights photos, video clips and other popular posts from the conference.

Don’t Forget
Whether you’re using a smartphone, iPad or laptop, don’t forget to bring your charger! You can only dismiss the “low battery” message so many times. Make sure you can access the Internet at an acceptable speed. Be considerate of conference attendees and sit in the back or on the side of the room to minimize distractions while tweeting. Also, don’t forget to double-check your camera and video equipment to make sure they are charged and any memory sticks are installed!

For more tips and sample promotional materials from the Indiana State Bar, please visit http://tinyurl.com/8-Tips-for-Live-Tweeting or contact Carissa Long at
Choosing Social Media

Bonnie Sashin – Director of Communications, Boston Bar Association

Ask me whether to use Facebook or Twitter as a tool for engagement, and I’m likely to respond with a question: Which would you prefer, a spoon, a knife or a fork?

Three years ago, I found myself in a room with colleagues who had dedicated their careers to putting out trade magazines, brochures, print newsletters and hard copy annual reports. Talented people, they were bemoaning the need to become acquainted with Facebook and Twitter.

Knowing that Twitter was newer than Facebook, one woman seemed to hope that Facebook would soon become a thing of the past, and then all she might need to learn would be Twitter. What she failed to grasp was that each platform offers something different and that the nature of engagement on each is different.

Twitter evangelist Jeff Keni Pulver has tweeted: “Difference between twitter and Facebook? On Facebook you run your own gated community. On twitter you are living on the Street.”

Jeff is referencing personal Facebook pages where settings allow you to determine who gets to see your page, and how much of it. Institutional Facebook pages, which often have Likes but not Friends, are typically open.

Here my former colleague, Paul, comes to mind. Friends in real life, we are also Friends on Facebook. Now that he works out in the suburbs and I work on Beacon Hill, I keep up with his family on Facebook. If I did not enjoy seeing frequent, new pics of his two very cute children, I might Unfriend him.

Yesterday Paul did something different, posting a photo showing him with members of the specialty bar association he heads up. Apparently their members were participating in a public service project that involved collecting birthday gifts for children living in a shelter for homeless people. The photo reinforced for me Paul’s public spiritedness, and that of his organization.

Had Paul gotten somebody to take several good pics of this public service effort, he might have posted them on Picasa or Flickr, and then shared the link to the photo album on Twitter. If Paul seasons his Facebook page with an occasional reference to his organization, my response is that it’s nice for him to tell us he’s proud of something members are doing.

By contrast, I think of another former colleague now handling public affairs for a Harvard teaching hospital. I Unfriended him within a month of accepting his invitation. Unfortunately, he used his Facebook page mostly for the purpose of bombarding me with news releases from the institution at which he worked. If something sounds like abuse of a friendship, even if it’s only a Facebook friendship, don’t do it.

Twitter might have been appropriate for sharing links to his institutions news releases and blog posts from his boss. This would imply that I think it’s appropriate to use Twitter solely as a public address system. No, Twitter works best when it’s used to engage in conversation with key constituent groups.

That being said, if you’re going to use Twitter solely for broadcasting, the links you provide in your tweets had better add so much value to the lives of your followers that they are willing to put up with this. News outlets can get away with this – if only because self-described curators like me enjoy sharing the tweets with my own Followers.

Bonnie Sashin is communications director for the Boston Bar Association (BBA). She established a Facebook page for the BBA in 2008, and a Twitter page a few months later. She began using Foursquare at the beginning of 2010 and recently reported that the BBA has become a sponsor of Social Media Club Boston.
The 2011 NABE Midyear Meeting could have easily been called the social media meeting. Many of the sessions were on some aspect of the various types of social media. Fortunately all of the sessions (at least the ones I attended) were excellent and this one was no exception.

The two speakers for this session were outstanding and despite the fact that John was from a very large bar association with more resources than most, his presentation was helpful to attendees regardless of bar size. There is no question that both of them believe that using social media whether it is Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook or whatever may come in the future is critical to attract and retain members especially younger or more tech savvy members. There were so many tips and ideas that both Sayre and John presented, it is easiest just to list some of those I took away from the session. Here goes:

- View the YouTube video on Socialnomics and Social Media Revolution 2 for information on using social media. The information is amazing and clearly shows why we have to know more and use these more. You can also go to YouTube and search on Socialnomics.

- The San Francisco Bar took the time (yes, it took time) to match all of their 837 Facebook fans to their database to see if they were all members. It turned out that only 210 were members which meant that there were 600 potential members. The Bar then did some marketing to these prospective members. They also used their Facebook page extensively to promote their events.

- If you use social media to post too much information just about CLE, members could start to block your information so it is important to use different social media appropriately. It should be used for more than just promotion of events.

- Although social media is electronic, it is “social” and there are ways to now create opportunities for those who use Twitter, to “tweetup” which means a gathering of people in specific location to meet socially and in person. There is actually a special invitation to these tweetups – Twitvite (http://twtvite.com/)

- You need to monitor all your social media accounts and the best (and really only way) to do this effectively is by creating a Social Media Dashboard. See article “Benefits of Using a Social Media Dashboard” Some of the sites mentioned for more information are HootSuite(www.hootsuite.com), Sprout Social (http://sproutsocial.com/). You can google Social Media Dashboard for even more information.

  - Facebook has code to help you put a “Like” button on your page. The Like button lets a user share your content with friends on Facebook. When the user clicks the Like button on your site, a story appears in the user’s friends’ News Feed with a link back to your website. Get the “Like” button code.

  - Add Social Media icons to all email signatures so members can sign up easily.

  - Marketing/Communication staff should follow local reporters, courts, law schools, board members and other association members on Twitter.

  - You should search LinkedIn groups for Twitter handles of some members.

  - LegalBirds.com allows you to search for legal professionals on Twitter by state. This lets you see which members are on Twitter and even potential members.

And finally both speakers at this session and all other sessions agreed that it is critical to have a communication and marketing strategy that incorporates all these new tools with more traditional tools and methods. These techniques should not be used in a vacuum but part of the larger picture for recruiting and retaining members.

Panelists

Sayre Happich, San Francisco, CA
Assistant Director of Communications & Public Relations, Bar Association of San Francisco,

John Sirman, Austin, TX, Web Manager, State Bar of Texas.

Pat was hired in 1993 to work with solo and small firm practitioners to help them with office management and technology (such as it was in 1993). Since then she has taken on the responsibility for Member Benefits, E-newsletters, the MSBA website, the Solo and Small Firm Conference and a variety of other projects. She has been active in NABE in a variety ways. She gave up sleeping in 1999. (Just kidding.)
The well attended To Tweet or Not to Tweet session at the NABE Midyear Meeting in Atlanta was subtitled “Which Social Media Vehicles are Appropriate for Which Messages.”

Bonnie Sashin, Communications Director at the Boston Bar Association, asked a series of questions to the panel of media experts, including: Toby Bloomfield (@tobydiva), Bloomfield Marketing, Bert Dumars (@bwдумарс), Newell Rubbermaid, Stephaine Frost, (@swfrost), Digital Media Strategist and Etan Horowitz (@etanowitz), Digital Media Producer, CNN International.

How Do You Use One Particular Tool Successfully?
Bert began by describing how his company developed a campaign to draw interest in their Sharpie product through the use of Facebook and Twitter by allowing fans to post their Sharpie artwork on the site. By turning the camera on the users, they become “YouTube” ambassadors. Etan uses Twitter for news gathering, promotion of shows and to analyze what people are interested in. He explained, “You have to think of your goal and not get distracted by numbers.” CNN didn’t have rights for the World Cup so he instead turned his attention on the international fan base. He went to bars, restaurants and events and used pictures and videos to cover the buzz and achieve the overall impression that CNN was there. Stephanie warns that you have to use a variety of tools, not just social media. Email marketing software such as Mail Chimp may be your best tool. Consider your target audience and choose the best tool to reach them. Bert agreed that a Facebook page for preoperative services might not be appropriate. Nurses cleaning surgical rooms would go to organization websites where professionals would discuss this topic. He also pointed out that email is still vital as it directs to other places where you post and creates a web through links, discussions and networking events. He highlighted the value of social media to create brand loyalty, increase sales at a minimal cost, “No one is spending millions in social media, it’s just not necessary.”

How Do Professionals Want to Interface?
Stephanie suggested Facebook as a good start, “Videos are great.” YouTube is a useful tool since it is owned by Google and will easily come up in searches. CEO’s can reach out to customers directly or testimonials by regular users can be posted in Facebook company pages. She pointed out that LinkedIn and Facebook gives users a head start by allowing people to avoid chit chat: you have that information already. Some talked about the need to engage in the conversation on sites like Twitter. Toby warns that if you don’t have a back and forth dialog, others will ignore you. He also suggests that a long term strategy should be considered. Goodwill of Washington D.C. expanded its customer base to include women who love vintage clothing. They successfully used a blog to attract people who traditionally wouldn’t shop at Goodwill by integrating videos and pictures which drove traffic to their stores. They also added an Ebay store to enhance their online sales. Bert suggests that one can effectively use social media to promote an initiative by showcasing and driving attention to a live event to get interested parties together in the real world to make things happen. He says, “You can tweet all day long, but if you aren’t getting together it won’t do much.”

Are There Risk Factors to Consider?
Etan suggests that you survey the landscape and see what others are doing and learn from others’ mistakes. Stephanie thinks LinkedIn is a good option for professionals. It has been around awhile and is experiencing resurgence with their new app. Users can use this site to establish themselves as experts by answering questions or posting industry related content. Facebook has high traffic, global co-ownership of content and privacy issues. The content is owned by Facebook under creative commons. You have rights but others can share your information unless you forbid them. With this in mind, be careful how you set up filters and what you post.

Bottom line, social media is an awesome tool - just be careful how you use it. Don’t put all your eggs in one basket, use a variety of social media sites, but be selective while keeping in mind goals and strategies.

Sheila works in the LPM Department of the State Bar of Georgia and has long been an advocate of social media. She is a research paralegal and trains Georgia attorneys on how to use Fastcase, one of their member benefits.
How do you make the right decision about whether—and if so, when—to kill your dead-tree edition and make the leap to digital only?

I’d pay big money (such as registration fees, lodging, and airfare) to get the definitive answers implied in the program description for just this single breakout session during the Atlanta NABE Midyear Conference. For a year, our bar has been wrestling with decisions about our membership communication, and I know we are not alone. So I was in the front row as moderator Dan Wise introduced the panelist who were to share their insights: Angela Brady (Stratton Publishing), Joyce Hastings (Wisconsin Bar), and David Beam (Chicago Bar).

To be honest, I’ve attended enough conference sessions to know that such program descriptions are—shall we say—aspirational as opposed to contractual. So, while I didn’t expect definitive answers, I did expect some great insights and creative ideas. I was not disappointed.

Beam’s overview matched my own experience. Every time there is a budget crunch, the publication line items are immediate targets. Why don’t we just send it out electronically? The emphasis on social media has also, I fear, tended to be separated from the analysis of publication goals and measures of effectiveness. Beam’s survey at the Chicago Bar matched our own findings: a 50-50 split on how members preferred to receive information. And that doesn’t answer the question of whether members will read it if you give it to them in the form they say they would prefer. The Minnesota State Bar Association has found a significant difference in the amount of time spent by readers of their digital format magazine and their hard-copy edition.

Brady, with 20 years of publishing experience (mostly for associations), reminded us not to make the mistake of the once dominating force in society: the railways. “Railroads made the mistake of confusing being in the train business with being in the transportation business.” We are, she emphasized, in the information distribution/dissemination business, not the print-publishing business. While most associations have made some transition to digitized versions of publications, she believes the transition to effective enhancements is still to come.

Ultimately, Hastings encapsulated the panel’s consensus best: “Print is not dead, but print-only is.” Her description of the Wisbar revolution ushered in by that conclusion was informative and extremely practical (but unfortunately so filled with detail that it is impossible to summarize briefly here). Once again she and her communications team are many steps ahead of most bar associations in carefully strategizing their new direction. Many associations have—usually forced by budget considerations—made some changes that involve electronic delivery, but few have thought through the issues enough to design a totally new approach to integrating a “multi-channel distribution of practice-significant information.”

Unfortunately, the bad news is what we have all feared: Savings in printing and distribution costs are at the expense of staff hours and changing skill sets needed by the communications team. Wisconsin has limited the amount of print product, and focused those on “long content,” which is less workable in a smart-phone environment. But they have fully integrated it with their new emphasis on the complementary channels that include most social media options. She detailed how their new plan calls for considerably more content, some of which they had not really worked with before, namely video. Much of her time is being spent conceptualizing and coordinating the efforts. The pearls of wisdom wrought by her experience are perhaps best harvested in a “Wisbar” case study as a breakout session this fall in Nashville.

I left the session with an enthusiastic outlook, but with a recognition that doing it right, means a lot more time, energy, and perhaps cost than most communication teams can immediately invest. Because it is not a matter of exchanging print media for electronic media, the panel recognized that finding the right mix, and overlapping delivery media will be necessary. So the cost savings our budget committees hope for are unlikely to be realized. For associations she has worked with, Brady noted that some additional sources for revenue have been found in printing and mailing fewer copies and exploring new sources of revenue in the electronic issues. She emphasized that the future on these questions has not yet been written, but the option of waiting it out would not be wise. Instead, associations should carefully choose a plan and take the steps they can.

I was again struck with why I value my NABE membership so highly, and how much I gain through the shared insights and wisdom of colleagues, despite the missing definitive answers. I know my investment has paid off well.