

Online Mediation Training Task Force Marketing Committee Report

June 14, 2021



Table of Contents

- 1** Introduction
- 2** Issues Considered by Committee
- 3** Identified Resources
- 4** Analysis of Options Moving Forward
- 5** Committee Recommendations
- 6** Conclusion

1. Introduction

The Online Mediation Committee Task Force Family and Elder Committee consisted of the following members:

Chair: Susan Guthrie

Members: Michael Aurit
Gabrielle Hartley
Alberto Elisavetsky

The Committee met on three separate dates and communicated separately between meetings to review and discuss the issues presented.

2. Issues Considered by the Committee

The Marketing Committee was tasked with Considering the Following Questions:

- 1.** What resources, resource center(s) and organizational support will best support elevation, acceptance and use of online mediation training and online mediation services?
- 2.** How can mediation providers and policy organizations best support the expansion of online mediation providers?
- 3.** How can mediators and other professionals (ie focus of Beyond Mediation Committee) best support the expansion of online mediation
- 4.** What are the best new opportunities for expanding the application of mediation and online mediation services?

3. Identified Resources

The Marketing Committee has identified the following resources which may be of assistance and/or interest to practitioners in the field.

1. American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Online Practice Tools

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/dispute_resolution/resources/resources-for-mediating-online/

2. Mediate.com's Online Mediation Resources Guide

<https://www.onlinemediators.com/pg33.cfm>
<https://www.mediate.com/products/pg1357.cfm>

3. The Learn to Mediate Online Podcast with Susan Guthrie, Esq.

<https://www.learntomEDIATEonline.podbean.com> for audio podcast
<https://www.youtube.com/c/SusanGuthrieLTMO> for video podcast

4. Marketing Resolution - How to Grow Your Mediation or Arbitration Practice

<https://www.howtomarketmymediationpractice.com/blog-1/10-easy-tips-on-how-to-grow-your-mediation-or-arbitration-practice>

5. The European Union-Council of Europe Joint Project on “Promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution in Turkey” held its Launching Conference

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/ankara/-/the-european-union-council-of-europe-joint-project-on-promoting-alternative-dispute-resolution-in-turkey-held-its-launching-conference>

4. Analysis of Options Moving Forward

Marketing for mediation services and trainings has historically been a challenge for the industry. There has been an ongoing shift to digital marketing platforms including outreach through social media, website, email marketing and more, and in some ways this plethora of options has made marketing even more difficult as practitioners struggle to find resources to help them to understand the application of these outlet and find the right combination for their practice.

1. What resources, resource center(s) and organizational support will best support elevation, acceptance and use of online mediation training and online mediation services?

The rapid shift to online practice and training has added perhaps to the difficulties faced by mediators and trainers in that it has added additional complexity and dimension to the messaging that likely needs to be included in marketing for both. In other words, now mediators and trainers not only need to market their services, but also need to market the fact that those services are delivered online.

One factor that contributes to the complexity of this issue is that there is no central organization that provides support and

4. Analysis of Options Moving Forward, cont.

resources for professionals in one easy to access hub.

Additionally, issues of language, in that it would appear that a majority of resources and material on the topics are currently available only in English which is an impediment to international access.

Some possibilities in creating resources for marketing are:

- Resource hub with high quality training and marketing materials and translations for mediators and trainers world-wide.
- Marketing suggestions and strategies specific to online mediation and training
- Amplification of organizational and individual public acknowledgement of the benefits of online services.

As marketing is such an integral part of supporting online providers, it would be an important step forward to centralize resources such as:

- Providing leadership that actively supports the usage

b. How can mediation providers and policy organizations best support the expansion of online mediation providers?

4. Analysis of Options Moving Forward, cont.

of online mediation and online training.

- Promote and advertise providers who offer online services.
- Create policy around defining "online mediation and how it should function in the world of dispute resolution.
- Educate providers and the public on the benefits and acceptance of online mediation and training.

For many practitioners and the public there remain barriers to both mediating online and receiving training online due to limiting beliefs about the efficacy of the virtual platform. It is important to continue to promote the expansion of the, including the many benefits and efficacies of a virtual approach. Some identified strategies include:

- Expand individual mediator "belief limitations" about the effectiveness of online mediation and personal benefits and potential for practice online mediation

c. How can mediators and other professionals (ie focus of Beyond Mediation Committee) best support the expansion of online mediation

4. Analysis of Options Moving Forward, cont.

- Enlisting thought leaders to publically support online mediation
- Offer online mediation services
- Specifically market online mediation
- Publish articles on the benefits and effectiveness of mediation in their practices
- Train online mediation (if in the capacity to do so such as connections with training centers, universities, or internally within their own practices)
- Mentor fellow mediators in moving their mediation process online
- Shout it loud and proud

One of the main benefits of the shift to online platforms is that it increases access exponentially to both online mediation services and mediation training. Some of the best new opportunities for expanding further would be:

- Expanding location service area
- Expanding quantity of mediation clients nationally due to greater accessibility and meeting society where they are technologically

d. What are the best new opportunities for expanding the application of mediation and online mediation services?

4. Analysis of Options Moving Forward, cont.

- Training more mediators in the process of online mediation
- Creating more trainings for mediators online
- Creating trainings to train trainers to train online
- Amplifying the voices of those who train and mediate online.



Committee

Recommendations

Based upon the analysis and discussion of the issues and questions outlined above, the Marketing Committee makes the following recommendations with respect to the establishment of modalities for advancing the fields of online mediation and online mediation training:

A non-profit organization should be established to promote, educate and further the advancement of mediation, online mediation and online mediation training. Ideally, this organization would include participants from around the world and would promulgate material in multiple languages and incorporating international peacemaking trends.

A central resource hub, perhaps curated and maintained by the aforementioned non-profit organization, should be established to curate and solicit materials in order to provide professionals with support in both educating the public on mediation and online mediation but also to provide high-level training materials for training professionals. These materials should be made available in a wide-range of languages for use internationally.

The many benefits of online mediation and online mediation training should be emphasized in the materials provided to expand awareness.

Committee

Recommendations, cont.

Based upon the analysis and discussion of the issues and questions outlined above, the Marketing Committee makes the following recommendations with respect to the establishment of modalities for advancing the fields of online mediation and online mediation training, cont.

Digital marketing allows for the creation of one asset to be disseminated across many platforms (ie: websites, social media, email marketing, ect.) This repetition of content can, and should, be leveraged across platforms to create a consistent and ongoing message regarding the efficacy, convenience, and other benefit of the online mediation and mediation training fields.

Conclusion

As with all things, organization and collaboration go a long way to successfully expanding and enhancing the dissemination of any message. A centralized hub created to aggregate the effort would go a long way to creating more awareness and acceptance of mediation, online mediation and online mediation training.



Both professional and public awareness of online mediation and online mediation training is needed.



It would be helpful to have one hub to accumulate materials and centralize messaging in a manner suitable for international dissemination.



Digital marketing allows for a broad distribution of messaging accross multiple and far-reaching platforms which makes it well suited for this endeavor.

Online mediation and online mediation training have been widely adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic and as we move into a post-pandemic world, the benefits of both will likely continue expanding the range of options for all. The Recommendations in this Report of the Online Mediation Training Marketing Committee are suggested in furtherance of promoting acceptance of mediation, online mediation and online mediation training.