First Nations Communications Toolkit

Canada

Cette publication est également disponible en français sous le titre:
La Trousse de communication des Premières Nations

PREFACE

*The **First Nations Communications Toolkit** is a unique resource jointly developed by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, BC Region, and Tewanee Consulting Group. The toolkit was originally developed in 2007 and continues to provide a good basic overview of communications planning, activities and tools. While the fundamentals of communication such as engaging your audience and developing clear messages have not changed, some aspects continue to evolve. As a result, this edition of the toolkit has been updated to reflect changes in communications practices, particularly the use of social media tools.*

This toolkit was designed explicitly for First Nations communicators and is based on input from First Nations communicators and administrators working for First Nations organizations. It offers information on many topics, including communications planning, publications, events and media relations, from a First Nations' perspective. The best practices and practical lessons learned that have been included in the toolkit are drawn from Tewanee Joseph's experience working on communications projects with over 30 First Nation communities.

Input into the toolkit came from rural, remote and urban First Nations throughout British Columbia and included a survey as well as research on First Nation communications initiatives.

Additional input on the toolkit was gathered at a First Nations communication conference in March 2007 in Calgary, Alberta, which was attended by individuals from First Nations in British Columbia, Alberta and the Yukon.

> Oral history has been a fundamental part of First Nations culture for many generations — First Nations people have been effective communicators for centuries. The challenge in modern times is to find the appropriate mainstream tools to share our vision in a clear and understandable way with membership, the surrounding community and with the media.
>
> **Tewanee Joseph,**
> **First Nation Communicator and**
> **Principal, Tewanee Consulting Group**

This document represents a true collaborative effort between Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and First Nations communicators and stands as an example of what can be achieved through an effective partnership, a positive approach and clear communications. By raising awareness and facilitating dialogue, effective communications supports strong governance and the development of healthy, sustainable First Nations communities.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is intended as a resource for individuals from a range of backgrounds. It can serve as an introduction for novices or as a refresher for those with more experience. This kit can also benefit anyone from Chief and Councillors to members who want to better understand and learn how communications activities can support the objectives of the community.

Each section of this toolkit provides a broad overview of a specific communications topic. For more detailed explanations or training on specific communications elements, see the resource section for references.

Templates and samples are included at the end of each section. These can be used as is, or modified to meet specific needs. For convenience, these documents are also provided on the disc included in the back inside cover.

TEMPLATE

SAMPLE

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Introduction

Communications is one of the foundations for the success of First Nations organizations. First Nation governments are beginning to take a more proactive approach to communicating with membership and the general public. As many First Nation communities are negotiating treaties, specific claim settlements, economic development projects, and self-government agreements, effective communications is essential.

What is Communications?

Communications is an exchange of information. A dynamic function, communications is about providing information to a particular audience, listening to their feedback, and then responding appropriately. Whether you want to talk about an economic development project, a treaty, financial information, health or education, effective communications can build consensus through raising understanding and generating well informed dialogue among members, partners and other parties.

Why is it Important?

Effective communications has the power to change the way a community functions and how it is viewed by members and non-members. It can also facilitate community development. A well planned, resourced and executed communication strategy can make the difference between an initiative's success and failure. A community can benefit from the successful implementation of a communications plan, and conversely, experience poor results from ill-planned communications, or by not communicating.

Being Strategic
How Communications Can Support Your First Nation

Communication, whether oral, written or visual, is a tool that every person uses on a daily basis. The key is to do it effectively and strategically. An effective communications plan requires vision, commitment and, most importantly, buy-in. It needs to be something that your community understands and believes in. A First Nation's vision comes from its people. They set the mandate, they provide their thoughts, and they need to agree on the objectives and outcomes.

If planning is conducted on a consistent basis, your community will be better informed, your Chief and Council and your administration will be better prepared, and everyone will be able to make more informed decisions. Fully informed staff will be

better equipped to share information, field questions and build cohesiveness in the community.

When developing communications initiatives in your community, you should meet with your Chief and each member of your Council on an individual basis to explain your direction and how the community will benefit.

Well placed communications will raise the profile of your First Nation/organization, generating positive outcomes such as building trust amongst partners, membership and the general public; gaining credibility; and improving relationships internally and externally.

A well constructed communications approach will also provide membership with the information they require to allow for a productive decision-making process. Members who feel informed will also feel confident in voting and supporting initiatives (economic development, social, educational, etc.), and will feel more positive about their community.

Being strategic means having a clear objective and using communication to help you reach that objective.

Support from First Nations Leadership for Communications

Communications can either be a First Nation's biggest asset or its biggest challenge on a day-to-day basis. Done right, it can allow leadership to be prepared for any situation facing the community. Done wrong, it can send leadership into a state of constant crisis management.

Over the past several years, First Nation members' interest in their community's business and their interest in effective communications has increased dramatically. As a result of this positive shift, Chief and Council and administration should consider taking a more proactive and targeted approach toward their communications efforts.

It is essential to design and implement an effective communications plan and dedicate the necessary resources in order to provide members with updated information on the First Nation's current initiatives. Enhancing communications with members, media and the general public will allow the leadership to effectively plan for the future.

TIP ★

Effective communications planning will build trust and awareness with membership while at the same time ensuring transparency and accountability.

The following list outlines steps for getting communications efforts started:

- Develop a communications proposal for Chief and Council's review.

- Ensure leadership provides a mandate for the communications plan and related activities to be undertaken.

- Within the proposal, identify the resources necessary to carry out work.

- When appropriate, focus on a specific initiative (specific claim, economic development, land use plan, etc).

Communications Proposal
January 10, 2000

Background

For several years and in particular the past one and a half years, membership's interest in the Nation's business and their attitude towards communication has increased dramatically. As a result of this positive shift, the Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council and Administration need to take a more proactive approach towards communicating with the membership. Based on this premise, it is essential to design and implement an effective communications plan in order to provide membership with updated information on the Nation's current initiatives. The Squamish Nation will bridge the communication gap with the membership, the media and the general public by adopting a communication plan. We submit this plan for your consideration.

Current Situation

This past Fall, the Squamish Nation has often been in the media spotlight, and not always with positive results. As one of Canada's most urban and most sophisticated First Nations, it is almost certain that in the months and years to come, the activities of the Squamish Nation will increasingly be scrutinized by editors and reporters.

Since November 16, 1999, there has been 20 newspaper articles in the Province, the Vancouver Sun and the North Shore News, and three stories on Global Television. Many of the stories focussed on the Nation's finances and the Settlement Agreement. To date, the communications team, which was mandated by Chiefs and Council, has met with reporters from the Province, the Vancouver Sun, and the North Shore News to provide standard background information. Also, membership has received follow up flyers on the current information addressed in the media. The objective of the communications team on behalf of Chiefs and Council is to provide informational and educational materials to membership and the surrounding communities. The communications team has provided sound, unbiased, professional and technical information to the community at large.

Should the Squamish Nation Consider Creating a Communications Plan?

As a result of this recent media coverage, and based on the Squamish Nation membership's reaction to it, the need for Chiefs and Council and Administration to communicate information on a timely and consistent basis has been acknowledged as a requirement. To ensure the Squamish Nation gets its message out through the media, it is strongly recommended that the Squamish Nation give serious consideration to creating a centralized Communications Service Branch under the direction of Chiefs and Council, that would assist with the flow of information to membership and the surrounding communities. The service branch would assist in writing and media presentation for all departments. All information would be channelled through the service branch.

Communications would be achieved through a combination of printed information and the use of current technology to assist the Communications Service Branch to creatively communicate a message to membership. A few examples include news bulletins, flyers, telemarketing, Web site, e-mail, kiosks, workshops, and meetings. The communications service will provide membership with reports that are easy to read with follow up reports for more complex topics. The focus of the Communications Service Branch would be to target membership needs and requests.

The Goals of the Communications Service Branch

The guiding objectives of most public relations programs are to communicate a message, improve an image, build awareness, persuade a public — generally bolster one's identity among those who it considers important.

The Communications Service Branch will assist departments when necessary in the art of public relations.

One of the goals of the Communications Service Branch would be to promote a free flow of information in the areas identified by Chiefs and Council and to facilitate dialogue and networking within the community. The other would be to tell the truth and tell it well. The final goal is to establish a centralized communications vehicle within the Squamish Nation that every department would tap into.

The Squamish Nation Communications Service Branch

The service branch requires the following:

- Two staff members to oversee operations

- A three month interim operations and expense budget based on a proposed annual budget (please see Appendix 2)

- The mandate to access office support staff on a daily basis

- The mandate to interface with all Squamish Nation departments

- The mandate to develop a 12-month work plan and budget to be considered for the 2000/2001 fiscal year

Capabilities

Over the next two years, the capabilities of a centralized <u>Communications Service Branch</u> would include generating and coordinating publicity by designing and implementing an effective program of Media Relations to perform the following:

◆ Identifying key issues in order to brief Squamish Nation staff on key long term issues as well as breaking news stories

◆ Writing/distributing news releases, feature stories, media advisories

◆ Communicating directly with reporters and editors to ensure the Squamish Nation message makes it into print and electronic media

◆ Developing by-lined articles for media placement

◆ Creating press kits and other media materials

◆ Arranging print and broadcast media interviews and news coverage

◆ Handling media inquiries and crisis communications

◆ Speech writing

◆ Media interview training

◆ Writing and managing design and production of brochures, annual reports, and other printed material

◆ Newsletter writing and production

◆ Writing and producing broadcast and print public service announcements

◆ Assisting in the development of a Web site

◆ Managing programs and special events

◆ Designing and implementing inquiry tracking systems

◆ Developing and executing direct marketing concepts

◆ Direct mail writing and production

◆ Advertising concepts, writing, design, production and placement

◆ Assisting in the development of a telemarketing program

◆ Coordinating and conducting communications workshops and seminars for staff and Chiefs and Council

◆ Organizing public relations training workshops for key speakers

Future Outlook

Over the next five years, the service branch intends to implement a succession plan that would allow Squamish Nation members to become more involved in the communications and marketing fields. The target group would be existing and future post-secondary students who are interested in communications or business.

Conclusion

In an effort to ensure that an open line of communication to membership at general meetings, and community functions, the Communications Service Branch intends to establish a proactive grassroots advocacy program/service, which encourages membership to contact the Department Heads on program or policy issues that are important to them.

The Communications Service Branch will help the Nation engage and apply the technical expertise with cooperation and approval from the appropriate departments to improve communication with the community, municipalities, provincial and federal governments. The Communications Service Branch concept is to strengthen or assist in providing a service to membership and the surrounding communities.

The service branch would be designed to provide ongoing technical skills and reports targeted to the community, municipalities, provincial and federal governments on programs and policies as well as serve to make membership aware of important information initiatives.

Implementation

The implementation of the Squamish Nation Communications Service Branch would require the following steps:

1. Review and acceptance of this proposal.

2. Review and acceptance of the proposed budget in Appendix 2.

3. Receive the mandate to operate from the Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council by passing the following Band Council Resolution: **That the Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council having reviewed the Communications Proposal do hereby approve of the creation and operation of a Squamish Nation Communications Service Branch including the resources reflected in the attached budget. The funding is to come from next year's budget.**

4. The service branch would be located at 320 Seymour Boulevard, North Vancouver, BC, the Squamish Nation Administration office.

The description below is intended to serve as an example of the range of activities a communications coordinator may perform. The coordinator may perform all or some of these duties depending on the community and initiatives they are supporting.

Communications Coordinator
(Insert First Nations)

Summary Statement

Initiate, execute, support the role and activities of the (Insert First Nation) in the areas of internal and external communication, media relations, education and promotional plans, and publication management with outcomes that support the (Insert First Nation) overall goals and maintain a positive public image of the (Insert First Nation).

Relationships

Reports to: (INSERT NAME)

Subordinate staff: (INSERT NAME)

Other internal contacts: (INSERT NAMES)

External contacts: Media reporters and representatives, printers and graphic artists, consultants, community members, businesses, government communications officers.

Major Responsibilities/Duties

1. Develop, implement and evaluate communication strategies for programs designed to inform community members, various levels of governments and the general public about (Insert First Nation).

2. Facilitate focus groups, committee meetings and information meetings when required.

3. Advise (Insert First Nation) Chief and Council members on communications matters when required.

4. Write and edit various communications documents for (Insert First Nation).

5. Build relations with various levels of government communication officers and the business community.

6. Plan, organize, and implement various communications initiatives on behalf of (Insert First Nation) member communities (when required).

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7. Gather, research and edit communications material for internal and external audiences.

8. Prepare (when required) or oversee preparation of reports, briefs, biographies, speeches, presentations and press releases.

9. Develop and organize workshops, meetings, ceremonies and other events for publicity and information purposes.

10. Prepare and deliver educational and publicity programs to increase awareness about (Insert First Nation).

11. Develop, forecast and manage various communications budgets for (Insert First Nation).

12. Initiate and maintain contact with local, regional and national media.

13. Arrange interviews and news conferences when required.

14. Assist in the preparation of brochures, reports, newsletters and other communications materials.

15. Organize venues, catering, invitation mail-outs and attendance for communications meetings, events and open houses.

16. Coordinate and follow up with photographers, designers and printers.

17. Document production and distribution of fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, handouts, etc.

18. Prepare and assist in the preparation of audiovisual material for (Insert First Nation) (e.g. PowerPoint, slideshows or video).

19. Assist with production and coordination of display material.

20. Coordinate travel arrangements related to communications activities.

21. Respond to correspondence related to communications activities when required.

22. Respond to issues and concerns from the community members related to communications activities.

23. Research, compile and make recommendations on events that (Insert First Nation) should participate in.

24. Coordinate and organize (Insert First Nation) participation in speaking engagements, events, and obtain feedback from various groups.

25. Coordinate (Insert First Nation) spokespersons. This includes liaising with organizations, groups and communications officers from various levels of governments; booking speakers; getting written confirmation and arranging for necessary equipment.

Although a standard 40-hour work week is typical, some communications activities such as conferences, speeches, meetings and community activities may require individuals to have a willingness and ability to work variable hours, including weekends and evenings.

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Requirements/qualifications

- Post-Secondary education in the areas of Public Relations, Media Relations, Marketing or Communications or relevant work experience.

- Must be able to work as a team member.

- Must be a self-starter and self-motivator with excellent communications skills, both written and spoken.

- Understanding and knowledge of stakeholder and community concerns.

- Able to work independently and represent the (Insert First Nation).

- Excellent interpersonal and organizational skills.

- Community knowledge an asset.

- Computer skills in Microsoft Office Suite, Quark Express, InDesign, and Photoshop are an asset.

## Performance Competencies And Criteria

- Consistently successful event and project management.

- Quality interactions with internal and external contacts to achieve defined goals.

- Ability to proactively identify and serve the communication needs of the (Insert First Nation) and the Communities.

- Quality of work.

Supervisor:_____   Date: _____

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Branding

2
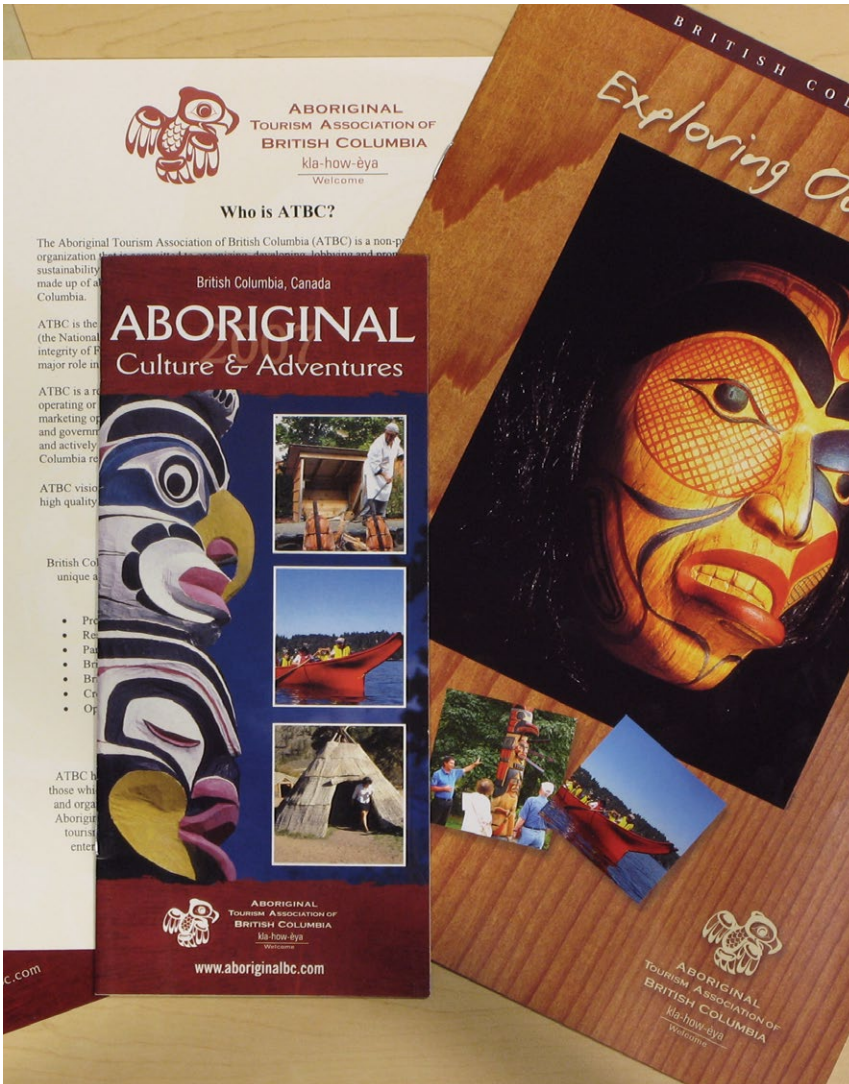
Before beginning to develop a communications strategy or initiating communication activities, it is important to have a clear understanding of who you are as a First Nation and what you are all about. This section will look at the importance of establishing and managing your brand and how it can support your communications.

Who you are — Your Brand

Your First Nation brand should be a representation of who you are, where you come from and how you want to be perceived. By definition "brand" is whatever a person thinks of when he or she hears your organization's name. Is your community sophisticated? Is it forward thinking? Does it have vision? Is it professional? How does it treat its members?

Your brand will distinguish your communications products and messaging, but it will also help people who work for your community represent a clear and consistent identity.

In First Nation communities your brand extends from the front reception to the economic development officer, to the Chief and Council, and even to the janitor. Every individual in your organization is an extension of your brand.

Establishing Your Unique Brand

All First Nations are unique in their own way and a well developed brand strategy can communicate these unique characteristics in a positive manner. The brand should be a reflection of the First Nation's personality, values and objectives. Branding will create an identity for your First Nation and must be in line with your wider communication objectives.

If your brand is effectively implemented it will create a unique and positive perception of the organization. A well developed brand is identifiable and recognizable.

Once you have a brand, you will be able to develop communication products that have the same look and feel that consistently identify your organization. This includes everything from your Web site to letterhead.

Elements of a Brand

There are several key elements that will support and reinforce your brand. These may include some of the components below:

- Logo/logotype
  (includes graphic elements and/or text element)
- Wordmark (text only graphic element)
- Slogan (e.g., Beautiful British Columbia)
- Design (i.e., colours, look and images)

Example of a Wordmark
(Google)

Example of a logo/logotype
(Assembly of First Nations)

Communications Planning
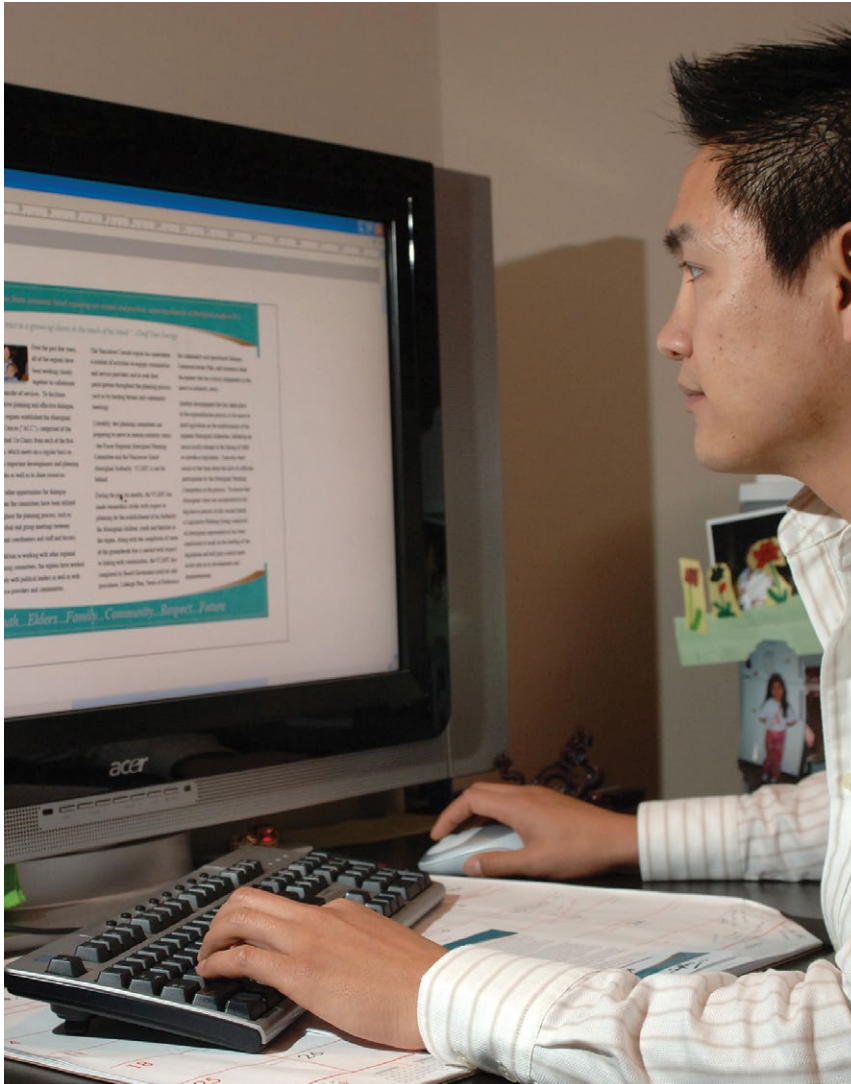
This section will outline various aspects of a Communications Strategy including how to develop a communications plan and then how to implement and evaluate it. Every First Nation is unique and it is up to your communications team to undertake a communications strategy that makes sense to your First Nation and relates to your brand.

TIP ⭐

When developing a plan remember to:

• Keep it simple so that everyone involved knows the goals and their role.

• Keep it focused and targeted — do the right thing, not everything.

Developing the Plan

A communications plan is like a road map that will help you to get from where you are now to where you want to be. It doesn't have to be lengthy or complicated, but it does have to be a living document that will evolve over time.

A communications plan should make use of a multi-disciplined approach to address media relations, internal and external communications as well as interactive communications. Different approaches, tactics and activities can be used to convey your messages to different audiences.

While the plan is generally written by one individual, it is very important to ensure that a team is involved in developing the overall communications strategy. It should be something that Chief and Council, the administration and membership have a part in developing and providing input into. Allowing all team members to contribute ideas builds ownership and emphasizes that everyone on the project is a communicator, whether they answer the phone or speak directly to the community members.

Elements of a Plan

While there is not one standard model, a communications plan should identify:

- Overall strategy
- Goals and objectives
- Target audiences
- Key messages
- Tactics (approaches, tools and activities)
- Budget
- Evaluation

Communications Goals and Objectives

Every communications plan should begin with a clear statement of goals and objectives. These should be simple and measurable. When developing your objectives attempt to answer the following questions:

- Why are you communicating?
- What are you hoping to achieve?
- What do you want people to do as a result of receiving your communications?
- How will you know if your communications has made a difference?

Audience Identification

It is vital to know who you are communicating with. You should already have a clear idea of your key audiences and user groups. You also need to clearly identify what you want them to ideally do. It's easy to end up with a long list; however, it is important to identify audiences according to importance and influence based on your communications objectives.

Target audiences may include:

- Membership
- Chief and Council
- Administration
- Youth
- Elders
- Media
- Federal and provincial governments
- Local neighbouring municipalities
- Private sector
- General public

It is important to understand your different audiences and what motivates them. When targeting various audiences, you need to determine for each:

- The purpose for contacting them.
- What information and messages they need.
- The best approach for delivering your message.
- What you expect to happen when they receive the messages.

Remember that some audiences such as media are both an avenue to other audiences and an audience in their own right.

Message Development

Key messages open the door to direct communication with your audience because they bridge what your audience already knows with what you are trying to tell them.

Think about the four or five key points (umbrella messages) that you want your audience to know about your organization or initiative. These are your key messages. They enable you to summarize your initiative in short, concise points so they can be consistently repeated. Key messages will also allow members of the organization to be able to say the same things in the same way.

You should also avoid having too many messages. It's better to have three to five powerful messages than too many. It's useful to experiment with what your message would look like in different formats — a news release, a report, a newspaper article, Web site page and social media posts. It's beneficial to think in advance about stories, case studies and packages of information that will bring your project to life for key audiences.

Although the overall key messages provide a general understanding of the initiative, messages can also be tailored to target various groups: First Nation Chief and Councils, First Nation members, Aboriginal organizations, general public, media, and various levels of governments.

Key Messages are:

- Linked to your objectives.
- Simple, clear and compelling.
- Brief and to the point.
- Written in an active voice.
- Accurate and factual, but with an overall positive tone.
- Focussed on a particular challenge and audience.
- Relevant (clear about why it matters).
- Not overly complex or technical.

TIP ★

Key messages:

- Identify up to five key statements that clearly and concisely convey your most important points.

- Repeatedly asking yourself questions until you come to the core, the very reason for something happening. This is the information that your audiences needs to know and understand.

TIP ★

Using the Five W's of journalism will help you arrive at your core messages.

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Why

It is important to periodically assess what messages may be emerging from the initiative and how these can be incorporated into your communications efforts. You may also want to refine messages based on your experience of their effectiveness.

Strategies and Tactics

Once you've created a prioritized list of audiences and developed your messages, it's then important to think about the most appropriate vehicle to use to reach them. How are you going to communicate your message and persuade the public about your initiative? How are you going to build awareness and share important information?

There are many different communications vehicles available today that you can use to get your message out to your target audience.

You should determine the most effective strategy or approach to getting your message out by considering how your audience can best access and take in your message. Choosing the right format will increase your chances of reaching and influencing your target audience. That might be through a publication such as a brochure or a newsletter. Your approach might include media relations. Or it may be through promotional material such as a poster, banner or magnet.

Whatever communications strategies and tactics (also referred to as approaches and tools) you decide on, your objective should be to tell your story and tell it well. Your goal should always be to promote a free flow of information in areas that are important to your First Nation, and that facilitate dialogue and networking within the community and with your external audiences.

Before you produce any specific material, it is important to define its purpose. Producing materials is expensive and time-consuming. As with other parts of your communication strategy, the question should be: *why are we doing this?*

TIP ★

If you produce a regular newsletter, the most important step is the research and information gathering. You never want to fill your newsletter with less than relevant material or "filler." Consider producing a quarterly publication that individuals look forward to receiving. Another alternative is a bulletin. Bulletins can be focused on a specific timely subject, sent out at any time (two to three in a week if necessary), and easily tracked.

TIP ★

You may not need to reach every audience directly. Consider a secondary avenue. Placing an article in the in-house publication of a well-respected organization, may be as effective as directly mailing a report to your members. This can be particularly useful if time and money are limited.

Other key questions to ask are:

- Will producing this material further our objectives?
- Is it the best type of material for our target audience?
- Is there another way we can do this?

While not an exhaustive list, here are some tools used in different communications approaches that you might want to consider when developing your communications plan:

For Media Relations	For Information and Promotion	For Community Engagement
Media event	Advertising (radio, TV, print)	Presentation material
Media advisory	Brochure	Meeting
Media kit	Video/DVD/CD	Summaries and briefings
Fact sheet	Poster	Fact sheet
News release	Bulletins/newsletter	Web site
Backgrounder	Web site	Social media
Web site	Social media	
Social media		

Careful consideration must be made when deciding which of the communications tools will be utilized. Ask yourself these types of questions:

- Why a regular newsletter rather than a more occasional briefing?
- Why a Web site rather than just e-mails?
- Why an e-mail bulletin rather than more face-to-face contact?
- Why a news conference rather than just issuing a news release?

Every community has its own unique circumstances. The approaches that you use to communicate with your audience, and the tools you use to disseminate your messages, should be determined based on what works best for your community.

TIP ★

All publicity materials should be clearly branded and provide contact details (including the Web site URL) for your project. Think in advance about how all your materials will fit together as a visually coherent 'family' of publicity for your project.

Budget

Developing a communications budget can be a challenge. Many of the financial resources in your community may already be allocated to various programs and services. Convincing departments within your organization that a communications budget is important may take some work.

To assist you in your budget planning:

- Start with a specific project or initiative.

- Develop your plan with the guidance of your key people (Chief and Council and department heads).

- Don't try to do too much. Narrow down your planning options so that you focus on what you can do well in the amount of time that you have.

- Make sure your budget is realistic. Don't underestimate the cost of items such as printing (colour versus black and white), postage, envelopes and delivery, catering, etc.

Evaluation

When you are thinking about your initial communications objectives and activities, it is worth building in some simple performance indicators and evaluation measures from the start. This will help your organization know if its communications initiatives have succeeded. You can measure your success by:

Evaluating participation and feedback from meetings or events

- Develop feedback sheets where individuals can make comments or ask questions about the organization.

Maintaining a record of all feedback received from target audiences

- Track telephone calls and maintain a list of questions and comments from individuals. (This can be done through a toll-free voicemail system.)

Tracking awareness of your initiative among your audiences

- Analyze responses before and after implementing your tactics.

Tracking media coverage including volume and nature of coverage

- Determine which media and blogs are relevant to you and monitor on a regular basis.

- Utilize a media monitoring service that can track references to your organization in the media.

- Analyze changes in how the story evolves through ongoing coverage.

Monitoring Web site usage

- Assess how many people are visiting your Web site.

- Track all e-mails and comments for review on a regular basis.

Social Media

- Monitor comments from your social media channels.

- Review statistics to see if you are reaching your target audiences.

Research

Before you know where you are going it is important to know where you are coming from. Effective communications planning should be based on sound information researched and gathered by you and your team. This should include assessing perceptions of your First Nation members among potential target audiences.

Gaining an accurate view of your current place in the world can help you develop a communications strategy that will give your initiative a distinct identity. More importantly, it will help you build the foundation for your overall brand.

The more research you conduct, the better positioned you will be to prepare the necessary plans to effectively engage your audience.

Ways to find the information you need include:

- Having a brainstorm discussion within your team for perspectives on how you are viewed by your potential target audiences.

- Checking past membership meetings or council minutes to identify important key points.

- Talking to people within your organization as well as membership (youth, Elders, entrepreneurs, artisans and key non-elected leaders).

- Conducting small focus groups (five to 10 people) with a prepared questionnaire.

- Looking back at media coverage your community has received.

- Conducting a short survey (in-person or over the telephone) asking people: "What would be the best way to receive information from your First Nation?".

- Check social media to find out what people are saying about your organization

No matter which method of engagement you choose, in addition to gaining valuable information to use in your communication initiative, you will begin the process of building awareness and trust within your community.

Information gathering (surveys)

Surveys conducted within your community or with your target audience can be a valuable tool for your organization while providing an opportunity for community members or others to provide their input.

Having the pulse of the community and understanding what they are thinking and feeling at a particular moment in time can help lead your initiative in the right direction. Also having representatives canvass the community provides an opportunity for face-to-face interactions, which is a good way to build relationships.

By simply undertaking a survey, you are communicating to community members that you care what they think. However, it is essential that the questions are clearly understandable and are seen as relevant.

TIP ⭐

Surveys:

- Determine if a survey is necessary.

- If yes, be specific about what information you are seeking.

- Make it clear and easy to understand.

- Do a test sample on 10-20 members in the community.

- Identify canvassers who can explain the survey to members, remind them that their input is important and pick it up when completed.

- Identify how the results will be analysed and used.
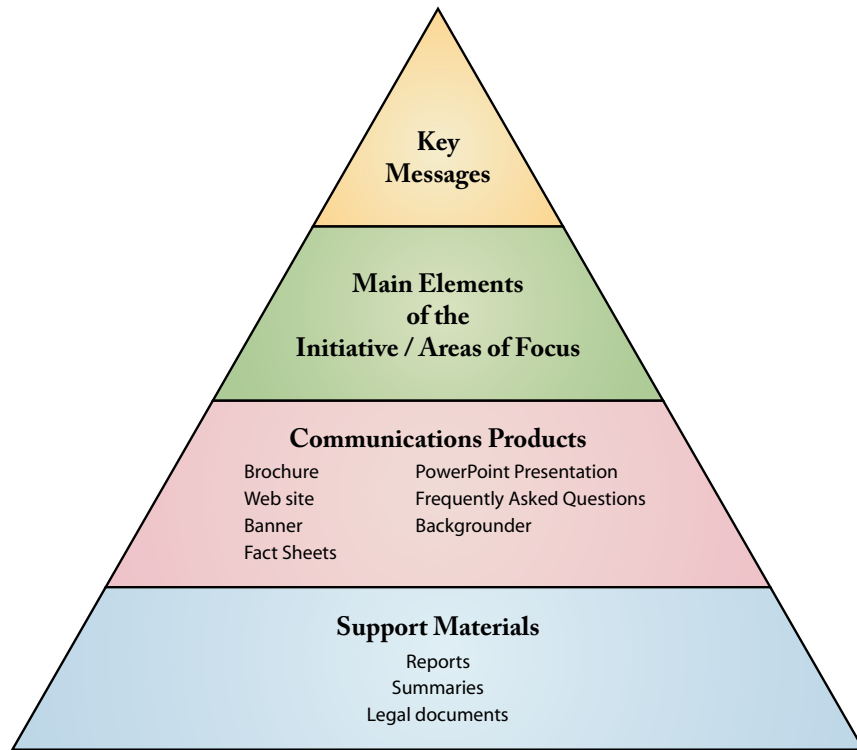
Key
Messages

Main Elements
of the
Initiative / Areas of Focus

Communications Products

Brochure   PowerPoint Presentation
Web site   Frequently Asked Questions
Banner   Backgrounder
Fact Sheets

Support Materials
Reports
Summaries
Legal documents

Product Pyramid

Develop your key messages before you begin creating communications products. Key messages are the main points that you want to communicate about your organization or initiative. The messages will serve as a focal point and ensure your communications products are consistent and have impact.

Before developing products, you may also want to consider if there are main elements of your initiative or broad topic areas you will need to address (such as economic benefits, governance, culture, etc.). Incorporate these into your products as well.

There are many types of communications products – determine which to use based on what will work best for your audiences.

Finally, support materials may be used as background to develop communications products. Conversely, support materials may incorporate some of the information from your communications products.

[insert subject of plan here]
Communications Plan

Background

Provide a few sentences or paragraphs on the nature of the project or initiative (history and role). What is the current situation and what needs to happen? If your goal is to create awareness of a project or program, detail any communication activities that have been undertaken in the past.

Include any public environment information (public opinion, media coverage, research etc.). Are there any contentious issues?

Communications Objectives

What are you trying to achieve? What do you want your audience to do? How will you measure success? Objectives should be specific, concrete and measurable.

Key Audiences

Who are we communicating with? Who do you want your communications messages to reach? List audiences with a brief rationale for each. Consider all potential audiences.

Key Messages

What do you want/need your audiences to know?

List at least three key messages you might use. These may be further broken down into specific messages for specific target audiences. It's important to know what words will resonate with your audiences. What ideas will they embrace?

Messages should be short and to the point. One sentence if possible.

Strategic Considerations

Outline any challenges, opportunities and environmental factors that need to be taken into consideration. Include information that would be relevant in determining the communications approach and messaging. Identify pros and cons of the strategy.

Electronic version available on CD

Communications Approach

Describe the recommended communications approach. Will it be proactive or reactive? Will it be a low-key or high-profile approach? Local or province-wide?

Communications Activities and Tools

Outline what you plan to do and how you plan to do it, and provide a list of deliverables. What tools are you going to use (i.e. news release, poster, advertising, etc.)? If significant and directly related to the deliverables, timing and implementation considerations can be included here.

Timeline

What is the project schedule? Establish timeline with specific milestones and deadlines for completion of activities.

Budget

Estimate resources (financial and human) required to complete each component of the plan. Please indicate if there will be no additional costs to the communications budget.

Evaluation

List what tools you will use to evaluate success. For example:

- Stakeholder/partner feedback
- Media monitoring
- Public opinion research
- Web site hits

Electronic version available on CD

Media Relations

4

Media relations is about working with and building relationships with print, broadcast and electronic media. The following section highlights key points on how you can work more effectively with the media to deliver your key messages to your target audiences.

TIP ★

You should focus on building an effective relationship with the media. Your goal should be to receive balanced coverage on stories about your community. Through proactive media relations, you may also be able to influence policies and raise your profile.

Why Media Relations is Important

The media is one of the most important and highly visible communication channels. How you appear in the media significantly influences your brand. Media relations, therefore, should be an essential element in your communication strategy. You can use the media for publicity, to get your story out or raise the profile of your group or activity.

In many First Nation communities, dealing with the media has been a very challenging and sometimes overwhelming experience. Most of this can be attributed to the fact that First Nation governments are extremely busy on a day-to-day basis and lack the resources and tools to work effectively with the media.

Reactive Versus Proactive Media Relations

Has your community ever had a reporter call your office looking for someone to speak to about a breaking story? Has your community ever had a television crew show up at your administration office asking you if you would like to comment on a high profile event that has occurred? More often than not this ends with a media report that includes a small one liner that says "unavailable for comment" or a quote from someone from your community, who knows very little on a very important issue. This is a classic example of unplanned, reactive media relations.

Meeting with reporters and returning their calls is an important first step in initiating a proactive media relations approach. If you start with these basics you will be better prepared to brief your spokespersons on any issue and respond in a more coordinated and effective manner.

Journalists are just ordinary people who have a job to do. When you think about building relations with a media outlet start with meeting for a cup of coffee. Ask a reporter to meet you at a designated location to discuss your community. Help the reporter understand more about your community.

Who are the Media?

The media is an all-encompassing term for print and broadcasting organizations who disseminate information to the public. Geographically, media can be local, regional, national or international.

It is important to understand the media so that you can maximize the success of your communications goals. The following highlights the advantages and disadvantages of using various types of media:

> ***Print*** tends to be the least immediate, but most permanent medium. Once a publication is printed, it becomes a permanent record. Types of publication include newspapers (local, regional, national and international), journals, magazines and newsletters.

> ***Radio*** is an immediate medium. News can be aired the moment it breaks and you can be instantly live on air.

> ***Television*** is also immediate. It is the most influential of all media because you are both seen and heard, creating the strongest and most enduring impressions.

> ***Web*** is also immediate. Web news and blogs are increasingly becoming a more accepted and used form of media.

> ***News agencies or news wire services*** disseminate news stories to other media. If you are seeking wide distribution of a news release, a wire service should be considered.

TIP ★

If a radio station requests an interview, ask if your comments will be aired live or taped. Ask who else is being interviewed for the story.

The Media Enquiry

As much as you attempt to prepare for media enquiries, from time-to-time you will receive calls that are unexpected. When responding:

- Act quickly — a speedy response and a clear statement will help limit the damage and sometimes kill off an inaccurate story altogether. However, ensure your messages are well thought out.

- Never say "no comment."

- Ask the reporter what their deadline is and if there is any factual information you can follow-up with.

- Let the reporter know that you will find the appropriate spokesperson and you will return their call within a specified time frame, and ensure that you do.

- Ask for questions in advance of the interview.

- Be honest and open. Do not try to deceive the media.

- Make sure the appropriate spokespeople are available for interview and are fully briefed.

As part of media outreach, First Nations need to identify a primary spokesperson and provide media training for key individuals including Chief and Council. The communications contact within your organization should be the individual to "background" the journalist and provide relevant fact-based information. Tell the reporter that this information is "not for attribution" which means they can use it for background but not quote you directly. The communications contact should also prepare the key messages for the spokesperson along with a list of possible questions.

Once the spokesperson has been prepared, only then should you call the journalist to conduct an interview. If you are prepared as well as the journalist, it will make for a more balanced story and a better interview process.

You may consider creating a log of media calls. This will help you form a database of media contacts and track how often specific reporters call and if they are consistently calling about certain issues.

Letters to Editor

If a story that appears contains errors or misrepresents facts, you may want to consider submitting a letter to the editor. A letter to the editor may be used to respond to inaccuracies, an editorial stance or another writer's letter to the editor. Letters to the editor are usually short and address a specific issue.

Being Proactive

Cultivating and maintaining relationships with local reporters and editors is critical and should be considered your number one media relations priority.

Being proactive with the media is not just about issuing a news release or holding a news conference. It's about actively pitching stories. In fact, in some cases, you may find the most effective way to pitch your story is to simply pick up the phone and talk with a reporter about it.

Whether you decide to utilize a more recognizable tool like a news release or go a less formal route, it is important that you build a positive relationship with the media. If you know the media and they know you, you will be much more effective when it comes to pitching your story.

Getting to know your local media and finding out what they are interested in, their deadlines, requirements and how they operate will allow you to more effectively get your message out. You'll get a better sense of the news angles and hooks that should be in your news release or pitch. This will increase the odds of your story being picked up.

The News Release

While being proactive with the media isn't just about issuing a news release, the news release is a central and commonly used tool in planned media interactions.

The purpose of a news release is to:

- Announce something newsworthy
- Respond to a negative or erroneous story circulating in the media when it is absolutely necessary

When writing a news release, try to think and write as a journalist would. Highlight the news. Be clear about the key messages you are trying to communicate. The more professional your release, the

TIP ★

A letter to the editor can be a proactive initiative when it is used to establish a position or address an issue that has not already been treated by the media.

TIP ★

Try to keep your news release to one page and ensure that your information is newsworthy:

- relevant to the audience
- timely
- unique

better chance of having it published in its existing format. It is also important to remember that neither the reporter nor your intended audience are experts in the subject you are communicating about, so it is important to be very clear and concise in your messaging.

Media outlets typically receive dozens, if not hundreds of news releases per day. It is very important for you to highlight news that is current, unique and relevant to many people. A news release should ideally be one page, and never more than two.

No matter what the content or the style, each news release will have the same basic format, consisting of the lead, the inverted pyramid and quotes.

The headline

The title or caption of your news release, usually set in large, bold type, should be something that will catch the attention of the news room.

The lead

The lead is the introductory paragraph in which the main points are summarised clearly. In theory, it should be able to stand on its own as the news story, and should generally cover the six key questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? It should be crafted in a way that catches attention.

The inverted pyramid

The inverted pyramid is the basic format for news stories — it presents information in order of importance. Start with the most important message in the top paragraph and work to the least important at the end of the release.

Quotes

Quotes are the backbone of all releases. All points made in a release have to be attributed to a reliable and credible source.

Journalists receive a large number of news releases, and many inevitably end up in the bin. To help ensure yours is not among them, here are some simple guidelines for writing good news releases:

- Think about your style — writing for the media is different than writing academic reports.

- Separate the main news from technical information (which can be attached separately as backgrounders).

- Stick to three or four points backed up with a few strong facts and figures.

The Media Kit

A media kit is basically a folder containing documents you want to provide to the media. For significant announcements it is a good idea to have a standard media kit which can be provided to media at the event as well as posted to your Web site. In addition to including the news release, a standard media kit will include a fact sheet, a backgrounder and a question and answer document.

Fact sheet
- No more than one page.

- Provide relevant technical information, or a summary of key points.

- Cover the six key questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Backgrounder
- No more than three pages.

- Provide the basic information that a journalist will need to know to understand your initiative and issues.

- Provide additional or more detailed information in order for the journalist to have a more thorough understanding.

TIP ★

You may want to consider developing a generic media kit about your First Nation. This can be posted on your Web site and accessed by reporters looking for general information. It will also be there, ready for your next media event — just add your new release and you will have a full information package.

Question and Answer document

- Can be one to five pages in length.
- Questions are posed and then answered.
- Anticipate and answer the basic questions about your initiative.
- Responses should be relatively concise but fully address the question.

Bios

Your media kit can include biographies of the people who have been identified as spokespersons for your organization and/or initiative. Bios should:

- Highlight the individual's accomplishments
- Explain their role within the community
- Include a photograph
- Be no longer than one page

Pictures

If you feel pictures can enhance your story, provide them electronically on CD in your kit. Pictures of your initiative (building, logos, renderings, spokespersons) should be at high resolution; at least 350 dots per inch or more. They should represent you and your initiative in the best possible way.

The News Conference

Some of your initiatives may be so newsworthy that it is worth holding an event to bring together key reporters.

These events should only be organized if they will add value. You never want to hold a news event and have no media show up. For example, if you are gathering reporters for a news conference, ask yourself what they will get from turning up that they wouldn't get from reading a news release or talking to you on the phone. Think about what's in it for the reporter — could they get an in-person interview to capture a different angle, get some good visuals, view

TIP ⭐

Using Photos:

Images/pictures of people, the community and events are a powerful way of communicating and can really enhance your written communications.

When you take photos of people you should get them to sign a photo release form. A release will give you approval to use the photos in your communications materials.

the unveiling of a model or a logo, or does your event bring together key individuals (Chiefs, local, regional or national politicians)?

A media briefing kit containing a press release, fact sheets and/or backgrounders should be prepared in support of any news conference.

To attract media to your event, a media advisory is generally sent directly to the news room of the media you are inviting. Your advisory is your formal invitation to the media and includes your logo, who will be speaking, date, time, place of the event and contacts. This should ideally be sent to the media one to two days in advance of the event. If you have time, you can contact the media to ensure they received your advisory.

Since timing is critical, take into account reporters' deadlines and try to schedule your news conference in the morning. Ensure that your event is well organized and no longer than 60 minutes. Your news conference can be a stand-alone event or could be part of a longer conference, community event or a regional Chiefs meeting. Choose your speakers carefully. Stick to the allocated time. Done well, an effective news conference with the media will raise the profile of your initiative.

Media Monitoring

It is important to track what is being said about your First Nation in the news. Whether you have initiated a media campaign or not, it is important to stay on top of what is being said so you can react appropriately and adjust your communications if necessary. You may want to consider utilizing a media monitoring service that tracks references to your First Nation in the media.

Without evaluation and monitoring, it is impossible to assess the effectiveness of your media relations campaign. Monitoring and evaluation not only help focus activities and resources, but help show tangible results.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will often include:

- Counting and analyzing the number of news releases issued and the number of outlets that responded (these can be broken down by type of media: local, regional, national and broadcast media, etc.).

- Reviewing news clippings. It is often worth subscribing to a news clippings service to ensure that all coverage of your First Nation can be monitored.

- Viewing coverage on media Web sites.

- Monitoring social media. See who is talking about your First Nation and what is being said.

- Getting people you know to alert you know if they see or hear about your organization in the paper, online, or on the radio or television.

- Using the "Google News Alert" option on the Internet.

Clippings should be analyzed to determine how effective you have been in getting your key messages across. By analyzing media coverage, you will understand how your First Nation or organization is being portrayed to the public. This is essential to determine how you strategically communicate your message to meet your objectives. You may find that media coverage has been positive and effective, or you may determine that your approach needs a major overhaul. In either case, it is critical to continually manage your media presence.

(Logo) First Nations Name

MEDIA ADVISORY

Date (Day, Month, Year)

ATTENTION: ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

Main Headline Focusing on Main Newsworthy Item
Subhead with a More Specific Angle of the Story – Local Interest, etc. (optional)

(LOCATION OF ISSUING ORGANIZATION) – Media advisories should be clear and concise, with enough detail to entice the media, but not so much that they can write the story without bothering to attend the event. Mention any persons of local interest, dignitaries, elected officials or others who are key to the event.

> **Date:**
>
> **Time:**
>
> **Location:**   (of event)

-30-

Contact: Name
Title
Organization
Phone
E-mail address

SAMPLE 📰 MEDIA ADVISORY

**BC ASSEMBLY
OF FIRST NATIONS**

MEDIA ADVISORY

November 22, 2006

ATTENTION: ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver) – The BC Assembly of First Nations is hosting the 3rd Regional Chief's Special Assembly. Invited delegates include Chiefs and leaders from the 203 First Nations of BC, national First Nations leaders, provincial and federal government officials, representatives from First Nations organizations, key stakeholders, and community members.

The assembly will provide an opportunity for the First Nations' leadership of BC to elect the next BC Regional Chief for three-year term and to provide the newly elected Regional Chief with a mandate for the next term. The Assembly will involve the review, discussion, and ratification of the draft BC Title and Rights Strategy Framework to reflect the *New Relationship* and the tripartite *Transformative Change Accord*.

The Premier will be providing remarks to the Chiefs- in-Assembly. National Chief Phil Fontaine will also be participating in this important event.

Date: **Monday, November 27, 2006 & Tuesday, November 28, 2006**
Time: **9:00 am – 5:00 pm each day**
Location: **Marriott Pinnacle Downtown, 1128 West Hastings, Vancouver**

- 30 -

Contact: Heather Gillies
Communications Director
604-837-6908

TEMPLATE NEWS RELEASE

Logo   First Nations Name

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date

HEADLINE USUALLY FITS ON ONE LINE

(Location) – News releases should always explain the problem, solutions and benefits and be written in the inverted pyramid style: the more important the information, the higher up in the release it goes. The release should answer "Who? What? Where? Why? How?" Who is involved, when will it happen and where, how or why is it happening.

The headline should include an active verb and give an idea of what action the organization is taking, as well as identifying the benefit.

The lead paragraph should clearly convey the position of the organization or stakeholder, the action being taken/to be taken, and the positive reason for taking this action. Be specific. Keep the lead to 30 words or less wherever possible, and never more than three lines.

More detail and additional points/initiatives can be included further in the release.

Releases are written in the third person, except for the quotes. Quotes need to sound as though someone would actually say them. If they are difficult to understand or too complicated, media will not pick them up. Make sure you identify the speaker of the quote after the speaker's first sentence.

The main quote should refer to the relevant mandates of the organization/ business/ or stakeholder and be relevant to the problem, solution and/or benefit.

Quotes can and should be positional and interpretive, but the body of the release should be more fact-based and objective.

Write in everyday English – forget jargon and explain unfamiliar terms. The intended message needs to be understood by a broad audience.

Use the active voice wherever possible (an exception is the lead, where you may want to use the passive voice to place increased emphasis on the issue).

- more -   (*when there will be a second page*)
- 30 -   (*at the end of the release*)

Contact: (name, title, number – separate line for each)

Electronic version available on CD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 1, 2004

New partnership to increase First Nations/ Metis and Urban Aboriginal participation in Construction Career training and Apprenticeships

VANCOUVER — The First Nations Employment Society (FNES), Metis Provincial Council of British Columbia (MPCBC) and Aboriginal Community Career and Employment Services Society (ACCESS) together with the B.C. Institute of Technology (BCIT) today announced a new partnership to increase First Nations/ Metis and Urban Aboriginal participation in Construction Career training and Apprenticeships.

The partnership is the first of its kind in Canada to bring together First Nations and aboriginal organizations with a polytechnic institution to deliver accredited skilled trades training in the disciplines of carpentry, heavy duty mechanics, ironworking, piping trades, electrical, plumbing, and welding. Additional skilled trade disciplines will be considered as the program is implemented.

"The Vancouver Regional Construction developments will generate 100,000 new jobs over the next 10 years and we need to focus our efforts on providing the opportunity for aboriginal people to fully participate in the rapidly expanding construction sector," said FNES President Leonard George.

Said John English, BCIT Dean of the School of Construction and the Environment, "BCIT will provide the training and education necessary for long-term sustainable skills that will create solid career paths for aboriginal people. Participants will have portable and nationally recognized credentials and they'll also have the ability to ladder into management training opportunities provided at BCIT. We are honoured to be working with our new partners."

Working together through the MOU, FNES, MPCBC, ACCESS and BCIT plan to support training to employment initiatives and lifelong learning for aboriginal people. The joint training partnership includes entry level trades training through to management occupations in the construction sector.

"We are endeavouring to provide a more effective urban delivery of our labour market programs with the Construction Industry through partnering with BCIT in Apprenticeship and Trades Training while incorporating client sensitivities, consistency and coordination to all First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status people," said ACCESS Chief Executive and Officer John Webster.

"The Aboriginal workforce is ready, willing, and able to compete in all areas of employment opportunities. The Metis Provincial Council of British Columbia is excited about this initiative and is committed to working together to prepare the Metis and all aboriginal people for these opportunities, " said MPCBC President Bruce Dumont.

- more -

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE – 2/2

First Nations Employment Society

ACCESS building futures today

Métis Provincial Council Of British Columbia

BCIT BRITISH COLUMBIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY A POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION

Training will be provided at BCIT and within community settings through apprenticeships and prior learning assessments. The joint training partnership will provide access to existing training as well as new training activities.

BCIT's School of Construction and the Environment is a nationally recognized centre for training. It provides provincially accredited training programs that lead to industry certification. Apprentice and trades training are integral to BCIT's polytechnic vision.

- 30 -

For more information please contact:

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SAMPLE BACKGROUNDER

FOUR HOST FIRST NATIONS

LIL'WAT | MUSQUEAM | SQUAMISH | TSLEIL–WAUTUTH

» BACKGROUND

Vancouver/Whistler's successful bid for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is bringing the world's premier sporting event to the traditional and shared traditional territories of the Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, known as the 2010 Four Host First Nations.

The Four Host First Nations recognized the significance of their involvement early on in the bid process and are proud to have played a vital and integral role in formulating and mounting the successful campaign. On July 2, 2003, with the support of the Four Host First Nations along with other Bid partners, the City of Vancouver, on behalf of Canada, was awarded the right to host the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

» WORKING TOGETHER

Over the past year the Four Host First Nations have been working together to prepare for a successful 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and to ensure that the protocols and traditions of the Nations are acknowledged and respected throughout the planning, staging and hosting of the Games.

The Chiefs and Councils of Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations on November 24, 2004 signed the historic protocol agreement which will coordinate their collective efforts as Host Nations to support the Games.

» PURPOSE OF THE PROTOCOL AGREEMENT

The Four Host First Nations agree to organize themselves to work in a positive and mutually beneficial partnership with the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and its partners to participate meaningfully in the planning, staging and hosting of the Games.

» GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Four Host First Nations agree to:

» Work together through to the end of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games,

» Work in a cooperative and mutually supportive manner in order to participate fully in the Games and to take advantage of the social, sport, cultural and economic opportunities and legacies that will arise as a result of the Games,

» Pursue a common approach to maximizing the involvement of their communities in the Games and create an environment of respect, cooperation, and mutual recognition,

» Welcome the world to the shared traditional territories of the Four Host First Nations,

» Promote the rich cultural and historical traditions of their communities,

» Establish a Four Host First Nations Board and Secretariat,

» Work with VANOC and other partners to communicate and liaise with other First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations on matters relating to activities of the Board and Secretariat.

» NEXT STEPS

Establish a Four Host First Nations Board and Secretariat. Work with VANOC to develop a protocol agreement between the Four Host First Nations and VANOC. Assist VANOC and other partners in building an inclusive process for the participation of not only the Four Host First Nations but other First Nations, Métis and Inuit throughout Canada.

TEWANEE JOSEPH *Interim Executive Director* ~ Four Host First Nations » Tel: 604 660 0948 » Email: fourhostnations@shaw.ca

FOUR HOST FIRST NATIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who are the Four Host First Nations?

- o Lil'wat Nation
- o Musqueam Nation
- o Squamish Nation
- o Tsliel-Waututh Nation

Why did the Host First Nations get involved in the Games?

- o Pursue a common approach to maximizing the involvement of Host First Nations in the Games and create an environment of:
  - Respect
  - Cooperation
  - Mutual recognition
- o Enhance the Bid and the Games overall,
- o Welcome the world to each of the Host Nations Traditional Territories,
- o Work with VANOC and the partners to inspire Aboriginal athletes, artists, and entrepreneurs and create a unique games experience.
- o Build long lasting legacies for our people and future generations.

What is the population of each of the Host First Nations communities?

- o Lil'wat Nation - 1900
- o Musqueam Nation - 1150
- o Squamish Nation - 3400
- o Tsleil-Waututh Nation – 400

Who are the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada?

Aboriginal peoples are recognized in the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 as First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The term "First Peoples or Aboriginal" can also be used synonymously.

Who are the people of the First Nations?

First Nations peoples are one of three distinct groups of Aboriginal or First peoples in Canada, and account for over 60% of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. There are over 600 First Nations in Canada, each with their own unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. Roughly 30% of Canada's First Nations, comprising more than 17% of Canada's Aboriginal peoples are in British Columbia.
There are 50 plus distinct Aboriginal languages in Canada, two thirds of which are spoken in British Columbia. Aboriginal languages are on the decline with less than one quarter of Aboriginal people able to carry on a conversation in their Aboriginal Language. Over half of Aboriginal people are under the age of 25, the fastest growing segment of Canada's population.
The 2010 Games are seen as an important opportunity to enhance and renew First Nation's heritage language, culture and participation in sport.

What is the function of the Four Host First Nations Society?

- o   Coordinate the activities of the Four Host First Nations leading up to and during the 2010 Games
- o   Liaise with other First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- o   Assist in identifying opportunities for other First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- o   Highlight Culture and Protocol of Four Host First Nations
- o   Investigate the potential for generating Revenue
- o   Sport/Sport Development
- o   Economic Development:
    - Skills and Training
    - Procurement
    - Business Opportunities

FOUR HOST FIRST NATIONS SOCIETY
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
tel: 1 866 809 5257
email: info@fourhostfirstnations.com
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Media Call Log

Reporter:	
Media name:	
Telephone number:	
Address:	
Fax number:	
Time called:	
Date called:	
Deadline:	
Inquiry/nature of call:	
Interview requested: (who, when, where)	
Others organizations interviewed for story:	
Action/information given:	
Action by:	
Further information needed/request sent to:	
Other comments:	

Electronic version available on CD

Photo Release Form

I (the Model) explicitly grant to the photographer (the Photographer) and to his/her assignees and licensees the absolute right and permission to use and/or publish the photograph(s) referred to below, in which I am included, in any medium, throughout the world, without any restriction whatsoever as to the nature of the use or publication or as to the copy of any printed matter accompanying the photograph(s). I understand that the images may be altered and I waive the right to approve of any finished product. I understand that I do not own the copyright of the photograph(s). I certify that I am over 18 years of age and that I have the full legal right to execute this agreement.

NAME of photographer: _____

DESCRIPTION of photo: _____

SIGNATURE of model: _____

DATE: _____

NAME of model: _____

MODEL AGENCY (if applicable): _____

AGE of model: _____

(if under 18 years of age)
NAME of Parent/Guardian: _____

SIGNATURE of Parent/Guardian: _____

ADDRESS of model: _____

_____

_____

TELEPHONE: _____

E-MAIL address: _____

WITNESS: _____

Electronic version available on CD

Event Planning

Whether you are planning a general band meeting, a consultation meeting on a specific project, or a youth or Elder meeting, events should all be carefully planned. The purpose of an event is to share information, ask for feedback or educate. You should consider the timing of the event and its location. Having an event scheduled at the same time as another community event can cause distraction and the loss of focus for your particular initiative — you may not receive the response you're looking for.

Remember that individuals are busy and their time is valuable. Make sure that your event purpose is clear and those who attend know why they are there and what action you want them to take as result of their presence.
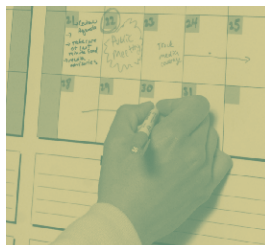
Planning your Event

Set your objectives for the event early on by asking yourself why you
are holding it in the first place. Key questions you should be able to
answer are:

- What do you want to achieve (goals and objectives)?

- Is the event primarily about providing information or about
  achieving consensus? Can you achieve the same objective by
  sending out a publication or by referring potential delegates
  to a Web site instead?

- Is the event primarily about the new ideas that can emerge
  from the interaction? (If so, the sessions will need to be
  highly participative).

- Who is your audience?

- What do you want your audience to do at the event?

- What do you want your audience to do after the event?

Event Planning Checklist

6-8 weeks in advance of event:

☐ Set objectives for the event.

☐ If it is a complex event with multiple partners or regarding a controversial subject, consider drafting an event plan.

☐ Consider potential dates for event; consult with partners/other parties if necessary (avoid religious days, holidays, selecting the same date as another event).

☐ Confirm event date.

☐ Develop a plan to publicize your event.

☐ Research potential locations for event (consider accessibility, room style, number of break out rooms required).

☐ Book a location.

☐ Prepare an event budget.

☐ Approach and confirm the chairperson, facilitator or master of ceremonies.

4-6 weeks prior:

☐ If appropriate, ask for help with organizing your event.

☐ Prepare a guest list.

☐ Prepare invitations. The invitation should have three essential pieces of information: the date of the event, the time of the event, and the location.

☐ Prepare a list of media (if media attendance is desired). Consider media logistics: Will you need a media feed? Will there be a scrum opportunity?

☐ If you are planning to serve food, prepare a menu and contact potential caterers.

☐ Inform yourself about the restrictions, reservations, and permits you may need for your event.

☐ Consider requirements such as a public address (P.A.) system, audio visual equipment (PowerPoint, video), podium, stage, and media feed box for the media.

☐ Decide if you will have a backdrop for the main conference room and break out rooms. Include your branding and logo.

☐ Consider access to the location — is it accessible to the disabled? If not, make the appropriate arrangements in order to accommodate everyone.

☐ Begin to draft an agenda.

☐ Draft a media advisory to invite the local media (if appropriate).

☐ Draft a news release, backgrounder, questions and answers, and fact sheet (if appropriate).

2-4 weeks prior:

☐ Finalize the agenda.

☐ Send invitations.

Electronic version available on CD

CHECKLIST ⊞ EVENT PLANNING – 2/2

☐ Arrange for a volunteer or book a professional photographer to take photos (if contracting, include in budget).

☐ Book audio visual (AV) equipment (sound, light, podium, tents, chairs, etc.).

☐ Book a caterer.

☐ If required, make travel arrangements.

☐ Finalize media materials (if required).

☐ Prepare text for social media channels and decide on a hashtag for your event.

☐ Do a site visit of the event location.

☐ Prepare to register attendees.

One week prior:

☐ Confirm the number of guests you will have and, if possible, contact the people who did not respond to your invitation.

☐ Confirm catering details.

☐ Create a list of contact information for those involved in the event.

☐ Compile a media kit (if required).

1-2 days prior:

☐ Review the day's agenda for your event, taking care of any minor problems.

☐ Take care of last-minute food preparations.

☐ Send a media advisory to media (if required).

☐ If possible, call the media to check if they received the media advisory (if required).

Day of Event:

☐ Fax and/or e-mail the news release and backgrounder to media contacts or to wire service such as Canada News Wire for distribution (if required).

☐ Ensure event details/roll out runs smoothly.

☐ Act as contact for media and government representatives.

☐ Greet media and ask them to sign in as you give them a media kit (if required).

☐ Ensure photo release forms are signed.

Post-Event:

☐ Distribute news release and photos to media who could not attend (if required).

☐ Post text, photos and videos to social media and Web site.

☐ Track media coverage (if necessary).

Electronic version available on CD

Community Engagement

Community engagement can be defined as the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members.

Within First Nation communities, community engagement can take the form of band meetings, traditional work, door-to-door visits, Chief and Council meetings, e-mails, telephone conversations and yes, even gossip. One of the goals of your communications plan should be to ensure that your initiative is being talked about. Regardless of whether they are initially supportive or not, if members are talking about the initiative, then they are demonstrating an interest and transferring information. It is a cause for concern if there is no discussion or demonstrated knowledge by your community members about the initiative. The challenge is to ensure that community members are informed and they have access to information and a chance to be heard.

Individuals who are vocal in the community provide an excellent indication of what should be addressed in your messaging. Often, these individuals will have a number of relevant questions; try your best to provide answers or to seek answers and follow up.

It is important to create a safe and inclusive environment in order to make people feel comfortable expressing themselves. This will also make them more receptive to what you have to say. By effectively listening and engaging all members of the community — youth, Elders, and on/off reserve membership — you increase awareness and involvement. There are diverse opportunities on a daily basis to engage your community members. If you have a solid plan and understand how to use some basic communications tools, you can use these opportunities to greatly influence outcomes in your community.

Community Meetings

Community meetings are a critical tool that you can use to engage your community. A lot of planning needs to take place to ensure you have an effective meeting. It is a good idea to develop a protocol for community meetings.

Decisions will need to be made on a number of issues when planning a community meeting. Planning beforehand will ensure that all staff are prepared for the meeting and understand their role.

When planning a meeting it is useful to consider:

- *Objective* — Be clear about why you are meeting and what you expect to get out of it.

- *Participation* — Who needs to be there and what are their roles?

- *Agenda* — Be clear about the items on the agenda and set out and respect time allotted to each item.

- *Facility* — Choose an accessible location.

- *Scheduling* — Ensure there are no other events or happenings competing for attendance.

- *Facilitation* — A facilitator or strong chairperson is essential to the effective management of your meeting.

- *Opening/closing* — Identify an Elder/youth to sing, dance, and say a traditional prayer.

- *Question and Answer period* — It's important to ensure that there is enough time for people to have the opportunity to ask questions.

- *Catering* — Identify caterers.

- *On-site staff* — Identify staff to sign in, hand out material (agenda, kits and binders), record questions and take minutes.

- *Handouts* — Provide relevant materials that support the objective of the meeting.

- *Key spokesperson* — Identify spokesperson(s) and put them on agenda.

- *Media* — Determine if it is desirable to have media (if so provide media kits).

- *Meeting follow up* — Identify how the information will be shared following the meeting. (Will it be posted on the Web site? Will the minutes be shared to each member?)

- *Other considerations* — Budget, catering, security and transportation.

TIP ⭐

Mail out system — things to consider:

- Establish a functional database (name, address, email, etc.)

- Identify who maintains and updates your database(s) including the printing of labels and labelling of envelopes.

- Identify who is responsible for stamping/delivering to postal outlet or for sending out batch emails.

- Consider delivery on and off-reserve.

Facilitating Meetings

Community engagement activities will likely bring together a diverse group of people with many different views. Having a facilitator lead the meeting will help to ensure everyone is heard and able to fully participate. A facilitator will know how to direct the dialogue to help ensure goals for the meeting are met, encourage participants to speak and work through conflicts. It is also generally the role of a facilitator to set a structure for the meeting (agenda, timing, etc.), and ensure that housekeeping is taken care of, such as setting up the meeting space and notifying participants.

It may be useful to hire a professional facilitator to lead your meetings but if this is not possible, find someone in you community who has natural facilitation skills to take on this role.

What Makes a Good Facilitator?

A good facilitator:

- Creates and maintains an atmosphere of trust by being sensitive to the feelings of individuals.

- Listens to the explicit meaning of words but also to their tone and implicit meaning.

- Acts for the good of the group even when this involves taking uncomfortable actions or saying something awkward.

- Is committed to collaborating, including sharing facilitation with others in the group.

- Has a "sixth sense" for time: knows when to bring a discussion to a close, when to change the topic, when to cut off someone who has talked too long, when to let the discussion run over the allotted time, and when to let the silence continue a little longer.

- Has a plan but is willing to be flexible in response to the situation.

- Has a sense of humour.

(Source: University of Minnesota —
http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/hreduseries/
hrhandbook/part2B.html)

Conflict Resolution

It is natural for different views to arise when groups are discussing issues. As noted above, a skilled facilitator can generally work through conflicts by giving individuals a chance to be heard and helping them determine how their needs can be adequately addressed so that they are satisfied with the outcome. Complex or historical conflicts may need to be resolved outside a public meeting structure. If this is the case, consider using traditional conflict resolution approaches or involving someone with conflict resolution expertise.

CHECKLIST 📄 CHECKLIST FOR FACILITATORS

Checklist for Facilitators

☐ Clarify who your client is. Who is sponsoring the meeting? This is generally the person with the authority to approve the agenda for the meeting.

☐ Talk to the sponsor to clarify the purpose of the meeting and, for your own knowledge, the sponsor's desired result. What will success look like at the end of the meeting?

☐ Be very clear about your role as a facilitator. A facilitator is a person that is not necessarily an expert on a specific subject (though can be), but an expert on group process.

☐ Select and design a process and agenda for the meeting that will help participants to achieve the sponsor's stated purpose.

☐ If there is time prior to the meeting, and the meeting is internal to the organization, you may wish to e-mail the meeting purpose and agenda to participants for their review and input.

☐ At the start of the meeting, review the group's purpose and agenda with participants to ensure they both understand and agree on the focus of the meeting.

☐ During the meeting, maintain eye contact with participants. Try not to talk too little or too much. You are there to bring out the views and contributions of participants.

☐ Consider where you sit or stand and other ways in which you may unconsciously exercise inappropriate authority.

☐ Help everyone have a chance to speak, to be heard, and to be treated equally; encourage differences of opinion but discourage argument; curb those who dominate; draw in those who are hesitant.

☐ Be aware of when the group is off topic or confused and when structure may be needed; explain, summarize and help to paraphrase participants' input when necessary; decide when to extend a discussion and when to move the group onto the next topic; remind the group when they are off subject.

(Source: *The Skilled Facilitator* by Roger Schwarz)

CHECKLIST COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Community Meetings Checklist

☐ Select facilitator.

☐ Prepare agenda.

☐ Develop meeting strategy and tactics.

☐ Determine meeting length.

☐ Identify spokesperson and other people to respond to questions.

☐ Establish meeting guidelines.

☐ Develop speeches and speaking points for presenters.

☐ Prior to initial meetings, review/rehearse presentation.

☐ Identify who is responsible for coordinating and booking meetings.

☐ Identify times, locations and dates.

☐ If transportation for on reserve members is provided, identify pick up times and locations.

☐ Identify floor plan and set up.

☐ Set up equipment, tables and chairs.

☐ Select caterer and menu.

☐ Identify person responsible for sign-in.

☐ Identify person responsible for recording and transcribing minutes.

☐ Identify type of sound equipment and AV required such as:

- Laptop computer, projection screen, sound system for recording, microphones (standing and table), projector for PowerPoint presentation, TV and video, writing pads, pens.

☐ Identify who is responsible for:

- Bringing all relevant printed materials and supplies.
- Storing all documentation and supplies after the meeting.
- Follow-up on questions from meetings.

Electronic version available on CD

Using Two-Way Communications — The Squamish Nation example

The following case study illustrates in detail how the Squamish Nation effectively engaged their community using two-way communications. You will see that the outcome of using some simple but well-thought out communication tools was well worth the concerted effort.

Comprehensive Communications Program
helps Squamish Nation win vital referendum

In January 2000, the late Squamish Nation Chief Joe Mathias asked former Squamish Nation councillor Tewanee Joseph and another member of council to create a communications strategy and program that would change the poor public perception of the Squamish Nation, overcome the lack of communication with local print and electronic media and improve the internal communication between members and the council as well as administration.

First and foremost, Joseph and his council colleague were facing a significant communications gap between the chief and council, administration and Nation members. They had to improve the poor communications – and time was becoming a critical factor as the Nation was facing a referendum on a $92.5 million specific claim settlement offer from the federal government.

"Initially, communications with members had taken the form of a weekly newsletter with the odd information package on an ad-hoc basis with some of the Nation's departments putting forward information, on education, economic development, land claims and treaty, but there was nothing consistent," Joseph revealed.

Previous communications efforts had not been enough to help members understand what was happening with their Nation. However, the Nation was staring in the face of a specific claim settlement offer that required the membership to vote on a referendum to approve the Squamish Nation Settlement Agreement and Trust. The original Omnibus Trust Action had been launched in 1977 by Chief Mathias and sought restitution on reserve lands in downtown Vancouver, the town of Squamish and in various parts of the of North Vancouver that had been taken from the Nation by various means.

In 1999, an out-of-court settlement-in-principle had been reached between the Squamish Nation and the federal government with a proposed $92.5 million settlement agreement and trust offer that had to be submitted to the membership for review and approval.

Chief Mathias had asked Joseph to help communicate to the Nation's approximate 2,000 voting members the 23 years worth of effort that had gone into the settlement-in-principle. Unfortunately, just as Joseph and his fellow councillor were setting up the Communications Services for the Squamish Nation, it was beset by the loss of its well-respected leader, Chief Mathias.

Challenges

The Squamish Nation had to overcome its poor public perception and communications challenges. A media analysis indicated that during a two-month period in 1999/2000, the Squamish Nation had appeared in local, regional, and national media over 27 times – all of them negative. Some of the members were not happy with Chiefs and Council and questioned why the Nation wasn't appearing to be transparent and providing timely, fact-based information.

"One of the challenges we were facing was creating this transparency for ourselves," Joseph continued. "And we had to explain to hundreds of members the Nation's past that led to the Omnibus Trust Action. We then had to bring them up-to-date, and ultimately explain how the settlement agreement and trust would impact on every member's life. To do that, we had to design and implement an effective communications plan that would allow members to make an informed decision."

In addition, explained Joseph, the media and general public knew very little about the Squamish Nation. "They knew that we were there, they knew that we were neighbours, perhaps, but they knew absolutely nothing about what we did," he explained. "They did not know that we have a $35 million annual budget and that we inject into the City and District of North Vancouver and Squamish, a significant amount of revenue into their economies."

"We always have to connect with our past because if we don't understand that, we don't know enough about it, then making a decision on something like a settlement agreement becomes a significant challenge because we just don't know where we come from," Joseph acknowledged. "Our mantra at Squamish Nation for anything the Nation does is 'understanding our past, dealing with the present and building our future together'." What Joseph found was that "if we can show our connection to the ancestors, then people will remember that some members of their family were part of making the decisions over the years."

That connection to the Nation's past has proven invaluable as the communications program was put into high gear. Joseph feels that by promoting a free flow of information and facilitating dialogue and networking within the community, a communications gap can be bridged.

Together with his council colleague, they established a proactive 'grass roots' advocacy program that encouraged the membership to contact the Chiefs and Council on issues that were important to them. As a liaison between the membership and council, the duo could be called at any time and they would get responses for members. In fact, they guaranteed responses.

"Never before had we done that," Joseph admitted. "If someone calls us, we won't let a day or two go by without phoning them back."

Two other challenges facing the team were to get the Chiefs and Council up-to-speed on what the whole deal was all about and then to break down the settlement and trust into manageable, digestible pieces for the members to understand.

To communicate effectively to their Nation's membership, the communications specialists had to target their information to an understandable comprehension level as there was a lot of 'legalese', financial and technical information.

"One of the most significant challenges we overcame was to summarize 23 years of work onto one page of paper," Joseph said. That was a very important piece of information not only for Chiefs and Council but for membership as well.

The Referendum

Another challenge facing the young communicators was to motivate the Nation's members to turn out and vote. The threshold for acceptance was 973 voters in favour (absolute majority).

The Squamish Nation had 3,000 members of which 1,944 were voting members (800 off-reserve in locations throughout North America and the World).

An absolute majority was required to accept the offer from the federal government – 50 per cent plus one from the total voting population. Under the federal government guidelines, if a voter did not show up (an absentee vote), it was considered a "No" vote; consequently, the communications team faced a huge challenge with only six weeks to go before the referendum.

It was June 9, 2000, and the referendum was going to be held on July 23. Prior to this referendum, the Squamish Nation had never had more than 700 people turn out for a vote on any sort of referendum. But the referendum was a bit more complicated as there were two votes: one to surrender the land; the second to accept the offer. Distinguishing the two issues was to become a major task.

The Communications Plan

"Before we developed and implemented our communications plan, we drafted a set of principles that would guide our communications activities," explained Joseph. The principles were based on teaching from Elders as well as comments made by membership over a 20 year period.

The communications effort included two general meetings, two youth meetings and one staff meeting. In addition, two Elder meetings, two off-reserve meetings and two follow-up, informal meetings were held.

Attendance peaked at 450 members at the first meeting, dropping to 30 to 60 at the last two meetings, which were circle-style meetings without microphones. The Chiefs and Council were available to any member seeking information.

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SQUAMISH NATION REFERENDUM
COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS

1. Used community members to support others who weren't comfortable speaking out at meetings.

2. Developed a speaking list to give every one a turn and limit their time to reduce the tendency by some members to dominate the meeting.

3. Created a message centre with a 1-800 number to address the concerns of members living off-reserve.

4. Created 15 different information bulletins addressing single aspects of the issues before the members, including a "Question and Answer" document.

5. Created a video and produced 2,200 copies so that visual-oriented members could view the 25-minute message in the privacy of their own homes.

6. Created a Web site for the internet users that included archived information about the Nation's history, particularly the amalgamation of 1923 when 16 bands came together to form the Squamish Nation and of the Kitsilano land issue. The Web site included e-mailing capabilities for members who wanted immediate answers to questions.

7. Developed a media liaison program where the news reporters were given backgrounders on issues and procedures and where the chief and councillors were prepped before discussing matters with the media.

8. Implemented a community relations program where the Chiefs and Councilors visited the communities that make up the Nation.

9. Developed direct mail or flyers, personalized for each recipient, to inform them of all the issues.

10. Conducted a survey and contacted of over 1,900 members before voting day to encourage members to learn about the settlement-in-principle and to get out and vote.

</div>

And perception has been changed!

"The media and the general public know more about the Squamish Nation today than they ever had in the past and, in fact, our stories in the media are more balanced now than they ever have been," Joseph explained.

Today, the Squamish Nation membership is in contact with the chief and council on a regular basis and the Communications Department receives between 100 and 120 calls a day.

"What we found is if people are part of communications and they are able to be part of producing documents, newsletters and Web sites, then they are more inclined to know what is happening in the community."

And Joseph's key to success: "There's no complex ideas behind it. It's all very basic and simple things that we all are already doing. All we've done is kept it very, very simple and listened carefully to our membership."

Results

The referendum turned out to be an overwhelming success with three-quarters of eligible voting members turning out for both votes. Also, the membership voted by a clear majority of 88 percent to accept the Settlement Agreement and Trust.

REFERENDUM RESULTS		
	First Vote	Second Vote
Total eligible voters	1,944	1,944
Total votes cast	1,487	1,325
Percentage voting	76.5%	68.2%
"Yes" Votes	1,313	1,121
Percentage support	88.3%	84.6%
"No" Votes	165	200
Percentage against	11.1%	15.1%
Spoiled ballots	9	4
Percentage spoiled	0.6%	0.3%

Web
Communications

7

Web sites are an important part of most communication strategies and can benefit your organization in many ways. One of the most important features of a Web site is its global reach. Web sites are effective for communicating with broad, varied audiences, and can be very cost-effective. A Web site will allow interested users worldwide to find out about you easily and quickly. You can use your Web site to promote events, publications and key messages.
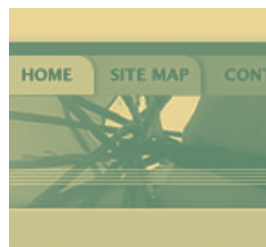
Carefully planned, a Web site should meet the communication needs of a wide range of users, from community members to the media and the public. It saves users time and effort if they know they can get what they need directly from your Web site. Similarly, it saves you time and money if users find information for themselves. A website should work hand in hand with your social media channels in order to achieve a fully effective online presence.

A Web site allows you to set up two-way information flows with your users. Bulletin boards and online polls allow you to gather information from your audience. Online exchanges can allow users, who would otherwise not have the chance to voice their opinion, to make a contribution.
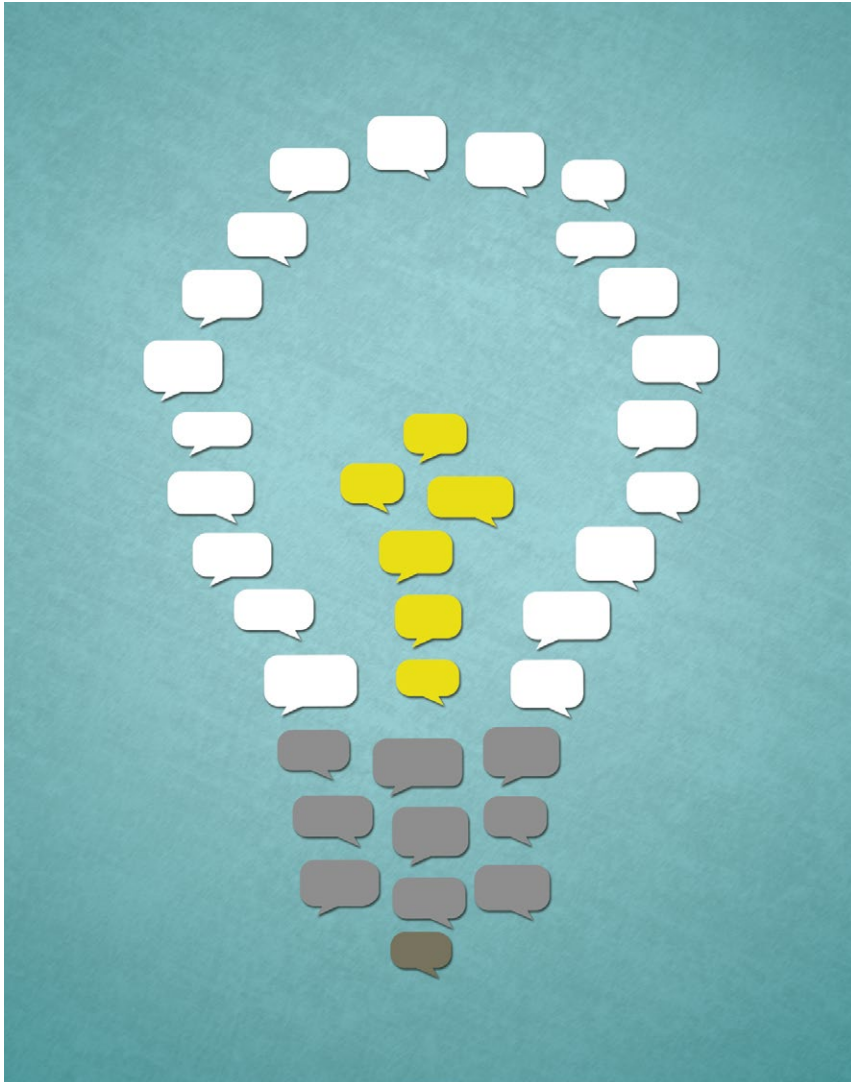
Steps you will need to take when developing a Web site:

- Select a Web designer.
- Identify a person to work with designer (to coordinate, research, develop content and scan information).
- Identify sections for Web site.
- Identify a person to receive and respond to e-mails.
- Update as required.

Social Media

Social media is an interactive and accessible form of communication that has become a significant part of our everyday life. Using social media and incorporating it into your communications planning can be an efficient and cost-effective way to reach and engage your community members and other stakeholders.

What is Social Media?

Social media is a term used to describe a wide array of different Web-based applications or tools that enable individuals to create, share and exchange ideas and information through words, pictures, audio and video.

Chances are you have heard of many of these social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, WordPress, Blogger, Typepad, LiveJournal, Wikipedia, Wikidot or Reddit.

Social media is a very powerful tool that has led to grassroots movements and even revolutions around the world. It's a medium that communicators have learned to incorporate into their planning to help their organization achieve its communications goals.

Why Social Media is Important

Should your organization use social media as part of your outreach? The answer to that question is most definitely "Yes."

Here are some of the reasons why social media should be part of your communications planning and activities:

- Increases awareness of your organization.
- Increases traffic to your Web site.
- Increases brand recognition.
- Supports timely dissemination of information.
- Simple and cost effective way to tell your story.
- Allows you to engage, interact and stay connected with your audiences.
- Enables you to monitor what is being said about your organization and have a better understanding of the perception of your brand.
- Provides early warning of potential issues that may impact your organization.

Because social media never sleeps, some organizations are reluctant to use the social media tools available to them. Monitoring social media sites, answering questions and managing and creating content takes time. One way to tackle this is to consider starting small by focusing on one social media platform such as Twitter or Facebook. Since these platforms have options that you can either activate or deactivate such as the comment section, you can reduce the time you spend managing them by limiting the number of options that are activated. Focusing on information sharing and monitoring may be an initial strategy for your First Nation to begin exploring what social media can do for your community.

Getting Started

Create a Facebook account (www.facebook.com)

Facebook allows users to create a profile, add "friends", "like" pages, exchange messages, post status updates and photos, share videos and receive notifications when others update their profiles.

To create a Facebook presence for your First Nation, you will need to set up a organization page at facebook.com/pages. You must have a personal account to administer the page.

Create a Twitter account (www.twitter.com)

Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called tweets. Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Users can subscribe or "follow" another Twitter account and will then automatically receive tweets as they are posted. Users can access Twitter through a Web interface, text messaging service, or mobile device application.

TIP ★

There are many social media platforms that you can use, however, make sure you consider each one carefully and ask yourself: "What is the purpose?" and "Does this social media platform help accomplish our overall communications goals?"

TIP ★

When establishing your social media accounts, make sure you consider the length and simplicity of your account names and hashtags. Names that are too long are not memorable. Use a coordinated approach with all of your names. Unless your organization has a well established acronym, try to avoid them.

Create a Hootsuite account (www.hootsuite.com)

Hootsuite is a social media management system that allows you to manage your organization's social media presence. It is a social media dashboard designed to listen, engage and measure all social networks from one simple interface. By using Hootsuite you can:

- Schedule messages and tweets,

- Manage multiple social profiles, i.e. Facebook and Twitter,

- Track mentions about your organization online, and

- Analyze social media traffic.

Establish a blog on your organization's Web site

A blog is a discussion or informational site or page that can be hosted on your Web site. Blogs consist of discrete entries or "posts" which are typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first).

Keep It Simple

Now that you are ready to enter the social media realm, make sure your text is short and to the point. Don't try to say everything in a Twitter or Facebook post. Think of your posts as teasers to capture your audience. Use links in your post to direct readers to your Web site or blog where you can provide more detail.

Remember you can also link to bulletins, press releases, meeting notices, videos, pictures and fact sheets that have been created as part of your communications activities and are already posted on your Web site. You can also link to your blog where you can have longer written text and stories. Individuals will be able to find more information about your First Nation or one of your initiatives through a simple click of a button.

By posting relevant and interesting information to your social media accounts for your target audiences, you should strive to increase followers, likes and mentions. Being active on social media will also provide you with critical information and feedback for your overall communications plan.

WHAT IS A HASHTAG?

A hashtag is a single word or phrase (with no spaces) preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) which is used to tie together various social media posts about a specific topic (see the example on the right). You can use hashtags to provide information about your specific initiative or to join other social media conversations that are of interest to you or your organization. You can also use hashtags to track posts and subsequent conversations. By conducting an electronic search you can find all messages that contain the hashtag on a particular social media platform such as Twitter. Although hashtags were originally created and supported by Twitter, they are now more widely used on other platforms such as Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Vine, Google+, and Tumblr.

FNHA
@fnha

Aboriginal Day at Trout Lake!
#aboriginalday #nadcanada
instagram.com/p/phwMhXhbEs/

6:11 PM - 21 Jun 2014

Using Video

You may want to consider using YouTube (www.youtube.com) as a medium to connect and network with your audience.

Video has become more and more prevalent today and by setting up your own YouTube channel you can post videos about community initiatives or from your organization's events. You could even include interviews of people from your community.

Posting to YouTube takes only minutes and you can use Hootsuite to post links to your new YouTube content on your other social media accounts in seconds.

People are watching events online as they happen. They will be willing to share and like your posts if they find the information touching, humorous, relevant or informative. This can provide you with valuable insight into what your target audiences are interested in.

By asking your audience to subscribe to your YouTube channel and having them leave comments you can create an ongoing network where you can engage and communicate.

This diagram provides an example of how to link your social media and electronic resources.

Teaser Text

Develop short teaser text (to be posted on social media) based on reports, pamphlets and other documents. Longer explanations and full documents will be located on or directed through the Web site.

▼

HootSuite

Insert teaser text into HootSuite. For Twitter, the text cannot be longer than 140 characters inclusive of Web link. Other text will be posted without links. HootSuite will automatically post to your social media channels.

▼

Social Media Channels

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube

Remember to use your organization's name when establishing your accounts. Also, use hashtags (#) to promote your initiatives.

⟷

Followers

Will repost tweets, like status, like posts, and like comments.

▼

Website

Social media channels will direct individuals to your Web site. The blog will have longer explanations and direct visitors to the appropriate section of the Web site for more information.

Resources

9

This listing provides a sample of the types of resrouces that can be found on the Internet or at your local library.

Training

BCIT — Marketing, public relations, journalism, design and editing courses

www.bcit.ca/study/
Courses can be taken full and part–time, individually or as part of a program. Some distance education options.

Capilano College — Communications programs

www2.capilanou.ca/programs/cmns.html
Courses can be taken individually or as part of a communications program; full– and part–time, day and evening classes.

Justice Institute of BC — Conflict resolution courses

www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/schools-departments/school-community-social-justice/centre-conflict-resolution
Course can be taken individually or as part of a certificate program. Courses are offered in various locations throughout BC or via distance education.

Kwantlen University College — Public Relations Diploma

www.kwantlen.ca/business/pr.html
Full–time, two–year program located in Richmond.

Simon Fraser University — Public Relations Certificate

www.sfu.ca/cstudies/pr/
Courses can be taken individually or as part of the certificate program.

University of Victoria — Public Relations Certificate

www.uvcs.uvic.ca/publicrelations/
Also available by distance education.

Toolkits and Other Support Materials

Comprehensive communications toolkit that can be downloaded for free
www.hersheycause.com/pages/tools-publications/

Facilitation resources
www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/?page_id=958
www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/citizenship/DH7437.html
www.managementhelp.org/grp_skll/resource.htm#anchor1231905

IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox: Techniques to share information
www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/toolbox.pdf

International Association of Facilitators – Basic facilitation primer
www.iaf-world.org/index/ToolsResources/IAFResources.aspx

The Skilled Facilitator
Schwarz, Roger. The Skilled Facilitator: A Comprehensive Resource for Consultants, Facilitators, Managers, Trainers, and Coaches. Wiley, John & Sons, Incorporated. 2002.

Organizations and Associations

Canadian Public Relations Society
www.cprs.ca
Networking and professional development organization serving public relations practitioners.

International Association of Business Communicators
www.iabc.com or www.iabc.bc.ca (BC Chapter)
Professional association for communicators that provides educational and professional development, access to communication and information resources, and networking opportunities.

Style Guides

Canadian Press Caps and Spelling
www.thecanadianpress.com/products_and_services.aspx?id=86
Companion to Canadian Press Style Guide.

Canadian Press Style Guide
www.thecanadianpress.com/products_and_services.aspx?id=86
Writing style guide with practical answers on writing clearly, accurately and concisely.

Media Directories

BC Community Newspaper Association

www.bccommunitynews.com
Provides links to most community newspapers in BC.

Black Press

blackpress.ca
Provides links to Black Press owned community newspapers in BC and their profiles.

Glossary

Audience

The individuals or group of people you address through communications activities. Audiences can be defined based on everything from age to location to interests. Communications tactics may target a specific audience or several different audiences.

Background

Information provided to help educate a journalist about a specific topic. To "background" a reporter means the information provided may be reported, but the source is typically not identified in any way in a specific story.

Backgrounder

A document containing background information about an initiative, service, organization or event.

Blog

Blog is short for weblog. A public Web site functioning as an online journal where users post their thoughts, comments and philosophies, as well as links to other Web sites and images. Blogs are updated frequently, can be written by one person or a group of contributors and normally reflect the views of the blog's creator.

Branding

The process of creating a distinct identity (brand) for a product or organization. A brand is a symbolic representation of all the information connected to the product or organization and serves to create associations and expectations around it. A brand can include a logo, fonts, colour schemes and symbols which may be developed to represent implicit values, ideas, and even personality.

Case study

Analysis of a particular project, initiative, or organization to learn what factors led to its success or failure.

Consensus

1. General agreement from all parties.
2. A decision-making process where parties reach an agreement by finding common ground.

Copyright

Legal ownership that protects literary, music or artistic work.

Direct Mail

A common marketing approach, in which communications materials such as flyers, newsletters, postcards, etc. are sent directly to customers using the postal service.

Electronic Media

Type of media where messages are delivered to an audience through an electronic channel such as e-mail, Webcasts or the Internet.

Evaluation

An examination and assessment of a particular initiative that reveals strengths and weaknesses of the approach and whether or not the overall outcome is successful.

External Communications

A strategic method of communicating that seeks to inform and educate external audiences about an organization's mission, objectives and initiatives.

Fact Sheet

A brief, easy-to-read document containing factual information about a product, service, organization or event. Fact sheets often contain lists, statistics, and answers to common questions. In some cases, fact sheets may be a summary of a longer document.

Goals

Broad, general statements of desired outcomes (i.e., to inform audiences about the treaty process). (See objectives)

Headline

The title at the top of a newspaper article or at the beginning of a news release, usually set in large, often bold type. Written with the intent to catch the eye of the reader, often using catchy or active language.

Implementation

The act of putting a plan into effect. A practical method for accomplishing specific goals and objectives.

In-house

A term used to note that resources from within an organization will be used instead of contracting for the work to be done externally. This is often an effective way of minimizing costs.

Interactive Communications

Two-way communications process which not only delivers information but provides an avenue for the audience to respond with comments, questions and suggestions.

Internal Communications

Communications inside an organization, usually between departments or between the organization and employees. Newsletters, intranets and other media are often used for this purpose.

Inverted Pyramid

Organizing information, particularly within a news story or news release, so that the most important, interesting or substantial information is presented first, at the top of the page. Other information then follows in order of diminishing importance.

Lead

First few sentences of a news release, outlining the nature of the news or story below. Typically a lead should attempt to answer most or all of the five Ws: who, what, where, when and why.

Logo

A graphical element or symbol designed to represent a company, organization, product, service, and sometimes places. Logos are typically designed to cause immediate recognition by the viewer. In some cases a symbol is used alone (i.e., a red cross for the Red Cross) but usually both images and the company name are used together.

Marketing

A communication process that promotes goods, services or information.

Media advisory

Invitation to the media to attend a news event. Advisories typically include the date, time and place of the event, and the name of the spokesperson and contact information.

Media Feed

A technical capability that allows media to plug their recording equipment directly into a sound system to get a clearer recording of the speakers.

Media release

Written communication directed at members of the media for the purpose of announcing something that is newsworthy (i.e., conferences, announcements). A news release is usually mailed, faxed or e-mailed to editors of newspapers, magazines, radio stations and television stations.

Media Scrum

The situation where a group of reporters and TV cameras surround a public figure, spokesperson, or other key individual, and bombard them with questions (often following speeches or sitting of the House of Commons).

Mission Statement

A formal statement that describes the overall purpose of the organization. Mission statements are typically provided in the organization's formal documents such as a strategic plan.

News conference

Media event which newsmakers invite journalists to attend for the purpose of making an announcement, answering questions, etc. A news conference allows a newsmaker to answer questions from reporters all at once rather than answering dozens of phone calls and can help attract news coverage for something that journalists were not aware of before. (Also called press conference.)

News Release

See media release.

Not for Attribution

An agreement between the provider of information and a reporter that the information given can be used but the source must not be identified. In some cases, individuals may be quoted but are only identified by their general occupation (i.e., a spokesman for FNESS).

Objective

A specific statement of what is to be achieved. To be most effective, an objective should be measurable, specific, realistic and have a time targeted for completion.

Polling

Survey to gather information or opinions from the public.

Press Conference

See news conference.

Public Service Announcements (PSA) or Community Service Announcement (CSA)

A non-commercial "advertisement" which is broadcast for free on radio or television as a public service. PSAs are most often used to raise awareness and educate the public about health and safety issues.

Public relations/ Publicity

The management of communications between an organization and the general public with the intention of building awareness of and/or fostering a desired attitude towards the organization, a product or a service.

Slogan

A brief memorable motto or phrase used in advertising or promotion. One element of branding.

Stakeholder

An individual or group of individuals who affect or can be affected by an organization's actions. Stakeholders may include community members, employees, local communities, government, etc.

URL

On-line Web site address or locator, beginning with http://

Vision

Description of what an organization hopes to achieve in the future.

Wordmark

A simple text-only graphic created from the name of an organization to be used as a clear, visually memorable identity. The word becomes a visual symbol of the organization or product.

Social Media Glossary

Comment

Replying to a social media post with an affirmation, question, disagreement, etc.

Follow

Signing up to receive the posts of another person or organization.

Follower

A person who follows or subscribes to the posts of another individual or organization on social media.

Following

A list of other users you have chosen to watch or follow on social media. Updates from these other users will appear on your home page.

Friends

The network of people an individual connects with through social media.

Friend (verb)

To add (a person) to one's list of contacts on a social media site.

Handle

A username.

Hashtag

A word or phrase preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) and used to identify messages on a specific topic. For example, "#Aboriginal" or "#SocialMedia".

Mention

Including the handle of an individual or organization in social media content. That individual or organization then gets notification that they've been mentioned. For example, "Great discussion with @johnny_doe17 at the meeting last night."

Like

A way for users to indicate positive feedback concerning a post. A user can "like" posts they find interesting or engaging by clicking the "like" button below each post.

Retweet

A way to repost or share someone else's tweet in Twitter.

Social media

Web sites and applications that allow people to create online communities or networks to share information, ideas, and pictures/videos.

Tweet

The content you share with your Twitter followers.

We hope the information, templates and examples provided in the First Nations Communications Toolkit serve as a useful resource as you develop your own communications tools and programs. This is not intended to be a definitive communications guide, nor do we consider it final. As communications practices continue to evolve, we will add new material to ensure the toolkit remains up-to-date.

We encourage all First Nations communicators to share their best practices and success stories with their colleagues and other First Nations through this toolkit. If you would like to share your examples of communications successes with us or have suggestions on how we can make the toolkit more relevant, please contact us.

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