

FINAL FOR BOARD APPROVAL

JULY 8, 2014



CLUB COMMUNICATION POLICY

KW SERTOMA SPEED SKATING CLUB

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WHY DO WE COMMUNICATE?

The KW Sertoma Speed Skating Club ('the Club') has over 200 members that require information updates and various levels of communication. Members have different preferences of communicating, and the club needs to balance those preferences with timeliness of information. The Club goals require a communication policy and strategy to ensure our communication goals are met successfully.

CLUB COMMUNICATION GOALS

- Ensure consistency of messages across all audiences
- Push time-sensitive information out quickly and efficiently
- Leverage all existing communication vehicles to their optimum benefit
- Maintain professionalism for the public and our members
- Bridge the communication gaps between skaters, parents and coaches
- Create a document review policy to keep all documents up to date

WHO DO WE COMMUNICATE TO?

Club communications involve 7 key audiences:

- Skaters
- Coaches
- Parents
- Board of Directors
- Other Members (e.g. Associates, Life Members)
- Non-members (public)
- Ontario Speed Skating Association (OSSA)

As mentioned, communication needs vary among audiences, and each communication method will be responsible for reaching different audiences and their needs.

Note the following roles that will back up each other in the event the main communicators are not available:

1. Communication Manager and Club Communicator
2. President and Vice President
3. Head Coach and Assistant Coach

WHAT DO WE COMMUNICATE?

The Club requires communication methods that deliver the following information to audiences:

- 1. Skating information:**
 - Season registration info and forms
 - Learn to skate info and forms
 - Camp info and forms
 - Program outlines
 - Equipment information
 - Ice schedules
- 2. Club information:**
 - Code of conduct
 - Sponsors
 - News and events
 - Contacts
 - Rink location
 - Board member names
 - Club history (alumni, timeline)
 - Skater and volunteer awards and special achievements
- 3. Parent's information:**
 - Volunteering
 - General racing structure for Ontario Short Track
 - Information on practices
 - Information on meets
 - Information on fundraising and volunteering
- 4. Coaches information:**
 - Regional and Provincial group information
 - Personal Best Time stats
 - Badge information
 - Meet results
 - Group blogs and forums
- 5. Timely updates:**
 - Rink closures
 - Ice schedule changes
 - Inclement weather
 - Important club changes
 - Form due dates
 - Skate pickup
- 6. Club promotion and marketing:**
 - Marketing the sport
 - Visibility in the community
 - Promotion of our Club to non-members

WHERE AND HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

There are 6 key communication methods used by the Club. The following table outlines each method, its key audience, what the method is responsible for communicating, how frequently it should be updated and by whom.

Method	Key Audience	Communicates	Update frequency	Updated by
Website	Public (non-members) Parents of skaters	Skating information Club information Parent information Timely updates Club & sport promotion/marketing	As required (minimum weekly)	Communications Manager
Social media	Public (non-members) All members	Club & sport promotion/marketing Club information Timely updates	As required (minimum weekly)	Communications Manager
Email	All members Board of Directors	Timely updates	As required	Club Communicator Registrar
Members' site (Schoology)	Skaters Coaches	Coaches information	As required	Head Coach Assistant Coaches Skaters
Display Board	Public (non-members)	Club & sport promotion/marketing Club information	Annually	Communication Committee
White Board	Skaters Coaches Parents	Timely updates Skating information	As required	Head Coach President Communications Manager

The website, social media, display boards and white boards are not meant for two-way communication. They are used for disseminating key information and club marketing on a timely and informative basis. Email and the members' site are the two places where the audience can interact with the communication method.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

The Club Communication policies and processes are outlined below.

WEBSITE

The Club website is www.kwspeedskating.com. This site is built by Everton Wilmot Technologies in Kitchener, Ontario and is updated and maintained by the Communications Manager. This site is maintained by the Club using WordPress. The host server is Go Daddy, but web hosting services are managed through Everton Wilmot Technologies.

The website is the main vehicle for public club information, including program and registration information, club information, parent information, news and achievements. It is the first impression the Club will leave with many non-members and needs to be clear, appealing and easy to navigate for visitors to entice them to learn more about speed skating and the Club.

The website will be reviewed, at a minimum, weekly by the Communications Manager for content update and to ensure links and photos are not broken.

Skating information

The website includes all registration information for seasonal skating, learn to skate programs and the FUNdamentals summer camp program.

All registration forms are included on the site. Registration forms are updated annually in July once registration fees are approved by the Board of Directors in the June board meeting. Forms are pdf format and maintained by the head of Club Membership/Registration.

The three main skating programs are outlined on the website – FUNdamentals, Train to Train and Active for Life. Reference to the LTADP is included.

Equipment information includes basic outlines of what skaters require for practices and meets. Links to equipment purchase include the OSSA website classified section as well as promotion of Shoei Creations (owned by Club member Paul Shoebridge).

All content, forms and links are updated and maintained by the Communications Manager.

Club information

The Club's Code of Conduct is included on the website and is reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors. The code is a locked pdf document available for download by the public, and is part of the annual registration package for members.

Club sponsors are clearly outlined on the website and logos are approved by the Communications Manager prior to posting.

News and events are updated monthly on the website to highlight club and skater achievements throughout the season. Information is provided in both text and a banner format on the site.

All club information content is updated and maintained by the Communications Manager.

Parent information

Volunteering is highlighted on the website, including information on potential fundraising events (e.g. skate-a-thons, Food Bank drives, Bingo sign up and other events as determined by the Board of Directors).

Club practice and meet expectations are available in downloadable locked pdf format on the site.

All parent information is updated and maintained by the Communications Manager.

Club history and achievements

Skater and club awards, and club achievements (i.e. 50th anniversary) will be showcased on the website, and updated as required.

A timeline on the club history will be shown to highlight key club milestones.

All club history and achievement information is updated and maintained by the Communications Manager.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Club relies mainly on promotion and marketing through two social media sites, Facebook and Twitter. YouTube may be used in isolation to run a streaming video of a live meet on the Club website, or to show Club approved promotional videos.

The Club registration form includes a privacy waiver for photos that registrants must acknowledge reading and signing to become a club member. This waiver lets members know that the Club can use photos, videos and event results of their child or them on the club's website, arenas, local newspapers or any photo and video sharing websites (referencing Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others). Our website also includes a statement that content posted on social media is not a reflection of the opinions of the Club unless posted by an authorized Club member.

Facebook (KWSSSC)

An information only page 'KWSSSC' is available for viewing through Facebook for members and non-members. This site will be updated weekly and monitored every few days by the Communications Manager for content, accuracy and inappropriate use of the site. Followers can post comments on the information page and 'Like' the page to endorse their acceptance of the page to other members.

The page is a one way communication tool to promote the Club, its skater and member achievements, Club events, raise awareness of the sport and its athletes, and promote health and fitness as it relates to speed skating.

Twitter (@kwspeedskates)

An information account designed to promote the Club, its skater and member achievements, Club events, raise awareness of the sport and its athletes, and promote health and fitness as it relates to speed skating. This account will be updated with 125 character profile updates (or 'tweets') as required, minimum weekly, and monitored every few days by the Communication Manager for content, accuracy and inappropriate use of the site. Followers can follow the account on Twitter and 'retweet', or forward, posts on the account onto their own page. The Communication Manager will be the administrator of the site and will see all retweets and posts from members following '@kwspeedskates'. Not all followers of the account see all retweeted posts from other followers. Note that ONLY the Club administrator will decide what posts are appropriate to tweet or retweet for all followers of the site to view. This account will follow Club endorsed accounts such as OSSA, SSC, and Club members.

Club posted tweets will be fed automatically onto the Facebook page 'KWSSSC' and the website www.kwspeedskating.com. Hashtags, represented by trending threads with a '#' symbol, will be tracked if they are in direct relation to the goals that the account is designed promote (as listed above). Discretion by the Communication Manager will be used when following trends, or hashtags.

Common Social Media Policies

Comments and tweets from all social media posted will follow this policy:

- Use comments and tweets to post material related to speed skating and the Club.
- Use comments and tweets to track areas of interest, web sites about a particular topic, or happenings in the sport.
- Use comments and tweets as a tool to point to related material on other websites as well as external sites.
- Use comments and tweets to engage audiences in a different way by providing a behind the scenes view of what makes our Club possible.
- Use comments and tweets to discuss our Club programs, post reviews, promote upcoming events, and receive comments.

Photos, posts, tweets, profile updates, comments, Club information and any other content is **ONLY** permitted by the Communication Manager to initiate new content on these sites. This includes photos taken by club members anywhere that members gather for the purposes of speed skating (e.g. change rooms, competition ice rinks).

If a club member requests a comment, post or tweet through any social media vehicle the Club supports, the member should make the request through email to 'communications@kwspeedskating.com' and the Communications Manager can post the comment or tweet.

All members are allowed to 'like', follow or 'retweet' Club posted comments. The Club can also 'like', follow or 'retweet' comments or content posted by members. This content will be screened by the Communication Manager as mentioned above.

If inappropriate, profane or negative comments are posted on any Club social media site, the Communication Manager will respond with professionalism in a prompt and concise manner to remove the offending comments from the site.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

There are 3 main methods of email communication:

info@kwspeedskating.com – for general inquiries from the public

register@kwspeedskating.com – for inquiries on the registration process from the public

<mailto:communications@kwspeedskating.com> – for club email blasts to all members to relay information – NOT to be used for non-members

The first 2 kwspeedskating.com email addresses are displayed on the website and each has their own inbox. The Club President will monitor the general inquiry inbox, the Registration owner will monitor the registration inbox and the Club Communicator will monitor the members' group email.

The Communicator will send any mass email blasts to deliver timely information for all members of the club. This includes inclement weather updates, ice schedule changes, reminders of skate pickup, coaching changes, event reminders and updates, and any other time-sensitive and content-sensitive material.

The Communicator is responsible for emailing these blasts through the 'communications@kwspeedskating.com' address. A group mailing list of all members will be created that can be blind cc'd from this generic email address to keep member email addresses private and confidential.

An additional account, 'kwspeedskates@gmail.com' has been set up for the sole purpose of managing social media sign up. This keeps all notifications and signup on one consistent generic email account that is monitored daily by the Communications Manager. This email address is also used to manage the Google calendar for the website Club schedule.

No other club member will email directly to all club members for any other reason, unless the Communication Manager gives approval for such an email to be sent.

MEMBERS ONLY SITE

The Club site for members only is hosted through Schoology, a web-based instructional site developed for teachers to communicate to students. The site has been adapted for Club use.

Schoology is the main vehicle of communication for coaches to skaters. Coaches monitor and update the site on a regular basis, at minimum weekly. The site is designed to hold key meet and development information for regional and competitive skaters, as well as skater Personal Best times, badge information and achievements.

Coaches can post content, photos and stats, and skaters are able to comment and 'like' comments posted in the main news feed page. Parents can also sign up and are encouraged to assign their children under their view.

The Club website provides a link to the login page for Schoology and promotes it as the members' only site. Best practices and 'how to sign up' instructions are provided on the website for members.

All members are approved by the Head Coach prior to being granted access to Schoology. Members that leave the club will be communicated to the Head Coach by email from the Registrar to have them removed from the members' site.

DISPLAY BOARD

The display board for the Club is on the right hand side wall at the main entrance to the Lion's Rink in RIM Park, Waterloo Ontario. The board is two-paned glass with a backing that holds information in a posted format. There is also a ledge for propping up awards and other content.

The board will contain:

- current newspaper articles on the club or speed skating
- photos of skaters at events
- awards and certificates of recognition
- other material to promote current events

This board will be updated annually by Communication Committee members to refresh the content and keep the information current.

WHITE BOARD

The white board is posted on the outside protector glass of the Lion's Rink at RIM Park in Waterloo. It is used to provide information to skaters and parents that requires a timely action such as completion/submission of a meet form, cancellation of ice or selling of equipment by a club member.

This board will be updated as required by the Club President, Vice President or Coaches as required. Emails should not be attached anywhere on the white board as they are unsightly, harder to read in this spot, and can damage the board.

RESTRICTIONS TO COMMUNICATIONS

All forms of communication described in this policy will not be used to:

- publish personal member or non-member information of any kind
- publish photos for members that do not wish to participate in use of photos for club purposes
- use social media accounts as two –way Club communication
- post inappropriate or profane comments, photos, videos or opinions by members or non-members, including inappropriate photos taken on any device in respected private areas (e.g. change rooms, washrooms)
- promote personal charities, organizations or events unless they are directly related to the Club

RISKS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

POTENTIAL EXCEPTIONS AND PROBLEMS

If any method of communication is used for a purpose it is not intended to be used for, as outlined here, the process to address and resolve this issue is as follows:

1. Communication Manager will conduct a discussion with the member:
 - In the case of subsequent issues, the Communications Manager will consult with the Club President or Club Vice President to determine the method of outlining the appropriate actions and expectations of the club

Social media issues will be dealt with as follows:

2. Communication Manager will remove offensive postings from site immediately.
 - If the Communication Manager is unsure of how to address a particular comment or post, they will review content with the President or Vice President to make the decision.

In all cases, the Communication Manager will review the Communication Policy with the Communication Committee for clarification and updating of Club policy, where required.

TRACKING RISKS AND ISSUES

The Communication Manager will keep track of issues that arise to identify areas where the Communication Policy or methods require updating.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS STEPS

The process to changing the Communication Policy is:

1. Communication Manager owns and reviews the policy document
2. Changes are reviewed at a minimum annually with the Communication Committee and approved
3. All changes are reviewed with the Board of Directors and approved
4. Communication Manager updates the Communication Policy and methods as required

CHANGE CONTROL TEAM

As indicated above, all changes to this policy will be vetted through the Communication Committee first, and then approved by the Board of Directors before implementation.

Members of the Communication Committee for 2014-2015 are:

- Kelly Schmidtke – Communications Manager and e-Media
- Rosie Chong – Club Membership and Registrar
- Debra Langridge
- Deb Baxter Heeney
- Angela Schrum

Members for the Board of Directors for 2014-2015 are:

- Vacant - President
- Doug Flynn – Past President
- Doug Gibbons – Coaching Representative
- David Wong – Treasurer
- Rosie Chong – Club Membership and Registrar
- Tom Read – KW Sertoma Representative
- Don Clarke – Equipment Manager
- Mark Blasman – Secretary
- Kelly Schmidtke – Communications Manager and e-Media
- Debby Langridge – Member at Large
- Angela Schrum – Member at Large
- Ann Flanagan – Member at Large
- Deb Baxter Heeney – Member at Large
- Tom Erdman – Member at Large