Public Relations and Marketing Workshop for Centers for Independent Living

Honing Your Message

September 18, 2013
11:30 – 12:30

Presenter:
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Prepare to Hone

- SWOT analysis can be helpful (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)
- List vision(s)
- List Goal(s)
- List Objectives
Background: Goals and Objectives

• Access throughout region is goal
  – Objective is accessible businesses in CIL’s neighborhood
• Full Olmstead enforcement is goal
  – Objective is 12 people a year out of institution
• Cross disability peer counseling is goal
  – Objective is ILPs for 24 consumers
Unabashed Benefits List

• Write list of benefits!!!
  – Extensive list of how your CIL benefits people and the world
  – Do not skip this step!
  – Comprehensive list
  – List becomes tool for
    • Honing message
      – Creating themes
      – Creating memes
Honing Your Message

• Why Hone?
• Big Hairy Audacious Goals are achieved one roll or step at a time
• The BHAG of “Full Societal Inclusion for PWD’s in Your Region and the whole universe” doesn’t fly as a tagline or brochure title
• Avoid scattershot approach or being all things for all folks
• Know audience(s) and play to them
Content not Conversation

• Narrow down from goals and visions
• What’s the core of what you do?
• Conversation not content is common mistake in social media world (superficial mention everywhere)
  - Your message leads to relationships and content gets you there
What’s Your CIL’s Core Content?

• Individual Choice
• Supports and Services
• Access
  • Education
  • Communication
  • Public accommodations
  • Transportation
  • Housing
  • Health care

Add examples from your CIL
Vision Leads to Your Message

• Underlying Vision: choice for each person w/disability in all aspects of life (housing, education, employment)

• Objective: Stop Medicaid Cuts and get 12 people a year out of nursing homes and into their own homes

• Objective: Make businesses in neighborhood accessible to wheelchair riders
Define Audiences

• Who will your message reach
  - Consumers and allies
  - Partners
  - funders

• Structure themes and find memes that reach all

• Find messages audience connects with
  - Inclusive of cultural competence
  - Aware of age/generation
Partners/Funders Message

• Prepare for lunch meeting with Pfizer pharma rep
  • Message content
    • Independent lifestyles
    • Active participant
    • Tell story of a male with SCI
      (Why? Pfizer makes Viagra)
Messaging Consumers

• Present at community health fair
  • Attendees from nursing homes, MDA camp, “special school”
  • Attendees are health care workers

What is your message content?
  - Independent living means choice
  - Home is where the heart is (Meme)
Theme

- Clearly understood theme (or tag) line
- Who are you in 7-10 words?
- Examples:
  - Helping others with disabilities build independent lives
  - Each one reach one—peers support disability independence
  - Promoting independence and civil rights for people with disabilities
  - Add Examples/Theme ideas from your CIL
Well Known Themes

- Caring for our 391 parks (National Park Foundation)
- Change a life, save a life (Red Cross)
- Helping people with disabilities gain greater independence (Easter Seals)
  - P.S. thought thread: How does your CIL differ from Easter Seals?
The Meme

- Idea about your organization
- Main benefit/behavioral message about your CIL expressed visually or verbally
- Catchy to viral:
  - Only you can prevent forest fires
  - Take a bite out of crime
  - This is what disability looks like
  - Disability is natural
  - Humans with disabilities (play on humans of NY)
Looking for Memes in All the Right Places

- Techniques to find creative ideas that lead to meme:
  - Understand problems faced by your target audience
  - Look at ways your CIL solves their problems
  - Study your benefits list
  - Think about what is the inherent drama of your message
  - What are the unique aspects of your CIL?
Work Backwards in Theme/Meme Hunting

• Think of the end result
• Envision audience response
• Scratch people where they itch: what belief, desire, and motivational buttons does the theme push
Themes Last

• Your theme will stick around for decades
• What response or behavioral change does it elicit?
• Visualize benefits to individual audience members when they “Buy in.”
• Test response
  - Formal/informal focus groups
Not just Themes, Memes, Taglines

• Honing the message is a key skill used throughout marketing work.

• If your CIL has theme and graphic collaterals, you will hone messages for campaigns, objectives, and programs.

• My Medicaid Matters campaign is example of honing a message for the purpose of stopping states from cutting Medicaid.
My Medicaid Matters Campaign

- Started by ADAPT, joined by NCIL, AAPD, NDRN
- Goal was Stop Medicaid Cuts
- Message Developed and Honed
  - Video library of individual stories
  - MMM Rally
- Media Campaign
- Facebook and Web Pages
  - [http://mmmtx.org](http://mmmtx.org)
- State based campaigns
Changing Worlds of Marketing

• What and how message is used changes
• Be creative in using honed message
  – Develop photo, video libraries
  – “white papers” on key issues
• Keep to 1 page
Placement

• Where will you use your message?
  • Social/conventional media
  • Ads
  • Trainings, workshops
  • Media
  • Community meetings
Contact Information

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