



Marketing and communication strategy and plan

To attract more users/group members you need to be showcasing what you do - tell people your good news, advertise events, recruit new members, attract potential funders. It is worth thinking about how you will do this and what you want to portray about your organisation and how you will maintain a consistent style and quality – build a brand. It will give you a tool to think about how you communicate your work and also think about your audiences. Initially you need to work with members of your organisation or committee to create a Marketing and communications strategy.

Under this you would create a plan of the tools and methods to implement your strategy – events, newsletters, website, etc. It may also be worth thinking about creating guidelines on the style you want if more than one person may be creating publicity and maybe some templates.

What to include in the strategy

Below we cover some of the things it is good to include in a strategy and tips on creating a plan, style guidelines and templates.

Lift pitch/key message

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.

Aims of this strategy

What do you want to happen as a result of this strategy? For example, more people know about your work or it encourages more partnership working.

Market/audiences

Who are you trying to reach? Who are your current audience. You probably have more than one audience, for example Macc has:

- **Voluntary, community and faith groups in Manchester**

- **Partner agencies**
- **Wider community of Manchester - individuals**

You will maybe have a primary audience that access your services and then other audiences like public sector bodies or funders. Under the main titles for these I would add a brief description of how many you think there are of these and some examples.

Market segmentation

This is where you break down further who the audience is. You have put a main title for an audience and brief description but who are they specifically? Making a list of all the partner orgs or groups, funders or public sector organisations you deal with or are targeting can help you think about them in a clearer way.

Why use you and your services?

Why would they or should they use your services? Come up with a bullet point list of the reasons.

Competition

Who is your competition? Are there any other groups or organisations that do the same work? If not then that's fine but if there are list them (maybe there are opportunities for collaboration?)

What makes you unique?

What makes you different from your competition? What do you offer that others don't? This is your unique selling point, basically what makes you special and will help you to survive.

Content tone

This is thinking about how you want to communicate, do you want to sound professional, accessible, friendly?

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.

What are the needs of each audience

This is where you can think more about your audience, who are they, what do they need, where do they go? This will help you think about what sort of marketing or communications will then be best to reach them. A table is a good way to do this – use the below headings and fill in some details.

Audience – e.g. older people, funders, NHS	Their needs – what so they want from you?	Which format – an email, face to face, newsletter, website	Where they go – community centres, places of worship, certain shops, etc.	Other characteristics/ issues – is there anything else you should think about? Can they read English? Cultural issues? Preferences

If you only have one audience then go through this process with them. You may have a few though and it will help you see what is best for them and one means of marketing won't reach everyone.

Communications plan

You will need to use various tools to market yourself and that's where your communications plan comes in. 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. There are various ways to structure this but one template is to begin with a list of outcomes that you hope you will achieve as a result of the plan and then below have a table. This could consist of the following:

Action/ Tool	Timing	Who	Audience	Message/ content	Impact/ outcome	Measure/ evaluation
Newsletter	Monthly	?	Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successes and news • Events • Volunteering opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises profile of group • Gets more members • Shows funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback • Increase in members • Requests for newsletter • More people at event

You might also want to add a column on your progress or next steps.

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 20th 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

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. For more see our Leaflets factsheet.

Further Help

Manchester Community Central – Tel: 0333 321 3021

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