

Programme

10.a.m. Welcome and Introduction

Alison Freeland *QPC Comms Team lead.*

10.15-10.45 a.m. Putting the Social into Social Media.

Julie Dunn *Edinburgh Presbytery*

*Commnications Officer.*

10.45-11 a.m Questions

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11.20- 11.50 a.m Problems solved and

pitfalls suffered.

Mr. R.D. Kernohan *former editor, Life and work.*

11.50-12.00 noon (It’s confidential ! )

Ernest Beattie *QPC Admin team lead.*

12.00 – 12.20 p.m. Questions and Discussion.

12.20 p.m. Conclusion and Benediction



The Seminar was universally well received. A few useful points were drawn from the feedback form, and will be detailed a the end. All speakers kept to time. The contrast and complementary nature of the subjects was applauded.

Alison welcomed attendees and read from Ephesians 4:29. The seminar was opened with prayer.

She then set the scene presenting the work the Comms team has already done around a Comms Team Strategy, identifying our Consumer, our Content and our Conduits. This can be seen to lead to the website as the central focus, but encompassing all other modalities for different information and to reach different levels of people. The first group identified for attention is the ‘Active members’ and the ‘Notices’ and considerable work has already been undertaken to shift the submission responsibility to the submitter and streamline the distribution of notices. Further work is now being undertaken on the website.

**Putting the social into social media – Julie Dunn**

Traditional communications from Churches etc are one sided. Social media now offers the opportunity for 2 way communication and dialogue. It also offers instant response, or at least a more timely response compared with print. 2/3rds of the population now uses social media of one sort or another.   
Julie delineated the pros and cons of all available media, concluding her opinion that Facebook remains the best for communities and groups. Younger folk may be preferring twitter or instagram but to be effective these require constant updates.

While she stressed ‘don’t post for the sake of it’ she also pointed out that posts should be eyecatching, with movement, relevant, humorous,inspirational.

Following other groups allows us to see what’s going on and encourages them to follow us.

Any negative comments should be responded to, timely and appropriately.

**Problems and Pitfalls Mr RD Kernohan.**

Beware of the advise of ‘experts’

Mr Kernohan began by advising us to beware the advice of experience as the pace of change leaves the generations ever wider apart. Some people are totally fluent in social media whilst others find it totally incomprehensible.

The last 25 years have seen dramatic changes in printing. Print media and the internet are now effectively one with the result it is highly likely that many newspapers and monthly journals will fold in print form.

He had looked at the QPC website favourably. Many others are still print bound and lacking colour. Whilst previously there had been constraints around colour printing , there had been significant improvements in the quality of both colour photography and paper.

Every Christian has some idea that can be turned into a contribution. He spoke of 10 talent people and 1 talent people, concluding every Christian will have at least 1 prayer or talent in them, while some of course will have many. But he guarded against over enthusiasm, recollecting a minister in Africa who was caught in the middle of a military coup. He wrote a contribution for Life & Work which was published but this then prompted him to submit many other less acceptable contributions.

It is important to encourage contributors. However the use of twitter without thought leads to expressions of regret.

The role of ministers in congregations’ communications must be considered. Some just have a blog, others play down their contribution. There is a need for them to find their means of expression. Don’t assume that all in the congregation know who is leading the service – make them aware.

The minister is not the editor, but is the chief teacher and his role on website and in print should be evident.

He noted that people respond best to people similar to themselves. Don’t assume everyone who you are reaching out to know who is who and what is what.

Now even newspapers are not immediate. By the time they are printed most people will be aware of the news via other media.

Letter writers can be cantankerous, stupid, sound and many other things. Most frequently readers turn to’ Letters to the Editor’ which stimulate other points of view. How can this interaction be reflected in the website and magazine? He had always encouraged letter writers to use their names which increased the value of their contribution. He very rarely printed anonymous contributions.

The gift of prayer was highlighted; it was important to include prayers

It was also important to be diligent about feedback. This needs to be organised – reader surveys. There is a need to communicate with young people but this is not easy. He failed with Life & Work despite various initiatives.

It is easy to become too divorced from young people. Don’t neglect to get contributions from youth organisations. Equally don’t neglect the needs of older people – loneliness issues, elders visits are important

**Pitfalls**

Never trust spell checkers

The role of the editor is different from the secretary. Editors shouldn’t abdicate responsibility. Editing requires tact and the editor needs supported in this role.

Tidy up but don’t rewrite or improve

Experience is gained by every edition

Draw in as many people as possible in various ways

Elders should discuss communications during their visits

Communication effort is part of one’s service to the church

Topicality is very difficult.

**Its Confidential**

Background information governance was described. And it was important to have a high profile for data protecting what data we hold .

Ease of moving data brings risks.

In a tyoical minute over 150 million emails are sent aross the world.

GDPR regulations. The new legislation was discussed.

This is relevant to us because we hold peoples identifiable data . Religious belief is held as sensitive data

Tips from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) were explained regarding telling people what and why you hold data, protecting with passwords and encryption, and keeping accurate and up to date

We need to justify the data you hold.

Use common sense and risk assessment

Insure there are adequate training and guidelines

Parental consent

Record consent- written down

**Conclusion**

Pre event advertising could have been wider, and with more explanation of content and to whom the Seminar was addressed.

There is a need to encourage cross fertilization of teams as many points discussed range across the teams.

Further Seminars would be worth pursuing.