WELLESLEY

ALC Communications Workshop:
Engaging Members Through Strategic Communications

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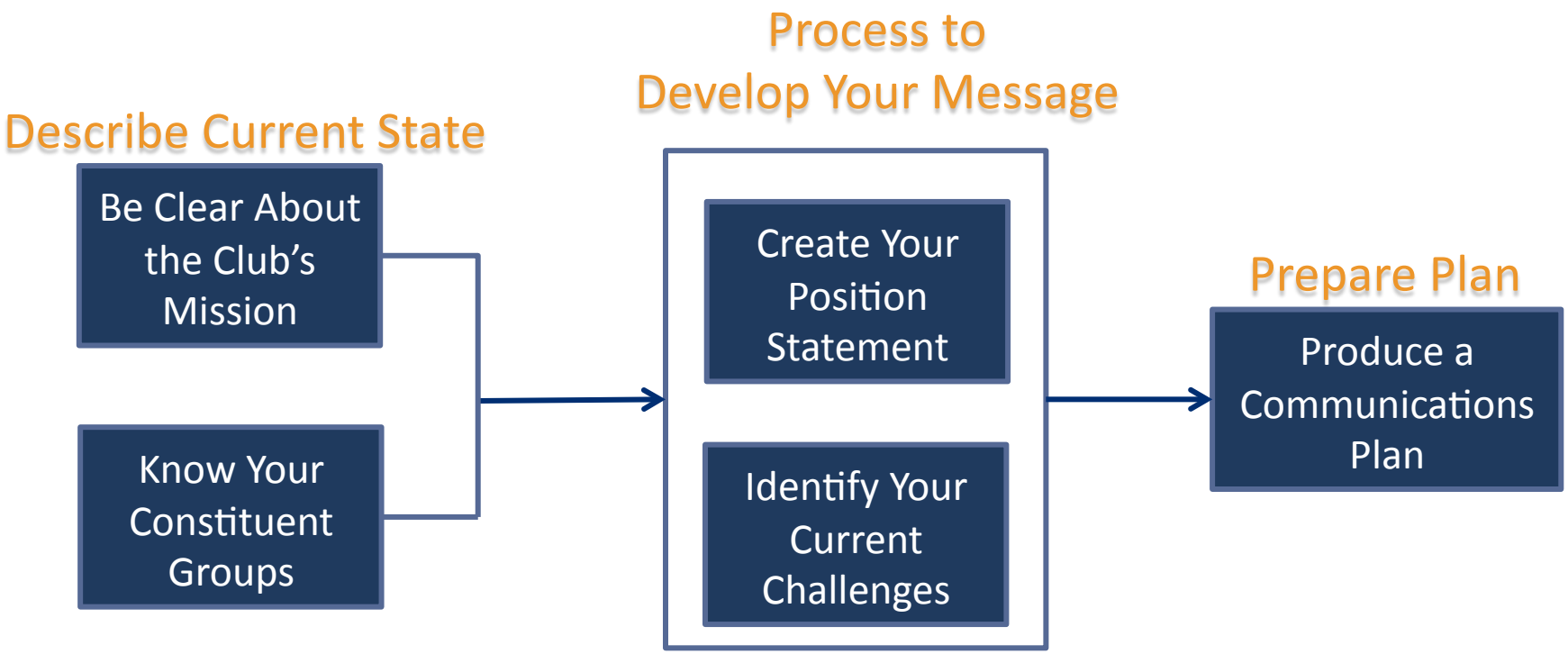
October 20, 2012

Communications Workshop
Topics for Discussion

- Use a Framework To Develop a *Strategic* Communications Plan
  - Describe Your Current State
  - Develop Your Message
  - Produce A Yearly Communications Plan
- Measure the Effectiveness of Your Plan
- Communications Tips and Tricks
- Wish List
- Appendix: Additional Reference Items

Use a Framework to Develop a Strategic Communications Plan



Input: Be Clear on the Club's Mission

Alumnae Association Mission Statement

http://new.wellesley.edu/alumnae/about

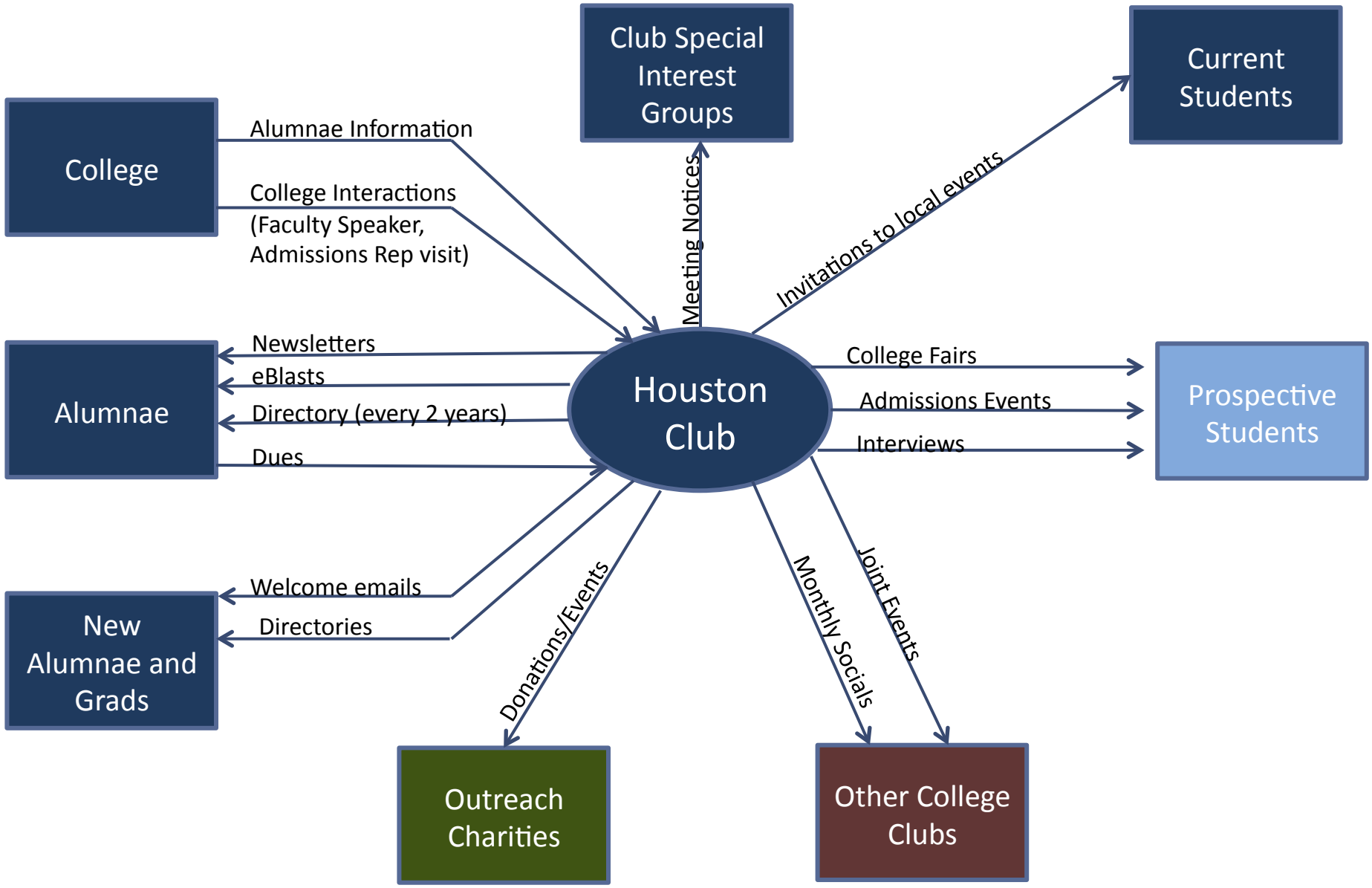
Furthers the interests of Wellesley College and its alumnae by connecting alumnae to the College and to each other.

Club Mission Statement

http://new.wellesley.edu/alumnae/volunteer/volunteerresources/handbook/roleclubstoc/letter_to_club_presidents

- To nurture alumnae friendships—Wellesley women enjoy one another's company and can be a rich source of support for one another.
- To promote continuing education and intellectual stimulation through Wellesley's commitment to lifelong learning.
- To assist the Office of Admission by identifying qualified high school students and cultivating their interest in Wellesley.
- To participate in a dynamic network of women who bring a wealth of career experience and knowledge to alumnae facing decision points in their professional lives.
- To enhance Wellesley's image through community involvement. To demonstrate in a public way the value of a Wellesley education and to fulfill our motto of service to others.

Input: Know Your Constituent Groups (example)



Process: Create Your Positioning Statement

Create a Club Positioning Statement

Positioning is the heartbeat of an effective communications plan. A positioning statement expresses how you wish to be perceived by your target audience – area alumnae. It is the core message you want to deliver in every medium. It answers seven essential questions:

- Who are you?
- What does your Club do?
- Who does it serve (can you define the audience beyond area alumnae, ex. their spouses, families, prospective students)?
- What do the area alumnae want or expect from the Club?
- Against what other organizations do you compete (for their attention, time, programs)?
- What does your Club offer that is different from other organizations?
- What unique benefit is derived from participating in your Club?

Process: Create Your Positioning Statement (example)

Example Positioning Statement

The Western Maine Wellesley Club is an organization of and for area alumnae, current students, and their families. We provide a variety of programs designed to stimulate conversation and curiosity. Our programs and communications help connect area alumnae and foster a culture of learning, support, and friendship, creating a unique community that builds from our shared experiences at Wellesley College.

Club Tagline

In addition, you may want to consider an appropriate tagline for your Club that reflects your "brand" position and is consistent with the Club's core values and mission.

Example*: Connect. Reconnect. Join.*

Process: Identify Your Current Challenges (example)

Current Challenges to Engage Members

- About 28% of our alumnae do not provide an email or it is obsolete. With online communications there is no way to contact them. (Both Houston and Western Maine Clubs)
- Young alumnae are not participating in club activities. (Houston, Western Maine still has room to grow)
- Due to the large geographic area, it is difficult for older alumnae to come to events. (Both Clubs)
- When alumnae become mothers, they stop participating in the club. (Both Clubs)
- The same people come to most events. How do we get other alumnae to come to programs? (Both Clubs)
- An increasingly large number of people are using their mobile devices to view eblasts, so are they skipping or forgetting to look at the online newsletters? (Both Clubs)
- Increase dues paying members. (Both Clubs) Are dues may be too high for people who cannot attend events but still want a directory?

Discussion: Club Challenges

What are your Club's Current Challenges to Engage Area Alumnae?

Output: Components of a Communications Plan

Required Communications

(Houston & Western Maine examples)

- eblasts to all alumnae
- One hard-copy newsletter to all alumnae each year
- Increase participation on Facebook page (Western Maine)
- Request for dues as often as possible
- Directory to dues-paying members every 2 years
- Invite prospective students to admissions events
- Engage more active volunteers to assist with programming (Western Maine)

Timing of Communications

- No Schedule (Facebook, Twitter)
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Once a year

Pick 3 Top Goals

(Houston & Western Maine examples)

1. Strive for 100% email address for all alumnae
2. Actively engage new alumnae and graduates to participate in activities
3. Develop programming that attracts a wider range of alumnae

Communications Platform

- Broadcast email
- Website
- Online newsletter
- Hard-copy newsletter
- Facebook
- At meetings
- Invitations
- Directory
- Twitter

Output: Develop a Yearly Communications Calendar

Date	Topic	Platform	Position	Other topics to include
March 1	Annual Meeting (on April 28) – first announcement	eNewsletter; postcard; Facebook; website; personal emails to prospective students	VP Communications VP Social Media	Dues; Spring Salon reminder
April 12	Annual Meeting (on April 28) – second reminder	Broadcast email	VP Communications	Final push for dues – include list of paying members
June 1	Summer picnic, new student announcements	eNewsletter; Facebook, website, personal emails to current students including new students	VP Communications VP Social Media Club President	

Discussion: Communications Tools Ideas?

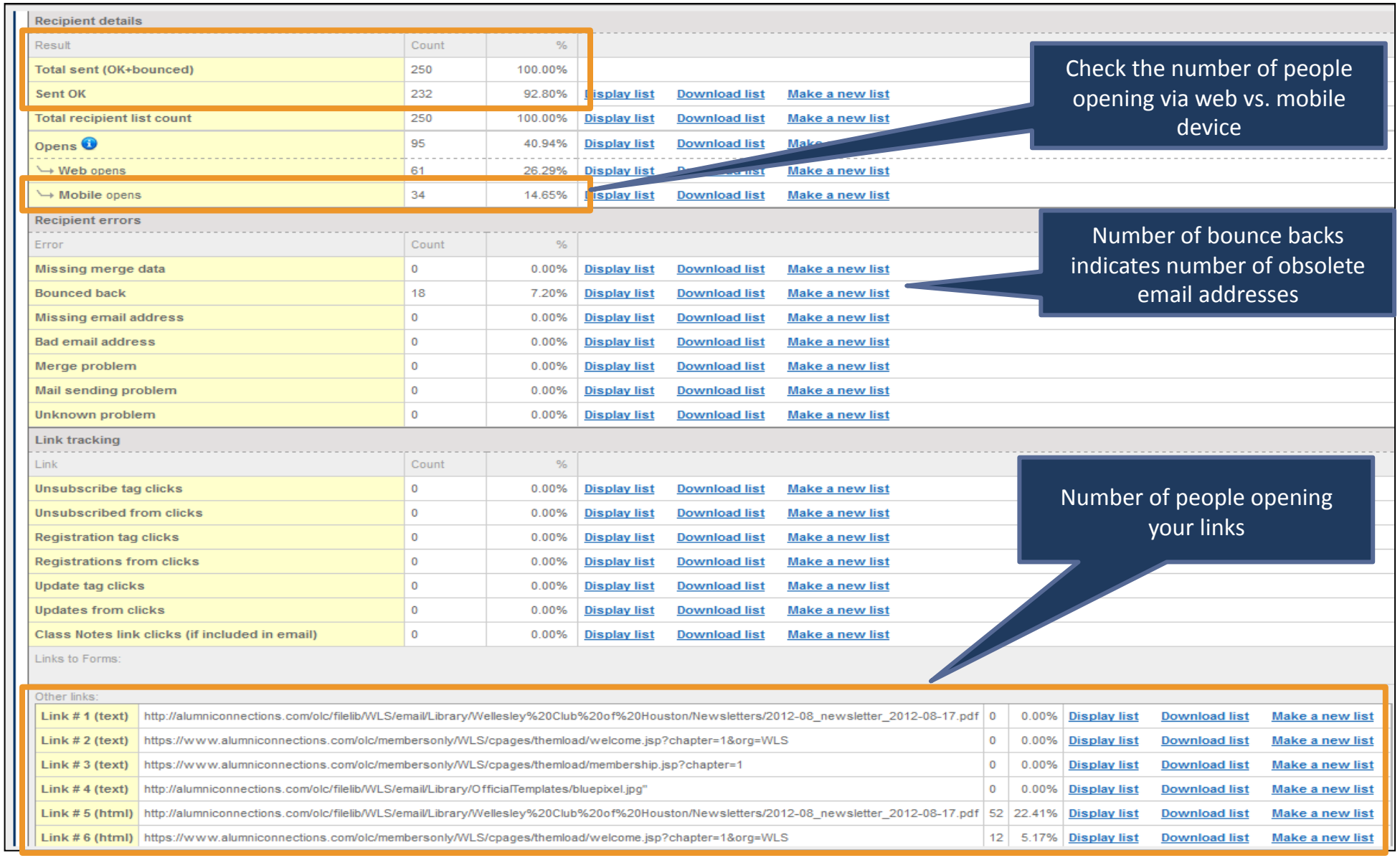
What other tools does your Club use to develop and implement a Communications Plan?

Measure the Effectiveness of Your Plan (example)

Specify the criteria for success and how you will measure it

Required/ Goal	Goal	Success Criteria	Measurement Criteria
Required items	Produce deliverables as specified in plan	Deliverables produced on time and on budget	Deliverables produced
Goal	100% email address for all alumnae	80% of target group responds	• Alumnae contact email updated • Bounce back emails reduced or eliminated
Goal	Actively engage new alumnae and graduates to participate in activities	New young alumnae respond to correspondence or attend events	• Maintain contact records • Event sign-in sheet
Goal	Develop programming that attracts a wider range of alumnae	2 – 3 alumnae attend who have not attended before	• Event sign-in sheet • Dues from new people
Goal	Drive more people to the website	50% of broadcast emails opened website links	• Vconnect Email Marketing Reports

Measure the Effectiveness of Your Plan (Broadcast email example)



Recipient details

Result	Count	%			
Total sent (OK+bounced)	250	100.00%			
Sent OK	232	92.80%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Total recipient list count	250	100.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Opens	95	40.94%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
↳ Web opens	61	26.29%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
↳ Mobile opens	34	14.65%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list

Check the number of people opening via web vs. mobile device

Recipient errors

Error	Count	%			
Missing merge data	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Bounced back	18	7.20%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Missing email address	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Bad email address	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Merge problem	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Mail sending problem	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Unknown problem	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list

Number of bounce backs indicates number of obsolete email addresses

Link tracking

Link	Count	%			
Unsubscribe tag clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Unsubscribed from clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Registration tag clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Registrations from clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Update tag clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Updates from clicks	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Class Notes link clicks (if included in email)	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list

Links to Forms:

Other links:

Link # 1 (text)	http://alumniconnections.com/olc/filelib/WLS/email/Library/Wellesley%20Club%20of%20Houston/Newsletters/2012-08_newsletter_2012-08-17.pdf	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Link # 2 (text)	https://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/membersonly/WLS/cpages/themload/welcome.jsp?chapter=1&org=WLS	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Link # 3 (text)	https://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/membersonly/WLS/cpages/themload/membership.jsp?chapter=1	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Link # 4 (text)	http://alumniconnections.com/olc/filelib/WLS/email/Library/OfficialTemplates/bluepixel.jpg"	0	0.00%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Link # 5 (html)	http://alumniconnections.com/olc/filelib/WLS/email/Library/Wellesley%20Club%20of%20Houston/Newsletters/2012-08_newsletter_2012-08-17.pdf	52	22.41%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list
Link # 6 (html)	https://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/membersonly/WLS/cpages/themload/welcome.jsp?chapter=1&org=WLS	12	5.17%	Display list	Download list	Make a new list

Number of people opening your links

Communications Tips and Tricks

- Nothing replaces personal communications
  - Call alumnae directly when asking for their participation or email addresses
  - Be direct in your ask if you are looking for a specific action or help
- Engage area alumnae by focusing on what your Club offers
  - Highlight your area alumnae by creating programs with and/or about them (ask about their hobbies and areas of expertise and ask them to share their knowledge)
  - Engage members of existing, successful Club groups to help engage participation (example: Book Club)
- Expand your constituent base
  - Invite parents of current students to Club events
  - Invite current students to Club events held during their breaks (they are your future members)
- Use social media for more timely communications
  - Create club Facebook page and post pictures, non-club events and allow alumnae to share their news or questions (job postings, need advice)
- Make it easy for your members to use your communications (see technical tips in Appendix)

Discussion: Tips and Tricks

What tips for Club communications do you have for other volunteers?

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Discussion: Wish List

What other tools would you like to see the College provide to assist with Club communications?

(Please submit written requests on form provided.)

Thank You

Thank you for sharing your ideas!

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Appendix

Additional Reference Material

- How to create an RSVP email
- How to create a link to your website that does not require login
- How to utilize PayPal in eblast or website
- How to check broadcast email reports
- How to compare broadcast email reports
- How to quickly save graphics files (with Windows 7)

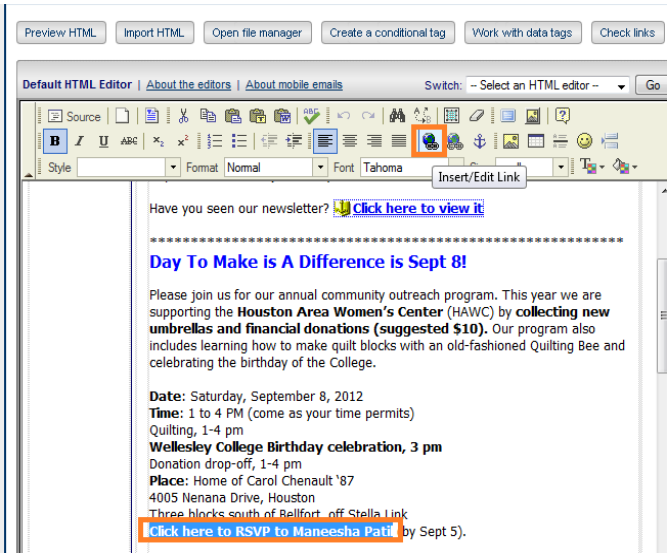
How to create an RSVP email

Example RSVP link in eblast

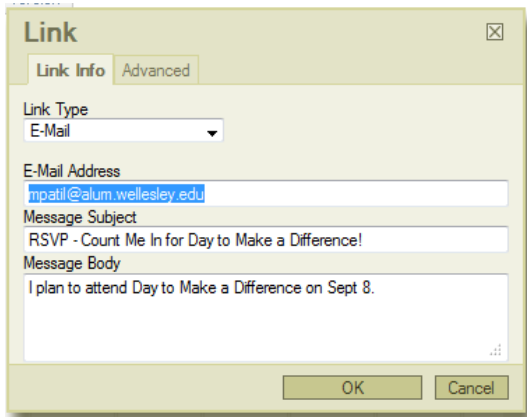
Steps to Create:

1. *In Create and Manage Content, open selected email.*
2. *Highlight the text for the link.*
3. *Click on icon to Insert/Edit Link.*
4. *In popup Link box, change Link Type to "Email".*
5. *Enter Message Subject and Message Body.*

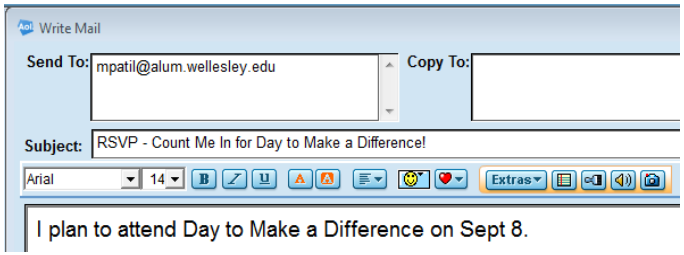
Highlight text and insert link



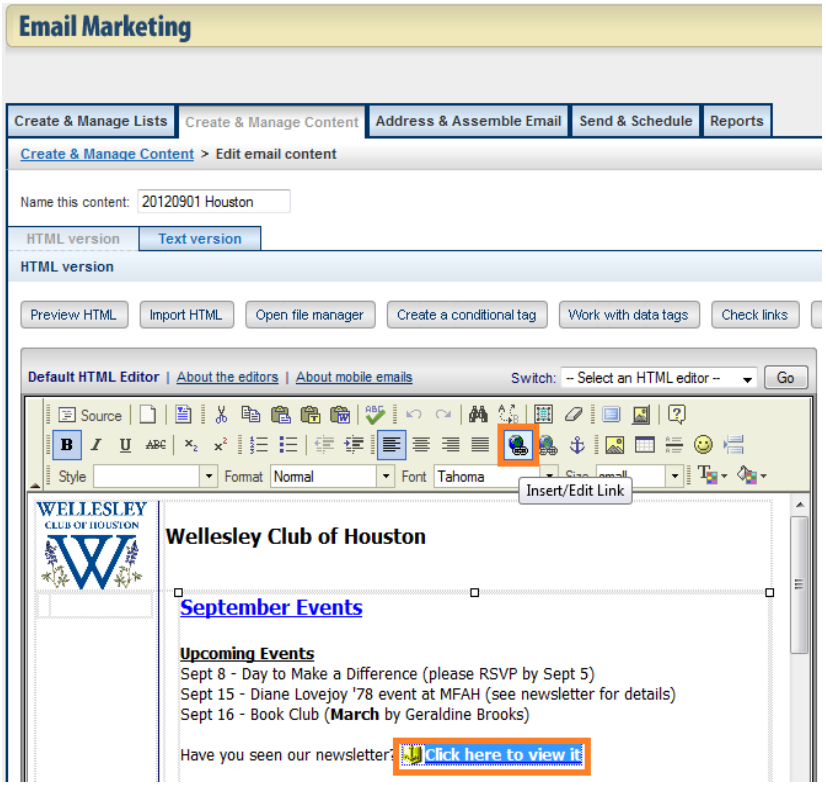
Popup box to enter link info



Generates this email

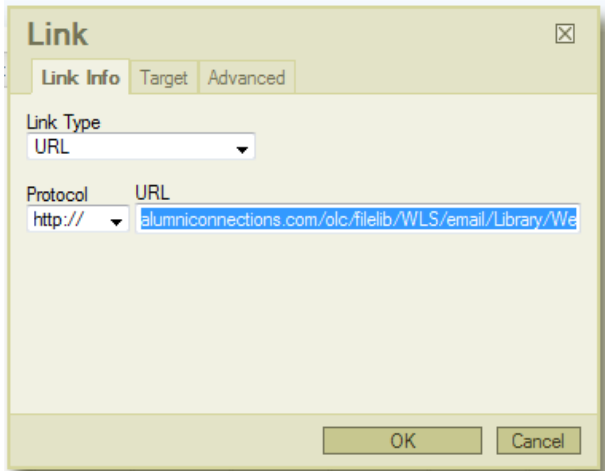


How to create a link to a newsletter on website that does not require login



Steps to Create:

1. *Upload your newsletter in PDF format to your Email Marketing Library folder. Locate the file in the folder.*
2. *Click on "Get URL" and save the url link that is returned.*
3. *In **Create and Manage Content** tab, open selected email.*
4. *Highlight the text for the link.*
5. *Click on icon to Insert/Edit Link.*
6. *In popup Link box, change Link Type to "URL".*
7. *Paste the link from step 2.*



Example link that is pasted in

alumniconnections.com/olc/filelib/WLS/email/Library/Wellesley%20Club%20of%20Houston/Newsletters/2012-08_newsletter_2012-08-17.pdf

How to utilize PayPal in eblast or website

In broadcast email

Dues Payment Options

Membership Level	Dues Amount
Supporter	$100 or more
Patron	$50 or more
Contributor	$35
Regular	$25
Parent of a Wellesley Student	$25
Young Alumnae Classes of '02 - '11	$15
2012 Graduate	$0

a) Login to **Houston Club website** to pay with Paypal
or
b) send check payable to: **Wellesley Club of Houston** to:

On website

Click here for a PDF form

Membership Level	Dues Amount
Supporter	$100 or more
Patron	$50 or more
Contributor	$35
Regular	$25
Parent of a Wellesley Student	$25
Young Alumnae Classes of '02 - '11	$15
2012 Graduate	$0

Use PayPal (please also download dues form and email to sgsimmons2@alum.wellesley.edu)

Dues Level

Supporter $100.00

Note to Treasurer:

Email for Correspondence

Add to Cart

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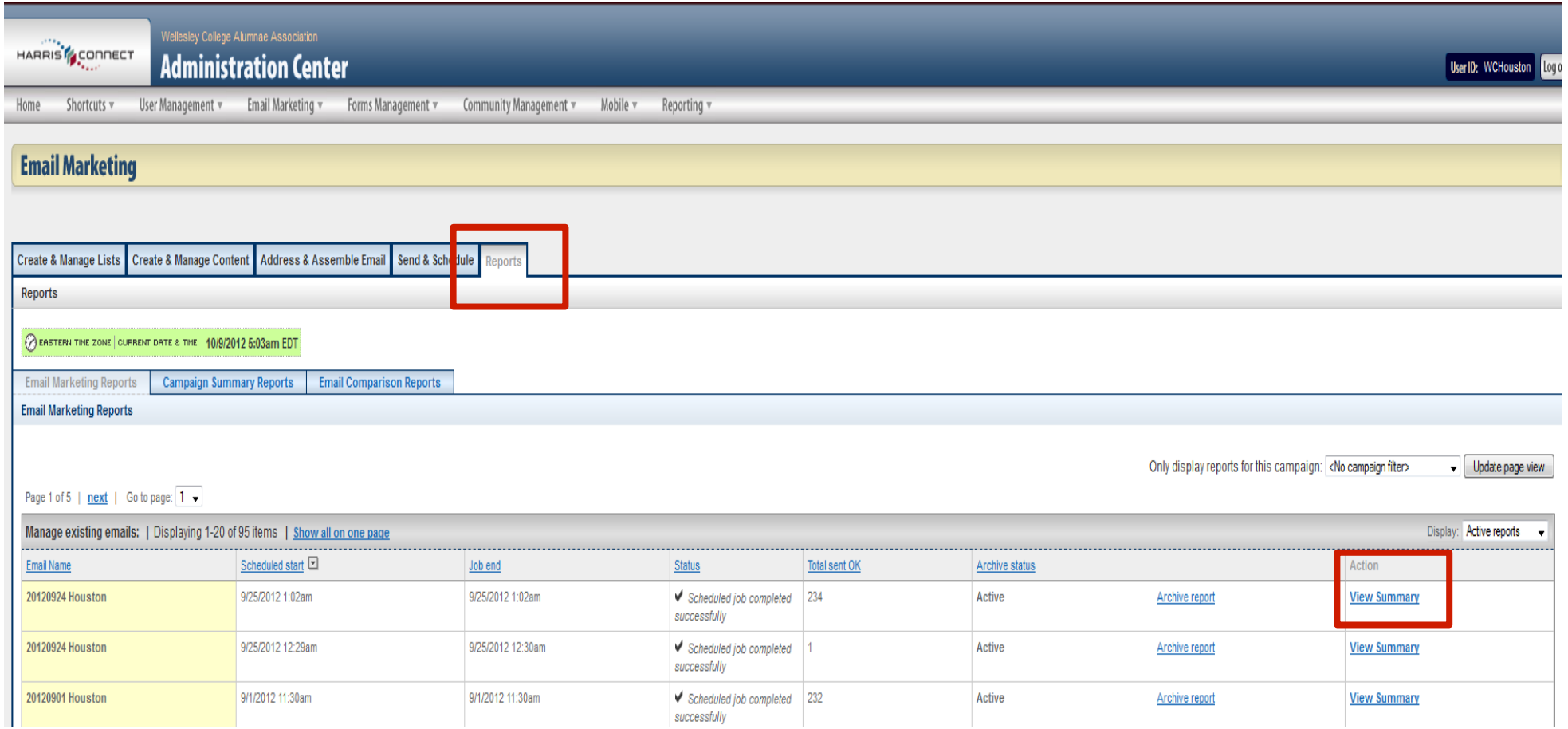
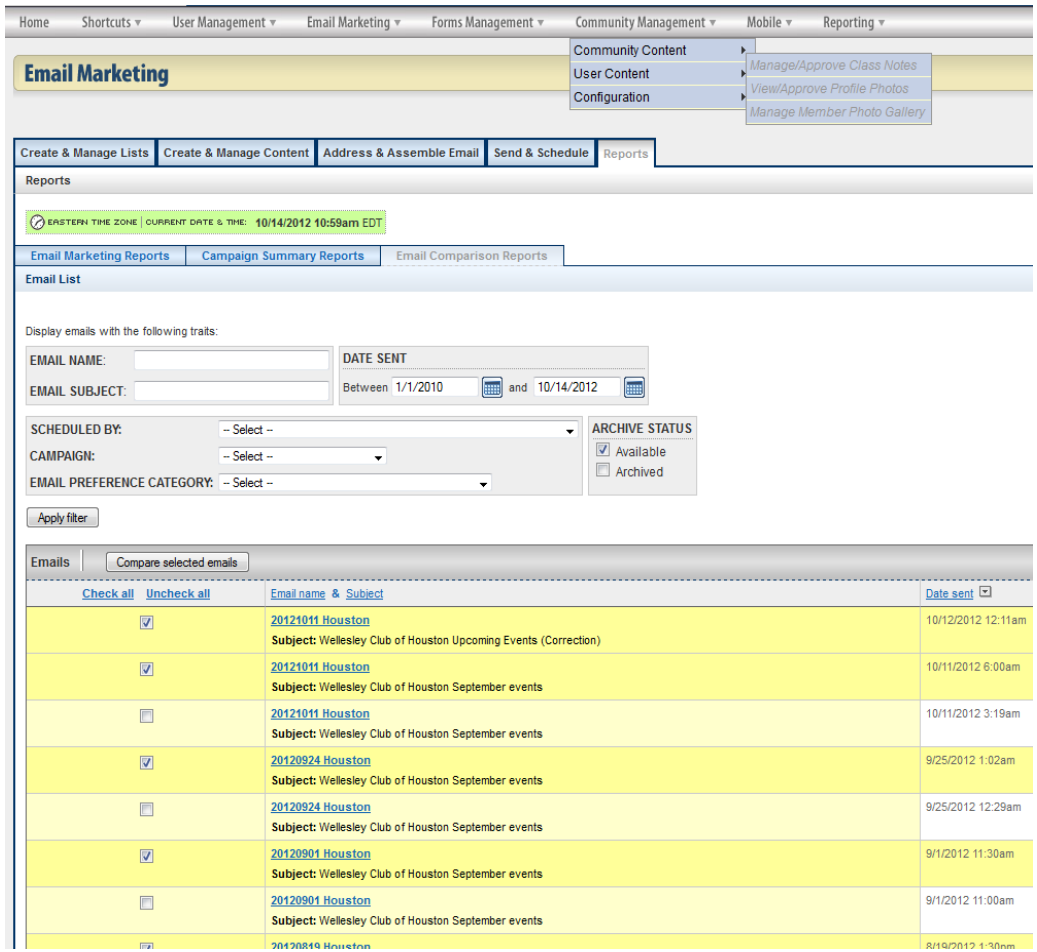
How to check broadcast email reports

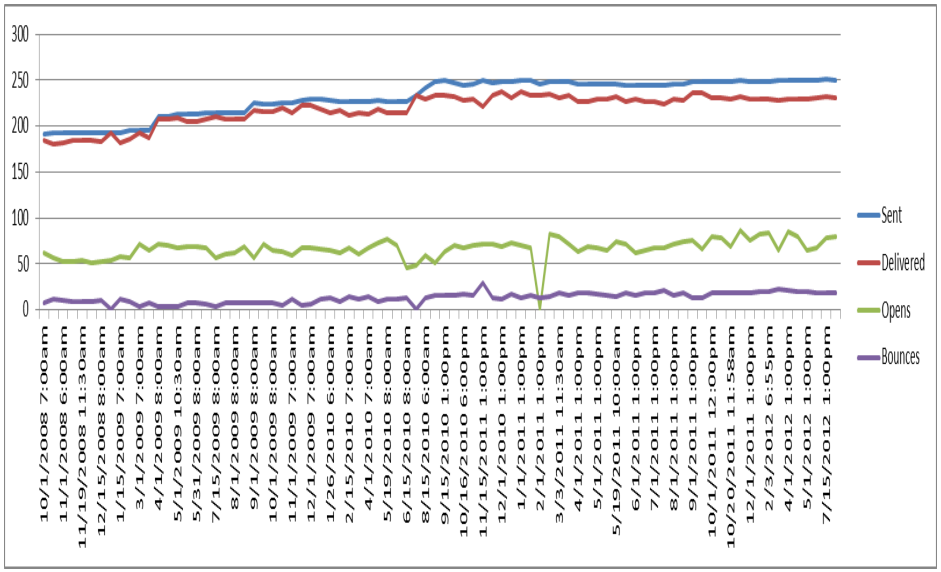


How to compare broadcast email reports for trending

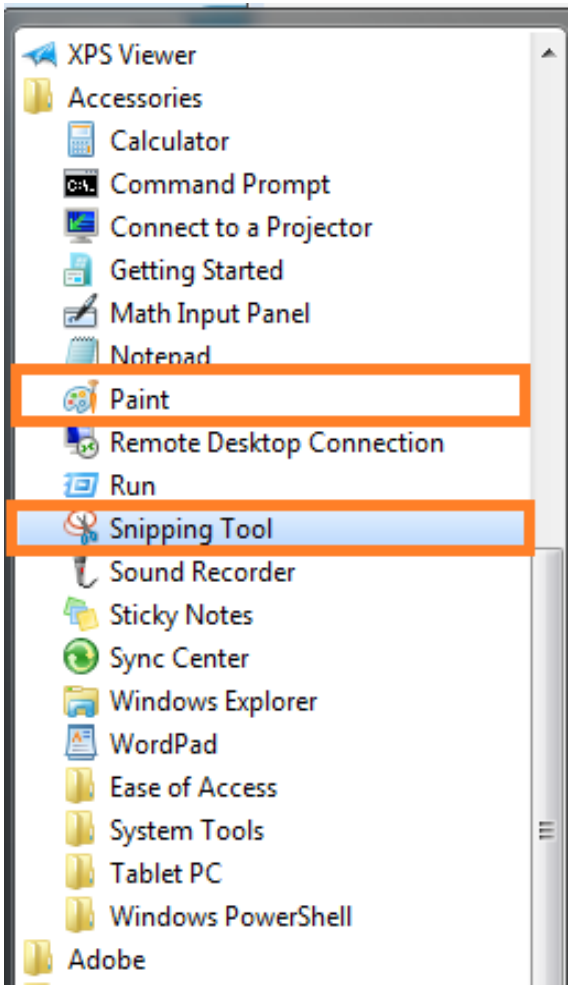


Steps to Create:

1. *On Reports tab, under Email marketing, select "Email Comparison Reports".*
2. *Enter dates for comparison period.*
3. *Click on Compare selected emails button.*
4. *Download file to Excel.*
5. *Graph trends.*



How to quickly save graphics files (with Windows 7)



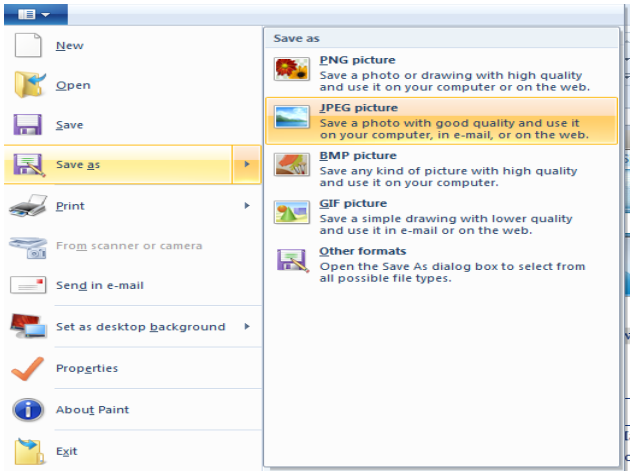
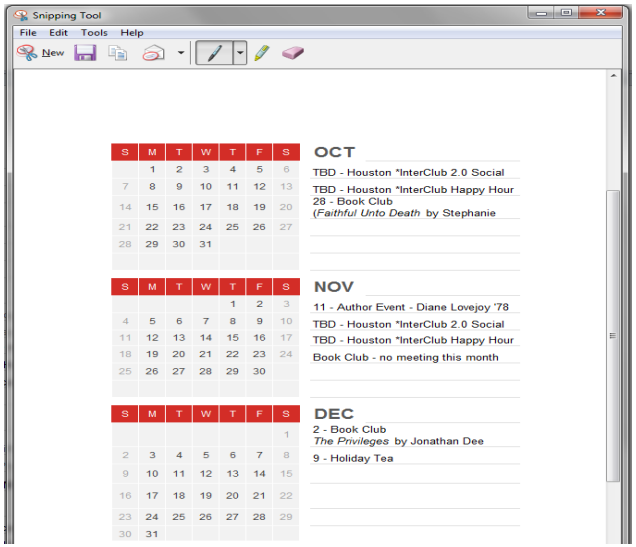
Under All Programs | Windows Accessories, use paint or Snipping Tool.

Use paint for pop-up windows. Press "Prt Scr" button on keyboard. Copy and paste to another document or save as graphics file

Use Snipping Tool to capture screen imagine and paste somewhere else or save as jpeg file.

Instead of trying to use Vconnect formatting tools, create your content in word or PowerPoint, save as graphic and upload to Vconnect as .jpeg file.

PAINT



SNIPPING TOOL