



News Eurideas

May 2011 Issue

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Attracting Attention: What makes your project a story and why it matters

You are managing a fantastic project and you want to let people know all about it. Great! But how will you entice them? How will you make them hear you? By telling a story, of course, one that draws them into your world—not some sterile, technical explanation of what you do, but something real, that they'll immediately want to be a part of.

People love good stories, but what makes a story great, who do you want to listen and what do you most want them to hear? The results of your fantastic project, right? Right, but those results don't necessarily constitute a gripping storyline. Not yet. But we can work our magic. The recipe is a delicate mix of relevance, novelty, ease of understanding and tone, which should ideally be political, controversial, sensational and original, depending on the context, of course, but let's be bold! Relevance is a key criterion too and is assessed in terms of the current and potential impacts of the information you convey on everyday life, and of its importance for society in general.

The news also needs to be understandable and meaningful for your target audience.

In this issue of Eurideas News we offer you some tips and suggest good practices on how to communicate about your projects, develop a good storyline and make it interesting and relevant for your stakeholders, who will certainly come back for more by the time you have finished!

'Eurideas News' is a newsletter issued by Eurideas Linguistic Services. Being a translation agency specialised in EU related topics, our aim is to talk about EU projects and organisations, countries, regions, politics and culture. If you would like to contribute to one of our next newsletters with an article, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Communicate your message: a roadmap to success

DEFINE THE OUTCOMES

- ◆ What do you want to achieve?

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

- ◆ **Analyse your case** and all available information.
- ◆ Look for existing **benchmarks** and research against which you can measure your performance.

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE?

- ◆ **Objectives:** Define the overall goals that you want to achieve. Set measurable objectives for your target audience.
- ◆ **Identify your target audience** (e.g.: policy makers, industrial groups, media, representatives of public and private sector funding institutions, project managers, consumers, communities, etc.)

HOW DO YOU GET THERE?

1. Identify the key messages:

- ◆ What are the messages that you want to transmit? Focus on the positive achievements and benefits your project brings.
- ◆ Keep your messages simple and jargon free.
- ◆ Support your messages with evidence.

'Emotional' messages vs. 'Functional' messages.

Which style would be more attractive for your target audience?

Example of a 'Functional' message: 'Stem cell research can provide us with information on how to prevent diseases' – if your target groups are scientists, researchers, industry groups, policy makers)

Example of an 'Emotional' message: 'Your parents' medical conditions and quality of life could benefit from the results of stem cell research' – if your target groups are consumers, communities, wider community)



2. Select the right information channels:

Examine the **channels** through you can reach your target groups. Some examples:

- ◆ **Individuals, wider community:** mass media, TV, popular press, internet, universities
- ◆ **Business-to-Business community:** trade fairs, seminars, specialist press, direct contacts

Build a network of campaign multipliers:

Campaign multipliers are organisations that can help you to raise awareness for your campaign and disseminate your message. How can you involve them? Find the organisations you think have direct contact with your target audiences. E.g.: if you want to reach young researchers, you can involve associations for young researchers, universities, forums of young researchers, etc.

3. Select the most appropriate communication tools:

Determine the most effective communications tools for your target group? Some examples: press releases, TV advertisements, on-line media, newsletters, sponsorship, events, case studies, presentations, personal contacts, etc.

4. Plan your programme:

- ◆ Phase your activities, don't do everything at once!
- ◆ Plan who you want your message to reach first (e.g.: influencers)
- ◆ It is advisable to establish a regular flow of information instead of ad-hoc announcements.
- ◆ Establish a list of spokespersons who can deal with particular aspects of your project or network, and ensure that they are informed about the overall plan and its key messages.

- ◆ And of course: you need to plan your budget and resources.

5. Strategy and Plan:

- ◆ **Prioritize and summarize:** what do you want to achieve, with whom, by when, within which budget; and how will you do that?
- ◆ Translate your global strategy into an activity plan, timescales, etc.

Set **S.M.A.R.T** objectives

Strategic: will it have a significant impact?

Is it **M**easurable?

Is it **A**ttainable, realistic?

Is it **R**elevant to our audiences?

Is it **T**ime-specific? Does it have a clear end date?

HOW DID YOU DO?

- ◆ Monitor results at pre-determined stages and adjust elements of the plan.
- ◆ Measure results against the objectives.
- ◆ Did you do what you set out in the plan?
- ◆ Did all your activities work towards the agreed objectives?
- ◆ How many people did you reach, how many times, over which period?
- ◆ What messages did people take away from the activities?
- ◆ What is the end result of your activities?
- ◆ Did you achieve our business goals?
- ◆ How did you change behavior?
- ◆ What could you improve for next time?



Interview with....

Philip Weiss

Philip Weiss is the Chairman of ZN and President of IABC Belgium, the Brussels based chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.

Over the course of the last decade, we have witnessed the incorporation of Internet into our daily lives and a great diversification of all communication channels. Under this new reality, how these changes influence the work of communicators today?

P.W.: The internet has dramatically changed the way communication works. Much more than a simple channel, it is changing the ability of individuals to communicate, enabling anyone with an internet connected device to join the conversation through a myriad of new channels. These tools (such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) are free or extremely cheap to use, so they make the process of communication much more open and interactive. This means communicators can no longer create a simple message they seek to repeat and control but they need to join and influence the conversation. They need to be ready to use these new tools, and understand the tone and form that is most acceptable to these new tools (quick, simple, honest and open – rather than slow, corporate, polished and controlled). Communicators need to understand, embrace and master this new environment and these new tools if they are to succeed in communication today.

Internet offers substantial communication opportunities, but how can we be sure that we implement the best online approach?

P.W.: There is no single 'correct' way to approach the internet, as so many variables change on an almost constant basis. However a few things can be applied to increase the chances of success:

1. Research the context in which you wish to communicate: who is engaged in this space? What are they saying? Which tools are they using? Where do they stand on the issues that matter to you.
2. Be prepared: you need to acknowledge that things can quickly change online so if you are going to communicate effectively on the internet you need to be prepared and able to respond quickly to questions and comments if the situation requires it.
3. Experiment: you need to be open to a trial and error approach, which means testing different tools and seeing what result they bring. Based on this you can fine tune and increase your activities.
4. Measure everything: the great advantage of the web is that most of the actions you do can be measured in some way or another. Be sure to measure what you can and analyse the data generated by your communication activities.

It's about change management: for most organisations the web is not just a new channel, it represents a new way of communicating and organising your teams. This often creates a great deal of resistance so if you want your internet initiative to be a success you need to lead the change in your organisation, educate yourself, your colleagues and keep learning.

ZN helps its clients to “hyperthink”. What is the meaning behind this concept?

P.W.: Hyperthinking is a concept that we developed over the years to capture the mindset needed to be able to imagine and implement an internet communication programme that works. We found that many of our colleagues and clients didn't have a method to be creative and systematically learn new thinking skills. The internet requires us to 'learn to learn' on a permanent basis, and have an open minded attitude to new technology and rediscover the joy of playing in a fascinating new world – as well as acknowledge that we need to learn all the time and that our ability to learn is a core competence. We describe the values and a series of tools that people can use to keep 'hyperthinking' in their daily work. Read more about this here: <http://www.hyperthinker.eu/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/hyperthinker-online-journey.pdf>

Networking and creating synergies are key elements in the EU Brussels arena. Are EU stakeholders aware of all the potential of social media in this sense?

P.W.: Brussels is by and large a very conservative place when it comes to EU affairs. I was recently at a meeting of communicators in a Brussels hotel and out of the 100 or so people there I was the only tweeting. This is quite different from many other communities. At the same time there is a great deal of buzz around the word 'social media' but it is by and large poorly understood. What communicators in Brussels need to do is gain personal experience of these new channels and then explore how online campaigns can be used for their organisations. I think we are probably 5 to 10 years away from the web being the core of every organisation that has a focus on communication but I believe it will happen.

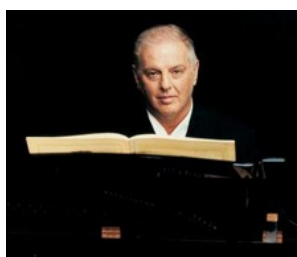
For more information on ZN visit: www.zn.be

ZN.be



AGENDA

AGENDA



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2



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1 ► **30 May, Brussels: Centre for Fine Arts. Daniel Boremboim.** Daniel Boremboim in concert. Daniel Barenboim has included Brussels in his recital tour. The programme will be entirely devoted to Schubert, a composer whom Barenboim has not played very often in the past.

2 ► **09 and 10 June, Brussels: FP7 Health - Open Information Day & Partnering Event.** The European Commission (Research and Innovation DG - Directorate Health) is organising an Open Information Day on FP7 Health research. The event aims to highlight the novelties of the 2012 Work Programme due to be published in July. It will provide guidance on proposal preparation and management. Visit: http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/events-05_en.html

3 ► **1-5 June, Euferia Andalusia, Atomium (Heysel).** The Euferia will take place this year again at the foot of the Atomium with all its flamboyant folklore and cultural festivities of the Andalusian tradition, including—among others—culinary Spanish delights, flamenco singing and dancing, horses performances. Visit: <http://www.euroferia.net>

4 ► **June 22-29, Flagey Arts Centre, Brussels European Film Festival.** The distinctive feature of the Festival is the exclusive promotion of European directors' first and second movies. More than 60 independent filmmakers are receiving a special attention at the festival. Visit: <http://www.brff.be>

5 ► **24-25 June, Couleur Café Festival, Tour & taxis.** An exposition of exotic and throbbing music. The organizers of Couleur Café invite the stars of the Caribbean, Africa and Latin America to put together a program to announce the arrival of summer. Like every year, a wide range of styles will be presented: R'nB, hip hop, soukous, reggae, dub, flamenco, salsa, son, zouk, folk, pop and electronic music, etc. Visit: <http://www.couleurcafe.be>