



10.0 Marketing and Communications

Marketing and Communications Planning

Overview

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Marketing Strategy

Define your product, service, or benefit

Before outlining your marketing approach, it is key to define your product, service, or benefit. This is your core, and all marketing activity should feed directly back to this core.

- What do you do?
- How does your offering differ from what your competitors or similar organisations do?
- What, therefore, is your USP - Unique Selling Point? The thing that makes you stand out.



Image: Planning a Marketing Strategy

When considering marketing, the five W's will help you define your approach:

Why?

Who?

When?

What?

Where?

Added together, these five points = How?

Why are you communicating with your audience

How do you want to be perceived? What do you need to achieve?

To get an objective view of how you are currently perceived, some research will probably be required – often a quick questionnaire or phone call to a reasonable selection of people will do. Gauging the tone of how people talk about your organisation on social media is another way to identify your 'position' in people's minds.



Task: Where are you now?

Take an environmental group as an example

Draw a straight line across a page. At one end write Greenpeace, at the other National Trust. Ask people to put a cross where they think your organisation is between the two.

This technique can be applied to almost any field.

Where is your organisation now, in comparison with where you need it to be?

Where do you want your organisation to be within a certain time frame – say a year, three years or perhaps by the end of a campaign? Do you want more people to know about you – why? Do you have the capacity to handle larger numbers of users/clients/visitors etc?

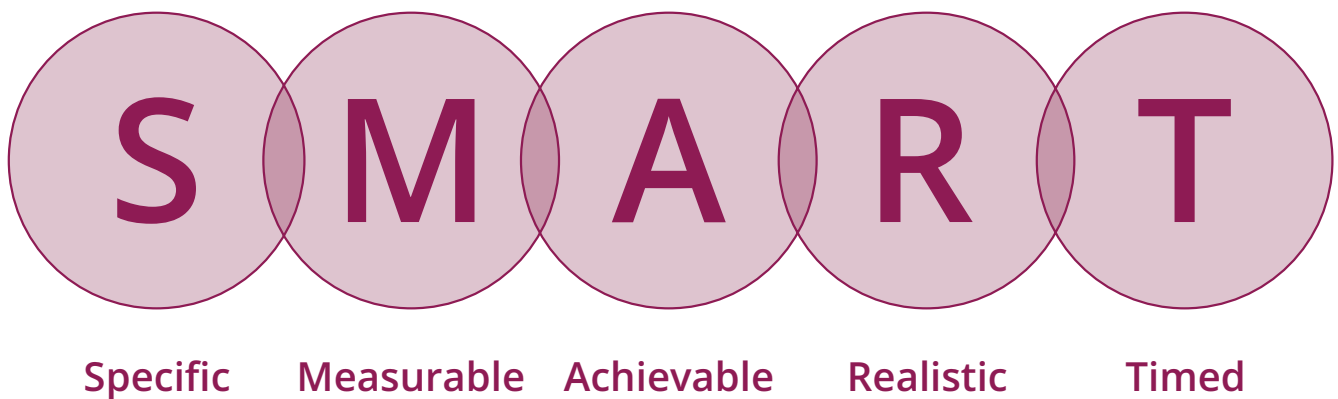


Task: Where do you want to go?

Take your position line as described above and put a cross where you would like to be seen at the end of your time frame.

If your cross for where people think you are now coinciding with where you want to be at the end of your time frame, it does not mean you have no work to do. Your image and reputation will always require attention, even if it is to do more of the same work to maintain your current image in the eyes of your audience.

What are your marketing objectives?



These need to be **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed**. For example a 10 per cent increase in users or volunteers over six months.

It is a good idea to create your marketing objectives annually, and these objectives should feed directly into your organisation's overall objectives. If you intend to undertake more than one communications campaign within the year, each campaign should have its own specific **SMART** objectives, which feed into your annual marketing objectives.

Your Audience

Who are you trying to reach?

Which section/s of the community are you trying to reach? The 'general public', or 'everybody' is too vague. The more you narrow this target down the more effective you will be. Targeting does not mean excluding everybody else, it means knowing a smaller group of people better.

Try to find out as much information about your target audiences as possible:

- Age group
- Religion
- Social class
- Interests
- Lifestyle

Potential target audiences are:

- Local opinion-leaders, such as the local MP or newspaper editor
- Service users or beneficiaries
- Volunteers
- Individual donors and funders
- Families and friends of the beneficiaries
e.g parents of children under five, or those who care for the elderly

Where can you find them?

Once you have a profile of your audience, consider where they are as this will help with implementing your strategy:

Offline:

- Where do they go daily/weekly/monthly (schools / commuting routes / supermarkets / sports clubs / community centres, etc)
- How do they travel in terms of the outdoor media they may come across? (Walk / Car / Bus / Train)
- What do they read? (newspapers, magazines)
- Do they listen to local radio?

Online:

- What media do they consume online? (e.g. News / TV / Film / Gaming)
- Are they on social media? Which sites?
- When are they online?



External Link

A wealth of information about consumers is freely available from Ofcom as well as from individual media owners, who know their audiences very well

[Ofcom Website](#)

When will you communicate with them?

Planning and timing are essential:

- Plan which days, weeks or months are best to approach each audience
- Consider your organisation's key milestones – what do you have coming up in your calendar of events?
- Look outside of your organisation – what else is going on in your industry that you could maximise upon to create momentum for your own campaign?
- Are there other important events happening within your specific area or further afield that may be relevant?
- What else is going on around the same time that you should avoid?

For a new service or initiative, you may want a big blast of publicity up front, followed by a steady flow.

As a matter of course, and to maintain your reputation and image, you will need a steady flow of communication between you and your audience – a two-way conversation wherever possible.

Give yourself targets and a timetable. Pay attention to lead times for printed media, which may have submission deadlines weeks before your messages appear in print.

How will you communicate with them?

Selecting the right communication channels

In consideration of all you have learned, consider what methods are you going to use to market your organisation or project.

Your methods should be based as much as possible on what you know about your target audience. There is no point in putting a great effort into getting coverage in the Western Mail or Daily Post **for example, if very few of your target audience read that media – the local weekly may be much more useful to you.**

Owned channels (channels you own):

- Organic (unpaid) social media
- Website
- Blog
- Newsletter / e-DM (Direct Mail)
- Events planned by you – (exhibitions, conferences, meetings, visits)

Earned channels (publicity generated by others):

- Public relations / media relations
- Blogger relations
- Influencer relations
- Word of mouth

Paid channels (channels you pay for):

- Advertising (digital / TV / radio / outdoor)
- Direct mail – (post, door-drop)
- Face-to-face (e.g. door-to-door collections or fundraising)
- Telemarketing
- Sponsorship

Shared channels:

- Content shared on social media
- Referrals
- Partnerships (stakeholder engagement – e.g. your messages in their e-Newsletter / shop window displays)
- Events arranged by others (e.g. talking at or providing literature at conferences, meetings, and visits)

Your key messages

For each campaign you run, establish your key messages - a maximum of three. Key messages are usually very simple and rarely involve policy statements. Consider the most important message to convey - the fewer the messages within a communication piece, the less diluted the message to your audience.

You should ask yourself **'why should our target audience come to us?'** The answer 'because we are good' is not good enough.

'We are trustworthy' and **'We know what we are talking about'** with facts to back up these statements, are both key messages.

Think about key messages in relation to a new campaign or developing a new service. Be specific, say what it does on the tin. Are they going to have an impact on your target audience?

Call-to-action

Decide upon a strong call-to-action so that the audience is prompted to do something. Your call-to-action may differ depending on who you are targeting or where your audience is on their journey with you:

- Visit our website for further details (**education stage – raising awareness**)
- Apply now by filling in this form (**time for action – generating applications**)

Customise the tone of your messages to each audience. One tone will not be suitable for all. It is crucial to have accurate and accessible communications - befriend or invest in a copywriter if you are uncertain about writing clear, simple copy.

Memorable names and logos are an advantage - if your organisation's name or logo is difficult to use, resize or remember, then perhaps it is worth reviewing or redesigning it.

Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 makes Welsh an official language in Wales. This means it must be treated no less favourably than English. While not all activity has to be translated in its exact context, an equal balance should be aimed for in terms of both English and Welsh speaking audiences being exposed to activity.

Budget

What is all this going to cost you?

In the voluntary sector you are unlikely to be able to do it all, so target your resources at the methods you think will be most effective – even if they are not the most glamorous ones.

Some elements in your strategy may not start for several months, in which case you might have time to try and raise some money. Funders are more likely to give for a specific item if it is clearly part of a communications strategy and feeding into your overall marketing objectives, than an item on its own.

Consider partnerships and collaborations – working with organisations that have similar values to your own could result in mutually beneficial activity.

Evaluating Your Efforts

It is important to measure your success, especially for future funding or building awareness. Facts and figures will prove your **ROMI: Return on Marketing Investment**, and ultimately, whether your organisation is making a difference or not.

This is the time to consider your marketing and communication objectives, which you should have made **SMART; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed**:

- Marketing objectives: annual objectives to feed into your organisation's overall objectives
- Campaign communication objectives: a set of objectives for every campaign you run throughout the year, which feed into your overall marketing objectives

Monitor and adapt

The first step is to constantly monitor your individual campaign as it progresses to gauge whether your efforts are beginning to work in the way you need them to. If not, you may be able to adapt your campaign before it comes to fruition. If one communication type is working better than another, determine why this may be and use the most successful formats more.

Measure each campaign

The next step is to use these results to write an informed report on your specific campaign, making recommendations based on what worked and what did not. This will help inform how to plan and roll out future communications campaigns.

Evaluate your year

Finally, you should use the results from each campaign run within the year to produce an annual evaluation. These results should feed into your annual marketing objectives and will give you an idea of whether you have achieved what you set out to at the beginning of the year.

Quantitative evaluation:

- Digital advertising impressions
- Social media likes, follows
- Social media engagements (comments, shares)
- Amount of media coverage
- Website visits
- Enquiries made
- Forms filled in / applications made
- Donations / money raised
- Number of attendees to an event

Qualitative evaluation:

- Tone of media coverage – positive or negative?
- Sentiment of social media engagement – positive or negative?
- Organise focus groups with your different audiences. Ask what they think of you, whether they are satisfied with how you communicate to them and how it can be improved

Collect feedback, whether this is by email from your website or by a survey in an annual piece of literature



Remember

The best strategy is one that is flexible and can change and develop over time.

Further Information

How to develop a better marketing plan

NCVO

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/studyzone/how-to-develop-a-better-marketing-plan>

Developing a communications strategy

NCVO

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/campaigns/communications/communications-strategy>

Resource Hub – Marketing Strategy & Planning

Media Trust

<https://mediatrust.org/communications-support/resource-hub/>



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector **Cymru**

Third Sector
Support **Wales**

Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales.

It consists of the 19 local and regional support bodies across Wales, the County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) and the national support body, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

For further information contact
<https://thirdsectorsupport.wales/contact/>

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