

## What Makes an Effective Communications Plan: Definitions

 **Goal:** High level statement describing the goal of the communications plan. It should be long-term in nature and describe the desired outcome of the plan, ideally describing how communications can support an organization's mission.

 **Objectives:** Specific activities that support the goal. Objectives should be action oriented specific and achievable statements.

Example: Drive and improve volunteer recruitment and retention

 **Key Activities:** Several individual activities/ tactics related to one objective that are needed to successfully complete an objective. These are the smaller or day-to-day activities that ground the objectives into tangible achievable actions.

Example: Launch a volunteer recruitment program at local universities and colleges.

 **Metrics for Success:** Measurable outcomes resulting from the successful completion of activities. These help us prioritize one activity over another, guide how decisions are made, and define what success looks like. Quantitative metrics are generally easier to track and report. Qualitative metrics can help tell the “human” side of the story.

Example: Increase new volunteer registration by 20% over last year

## SAMPLE COMMUNICATION PLAN

### Goal:

**Communicate mission and programs in clear, on-brand ways to increase engagement across all stakeholders**

### Objectives:

1. Drive volunteer engagement
2. Educate stakeholders on important food (& [food justice](#)) issues
3. Improve brand awareness and loyalty
4. Ensure execution of general MarCom activities
5. Increase the quality and quantity of our donor base and donor activities\*

## **1. Drive volunteer engagement**

### Key Activities:

- Develop volunteer reward system to retain and develop volunteers
- Improve existing volunteer engagement channels
  - Newsletter
  - Signup system
  - Website
  - Social media
- Create and execute a volunteer engagement survey
  - After shift form
  - Focus groups
  - 2x per year
- New volunteer recruitment
  - Misc activities/ connections

### Metrics for success:

- Increase of volunteers in database
- More volunteers take on leadership roles
- Less “last minute” volunteer recruitment
- Volunteers participate in multiple opportunities
- Survey completion with action plan

## **2. Educate stakeholders on important food issues**

### **Key Activities:**

- Develop and share original content
- Share content from others/influencers/partners (ensure a diversity of sources)

- Host a book club
  - Internal
  - External

**Metrics for success:**

- Volunteers support local food systems
- Stakeholders share food justice information with friends/family
- Regularly post/ share relevant content
  - Newsletter
  - Social
  - At volunteer events
- Book Club

### **3. Improve brand awareness and loyalty**

**Key Activities:**

- Develop Style Guide + communication tools
  - Style Guide
  - PPT template
  - Canva
  - Photobank
  - Voice and Message Map
- Launch 3-5 programs/events to encourage community engagement/community exploration/silliness
  - Photo contest
  - “Why I volunteer” video series
  - Etc.

**Metrics for success:**

- Complete style guide and communication tools
- Program participation (metrics per program)

### **4. Ensure execution of general MarCom activities**

**Key activities:**

- Channel management (calendar mgt and execution)
  - Ensure website is up-to-date
    - Keep style
    - Work on user experience
    - Streamline content & write new content
    - Volunteer signup
  - Regularly post on social channels
    - Designate days for certain types of posts

- Create cache of posts/articles/material for certain types of posts
  - Email Marketing
  - Newsletters
    - Conversion
    - User experience
    - Content
- Press management
  - Ongoing and reactive as needed
- Event management
  - TBD
- Content Development
  - Create digital/print materials/flyers
  - Create relevant content

**Metrics for success: TBD**

- Data Tracking Tool
- Website metrics are usually around traffic, duration, clicks, and taking “designed” action. Will want something around converting all signups to website
- Social metrics are usually around exposure, likes, shares. Will want some around count and count by type as well.
- Email and Newsletter metrics are usually around opens, clicks, forwards, and unsubscribes
- Press Management metrics are usually around count and quality of mentions
- Event Management metrics vary... participation and/or other specific goals.
- Content dev metrics will probably be around count.

**5. Increase the quality and quantity of our donor base and donor activities\***

**Key Activities:**

- Nurture existing donor base
  - Donor appreciation activities
  - High-touch outreach
  - Annual report/1 pagers
- Recruit new donors
  - Target Volunteers
  - Friends and Family outreach
  - Partners
- Plan and execute fundraising events
  - End of Year giving
  - Etc

**Metrics for success:**

- Increase number of new donors
- Increase giving from existing donors
- End of year giving exceeds previous year