

## Professional Relations and Chapter Networking

*Building and maintaining a robust professional network enables AMCP Chapters to strengthen their programming and optimize student engagement. Professional relations are essential for maintaining a chapter's local presence and providing valuable resources for student members. This document provides guidance for building and leveraging a sustainable professional network for your AMCP Chapter.*

### Key Points

- A sustainable database is crucial for continued success
- Alumni and AMCP professionals are the cornerstone of a strong network
- Engaging your contacts is essential for maintaining your network

### Building a Sustainable Contacts Database

Since student executive boards change yearly, Chapters need to establish a centralized database of professional contacts that can be easily transferred each year to new leaders. This allows the new board to leverage the network without re-establishing connections. Ideally, this database is accessible by all pertinent board members and updated continually. Possible platforms include Excel, a cloud-based Contact Book, and Google Docs.

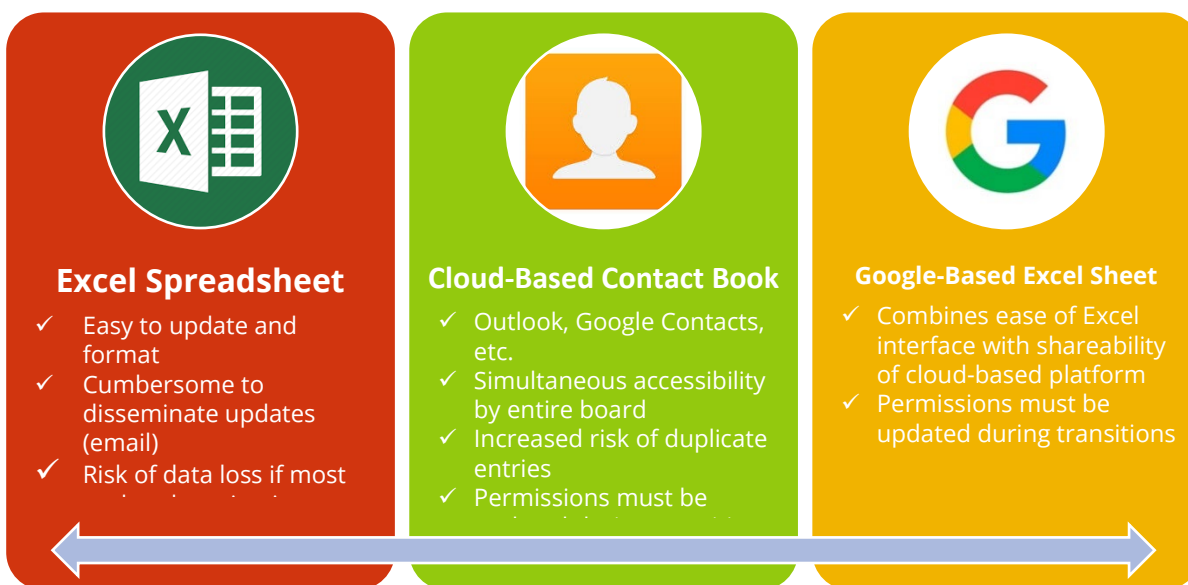
Excel may be the simplest way to maintain your database with its easy and familiar interface. However, it also runs the risk of data loss if the spreadsheet gets deleted or all updates are not transitioned to the succeeding executive board. Excel may be a good option for smaller Chapters or those with strict transition guidelines. Alternatively, a cloud-based Contact Book can be simultaneously accessed by multiple board members, updated in real-time, and ensures that your database will not be accidentally deleted. However, permissions will need to be updated annually, and screening for duplicate entries is essential. This may be a good option for Chapters with large networks and diligent recordkeeping. A hybrid option utilizing Google Docs may also be considered. An Excel-like spreadsheet may be created that combines this interface's ease with the shareability of Google's cloud-based platform.

After your platform is chosen, all contacts of the Chapter should be input with pertinent information such as:

- Name
- Company
- Position/Title
- Location
- Email Address & Phone Number
- Notes detailing the Chapter's engagement with the contact (speaker, P&T judge, attended networking event, etc.).

This is a great way for executive boards to discern how engaged a contact is with the Chapter.

Now your database is easily accessible and searchable for contacts, enabling officers to reach out for resources and opportunities.



## Leverage Alumni and AMCP Professionals to Kickstart Your Network

Alums are your most accessible resources when building your Chapter network. Having graduated from your school, they are familiar with your program and members, and most are willing to engage. Ask your Chapter Advisor and Diplomat for alumni contacts and reach out to them via email or LinkedIn. Inviting alums to be speakers at General Body Meetings, judges for your P&T Competition, and attending speed networking events is a great way to engage them and expose your student members to their perspectives and opportunities.

Further, establish P4s as contacts before they become alumni. P4s that have been active with your Chapter or college may be willing to continue engaging as alumni. Sending a survey to P4s prior to graduation to gauge their interest and post-graduate plans, as well as asking for their new contact information, can allow your Chapter to stay proactive in growing its network.

Leveraging your local AMCP members and your regional AMCP Affiliate as resources for ideas and events also integrates them into your Chapter's network. The benefit is two-fold in that AMCP professionals have invaluable insight into managed care and industry, which can be shared with your student members. It allows your Chapter to stay in step with AMCP happenings at the professional level locally and regionally.

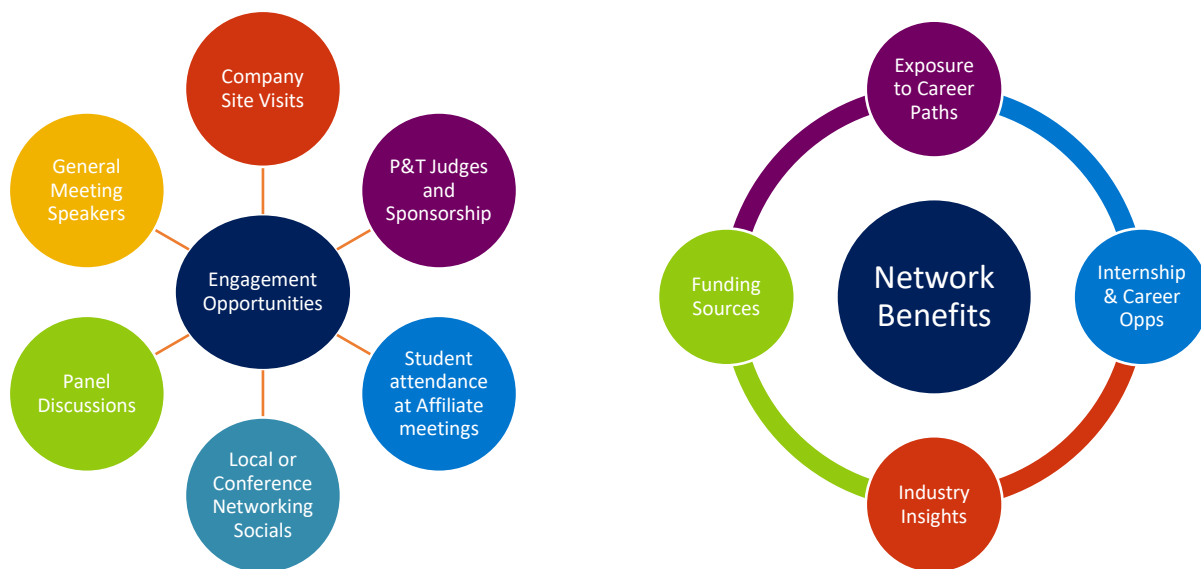
## Continuous Engagement Is Key

The main purpose of creating a professional network is to utilize it for the benefit of your members. Reach out to your contacts regularly with invitations to participate in Chapter events and initiatives, serve as guest speakers, and touch base on Chapter happenings. Maintaining an open communication channel with your contacts ensures the sustainability of your network.

Local contacts are also great for setting up recurring **company site visits**. These visits will allow your membership to experience first-hand how pharmacists contribute in different settings and serve as additional networking opportunities. These connections have the potential to evolve into post-graduate career opportunities for student members. The national and regional AMCP **conferences** (e.g., Nexus, Annual Meeting, Midwest Regional) are another key opportunity to strengthen your network. Chapter social events during the conference, such as a happy hour or a sponsored dinner, create incentives for members to attend conferences and the opportunity to invite professional contacts who may also be attending the conference.

Some employers of your contacts may also be able to sponsor and cater the social event, demonstrating your contacts' investment in the Chapter and its members—a win-win for your Chapter. If there are no regional conferences for your locale, establishing one could be an ambitious goal for your Chapter, leveraging your network for support.

Engaged contacts are more likely to **invest** in your Chapter. Professionals who are active and invested in your Chapters' success are good resources for funding Chapter events. Depending on company policies and regulatory statutes, your contacts may be able to allocate company funds to support the professional development of your members through funding of events, P&T competitions, conference sponsorship, and other financial needs of your Chapter.



## Additional AMCP Resources

- The AMCP Member Directory has the ability to search by state, allowing you to connect with local professionals: <https://members.amcp.org/AMCP2019/MemberDirectory>
- Information for upcoming conferences to coordinate your Chapters' travel and events: <https://www.amcpmeetings.org/>
- Find and connect with your regional AMCP Affiliate: <https://www.amcp.org/amcp-affiliate-program>
- Learn more about the AMCP Diplomat Program: <https://www.amcp.org/diplomats>
- Read about the Diplomats of AMCP in the Diplomat Spotlight: <https://www.amcp.org/diplomat-spotlight>