

NAATW 2019

Technologies for the 12th
Step: Chat and Email

Why are we here?

- Tradition 1 - Our Common Welfare
- Tradition 12 - Spiritual Foundation
- AA adopts technology slow and late
- Bill Wilson
- What are we trying to accomplish?
 - Speed
 - Distance
 - Cost
 - Reach

What are the hurdles?

- Anonymity
- Privacy
- Affiliation
- Getting users signed up
- Keeping users signed up
- SPAM filters (and not SPAM'ing our users)
- Unsubscribing accidentally (or on purpose)
- Legal issues
 - Text messaging restrictions
 - Members who are not allowed access to social media

Messaging Apps

- Facebook Messenger
 - Do not need a Facebook account
 - Client is robust and allows for sharing files as well
 - All platforms
- Telegram
 - Secure
 - All platforms
 - Not used this one for AA...yet
- WeChat

Messaging Apps

- WhatsApp
- Twitter
- Slack
 - All platforms
 - Free account limitation
 - Can be noisy
- Teams

Text Messaging

- SMS
 - Limitations on how many
 - Some phones / carriers don't work
- iMessage
 - If we could just convince everyone to use an iPhone, all our problems would be solved
- Twilio (custom solutions)
 - Promising results, not that hard to build an app that uses this service

Hybrid SMS / App

- GroupMe

- Great solution, except that if users did not respond in a certain amount of time, they were removed and had to add themselves back.
- Basically, killed due to FCC regulations

Email

- Manual
- MailChimp
 - Concerns about affiliation (not an issue, but we can just pay for it)
- Hosted solutions
- Google Groups
 - Best solution I have found so far, but only for relatively static lists
 - Does not work (currently) for aol.com addresses

Other Apps / Web Solutions

- Facebook Groups

- Some are helpful, some are toxic
- Old Method - Public, Closed, Secret
- New Method
 - Privacy - Public or Private
 - Discoverability - Hidden or Visible
- Does not appear to be implemented yet

Other Apps / Web Solutions

- Facebook Pages
 - Good for general info & one-way communication
 - Tarrant Countywide
- Website
 - Contact Forms
 - RSS
- WordPress
 - Subscriptions
 - List services

Closing

- There is no one perfect solution (not even close!)
- Maybe we need to build it ourselves
- Google Groups is the best I've found so far