

Operations Manual Chapter Tool Box

Newsletter Editor/Regional Copy Collection Editor

- Has primary responsibility for gathering and creating editorial content, laying out the newsletters, and preparing it for printing.
- Ensures that the newsletter is properly labeled, has the correct postage, and is delivered to the postal system for distribution to members.
- Ensures that the newsletter contains the minimum elements required by BMW CCA and is published within the required timeframes.
- Attends the National BMW CCA Newsletter Editor/Webmaster Conference. (Authorized travel expenses reimbursed by BMW CCA for one (1) Newsletter Editor per Chapter.)
- Successful newsletters have many common traits, but the most important are accuracy, regularity and good content. Beyond that, newsletters can be extremely well-constructed and printed in color on quality paper, but it still comes down to this: members want their newsletter regularly and on time; they want the information contained within to be accurate and reliable; and they want the content to be well presented.

Webmaster

- Has primary responsibility for gathering and creating editorial content, designing the site, selecting the hosting service, registering and renewing the domain name, and uploading the website content.
- Ensures that the information contained on the website is current.
- Strives for a website that is easy to navigate, meets the informational needs of the Chapter members, and can also serve as a recruiting tool for new members.
- Attends the National BMW CCA Newsletter Editor/Webmaster Conference. (Authorized travel expenses reimbursed by BMW CCA for one (1) webmaster per Chapter.)
- In the event the Chapter cannot maintain its own website, the Chapter Webmaster or another individual designated by the Chapter must ensure that accurate and timely information is provided to the BMW CCA National Office so that the substitute Chapter Web page can be maintained by the National Office.

Activities Director/Event Coordinator

- Primary responsibility is for planning, organizing, and supervising the staging of Chapter events and activities.
- Appoints members or recruits volunteers to take care of portions of each event. Keeps records of these events and how well they succeed.
- Responsible for financially structuring the entry fees for events in such a way that the Chapter costs (including insurance and any plaques or trophies) are covered with a small profit. (Growth of the Chapter rather than profit is the goal.)

- All costs for an activity must be included in computing the final entry fees. These include insurance, postage, telephone calls, publicity, supplies and any rental of equipment.
- Arranges to receive merchandise, trophies or awards as donations from local merchants or car shops, the cost of the event should still be structured as though they were paid for. This will provide continuity from one event to another as well as reward the Chapter financially for their efforts.
- Advertising can also be sold during the event in the form of sponsorships or the placing of manufacturer's decals or posters.

Membership Chairperson

- Monitor Chapter membership activity, renewals rates, and reasons why members don't renew.
- Develop and supervise programs and activities to increase membership.
- Assess the satisfaction of members with the Chapter.
- Contact members who are about to lapse to ensure that they realize their membership is due to expire.
- Call or send a Welcome letter to new members, inviting them to upcoming events.

ROUTINE CHAPTER TASKS

- **Picking up the mail.** At least once a week (more often if possible) a Chapter representative should empty the Chapter post office box and distribute the mail expeditiously to the appropriate people. Especially important are items that should go to the President, Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor, as some materials are time-sensitive. It should always be checked just prior to newsletter deadline, as there might be classified ad submissions or information requiring dissemination to the members.
- **Answering e-mail.** Chapter officials who have e-mail routed to them through the Chapter website or sent to them directly may receive correspondence or inquiries that require immediate attention. These should be promptly answered or forwarded to the Chapter official who has the information or authority to respond.
- **Processing new member applications.** Although most new members join using the National toll-free telephone number or through the BMW CCA website, chapters may still receive paper membership applications. These should be forwarded to the National Office immediately so that a membership card and the next issue of *Roundel* may be sent in a reasonable time. The Newsletter Editor should also be informed so that the most recent or next copy of the Chapter newsletter can be sent to the new member.
- **Organizing regular meetings and events.** Once a Chapter activity has been approved, individuals must volunteer or be assigned to take care of the details. These could include arranging for or reserving rooms, restaurants, or other facilities; contacting speakers;

obtaining door prizes and drawing materials; speaking with caterers or other service providers; renting equipment such as tables, chairs, tools, audiovisual equipment; etc.

- **Lending library, toolbox, parts store, merchandise sales.** If a Chapter maintains a set of reference materials, specialized tools, or offers Chapter merchandise or parts for sale, then individuals must be assigned to maintain the library, tools or inventory, account for them, be available for pick up, fulfill orders, etc.
- **Maintaining and Increasing Chapter Strength**
- Some reasons for Chapter growth may be beyond the Chapter's influence, such as, more new car sales at the local dealer and recruiting campaigns or incentives offered by the National organization. However, the best ways for growth are under the Chapter's control. First, is to make the Chapter a group to which people want to belong. An active, vibrant Chapter that hosts a lot of activities, has an excellent newsletter and website, and uses the Internet to generate and keep interest high will see excellent retention and many new members from word of mouth.
- Successful chapters also take their message to where the potential new members are. They have people designated to make sure that membership brochures and applications are always available and on display at the local BMW dealers and independent repair shops. They work with dealers and shops to get them to host open houses and tech sessions. They put membership flyers on the windshields of BMWs in parking lots. They join or monitor online BMW-related discussion groups to see what's being discussed and figure out ways for the Chapter to take advantage of that.
- Successful chapters look for ways to attract younger BMW fans. They host Street Survival schools and organize or participate in autocrosses that allow drivers under 18. They pay attention to what's going on in discussion groups online and learn what the younger members are talking about or looking for in chapter activities.
- Successful chapters look at their member reports each month to see who hasn't renewed and sends them a letter or makes a call to see if the person simply forgot.
- Successful chapters actively look for new faces at every single event and activity and go out of their way to make the new people feel welcome and a part of the Club.
- Successful chapters never stop asking themselves what else they could be doing to make their Chapter a better way for people to enjoy their BMWs and the people who drive them.
- Successful chapters look for other car-related groups in the area who share common goals and interests, and build synergistic relationships with them.

Chapter/Regional Newsletter

Regularity

Ideally, the mailing should be within the same five (5) day period for each issue. Variation in postal service delivery times notwithstanding, members will start to look forward to the receipt date.

Content

Content should be as diversified as possible in each issue. Members' reasons for joining BMW CCA are varied. Some want only technical articles, others are interested in driving schools or autocrosses. Racing news appeals to some and there are those who are primarily interested in social events. If a member can find something of interest in most issues, there is a stronger possibility they will renew their membership.

Contributions

One of the best sources of content is the Chapter membership. Such submissions should be used whenever possible, as they help express the varied interests and desires of the members, and being published in the newsletter gives members a sense of accomplishment, recognition and community. A newsletter entirely written by one person will be obviously biased toward that person's interests. One of the hardest parts of an Editor's job is to obtain contributions.

Advertising

Advertising can help defray the cost of printing and postage costs. Rates should be reasonable. The addition of paid display advertising also means added responsibility for the Newsletter Editor or Newsletter Team, because advertisers must be invoiced, fees collected, and the ads must be reviewed.

Technical Accuracy

Before printing articles of a technical nature, it's a good idea to have one or more people in the Chapter with whom the Editor can consult to see if the material in the article is accurate. Chapter members should be able to trust the information they're receiving.

Proofreading

Proofreading is a skill that not everyone is good at, even editors sometimes. It helps to have someone on the Newsletter Team or another Chapter member who is willing to proofread the text so that the newsletter is free of mistakes.

Newsletter Budget

Chapter boards must decide what percentage of their anticipated annual revenue will be spent on Newsletter production and postage. Great design, color and glossy paper can make for a visually stunning newsletter but the Chapter needs to balance that against other possible uses for the money. In the end, the Chapter will spend its money where it thinks best. Once priorities are decided, and advertising revenue and production expenses are estimated, the Newsletter Team should be given a budget so that the Chapter knows ahead of time how much money it has to spend on other functions.

Copyright and Trademark

Newsletter Editors, must ensure that they do not use copyrighted material in the Chapter's newsletter without prior permission. Just because a photo or article is floating around the Internet without credit or attribution doesn't mean the Chapter Newsletter Editor is free to use it. The Newsletter Editor should have a basic understanding of Copyright and Trademark law. The BMW roundel logo is prohibited from appearing in any BMW CCA newsletter except in three

instances: as part of an approved Chapter logo; as part of the BMW CCA logo; or on a picture of a BMW vehicle (provided the site has permission to use the picture).

CHAPTER/REGIONAL WEBSITE

Look and Feel

The look and feel of a website, especially the homepage, must be consistent with the expectations and informational needs of the target audience, in this case, current and potential Chapter members. Webmasters are less constrained by cost and paper design limitations than the Newsletter Editor and can also change the look and feel of the site almost at will, instead of waiting for the next issue.

Navigation

Ease of navigating the website is critical to its success. Website visitors are using the Internet for its speed and its content so it is essential that the Chapter site make it easy to see what's available and easy to get there.

Current Information

Members consult the Chapter website to see what's happening and when, or to get information relating to their immediate needs. If they are looking for the time and location of this month's meeting, but all they can find is information on last month's meeting, it does them no good and may reflect poorly on the Chapter. The strength of the Internet is that it allows people to place information in real-time instantly without waiting for a printing and mailing cycle. Successful websites make maximum use of this capability.

Contributions

While longer articles are probably better suited for the Newsletter, photographs and technical articles submitted by members are ideal for the website. Information on events should be given to the Webmaster by the Chapter Board.

Advertising

Advertising can help cover the cost of hosting or maintaining the website, but the Chapter must weigh that against the sometimes intrusive nature of Web advertisements.

Technical Accuracy

Because members and prospective members visit the Chapter Website to find information on upcoming events, who they can contact, how they register for an event, or how to work on their car, it is imperative that website information be accurate. Chapter members need to be able to trust the information they get from the website. Another unfortunate aspect of the immediate and global nature of the Internet is that information posted to a Chapter website could find itself traveling all over the world in a matter of minutes. Once an incorrect piece of information goes on the Chapter website, it could be propagated worldwide and when it's found to be wrong it could come back to embarrass the Chapter.

Website Budget

Unless a Chapter pays to have its site designed or updated, the largest cost will be for the website hosting service. As the number and quality of these service companies increase, the prices have come down to the point that even the smallest Chapter can afford to pay a service to host their site. In the event that a Chapter does not have the money to do so or does not have any members who can design or maintain a Chapter website, BMW CCA will host a single-page Chapter website listing basic information such as Chapter mailing address and Chapter officer contact information.

Copyright and Trademark

Webmasters, like Newsletter Editors, must ensure that they do not use copyrighted material on the Chapter's site without prior permission. Just because a photo or article is floating around the Internet without credit or attribution doesn't mean the Chapter Webmaster is free to use it. The Webmaster should have a basic understanding of Copyright and Trademark law. Likewise, the BMW roundel logo is prohibited from appearing on any BMW CCA website except in three instances: as part of an approved Chapter logo; as part of the BMW CCA logo; or on a picture of a BMW vehicle (provided the site has permission to use the picture).

MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SUGGESTIONS

Chapters are limited only by the imagination and talent of their members. Below is a list of the more common types of events that have appealed to Chapter members in the past. However, Chapter leaders and members are encouraged to develop ideas for new types of events:

Driving School	Picnic
Club Race	Swap Meet
Safety School/Car Control Clinic/	Movie Night
Street Survival	Progressive Dinner
Gymkhana	Recreational/Cultural Outing
Autocross/Autocross School	(Museum, Ballgame, Concert)
TSD Rally	Tech Session at Member's House
Fun Rally/Gimmick Rally/Poker Rally	Evening at a Local Shop
Driving Tour/Weekend Drive/Dinner Drive	Tech Session at a Repair Shop
Area or Regional Car Gathering/Model-	Dealer's Open House
Specific Fest	Tour of a Race Shop
Car Show/Clean Car Contest/	Preparation or Inspection for Driving
Concours d'Elegance	School
Caravan to Regional or National Event	Community/Public Service Activities
Caravan to Major Motorsport Event	Fundraisers in Connection with Chapter's
Go-Kart Nights (or Days)	Driving or Social Event
Dinner Meeting	Charity Auctions/Silent Auctions
Monthly Meeting with Guest Speakers	Parade Laps
Informal Get-Together at Member's House	Raffle
Annual Dinner	Charity Walks/Bicycle Rides

Suggested Chapter Chart of Accounts

Chapter accounts should be arranged as follows:

BEGINNING EQUITY			ENDING EQUITY
Income	Expenses	Assets	Members' Equity
Membership Dues	Newsletter Printing,	Cash – Checking	
Newsletter Advertising	Typing, Photography	Cash – Savings	
Event Fees	Postage	Inventory	
Drivers Schools	Insurance	Equipment	
Tech Sessions	Event Expense	Accounts Receivable	
Rally	Merchandise/Awards	Deposits	
Autocross	Travel & Food Expense	Miscellaneous (explain)	
Rebates from National	Miscellaneous (explain)		
Insurance			
Printing & Postage			
Ads, etc.			
Interest			
Other Merchandise Sales			
Miscellaneous (explain)			

Chapter Tool Lending Program

Chapters may offer their members the loan of tools including specialized tools to make it easier for members to work on their BMWs. The sources of tools could include donations or gifts from Chapter members or, in cases where there is a strong demand for Chapter technical activities and events, the Chapter could purchase the tools.

A good tool lending program requires a few key characteristics:

A responsible Chapter member to maintain, account for, hand out, and take back in the tools.

Publicizing what tools are available for members to use at their own risk.

Good instructions for using the tool, if the tool's operation isn't already clear.

Policy and procedure for accounting for tools and protecting the Chapter from financial loss if loaned tools are not returned or misused.