

SFNet Marketing Committee

BY EILEEN WUBBE

This column highlights the hard work and dedication of SFNet's Committee volunteers. Here we speak with Lauren Nadeau, senior director, head of Marketing & Communications at Gordon Brothers and chair of SFNet's Marketing Committee.



■ **LAUREN NADEAU**
Gordon Brothers

TSL: Please provide our readers with some background about your career.

Nadeau: When I joined Gordon Brothers, I was new to the restructuring and asset-based lending industries. The majority of my career prior was focused on marketing strategy in investment management, targeting investment advisors and individual and institutional investors. I also worked in the healthcare industry at a medical device manufacturer where I focused on B2C and B2B marketing, targeting both individual patients and the doctors who prescribed the medical devices.

I've held a variety of roles within marketing, including content marketing, website development, CRM and marketing automation, market research, and marketing strategy and measurement.

Throughout my career much of my focus has been on building new programs and communication platforms. At my previous employer, I launched a social media program when LinkedIn and leveraging social media for business purposes was fairly new territory and before FINRA or the SEC had provided any guidelines. Many investment management firms were nervous about participating on social, so we took a measured approach that evolved over time as the regulations from governing bodies caught up to what was happening in the space.

I also have experience with website development, CRM and marketing automation, as well as marketing strategy and measurements. I have enjoyed leveraging

my marketing background both at Gordon Brothers and in my position on the Marketing Committee for SFNet.

For someone who is reading this and interested in joining the Marketing Committee, how would you describe it to them?

What does the Committee do?

Our mission statement sums it up nicely: The SFNet Marketing Committee is dedicated to elevating the value proposition of the SFNet and maximizing member satisfaction. We strive to ensure all members are fully aware of the wealth of resources available to them. The committee works with SFNet staff and advises on strategies to help drive effective segmentation, optimized communications and cross-channel promotion to amplify awareness and engagement with SFNet's professional development, data resources, networking opportunities and advocacy efforts while bolstering SFNet's brand equity and driving sustained value for all stakeholders.

This past year we focused on how we can elevate brand awareness, increase member engagement with offerings, and demonstrate member value. We spent time speaking with SFNet staff and the different committees about their current challenges and how can we help them communicate better, whether it's regarding the SFNet education offerings and professional development, advocacy, or conferences and events. SFNet has expanded significantly over the last seven or eight years, so we found members aren't necessarily aware of all that is available to them and, at the same time, have a lot of information flying at them.

We've started looking at the overall SFNet communications strategy and how all the different levers work together. Between e-mails, social channels, live events, the website, we tweaked strategies to align with the broader organization, which will carry into next year.

How often do you meet? How much time would you say is involved if someone is a member of the Committee?

We meet once a month for an hour and ask Marketing Committee members to actively participate in our discussion. Occasionally, we may members to look at something outside of the meeting and give us feedback.

In addition to meeting monthly, members can serve as a liaison with other SFNet committees and help them with their communications. For example, Augusta Melendez of FGI has become more involved on the SFNet education front with the guest lecture program, and Gordon Brothers' Kevin Creedon has volunteered for the 2025 Emerging Leaders Conference and committee communications.

It's not required as part of the Marketing Committee, but an additional volunteer opportunity for people to get more involved in a communications capacity with some of the other committees.

In working with the Marketing Committee members, have you noticed any trends, common themes or challenges?

Many of the challenges we are looking to solve for SFNet are similar throughout the industry. Not only do our members speak to the communications challenges they are facing at their own companies, but help us understand what is valuable to their member base.

One of the common threads we have heard throughout the year, particularly on the banking side, is that companies are tightening expenses and are more mindful of travel. We then look at how this affects SFNet in terms of conference attendance and other in-person programs, and what we should be thinking about in terms of communications.

In addition to some common challenges, a theme that comes up for us is time. Since there's a seemingly ever-decreasing amount of free time available, we focus on how to cut through the clutter to get people's attention. We hone in on where people are most likely to get information from, what kind of information they are looking for and how we can communicate in a way that is most effective.

The communications challenges we are all facing with our respective audiences include the increasingly strict platform guidelines, privacy policy regulations in different states or countries, and additional security measures that individual companies are instituting to protect themselves, which in turn can make email communication more difficult.

Although e-mail is the preferred tool of our members, it's also becoming much harder to reach them because of all the enhanced security measures in place, both at the company and domain level based on the email provider.

What do you enjoy about being on the Committee?

I enjoy meeting with peers across the industry and hearing about the different challenges they're facing or opportunities available to them. I believe information sharing and collaboration is not only helpful to SFNet, but also for myself and the broader committee to hear how we can collaborate to solve business challenges.

It's gratifying to see our committee members feel similarly. In the recent SFNet Committee Volunteer Survey results, all the committees scored highly from those that took the survey including the Marketing Committee. The members who work with us enjoy the experience and tell us we provide what they were looking for in terms of communicating with peers and feeling like they are valued and appreciated for their input.

What are your goals for the Committee in the coming year?

The biggest goal is continuing to accelerate the work around the broader communication strategy and platform to increase member engagement and demonstrate member value while elevating branding awareness.

We've done quite a bit of work looking at email this past

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year. SFNet staff rolled out a new email platform over the summer, and we are looking at how we can better frame those communications. We'll also be looking at integrating communications across email, social media and the website with the goal of getting the information and fantastic offerings SFNet provides members while making it easier to find this information.

Additionally, in the coming year, we will look at how we spread awareness more broadly, not just for SFNet, but for the secured finance industry. Whether advocating nationally or within state legislatures, we want to make sure people understand our industry, who SFNet is, why our industry is important and how it differs from the more traditional investment management side of the world.

When you're not busy at Gordon Brothers or SFNet, what can you be found doing?

I'm usually running around with my family. I have two young children, so my time revolves around getting them to their various activities. I also love to travel and explore new places when we can squeeze in the time. 🏠

Eileen Wubbe is senior editor of The Secured Lender.

SFNet 2024 Marketing Committee Members:

Lauren Nadeau, Gordon Brothers, Chairperson

Karen Bubrowski, Hilco Global

Kevin Creedon, Gordon Brothers

Hamish Davidson, JS Held

Stan Grabish, Huron Consulting Services

Robert Hanna, Cohn & Dussi

Maria Kerr, Novo Advisors

August Melendez, FGI

Maria Kerr, Novo Advisors

What did you enjoy about being on the Marketing Committee in 2024?

As part of a small marketing team, I have really enjoyed using this committee as a space to collaborate with other creative professionals. It's been incredibly valuable to exchange ideas and gain insights into the latest trends and strategies within our industry from a marketing perspective. This opportunity to brainstorm with like-minded individuals has been a refreshing way to broaden my approach.

What would you like to see the Committee accomplish in the coming year?

I'm excited to see the new developments in our social media and email strategy. With the growing importance of social media, especially in the B2B space, it can be challenging to find the most effective ways to leverage it. I'm eager to see how we can continue to innovate in this area for SFNet and drive meaningful engagement.

How has being on this Committee helped you in your own job?

Although I've been in marketing for over 14 years, I'm relatively new to the finance industry. Serving on this committee has been instrumental in expanding my understanding of both the industry and the types of content our audience values. It's helped me tailor my content creation to better meet the needs of our field and enhance my contributions in my current role.

Augusta Melendez, FGI

What did you enjoy about being on the Marketing Committee in 2024?

SFNet is an incredible resource for our industry. From Events and Education, Industry Data and Publications, to Networking and Advocacy, SFNet is constantly creating opportunities for members to engage and learn. As a part of the marketing committee, I have enjoyed discussing and planning communication strategies to create awareness of the many offerings available to members and advance the initiatives that bring so much to the secured lending community.

How has being on this Committee helped you in your own job?

Collaborating with other marketing professionals has been a highlight of my time on the Committee. There are nuances in secured lending that impact marketing in the space, and it has been an excellent opportunity to discuss ideas, perspectives, and best practices with so many talented marketers from around the country.