ALUMNI RELATIONSHIP

Increasing Alumni Engagement

ALPHA KAPPA PSI
The Professional Business Fraternity
While transitioning from a student to an alumnus does happen overnight, developing relationships between chapters and alumni does not. Student chapters have a unique ability to enhance their alumni relations and continue to foster the membership experience for both students and alumni.
1 Prepare the student members early

Today’s students are tomorrow’s alumni. Create precedence and ensure you have alumni who want to come back in the future.

Wanting to come back as an alumnus starts with having a great student experience. Not only should you prepare graduating students to become engaged alumni members, but let them know they are welcome and encouraged to visit chapter events and programs as appropriate. Remember, though, AKPsi’s policies apply to alumni, too.
Alumni aren't able to contribute if you don't keep them informed and give them an avenue to engage.

By informing alumni about the chapter's activities, it makes them feel connected and provides an idea of when an event or program is happening, should they want to visit.

Using social media is a good way to inform alumni about meetings and events the chapter is hosting, but remember, not all alumni use these platforms. Consider creating a chapter directory, both so you know how to contact alumni, and so alumni can contact each other.
Ensure your alumni feel welcome to come back by developing a relationship beyond the minimum expectations.

Tap into your alumni network for professional speakers, ask for feedback on events and goals, and host social events to capitalize on developing a relationship and fostering the brotherhood. If you only reach out to alumni for donations, they won't be as inclined to stay involved. Creating these bonds will ensure your alumni still have a connection to the chapter and organization.
Develop consistent communication

Maintaining steady communication with your alumni ensures they are up-to-date on events and minimizes fall-off.

Alumni want to know they will receive regular, ongoing communication from their chapter. Be sure to keep your mediums current and delivered on a consistent basis. As alumni have many priorities, consistent communication will also keep the fraternity at the forefront so they don’t lose interest. Determine the optimal frequency for your chapter and keep your website current.

“The most critical function when forming an alumni foundation with student chapters is communication, communication, communication! This should be via face-to-face, email, and social media. It is important to have an active presence in developing these relationships so they are both meaningful and beneficial for both parties. Engage with your alumni regularly by inviting them to events and to be mentors to student brothers.”

– David Andrews, President of Baltimore Metro Alumni Chapter
"What works for a 20-something new graduate may not work for an octogenarian. Today, most chapters rely solely on email or web-based communication, such as social media. This is fine and good, but you are often ignoring the older generations, who may not be as social media savvy. Yes, my 74-year-old father uses Facebook, but he has no idea how to maneuver around groups and pages."

– Stephen Smith, President of ASEAN Alumni Chapter

Not all alumni are interested in the same things. Target each of them by providing relevant information for all generations.

Sharing topics of interest with your alumni makes all the difference in their engagement. Would they be interested in news about the current student brothers or about fellow alumni? Would they like to read biographies of incoming members or current brothers? What about other alumni biographies? Would they care about the new brother camping trip or a professional field trip to an alumnus's company? Find a balance to keep your content appealing to everyone.
Alumni, like students, have other aspects of their lives and even more responsibilities. Consider their schedules and interests when you plan events.

Realize all alumni won’t want to reconnect and their level of involvement can change over time since there are other factors competing for their attention. If you invite alumni to attend a function, keep in mind work, family, and community consume a lot of their time. They need plenty of advance notice and their plans can change unexpectedly.

Knowing how to reach your alumni and understanding what they want to hear is important to developing strong relationships. Whether your alumni relations have fallen off or never existed, these guidelines can help any chapter’s alumni relations flourish.
More in the Alumni Relationship Series:

Alumni Don’ts  |  Alumni at Events  |  Alumni Newsletters