

# Brand Symposium 2020

How to create an effective  
communications plan

MISSOURI  
**S&T**



# Introduction

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- > Almost 20 years experience working in public relations, communications and marketing in private industry, government and public institutions
- > Accreditation in public relations through the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 2016
- > Bachelor's of journalism from Univ. of Missouri-Columbia in 2001



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# Introduction

Share an example project or program that you want to market or communicate about to an audience.

- > Do you already have a goal in mind?
- > Do you know who you want to reach and how?

# Planning works

## Success stories

- > Top 10 by 20 campaign
  - 500+ Public Service Announcements on TV
- > Miner Pledge
  - 2,000 pledges from students, faculty, staff and alumni

# Requests for tactics

Chris Brown, Marketing Resources & Results, Inc.

*So often I'll get a request from a company representative for a price on execution of a piece of marketing. A Facebook page. A website. Maybe a PDF brochure or a prospecting email.*

*All of these items are fine on their own. Marketing Tactics. A marketing tool that helps support marketing results.*

*But alone, without being in support of a goal, the tactic simply doesn't work.*

# Planning is a blueprint

1. Set a goal
2. Create a plan
3. Implement the plan
4. Check your work



# Communications Planning

## The Four-Step Process - RPIE

- > Research
  - What do you already know?
  - What data do you have?
- > Planning
  - Create a plan to reach our audiences
- > Implementation
  - Put the plan into motion
- > Evaluation
  - Check your data to see if it's working
  - Adjust plan as needed

# Research

Research is the systematic gathering of information to describe and understand a situation, check assumptions about publics and perceptions, and determine the public relations consequences.

- > Define the problem you're facing
- > Identify target audiences
- > Learn about your audiences
- > Record what you already know
- > Determine how you will collect data
- > Determine how much time you have



# Research

Learn about your audience

- > Find existing research
- > Interviews
- > Focus groups
- > Surveys – online, phone, in-person
- > Public opinion research and polling
- > Talk with partners, colleagues and community contacts

# Planning

## Five elements of a communications plan

- > Goals
- > Audience
- > Objectives
- > Strategies
- > Tactics/Tools

# Vocabulary

## Goals

- > Goals are longer-term, broad, global and future statements of “being.”
- > Goals may include how an organization is uniquely distinguished in the minds of its key audiences.
  - Example: To become the recognized leader in our industry and foster continuing public support.
  - Example: Missouri S&T will be the leading public technological research university for discovery, creativity and innovation.

# Vocabulary

## Audience

- > Audiences are groups of people tied together by some common element.
- > Before starting to plan, you should clearly define groups with which you need to foster mutually beneficial relationships.

# Vocabulary

## Objectives

- > Objectives focus on a shorter term than goals. Objectives are written after research on all audiences is done.
  - Objectives (1) define WHAT opinion, attitude or behavior you want to achieve from specific audiences, (2) specify how much change you want to achieve from each audience, and (3) tell by when you want to achieve that change.
  - Objectives should be SMART: • Specific (both action to be taken and public involved) • Measurable • Achievable • Realistic (or relevant) • Time-specific

# Vocabulary

## Strategies

- > Strategies provide the roadmap to your objectives.
  - Strategies describe HOW to reach your objectives.
  - Strategies include:
    - > “enlist community influentials to ...,”
    - > “establish strategic partnerships with ...”,
    - > “accelerate involvement with ...,”
    - > “position the company as ...”

# Vocabulary

## Tactics/Tools

- > Tactics are specific elements of a strategy or tools for accomplishing a strategy.
  - Examples include meetings, publications, community events, news releases, websites and social networks.

# Planning

## Five elements of a communications plan

- > Goals
- > Audience
- > Objectives
- > Strategies
- > Tactics/Tools



# Communications plan examples

- > Questions on creating a communications plan?

# Tips for success

- > Advocate for the resources you need
- > Bring people into the planning early
  - Ask team members to add to the plan for buy-in
  - Brainstorm for to great ideas
- > Review your data, change what's not working
- > Obtain the best research to produce the best results

# Last questions?

- > What do you need to know?
- > How can I help you?

# Thank you!

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