



# How to

## Plan and Deliver an Effective Communications Campaign



Effective communication is simply talking to the people you need to talk to, in a way they like to be talked to, about something that interests them because you want them to think or do something.

This short guide gives you handy tools and useful tips to help ensure your project benefits from effective communications.

### Get planning!

Begin by answering these four questions

#### What do you want to achieve?

Are you looking to attract community share investors? Or raise money? Or boost sales? Once you are clear on what you want to achieve then you can define what individuals, groups of people or organisations you need to communicate with in order to achieve that goal. These people are your audience.

#### Who do you need to communicate with?

Try to define your audiences as precisely as possible: use location, gender, age and interests to build up a clear picture. When you've done that, try to identify those individuals and/or groups of people that will be most important and influential in helping you achieve your goal. This will help you focus your communication effort. Use our 'Audience Map' tool to help you.

#### What do you want them to think or do?

Be clear about what you want your audience to think or do when you communicate with them. Do you want them to sign up to volunteer, donate or invest, attend an event or be an advocate for your project? If you know what response you want then it is easy to evaluate how successful you are being.

### What is the best way of communicating with them?

For many people, using a smart mobile phone for email and social media are the communication tools of choice, but don't forget that not everyone is online. The village newsletter, notice board and local shopkeeper may be as important sources of information for some of your audience. Leaflets can be a cost effective way of getting your message directly into the hands of your audience and can be used in a variety of ways including door to door delivery, distribution with local magazines and newspapers, attached to letters and placed on seats at events.

Use these templates to help plan out your campaign

**Audience Map:** a grid to help you identify the most influential people or groups that you need to communicate with.

**Plan on A Page:** a useful at-a-glance overview of your communications campaign including objectives, audiences, key messages, communications channels and timescales.

**Communication Planner:** an Excel document to help you plan your communications week by week.



## I Start communicating!

Now you are clear about what has to be done, you need to find the people to do it! It's unlikely there will be just one person with the knowledge and time to do all the communications so you will need a small team of people to share the work.

### Play to strengths

If you know someone is good on Facebook ask them to be responsible for managing the posts on your project page. Or, if someone else is good at writing, ask them to pen the e-news updates and articles for the village newsletter. It is best to have one person in charge of co-ordinating communications and keeping the team on track.

### Stay 'on message'

With several people in the team, it is important that everyone knows what is to be communicated and when. Make sure your 'Communications Planner' is regularly updated and shared, and set up a WhatsApp group for your team.

### Share information

You can share important documents and allow others to add to them by using tools such as Google Drive and DropBox. Plan in regular meetings with your team to review what has been done and to plan ahead.

## Keep track of your activity

If you intend to use several different social media platforms, you can easily schedule posts and keep track of posts, likes and replies at a glance by using a social media management tool such as Hootsuite, Later or Socialoomph. There are lots to choose from and some offer a free package. Keep scans, cuttings, recordings and links to your media coverage as these can be good content for social media (see 'How to Make Social Media Work for You' guide).

### Focus your effort

Whatever activity you decide to do it is going to cost you in either time, money or goodwill (probably all three!) Make sure you have the resources you need before you start and don't waste time and energy on activity that is not helping to achieve your goals. Good planning at the outset will have identified the people you need to reach and how best to communicate with them. Take time to review the effectiveness of your communications, stick to what works best and don't be afraid to change tack if something isn't working.



Wherever you are in the UK, if you are interested in starting or developing a community pub please contact the Plunkett Foundation - **01993 810730**, [info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk) or visit [www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk) to find out how we can support you.

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities UK-wide to tackle the issues they face by promoting and supporting community business. In addition to developing and safeguarding valuable assets and services, community businesses address a range of issues including isolation, loneliness, wellbeing, work and training.

If you share our vision for a vibrant rural economy with rural community business as its heart, why not join Plunkett as a member? Find out more about our membership packages [here](#).

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