

ANNE KLEIN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

Building an Online Community One in a Series of Intelligent Solutions

The Challenge:

Provide a Web-based venue for adoptive and foster parents to interact and share information under the umbrella of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, a non-profit that runs senior living communities and offers social services including adoption and foster care (AFC) and child placement services.

Results:

- Diakonfamilies.org, a branded online community designed specifically for Diakon's AFC participants, is "live" and being used by this special audience.
- AFC participants have a place to feel welcomed by other families facing similar challenges and obstacles. Participants can express concerns, ask questions, find friends and share success stories in a safe, privacy-protected environment.
- Diakon's AFC representatives are part of the community and therefore are able to strengthen their relationships with and service to participants on a more regular basis.
- Similarly, Diakon monitors the community for potential topics of contention or underlying issues. This allows them the opportunity to defuse potential issues before they emerge.
- Diakon has established itself in the forefront of using technology – specifically, social media – to engage an adoption and foster care audience in innovative ways.

Background:

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries offers a range of services for children, youths, families, and older adults in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware. Each year, Diakon touches the lives of more than 100,000 persons. Diakon's AFC program has helped thousands of children and youths of all ages gain permanency with loving adoptive and foster families.

The Campaign:

After conducting a focus group of adoptive parents, AKCG and Diakon determined that an online forum would provide a venue for AFC participants to build relationships, share best practices, ask and answer questions and generally feel connected with other, like-minded people. Based on the input from the parents, and working with a Web design partner, AKCG tailored the design of the forum and created seed content – topic areas and starter information to help launch the discussion. Once the site was designed, the focus group participants beta-tested the forum's functionality. Following the beta test, the site launched and was publicized to all AFC participants through Diakon's myriad communication vehicles including newsletters, flyers and one-on-one consultations.

To learn more about how Anne Klein Communications Group can help you build and strengthen relationships using social media, please call and ask for Chris Lukach or Mike Gross.