

IL-NET

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Public Relations and Marketing Workshop for Centers for Independent Living

Marketing Basics

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Marketing Basics in the Age of Social Media

- The Landscape
- Strategic Thinking vs. Tactical Thinking
- A 6-Step Plan (from *Spitfire Strategies*)

The Landscape

- Listen first
- Meet people where they are
- Conversations, not Broadcasting
- Relationships, not Transactions
- Dressed down, not Buttoned Up
- From Hero to Host
- Customized
- Perpetual Beta
- Co-creators
- Multimedia

Strategy vs. Tactics

- **Strategy=WHAT** you are trying to accomplish
- **Tactics=HOW** you accomplish it

Must know **WHAT** you want to do **before** you can figure out **HOW** you want to do it.

Communications Planning

1. Program Decisions
2. Context
3. Strategic Choices
4. Communications Activities
5. Measurements of Success
6. Final Reality Check

Source: Spitfire Strategies: <http://www.smartchart.org/>

1. Program Decisions

- **Broad Goals**—What are you trying to do?
 - What are your BHAGs? (Big Hairy Audacious Goals)
 - What is the vision that's rooted in your mission?
- **Objectives**—What concrete steps will you take?
 - Behavior change
 - Policy change
 - Make them S.M.A.R.T.
- **Decision-maker**—Who makes your objective a reality?
 - Who are you ultimately trying to reach?
 - Who has the power to give you what you want?

Another Way to Think About It

- Awareness?
- Appreciation?
- Action?
- Advocacy?

Think of these as a continuum—you can't "Appreciate" without "Awareness."

Where is your audience at currently? Where do you want them to move?

2. Context

- **Internal scan**
 - What staff, resources and tools do you have?
 - Do you have access to information that can help you shape your strategy?
 - Are you well-known or not?
 - Are you part of any partnerships that should come into play?
- **External scan**
 - What's the present situation around your issue(s)?
 - What key events, timing, etc. might impact you?
 - What barriers, obstacles and opportunities do you see?
 - Are there natural communications opportunities to leverage?

Defining Your Position

- **Frame**—There is no current discussion, so you can frame the terms of the discussion.
- **Fortify & Amplify**—There's a discussion happening that supports your objectives.
- **Re-Frame**—The current discussion doesn't support your objectives, so you need to re-frame it.

3. Strategic Choices

- Audience
- Readiness
- Core Concerns
- Theme
- Message
- Messenger

Audience

- **KEY QUESTION:** Who are the people who can help you move your decisionmaker(s) to achieve your objective?
- **Segment your audience into narrowest possible categories** so you can target your efforts.
- Do not target the “general public.”
- Do not target “the media”—they are a means to an end.
- **Focus on those you can persuade!**

Readiness

- Where is your audience when it comes to your issue?
- Think of your communications in stages:
 - **Sharing knowledge**
 - **Building will**—overcoming barriers and easing perceived risk
 - **Reinforcing action**

Core Concerns

- What will **compel your audience to move toward your objective?**
- What do they **already believe** about the issue?
- **Tap into THEIR values system**—don't assume that with knowledge they will make same decisions you do.
- Have to make the issue **personal and relevant**.
- **Identify barriers** that might prevent audience from hearing what you have to say.
- Consider **audience lifestyle**—**make things easy!**

Theme

- The “**big picture**” you want to convey.
- **Different themes can reach different audiences** but work toward the same objective. For example, anti-smoking:
 - The Bad Guy
 - Vilify 2nd Hand Smoke
 - Less Attractive
- Consider **tone**, too
 - Hope, possibility?
 - “We’re in this together”
 - “Let’s meet this challenge!”

Message

To test your message, ask:

- Is it **based on the audience's core concerns**?
- Do you **overcome—not reinforce—their barrier**?
- Is **“the ask” in the audience's comfort zone**? If not, **does the benefit offered outweigh the risk**?
- Does the **message offer a vision or emphasize a personal reward**? Does it convey hope toward success?
- Is it **consistent with the theme** throughout?

Messenger

- Who does your audience **trust**?
- Who is **credible and relevant**?
- Who do **they admire and want to emulate**?
- **People listen to people**, more than to institutions.

4. Communications Activities

- **Tactics**—How you carry the message to your audience
 - Social media
 - Meetings
 - Calls
 - Advertising
 - Web sites, etc.
- **Timeline**—Plot the timing
- **Assignments**—Who's responsible for what?
- **Budget**

5. Measuring Success

- **Quantifiable** and **anecdotal** measures
- **Outputs**—things you are doing to move your strategy forward
- **Outcomes**—changes that occur as a result of the outputs
- ROI
 - Return on **Insights**—what do you learn?
 - Return on **Interaction**—what relationships do you develop/deepen?
 - Return on **Investment**
 - Return on **Impact**—what changes do you create?

6. Final Reality Check

- Is the strategy **doable**?
- Are your **resources** in line with the strategy?
- Are you **motivating the right people to take the right actions at the right time**?
- Are your **choices consistent**?
- Will the **tactics reach the right audiences and move you toward your objectives**?
- Are you using the **best persuasion tactics**?
- Is there **buy-in**?
- Can you **measure progress**?

Keep in Mind . . .

- **Fight the urge to skip strategy!**
- **Try not to assume** that you know what an audience thinks/believes—gather info where you can!
- **Regularly evaluate/re-assess**
- Keep things **flexible**
- **Gather data and use it** to inform your efforts
- **Experiment!**

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