

# Factsheet

## 32: Marketing strategy, Communications plan and housestyle guidelines

The Marketing strategy will help you think about how you showcase your work and target new members, volunteers or funders. Under the Marketing strategy you would then create a Communications plan of the tools and methods to implement your strategy – events, newsletters, website, social media etc. If more than one person will be producing publicity or even just sending out emails it is worth creating housestyle guidelines and maybe some templates. This will ensure a consistency and quality to everything you communicate.

Below we cover some of the things you should include in a strategy and tips on creating a plan and housestyle guidelines. We also have Marketing strategy and Communication plan templates available.

### **Lift pitch/key message – Executive summary**

If you were in a lift with someone and they asked you what your group/organisation does what would you say? Keep it as short and clear as possible you would only have a minute or two. Or if you find it easier what do you tell taxi drivers if they ask you what you do? This is a clear statement on the work of your group or organisation and should be clear to whoever you talk to avoiding any jargon or acronyms. This is a good exercise to do with members of your group – get them to split into pairs and come up with something and then role play the lift scene. Between you all you can then come up with the statement you all agree on. This is really useful to then use on leaflets, websites, all publicity and when you are out and about.

### **Services you provide**

Breakdown the services you offer, not in great depth but just bullet points of your main services/projects.

### **Mission and vision**

What do you want to happen as a result of this strategy? What will it change? What are your goals?

### **Competitor analysis**

Who are your competitors? What do you offer that they don't? What is your unique selling point?

### **It can be good to do a SWOT analysis**

Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities - Threats

### **Market/audiences**

Who are you trying to reach? You probably have more than one audience, make a list.

### **Market segmentation**

This is where you break down further who the audience is. Take your list and make a table – What are their passions/interests?

What are their problems/What keeps them awake at night?

What are their values?  
What keeps them coming back for more? Why would they use us?  
What are their needs?  
How do the competition connect with them?

### **Marketing and communication owners**

Who will be responsible for your marketing and communications? Often this is everyone in the organisation but someone may take a lead.

### **Communications plan**

Use the audiences you have broken down and their needs to identify what tools you would use. These are then added to your communications plan. Your communications plan outlines how you will target specific audiences, what with, how often, what the message is and how you will evaluate the outcome. See the Communications plan template.

### **Style guidelines and templates**

To ensure everything you produce is of a certain style and quality it is good to produce some brief guidelines. These could just be a bullet pointed list of things like:

- How you want your name writing, e.g. spell out first and then acronym in brackets
- How you want the date writing 20<sup>th</sup> November or 20 November – it doesn't matter which but it is good to decide one way to avoid different formats being used in one document and looking unprofessional – it is the overall look and brand.
- The fonts you want to use – Arial and not Times New Roman
- Content tone - This is thinking about how you want to communicate, do you want to sound professional, accessible, friendly?

You could also add instructions on use of your logo – don't stretch, make sure it is big enough to read the text. To help members of your organisation produce publicity you are happy with it may be good to develop a couple of templates – a leaflet and a poster. You can use the colours you want that compliment your logo, the subheadings you want, format, etc, and the content can be pasted in when needed.

### **Further help**

**Manchester Community Central** – [www.manchestercommunitycentral.org](http://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org)  
contact 0333 321 3021, or email: [info@mcrcommunitycentral.org](mailto:info@mcrcommunitycentral.org)

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