

# Online Communities Provided Vital Connection for County Health Officials During COVID-19

During the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020, NACCHO used online communities to connect local health departments. Their Level 3 (highest), full incident command structure, depended on their communities sharing important public health information, keeping staff informed and engaged, and supporting members during uncertain times.

## OPPORTUNITY

The **National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)** members, made up of nearly 3,000 local health departments, faced not only a strained workforce due to budget cuts, but an extraordinary public health situation. Their members needed a central location for information and a way to communicate with each other, but they were inundated with information during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

While NACCHO already had an online member community, they needed to make some changes to their internal tech processes and encourage more member adoption of the community before they could meet these challenges.

To solve this, NACCHO worked with Higher Logic to launch three new online sub-communities, centralize communications, and continuously monitor and adjust to ongoing and changing member needs.

## RESULT

NACCHO's earlier investment in **Community** provided them with the essential building blocks they needed to serve their members, even as their offices moved to a virtual working environment. Their three new communities fit well with the unique considerations of their membership structure, e.g., providing information to all local health departments, whether they were dues-paying members or not.

NACCHO used **Communications** consistently in their outreach to members. They could send out an email newsletter and digest, which supported the many members working in public spaces with easy, mobile access to information. Those files and information updates could also be password-protected to limit access. For some counties, NACCHO was the only way for members to connect to Federal-level calls and information.

### KEY FACTS

- ➔ The CDC referred to NACCHO's site as a resource during calls
- ➔ **400%** increase in online community logins

### HIGHER LOGIC PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- ➔ Community
- ➔ Communications

### ABOUT NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) seeks to improve the public's health and serves as a voice for local health departments.

**Type:** Professional Association

**Industry:** Public Health

**AMS:** netFORUM Enterprise

*"We are 11 months into this project and still using our COVID-19 emergency community to post resources and to field questions from local health departments. It helps us to keep an ear to the ground while allowing our members to contact each other, easily."*



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