TELLING YOUR ORGANIZATION’S STORY

February 9, 2023
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS NEEDED TO COMBAT LOW TRUST FACTOR

Trust in state and local government is low compared to historical averages, according to 2021 Gallup Poll.

Public relations is "a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics." - Public Relations Society of America
VALUE OF STORIES AND PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION PLANNING

- Encourages participation in the democratic process
- Builds awareness, fosters understanding, changes perception
- Humanizes your organization
- Builds trust in your organization
- Gaining support for rate adjustments, special funding
- Builds rapport ahead of a crisis – pennies in the bank
“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” -Maya Angelou.
USING R.P.I.E. TO BUILD CAMPAIGNS

Public Relations 101
A Strategic Planning Cheat Sheet

Getting Started with your FY Campaign
Your agency plays an important role in the community’s well-being. Thus, you must be ready to start this year off right by exploring and assessing projects to best align your funding and ongoing needs. Next, it’s important to plan and organize your strategic actions.

This cheat sheet is for new communicators and is based on the CAPIO Fundraising, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation. This strategy ensures that your public relations effort will be the strongest and most successful.

Effective public relations strategies are clearly defined in order to create a successful plan that secures your goals, and a comprehensive PR planning implementation and evaluation. This strategy emphasizes that your public relations effort will be the strongest and most successful.

Research
The research phase is where you will gather information to plan your public relations efforts. It is the foundation for your strategic planning.

- **WHO** do we want people to be? (i.e., our target audience)
- **WHAT** do we want people to do? (i.e., what we want them to do)
- **WHEN** are we going to deliver these messages?

These are critical questions that need to be answered before you can move forward with your campaign.

There are several quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect data—ranging from one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and surveys to more advanced methods like observing and analyzing social media.

- **Focus groups**
  - **Interviews**
  - **Surveys**
  - **Observational studies**
- **Content analysis**
- **Case study analysis**

Planning
During the planning phase of your project, you’ll need to focus on marketing.

- **STRATEGIES** to achieve your goals
- **OBJECTIVES** to measure your success
- **AUDIENCE** to engage with your target audience
- **MARKETING** to reach your target audience
- **EVALUATION** to monitor your progress

Implementation
During this phase, you will focus on executing your communications plan based on the data you have gathered. It is important to stay on track and adjust your plan as needed to ensure success.

- **OUTPUTS**: specific actions such as the number of emails sent, number of website visitors, and number of publications
- **OUTCOMES**: overall impact on public opinion, awareness, and action

Evaluation
You will need to measure the success of your program as you implement your plan. This will allow you to refine your strategies and tactics if necessary and to maintain a strong and effective program.

The end of the plan will also allow you to analyze outcomes by looking at metrics, data, and related objectives.

**EXAMPLE:**
- **INPUTS**: Paid advertising, social media, email campaigns, and website traffic
- **OUTPUTS**: Reach, engagement, clicks, and conversions
- **OUTCOMES**: Increased awareness, positive perception, and behavior change
- **EVALUATION**: Surveys, focus groups, and interviews to measure the effectiveness of the program
ELEMENTS OF R.P.I.E

Research & Planning
- Qualitative and Quantitative research methodologies (web/social surveys, focus groups)
- Establishment of measurable goals and outcomes
- Alignment with citywide plans, council goals

Implementation
- Paid media placement
- Media relations, blogs, features
- Social media
- Owned – website, events, public meetings, e-news
- Create once, publish everywhere

Evaluation
- Monitor and track support regularly
- Pre and post surveying
- Make adjustments
CASE STUDY: GROUNDWATER OUTREACH

“Our homes were built for good water.” Carolyn Mithee said. “Our health is at issue even though they say they met all the health requirements. We won’t hesitate that we won’t get our water again.”

“Out of the mouth of a river, I learned something and got a different view of it every time I performed. After two rounds, Bettencourt was asked to go again. Her piece ‘Tol Derricotte’s ‘Passing,’ a bow to the perception of the mixed race, if an bias,’ she said. She said it was well. ‘I think that was my performance,’ she said. I hit right at my high point, and self to take a place at the bottom. I’ve never done that, perhaps, when she was at week.”

The Sacramento Bee

Thursday, March 20, 2008

ROSEVILLE

Thumbs down for water

Some Roseville residents revolt over supply stored in underground aquifers.

By Jennifer K. Moria jmoria@sacbee.com

“The water is from the local stream. Our health is at issue even though they say they met all the health requirements. We won’t hesitate that we won’t get our water again.”

“Our health is at issue even though they say they met all the health requirements.”

- Carolyn Mithee, Roseville resident

“We ask people to reduce their usage, but we also need to make some of that water usable.”

- Whitehead, Environmental Manager for the city of Roseville.
Participants generally supported the use of groundwater as a water source, but needed clarification on some of the terms used to describe the process, including dispelling the notion that a groundwater aquifer was a manmade structure or a void in the ground.

Top-of-mind concerns for water supplies above public education, economic stability, roads and streets, and new development.

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) are less than accepting while the rest remain “accepting” or “totally accepting.”

Research revealed that customers wanted to learn more about what we do and what we managed.
“If the city were to choose to implement this as a regular water supply, a strong education effort would be needed to dispel preconceived notions of groundwater quality, help residents understand that groundwater is an excellent water supply and not less superior than surface water, calm fears about what the new emergency plan would be, and provide a clear explanation regarding distribution”
“…Virtually no one knew what an “aquifer” was. (Many in both groups assumed it was a manmade, physical structure used to storage water underground.)”
Ongoing efforts to educate the public about Roseville’s growing groundwater program and dispelling myths associated with groundwater usage using a multi-channel approach to communication

Create public events that provide opportunities for customers to see our groundwater infrastructure, taste groundwater, educate customers on the process of replenishing and extracting groundwater resources and answer any questions
OUR STORYTELLING TOOL BOX

PAID
EARNED
SHARED
OWNED
• Groundwater is part of Roseville’s water supply planning, diversifying our portfolio

• Groundwater is safe, natural, and can provide additional water resources for our thriving community

• Use words like “future” – it tests well and is positive
SEEING IS BELIEVING, TASTING IS GROUNDWATER REAFFIRMING
IF A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, VIDEO WORTH A MILLION
OVER SATURATE: CREATE ONCE, PUBLISH EVERYWHERE
IS WHAT WE ARE DOING WORK?

New wave of public opinion research

• Focus group: Few mention groundwater as a water source, but this is as often thought of in the form of recycled wastewater

• Focus group reactions to our groundwater program
  • They think this system is “fantastic”, “awesome”, “wonderful”, and “really cool”. They appreciate underground storage as efficient, evaporation-proof, good use of space, and effective

• Statistical survey:
  • Acceptance of groundwater as a drinking water supply is now at 81 percent!
  • Customers are willing to pay for more reliability in their water service
WHERE DO WE SIT NOW WITH OUR STORY?

Continued outreach

• Relaunch our water reliability paid media campaign with research insights in mind – key messages, look and feel

• Exploit opportunities where we can gain media exposure or third-party endorsements

• Launch a citizen’s water academy in quarter four of 2023 to build advocacy in the community
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- Align with the city’s general plan and strategic plan
- Support council-established vision statement and guiding principles
- Advance organizational goals and objectives
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

• “Distinctive by Nature”
• Volunteerism and Service
• #MeetYourCity

• Tourism/City Amenities
• Historical Roots
SOCIAL MEDIA

- Engage with the Public
- Crisis Communication
- Launch and Grow Campaigns
- Low Cost ...But High Stakes
- Develop Your Brand
- Humanize Government Services

City of Folsom - Government
Published by Sandi Al - November 26, 2022

This Small Business Saturday, let’s support and celebrate Folsom’s small businesses and all they do for our community. When small businesses succeed, we all do. Join us in shopping small and sharing your favorite local places! #WeSupportFolsom

SUPPORT LOCAL FOLSO M
SMALL BUSINESSES
SOCIAL MEDIA

City of Folsom - Government
Published by SeeClickFix - January 8 at 15:59 PM

Folsom public safety and city crews are working hand in hand 24-7 to ensure our community stays safe during the storms. We’re here if you need us, and we are working as quickly as possible to address storm-related hazards in our community. Residents are urged to prepare before the next storm rolls in. View the City of Folsom storm alert at https://konta.cc/2xyWHR:

- Report Storm-Related Incidents
- Stay Informed
- Sandbags Available (Bring Proof of Folsom Residency)
- Prepare Your Home
- Keep Gutters and Storm Drains Free of Fallen Leaves
- Drive with Caution

Be prepared for wet weather this week. Sandbags are available free of charge at the following locations: 48 Natoma Street (next to City Hall, behind the Arts & Senior Center) and 9700 Oak Avenue Parkway (behind Fire Station 36). Please bring a shovel.

Clogged storm drain, localized flooding, or fallen tree limb on your street? Report storm-related hazards with SeeClickFix Folsom at www.folsom.ca.us/seecklickfix. Call 9-1-1 for life-threatening emergencies.

When lea... See more
Meet Debbie Centi. She has worked for the Folsom Public Library for 12 years, recommending books to children and hosting many of the Library's programs. Join Debbie for story time Tuesdays at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Wednesday through Sundays at 10:30 a.m. www.folsom.ca.us/library.
SOCIAL MEDIA

City of Folsom - Government
Published by Folsom Comm
December 2, 2020

"I got hit pretty hard... The virus is real. I hope people take sensible precautions because I think wearing masks and social distancing does help slow the spread. It will save lives."

Mayor Sarah Aquino is at home recovering from a severe case of COVID-19. Hear her story at The Sacramento Bee.

The Sacramento Bee
December 2, 2020

"I get frustrated when I get emails from people who think that mask wearing is a joke."

City of Folsom - Government
Published by Sprout Social
October 27, 2020

Help keep Folsom healthy — even if you don’t have COVID-19 symptoms, you can save lives by getting a test. Sacramento County offers free COVID-19 testing in Folsom every Wednesday at Oak Hills Church from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 1100 Blue Ravine Road. Schedule your appointment at folsom.setmore.com.
CASE STUDY: E-NEWSLETTER

- Newsletter team comprised of a staff member from each department
- Published weekly
- Reach: 8,500+ subscribers
- Content is king. Quality content drives results.
  - Easy to share
  - Easy to read
  - Does double duty: Posted to website, print newsletter, social media
  - Builds community
  - #1 news source for our community
Citywide communications and marketing campaign, in partnership with Chamber of Commerce

**Goals:**
- Encourage the community to shop and dine locally
- Engage the public about the pandemic’s impact on local businesses
- Foster community pride and love for our hometown
CASE STUDY: WE SUPPORT LOCAL

- Branding
- We Support Folsom website
- Infographics
- Loyal to Local Pledge
- Collateral
CASE STUDY: WE SUPPORT LOCAL

Results

• Social media – 200,000 reach
• 500+ posters and banners in local businesses and shopping center
• 300+ signed an online pledge
• 10,000+ views on videos
• Freeway signs – 300,000 motorists daily

Most importantly, the response from the business community was overwhelmingly positive.

100 percent yes! Please help support our local restaurants! They need us! Even if it’s a $20 gift card. Whatever you can do!
- Katie McCormac

I'm doing all my Christmas shopping in small businesses in Folsom this year!
- Cindy Baker
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community engagement and partnerships:
• Promote civic pride
• Strengthen relationships with community members
• Build trust
• Promote volunteerism
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community Service Day

- 2,500 Volunteers
- 100 Service Projects
- 80,000 Pounds of Food Donated
- $90,000+ in Cash and In-kind Sponsorships
CULTIVATING AMBASSADORS

- Customer workshops
- Stakeholder tours
- Water Savvy Landscape Contest & Garden Tour

The Water Savvy Garden Tour was great! The residents of each home we visited were very welcoming and eager to answer all our questions. I commend the CVWD team for organizing this tour and doing such a great job!

-Tour attendee
EDUCATING FUTURE WATER LEADERS

• Community partnerships
• Robust education program
• College internships
CVWD’S COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES

- Traditional and innovative communications
- Podcast
- Board member involvement
- Face-to-face engagement
- Drought “expert” strategy
- Consistency
DROUGHTREACHSUCCESS

- An ongoing effort since the last drought
- Positive response to messaging
- Increased program participation
- Changes in behavior
CAPIO IS HERE TO SUPPORT

• Government Communicators Day: February 24
• Annual Conference
  • Save the Date: May 1–4, 2023 in Monterey
• Emergency Communications Academy: June 13 & 14
• PIO 101 & Leadership Summer
• Webinars and training
• Professional development
• Network of the best public sector communicators
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?