“NETWORK OF DANUBE WATERWAY ADMINISTRATIONS” – data & user orientation

SOUTH EAST EUROPE TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME

TOOLBOX

TIPS & TRICKS FOR PR MANAGERS

Document ID	O.7.1.7
Activity	Act. 7.1
Author/organisation	**Version/date**
Helene Gilkarov / viadonau	V1 / 17.12.20142014

Jointly for our common future

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 SCOPE OF DOCUMENT 4
2 EVENT ORGANISATION 5
2.1. Preparation 5
2.2. Objectives 5
2.3. Duration 6
2.3.1. What to outsource? 8
2.4. Planning 8
2.4.1. Planning the contents 9
2.4.2. Planning the budget 9
2.4.3. Planning the menu 9
2.4.4. Catering Tips 11
2.5. The agenda 12
2.5.1. Organisational items 14
2.6. Following-up with checklists before and after an event 15
2.6.1. Event checklist 15
2.6.2. Just before the event 16
2.6.3. At the event 16
2.6.4. Contact with the speakers 16
2.6.5. Panel discussions 16
2.6.6. After the event 17
2.6.7. Looking forward 17
3 CONFERENCE ORGANISATION 18
3.1.1. Large groups (usually more than 40 delegates) 18
3.1.2. Small groups (usually less than 40 delegates) 19
3.1.3. Venue search sheet 20
4 GIVE-AWAYS 21
4.1. Why give-aways: 21
4.2. Thinks to consider: 21
5 PRESENTATIONS 22
5.1. How to make a successful PowerPoint presentation 22
5.1.1. Introduction: The power of presenting 22
5.1.2. Planning a presentation 22
5.1.3. Making a presentation 23
5.1.4. Presenting 25
6 PRESS & JOURNALISM 27
6.1. Useful tips 27
6.2. Contact database 27
6.2.1. Why create a database? 27
6.2.2. How do you create a database? 27

6.2.3. Internet resources 28
6.2.4. Who manages the database? 28
6.2.5. Tracking information 29
6.3. Relations with the media 31
6.3.1. Who are they? 31
6.3.2. The media can be split up in two categories 31
6.3.3. Why are they important? 31
6.3.4. What goals do you want to accomplish? 32
6.3.5. Who is the target audience? 32
6.3.6. Key messages 32
6.3.7. What media channels will be the most efficient and cost-effective? 33
6.3.8. Who should deal with the media? 33
6.3.9. Do's and don't of media interviews 34
6.4. Press conferences 35
6.5. Press releases 36
6.5.1. Technical tips 36
6.5.2. Information 38
6.5.3. Writing & language 38
6.5.4. Take into consideration 38
6.5.5. Structure 38
7 WEB PRESENCE 40
7.1. Getting started 40
7.2. Website start checklist 41
7.2.1. How to create an e-newsletter 41
7.2.2. E-news 42
8 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT METHODS 43

1 SCOPE OF DOCUMENT

Organisations must have a concentrated and coordinated effort to communicate why they are important and what they contribute to society.

The following guidelines should help and guide PR Managers in the development and implementation of a communication plan for their organisations.

While the ideas contained here may not always apply to the "communication" situation you are currently dealing with, they provide examples based on the experience of the NEWADA Activity 6.2 PR Managers workgroup. Working together, we have taken examples from people who communicate on behalf of inland navigation from different organisations: waterway administrations, development agencies and Ministries of Transport. What we all have in common is our common understanding that communicating about inland navigation presents its own special challenges and that in order to be successful, communication efforts must be well thought out.

2 EVENT ORGANISATION

2.1. Preparation

For an event to be successful, preparations should start 3-4 months prior to the date of the event. It is a long and not so easy process; on the other hand, proper planning makes sure that everything goes smoothly.

Event planning does not start with defining the date and venue. The main concept for the event should be clear. You start with the general idea of the event and more specifically, with the objectives.

2.2. Objectives

One of the most important things in the organization of an event is to clearly define its objectives. All other aspects of the event depend on the goals you want to achieve.

After clearing the aims, you should define the format of the event. It could be interactive, such as a workshop. It could be a row of presentations, so that the participants present their products/ideas, or you could have to organize an exhibition.

Event planning means teamwork. Make sure you put a good team together to help with the preparations and the organization.

Here are several options:

- use internal staff
- hire people for a fixed period to help with the organization
- outsource – use an event management company to do most of the work

Since we work for national agencies, the budget is usually rather limited and therefore the outsourcing option will rarely be an option. For large events however, an event manager can take over one or another part of the organization (registration, badges, list of participants, accommodation, etc…).

You can start by preparing a briefing note with the most important objectives and activities you plan to include and disseminate it among the organization team and your co-workers involved in the organization of the event and ask them for feedback. You can get useful recommendations and suggestions. This way you will be able to receive an early feedback, make changes if necessary and make sure the planned event meets both needs and expectations.

Your next step should be to set the (draft) agenda for the event. The agenda should be carefully planned. Participants should not be bored, but at the same time the event should not be rushed. For each activity should be planned enough time, but not too much. Seek the balance.

Consider the participants' point of view; ask yourself

- What you would expect from the specific event if you were a participant.
- Why would you consider it worthy to spend time, energy and money to attend this event?

Be objective when answering. You should be able to find a satisfying answer.

After all these steps is the time to take action: define the date, time and venue, send invitations etc.

It is a good idea to make a checklist and disseminate it among the team. Specify all the activities and the deadlines for each of them. This way your team will be aware of what you have in mind. Make sure you keep deadlines and don't fall behind schedule.

2.3. Duration

The overall duration of an event should be consistent with the purposes and participants. You have many options: whole day, half a day, days, lunch/breakfast only meeting, evening reception etc.

Consider how the participants will travel to the venue and from where.

If participants are travelling from far, it is a good idea to have some kind of reception the night before the event in order to get to know each other and perhaps "break the ice". This, of course, depends on your budget. If you have a limited budget, instead of organizing a seated dinner you could opt for a cocktail reception with finger food, or even drinks only.

The organization of an event is probably the most demanding task in the communication and PR area. Different skills are needed to perform this task well, including coordination skills, writing skills, verbal skills, design skills, etc. Here's an easy way to brainstorm before you get into the organizational details: The 5 "W's"

- **What?**

The first thing is to answer the question: what we are organizing? It can be a conference, workshop, forum, presentation, exhibition, bilateral meeting, multilateral meeting, press conference,…

- **Who?**

The second question is: who is organizing? It is very useful to appoint one person to be in charge, i.e., the “event manager”, coordinating a team. That person should gather the team of two/three persons, and delegate certain tasks. However, all information should be collected centrally by the main event coordinator who should create and monitor the check list. This list should contain all tasks that should be performed before, during, and after the event.

- **When?**

The third question is: when you are organizing it? Check in your company calendar if it doesn’t collide with internal events. Then check that there are no important conferences in your sector held at the same time. Finally, check with public holidays. In addition, you can discuss the date with participants (usually high level, project partners, and main stakeholders) you absolutely need to participate at your event. Only then can the official invitations be sent out. Remember, this task is critical, since the damage created from the improper date cannot be repaired and event could be a total fiasco.

- **For whom?**

The fourth question is: for whom we are organizing it? This is very important, and determines a lot of other things. You need to have the proper participants and/or audience clearly defined.

If you want to go public with the event, it is useful to attract some press people to come. It is not necessary, but usually proves to be very useful.

For participants from abroad, or for participants from different cities, a travel info package should be prepared and sent together with the invitation letter and agenda. In addition, always try to negotiate a better price for the accommodation at the nearest hotel(s).

- **Where?**

The next question is: where we are organizing the event?

Defining the venue is a very important aspect of the preparation. Make sure the venue is suitable for the purposes of the event. You need to book early for your own peace of mind. Also consider if the place is accessible and easy to find. Even if you have chosen the perfect venue, there is no use if it is not easy to access. Take in consideration how the participants will arrive – by car or public transport. If they come by car, there should be enough parking place for all or at least parking space in the area.

Knowing the exact number of people expected to attend the event is very important. Is the location easy to reach? Make a note of the nearest airports, rail stations, bus and underground connections. Make sure to schedule a site inspection where you can select the meeting room, check the ventilation, accommodation and eating areas. Another 1 or 2 site inspections as the organization gets in more concrete steps must be scheduled and will prove very useful.

You can of course choose to hold the event in your company facilities. But if and when you decide that your event will be organized outside your company, be sure to check the facility and the room where the event will take place. Be sure to check the availability of following items:

- ✓ Number of seats
- ✓ Electricity supply points
- ✓ Pens and notepads
- ✓ Projector
- ✓ Wireless presenter
- ✓ Wireless internet access (people really like this one)
- ✓ [Translating equipment (headsets, microphones, cabin for the translator) if relevant]
- ✓ Visibility (company, project, programme, country…)
- ✓ Check the access to the venue as if you were a tourist, visiting for the first time.

2.3.1. What to outsource?

If you can do everything without any outsourcing, do it. If not, make sure that you perform the tendering procedures in advance. Things that can be outsourced are:

- ✓ Conference room
- ✓ Catering, refreshments, dinner
- ✓ Translation services
- ✓ Printing services
- ✓ Technique and sound
- ✓ Take the venue staff into consideration and ask for their help. They know what resources they have and do this on a full time basis

Always be aware of your budget, and eligibility of your costs.

2.4. Planning

Once you decide where and when your event will take place, get into the planning phase.

2.4.1.Planning the contents

Define your target audience and your goals for the event. Decide the overall theme of the conference. Prepare an outline of the sessions and define whether you want to run parallel sessions.

2.4.2.Planning the budget

An effective budget is crucial to the success of the conference. Talking about the budget, make sure you take into consideration all the costs for the events. Keep in mind not only the obvious – reception, room etc, but also the details – data projectors, equipment, extras.

- ✓ Work out your costs, establish your budget
- ✓ Calculate how much is needed on fixed costs, e.g. venue hire, speaker's fees etc.
- ✓ Calculate the amount needed for variable costs such as additional hotel accommodation, extra delegates' packets etc.
- ✓ Calculate a contingency of at least 10% to cover unforeseen expenses.

2.4.3.Planning the menu

Discuss the menu with the venue staff (or relevant catering company) and determine the times when you want the food to be served and what delays may be encountered during the conference.

a) Event logistics

Make sure you have all necessary equipment (overhead projector, screen, etc…) and sound technique.

Ask yourselves the following questions:

- ✓ Do the speakers require a lectern?
- ✓ Is the room going to be darkened whereby the speaker may require some lighting to read his notes?
- ✓ Is a TV and video recorder required?

Speak to all the speakers and ask them what they will need for their talk and make sure it is available and tested

b) Rehearsal

This is a very basic but essential tool to ensure that all aspects of the conference is covered. Run through the entire day from start to finish. Detail every activity from registration:

- ✓ Is there enough time to register the delegates?
- ✓ What happens if there are latecomers?

- ✓ Rehearse again on the eve of the event

c) Invitations

Invitations can be sent in a number of different ways. First, invitation can be sent via official channel (via post). Some institutions only react to this kind of official invitations. For others, an invitation sent via e-mail is enough. Invitations can also be made public by putting it on the company web site. This can be tricky, since you could end up with a very large number of participants and might not be able to handle that in a proper way.

Thus, website registration only applies for events with a large contingent of invitees and a registration deadline must be set. When you start to make invitations, always add a line regarding necessity of sending the registration form. This is a good tool for keeping the number of participants under control. Leave enough time for participants to send the registration forms, but be sure to close the list of participants at least one week prior to the event. When you close it, you can prepare one joint e-mail, address all registered participants and thank them for registrations. At the same time, this is some sort of reminder for them, not to forget your event.

It is strongly recommended to attach the agenda/program of the event to the invitation letter. People like to know what to expect when attending some events.

If you have participants from your country, but also from abroad, make sure to announce in the invitation letter the official language of the event. If you go with the double languages system (native + English), a good tip is to prepare two projectors, and to run all presentations in two languages at the same time. This means additional effort and resources to translate presentations, since it is not a usual to ask from the participants to prepare double presentations.

If you have promotional items, it would be very nice to distribute those at the event. Anything can do, but usually this means bags, folders, notepads, pens, flyers, etc… Make sure for all participants to sign in the List of participants, and keep it or the record.

d) Event checklist

- ✓ Save the date first: Project: 2-3 months, international meeting 5 months prior; Reminder: project meeting 1 month then 1 week, international: once a month until the event
- ✓ Registration form

- ✓ Excel sheet with status of speakers (and moderators) for regular update
- ✓ Set clear deadlines for registration and closing of registration (2 weeks prior for big events, 1 week before for project)
- ✓ Collect presentations (at least 72 hours prior to the event)
- ✓ Registration form template (to do - all)
- ✓ Book a photographer
- ✓ When you set up the programme, make sure that presentations with a more technical character are scheduled for the morning.
- ✓ Create presentation templates and send them to the presenters far enough in advance. On the template, visibility items should be present: logo(s), framework programme, cover page, last page.
- ✓ Slides for in-between (welcome, coffee breaks, lunch breaks, next presenter, networking event

2.4.4.Catering Tips

The following tips were designed to help you plan for any catered event. Whether you're planning a lunch meeting, conference workshops, or formal banquet no detail should be left unattended.

a) Have a schedule or agenda

Though it may seem unnecessary, remember, timing is everything! Professional caterers like to have all the arrangements completed prior to the scheduled time. Our services are ready 15 minutes beforehand.

b) Know your guest count

All food and beverage quantities rely on the guest count. Guest count is extremely vital for banquets with several meal choices. It is the customer's responsibility to communicate to Catering exactly how many meals are needed of each kind. See the 'Chart of Quantities' (*) for appropriate per person quantities for our A la Carte menu selections.

c) **Chart of Quantities**

Menu Type Quantity per Person

Beverages 2 – 3 Cups
Pastry 1.5 Pieces

Snack 2 Servings

Platter/basket 1 Serving

Appetizers 2 – 4 Pieces

Buffets 1 Serving (allows for seconds)

Entrée 1 Serving

Dessert 1 – 1.5 Pieces

d) Establish a per person budget after reviewing menu options

We understand that nothing's worse than expecting one thing and receiving another. Review our menu, complete with prices, to avoid surprises. All staffing charges, equipment rentals, dishes, silverware or plasticware, and linen costs for the service table are included in the price of your menu selections.

e) Communicate all changes to Catering

As many people are directly involved with the success of your event from organization to staffing and serving, communication is vital in ensuring that your wishes are followed. Errors are unlikely to happen when everyone is on the same page.

2.5. The agenda

Making the agenda is one of the most significant aspects of the organization of a meeting. The agenda should be carefully planned. It is not so easy to define how much time will be spent on each item.

Generally, a good way to structure your agenda is to make it as a table with 3 columns:

- ✓ agenda item
- ✓ presenter
- ✓ time allocated

You could send it to the participants earlier before the event and ask them for suggestions, to let you know if they want to include an additional item. Of course, you don't have to include all suggestions if they don't relate to the main topic and goal of the meeting. If you have suggestions that don't relate to the aims of the particular meeting, contact the sender and kindly inform them that you will include the item in another meeting.

Sending the agenda earlier has other advantages too. People will know exactly what you are planning and will be prepared for the discussion topics. Just keep calling the versions “draft” until the final version is released.

Planning the time seems to be a tough task that really needs some practice. However, the main rule is to plan a little more time than you expect to spend on each item, especially for discussions. When people have an agenda for a 2-hour meeting, they expect it to end after two hours. So, if you finish earlier, they can be even pleased, but if you are late, they will get nervous.

This part applies more specifically to internal project meetings, but is still relevant and worth adding here:

During the meeting make sure you actually follow the agenda – that is the only way to make it effective.

A successful meeting agenda is generally clear and simple. It includes:

a) a header with following information:

- ✓ Organization Name
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Date
- ✓ Starting and ending time

b) a body, including:

- ✓ Welcome and introductions

  Start the meeting with a few welcome words to the participants. This is especially suitable when this particular group doesn’t come together very often. Introduce the guests and the new participants if there are any. Starting the meeting this way has another advantage too – if any of the participants are running a bit late, they won’t miss anything significant.

- ✓ Adopt previous meeting minutes

  Here is the time to review the conclusions from the previous meeting, if there has been one. After you are done with that, you can go to the current meeting by stating clearly its purpose and the expected outcomes.

- ✓ Topics of the meeting

  This is the main part, and also the longest one. Include the topics, discussions and any other activities (brainstorming ideas, interactive sessions etc.) you have planned for the meeting.

- ✓ "Open" session

  You could include such session for any questions, suggestions and other items that are not included in the main part. It shouldn't be too long. However, if any important topics come up, you can include them in the agenda for the next meeting. Sometimes this session could be in the beginning instead of in the end, because some points could be made that could change the course of the meeting.

- ✓ Next meeting – time and agenda

  At the end of a meeting it is a good time to decide when the next one will be held and what topics it will cover.

Getting back to the organization of larger meetings and away from internal project meetings only, here are some more points to consider:

2.5.1.Organisational items

Visibility

For big events - more than 30 participants - it is recommended to prepare ID cards, branded if possible. ID cards are to be given to the participants at the registration point. At the entrance to the venue, place some signage with arrows pointing the direction of the event room(s). Besides the promotional items meant for distribution, visibility can be achieved with some decorations, including roll-ups, little table flags, posters, etc.

Photos

Make sure to make some photos of the event. Always appoint one person only for this job. For big events, hire a photographer. Good photos can be used even years after the event itself.

Catering

This is normally handled by the conference organisers but if you book a venue with no catering, hire an external catering company and make sure the menu is decided upon and all contingencies allowed for. What meals need to be catered for - breakfast, tea, lunch, and dinner? Furthermore, check that the venue doesn't work exclusively with one or another catering company.

Program Development

It is essential that your programme is varied and tailored to suit the danger areas - the period immediately after tea and lunch. This is when energy and enthusiasm is at a low ebb and something different may be required for these times.

Promotion

A conference which is to be attended by delegates that are not part of the company needs to be promoted though news releases and advertisements in the specialized press well in advance. Mail shots of publicity literature and proposed programmes must be sent regularly to likely participants. Make sure to invite journalists – but only a few weeks in advance – and offer them to bring their publications. If they cannot attend, at least they will put the date in their event calendar. Prepare a press kit.

Conference Material

It is a very important and supportive tool. Develop a central theme – a conference identity much the same as a corporate identity – and use the layout or coloured paper for all communi¬cation e.g. name tags, registration cards, note paper, brochures, programme tickets, website constantly updated with new content, etc…

Presentation kits & giveaways

Most delegates are presented with a presentation kit with all the relevant documentation - programmes, talk summaries, notepads, handouts and promotional items as ‚giveaways‘. Decide what your kit should contain and get it ready for distribution at the conference

2.6. Following-up with checklists before and after an event

Text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text

2.6.1. Event checklist

What – Until when – Who? – status

- ✓ Travel info only?
- ✓ Presentations in one or two languages?
- ✓ If you use an interpreter, try to hire a company/person you've worked with previously
- ✓ Send the presentation to the translator prior to the event to give them enough time to get used to the terminology
- ✓ Choosing a date: no conflicting dates
- ✓ Check basic logistics on site
- ✓ Narrowing down invitees: high-level, programme representative, local programme representative, project partners, users of the services developed in the project, observers, journalists
- ✓ Press conference or at least press kit
- ✓ Sponsorship when possible: services (coffee breaks, bus, dinner), give-aways
- ✓ Monitor progress
- ✓ Event chairperson and back-up
- ✓ Eventually, but applies mostly for big international events: hire a master of ceremony

- ✓ Keep track of status
- ✓ Keep the phone numbers of all important players on site

2.6.2. Just before the event

Run the final check of the facility, one day before the event if it is possible. Make sure that everything is set. Be aware of the Murphy (if something can go wrong, it will, and it will today).

- ✓ Make sure that everybody knows their role and task at the event:
- ✓ Who is the chair person/moderator?
- ✓ Who is the back up for the chair person?
- ✓ Who are the speakers?
- ✓ Who stands at the registration desk?
- ✓ Who is the photographer?
- ✓ Who writes the MMs? [if relevant]
- ✓ Who is in charge of technical support?
- ✓ Have you briefed the caterer?

It is recommended to prepare some sort of guidelines for speakers. It should contain a ppt template and maximum time for presentation. Make sure that you have the updated list of speakers and updated agenda. Agenda is alive until the event. After the event starts, all participants should be provided with the final agenda.

It is recommended to collect all presentations few days before the event. That should be enough time to make translated versions, if you decide to go with the double projector (double language) system.

2.6.3. At the event

Make sure that everything is running as planned. But, if something goes wrong, remember what John Lennon said: “Life is what happens while we make other plans”. Be calm, and be prepared to improvise. Spend some time with all participants during the breaks. Make everybody feels welcomed.

2.6.4. Contact with the speakers

Keep speakers info sheets (**Annex 1**)

2.6.5. Panel discussions

See template of NEWADA final event (**Annex 2**)

2.6.6.After the event

The event is maybe over, but your job is not. Here is the list of what we do after the event is finished:

- ✓ Prepare a text for our web site and for our newsletter.
- ✓ Make all materials available (agenda, list of participants, meeting minutes, presentation, photos.
- ✓ Write a news text for your website covering the event.
- ✓ Send a thank you for your participation email and thank the delegates for their contribution to the event.
- ✓ Finally, don’t forget to pay to the provider of your services (conference room, catering, translator, printing company…), and give them feedback on their services

2.6.7.Looking forward

After every event that we organize, we realize that we forgot to do something, or that something could have been done better. It is ok, just put it in your check list for next time. Nobody is perfect.

3 CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

(draft additional text for the PR Toolbox (WP7, activity 7.1 – improve communication skills))

This overview serves as a **Guide to Conference Plannin**g. It will provide you with the foundation need in order to plan, organize and host a conference, meeting or event.

Organisers must select a conference venue proportionate to the number of people attending. Not only is this cost effective for the host, it is a good indicator of how well the conference has been planned.

Choosing the appropriate conference seating style will support the aim of the event and the goals of the presenter. Organisers must fully inspect the conference venue and think everything through from a delegate and presenter point of view.

1. Conference venue layout and tips
2. Ensure easy access to seats and that the aisles are wide enough
3. Accommodate people with special hearing, seeing or mobility needs
4. Choose adjustable chairs for day-long training
5. Place the entrance at the back of the room to avoid distraction
6. Check that the speaker can be seen from the back of the room
7. Speaker tables can have a skirt around the front to screen belongings

3.1.1. Large groups (usually more than 40 delegates)

- Cinema / Theatre Style
- Classroom
- Chevron

- ***Cinema / Theatre Seating Style***

This style of conference seating has rows of seats with aisles (3 columns) facing a stage or podium. **Best for** – Formal presentations, lectures, Q&A sessions

Downside – No tables for note taking; no interaction between delegates

This is the most popular room set up for large conferences. This is the best set up for saving space with a high number of delegates being able to use a modest size room and is suitable for all group sizes.

- ***Classroom Seating Style***

This style of conference seating has rows of tables with 2-4 seats each and aisles (3 columns) facing a stage or podium.

Best for – Note taking / PCs at presentations, training courses

Downside – limited interaction between delegates

Classroom style set up is suitable for large conferences where people need a desk in front of them. It takes up a only bit more space than theatre style. It is suitable for very large groups as well.

- ***Chevron Seating Style***

Chevron style has a centre aisle with rows of 4 seats on either side (2 columns) facing a table, stage or podium. The chairs are in a line and turned inwards, with or without tables. Delegates can interact across the aisle and with the speaker.

Best for – Interaction; table space for notes / PCs

Downside – for smaller groups and less conference character

3.1.2.Small groups (usually less than 40 delegates)

- Boardroom
- Hollow Square
- U-Shape

- ***Boardroom***

Conference seating is around a long rectangular table with not more than 12 – 15 seats; over 15 and the people at the far end feel left out and form a separate unit.

Best for – Small meetings, training sessions, interviews

Downside – For delegates of the same or similar rank

Great for small meetings where one-on-one interaction is essential. Generally suitable for meetings up to 25 people. Ideal set up for a meeting with a meeting chairman.

- ***Hollow Square / Rectangle***

The tables are arranged together to form the shape with a space in the middle, conference seating is around the outside. Suitable for meetings where rank is not an issue.

Best for – Interaction with a facilitator; note taking

Downside – Visuals are awkward to use

An alternative to boardroom style giving delegates a bit more space. Suitable for groups up to 40 people.

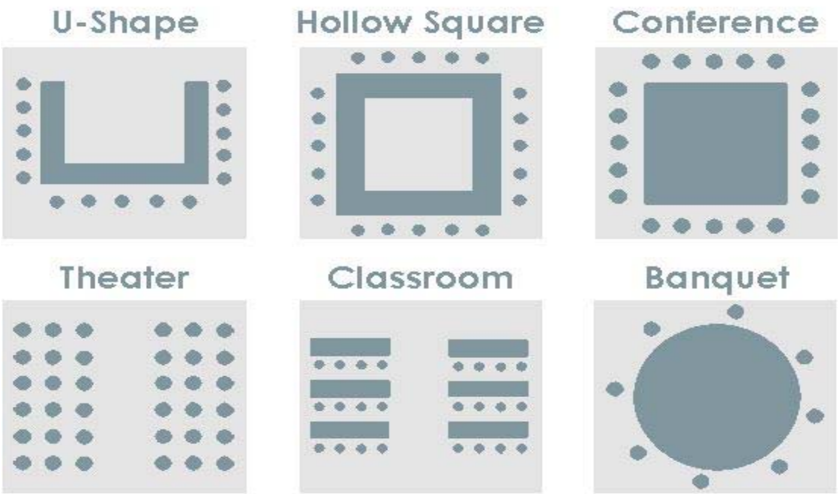
- *U Shape*

Tables are arranged to form the shape with seating around the outside. There can be a screen or a speaker table at the front of the room. The centre area can be used for media camera people, demonstration and role play. Suitable for a maximum of 25 people.

Best for – Press conferences, training, brainstorming, notes / PCs

Downside – No more than 25 delegates

This set up is ideal when you have a training session with a presenter at the front of the room. It allows for a screen to be set up so everyone can see it and for delegates to talk easily among themselves.



Possible seating arrangements

3.1.3.Venue search sheet

Make sure you write your own venue search sheet before getting started and mail the same sheet to all potential venues. (see **Annex 5**.)

4 GIVE-AWAYS

(draft additional text for the PR Toolbox (WP7, activity 7.1 – improve communication skills))

4.1. Why give-aways:

Everybody loves receiving gifts. Anyone in your office, company, would gladly tell you that they can appreciate even the smallest gifts as long as it is given free and with a purpose. Whether it is a ball, pen, bag or t-shirts or any other giveaways, they would be interested in it as long as it is given to them without a fee.

4.2. Thinks to consider:

Do you know that you can invest on people's addiction to free items or giveaways by simply distributing promotional gifts or items?

Promotional items are the latest secret ingredients in making a successful marketing strategy of your project or company. Every year millions of promotional products are being made and distributed to millions of consumers. When people receive promotional products, they appreciate it and they tend to recall the company or business that sponsored the item. This is a good thing and in the long run, it will definitely benefit your company.

According to a study conducted by Advertising Specialties Impressions, more than 8 out of 10 (84%) remembered the advertisers of the promotional products that they received.

When it comes to choosing conference giveaways, you should consider a few things:

- ✓ Make it a point to select promotional items having enough space on all sides where you can display the company logo
- ✓ Produce useful giveaways, things that you yourself liked and know will work. Bags, mugs, caps, office stationery are ideal as corporate giveaways.
- ✓ Get conference/project/event giveaways that highlight the brand and its usability in the easiest manner possible.
- ✓ Find a product that serves the dual ends of satisfying your clients and publicizing the services all at one go

Giveaways are great promotional tools that put remarkable effect on the potential customers. Besides, corporate gifts are also given to the sponsors to remind them about the business association or show the gratitude.

5 PRESENTATIONS

5.1. How to make a successful PowerPoint presentation

5.1.1. Introduction: The power of presenting

Presentations are a great way to convey ideas as well as educate and convince people. Presentations give you an opportunity to share your key messages with various segments of your target audience, and a good presentation will stay with your audience long past the time of the presentation.

Giving a presentation is not an easy task; it requires substantial research, organization, public speaking skills, and self-confidence. A good presenter has the ability to engage his or her listeners from beginning to end and compel them to take action.

You will find presentations effective both in a conference setting and when addressing individual audiences. A presentation, just like any other PR tool, should be consistent with your goals. But one thing that a presentation should never be is boring and monotonous.

This is a useful mental checklist which you can use to get started. When planning a presentation, you should keep in mind three different aspects:

- ✓ What do you want to say (messages)?
- ✓ How will we present the messages graphically (making the presentation)?
- ✓ How will we present the messages verbally (presenting the presentation)?

5.1.2. Planning a presentation

The audience

The first step is to work out who your audience is – in your communication plan you will have identified primary and secondary target groups – who is this presentation addressing?

Are you presenting at a conference? What is the key message of the conference? That is what the audience is expecting to hear – tailor your presentation to the audience.

Are you presenting to companies? Tailor your presentation to meet the needs of that company.

The message

Now work out what message you want to send with your presentation – remember your three key messages:

- ✓ Inland waterway transportation is the perfect mode for all kinds of products/goods (not only bulk transportation), because we operate just in time and we have a lot of free capacity, making sure that we can guarantee you efficient transportation.
- ✓ We provide you with integrated solutions; we get your products/goods from A to B in the most efficient (also cost-efficient) and effective manner and you don't have to be settled next to a river or canal.
- ✓ We have an integrated network of rivers and canals in the whole of Europe.

Make sure that your presentation helps to explain those messages, but that the messages are framed in a way that will meet the needs of your audience.

The objective

Once you have locked down the target audience and the messaging, you can move on to making the presentation. A good tool for making presentations is PowerPoint, but don't get caught up in the technical aspects – remember that what you want to say is key.

Decide if your presentation is meant to entertain, inform, persuade, or sell. Is a light-hearted or a more formal approach most appropriate to the subject and your audience? Choose an appropriate presentation structure: topical, chronological, classification by categories, problem and solution, or cause and effect. Divide the body of your presentation into three to five main points. More will only confuse the audience.

The conclusion should include a summary of the main points of the presentation and leave the audience with something that is worth remembering and pondering.

You may also want to include questions in your presentation, which should be asked once every 10 minutes to engage the audience.

The final slide should contain a message thanking the audience, your contact details, and information about the availability of speaker notes, materials, and feedback tools.

5.1.3.Making a presentation

Keep it simple

The key to making a good presentation is to remember three things: purpose, simplicity, and consistency.

As with any type of design, don‘t overdo it. No more than two font (a font is traditionally defined as a quantity of sorts composing a complete character set of a single size and style of a particular typeface) families is a good rule of thumb. No more than one graphic image or chart per slide is another good rule (excluding any corporate logo or other recurring element in the design).

Tip

Try to stick to the 666 rule for simplicity in design:

- No more than 6 words per bullet,

- No more than 6 bullets per image
- No more than 6 word slides in a row

Be consistent

Use the same colours and fonts throughout your presentation. Select graphic images in the same style. Templates go a long way toward helping to maintain consistency. There are both good and not so good PowerPoint templates available on the Web. Choose carefully to find the templates that provide consistency, readability, and are appropriate to your message and image - or create your own template.

The slides

Below is a good example of how to structure a presentation so that the information is properly organised for your audience.

a) Outline

- ✓ Make your 1st and 2nd slide an outline of your presentation
- ✓ Follow the order of your outline for the rest of the presentation
- ✓ Only place main points on the outline slide – use the titles of each slides as main points

b) Slide structure

- ✓ Use 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation,
- ✓ Write in point form, not complete sentences
- ✓ Include 4-5 points per slide
- ✓ Avoid wordiness: use key words and phrases only

c) Individual elements

Each presentation needs to have a concept with following elements:

- ✓ Introduction ("I'm telling you what will I speak about")
- ✓ Greeting
- ✓ Addressing
- ✓ Creating sympathy
- ✓ Creating interest for the topic
- ✓ Main part ("I'm speaking")
- ✓ Conclusion ("I'm telling you what I have spoken about")
- ✓ Summary of presentation
- ✓ Impressive end of presentation

Tips

- ✓ Use at least an 18-point font
- ✓ Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points (for example: **title font 36-point, main point font 28-point** etc.)

- ✓ Use a light background that is attractive but simple and use the same background consistently throughout your presentation
- ✓ Use **graphs** rather than just charts and words – data in graphs is easier to comprehend and retain and trends are easier to visualise in graph form
- ✓ Include **pictures, graphics,** schemes and any other kind of visualization in the presentation. This way you engage the visual memory of the audience. The information you are presenting becomes clearer and easier to understand.
- ✓ Use **animations** – they can be included as long as they are uniform. Each slide should enter with the same animation. This small change will make your presentation look
- ✓ Proof your slide for spelling mistakes, the use of repeated words and grammatical errors
- ✓ It is recommended not to include long passages of text in the slides. Presentation is meant to "present", not to report. Include short formulation of the main and most important topics.

5.1.4.Presenting

The structure

Structure your presentation so that it has a beginning, middle and an end. When speaking, use conversational language and get to the point. Avoid jargon and large words. Most people appreciate short, concise messaging.

In the beginning you have two main goals:

- ✓ to grab the attention of the audience
- ✓ to calm yourself and relax for your presentation

To achieve these two aims you should begin with something you feel comfortable with. It may be a short story, a short video, some statistics (that have to be well researched) etc.

The end is very important. It is known that people tend to remember what they were last told much better than the points made before. A good practice is to relate the end to the beginning of your presentation. You could make a quick review of the points you have made through the presentation. In some cases it is a very good idea in the end to call to action – to offer your contact details, tell the audience where to find more information about your company/project/business etc.

Manner of speaking

Use conversational language and get to the point. Avoid jargon and large words. Most people appreciate short, concise messages.

Power Point is an application of Microsoft Office designed for presentations. With this application we can enter in presentation texts, clip-art images, charts, Excel tables. We can also create our own artistic images using a variety of drawing tools in PowerPoint. If the system contains a computer sound card and speakers, you can add lines of text, forms or different pages sound effects.

PowerPoint comes with many features, but if they all are used in the presentation it will be overloaded and will not achieve its goal.

6 PRESS & JOURNALISM

6.1. Useful tips

- ✓ Make sure that you send journalists plenty of photo material: you want to make sure that they use your photos.
- ✓ Open press@yourcompanyname.org (should also be done for large projects) or officepr@yourcompanyname.org
- ✓ Quote people: collect quotes and make sure you can use them efficiently at a later stage
- ✓ Keep and update a contact database

6.2. Contact database

6.2.1. Why create a database?

It is very helpful to gather data about your contacts, including media, politicians, partners, stakeholders, users and potential customers in order to build ongoing support their programs and services. Capturing this information is crucial for an organization to show the impact of its programs, to measure how people are perceiving the organization, and to show the gaps regarding where and how your organization's messages are being communicated. An effective database will allow every department of your organisation to fulfil their goals as well.

You identified target groups in your communication plan – it may sound simple, but it is important to keep track of who is important in our target groups. You should keep records of your business contacts and potential contacts.

In this way you can develop ongoing relationships with our contacts, remembering personal details such as their partners' names and their birthdays, as well as knowing where you have synergies with their interests. Effective management of business contacts is part of what makes an organization effective.

6.2.2. How do you create a database?

The first step in deciding what information you need to track is to decide what you want to be able to do with the database. Try to get together everyone in your organisation for a brainstorming session.

Several programs can be used to build and extend databases, for instance Microsoft excel or access or File maker.

A well designed database file makes it easy to enter, store, and find specific information. To ensure easy locating of information when having created a database, a logical setup and standardized data entry and, where possible, validation of entered data is vital.

A database for business contacts can contain (some of the) following columns to enable optimal use:

- ✓ Name of the organization / company name
- ✓ Gender of the contact person
- ✓ Salutation (sir, Mr, madam, miss, Ms)
- ✓ Title(s) of the contact person
- ✓ Initials of the contact person
- ✓ Family name of contact person
- ✓ Position of the contact person
- ✓ Street name, Number
- ✓ Postal code, City
- ✓ Province, Country
- ✓ E-mail address
- ✓ Checkbox: direct / general e-mail address
- ✓ Internet address website
- ✓ Office & mobile phone number
- ✓ Contact moments (in the past by date with brief content and type of contact: personal, phone, e-mail, in writing)
- ✓ Current status of cooperation (including entry date)
- ✓ Action points / agreements / possibilities for the future
- ✓ Regular contact language (where applicable)

6.2.3.Internet resources

It may be of use to investigate this Excel 2007 Step by Step Database Tutorial on the internet. Just follow the link: http://spreadsheets.about.com/od/datamanagementinexcel/ss/080608_database.htm

On the same page a link is available to the tutorial for Excel 2003. Information about creating databases with Microsoft Access is accessible through the following link: http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/hp051874421033.aspx

6.2.4.Who manages the database?

As mentioned before it is important to ensure that data is entered correctly. Data errors, caused by incorrect data entry, are the source of many problems related to data management. If the data is entered correctly in the beginning, the program is more likely to give you back the results you want.

It is therefore advisable to give writing access to the database to only one person to avoid entry differences. Writing an instruction manual for entering new data in the database is another option. This may also come in handy when personnel changes occur.

To prevent entry mistakes, it is possible to proscribe the content of the column, for instance:

- ✓ Only alphabetical, numerical data or all values
- ✓ The number of characters / figures to be filled in (minimum and maximum)
- ✓ A predefined list of values (words or numbers)

The system will then display a message when the entered value differs from the predefined properties. Managing a database with contact information is a challenging task. It needs continuous updating and accuracy to keep the data useful and valuable.

The value of a database comes not from a computer program, but from the information that is tracked. The most important component in a good database system is people who understand the importance of gathering information and of thinking proactively, and who are dedicated to keeping the information up-to-date.

Please note that regular data entry and maintenance may significantly change your present organizational procedures, depending on who enters the data, what the scale of operation is, and training requirements. It is of the utmost importance to support the person(s) who maintain the database (i.e. the people who input the data). This should be a priority job, not an after thought or a "when-you-have-time" task, and not something to think about late in a database adoption process. Without full and initial support of this person or persons who will primarily input and manage the data, your database, no matter how well designed or how highly thought of it is by IT experts, will fail to meet your organization's needs.

Everyone should contribute information for the central database; all staff members have a responsibility to provide important names, address changes, etc. for the database.

6.2.5. Tracking information

No organization measures its success by the number of people who are in its database(s). The value of a database also doesn't come from a computer program. The value of a database comes from the quality of the information that is tracked. The most important component in a good database system is people who understand the importance of gathering quality information and of thinking proactively, and who are dedicated to (and fully supported and empowered in) keeping the information up-to-date. Deciding what information needs to be tracked will help you decide what fields to create to track information about people in your database(s).

Tip

Don‘t think of your database as merely a group of people waiting to hear from you; they are people who want to talk back to you -- and maybe to each other. Invite everyone on your database, through your communications with its membership, to subscribe to your email newsletter, subscribe to your blog, subscribe to any RSS feeds you provide, etc. At the very least, you should have an online discussion group at least for all current and previous volunteers.

6.3. Relations with the media

6.3.1. Who are they?

When we talk about the media as a collective term, it covers many things:

- ✓ print publications collectively, especially newspapers and periodicals.
- ✓ all the media and agencies that print, broadcast, or gather and transmit news, including newspapers, newsmagazines, radio and television news bureaus, and wire services.
- ✓ editorial employees, taken collectively, of these media and agencies and a group of news reporters and/or news photographers e.g. The press are in the outer office, waiting for a statement.

6.3.2. The media can be split up in two categories

General media

First we have the general media. They usually reach the elite and more in particular the decision takers, both at a European and a national level. They have the powerful capacity to set the agenda and thus, to a great extent, decide what politics will deal with. They can help to push for items such as funding of infrastructure projects, responsible adaptation of rivers and promotion of IWT.

Industry publications

The second category is specialised industry publications. On the one hand we have the industry magazines and on the other hand the transport and logistics press as well as the IT media (who might be interested in software programs optimizing traffic flows).

6.3.3. Why are they important?

All organisations have to deal with the media at different events and as part of their outreach and campaign work.

Advocacy is a key part of the work of most organisations. As we are trying to mobilise people behind the cause of inland waterway transport and influence public opinion to favour increased use of IWT, publicity and marketing is very important. People must know IWT, what it stands for and why they should support it. Inland waterway transport needs to build a profile that people relate to. Newspapers and radio reach thousands of people and if through using the media effectively IWT will become well known and respected among the people. Also, using the media will help to build reputation and influence.

The media is not the primary target for the message, but rather a secondary target group – however, the media is also a way of reaching the primary target group, as they will read any articles carried in the media. Thus, the way you deal with the media has a direct impact on all of your other target groups.

The media plays a significant role in the success of any business. It is the information that the media generates that influences public choices and opinions. To get your message across you need the friendship of the media. Nowadays, the media means more than the newspapers and magazines. Today the scenario has changed to include TV, radio, and the internet.

They need to get targeted and factual information on the economic advantages of IWT, stressing items such as cost-efficiency, flexibility, speed, etc.

Below are the basic questions that need to be answered to develop a plan for an effective media campaign. The following questions can be a useful first step:

6.3.4.What goals do you want to accomplish?

Pinpoint very specifically the action and/or awareness that you want your target audience to adopt. Questions to be answered are: What is the current opinion of the people who will be reached by the media campaign? How do you want them to think after the media campaign?

6.3.5.Who is the target audience?

Knowing what the target audience thinks about the issue at hand and where they obtain information will play an important part in determining appropriate media channels used in delivering your message.

6.3.6.Key messages

The purpose of a media campaign is to get across a specific message – define this message very clearly within your organisation. You may find it useful to hold one or two brainstorming sessions to come up with a clear and concise message. You also need to keep in mind the core messages:

- ✓ Inland waterway transportation is the perfect mode for all kind of products/goods (not only bulk transportation), because we operate just in time and we have a lot of free capacity, making sure that we can guarantee you efficient transportation.
- ✓ We provide you with integrated solutions; we get your products/goods from A to B in the most efficient (also cost-efficient) and effective manner and you don't have to be settled next to a river or canal.
- ✓ We have an integrated network of rivers and canals in the whole of Europe.

6.3.7.What media channels will be the most efficient and cost-effective?

There are several categories of mass media: News media includes television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and periodicals. Advertising and public service announcements may involve print, radio, television and billboards/bus boards.

To help inform the decision of which type or types of media to use, be aware of where the target population gets its information, which channels are most/least believable, what your budget will support, and what will provide adequate “dosage” of the messages on a regular basis. Building and maintaining relationships with local media will aid in better results during a campaign.

6.3.8. Who should deal with the media?

Most organisations have their own rules for who may speak to the press and their own policies for dealing with the media. Policies should include issues like:

- ✓ Who acts as spokespeople on specific issues?
- ✓ Who issues and approves press statements?
- ✓ Who may be interviewed on behalf of the organisation?

Make sure you develop and understand clear policies within your organisation and get guidance and help from your organisation’s leadership structures when you need it. Most organisations have three types of people who speak to the press:

- ✓ A spokesperson who stays in regular contact with reporters, briefs them, issues press statements, deals with questions and queries and organises interviews
- ✓ Leadership who are interviewed or asked questions or are just quoted when they speak in other forums like public meetings.
- ✓ Spokespeople on specific topics who have special knowledge and experience on that topic

Tips

Always make sure that your spokesperson is briefed to be on message

Timeline:

More than 1 month prior to campaign

- ✓ Organize media lists: contact names, titles, address, phone…
- ✓ Develop media campaign strategies: message, target audience, media to use, alternative media ideas, partners, events, etc.

4 - 8 weeks prior to campaign

- ✓ Call media to update contact list and alert them about upcoming campaign.

- ✓ Write press releases, media advisory, other materials

2-6 weeks prior

- ✓ Send press releases and public service announcements to media. (note: if mailing to a monthly publication, such as organizational newsletters or magazines, send press release at least 4 weeks in advance of publication)

1-4 weeks prior

- ✓ Send media advisory to request coverage for specific events.
- ✓ Flyers, posters, and other alternative media distributed.

1 week prior

- ✓ Follow-up phone calls to media about press releases and media advisories

6.3.9.Do's and don't of media interviews

State the most important information first – then provide the background.

Talk in lay terms, using as little professional or technical jargon as possible. Tell stories and anecdotes that illustrate your point and give examples.

Keep the answers short.

Think about what you want to say before you speak. Define two to three main points you would like to make about your subject. Gather facts, figures, and anecdotes to support your points. Anticipate questions the reporter might ask and have responses ready.

Speak in complete thoughts. The reporter's question may be edited out and your response should stand on its own. This is especially important for television interviews.

Never say anything you do not want to read in print, hear on the radio, or see on television or the internet.

Reporters always need perspective; don't hesitate to put the issue into perspective, even if the reporter doesn't ask.

If you can provide the reporter with a written summary of information, main points or statistics, do so.

Don't overestimate a reporter's knowledge of your subject. If a reporter bases questions on information you believe is incorrect, do not hesitate to set the record straight. Offer background information where necessary.

Identify anything you say as either fact or opinion. Your opinions are your own, but fact is fact.

Be confident. You are the expert.

If you do not understand a question, ask for clarification rather than talking around it. If you do not have the answer, say so. Tell the reporter where to find the information, if possible.

Never say, “No comment.” Instead, if you cannot or do not choose to answer, explain briefly. For example, “I can’t answer that because I haven’t seen the research paper you are referring to.”

Make your final comment clear and concise, reemphasizing your main point. If you feel that you failed to get the message out, force it in at the end. (“I think we’ve missed the real, critical issue here, which is.…”)

Don’t go on vacation the week your paper comes out. The press wants to talk to you, not the P.R. person.

Just because someone doesn’t understand everything about your work, that doesn’t make them stupid. Just make it simple. Try to say it in a sentence or two.

A good picture will get your work a lot of attention. People like cool things to look at.

Reporters don’t generally work on the same kinds of deadlines that you do. Respond as soon as you can. It would not be unusual for a reporter to have to turn something into a story within a few hours.

checklist media enquiry (see **Annex 3**)

6.4. Press conferences

You should organize press conferences when you have events, news or some kind of happening that is important for your organization or for inland navigation as a whole. A press conference enables you to communicate your news at one place and one time to all important journalists.

Whether your happening is important enough to become the news is up to the media. There is no proven formula for successful planning and carrying out of press conference, but one of the main contributors to success is overlapping the message of the press conference with current media interest.

Press conferences which are badly planned or organized without any real purpose can discredit you with journalists, making it harder to organize a successful event in the future.

You should invite the media to a press conference according to a media list which includes:

- ✓ Journalists with whom you are cooperating on a regular basis
- ✓ Journalists specialized in a particular theme or sector (business, IT, healthcare etc.) depending on the theme of the conference
- ✓ Correspondents (according to the geographical location of the press conference)

Other issues which need to be cleared up before the press conference:

- ✓ Who will welcome the journalists?

- ✓ Which representatives of the organisation will be present?
- ✓ Who will be in charge for specific questions and who will answer the questions?
- ✓ Who will be available after the press conference is finished for possible radio or television statements and interviews?
- ✓ Who will lead the possible sightseeing of the factory?
- ✓ Who will stay for lunch with the media?

During the press conference it is important to capture the attention of journalists. Our task is to persuade them that our story is worth of the media attention. It's good to keep in mind that journalists always look at things from the perspective "will this news be interesting for an average reader/viewer". They will try to asses to whom your theme could be interesting and in what way it affects the lives of ordinary people.

The best time to hold a press conference is on workdays between 10 AM and 12 PM which gives enough time for journalists from the print media to have time to write the article for tomorrow's newspapers. It is also important not to organize a press conference on public holidays or on dates where some other major events are taking place.

It's a good idea to host a press conference in an appropriate environment. For example, if opening a new factory it is advisable to hold a press conference in the factory. If signing an important agreement, we have to choose an exclusive or representative location. Choose the location well in advance in order to have enough time to examine it well before the conference. How many entrances does the place have? How many parking places does the location have and what kind of parking payment system is there?

Printed invitations have to be sent via mail at least 5-7 days before the press conference. If we are sending invitations via fax or e-mail, they should be sent 2-4 days earlier. After we send the invitation via fax or e-mail a few hours later we should check via phone if the invitation was received and then call again a day before the conference to confirm the participation of particular media/journalist.

It's a good idea to draw up a script for the press conference beforehand, so that everyone involved understands what they need to do.

6.5. Press releases

6.5.1. Technical tips

A press release is an easy way to inform the media about important events and information. Journalists are very busy and usually want to get a good story as fast and easy as possible. You always have to keep in mind that your press release is competing with a dozen of other which journalists or editors are reading every day, so give an extra effort to really offer something interesting or different.

There are several important things regarding the press release, besides generating publicity. The most important thing is an interesting story. A good story is the basis of our efforts to gain publicity. Besides that, you need to start thinking like an editor. Give him what he wants and you will have an excellent relationship with him. It is also important to be persistent. If you really believe in your story and think it's the right thing for the media it was sent to then give your best efforts to see it published.

Below are some common agreements as to how press releases should be formulated. Using these stylistic elements will help to present your release as professional.

- ✓ A4 paper format one-sided – never write on both sides!
- ✓ If you have official letterheads you can freely used them for press releases
- ✓ Line spacing 1,5
- ✓ Align text left for easier reading
- ✓ Place and date should stand before the first sentence
- ✓ Font usually 12 (Arial Narrow 12 or Arial 11)
- ✓ Numbers from 1 to 10 should be written in letter form
- ✓ If you are mentioning specific persons always put their function and full name
- ✓ When mentioning a specific term for the first time put the whole name/term/ expression, but later you can use an abbreviation
- ✓ Quotation should be marked with double quotation marks
- ✓ Pages should be numbered as 1/2, 2/2 etc.
- ✓ Press release should be max 2 pages long

Further tips

- ✓ Copy the press release into the body of the e-mail, don't send it as an attachment
- ✓ Title should consist of max 10 words, don't write it in capital letters
- ✓ Don't rely on spell check programmes, give your press release to a colleague to check possible mistakes
- ✓ Don't use HTML tags, bold mode or colours – e-mail could look different on various PCs because of different programmes
- ✓ Use links – to company's website or/and to contact person
- ✓ Don't use Cc – the receiver of the e-mail should feel special and shouldn't see that you have sent this e-mail to other journalists
- ✓ Don't use emoticons
- ✓ At the end of the press release put "# # #"
- ✓ Always include your signature with contact information

6.5.2.Information

- ✓ newsworthy
- ✓ intended for the audience
- ✓ trustworthy

6.5.3.Writing & language

- ✓ informative
- ✓ usage of nouns mostly, avoiding adjectives
- ✓ report in the “third person”
- ✓ clear and simple

6.5.4.Take into consideration

- ✓ how will the press release be related to the people it is addressed to?
- ✓ how will they connect to the news it informs about?

6.5.5.Structure

- ✓ Headline
- ✓ Brief description of the news
- ✓ Body
- ✓ Additional

Headline and the first paragraph are all about grabbing the attention of the reader. The headline should be creative, short and capturing. An exclamation mark though is not recommended because it would make it look like an advertisement, not news. In the headline you can make connection to your company’s offerings/ activity/ project and top stories from the world scene.

In the first paragraph you briefly give the main information – where, when, who, what, why (in other words the 5 “W”s). It should be very short, but in the same time summarizing the whole release. When the reader sees it, he should be able to understand the whole message. The first paragraph should contain a “hook”, in order to make the reader read forward.

The body of the release contains more details. It is structured in paragraphs (best 2-3) that give more detailed important information. Be careful with the details though, they shouldn’t be too much.

Always keep in mind who is the press release meant for. Try to look at it through the eyes of a journalist. This will help you to separate the important information from the unnecessary details.

In the final paragraph of the body, summarize the main points of the release. An optimal length for the body is considered 300-500 words. Keep the language clear and simple.

Effective press releases usually utilize a strategy known as “the inverted pyramid”, which is written with the most important information first. At the end provide you contact details (or these of the person who can answer questions about the release). By additional are meant for example useful links for the reader to be able to find more information if interested. You can also include company information if appropriate. Last but not least: Make sure your grammar and writing are correct. Any mistakes make you look unprofessional.

7 WEB PRESENCE

7.1. Getting started

Before you start, try to answer the following questions with content of your web site:

- ✓ **Who** are you?
- ✓ **What** do you do?
- ✓ **How** do you do it?
- ✓ **Why** do you do it?

Try to brainstorm with your team and discuss the following items:

- ✓ Do you have a definition of your own and your company orientation?
- ✓ Is your website navigation over viewable?
- ✓ Do you have an English version? If yes, when did you update it last?
- ✓ Do you have nice photos? Seasonal photos are an option
- ✓ Consider adding opinion polls
- ✓ Could slideshows fit in?
- ✓ Is your website user-friendly?
- ✓ Is there room for innovation? Could you eventually add an interview section with archive?

Once you've gotten yourself and your company started with website work or improvement, keep a social media profile: facebook, twitter. If you decide to engage into social media, make sure that you only engage in social media when you have enough information to share and once the responsibilities have been defined of "who does what" in terms of social media in your organization or department.

Based on experience, twitter might be a better choice since you are limited to just a few lines and can add links which will speak for themselves.

Subscribe to Google alerts and make RSS feeds available – when relevant – on your website. Question & Answers: Q&A's are a nice add-on but are not a prerequisite.

If you have limited financial and human resources, here is **a minimum website content** indication you must have:

1. **The minimum content should be**:

About us | Activities | Services | Projects | Legislation

Links | Media centre

2. **Check your performance**:

- ✓ Monitor the number of visitors
- ✓ Monitor what pages are the most visited

3. **Keep basic standards**:

- ✓ Make a native language and English language version
- ✓ Use photos
- ✓ Install a press section
- ✓ Send out newsletters and make them available in the archive on your website.

7.2. Website start checklist

7.2.1. How to create an e-newsletter

Based on experience, people like newsletters for a number of reasons.

They are short – no more than two pages.

They keep stakeholders up to date with the latest news.

They don't cost anything, except for one day of work. Here are some tips and tricks to guide you in the preparation of your newsletter:

- ✓ Brand it. Make one header and stick to it. The header should contain: your company logo, the issue of the newsletter (Nr. 1, 2, 30, etc…), year of edition, indication of the month of the release.
- ✓ Play with colours. The header or part of the header can change with every new release (we do it). It will not damage your graphic standards manual, but only give the new life to every new release. Even the best graphics become boring after some time.
- ✓ Use PDF form.
- ✓ Try not to exceed two pages if you opt for a digital version. Everything more than two pages can be in danger not to be read. If you don't have materials for two pages, wait for a few days, something will came up. If nothing happens in the next few days, fill the blank space with interesting photos and run it. If you have materials for more than two pages, split it in two or more releases.
- ✓ Print newsletters can be longer and printed like booklets.
- ✓ Concentrate on content. Pick interesting news, from the point of view of your audience (target groups).

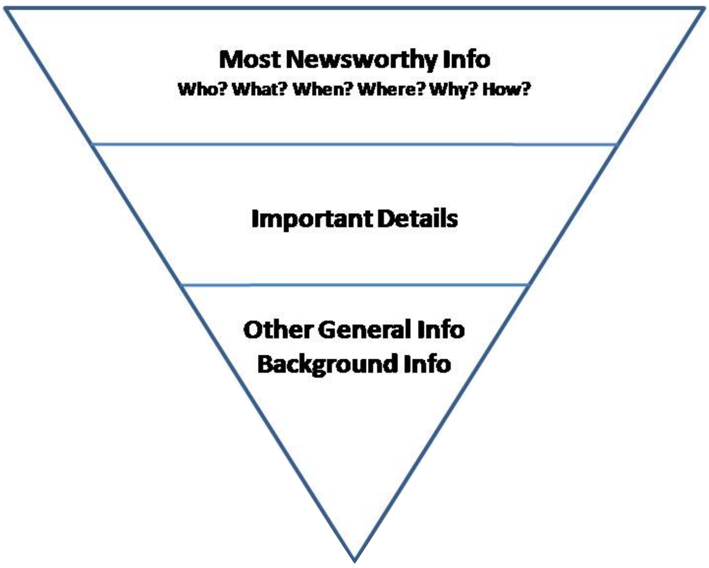
- ✓ Report on past events (conferences, workshops) that you had organized. Answer basic questions: who, what, when, where, why. It is useful as a check list. Note the official web site of the event (if any).
- ✓ Inform about projects that you are participating in. Indicate why this project is important for you, and for your stakeholders. Note the official web site of the project.
- ✓ Inform about your future plans. Make announcements for future events, future projects. If something is important, run it as news in a few consecutive editions.
- ✓ Your achievements: newsletters are great opportunities to brag about what you had achieved. Just be careful not to go above the decency level.
- ✓ If you're running out of inspiration, make recollections on some past events (if you don't have anything else), or mentions some anniversaries (of your administration, for example).
- ✓ Photos: Use photos, always. Sometimes, photos truly speak more than 100 words.
- ✓ Logos. Use logos of different projects, funding programmes, countries (flags), companies.
- ✓ Make releases in regular intervals. After a while, people will get use to it.

Make your newsletters available in the archive on your web site. Some new prescribers can arise from this. And, at the end, always update your mailing list.

7.2.2.E-news

E-news is an important tool that people expect to see on website. News is not always news; therefore, you should follow the basic template (**Annex 4**)

The inverted pyramid



This refers to the style of journalism which places the most important facts at the beginning and works "down" from there. Ideally, the first paragraph should contain enough information to give the reader a good overview of the entire story. The rest of the article explains and expands on the beginning.

A good approach is to assume that the story might be cut off at any point due to space limitations. Does the story work if the editor only decides to include the first two paragraphs? If not you should re-arrange your text.

8 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT METHODS

(draft additional text for the PR Toolbox (WP7, activity 7.1 – improve communication skills))

Stakeholder management is critical to the success of every project in every organization. Engaging the right people in the right way in your project makes a big difference to its success. The more people you affect, the more likely it is that your actions will impact people who have power and influence over your projects. These people could be strong supporters of your work – or they could block it. Stakeholder Management is the process by which you identify your key stakeholders and win their support. Stakeholder Analysis is the first stage of this, where you identify and start to understand your most important stakeholders.

Before you even start managing your stakeholders, you have to identify and categorize them. Stakeholder Analysis is a 3-step technique used to identify the key people who have to be won over:

- ✓ The first stage of this is to brainstorm who your stakeholders are.
- ✓ The second step is to prioritize them by power and interest, and to plot this on a Power/Interest grid.
- ✓ The last step is to understand of what motivates your stakeholders and how you need to win them around

Step 1 – Identify Your Stakeholders

The first step in your Stakeholder Analysis is to brainstorm who your stakeholders are. As part of this, think of all the people who are affected by your work, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its success or lack thereof.

Remember that although stakeholders may be both organizations and people, ultimately you must communicate with people. Make sure that you identify the correct individual stakeholders within a stakeholder group.

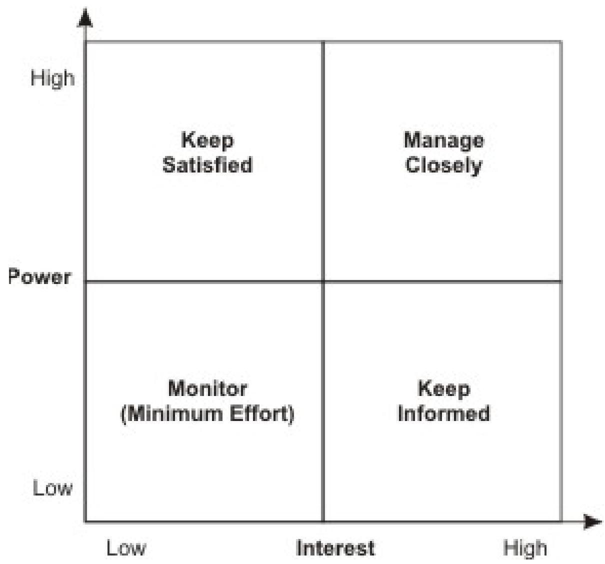
Step 2 – Prioritize Your Stakeholders

You should now have a long list of people and organizations that are affected by your work. Some have the power either to block or advance, others will be interested in what you are doing, others may not care at all.

TOOL TO ASSIST IN THE EVALUATION OF STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Stakeholder				
Skill Level				
Confidence Level				
Cultural diversity	Language need			
	Other need			
Likely participant				
Hard to Reach				
Importance				

Key: 1= High 2 = Medium 3 = Low



Make a grid with your stakeholders according to their interest. That will be very useful later to evaluate their degree of involvement and decision-making power.

- ✓ High power, interested people: these are the people you must fully engage and make the greatest efforts to satisfy.
- ✓ High power, less interested people: put enough work in with these people to keep them satisfied, but not so much that they become bored with your message.
- ✓ Low power, interested people: keep these people adequately informed, and talk to them to ensure that no major issues are arising. These people can often be very helpful with the detail of your project.
- ✓ Low power, less interested people: again, monitor these people, but do not bore them with excessive communication.

Step 3 – Understand Your Key Stakeholders

It is important to know your key stakeholders well. You need to know how they feel about and react to your project. You also need to know how best to engage them in your project and how best to communicate with them.

end of document

ANNEX 1

Date of event, city, country
Location

PARTICIPATION FORM

Please complete this form and return it by day month year to ***xxx.xxx@yourcompany name .org***

1. Your contact details	
Name	
Last Name	
Job Title / Function	
Organization	
Phone	
Email	
Address	

2. On site contact number (mobile) *It is important that we are able to contact you on the day of the conference if necessary.*
Mobile :

3. Additional contact details if relevant (e.g. colleague or assistant)	
Name	
Email	
Phone	

4. Participation
Conference location ☐ x day month year (from-till) ☐ x day month year (from-till) **Networking Event** at *location name* ☐ x day month year (from-till) **With this information we will carry out the conference registration for you.**

PHOTO

5. Speaker background information
Picture in .jpeg format Professional resume/biography (max. 10 lines) **Please provide this information in English or other language.**

ANNEX 2

PANEL MEMBER INFORMATION

PHOTO

Name:	
Organisation:	
Position:	
Main area(s) of responsibility:	

How do you feel about the transport mode Inland navigation? From an economic and social point of view?	
What is your opinion on transnational cooperation / projects?	
How does your organisation contribute to developments in the field of IWT?	
Do you think enough efforts are being made and resources are available to achieve sustainable development of IWT? Do you think things could/should be improved? How?	

…	

ANNEX 3

Media Inquiry Checklist

Name of the newspaper, magazine that the journalist is producing this piece for:
Name of the journalist:
Date: Time:
For:
From: *Your name*
Question Answer/to do
1.
Continue with question 2

Continue with question 2

Request more info per email or per fax
2. Type of story
(Background report, statement, interview to be fixed up, quote, etc…)
3. Topic? Ask what the piece is about
4. When will the publication, article go out?
5. How long should the text, interview be? *
6. Who else is being mentioned in the article?*
7. Call-back required or deadline:
8. Phone number:

First Name Last name
Person who filled out the media inquiry checklist

ANNEX 4

E-news

Date: 01.01.2007

Header

Abstract Abstract
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue.

Source and editorial:

ANNEX 5

Venue search sheet

In order to facilitate your search for the ideal location and depending on the type of event you are oranizing, this basic checklist could be a great help for the brainstorming phase about an event.

Where is your event?

- Venue location

Enter city, postcode, district or point of interest

Venue requirements

- Tell something about your event, facilities needed, start and end time

- Do you need accommodation? -- Category --
- What do you need the venue for? -- Sub-Category --

What styles of venue are you thinking of?

0 ☐ Conference Centre Venues
0 ☐ Meeting & Training Venues
0 ☐ Museum or Tourist Attraction
0 ☐ 1-3 Star Hotels
0 ☐ 4-5 Star Hotels
0 ☐ Academic Venues
0 0 ☐ Historic Venues

Venue dates

- How long is your event? Full Day
- Exact Date
- Range From
- Range To
- Any other comments

When do you need proposals by?

- Last date I want proposals by
- Hide my company name? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Budget and people

- My budget basis is Total price
- Approximate Budget (Ex VAT) € or other currency
- Approximate Number of People

ANNEX 1

Date of event, city, country
Location

PARTICIPATION FORM

Please complete this form and return it by day month year to ***xxx.xxx@yourcompany name .org***

1. Your contact details	
Name	
Last Name	
Job Title / Function	
Organization	
Phone	
Email	
Address	

2. On site contact number (mobile) *It is important that we are able to contact you on the day of the conference if necessary.*
Mobile :

3. Additional contact details if relevant (e.g. colleague or assistant)	
Name	
Email	
Phone	

4. Participation
Conference location ☐ x day month year (from-till) ☐ x day month year (from-till) **Networking Event** at *location name* ☐ x day month year (from-till) **With this information we will carry out the conference registration for you.**

PHOTO

5. Speaker background information
Picture in .jpeg format Professional resume/biography (max. 10 lines) **Please provide this information in English or other language.**

ANNEX 2

PANEL MEMBER INFORMATION

PHOTO

Name:	
Organisation:	
Position:	
Main area(s) of responsibility:	

How do you feel about the transport mode Inland navigation? From an economic and social point of view?	
What is your opinion on transnational cooperation / projects?	
How does your organisation contribute to developments in the field of IWT?	
Do you think enough efforts are being made and resources are available to achieve sustainable development of IWT? Do you think things could/should be improved? How?	

…	

ANNEX 3

Media Inquiry Checklist

Name of the newspaper, magazine that the journalist is producing this piece for:
Name of the journalist:
Date: Time:
For:
From: *Your name*
Question Answer/to do
1.
Continue with question 2

Continue with question 2

Request more info per email or per fax
2. Type of story
   (Background report, statement, interview to be fixed up, quote, etc…)
3. Topic? Ask what the piece is about
4. When will the publication, article go out?
5. How long should the text, interview be? *
6. Who else is being mentioned in the article?*
7. Call-back required or deadline:
8. Phone number:

First Name Last name
Person who filled out the media inquiry checklist

ANNEX 4

E-news

Date: 01.01.2007

Header

Abstract Abstract
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue.

Source and editorial:

ANNEX 5

Venue search sheet

In order to facilitate your search for the ideal location and depending on the type of event you are oranizing, this basic checklist could be a great help for the brainstorming phase about an event.

Where is your event?

- Venue location

Enter city, postcode, district or point of interest

Venue requirements

- Tell something about your event, facilities needed, start and end time

- Do you need accommodation? -- Category --
- What do you need the venue for? -- Sub-Category --

What styles of venue are you thinking of?

0 ☐ Conference Centre Venues
0 ☐ Meeting & Training Venues
0 ☐ Museum or Tourist Attraction
0 ☐ 1-3 Star Hotels
0 ☐ 4-5 Star Hotels
0 ☐ Academic Venues
0 0 ☐ Historic Venues

Venue dates

- How long is your event? Full Day
- Exact Date
- Range From
- Range To
- Any other comments

When do you need proposals by?

- Last date I want proposals by
- Hide my company name? Yes No

Budget and people

- My budget basis is Total price
- Approximate Budget (Ex VAT) € or other currency
- Approximate Number of People