

Writing Communication & Marketing Plans

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TAKING STOCK OF YOUR ASSETS

PARTS

- Vision | Mission | Values
- City or county goals, promises, ideals
- City or county strategic plan
- SWOT (You may be the only person who does this for the entire organization)
- Arlington, Texas, calls some of these “**horizon issues**” (a.k.a. sticky wickets)

HORIZON ISSUES

LONG-TERM STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

- HOUSING SUPPLY
- REGIONAL MOBILITY
- QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS
- ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY
- NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- ASSET MANAGEMENT
- CITIZEN RELATIONSHIPS
- STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
- LOCAL AUTONOMY
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

5:43 / 6:24



The FY 2014 Budget in Less Than Seven Minutes



City of Arlington, TX · 287 videos

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MORE PARTS

- Existing plans or aging plans
- Crisis communication plan
- Social media policies or guidelines
- Any daily interface with citizens
- City Hall or County Courthouse (place, people, leadership, perception of citizens)
- Oh yeah, *citizens*

MORE PARTS

- All other communicators within programs and departments of your city or county
- Other city, county and regional plans
- Vagaries of elected officials and their personal crusades for their districts
- Any other existing initiatives, listing responsible departments or leaders



Many of the parts may be thought of as

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING + FORMATIVE RESEARCH

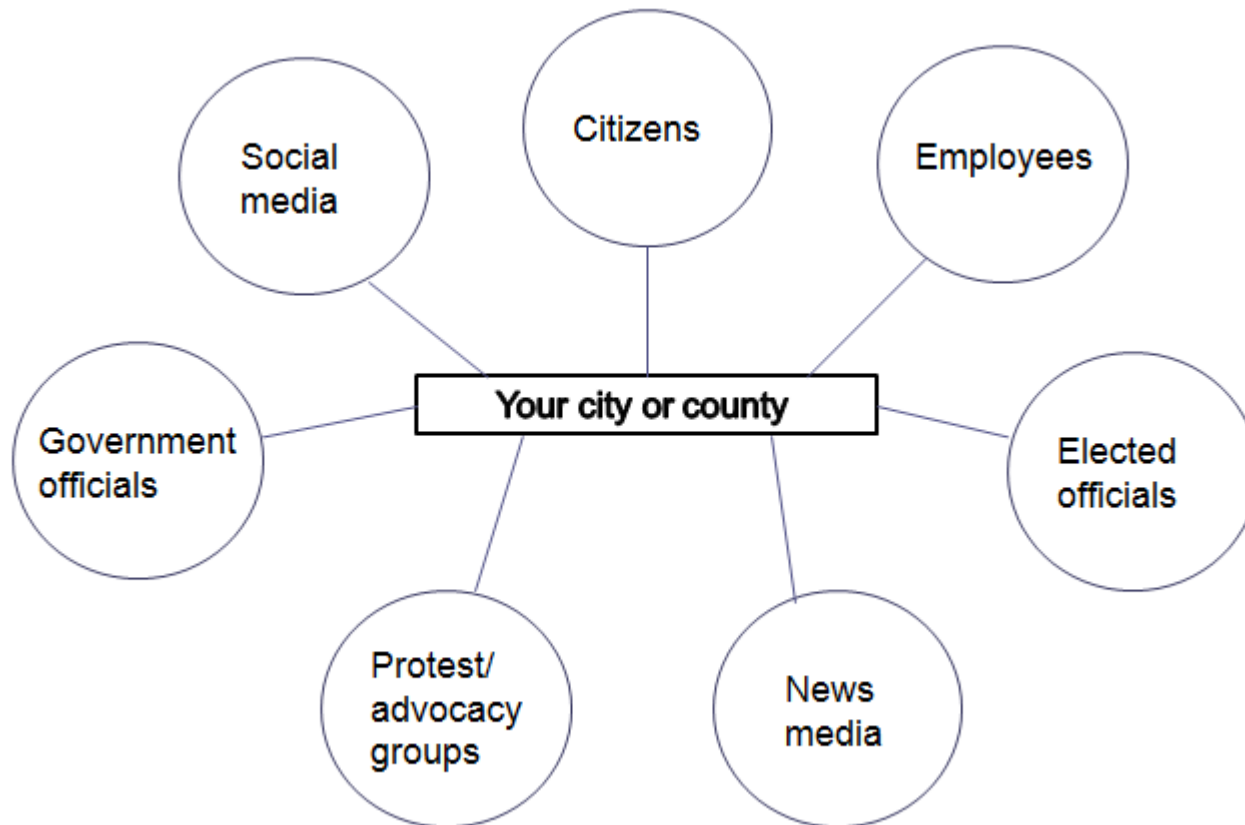
THE PROCESS

- Environmental scanning
 - Formative Research
 - Planning
 - Message design and execution
 - Evaluation
- You may remember this as the four-part process:
- Research
 - Objectives
 - Programming
 - Evaluation

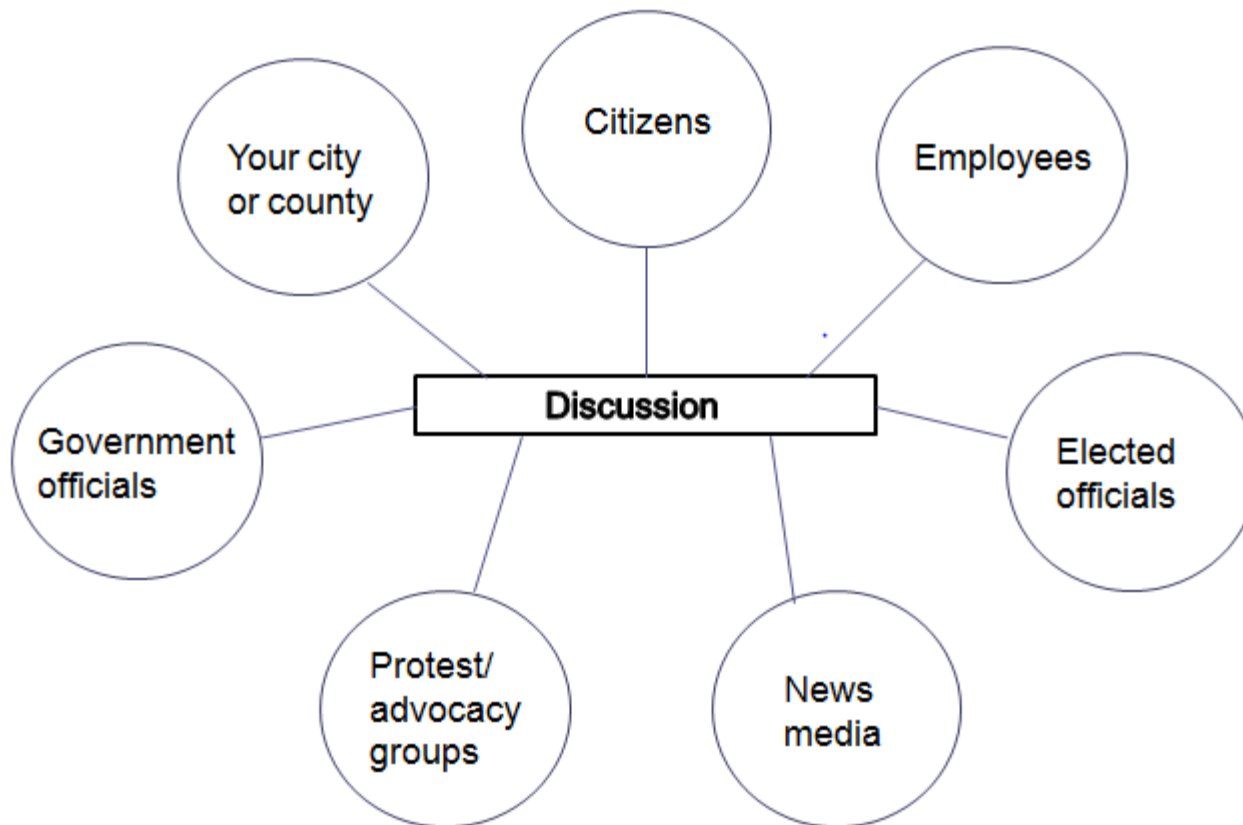
THE TOOLBOX

- Database where you gather these parts
- Ears (listening)
- Focus groups, surveys, “road show”
- GANTT Chart (projects less than 30 days)
- PERT Chart (complex projects)
- Both use tasks, time frames, dependencies
- Budget: people and hard costs

Traditional Communication Model



Lambiase New Media Communication Model



WHY?

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Why planning?

- To keep communication in line with county or city's values, mission and goals
- To proactively manage issues rather than react
- To understand what we know & don't know
- To build consensus
- To manage city resources

MORE REASONS

- To map territory or territories of communication responsibilities across a complex organization
- To show other people within the organization what communication jobs belong to your domain
- To stick to your organization's strategic goals, rather than off working on stray initiatives



<http://www.mosaicworks.com/mosaics/depthfinder.html>

Without strategic planning as a frame,

**COMMUNICATION IS JUST ONE
DAMN TACTIC AFTER ANOTHER**

ROBUST, FULL-BODIED PLANS NEED ...

- **Goals** (lofty and ambiguous, but tied to organization's mission/vision/values)
 - **Objectives** (measureable and specific)
 - **Strategies** (audience, tone, channel)
 - **Tactics** (messages, events, programs)
-
- Otherwise, you just have routines

There are at least

TWO WAYS TO BUILD A PLAN

METHOD 1: THE “EASY” WAY

- Replicate prior plans
- or-
- Build from scratch, analyzing routines and using existing tactics to build backwards toward goals

STEPS:

- Update an existing plan or old plan
- Complete an audit of all public-facing tactics (online newsletter, YouTube videos, website, bill-paying window, Twitter/Facebook/Instagram, Town Hall meetings, and more) and then build your plan from the bottom up

METHOD 2: THE HARDER WAY

- Scrap old plans or old routines to start anew

STEPS

- Learn about the culture and meet it in its best reality or form (modeled by top-forming departments)
- Accept input from all stakeholders
- Build cultural frameworks around existing communication routines that you want to preserve, or create new culture and frameworks for this best-case culture

CASE STUDY: BRAND COLORADO



- Introduced last week, as part of a two-year effort that ends summer 2014.
- Focused on trade, tourism, travel.
- Unified 22 state agencies.
- Nonprofit and public-private partnership effort.
- \$1.5 million in pro-bono work from Colorado-based PR & ad agencies.
- Part of governor's overall economic development effort.
- Youth advisory board, amplified through social media.
- Listening tour across the state, with many stakeholders.
- Research showed that state flag was identified more with Chicago than Colorado, outside the state.
- Brand saves time and money in multiple-agency communication tasks.

OTHER TASKS

- Channel Quest: Build a model of all communication pathways inside your organization and to the outside
- Content Quest: Complete an audit of all public-facing tactics (online newsletter, YouTube videos, website, bill-paying window, Twitter/Facebook/Instagram, Town Hall meetings, customer service, and more)

OTHER KEY QUESTIONS

- What kind of communication organization do you have? Centralized or decentralized?
- How many programs or departments communicate with external stakeholders?
- How well does your internal communication system work? Where are improvements needed?

LET'S WRITE SOME GOALS

- Being available whenever citizens require key interaction with or important information from government.