S.M.A.R.T.
COMMUNICATION
GUIDELINES

by Lloyds Design d.o.o. - October 2018

1. WHAT IS S.M.A.R.T. COMMUNICATION?

One of the most common yet serious mistakes in communication measurement is poorly stated objectives. It is a mistake you can easily avoid by sticking to the SMART method. Here are the guidelines to follow for achieving your communication goals.

S for Specific

First and foremost, your communication objective has to be specific. Use all the common questions to drill down to the heart of the matter: What is going to happen, who is going to do it, when is it going to take place, how much is going to change, why are we doing it etc. Being specific is all about the details so you know precisely what needs to be done.

M for Measurable

Your next step is to ensure that you have a way to quantifiably measure whether you succeed or not. This may sound logical, but have you actually considered how you are going to gauge when you are at the finish line? What quantitative or qualitative methods are you going to apply to collect data? How are you going to analyse it? How will you be able to conclude if you achieved your stated objective? An objective that cannot be measured is actually not on objective – it is just something you wish for (and thus useless).

A for Achievable

The third criteria in SMART is to make sure the objective is achievable. Do you have the necessary time, money and resources? Is it realistic or are you biting off more than you can chew?

R for Relevant

Relevance is the fourth step. This is all about ensuring alignment between your objective and everything else your organisation is trying to do. Is what you are trying to do a natural development of your strategy? Or is it a vanity project? Will succes mean improvement for the business? Will it strengthen other areas or projects?
A second way to look at relevance is to ask yourself whether you are measuring what is important – or what is easy to measure? Make sure your chosen metrics that make your objective Measurable are also Relevant.

T for Time-bound

And finally, you must make sure that your objective is time-bound. That means setting a start date, an end date and milestones along the way. Plan out when important events or decisions will take place. It is almost always better to collect data in a shorter period of time and immediately apply what you can learn incrementally. If you collect data over a long time-span, it risks turning obsolete before you get a chance to analyse it and react to the findings.

2. WHERE AND HOW TO IMPLEMENT S.M.A.R.T.?

BE BOLD - DO NOT STICK ONLY TO REALISTIC GOALS

Before setting an attainable goal, think hard. Consider the long-term strategic impact of an unrealistic goal. If possible, pick something that's challenging, but realistic. You want your goals to fuel innovation, not just look good in a status report.

SET A RANGE INSTEAD OF A SINGLE FIGURE

As your communication campaign is a "living creature", you have to adapt and adopt during the communication period. Do not stick to single figures - set a range when thinking about yiur objectives and do not hesitate to make small changes during the campaign.

COLLABORATE ON SETTING GOALS

Make sure all the people and groups collaborating on the project give their view on the project goals. The collaborative approach works far better than cascading goals. It gives project leaders an accurate picture of what's attainable, what's not. At the same time, it pushes project partners to adopt some rules that help their teams to do the best possible work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR COLLABORATION

- Make ONE official mailing list of partners' CMs and communicate everything through it

- Decide on online cloud platform for data, documents and materials that is best for you (our suggestion: Google Drive, alternative: Dropbox or a website on Interreg server, depending on data capacity)

- Have a database of all things that are important for your project communication, e.g. photos and visuals to use on social media, photos for press, content that describes the project (short and long version), lists of contacts (stakeholders, media, other target groups)

- Have a document with tasks, responsibilities and due dates for each partner and a communication company

3. VISUAL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES - PRINT

TOP-TO-BOTTOM & SIMPLIFIED

We're all taught to read from top to bottom and left to right when we're in school: your consumers are no different. Keep this in mind as you start creating content for your material. Keep it to relevant information only – more information can be provided by other means of communication, such as web page, online documents or FAQ sheet.

USE ONLY HIGH-QUALITY IMAGES

When picking a graphic material for your brochures, leaflets, posters or even presentations, stick only to the high-quality, sharp and high-resolution images and graphics. No matter how important or attractive you find a graphic that does not have a certain level of quality, do not use it - most people will recognize it as a drawback of your presentation.

MAKE USE OF TEXT AND SPACING

No matter if you are the one creating the design or merely setting up the content for the professional designer to create your print material, always be aware of the typography and the amount of content. Typography is the arrangement of letters and type in a way that's both readable and artistically appealing.

Do not overload your material with textual content! Make sure to use headings, subheadings, plain text, quotes and footnotes as separate and always defined styles. Using plain text only is boring and ineffective and it draws your consumers away from your content.

CHOOSE THE SIZES THAT ARE RIGHT FOR YOU

When making - or ordering - a poster, a brochure or a leaflet, think about the places where it will be applied on or the consumers that will get their hands onto it. Do not oversize the formats of brochures and leaflets - the pocket-sized are just fine for you, so your consumers can simply take it with them. If you oversize your promo and reading material, you will end up with most of it left behind - for practical reasons!

The whole different story is with posters - they have to be readable and visually clear and appealing from a fair distance your consumers are looking at them. Make sure you do not put A3 posters in big venues or exterior - they are almost useless in a cramped format.

4. VISUAL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES - MULTIMEDIA

VIDEO

Nowadays video content is most commonly consumed via online platforms. When making a video whose purpose will primarly be promotional or educational, keep it as short as possible for two reasons: firstly, to keep the attention of the consumer from the beginning to the end; secondly, to not de-motivate a consumer with the overall length of the video to even start watching it. It is far better to do a set of short videos that can be merged into one lenghtier video for future purposes than to make a full-hour video that no-one will have time or motivation to watch. The recommended duration for online video is between 3 and 5 minutes.

PHOTO

In Facebook and Instagram era and in times of broad expansion of quality online content, it is of a high importance to keep the material up to date and trendy. Keep all your photographs and other visual material in high resolution and quality. If necessary, hire a professional photographer - the competition is too high nowadays to risk with poor or badly taken photos. The photo material is no more used only for printing or photoarchiving, it has much wider usage - a great photo can easily be a basis of your communication campaign! It is a first attention grabber and draws much more consumers into engagement than a textual content - so give it as much importance and do not save money or space on it.

WEBSITE

Doing a smart social media campaign or presenting a project in media cannot be done on the highest level without a quality website all the links will lead onto.

A project website on the Interreg subdomain and platform is enough - if it is regularly updated with fresh content (description of the project, news, announcements, photo and video materials, visuals database, documents database etc.).

Moreover, yor website can be the information basis that will ease and simplify online communication, e.g. for every digital materials you want to send to media, stakeholders or others, can easily be accessed via the link - and always "alive", changeable and updateable, on the very same address.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

The first rule of all the social media communication campaigns is - be engaged and never stop being engaged. Social media range and your page/profile appearance in other people's channels varies and the most common drawback is the lack of engagement and action.

If the project holder and partners do not have enough time to be constantly engaged on all the social media pages and profiles, it is advised to reduce the number of social media you planned to manage, rather than reducing activity and keeping all social media channels.

5.1. FACEBOOK

As the biggest and strongest social media platform, Facebook is always changing and improving and it has many rules that tend to be different every year. Here are 10 of them for 2018:

1. **Target specific audience**
2. **Run a simple contest to build up engagement**
3. **Create short and enticing video posts**
4. **Use images with people to direct attention**
5. **Post more "human" and less "corporate" images**
6. **Target pepole you already have as followers on Facebook**
7. **Increase the number of your main audience**
8. **Use funny / relaxed employee photos**
9. **When paying, only promote your best content**
10. **Use emojis, no matter how formal your content is**

Do not forget that Facebook is primarily a social network, intended to engage people with informal communication and "human touch" - even the biggest brands and political parties do it that way.

The suggestion is to post on Facebook up to 10 times per month - e.g. twice a week, unless there is an event - then an everyday activity is welcome, even 2-3 posts per day. If there is no news, new photos or good content, it is better to skip one post then to make it uninteresting.

Sharing FB posts to other stakeholders and suggesting them to share it or post it on their pages (e.g. the Tourist board of Labin or a local museum shares the photo gallery from Labin event) will spread a native range of followers.

We will closely follow the statistics of Facebook reach and suggest further actions, corrections to the given plan or post content, and even suggest a paid campaign to raise the reach, if necessary.

5.2. INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a social netwirk with the biggest rise of users, outnumbering 700 million users. Its main content is visual - photo or video. However, getting others to engage with your Instagram isn't as simple as uploading decent content and calling it a day. Project leader and partners must understand how to promote your Instagram to reach your biggest audience possible.

The plan is to have a selection of at least 20 quality photos of architecture, events connected to the architecture or interesting historical photos per partner, to make the Instagram profile live and attractive to common Instagram followers.

The suggestion is to post up to 10 photos (or videos) per month, up until the end of the project.

5.3. TWITTER

Twitter is a very specific social network, much more popular in US than in Europe. It consists of short messages, images and video content. The only rule you have to follow in Twitter is: be as much engaged as you can. Best Twitter campaigns are the ones where several posts are created every day, and the reply time is very important too.

Our suggestion is not to use Twitter as one of the main communication channels if you do not have time to be engaged at least once to twice each day.

If the use of Twitter is your obligation in project, then we suggest to repeat the posts from Facebook, in the same dynamics as the Facebook posts are published.

5.4. GOOGLE +

Google + is officially shut down for non-professional consumers. strongly

We suggest to leave it out of your plan.

5.5. LINKEDIN

Linkedin is a specific business-to-business network. Make a profile of a project leader or project representative and a business page, fill it with all the necessary information and keep it updated ionly f and when necessary.

Our suggestion is to fill it with all necessary data and leave it without activities unless some information changes.

5.6. YOUTUBE

Use Youtube as a channel to post your online video material, without htinking much about the social media engagement - for the professional use, the engagement is not of a great importance.

When the first video material is done - or if you already have some interesting video material - we will upload it to Youtube channel and use other social media channels - such as Facebook or Instagram - to raise its reach.

Of course, Youtube can be - and is recommended to be - a basis of all the video material you will have on your website - consider it as a video database. We will provide all the updates, descriptions and other necessities.

6. PUBLIC PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

NUMBER ONE RULE - ALWAYS USE THE PP/KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

No matter where you are presenting the project, if possible use the visual presentation. People are always more engaged when having visual material in combination with the lecture or keynote speak.

30-20-10 RULE OF SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATIONS

This simple rule just works:

Font size in your Power point presentation always has to be at least 30. People from the back rows must be able to read everything.

Make sure you do not have more than 20 slides, if possible.

Try to keep your presentation as short as 10 minutes. You will get all the attention of the audience in first 10 to max 12 minutes.

PARALLEL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Presentation is always better when images and sounds are combined together. If you do not have the possibility to present Power point, try to play a video or at least have a set of posters, rollup banners or other visual material to go with your spoken presentation.

7. MEDIA COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Every project partner is responsible of sending the media reports in their own language, to local, regional and national media, depending on the report or news importance and of the communication guidelines given below (Part 9 of this document).

Every project parnter is responsible of collecting press clipping about the project.

7.1. COLLECTING CONTACTS AND CREATING A LIST OF CONTACTS

See PART 9 of this document

7.2. CREATING AND SENDING A MEDIA REPORT

When writing a media report, always stick to simple principles of press: your text has to give answers to five simple questions: Who? When? Where? Why? How?

Make sure not to overload the media report with text - the more consistent and direct your reports are, the more chance for them to be published.

Make sure to use quality photographs and avoid to send more than 3 to 5 key photos for every media report you prepare.

Always have prepared a set of premade photos, in case of not having a quality image in the moment of sending the media report.

Keep track of every sent media report and have a document or database with the info on media you sent your report to.

7.3. COLLECTING PRESS CLIPPING

You can choose the method of collecting press clipping. It can either be done by you as a project partner or you can hire an external service to do it.

Make sure all the press clipping is connected to media reports, news or events strictly connected to the project.

Always have a digital and printed copy of the article.

Kindly ask the television or radio providers to send you the video or audio file, or at least to provide you with Youtube/Vimeo/Soundcloud/Mixcloud link. When possible, always download multimedia content - the links can be deleted after a certain period of time.

8. STAKEHOLDERS MAILING LIST

This is the official mailing list of all major stakeholders in the project, from all partners. It is elgible to change it during the project duration, however all the partners and the company in charge of communication plan have to be contacted immediately when the change occurs.

This mailing list is a part of the official S.M.A.R.T. Communication Guidelines for the Atrium PLUS project.

Francesco Natale - francesco.natale@comune.forli.fc.it

Cristina Vallicelli - cristina.vallicelli@comune.forli.fc.it

Antonia Mlikota - amlikota@unizd.hr

Božena Krce Miočić - krceb@unizd.hr

Irena Kozuli - ikozulic@unizd.hr

Anita Matek <adzepina@unizd.hr>;

Lisa Pietropaolo - l.pietropaolo@comune.bari.it

Marisa Lupelli - m.lupelli@comune.bari.it

Giovanni Antelmi - giovanni.antelmi@gmail.com

Andrea Santoro - andrea1981santoro@gmail.com

Stipe Marić - stipe.maric11@gmail.com

Maria Teresa Pinna - mt.pinna@comune.fe.it

Cecilia Fogli - c.fogli@comune.fe.it

Sara Conforti - S.conforti@comune.fe.it

Giulia Righetti - giulia.righetti@naxta.it

Nino Bažon - Nino.bazon@labin.hr

Irina Belušić Maggi - irina.belusicm@labin.hr

Dragana Jakovcic - dragana.Jakovcic@labin.hr

9. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES MAILING LIST

-- in progress --

The media representatives mailing list will be divided among project partners. Every project partner is obliged to create a mailing list consisting of:

- up to 10 local media mail addresses
- up to 5 regional media mail addresses
- up to 3 national media mail addresses

Every project partner will send media reports about the project to the local media at least once every month. Every project partner will send major news about the project to local, regional and national media at least once every 3 months.

The mailing list of all the media collected from all the project partners is a part of the official S.M.A.R.T. Communication Guidelines for the Atrium PLUS project.

10. SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN

PHASE ONE

Facebook:

1. Populating the Facebook page with info about the project - at least 2 pre-made posts from each project partner (10 or more total) in the first 20 days (1 post every two days)
Start: October 23, 2018 - DONE

2. Creating a set of pre-made Facebook posts (at least 20) for next 2 months period
Start: November 22; End: November 30, 2018

Instagram:

Populating the Instagram profile with pre-made photo collection connected to the project - at least 20 photos in the first 20 days (1x per day)
Start: November 22; End: November 30, 2018

Youtube:

Uploading videos based on dynamics of creation - or uploading videos immediately if there are existing ones
Start: day 1 of final version of first video / or October 29, 2018 if video material exists
End: Last day of the projet

Twitter:

Using it only for the milestone events in the project - start with one post to populate the channel
Start: November 22, 2018

LinkedIN:

Fill the profile with necessary information until November 30, 2018