



Information Item	Engaging with members on a new level
Sponsor:	CEO
Date:	July 2020

July 2020

Engaging with members on a new level

In today's gilded age of information, where no one is short of access to a myriad of advice, the Crane Industry Council of Australia (CICA) took a different COVID-19 communications approach.

While Chief Executive Officer, Brandon Hitch, says CICA ensured members were up to date on Job Seeker deadlines – and other government aid programmes – focussing on staying calm was paramount.

Being able to control the controllable helped give members clarity of thought, or as Brandon puts it, remaining calm throughout the crisis is critical.

"We started with a LinkedIn campaign about 'Controlling the Controllables' to try to dispel any unnecessary hysteria – because we all were a little bit hysterical when the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic began to bite.

"We wanted to bring back some semblance of calm to the situation."

CICA anticipated that there would be some downtime due to the slowing of economic activity and decided to utilise that period to theirs and members' advantage.

They began promoting, on a weekly basis, the benefits of upskilling and continued training.

Filming and hosting Zoom and YouTube streams that highlighted CICA's tools; firstly, to renew members' awareness of them, and secondly, to emphasise their benefits.

The first of these was an economic analysis tool for members' businesses – viewed over 200 times.

"This analysis tool walks the user through a simple spreadsheet, it furthers people's understanding of their business' future financial health," Brandon says.

"Every week, we brought attention to tools – working at height, working around overhead power lines, using two-way radios, etc.

"All of these weren't necessarily directly related to COVID, COVID, COVID – because we wanted our members to be calm, we offered solutions or options of how best to take advantage of this situation."

And it has struck a chord with members, Brandon says, according to their analytics. Passive data suggests that these kinds of communiques are having higher click rates.

One of their most “lateral or bizarre” moves was launching a Colouring In Competition over Easter.

“Yes, it’s crazy in the sense that what benefits does that deliver to our membership? It didn’t tick any normal values in our strategic plan, but it was an awareness that all of us are depended on by someone else.

“I’ve got a nine-year-old daughter, and there were days that I took off work to try to figure out how to be a teacher, as well as a parent.

“And I think that we were trying to address things that maybe were some of the soft skills that were impacting families. Our members are made up of companies that have employees that have families to go home to, and we never want to lose sight of that.”

Brandon says the participation from members was great, but it’s not often what one expects from a crane industry association that is “tarred with the brush of rough and ready”.

Beyond that, Brandon ensures he’s keeping in regular contact with CICA’s six branch committees and their executive teams.

He also has a fortnightly board meeting to see what the word on the street is, and what members’ needs are.

“When this COVID safe app came out, we tried to raise awareness within our membership of its use.

“The reason for that was because the government, in some of their press releases, indicated pretty directly that the take up rate of the app would determine what restrictions could be lifted.”

Brandon believed it was in everyone’s best interests – not just for CICA members, but society at large – to get on board. Society would return to ‘normal’ much faster, and businesses would be allowed to re-open.

Looking forward to the “new normal”, Brandon is looking to incorporate those different touchpoints into every CICA life.

“We will be continuing to use that medium to promote activities because I think it’s that element of the new normal people can expect that from us.

“We’re still figuring out how to do it right as well – all of this is very amateur, it’s not a polished production video.

“But that’s intentional, because it is more approachable, not so overwhelming and it’s given us the feasibility to try things like that in the future, to be more engaged.”

Brandon Hitch
CICA Chief Executive Officer

Newsletter Disclaimer:

The information in any CANZ newsletter is for general use only. The information has been provided by CANZ and by third parties including CANZ members. While CANZ has reasonably endeavoured to provide accurate information, neither CANZ nor the third parties provide any guarantees regarding the correctness, currency, completeness or suitability of the information for any particular purpose. It should not be relied on in place of appropriate specific advice or verification. Opinions provided by third parties on any matter do not necessarily represent the opinion or policy of CANZ.

The newsletter also contains promotional information about third parties and their products and services, including references to CANZ sponsors, and links to third party websites. CANZ does not endorse third party products or services, and any dealings with third parties, including accessing their websites, will be at the user's sole risk.