MONITORING OF COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

BEST PRACTICE

Background (REF:1)

Measuring the impact of communications campaigns requires monitoring and evaluation. It is essential to be able to improve and adapt the approach, and to ensure cost efficient use of available resources. Setting aims, objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring is helpful to decide what to monitor and the method that will be needed.

ACTION

Evaluation of the communication campaigns by comparing investments and results achieved

Example of best practice implemented

Durham Country Council (UK) participation rate monitoring (REF: 2)

In order to **monitor the effectiveness of a communications campaign to promote the "Kerb-it" scheme in low performing areas**, Durham Country Council conducted participation monitoring.

Figure-1: Communication campaign in Durham Country Council. Source: Durham Country Council

The pre- and post- campaign participation monitoring was undertaken across a representative sample of properties, with 1100 properties identified in each of the four districts considered. In each area, the full collection round was monitored for consistency. A further round was monitored in Durham related to the student population. The collection service was fortnightly, so the monitoring was over a six-week period.

The results were very useful in demonstrating the impact of the campaign. They showed that participation had increased by 9.5% overall across all the campaign target areas. Specific monitoring had been conducted in student areas, and this showed a significant increase of 16.8% in participation levels. Combined with other monitoring data such as tonnage and survey data, the results allowed the council to determine the success of the campaign and make improvements to its communication strategy.

Keep in mind that...

⚠ **Measuring the impact of a campaign as a whole should be done using monitoring techniques guided by the aims, objectives and KPIs (general and specific to the campaign).**

⚠ **A lot of factors should be taken into account when evaluating the results of a communication campaign. For example: counting hits on a website does not tell the ways in which people are making use of it.**

⚠ **There is a need of transparency/legally defined implementation.**

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How to start? (REF: 3, 4, 5)

There are different types of objectives that can be set to help you monitor and evaluate communication activities, such as those recommended by:

- o **Input objectives** are those that describe what will be done, and are therefore a measure of your effort.
- o **Outcome objectives** are those that describe a change that must happen as a result of communications.
- o **Impact objectives** are those that describe what ultimate result of communications should be.

Table-1: Example of SMART objectives for monitoring communications

Communication campaign objective	Objective type	Associated monitoring objective
To distribute 15500 instructional leaflets to households by end March 2010.	Input	To keep a record of the number of leaflets distributed to households 12 by March 2010.
To increase the proportion of committed recyclers among Ward 12 residents during 2010 from a baseline of 35% to 65%.	Outcome	To measure the number of committed recyclers in Ward 12 by conducting a committed recycler survey of 1100 householders in January 2011.
To increase the amount of material recycled per household from 175 kg/hh/year to 220kg/hh/year by March 2011.	Impact	To measure the amount of material recycled per household by analysing tonnage figures against household numbers every month until March 2011.

GUIDELINE

For specific information about how do a monitoring of an awareness campaign, please visit link: *Wrap (2010) - Improving the Performance of Waste diversion Scheme: A good practice guide to monitoring and evaluation – chapter 10 – Monitoring communications campaigns*

Over the years, the Public Relations industry has developed tools aimed at assessing cost-effectiveness of mass media input measure and these may be valuable in defining inputs. Two main tools have been developed for this purpose:

- **Opportunities to See (OTS):** used to assess the size of the audience that could be potentially reached.
- **Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE):** used to assess printed coverage other than advertising.

In order to measure campaign success, a survey can be distributed after the campaigning activity has ended as long as people´s knowledge and awareness were measured before any campaigning took place. The difference can be at least partly attributed to the campaign.

Potential benefits

Identify opportunities to design and improve your service or scheme	●	●	●
Find out the strong and weak points to improve the coming communication campaigns	●	●	●
Develop effective communications campaigns that address the real issues faced by householders/citizens		●	●

References:

1. Wrap (2010) – Improving the Performance of Waste diversion Scheme: A good practice guide to monitoring and evaluation.
2. Wrap (2010) – REF 1 – Annex 1. Example description.
3. Wrap (2010) – REF 1– Chapter 4 – 9.
4. Wrap (2010) – REF 1– Chapter 10 – Monitoring communications campaigns.
5. Wrap (2010) – REF 1 – Chapter 4 – Monitoring awareness, claimed behaviour and satisfaction.

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