



Internet Society **International** **Chapter Toolkit**

Tools for Mobilizing Volunteers

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Introduction

If you are like many Internet Society Chapter leaders, you are thinking about the best ways to mobilize your members into an effective team that can deliver successful programmes in your region or related to your mission. This toolkit, which draws on the voices of Chapter members who have organized successful events, was developed for the purpose of helping Chapter leaders harness the power of their membership to create and implement all types of Chapter activities, from presentations and events to public awareness campaigns to educational and networking opportunities.

If your Chapter is new, it can be especially useful to capitalize on the sense of excitement about how your team can make an impact. This enthusiasm is one of your most useful resources and should be harnessed as soon as possible.

If your Chapter is already established, continuously motivating members to action as volunteers will be a key to your success.

In this toolkit you will find:

- ✓ Insights into what motivates members to volunteer
- ✓ Advice from other Chapter leaders about what works for them
- ✓ Strategies for persuading members to volunteer
- ✓ Ways to use meetings, presentations, and activities to inspire volunteerism
- ✓ Tools such as checklists, sample thank-you notes, and a sample member survey



I. Understanding Why Members Volunteer

In a 2007 survey of more than 26,000 members of 23 cosponsoring organizations, the American Society of Association Executives and The Center for Association Leadership learned what it takes to turn passive organization members into active volunteers. Although the survey was conducted among U.S. citizens alone, there are several insights and principles that could be useful to Chapter leaders around the world.

Key insights from the study include:

- ✓ People are most likely to accept a task when asked in person. Asking a member in person to support the Chapter was a more effective way to recruit volunteers than any other method of contact. One way to ensure that people accept a task is first to find out what interests they have and what skills they can bring to the Chapter.
- ✓ While some people prefer to work on tasks that involve their strongest skills, others see volunteering as a way to try new things, to gain new experiences, and to stretch in ways that do not affect their job performance.
- ✓ Busy people need to feel that volunteering their time will make a meaningful difference. Asking a member to help can be more successful if you can frame the request in terms of pursuing the greater goal of the organization.
- ✓ Professionals have many reasons for giving their time. The most common motivations, or reasons for increased satisfaction, are related to these “drivers” of volunteerism behavior:
 1. Desire to give back to their professional field,
 2. Enjoyment of meeting, working, and socializing with others in their profession,
 3. Sense of working toward a common goal,
 4. Need to connect to the mission of the organization,
 5. Opportunity to use their skills,
 6. Opportunity to take a leadership role,
 7. Feeling a sense of being respected and appreciated,
 8. Sensation of acting in response to choices they’ve been given about when they volunteer or what they do.



Researchers studying why people volunteer have found that a person’s motivations actually drive their preferences for specific tasks. They found that “the desire to help others, support a cause or profession, and act on compassionate instincts—is most important” when it comes to volunteering.

As a Chapter leader, you can use these insights to turn your members into active and enthusiastic volunteers. Start by asking your Chapter's members—in person, when possible—what they hope to gain from their membership. Make notes (mental as well as written) to help you better understand each member and his or her motivations. Then, when it comes time to invite them to volunteer, you can match specific needs to individual members whose interests are best suited to those tasks.

- ✓ A Chapter member's willingness (or motivations) for volunteering is sometimes rooted in the member's desire to help his or her community. People may be more prepared to accept a task—especially one outside their specific areas of interest—because they see the broader value beyond their personal preference.
- ✓ Although the researchers found that some “members do not feel as strongly about their reasons for association volunteering as they do for community volunteering,” ISOC Chapters are fortunate because our mission and goals bridge both professional and social “drivers” of volunteerism. It is important to note that the research also indicates that people look for opportunities to connect their volunteer and professional work. Motivating members—existing and prospective—to volunteer may be as simple as describing how ISOC's work helps the community.

Researchers also learned that people volunteer “not only because they want to support a cause, but because they expect some personal benefits in return (such as growth, feedback, and recognition).” For this reason, researchers advise that in order to ensure that prospective volunteers take on a specific responsibilities, they may need to hear a clear message about the benefits to themselves personally, as well as the benefits to the community.

For these reasons it makes sense to design your invitations to potential volunteers by offering a combination of personal—as well as community—benefits. An invitation may sound something like this:

“Jo, I know that you are committed to helping the rural communities in our region with Internet capacity building. I also understand that your business relies on understanding the network needs of local businesses. With that in mind, would you be interested in calling on IT directors in the southern part of our region to invite them to attend our upcoming presentation? Then, at the event, you can introduce yourself and make some good connections on behalf of our Chapter and your business.”

A very different example might be something like this:

“Sebastian, I recall from our conversation that you are interested in seeing our Chapter become a leading voice in the issue of

Internet security and stability. You also mentioned that you're looking for a job as a network engineer. Would you be willing to give a talk on this subject? If so, we could work on targeting an audience that might be useful for attracting new members, such as financial institutions, which have a big stake in Internet security and stability. That might help put you in front of potential employers while helping establish us as experts on the subject."

Or, you can look to a particular audience to help find potential members:

"Louis, our Chapter is interested in running a series of talks on topics related to safe Internet surfing. I know you work at the IT help desk at the local university. Would you be willing to find us a room at the college that we can use for the talks? And do you think you could find some IT students who might be interested in manning the registration desk? That way we can save money on a room and see if we can attract college students to our Chapter."

As these examples illustrate, being an active member of your Chapter can provide useful—as well as gratifying—rewards. This type of outreach gives members an altruistic context for making contact with people who might serve them professionally. In fact, as the researchers found, "One of the most encouraging findings in this study was that numerous association members find the volunteer experience so rewarding, they consider it a membership benefit in itself."

While a Chapter's activities, projects, and events provide the community with opportunities to learn about the Internet and the people who support ISOC's goals in their community, they also create opportunities for your members to feel a greater sense of involvement by taking ownership of small parts of the overall effort as volunteers.

Public events and presentations help expose nonmembers to the work Chapters do. They also help Chapter members to exercise their organizational muscles by attending and volunteering, which helps solidify their relationship with the Chapter and its mission.

II. Opportunities for Volunteerism

A. Meetings and Presentations

Just as you have spent a good deal of time sorting out and refining your Chapter's objectives, you will want to spend some time considering how your members and others will experience your Chapter. Meetings and presentations, either as a sole Chapter initiative or as a joint effort with one or more other organizations, are great ways to attract new members and to give existing members opportunities to get involved.

"When we need a skill, we send out a question to the Chapter mailing list and feelers to people we know may have them. We even get offers of developing code and of hosting from our members. We use everyone we can."

—Alejandro Pisanty, ISOC Mexico Chapter

They also provide great opportunities for learning how to break down responsibilities into smaller tasks that, when managed properly, will lead to a successful event while engaging and inspiring volunteers.

If you have experience planning events, you know what it takes to make them successful. The key is planning. Most ISOC Chapter leaders agree that it is best to start small and work your way up to larger, more complex, and more frequent events and presentations.

Once your Chapter has decided to organize a meeting or a presentation, begin by meeting with your most active members and board members. Come prepared with a list of action items (if you are unsure of what should go on that list, solicit input from members who have event experience or contact other ISOC Chapters via the Chapter Delegates list).

Here are just a few considerations that should appear on your list:

- ✓ Location: Where would be a good location and setting for the event, one that will be convenient and comfortable for members and guests? If your Chapter has little or no funds available, whoever is in charge of identifying a location will want to find a place for the event that is free of charge. See the ISOC Chapter Handbook for information on sponsorships and in-kind contributions.
- ✓ Promotion: Who will be responsible for promoting the event, beyond sending emails to members?
- ✓ Set-up: How will the space be arranged for the event and who will take care of setting up the room?
- ✓ Welcome: Who will be available to welcome attendees and obtain or check their contact information?
- ✓ Introductions/Moderating: Who will act as host/hostess for the speaker(s), introducing them and helping with the Question/Answer portion, if any, after the presentation?



The secret to creating successful activities and running successful programmes is simple: Divide the labour into smaller, easily managed tasks that can be shared by many people.

Want to Recruit New Members? Be Creative!

Many ISOC Chapters are being creative when it comes to recruiting new members. The Internet Society Colorado Chapter arranged for a booth at the 2010 Rocky Mountain IPv6 Summit in order to introduce themselves to the community. "Because we are a nonprofit, we were able to easily negotiate a no-cost booth at the event. Then we applied for event funding from ISOC HQ to purchase a banner, table wrap, and a prize. Along with all of the great material that ISOC HQ sent us and a few stickers we printed up ourselves, we had a sign-up sheet on the table along with a sign announcing that everyone who became a new member during the summit would be entered to win the prize. We chose an open-source MP3 player kit called the 'Daisy' that is fun, unique, and costs around USD 100. Over the two-day event we had a dozen new members sign up and spoke to many of our current members at the booth as well."

- ✓ Refreshments: Who will handle securing and setting out drinks and food, if they are being offered?
- ✓ Promotions and Prizes: What, if any, promotions or prizes can be offered to make the event more fun and keep people in the room?
- ✓ Break down: Who will be in charge of putting the room back in order, if that is required?
- ✓ Administration: Who will be responsible for entering new and corrected emails in the Chapter's database?
- ✓ Follow-up: Your Chapter will want feedback. Who will follow up with attendees and speakers?

"One needs to find ways to spread sufficiently thinly the work that needs to get done while at the same time finding ways to spread the credit beyond just a routine thank you."

—Christopher Wilkinson, ISOC European Chapters Coordinating Council

As this partial checklist shows, there are many small—but important—tasks involved in launching a successful programme. For any new (or newly reorganized) Chapter, it is essential that their programmes be well planned, organized, and managed on site. More importantly, each of these tasks is usually manageable for a new volunteer or a volunteer who has limited time to commit.

B. Educational, Advocacy, and Public Awareness Activities Can Inspire Volunteerism

As with meetings and presentations, educational and public awareness activities can galvanize your members and turn members into volunteers. Throughout the ISOC Chapter community are examples of how Chapters become associated with causes that speak to ISOC mission and goals. In the summer of 2010, the Internet Society Mexico Chapter launched an online campaign mostly via Twitter to promote public investigation into two new laws that would play a leading role in the public discussion and repeal of two laws presented to the country's legislature (one intended to have Internet service

Student Interns

If your Chapter is geographically near or works closely with a college or university, consider using student volunteers. The Internet Society Puerto Rico Chapter contacted a professor in the Business school of the University of Puerto Rico to use a couple of his best students to prepare a plan for a public relations campaign as part of their course work. According to Chapter chair Eduardo Diaz, the collaboration was a success. "The students were very enthusiastic during the whole process for they knew they were doing the whole thing," Eduardo wrote via email. "The whole process lasted two to three months. At the end, they presented the final plan to our board of directors and in another section to their classmates, which included the professor." As with most volunteer efforts, Chapter leaders should be aware that even free help takes work. "We were planning to keep doing things like this at least once a year with other professors from the same business school but it requires time to coordinate and follow-up, which most of us on the board do not have. It requires full-time staff to provide continuance to such programmes."

and hosting providers inspect content for intellectual property violations and the other to impose a surcharge on all goods capable of copying digital content). The ISOC Hong Kong Chapter leveraged the growing popularity of the Internet Governance Forum (and the growing interest in Internet policy and governance issues) to organize the first Asia Pacific Regional IGF in Hong Kong. The ISOC Kolkata Chapter responded to the problem of rogue elements penetrating servers of public and private interest through unsecured wifi networks to launch a campaign to raise awareness of the need to how to keep wifi secure. And the ISOC San Francisco Chapter addressed ISOC's theme of Internet trust and identity at a regional INET meeting it organized in May 2010.

In all of these examples, the Chapter was able to inspire its members, making it easier to engage members in the Chapter's work.

If your Chapter is interested in pursuing projects or activities that involve education, advocacy, or public-awareness building, here are the types of volunteers you might want to engage:

- ✓ **Researchers:** Whatever topic you decide to pursue, it will help to have one or more volunteers who can thoroughly research the topic, including news, reports, white papers, official comments, etc. Remember: For many of the topics that ISOC promotes, there are likely to be briefing papers, presentations, and other materials that address the topic.
- ✓ **Writers:** Having someone on your team who can frame an issue is enormously valuable. Make inquiries into your membership about people who might already have experience writing or teaching about that specific issue. Writers can also take on development of Web content and promotional materials.
- ✓ **Partnership solicitors:** Does your Chapter have members who might be able to help identify partner organizations? According to David Solomonoff, the Internet Society New York Chapter regularly develops relationships with other groups in New York City that share their principles, such as open source software groups and NYCWireless, an organization that sets up wifi in public spaces.
- ✓ **Liaisons:** Depending on the topic, you might want to find volunteers among your members who have business, government, or agency contacts. Remember: Many of your members would like to be better connected. It is often easier to approach influential people when it is done in the context of working toward the greater good.

III. How to Interest and Engage New Members and New Volunteers

Remember: Success is a cycle. Successful Chapters have members who have a high level of personal commitment to the Chapter's goals. The members who

"It's a round-robin situation—the more people do things for you, the more street cred you get and then more people will do things for you."

—David Solomonoff, Internet Society New York Chapter

are the most committed will form the core of your Chapter. Chapters with relatively large numbers of committed volunteers are successful because of this commitment and because of their consistent focus on recruiting new members who are likely to contribute to the success of the Chapter.

Even with a core group of committed members, your Chapter will always need to be recruiting volunteers in order to bring new energy that will help



Survey your members to see what topics they would be interested in either learning—or speaking—about at your first public event.



your Chapter become—and stay—productive. Volunteers do not have to be members, but volunteering is a great path to membership. Members become ISOC envoys who, in turn, promote ISOC’s goals, priorities, and good works. This cycle is one of the keys to ISOC’s success.

Here are some techniques for creating (or reinforcing) a culture of member participation in your Chapter.

A. Build a Volunteer-centered Culture

To ensure that your Chapter will always have fresh energy and plenty of support for your programmes and activities, it is a good idea to create a volunteer-centered culture.

1. Get to know your members

A good way to ensure that your Chapter’s programmes will be supported by volunteer labour from within your membership—as well future members and volunteers—is to create a record of your members’ interests, skills, motivations and preferences (see sample member survey).

2. Create checklists

Checklists can be created as a tool for communicating with members the level of effort needed to support educational programmes. Each time your Chapter runs an event or presentation have a volunteer update the checklist with any new information. Circulating a checklist ahead of time will give members an opportunity to see which, if any, of the tasks interest them. Having a formalized

checklist also sends the message that, no matter who had the idea, the level of effort needed for every event will require some volunteer effort on the part of each member.

3. Keep it topical

Good causes, not events or activities, are what inspire people to get involved. At planning sessions, in conversations, or, if necessary, through an email, circulate potential topics of interest to the community. That will help build some excitement about the programme. Once people are excited about the topic, you can invite people to self-select to volunteer for tasks, which can save time, especially if it's done during a planning session or member meeting. Typically, when people see that they are taking on only a small fraction of the work, they will be happier to volunteer. In this way, even people who volunteer for only a single task can take some pride in helping an event, activity, or project to succeed.

4. Organize a promotional campaign to reach out to prospective volunteers. Here are a few tips:

- a. Organize a casual mixer to bring together as many of your members as possible. This event does not have to be complicated. Find a location (perhaps a conference room in someone's office). Ask a few of your members if they can donate beverages, cups, and napkins. Limit the event to an hour. Talk to attendees, along with your board, to find out what they do, what interests them, and why they want to be part of the Chapter. Ask them for their business cards and make notes on the back of their cards about what they like to do.
- b. Do some research. Find out what other organizations in your area that might have similar missions are doing to attracting prospective members and see if your Chapter can work with them.
- c. Communicate with current members in person or via email to learn from them, in their own words, what made a programme they have attended (one of your Chapter's or another event altogether) successful, what they learned, and why they enjoyed themselves. These notes will be useful when creating new promotional language for future programmes and events.



When assigning a task to a new member or volunteer, be sure to keep the tasks small at first. This enables the person to feel that they are contributing in a way that is not a burden to them—while supporting the Chapter in ways that are clear and apparent.

Connect Volunteers to the People Who Benefit

Carlos Vera of the Internet Society Ecuador Chapter believes keeping volunteers informed about the people who benefit from their work is key to keeping volunteers coming back. Carlos suggests making note of the “before and after” of a volunteer effort. He also suggests asking those who benefited from the work to personally thank the volunteers. For example, if your Chapter is engaged in a project that helps train technologists in your region, suggest to the students that they thank—preferably in person but if necessary by email—their trainers and other volunteers.

5. Create a one-page flyer that explains the mission of your Chapter as well as its focus and goals within the community.
 - a. Bundle the flyer with other ISOC materials, such as its membership flyers, so that people will make the connection. For an example of Chapter-specific materials, see ISOC New York Chapter's flyer at http://wiki.chapters.isoc.org/tiki-list_file_gallery.php?galleryId=3 (login required).
 - b. Include in the flyer an invitation to contact the Chapter about getting involved as a member or volunteer. Don't forget to include contact information, such as the Chapter's URL. If you have a calendar of events—or even a list of upcoming meetings—add this to the flyer. And remember: There might be someone within your membership who can volunteer to design and produce a brochure.
 - c. Ask someone to volunteer to distribute the flyer to every person attending a Chapter event. Flyers can also be distributed at events at which a Chapter member is speaking. Ask permission to distribute your flyers at events run by other organizations.
6. Create benefits for your members that inspire them to volunteer. Examples of member benefits include:
 - a. Discounts on products and services.
 - b. Discounts on, and waivers for, Chapter dues (if you charge dues, see the ISOC Chapter Handbook for more information about Chapter memberships).
 - c. Admission to special, member-only events and meetings.
 - d. Training opportunities through the Chapter.
 - e. Access to the Chapter's membership directory.
 - f. Access to ISOC-sponsored programmes, awards, travel opportunities, and publications. Make sure your members are aware of ISOC's programmes, activities, and publications, such as the Next Generation Leaders Programme, which includes the ISOC Fellowship to the IETF and the IGF Ambassadorships, regional INETS, and copies of the IETF Journal, to name a few.



Member benefits can be as unique as your community and your Chapter. Be creative in thinking about ways to demonstrate value!

7. Thank volunteers

Remember to personally thank every volunteer for their time and commitment—no matter how small you (or they) may consider their contribution.

Every contribution represents additional energy that supports the Chapter. It also demonstrates to prospective members that the Chapter is worth people's time and support.

8. Seek out new talent

Make it a point to occasionally ask for help from members and volunteers who do not offer to volunteer, even people you know who are not members but who might be able to pitch in. Ask them to do one small task so that they can have the sense of contributing their time to the Chapter's success.



It takes less than a minute to express your gratitude, but the good energy can power a person's positive attitude for months.

9. Recognize volunteers

Organize an event, or a special portion of an existing programme, to recognize volunteers. While all Chapter members are potential volunteers, only some will take the time to volunteer.

- a. Present Certificates of Appreciation printed with the name or names of your Chapter's volunteers and present it to them.
- b. Ask Chapter members in local businesses about donating small gifts for volunteers.
- c. Ask local businesses to sponsor either the volunteer recognition event or small gifts that can be awarded to volunteers.

B. Identify Prospective Members and Volunteers

To identify people who may want to volunteer look to organizations with related interests. Organizations that focus on technology—of almost any kind—are likely to have members who understand the importance of protecting and expanding access to the Internet. Also consider businesses and organizations that rely on the Internet for the success of their business or that have missions that intersect with ISOC's mission and goals. For example, IT professionals at financial institutions, college and university IT and engineering departments, and groups that serve students or senior citizens are good target markets.

Contact other organizations and invite them to join you in sponsoring a programme or event. Consider organizations with members, volunteers, and

Social Networking

When it comes to connecting with members, nothing beats face-to-face. The Internet Society Puerto Rico Chapter has been organizing monthly events for members and the general public nearly every month of the year for the past five years. During those activities, Chapter leader Duardo Diaz personally greets everyone who attends. "First I tell them who I am and what ISOC is about," Eduardo wrote by email. "After that, I ask them what they do and what kind of Internet exposure they have had. If I am not sure I understand, I ask other questions to clarify. I ask these questions so when I see a possible connection between attendees with the same interests, I invite the person to meet other people who have more or less the same backgrounds and experiences. I also ask them how they heard about us and then invite them to become a member of our Chapter. Finally, depending on the number of people, I ask everyone to say who they are and what they do. As a result of these interactions, I have heard of people who have connected to do future business together or who are currently cooperating with each other in other ways. And I see them coming back to our activities. It feels really good when you see people opening up and start networking with each other."

programme attendees who are interested in:

- Engineering
- Public Policy
- Education
- Community Development
- Healthcare



Remember: your Chapter will always need to recruit volunteers to bring new energy that will help it become—and stay—productive.

Create interesting presentations about the Internet that feature the expertise of your leaders (or members) and offer to present it at another organization's meeting. You can also use a presentation from ISOC's library—which can save you time. Print single-page handouts that contain the main points of your presentation and include information about your Chapter and the contact information of the Chapter leader in charge of recruiting volunteers and members.

Universities are an excellent source of potential members and volunteers. Since many professionals who continue their studies at universities are heavy Internet users, they understand its importance as well as its potential.

Consider contacting professors who teach courses in:

- Computer Science
- Computer and Internet services
- Engineering
- Public Policy
- Education
- Community Development
- Healthcare

IV. Techniques for Retaining Volunteers and Members

There are many ways a person can express their interest in ISOC's work and the work of your Chapter. They can demonstrate interest simply by attending one or several programmes or events. They may identify themselves—and their interests—by introducing themselves and even offering to volunteer in the same conversation. The level of their initial commitment will vary but it is a good idea to keep a few points in mind as they become part of your group so that they will want to stay with your group.

A. Cultivating Strong and Lasting Relationships

Consider these strategies for cultivating strong and lasting relationships with new volunteers and members:

1. Be Candid as well as Upbeat

Most everyone wants to join a winning team—even if they are busy. As a Chapter leader it is important to remember that people joining your group do not need to hear about every concern, problem, and challenge that the Chapter is facing. Although you may be tempted to share information as a way to appear open and honest, be selective about the type—and quantity—of information you share with new members and volunteers.

It is not a good idea to keep secrets from members but it is wise to consider the effect information has on someone else's perception of your Chapter.

There is always some good news to share with your members and volunteers—even if it comes from a distant Chapter or the ISOC headquarters—so focus on balancing sober and optimistic information when you discuss the Chapter with new members and volunteers.

2. Volunteers Want to Feel Integral, Not Overwhelmed

One key to growing your Chapter is to ensure that new members and volunteers are given opportunities to help that are in line with their level of commitment. We all like to feel like our effort is associated with a worthwhile cause. The trick is to divide the Chapter's work into pieces that are proportionate to the various levels of commitment among your Chapter's members.

Even the most enthusiastic new members and volunteers can lose their energy if given a job that is too large for their level of commitment. One of the fastest ways to burn out new members or volunteers is to give them tasks that—to them—seem to require a greater level of effort than they are prepared to contribute. This is especially true if the person was reluctant to accept a formal role in the Chapter.

Since many people want to give the impression that they are willing, it is not always easy to determine the level of effort—or size of task—that can burn out a new volunteer. For this reason, it is wise to start volunteers with small tasks and assignments that they can do in relatively small blocks of time.

First, consider how many people you will need to manage a project. Then, once you have had a chance to divide the labour into smaller pieces, you will have a sense of what your Chapter can accomplish within the abilities of your current membership. If you want to do more as a Chapter than your current membership and volunteers can support it is wise to:

- Revise the scope of your goals, or
- Revise the date by which you plan to have it accomplished, or
- Take a break from other Chapter work to focus on building your team of members and volunteers.



Students, particularly those at the undergraduate level, can be a rich source of volunteer labour! Ask a local professor about the possibilities of having students receive academic credit in exchange for helping with the Chapter. You may have to create a position description for an unpaid internship, or you might be able to receive donations from a local company to use as a stipend for a student's paid internship.

3. Publicize the Outcomes

For many volunteers, nothing is more rewarding than knowing the outcomes of the good work they put in.

4. Membership is the Chapter's Heartbeat

Wise organizational founders and leaders understand that although the charter and mission of a group can be a powerful draw for new members and volunteers, the organization must also be adaptable to the varying, evolving, and changing needs—and interests—of those people who may follow.

5. Leadership Means Flexibility and Commitment

Some people refer to new leaders putting “their stamp” on the organization that elected them to a leadership role. Rarely do we hear of successful long-standing entities that are either radically changed—or faithfully preserved—by their leaders. Being too flexible can lead to disorganization and confusion. Being too rigid can lead to an energy crisis in which too few new members join and there is too much work needed to sustain the group and its narrow goals and philosophies.

6. Tap Available Resources

Using ISOC materials to your advantage, you can have a strong Chapter that can accommodate a variety of interests, levels of commitment, and programmes and events. (The availability and variety of ISOC materials changes regularly so be sure to check with your Regional Bureau manager or send an email to Chapter-Support@isoc.org for information on what is currently available.) The ISOC name, the work of its many Chapters, the central administrative staff members in Reston and Geneva, and their communications all represent assets that you can use to interest and attract new people to your Chapter. For ISOC communications resources and materials, send an email to Chapter-Support@isoc.org.



The secret is this: The work of attracting and retaining members and volunteers is the heartbeat that powers everything else the group wants to accomplish. Without fresh energy, ideas, and even new priorities it can be nearly impossible for the original members of any group to sustain it for any real length of time.

V. Conclusion

If you keep in mind that attracting new energy—in the form of new members and volunteers—is as vital to your Chapter's success as anything else to which

Accentuate the Positive

As a member of an international organization, there is always some exciting news you can share with your Chapter. Even if your Chapter is struggling, take every opportunity to discuss the news of other Chapters and to remind people that they are members of an important international group that is enjoying success—and making real progress—every month. You can inspire your members' desire to volunteer by sharing these stories on your website, at meetings, and in publications (both internal and external).

your Chapter devotes its time, you will find that the benefits of meeting new people and expanding your network of contacts are as rewarding personally as they are to your Chapter's success.

The lifeblood of every organization is the energy contributed by the people who choose, above other opportunities, to lend their time and intelligence to a cause that they believe—in their hearts as well as in their heads—is both socially worthy and personally rewarding. Without a consistent replenishing of this energy, organizations cannot hope to accomplish the objectives on which they were founded.

If your Chapter has techniques that have helped you in your efforts to encourage members to volunteer or to recruit new members, please send them to Chapter-Support@isoc.org so that they can be added to this toolkit.



Source: *The Decision to Volunteer: Why People Give Their Time and How You Can Engage Them*, by Beth Gazley, Ph.D., and Monica Dignam. For more information, or to order this book, visit <http://tinyurl.com/2f8boj5>.

Event Checklist for Volunteers

Planning an event, meeting, or presentation for your Chapter's members or to attract new members? The checklist that follows may come in handy when you're trying to organize volunteers. Or, if you have experience with events, let us know if you have a checklist of your own.

Start by organizing a planning committee of approximately three to five people. Use what follows as an agenda or checklist for the first planning meeting. Ideally the first meeting should be in person. Save email communications for follow-up. Ask one person on the committee to volunteer to be the point person between the committee and the volunteers who will be taking care of many of the details.



General Planning

1. Purpose: It is always good to start with a specific purpose for the event, meeting, or presentation. Examples might include:
 - a. Get the attention of local businesses, either a specific market, such as IT, finance, healthcare, etc., or local businesses in general
 - b. Raise the Chapter's profile among local policy makers, government agencies, or other decision makers
 - c. Reach a specific user demographic, such as students, the disabled, or the elderly
2. Topic/Theme: Begin by having the planning committee choose a topic that connects with the community the Chapter is serving or the audience you are trying to reach. Some of the more popular topics among ISOC Chapters include the following (see the ISOC Chapter Handbook for more suggestions and links to presentations). Be sure to consult the presentations gallery on the ISOC Chapter wiki at http://wiki.chapters.isoc.org/tiki-list_file_gallery.php?galleryId=2 (login required).
 - a. An overview of the Internet Society and its mission and goalsIPv6 (see <http://www.isoc.org/educpillar/resources/ipv6.shtml>)
 - b. Safe surfing (specifically, safe surfing for kids and seniors)
Internet security (including DNSSEC)
 - c. Internet Governance and public policy issues
3. Schedule: Once you have formalized your plan to organize an event, meeting, or presentation, create a planning schedule with specific deadlines. That list should include the following (add other items, such as sponsorships, as necessary):

- a. Room/space location and confirmation
 - d. Speaker identification and confirmation
 - e. Promotion
 - f. RSVP/registration
 - g. Refreshments
 - h. Lucky dip draw (or something at the end of the session to keep people around)
 - i. Post-meeting activities, such as evaluations
4. **Speaker:** Once you have a topic and a plan, you will need to identify a speaker or speakers. Look for people in your region who are experts in the topic you would like to cover. You can start with your Chapter's board members or ask them and Chapter members for recommendations from their networks. Contact Chapter-Support@isoc.org for suggestions and contacts from within the organization. Solicit a volunteer to be in charge of finding a speaker and making the appropriate arrangements.
 5. **Date:** Give yourself enough time to get organized. Set a date that is convenient for your speaker and that is far enough in advance to give you enough time to plan and promote the event (usually several weeks). Consult a calendar to make sure that the date isn't on a holiday when people are likely to be away or otherwise occupied or on the same day as a competing event.
 6. **Time:** Decide whether it will be a morning (perhaps breakfast), afternoon (perhaps lunch), or evening (after work) event. Picking the time depends on the local culture and "norms". For example, it might be difficult to organize a very early breakfast event in Delhi. Similarly, it could be difficult to organize a midafternoon event in Spain. Most Chapters plan events in their regions, so they are likely to be aware of the customs and norms. However, it helps to consider all factors in advance.
 7. **Length:** Decide how long the event should be (assume between one and two hours for a meeting or presentation). If this is your first event, we recommend starting small. For example, you might decide to start with a series of short meetings, each focused on a single, interesting topic, rather than attempting a large meeting with a complex agenda and several speakers. The Chapter can build up to larger meetings as it gains more success and experience with smaller events.
 8. **Location:** Identify a location that is convenient for your audience,

appropriately sized (it should not be too big or too small for the expected number of people), and has the right atmosphere. Be sure to find out well in advance if there will be equipment needs and, if so, look for a room that can accommodate those needs. Solicit a volunteer to help secure a location and make the appropriate arrangements. Remember: It is better to have a small, crowded room rather than a large empty room—just make sure you can get hold of extra chairs!

9. **Size of event:** Decide how many attendees you are interested in attracting, both the minimum number and the maximum. Be sure to inform the location volunteer what size room you might need. Always factor in a “drop out” rate. This can be anywhere from 30-50 percent.
10. **Sponsorship:** Events are great opportunities to solicit sponsorships from organizations, educational institutions, and business enterprises to help cover some or all of the costs (both cash and in-kind) of organizing an event. For example, a nearby college or university is usually a great resource for meeting rooms. Look to your employer or the employers of the people on your planning committee for help with promotion (company mailing lists, newsletters, and websites) or to cover the cost of refreshments. Solicit a volunteer to help identify and/or assist with securing sponsors. For more information about sponsorships, see the ISOC Chapter Handbook.
11. **Promotion:** Determine who the audience is for the event and solicit a volunteer to take care of promotion. If that person has experience with marketing and promotion, they will likely be able to work independently. If that person does not have experience in this area, the planning committee may need to assist. Promotion can range from a simple email to your member database to a more elaborate plan that involves getting your message out through a variety of outlets, including press releases, partner organizations, and flyers.
12. **Refreshments:** Decide whether food and beverages should be available and, if so, what should be offered. If you are going to be offering refreshments, how will the cost of the refreshments be covered? Member dues? Registration fees? Board donation? Sponsorships? In 2010, ISOC launched an Event Funding programme (<http://www.isoc.org/isoc/chapters/funding/>) to help Chapters cover expenses for events as a way to help reinvigorate Chapters. However you pay for refreshments, solicit a volunteer to take care of making the arrangements to have the refreshments ordered and either picked up or delivered. Let the volunteer know they will also need to arrange to have cups, plates, napkins, and utensils on hand.
13. **Set-up and break down:** Be sure to have a volunteer who can make sure the room is set up (including making sure that the seating is appropriate

and that all technology needs are met) and broken down once everyone has left. This volunteer must make sure that the room is put back together, that technology is returned (if necessary), and that the refreshment station is cleared.

14. Registration: If attendees are expected to register for the event, you will need to make arrangements for people to register via email, website, or other means. Solicit a volunteer who can take care of overseeing registration, including capturing relevant information (such as name and email addresses). However, be aware that capturing member or other information demands attention to privacy issues. Make sure that your Chapter has a privacy policy with regards to personal information and that registrants are aware of the policy.
15. Greeter: At any event or presentation, attendees are best served when someone is available to greet them and make them feel welcome. When (and where) possible, have a desk or a space where a volunteer can be seated to greet attendees. And be sure to have the greeter verify contact information or collect that information if registration was not required.
16. Follow-up:
 - b. Consider a survey of attendees to get feedback on the event or presentation
 - c. Be sure to send a thank-you note to the speaker or speakers
 - d. Recognize volunteers

Volunteer Responsibilities and Job Descriptions

Regardless of what type of meeting, event, or presentation you are planning, opportunities for volunteers abound. Chances are, as a Chapter leader, you and your board or planning committee are overseeing the bulk of the work. However, if you get in the habit and practice of engaging volunteers, you not only reduce the workload for everyone, you mobilize members.

As with event planning, it's best to start small. Ideally, you should give a new volunteer a small job, something easy to manage and that does not require a significant time commitment. By doing so, you ensure that the volunteer will have an enjoyable experience and come out of it feeling successful and useful.



Volunteer Responsibilities

Below are responsibilities associated with running events, meetings, and presentations that can and should be assigned to volunteers. In some cases, the positions below can be merged into one position. Be careful not to have too many people working on one event or things can get confusing.

- ☐ **Planning liaison:** This position is especially useful if you are running a large or complex event (such as a full-day event that includes multiple speakers, breaks, and refreshments). Regardless of how many or how few volunteers you have, one person should be given responsibility for following up with volunteers and making sure that things are getting done on schedule. Responsibilities for a planning liaison include maintaining a master document or spreadsheet with the schedule, volunteer assignments, and the name and contact information of all volunteers.
- ☐ **Speaker liaison:** If the speaker or speakers are not directly connected to the Chapter (meaning, they are not Chapter leaders or board members), you will want to have someone who can coordinate with them. Speaker liaison responsibilities include making sure speakers have all the relevant information about the event (date, time, location), making sure they have what they need in terms of technology, confirming that they are speaking on the topic assigned, and assisting with handouts or other materials. This volunteer should have the speaker's contact information handy (phone and email) and, on the day of the event, the volunteers should be at the location prior to the speaker's arrival.
- ☐ **Location liaison:** If your Chapter does not already have access to a room for meetings and presentations, solicit a volunteer who can identify and secure a location and arrange for its use. This space could be a room in an office where you or one of your Chapter members works, a classroom or meeting room at a local college or university, or at a local business.

Ideally, the location liaison volunteer will visit spaces to determine which room is the best fit for the event and coordinate with the people who own or run the space to find out what is required of your Chapter in order to use the space.

- ☐ **Room Set-up and Break down:** This could be one volunteer (such as the location liaison) or two. Responsibilities include making sure the room is set up, including chairs, a podium, audio-visual equipment, a literature table, a registration desk, a place for refreshments, etc., and that everything is broken down and/or put away after the event.
- ☐ **Promotion liaison:** This volunteer will oversee creating and executing a plan for promoting the meeting or presentation to the relevant audience. This volunteer may be responsible for everything from sending emails to everyone on your Chapter's mailing list to making sure the event is promoted on the home page of your Chapter's Web site to creating links from businesses that serve the audience you're targeting to using social media. Remember: Even though you want to reach as many people as possible, nothing beats a personal invitation. The promotion liaison should enlist the Chapter leaders, board members, and/or planning committee members to reach out to their contacts and make personal invitations.
- ☐ **Greeter:** A volunteer who will be at the door or at a registration desk to greet attendees and collect business cards or take down contact information.
- ☐ **Moderator/Introductions:** Have someone volunteer to introduce the panellists or speaker(s). Responsibilities include getting information from the speaker, writing an introduction, and checking to be sure that all information is accurate.
- ☐ **Refreshment organizer:** If you are going to be offering refreshments, be sure to have a volunteer who can make those arrangements. Responsibilities include securing food and beverages as well as plates, cups, flatware, napkins, etc. It also includes making sure the food is delivered (or picked up) and that it is laid out in the proper place. This person should coordinate with the person who has volunteered to set up the room (or it could be one position).
- ☐ **Materials organizer:** Regardless of what type of event you're organizing, you will want to have materials on hand to pass out to attendees. That might include your Chapter's own promotional materials, ISOC materials, literature relevant to the event's theme, a flyer promoting upcoming meetings and events, and giveaways, such as pens and pads.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are helpful and we encourage you to use and build on these or create descriptions of your own based on past experience. If you do have volunteer job descriptions that you have used in the past, we encourage you to share them with other Chapters. You can send materials to Chaper-Support@isoc.org.

There are countless positions that can be assumed by volunteers. Some, such as management-type volunteer positions (membership coordinator or Chapter promotion, for example), require fairly large commitments and at least some experience. Most others, however, can be broken down into smaller pieces, such as having a member who has writing experience handle writing a press release for a particular programme or event.

Below are just a few of the positions for which your Chapter may require volunteers.

Clerical assistant

- Enter contact information into a database
- Create and format meeting agenda
- Organize and collate meeting and/or presentation materials

Writer/Editor

- Create press releases for an event, presentation, project, or activity
- Create website content
- Create newsletter content

Graphic designer

- Design printed or online materials, such as flyers, newsletters, invitations, and announcements
- Design and update websites

Publicity/Promotion

Devise and coordinate marketing and publicity for an event, activity, or programme

- Oversee outreach to the community, such as through press releases, media contacts, and other outreach activities

Web developer

- Oversee technical aspects of website development

Bookkeeper

- Manage bookkeeping activities (relevant if dues or fees are being charged)

Sponsorship coordinator

- Reach out to potential sponsors
- Follow-up with sponsors
- Maintain relationships with sponsors
- Ensure that agreements between sponsors and organization are upheld

Event coordinator

- Create event schedule and list of activities associated with the list (such as location, refreshments, set-up, clean-up, audio-visual, etc)
- Oversee event volunteers

Membership coordinator

- Help set membership objectives
- Help devise membership strategies

Expressions of Appreciation

Expressing gratitude is one of the easiest ways to reward a volunteer. It also happens to be a reliable way to ensure that volunteers keep coming back. Even the smallest task deserves recognition, if not in writing, at least in person or by telephone. Email thank-you notes are always appreciated, but nothing beats a hand-written note or personal phone call.

Here is an example of a simple thank-you note:

Dear Giancarlo,

On behalf of our entire Chapter, I would like to personally thank you for your recent contribution to [event or activity]. This event would not have been possible without your help and the help of all of our volunteers.

[You can use a second paragraph to outline specific contributions made by the person you are thanking or to express your appreciation for the amount of time and effort the person put in.]

I genuinely hope ISOC [Chapter Name] will have the honor of your participation in future events [or activities].

Many thanks again for your efforts.

Warm regards,

[NAME]

Be sure to thank volunteers in person or by phone when possible.



Survey of Member/Volunteer Interests

Getting to know your members will go a long way toward inspiring them to volunteer. First, people appreciate having someone take an interest in their work and other interests. Second, your members' interests, skills, and talents are valuable resources that will ensure your Chapter's success.

A survey of your members does not have to be complicated but it should be well organized and easy for you and your Chapter's other leaders to consult, update, and maintain.

Here is an example of the types of information Chapter leaders may want to collect about their members. Some of this information can be collected when a member joins online. Otherwise, an occasional survey of your members could bring in some fresh talent.

- ☐ Would you be interested in volunteering from time to time at a Chapter event or activity?

If so, please let us know in what areas you have experience or particular skills:

- ☐ Writing (press releases, newsletter content, website content)
- ☐ Graphic design (print and/or Web)
- ☐ Web development and/or programming
- ☐ List management
- ☐ Event coordination
- ☐ Public relations and/or marketing
- ☐ Administrative activities

Please let us know in which, if any, of the following areas you consider yourself particularly knowledgeable with regard to Internet technology, development, and policy:

- ☐ Internet policy and/or governance issues
- ☐ Censorship and/or regulatory issues
- ☐ IPv6
- ☐ Security. If so, can you be more specific?
 - ☐ DNSSEC
 - ☐ Safe surfing
 - ☐ Internet identity issues
 - ☐ Security issues associated with electronic storage of information



☐ Other (please describe)

☐ Capacity building in remote, rural, or developing regions

☐ Internet training (please describe briefly)

Do you have relationships with or have you worked with any of the following?

☐ Members of the local, regional, and/or international media

☐ Local and/or regional government agencies and/or nongovernmental organizations

☐ Local and/or regional business enterprises

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A nonprofit organisation, the Internet Society was founded in 1992 as a leader in promoting the evolution and growth of the Internet. Through our members, chapters, and partners, we are the hub of the largest international network of people and organizations that work with the Internet. We work on many levels to address the development, availability, and technology of the Internet.

The Internet is critical to advancing economic growth, community self-reliance, and social justice throughout the world. Become a member of the Internet Society and share this vision. For more information, visit <http://www.isoc.org>.

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