

Communications Planning Template



Courtesy of



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Purpose

State why you are creating a communication plan. What is its scope? Is it for external or internal audiences, or both?

For example: If you're planning to launch a Facebook page, the purpose of your communication plan might be: "Provide a roadmap guiding internal and external communication for the launch and maintenance of my new Facebook business page to ensure quality and success, and to limit risk exposure."

Situation Analysis

State important factors affecting your project. What are the current communication challenges and issues? What is expected to change? What are significant strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

For example:

- I already have a website, e-newsletter, and YouTube channel with a growing following.
- The person in charge of launching my Facebook page is already overworked.
- My organization/ministry has no policies governing social media.
- Graphics copyright law is a gray area and I don't know where to get a steady source of good graphics.
- My board members don't know much about social media and will need to be educated.
- Etc.

Goals & Strategies

State your communication goals (long-term desired outcomes) and objectives (the measures of progress that will help you reach your goals).

For example:

- Position my organization as one of the country's leaders in the area of XYZ. (Goal)
- Draw seekers to Christ. (Goal)
- Increase participation at my special events. (Strategy)
- Provide an online voice to communicate my organization/ministry's key messages. (Strategy)
- Build relationships with, engage, and educate fans. (Strategy)
- Attract new constituents. (Strategy)
- Etc.

Objectives

State key objectives—the steps you’ll take to accomplish your strategies.

For example:

- Announce the page to key audiences (see below). Ask them to promote it and show them how.
- Create a posting calendar and use scheduling software to schedule posts.
 - Identify key organizational milestones, dates, and holidays and tie messaging to the dates.
- Vary the content, offering a mix of inspiration, humor, and organization-centered messages.
- Respond to questions and comments so fans will know the page is attended, and to encourage fans to discover the value you bring to them.
- Use Facebook’s “lookalike audience” feature to reach new people who are likely to be interested in our organization because they already like pages similar to ours.
- Determine budget for Facebook promotions/ads.
- Regularly post “calls to action”—opportunities for fans to: become a member (if applicable), donate, attend events, subscribe to our newsletter, take advocacy action, share stories or testimonies, comment and engage, visit our website, and XYZ (other important actions).
- Promote the page through our existing platforms (e.g., newsletter, website, YouTube).
- Etc.

Key Messages

What messages do you want to convey consistently through this new social media platform?

For example:

- Our organization is a leader in XYZ (name it).
- Our organization is making a difference in these ways: XYZ (name key areas).
- When you like my page, you’ll:
 - Get to know more about our organization.
 - Receive special offers and discounts.
 - Find out first about upcoming events.
 - Be inspired and educated about XYZ (name key areas).
- Etc.

Target Audiences

Focus on the role your key audiences play. If you have a sense of the age, gender, or special interests for each audience, include it.

For example:

- Internal: All board members, staff, and volunteers.
- External: Everyone on our mailing list, ministry partners, event attendees (75 percent female between 25 and 60 years old; 20 percent stay-at-home moms, 60 percent work outside the home; 80 percent church-goers; 90 percent high school graduates, 20 percent have at least one year of college education), my personal friends and relatives, and those of board members, staff, and volunteers.
- Etc.

Measurement

State how and when you'll measure your efforts and to whom they'll be reported.

For example:

- Recruit a knowledgeable individual to capture, analyze, and report metrics.
- Use Facebook analytics to understand what's working and how people interact with our content, and improve our results over time.
- Examine data on who, exactly, is visiting our page and adjust content and audience descriptions accordingly.
- Review results quarterly to determine if we're advancing our goals, strategies, and objectives.
- Etc.

Implementation Table

Attach a separate table showing the specific tactical steps required to implement your communication plan. For each line item, include a column to specify deadlines, the person/team responsible for task completion, contingencies, completion date, and comments/questions/notes. Typically, a budget addendum would also accompany your communication plan.