

NAHMAanalysis

NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Ensuring NAHMA Members Receive the Latest News and Analysis of Breaking Issues in Affordable Housing

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NAHMAanalysis 2013-0417: A New Suite of Social Media Tools for NAHMA Grassroots Engagement

Background

This NAHMAanalysis will present members with information on NAHMA's new and updated social media tools, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. The goal with this suite of social media tools is to foster grassroots activities, and provide another outlet for member discussions and affordable housing policy updates.

NAHMA has periodically used Facebook over several years to connect with members, but we intend for a stronger presence on the site. Because LinkedIn and Twitter are both new tools for NAHMA, this NAHMAanalysis will provide specific instructions on how members can participate in these two new social media outlets. Improved presence on these social media sites will assist our organization in realizing our strategic plan for 2012-2016, in creating an advocacy toolkit for individual members that will clarify how they can participate in grassroots activities.

The NAHMA Facebook and Twitter pages are publicly open, so non-members and individuals without registered profiles on these sites may still view the content that is posted. However, much of the content on the LinkedIn page will be private, and limited to NAHMA members, so a registered profile will be required.

Facebook

The NAHMA Facebook page has been operational for a few years and has so far been a place for members to gather information on NAHMA activities, such as online conference registration and Education Foundation Scholarship guidelines. As previously mentioned, the NAHMA Facebook page is publicly open, so individuals without a Facebook account may still view the content (though to comment on or 'like' posts does require a registered account).

The content on the NAHMA Facebook will continue to promote member activities and upcoming events. Along with this promotion, NAHMA plans to use the Facebook page as a catch-all for policy updates and Communities of Quality information. Facebook will also serve as another outlet for our advocacy objectives. According to a study by the Congressional Management Foundation, nearly two-thirds (64%) of Capitol Hill senior managers surveyed think Facebook is a somewhat or very important tool for understanding constituents' views and opinions.

LinkedIn

The NAHMA LinkedIn page is new for the organization. LinkedIn operates much like Facebook in that users create their own individual profiles, comments and topics can be shared, and the site can serve as a platform to promote an organization's activities. However, LinkedIn is often credited as being more professional than Facebook. LinkedIn caters to professionals as a social media hub where accomplishments and credentials can be promoted, and where professional networking can flourish.

Outside of individual profiles and networking, LinkedIn operates as a place where information can easily be exchanged, but with protective security features not found on Facebook. The most evident example of this can be seen in the group pages, which are often private and require the user to be permitted to join by an administrator.

To join the NAHMA group on LinkedIn:

1. Begin by filtering for Groups in the search bar at the top of the page (Figure 1).
2. Search by group to find the NAHMA Member's Discussion page. (Figure 2)
3. After finding the group, click on the Join Group tab. Your request to join will be forwarded to NAHMA staff. (Figure 3)

After joining the group, you may begin to submit discussion topics or polls. Other group members may comment on, or 'like' your discussion topic. These discussions will be an excellent opportunity for individuals to share information and pose questions to a wide variety of NAHMA members.

To start a discussion:

1. Enter your topic in the box labeled "Start a discussion or share something with the group..." (Figure 4)
2. After entering your topic, and other additional information you are seeking, click the share button to open the discussion up for the group. (Figure 5)

To submit comments on discussions:

1. Click on the discussion you would like to comment on.
2. Enter your comment in the "Add comment..." box and click the Add Comment button. (Figure 6)
3. You may also 'like' the discussion by clicking the Like button. (Figure 6)

As previously mentioned, viewing our LinkedIn page will require an individual profile. LinkedIn profiles are easy to create, and the privacy features allow users to maintain control of their information.

Twitter

The social networking site Twitter is also a new tool for NAHMA. The goal is to use Twitter as another outlet to quickly inform members on important policy and general affordable housing news. Like Facebook, Twitter is open to the public, so the information available through "tweets" will be readily available to members even if they do not have a registered account on the site (a tweet is a single posting that is displayed on the Twitter profile).

Twitter also limits the amount of information that may be shared at a given time. “Tweets” are limited to 140 text characters, so the information that is posted will often be condensed or serve the purpose of leading members to more detailed documents on current policy. For example, a new HUD policy could be announced by NAHMA through Twitter, and the individual tweet will include a link to the specific HUD webpage where more information could be gathered. Overall, Twitter will assist in promoting the latest news in affordable housing.

The NAHMA Twitter page is @NAHMAtweet, and members with a Twitter profile may begin following NAHMA now. Information that we release on Twitter may be shared and re-tweeted so that others in your personal network can view the information as well.

To follow us on Twitter:

1. Begin by searching for NAHMA in the search box located at the top of the screen. (Figure 7)
2. After finding the NAHMA profile, simply click follow to add NAHMA to your Twitter feed. (Figure 8)

Summary

Social media has become a very effective tool for non-profit organizations, and NAHMA is excited to continue our development online through social media. These tools will foster member communication, strengthen grassroots engagement, and we hope that the publicly open qualities of Facebook and Twitter will entice more people to join NAHMA as well. Likewise, as the member participation in LinkedIn and our other profiles expands, distributing information on current affordable housing policy will become more effective. Please contact Scott McMillen at scott.mcmillen@nahma.org with any questions related to social media operations, or with any suggestions for improvement.

Below are direct links to all three social media accounts:

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Twitter](#)

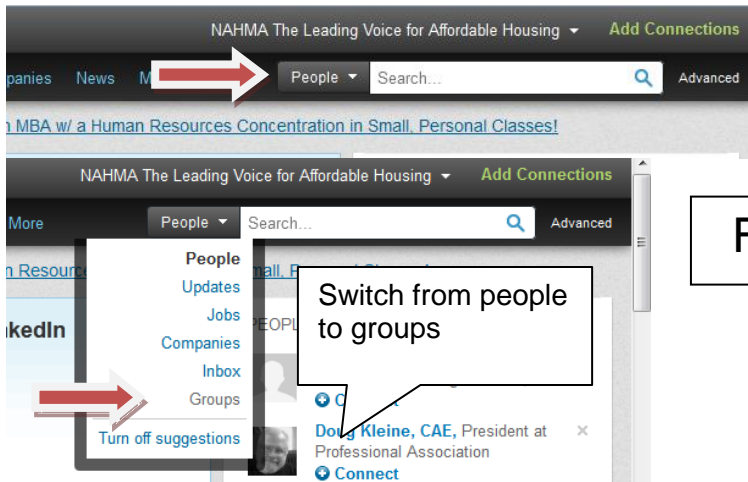


Figure 1

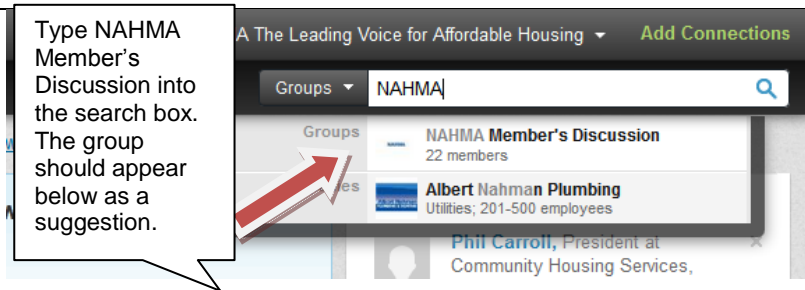


Figure 2

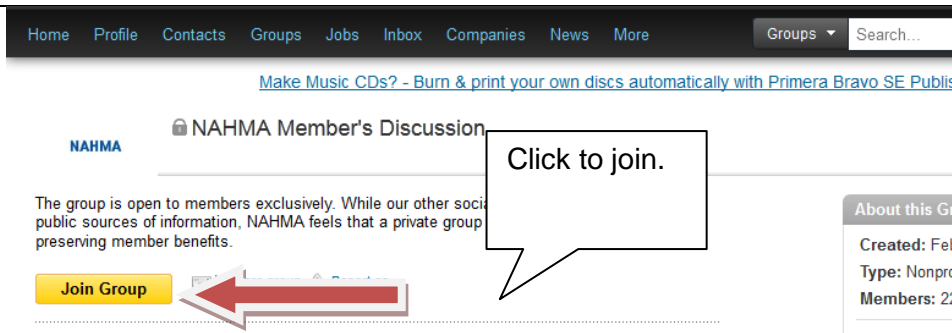
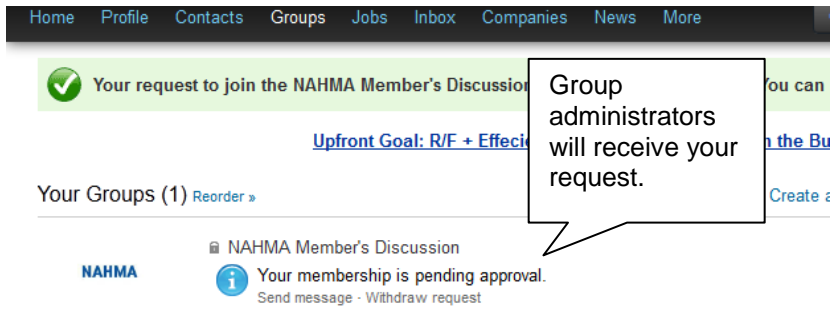


Figure 3



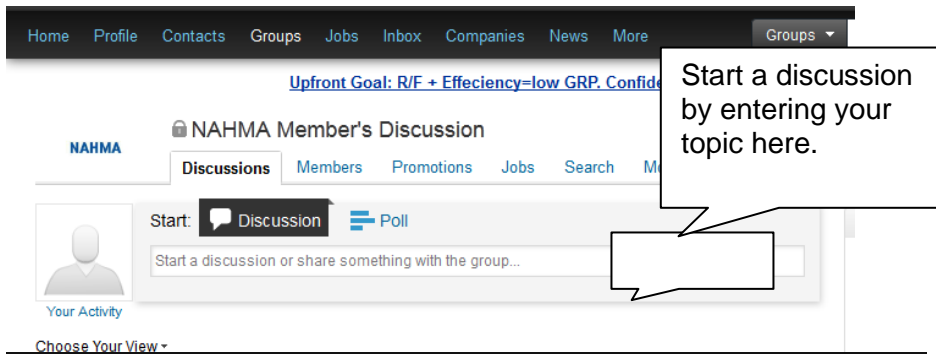


Figure 4

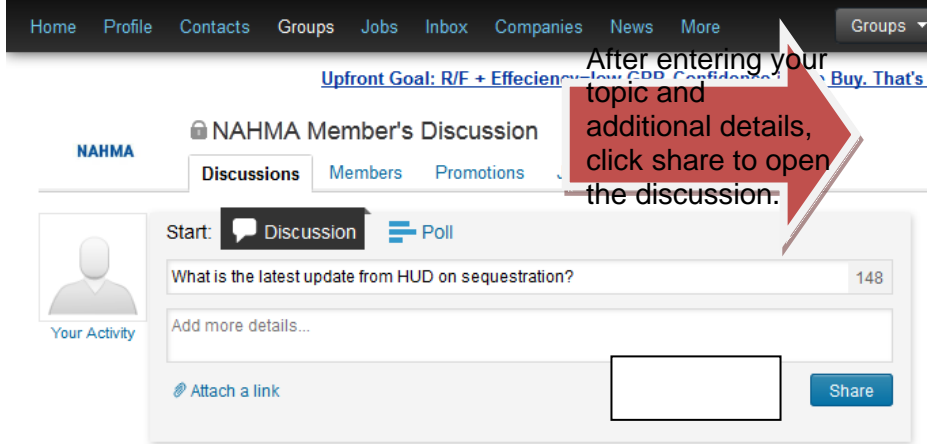


Figure 5

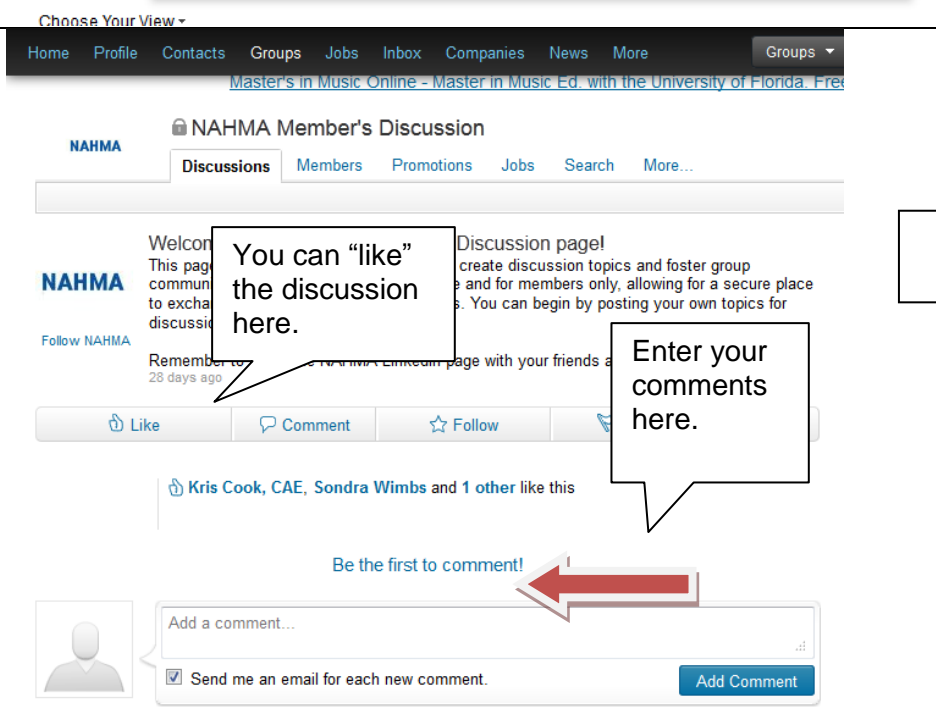


Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8