



Creating a Communications Plan
that works!

Workshop objectives

STOP

Struggling to get through each week

Continuing small initiatives that
suck up too many resources

Making excuses

Being reactive

Letting weaker opportunities
distract you

START

Planning the Big Picture

Taking the time to plan longer term
initiatives, get the right people in
the right places to realize the project

Making things happen

Being proactive

Focus on well researched
opportunities that are scalable
and fruitful

What is a communications plan?

A communications plan is a written document that describes:

OBJECTIVES: what you want to accomplish with your organization's communications.

GOALS: ways in which those objectives can be accomplished.

AUDIENCE: to whom your organization communications will be addressed.

TOOLS AND TIMETABLE: how you will accomplish your objectives.

EVALUATION: how you will measure the results of your program.

Why bother?

With a good communications plan, you will gain:

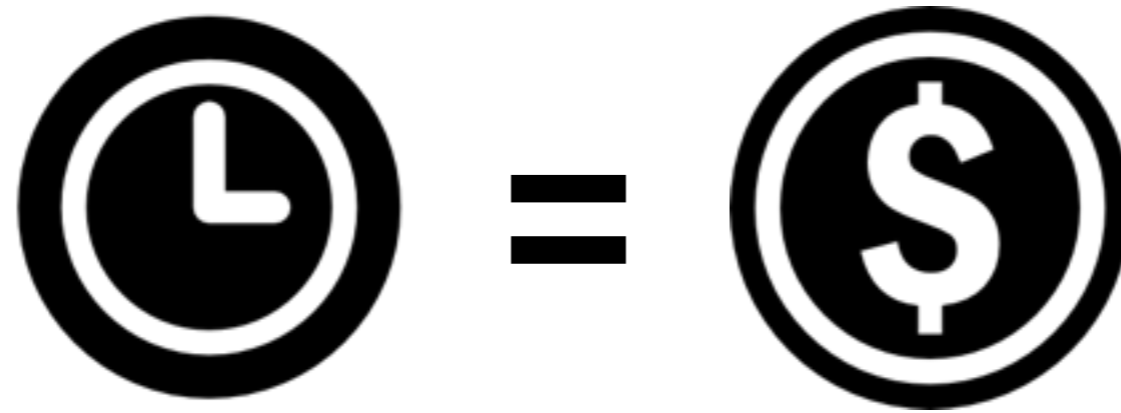
A clear path forward for your communications.

Concrete, measurable objectives so you know what you are working towards.

Stronger connections with your member base and prospects, leading to more participation, increased donations, membership and advocacy.

A more productive effort — making the most of your team, your time and your budget.

A concise overview of your work to engage colleagues and potential donors, members or clients.



Why take the time?

You've got better things to do than worry about communications

Needs and expectations of stakeholders are better met

Your messaging will be more consistent and effective

Core elements to consider

EXTERNAL

Target audience

Differentiation

Strength of message

Consistency

Tools

INTERNAL

Organizational buy-in

Vision and growth

Relationships

Data

Investment



Four essential statements every non-profit should have

Mission.....process

Vision.....result

Values.....emotion

Positioning.....difference

All four of these statements should be **distributed** to all employees, volunteers, sponsors and other stakeholders. They should be expressed publicly in annual reports, speeches and press releases.

They will give creative suppliers and consultants clear guidelines for brand and provide a basis for the development of the various branding elements into a comprehensive and consistent brand identity.

Mission	Process
Vision	Result
Values	Emotion
Positioning	Difference

Target audience

Who do you want to engage with?



Fundraising	Program	Advocacy
<p>individuals</p> <p>corporations</p> <p>foundations</p> <p>government</p>	<p>clients</p> <p>individuals</p> <p>organizations</p> <p>patrons</p> <p>members</p>	<p>community leaders</p> <p>policy makers</p> <p>media</p> <p>influencers</p>

Fundraising

Program

Advocacy

Tone?

Tone?

Tone?

Style?

Style?

Style?

Approach?

Approach?

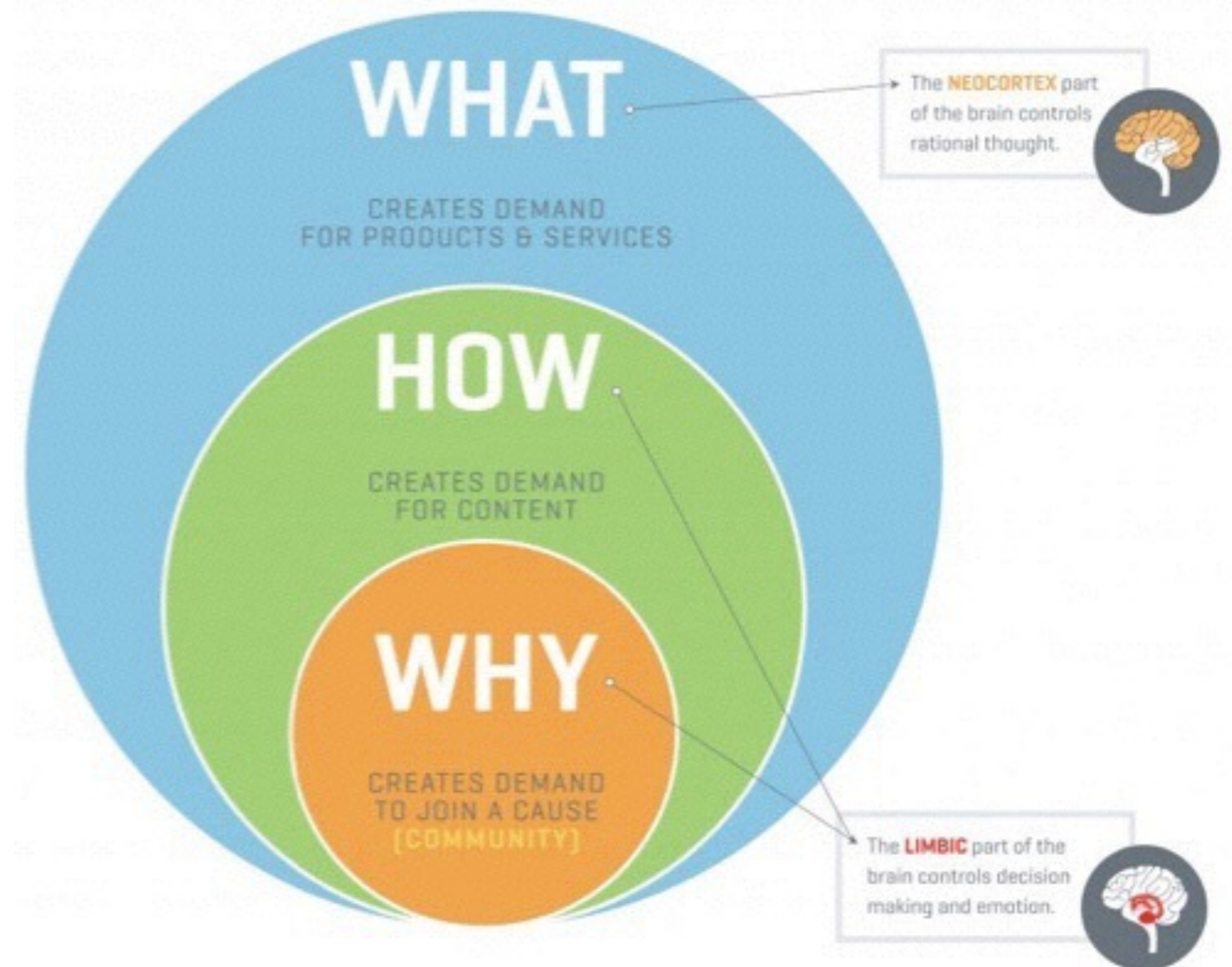
Approach?

Brand distinction

People don't buy
what you do,
they buy
why you do it.

—Simon Sinek

The Golden Circle





© Millward Brown

Ask yourselves:
what is not being addressed
by the competition?

Fill that gap.

If you don't **create your own message**,
then you're promoting someone else's.

Your brand is the DNA of everything
that encompasses your organization:
Define it, develop it, live it!

Focus on standing out
because you want your core values
to **be remembered** by your audience.

HOW?

1. Select the top 10 words that describe your organization and your unique value.
2. Do the “Mother test”.
3. Create a boiler plate (elevator pitch).
4. Make it your own.
5. Focus on being Y0U.

Strength of message

The most **successful brands**,
and those with the strongest
growth potential,
have a clear, distinctive positioning
based on **emotional** as well as
rational benefits.

The Elevator Pitch

When working on your pitch, consider the best your organization has to offer.
To start your thought process about what your brand can understand, answer the following questions:

What are the three key words that describe your organization's best qualities quickly and clearly?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

What is your "X" factor, what is at the core of what you do?

We are at our best when _____.

What is your biggest strength, the knowledge/skills that you have?

We are recognized for _____.

What is your superstar quality, what sets you apart?

People comment on our ability to _____.

To get you started writing your statement, use this model.
You can vary it a little; simply use it as a starting point.

We use our marketing skills and creativity to help non-profits.

Known for our philanthropic passion, we craft thoughtful fundraising campaigns, branding projects and online initiatives.

Using our expertise in communications, we advise our clients,

and deliver concrete results that have a real impact in our community.

Thanks to our many years in the sector, we quickly understand our clients most urgent needs,

enabling us to offer effective and affordable solutions.

To get you started writing your statement, use this model.
You can vary it a little; simply use it as a starting point.

We use our _____ and _____ to _____.

Known for _____, we _____.

Using our _____, we _____,

and deliver _____.

Thanks to our _____, we _____,

enabling us to _____.

**Think about your sector and the problems
you're trying to help solve.**

Why does your organization exist?

Think about solutions.

What does success look like?

**Highlight your organization's unique
differences.**

What makes you stand out in the market?

Use real stories.

Can you incorporate a personal experience that
illustrates your impact in the community?

Improving the warmth of your brand's
personality with a **strong message**
will help catapult your organization
to the next level.

Message consistency

Keeping your message consistent
is just as important as developing
the message itself.

70/30 rule

70% planned + 30% flexible

HOW?

Tie communications to fundraising initiatives.

Ensure messages are in sync with fundraising goals.

Determine what you want to achieve and when.

Use tools that target the audience.

Use stories to support your efforts.

Release good news as soon as it happens.

Be aware of **what** you're doing
and **why** your doing it.



TOOLS & CHANNELS



Take the time to do informal focus groups
if you cannot afford formal research.

Use the Internet to find statistics, articles,
and examples of success stories.

Find out why they were successful.

Key points for creating successful tools

Do your homework, listen to your audience.

Decide on the shelf life of each tool
and only print the amount you need.

Invest in channels that have
a stronger return on investment.

Measure the results of your initiatives
and don't repeat thing that don't work.

EXAMPLE : internal communications

Communication goals, methods, tools and resources

Desired action (intention, concern, result wanted):

Create a better corporate culture, inform staff and volunteers so they have a shared vision.

Communication type : informational

Audience : internal

Elements to formulate your communication goals :

- Objective --> Increase/improve internal communications.
- Task --> Send out regular news about decisions being made, and where the organization is going.
- Audience --> Staff and volunteers.
- Timeline --> 3 months to set up, monthly touch points from that point forward.

Formulating the communication goal:

Within three months (duration), all (proportion) employees and volunteers (audience) will be informed (objective) regularly on organizational decisions and orientations by ways of an internal newsletter (task).

Activity : Monthly touch point

Tools : Electronic Newsletter

Reason/Benefits:

In the process of producing this newsletter, we will seek the cooperation of employees and volunteers so that the information is as complete as possible and accurately represents the life of the organization. It will foster a greater sense of belonging, and help break the silos between departments.

Who's in charge : Denise (HR/Communications)

Budget : \$0 (TBC) + 2 hours per month of staff time

Deadline: March 31 2015 (1st issue will go out April 1)

EXAMPLE : external communications

Communication goals, methods, tools and resources

Desired action (intention, concern, result wanted):

Increase our clientele

Communication type : advertising/print material

Audience : external

Elements to formulate your communication goals :

- Objective --> Convince them to use our service once a month.
- Task --> Create an ad.
- Audience --> Young single moms in the neighbourhood (16-25 yrs old).
- Timeline --> 12 months.

Formulating the communication goal:

Our organization wants to convince 20% (proportion) of young single mothers aged 16 to 25 (audience) to use our services at least once a month (objective) in one year from now (duration).

Activity : hand out information

Tool : pamphlet

Reason/Benefits:

By handing out pamphlets at a grocery store or financial institution, we are likely to encounter our target audience and present our information to them without pressuring them too much. Like banking and grocery shopping, we need to convince them that coming to our centre can also be part of their routine.

Who's in charge : Mark (program director)

Budget : \$500 printing + \$350 for graphic design + 5 hours of our time to work on content

Deadline: December 31 2015 (Go to print by March 1. Distribute mid March, May, Sept + Nov.)



INTERNAL WORK

Organizational buy-in

Your communications
are only as strong as
the people who deliver them
– this includes your board.

HOW?

Provide the right working tools to your team:

- Mission, vision and values document (MVV)
- Brand book
- Pocket folder / material you distribute to the public audience
- Real stories

Brand and vision growth

Have checkpoints throughout the year:

- how are we doing?
- how realistic was our plan?
- does anything need to be adjusted?
- what's the feedback we're getting?
- have we accomplished a milestone?
 - > Yes? What's our next one?
 - > No? Why not? What needs adjusting?

Four tools to make research easy and cost-effective

- 1 Surveys
- 2 Focus groups
- 3 Communications audits
- 4 Secondary information sources

Relationships



Ideas:

Ask suppliers or corporate sponsors to send out a press release, blog post or tweet about their involvement with your cause.

Send out a Tweet or a Facebook post when a new staff or board member joins your organization.

Praise the competition when they do something for the cause.

Praise your volunteers and staff regularly. Highlight people who have been with your organization for years, it makes for great content and can even be picked up by journalists.

Celebrate your victories: announce certifications gained or grants being awarded.

Give a shout out to the community when they've come out to support you. Find unique ways to say Thank You.

Metrics



Google Analytics



Just ask!

Investment

Setting your Marketing Budget

IF YOU WANT TO HAVE SUCCESSFUL MARKETING PROJECTS,
START YOUR BUDGET PROCESS TODAY, EVEN IF YOU'RE IN
THE MIDDLE OF YOUR FISCAL YEAR.

The budgeting process helps guide us and helps us to determine whether the marketing plan is realistic. If not, we can always cut the plan to focus on ultimate priorities and retool the budget. The advantage of developing a budget based on your organizational finances is that it's organic. Communications spending grows as does your organization. The average allocation is from 9-12% of your annual organizational budget (we recommend you start with 10%).

HERE'S A HIGHLY-SIMPLIFIED EXAMPLE OF A BUDGET SHAPED BY THE PERCENTAGE APPROACH:



Producing (design, artwork) and printing (includes newsletters, brochures, web sites, press kits, etc.)



Consultation and marketing planning



Purchasing all advertising and promotion media (includes internet, newspaper, radio, TV, direct mail, etc.)



Producing special events (if appropriate for your organization)

Things we take into account when determining your budget:

The size of your market: local, regional, national

The size of your target groups

What stage are you at: launch, maturity, decline?

The projected revenue: services, grants, donations.

The amount that you are willing to invest to acquire a new donor.

Tools	Branding, print, web, etc.
Exposure	Fairs, trade shows, conferences, etc.
Memberships	Associations, clubs, etc.

Find your niche
Set your goal
Make some noise!

Integrated Multi-Channel Marketing:

Where Nonprofit Organizations Are Today & Key Success Factors Moving Forward

Author: Vinay Bhagat, Founder & Chief Strategy Officer at Convio



Donor centric.

Instead of following a rigid or communications plan similar to another non-profit, or with a one-size-fits all approach, organizations should adapt their communications to the **donor behaviour**.

This makes for more relevant and effective communications.

Multi-channel approach

Campaigns deployed through a single communication channel are a thing of the past.

Seek out **new ways of reaching out** to your target audiences.

An integrated theme across all channels

Each communication channel reinforces the same message
and helps complete the ask.

Optimal sequencing

Using tests and data analysis, you can improve each campaign and adjust the strategy where needed.

Strong performance indicators

Must be defined and properly measured so you can optimize, get consistent results and get your return on investment.

Get to know your donor

Gathering information is not enough;
you must analyze the database and segment accordingly.

No more silos

To present an integrated and consistent message to donors,
you must first get organized internally.

Get on the same page:
program / fundraising / board level / administration.

Thank you!



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Resources

Information :

<http://nonprofitanswerguide.org/faq>

<http://www.imaginecanada.ca>

<http://www.blackbaud.com>

<http://www.socialbrite.org/2013/06/18/10-top-online-survey-tools-for-your-nonprofit/>

<http://www.afpnet.org/>

Inspiration :

<http://topnonprofits.com/>

<http://charityvillage.com>

