



platform for the implementation of NAIADES

Tips and tricks for inland navigation communication

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A. INTRODUCTION

While some people are “born communicators”, others can be made. Managers often have little communication training or experience yet need to serve as spokespeople because of their knowledge and expertise. Communication specialists can help formulate policy, coach from the wings, act as liaisons, and train other staff, but they cannot replace the important interchange between “the experts” and their stakeholders. By working together to plan communication both sides benefit and so achieve the communication goals of the organisation.

Communicating about inland waterways has its own special challenges, and this workbook is part of helping to plan effective communication and capitalise on one another's successes

This workbook assumes that one key to successful communication is effective planning. Even those with extensive communication experience may improve their efforts by improved planning. The hope is to replace last minute, poorly conceived communication efforts with well thought out ones. Throughout this workbook, we have taken the example of a European wide communication plan for inland navigation. These suggestions are examples which can be modified and applied throughout the work of your organisation.

“There's not enough time” is the most common reason for skipping the planning stage. In fact, ad-hoc communication efforts often take more time than carefully planned ones. Staff will often find themselves playing “catch up”, developing informational materials and holding meetings that might have been unnecessary if planning had occurred.

A.1 How to use this workbook

Organisations must have a concentrated and coordinated effort to communicate why they are important and what they contribute to society. This workbook can guide you in developing and implementing a communication plan for your organisation.

The ideas contained in this workbook are provided as examples. Every organisation is unique and therefore some of the ideas and tactics described may not apply to your organisation. Feel free to add, delete or change the content as needed.

A.1.1 Customising the plan

This workbook is a step-by-step guide to creating a communication plan for inland navigation in Europe. To be effective, it must be customized to reflect the challenges, goals and trends that affect your individual country and organisation.

Customizing your communication plan is just the beginning. You will need to refine and improve it as implementation and evaluation take place. The process of marketing requires a consistent and sustained effort and results take time, especially when we are working to change current opinions and habits.

A.1.2 Components of a finished plan

A completed plan can be used as a foundation for making other long-range planning and budgeting documents. A solid plan should contain the following components:

- Challenges currently facing the sector and your organisation
- Goals and recommendations
- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Market research
- Target audience
- Goals, objectives, strategies and tactics to be implemented as part of the communication plan
- Measurement tools

A.2 Acknowledgments and thanks

Much of the information, tips and techniques in this manual are drawn from the work conducted within the PLATINA Image workgroup with think.BBDO. We are very grateful for their professionalism and assistance throughout this process.

Ideas and techniques have also been drawn from “Texshare Communication Plan Workbook” (produced by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the TexShare communications Working group, Austin, Texas 2009) and “Communication Planning for Scientists and Engineers (Foundation for Education, Science and Technology – www.fest.org.za).

B. CONTEXT, SITUATION AND ANALYSIS

The background of the sector and your organisation provides a foundation for a communication and marketing plan. Review what you know about your organisation and its constituency. We have presented here the results of a European wide survey conducted on behalf of PLATINA by think.BBDO. Is this research valid for your organisation too? Do you know that there are things that differ within your own country context? At the end of this section, there is space for you to make your own notes.

B.1 Key findings of the research

In November and December 2008 think.BBDO investigated the reputation of inland waterway transport through a qualitative study amongst 51 respondents. The following categories of respondents gave their opinion on inland waterway transport:

- Industry and employer federations
- Journalists
- NGO
- Political and policy key figures
- Other general public (trend watchers, researchers, other opinion leaders)

As an introduction to the strategic communication agenda, we hereby give a summary of the key findings.

Awareness of inland waterway transports amongst respondents is limited to average. Those who have had experience with inland waterway transport are aware of the benefits and limitations of inland waterway transport. Others refer to rather general and obvious characteristics of inland waterway transport.

Awareness is largest amongst industry federations. NGO's also have a good awareness of inland waterway transport. This is not the case for political and policy key figures, who are more familiar with other forms of transport and put these more at the top of their agenda. Journalists have a good knowledge of the whole transport and logistics sector, inland waterway transport included. The general public is least familiar with transport and inland waterway transport.

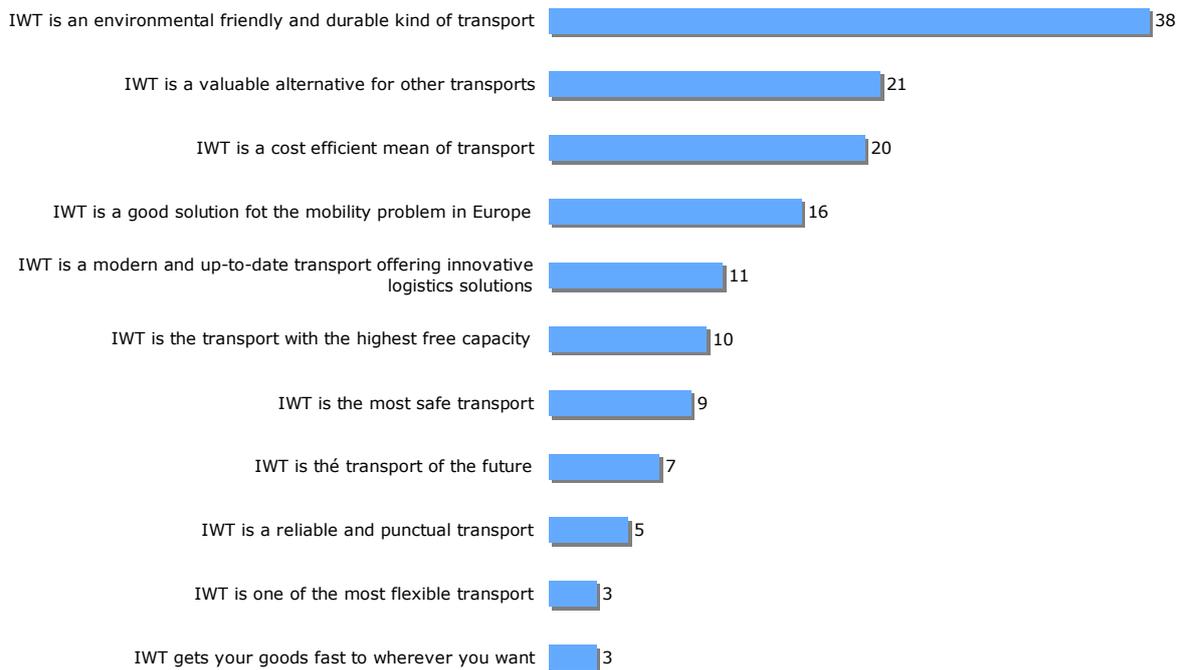
Due to a sometimes-limited awareness, all target groups express **the need for more communication and information**.

Respondents do have a **positive attitude** towards IWT, especially in comparison to transport by road and by plane.

The most **positive characteristics** associated with inland waterway transport are cost efficiency and its environmentally friendly character. Also in favour of inland waterway transport is the free capacity of the network, which offers reliability. Though IWT is perceived as an environmentally friendly kind of transport, NGO's have a more critical attitude towards IWT. They are concerned about the impact on nature and more specifically the impact on the morphology of rivers.

The **Downside** of inland waterway transport is the limitation of the existing network and infrastructure. Also, inland waterway transport is perceived as a slow transport with a lack of flexibility.

Respondents predict a positive future for inland waterway transport with opportunities for further development of the transport. Again, the need for more communication is expressed. The preferred message by far is that IWT is an environmentally friendly and durable kind of transport. A valuable alternative and cost efficient means of transport is also seen as interesting.



IWT as a transport is expected to grow in the coming years, and thus the economic importance of IWT as a transport, will increase.

The saying 'unknown, unloved' is not applicable to inland waterway transport. Inland waterway transport is not at all unloved but it is a bit unknown. The communication should change this.

B.2 Define your desired image

Once you have identified the background, you need to define the desired image for your organisation. Below is an example for European inland navigation defined together with all PLATINA SWP 4.1 members.

You can conduct a similar exercise for your organisation.

B.2.1 Brand summary or our DNA.

B.2.1.1 *Category (In which field are we active)*

Inland Waterway Transport is an important player in the European logistics and transport sector.

B.2.1.2 *Brand Vision (The reason to exist)*

Inland Waterway Transport is the oldest and newest transport in one. Inland Waterway Transport uses the natural network of waterways to help companies to get their freight where they want it.

B.2.1.3 *Brand Mission (A tangible statement on the contribution IWT should make to the customer's life)*

Inland Waterway Transport takes transport seriously. Inland Waterway Transport offers modern, integrated and positive solutions, which are cost efficient and sustainable.

B.2.1.4 *Brand Core competences (Sustainable strengths of IWT as acknowledged by different target groups)*

- Environmentally friendly: Inland Waterway Transport is the most environmentally friendly form of transport
- Cost effective
- Free capacity: an alternative solution for the congestion problem
- Reliable and safe
- Interconnectivity

B.2.1.5 *Human drivers of IWT (Key brand differentiators on a service and attitude level)*

- **Vitality**
Inland Waterway Transport has a network with free capacity. Thus, it guarantees efficient transport. This helps companies and communities to grow their business and attain their ambitions.
- **Parenting**
Inland Waterway Transport is environmentally friendly, aligning people, planet and

profit. It is sustainable and takes into account the environment of today and tomorrow. Inland Waterway Transport - always thinking ahead.

- **Tribalism**

Inland Waterway Transport isn't a solo player in the logistics landscape but is part of a living network. Collaboration and interaction with other transport modes offers integrated solutions. This makes us feel connected.

B.2.1.6 Brand personality (How does IWT look and how does it behave)

- Open
- Agile
- Durable
- Cooperative

B.2.1.7 Brand Essence (A single minded definition of what IWT stands for in the marketplace, this is not a baseline)

- [H2O]² – this concept sums up the concepts explained above – it is a kind of shorthand for the brand summary – the power of water, squared.

B.2.2 Create your own brand summary:

Fill in your own Brand summary for your organisation – this is best done in consultation with all the members of your organisation – plans that are created together achieve better buy-in and implementation.

B.2.2.1 Category (In which field are you active)

B.2.2.2 Brand Vision (The reason to exist)

B.2.2.3 Brand Mission (A tangible statement on the contribution your organisation should make)

B.2.2.4 Brand Core competences (Sustainable strengths of your organisation as acknowledged by different target groups)

B.2.2.5 Human drivers of your organisation (Key brand differentiators on a service and attitude level)

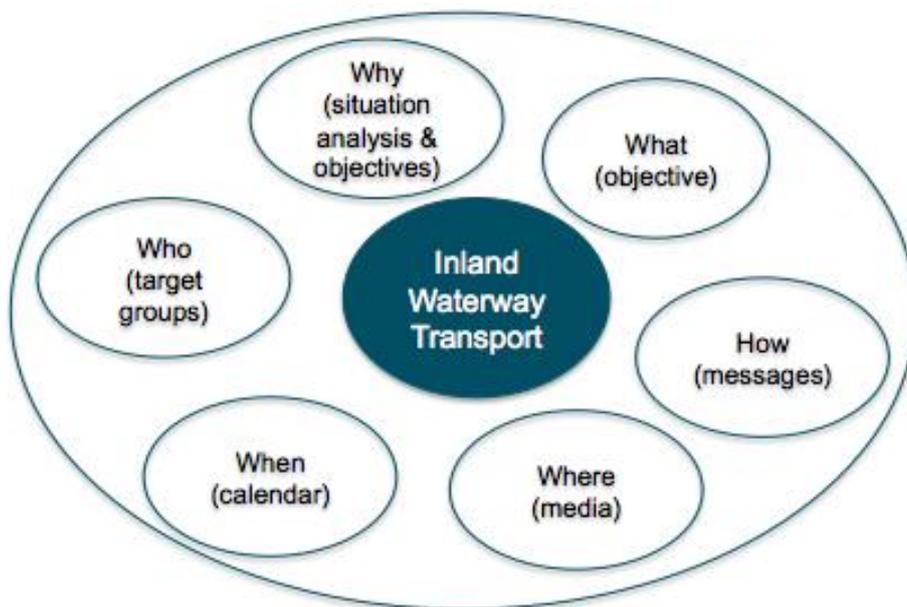
B.2.2.6 Brand personality (How does your organisation look and how does it behave)

B.2.2.7 Brand Essence (A single minded definition of what your organisation stands for in the marketplace, this is not a baseline)

C. THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AGENDA

Starting from these research findings, the insights we defined and the positioning for inland waterway transportation, we need to define the following elements:

Within this document, we start by defining the objectives, and then move on to the other elements.



C.1 Communication objectives

The start of the communication plan is the definition of the objectives. We have to answer the question: what do we want to achieve with the forthcoming plan?

This is how the PLATINA members answered the question:

Inland Waterway Transport is rather unknown (a few target groups are an exception on this): there's a knowledge deficit. On the other hand, most target groups have a positive attitude towards IWT, mostly based on positive general items they link with it. Therefore it is clear that IWT is in a strange situation, namely 'unknown, but rather loved'. So the attitude level is good, the knowledge level on the other hand isn't. This important insight determines the setting for the communication objectives we will now define.

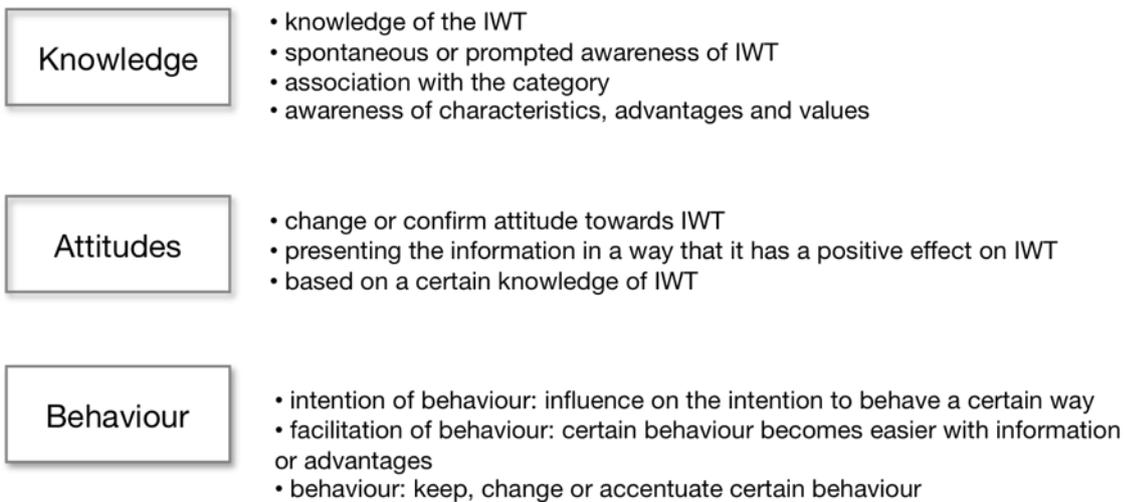
The overall objective is to generate a better acceptance (= being a full alternative) of IWT by all concerned target groups (which will be defined in the next point). There is

There are many models one can use for defining communication objectives, but one of them is the think (knowledge) – feel (attitude) – do (behaviour) –model.

Briefly explained, this model asserts that every organisation, brand or activity can base its positioning

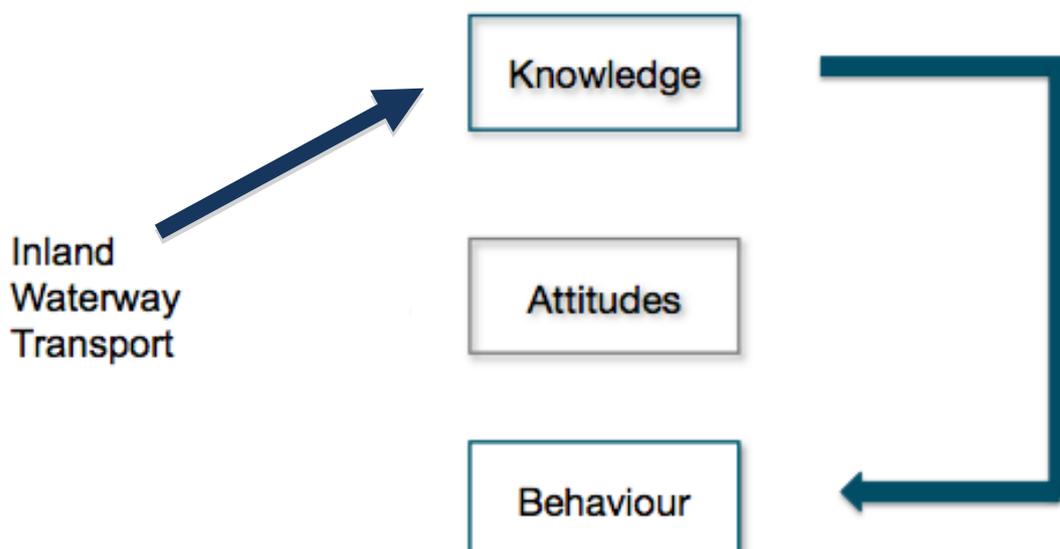
- on knowledge (eg. work on the awareness of the activity or knowledge);
- on the attitude of the target groups towards the activity;
- on the behaviour of the target groups.

It is also possible to work on more than one element.



So via actions and communication you can decide to only work on knowledge (objective). This doesn't mean that this won't have an effect on (both) attitude and behaviour. Working on one or two of the previous elements, can imply an indirect or direct effect on another (indirect) objective.

Given the fact that attitude towards IWT is already positive today and the fact that the information targets groups have about IWT isn't always complete, correct or



C.2 The Communication strategy

Once you are clear on the background, you can move on to the communication strategy. This is what think.BBDO identified as important within a European wide IWT strategy, based on the objectives identified above:

C.2.1 Factual in messaging

Our first task is to provide information in order to reinforce the already positive attitude and to convince the target groups that IWT is a positive and real alternative. What this means is that **messaging has to be factual**. This is because it is clear from the research that many of our target audience are not even aware of some of the basic facts that we take for granted. But, they are in search of and open for our information and communication, in order to evaluate our mode of transportation based on factual information.

Of course, there's no communication without a certain tone of voice, which also has an effect on the message. The tone of voice of the communication is determined by the approved brand summary and gives the factual messages a somewhat emotional pigment.

To be concrete: have target groups have to be given correct information about IWT, they even 'ask' for it. But it is also necessary to focus on some elements. Don't try to say everything at once. Don't overload the message. First trigger people with one or two clear key messages. Afterwards they will either 'talk' (dialogue) or look for more information, which should be easily available then. Let them decide on their own, based on the information. In other words: be factual, clear and focused.

C.2.2 One unifying idea puts IWT on the map

Our previous point made it clear: we need to be factual to reach the primary objective. But on the other hand, facts on their own don't sell very well either. Therefore we need an appealing concept (including tone of voice). Because in these days, you not only need a strong and distinctive USP – Unique selling proposition, you also need a recognizable and effective ESP – Emotional selling proposition. And both of them should be well aligned.

It's clear that this creative concept should be 'different' from IWT. Inland waterway transportation is, as a 'concept', too factual and loaded.

A creative concept gets the best of both worlds (the factual and emotional one).

Of course, boosting knowledge is still the key objective. But on this level we should create an overall concept that, on the one hand, 'shows' the importance and advantages of IWT and, on the other hand, 'gets' the target groups on a more 'emotional' level, strengthening the already positive attitude by giving the strong and clear arguments. We find a very good example of such a covering campaign in the 'Woolmark' campaign.

The Woolmark is all about raising awareness about wool quality on an international level (for the general public in their case) and giving wool as a textile the image it deserves in the public mind, namely a modern, versatile and effective product of a dynamic industry.



So, communicating clear and simple facts is still our priority, but these facts also need to correct some of the aspects of the image of IWT: making it more 'attractive', and a true alternative, for other industries and potential clients. Therefore you not only need a limited number of clear messages, but also an umbrella, an integrated **quality label** (and style guide). In the 'Woolmark' campaign an umbrella logo or quality label was also created and is used by the individual participants.

Next to that, a clear baseline can communicate the key positioning.

It communicates your Unique Selling Point and Emotional Selling Point. This quality label and baseline builds on the already existing and gained qualities, but moreover concentrates on the key elements of your message for the next 5 – 8 years. It's a factual and emotional proposition.

A quality label and baseline adds clear value to IWT because it generates and creates unity and recognition over the different countries, with the different target groups.

It should be used in every communication (pan-European and per country). By doing this, communications will reinforce each other and will be recognized more easily. It also powers the individual communication. Unity and consistency in the graphical approach and appearance (on all levels) will strengthen the message.

Does your organisation have a USP or an ESP?

Would your organisation benefit from being part of an umbrella brand?

C.2.3 360° communication

Once the desired image is decided, the next step is “getting it out there”.

One way to do this is to use the 360° approach. How this works is that you start from a central **‘big’ idea** and/or **from central messages**, which will be communicated **via the different chosen channels/means**. Next to that, all means used should have the correct tone of voice and, if applicable, the same look & feel, all based on the defined brand summary.

The 360° approach means that we go from (often) many heterogeneous communication to a more integrated communication - both **on the level of messaging and on the level of look & feel** -.

Together with this principle we need to have a **rational approach** of the used means: it’s better to have 5–10 good and effective means, instead of 20-30 spread and inconsistent means.

Via this approach we will be able to build a consequent and consistent reputation and our target groups will recognize our messages more easy and feel approached in a clear way.

We will use a spectrum of effective means for our target groups, but we will be rational to cover the information flow and reinforce messaging to all defined target groups on national and European level.

C.2.4 Tips and Tricks

C.2.4.1 *Create a dialogue and interaction*

Nowadays, communication is all about creating a dialogue or interaction between yourself and your target groups. That way, communication is at its strongest and best. But creating a dialogue is more than face-to-face communication.

The most important thing is that our communication shouldn’t be a one-way road. We should deliver the necessary information to the target groups, because that is the key element for achieving the set goals. But we also have to avoid a top-down communication.

The creation of a dialogue already starts at the information/knowledge level. As said before, we should focus on some key messages, but of course, when people are interested, they should also be able to find details on this, as easy as possible (information pyramid).

Another example is NGO’s. NGO’s are difficult to convince, so don’t try to convince them by playing the hard negotiator. It’s better to provide the right arguments and information, in an objective manner, and let them decide for themselves: let them talk to you and interact with you based on your information and their experience and knowledge.

No need to say that the convincing part of the process (behaviour) is all about interaction and dialoguing. Good arguments are an important part of this process, but even more important is to show empathy during a (physical or indirect) dialogue:

presenting inland waterway transport as cooperative, looking together for the best solutions, listening to specific demands and problems, etc.

C.2.4.2 Convincing is part of the business and selling process

Communication **flows over into our other processes** (which is of course also communication). **Messages** should all be **aligned** with the elements of the brand summary and with the key messages defined in the plan.

But also, our attitude during this process should be well in line with the brand summary, meaning that we should be cooperative and looking for solutions, open, agile, thinking ahead, talking and promoting our co-modality network, our just in time transport, etc.

This way, the business process will be consistent with the communication process, and on top of that strengthening each other.

C.2.4.3 Communicate towards primary and secondary target groups

We will discuss this choice in detail in the section covering target groups.

C.2.4.4 (Let) third parties talk about you

The message is always stronger when communicated by a third (objective) party.

If an objective messenger talks about IWT in a positive way, this will always have a bigger impact. Then we're not 'selling our own business': other people are doing it for us.

Therefore we will also propose some ideas and means based on this principle.

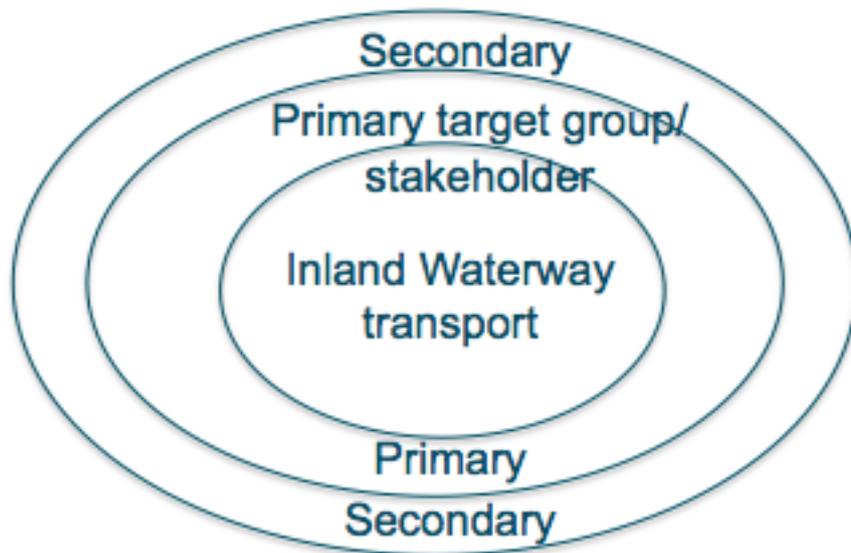
C.2.5 In conclusion:

- Knowledge and behaviour strategy: improve knowledge, stimulate positive behaviour.
- Be factual in messaging.
- Create one unifying idea: baseline & trademark/ quality label and a creative concept. Unity in our graphical approach and appearance will strengthen the message.
- Follow the 360° approach of communication: starting from one 'big' idea and/or your key message(s) and use them in all of the (chosen) means.
- Create a dialogue.
- Communicate towards primary and secondary target groups.
- (Let) third parties talk about you.

C.3 Target groups

In this section, we talk about how to define different target groups inland waterway transport.

We need to make a distinction between primary and secondary target groups and (potential) influencers. In the diagram below, you see how this works for inland waterway transport.



C.3.1 Primary target group

The primary target group includes the audiences that have a direct impact and implication on your organisation. For the PLATINA image group, we decided that the target group that has the most impact and implication on the development and usage of inland waterway transport was the manufacturing industry and political key figures and policy makers.

- The manufacturing industry (current users of inland waterway transport as well as potential users - we will target the decision makers of these companies (logistics managers, general managers or others deciding on the modal decisions of the company); this can also be people and companies offering integrated logistics services)
 - The category of the industry comprises in first instance the general industry, that is all companies that need transport for their goods and thus might

consider using IWT as an alternative to other transport modes or as an integrated part of an intermodal itinerary.

- As subcategories of the above we would pinpoint not only classical target companies such as those shipping bulk transport but also car manufacturers or electronic goods manufacturers.
- The second category comprises the transport operators that have influence on the way transport is organized and who can advise their transport clients to opt for IWT instead of more traditional transport modes as well as the ship owners. These are objective partners and they need to be informed on the prospects of IWT.
- Both types of potential clients of IWT need to be convinced that IWT is a realistic and positive alternative, easy to organize. The organisational benefit will be promoted together with values such as flexibility and cost-effectiveness rather than the environmental advantage (cfr. also later).
- Political key figures and policy makers (including national and European political key figures involved on transport, environment or regional development). Policy makers are to be divided in two categories.
 - The first one is on the international level,
 - in particular the European Parliament and very specifically the members of the Transport Committee of the EP, the whips in that Committee and finally the secretariats of the main political factions in the EP
 - Within the Commission it is still vitally important to target the higher levels of the Commission, where knowledge and support might be less.
 - The European level needs to be supported in its policies to make funds available to finance often expensive and cross borders projects and to act as a stimulator and facilitator through suitable legislation for the promotion of IWT.
 - The second level is the national level,
 - The Ministers of the transport and environment on the one hand and the political parties on the other hand.
 - They need to be convinced to see IWT not only as a environmentally friendly transport mode but also to plan and finance the necessary projects for waterways and terminals as well as facilitating the use of IWT.
 - European as well as national politicians will be listening carefully to arguments such as: 'IWT will help fight road congestion', because road congestions are in all regions and at all levels a burden on the economy and a daily stress for their commuters.

C.3.2 Secondary target group

The secondary target group consists of influencers that have an indirect impact on the awareness, attitude or behaviour towards your organisation. For European inland waterway transport we identified the secondary target group as NGO's (and other environmental opinion makers) and the media.

- NGO's (non-governmental organizations) and other environmental opinion makers.
 - NGO's are already aware of the ecological benefits of IWT. But they still tend to only give support under the condition that eg. changes in river morphology are carried out according to strict ecological principles. It's difficult to convince them 100%, so we should try to 'force' them (more on this, later on under the chapter messages).
 - Many NGO's have specialized experts (studying water management eg.) in house. They won't easily be influenced by a simple brochure or advertising language. But on the other hand, they may be open (because they already have a quite positive attitude towards IWT) to a scientific and rational argumentation that supports IWT as a valuable alternative to road and plane transport.
- Media (economical journalists, specialized press). The media can be split up in two categories.
 - First we have the general media. Their angle of reach: the elite and more in particular the decision takers, both at a European and a national level. They need to receive information that positions IWT as a modern transport alternative, ideal for business. They are to receive the arguments that allow them to plead for IWT and thus influence politicians. Not only by supporting, and communicating, our arguments, but also because they have the powerful capacity to set the agenda and thus, to a great extent, decide what politics will deal with. They are to push for items such as funding of infrastructure projects, responsible adaptation of rivers, promotion of IWT and, why not, a specific fiscal regime.
 - The second category is the specialised industry publications. On the one hand we have the industry magazines and on the other hand the transport and logistics press as well as the IT media (who might be interested in software programs optimizing traffic flows).

They both need to get targeted and factual information on the economic advantages of IWT, stressing items such as cost-efficiency, flexibility, speed, etc.

C.3.3 Potential influencers

You could also identify other target groups as potential influencers. Other target groups for European IWT are:

- the general public
- education
- leisure

You need to know that this group is there, but we should suggest that taking into account time, effectiveness, budget, etc., you should only **concentrate**, certainly in the first three years, your communication **towards the primary and secondary target group**.

What are the potential influencers for your organisation?

It's always important not to try and do everything at once, but focus. Budget and timing are important factors in this. Communication has no effect when fragmented. It will be important to make sure that the communication has enough body to make an impact. So, if budget resources are limited or for any other reason, you still can decide to focus on some target audiences and goals to efficiently use your means.

D STRATEGIC MESSAGES

Once you have identified your target audience, brand summary and goals, you need to clarify your strategic key messages. This is the process and thinking behind the PLATINA partner's development of strategic key messages for European inland navigation:

D.1 Background

It's clear, from think.BBDO's research, that **nobody is really against IWT**. But IWT has to deal with **indifference**.

So we needed to focus on information (which will also correct some incorrect prejudices that exist). As we will later on see in this chapter, we should provide basic and correct information at first, but we also have to make sure that more detailed information is easily available for people wanting to know more about it.

In the process 'awareness → relationship/behaviour', people go from little but fundamental information (knowledge leverage and creation of awareness) to detailed information (to create, or confirm, their attitude and behaviour).

D.2 Strategic key messages

The strategic key messages the PLATINA partners formulated were based on the brand summary, in which we presented a picture of inland waterway transport's DNA.

- Inland waterway transportation is the **perfect mode for all kind of products/goods** (not only bulk transportation), because we operate just in time and we have a lot of **free capacity**, making sure that we can guarantee you efficient transportation.
 - In this, cases like Nike and Heineken can give our image an enormous boost and provide the proof that IWT isn't only effective for bulk transport. The condition for this: others should know about these cases, so we need to communicate them (testimonials, best practices, factsheet, ...).
- We provide you with **integrated solutions**; we get your products/goods from A to B in the most efficient (also cost-efficient) and effective manner, and you don't have to be settled next to a river or canal.
- We have an **integrated network** of rivers and canals in the **whole of Europe**.

D.3 More tips and tricks

Below are some suggestions think.BBDO made for communication about European inland navigation – do these apply to your organisation?

D.3.1 Don't explicitly play out the ecological aspect

Why wouldn't we play out the 'green' and 'durable' aspect of IWT in an explicit way?

There are three important reasons for this.

- Firstly, the target groups we defined already link this aspect to IWT, so we **already obtained this advantage** (in a generic way).
- Secondly, you **don't want to overpromise** in regards to ecology. If you start to play out this aspect in a way that is too obvious and too explicit, ecologists will react, and that could harm you more than the possible advantages you would gain from it. But it doesn't mean, at all, that we shouldn't use this argument. We should, but only on a secondary and supporting level.
- Finally, it is a proven fact that **you don't convince** potential clients, or in extension other target groups, **with the argument 'we are green or we are the greenest'**. Ecological arguments are only effective, when all of the other elements (cost efficiency, reliability, etc.) are on the same level (or better) than those of its/your competitors. Therefore we should only use this in a supporting way. It is key now to **show our economical relevance**, because that is the only way to convince the target groups. Being ecological is neat but not enough as an argument to convince them.

With regards to NGO's, we want to point out an extra point of attention: don't try to convince NGO's by all means.

think.BBDO's research indicates that NGO's (being the most critical about IWT) will support IWT, because they believe that transportation over road and by plane are far more ecological damaging. But, even so, they are still concerned about the impact on the landscape among others (that's their task).

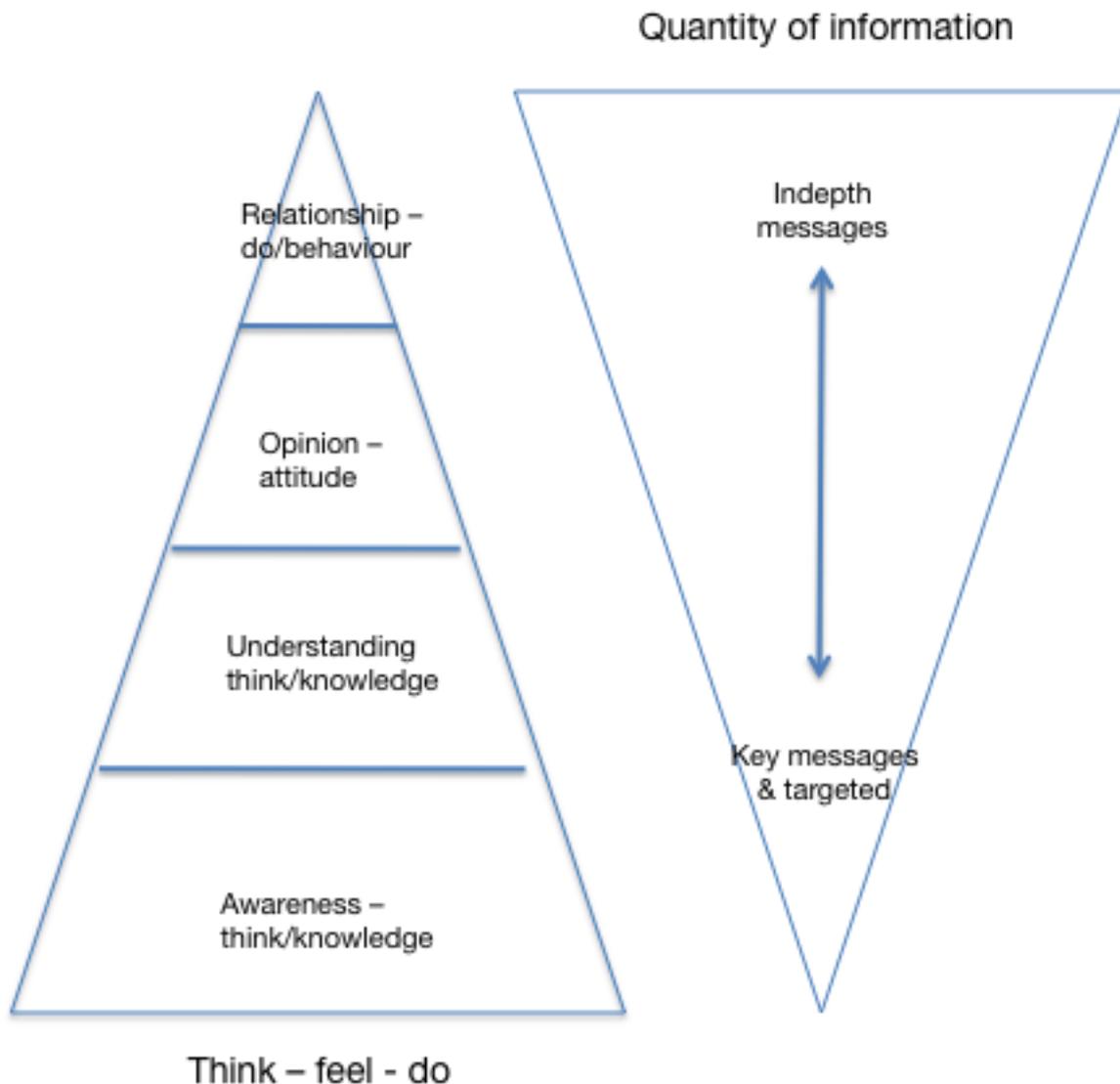
So communication shouldn't stretch on trying, by all means, to convince NGO's that IWT has no impact on the environment at all. The only thing we can and should do, is give them (factual) more information and objective arguments and let them come to conclusions for themselves (hopefully in a dialogue with us). So there's no need to try to take away all negative elements. It's more efficient and realistic to stress the positive elements.

D.3.2 Principle of the inverted information pyramid

The information 'pyramid' or triangle has a broad base at the top of the figure, representing the most substantial and important information you want to convey.

The triangle's orientation is meant to illustrate that this kind of material should be 'available' for all your defined target groups. These are your key messages.

The other material (more detailed) should follow. This material has to be available for the target groups that seek for more information, but you don't use it in all communication, otherwise you'll have an information overload and your key message(s) will be 'covered' by too detailed information.



One strategy too often used, but not the correct and most efficient one, is the tendency to swamp the broad market with a vast amount of information about the brand, organisation or activity.

A common reasoning for this is to hit segments (target groups) of the market with a shotgun approach to information dissemination. This is a wrong approach that will add to the marketing/communication 'noise' population and rather discourage potential clients. Even if information should get through to the intended target groups, it would probably be isolated to such an extent that it would have little impact.

A better approach is to **segment the market** (= define target groups, as defined before) and **target these segments with short messages and with the most efficient and impactful means**. This is the best guarantee that they will get through to the intended groups. These different target groups have the same (key) messages, but sometimes a different telling (tone of voice, ...) of the same message.

If we succeed in getting the target groups with our clear and simple messages, it is likely that the recipient will want more information, as they work their way up the pyramid through understanding (also building on knowledge), evaluation and creating an opinion (behaviour) and into a relationship/partnership/...(behaviour).

The information available accompanies this climb – but doesn't force it upon the target group(s) - and therefore we should make sure it is available.

But, once more, we first need to concentrate on the knowledge level, thus the clear and simple key messages.

Do these tips work for you?

E 360° COMMUNICATION: THE MEANS

Once you have defined your target audience and message, you move on to the practical application. If we apply the holistic or 360° approach of communication, meaning that we go from (often) (many) heterogeneous communication to a more and an integrated communication (messaging and look&feel), together with the consistent messaging, we will achieve a more consequent and consistent image: communication will be recognized and thus its impact will be greater.

The knowledge of the different target groups is once again crucial in order to reach them (means) in an efficient way. It is important to understand them and know them.. This is the fundament for the next part: we use the insights that made us able to choose the most pertinent means, and develop the most effective ideas, to reach them. We take into account the needs of the different relevant target publics and focus as much as possible, in order to use the limited means for the large territory in an efficient and effective way.

Do you know enough about your target audience? How can you learn more?

We suggest a spectrum of media/means that cover our information flow and reinforce messaging to all defined target groups.

Finally, as said before, the 360° approach also implies a consistent look & feel (the proposed quality label (and graphical guidelines) and baseline), that is used in every communication and actions from now on.

The following proposals can be split up in three groups.

- Graphical identity (quality label), baseline and creative concept
- PR actions and proposals
- Advertising (based on a creative concept).

but all of these elements serve the same purpose: spread clear and simple information about IWT to the defined target groups.

E.1 Graphical identity and baseline

We already discussed this point in a previous chapter: we need an **appealing creative concept** (including tone of voice) to create recognition and a 'relationship': the basic for this is the creation of a quality label (+ style guide), a baseline and a creative concept for advertising.

The look & feel, defined by the quality label and in the style guide, should be used in every communication (360° approach) in order to be consistent.

Finally a creative concept, for your campaign, should be developed based on the brand summary.

Below you will find an outline of suggested steps for preparing an effective communication plan.

E.2 PR actions

E.2.1 Preparation of the communication and the campaign

The preparation of the communication process can include the following items:

E.2.1.1 A meeting with the different organisers

All organisers should meet three months in advance of the communication and campaign in order to fine-tune the program, the messaging, discuss remaining problems and discuss in detail the whole campaign and communication.

It would be advisable to make sure that stakeholders are invited and present to meet up with the organisers and to exchange views. You then can present them the communication and campaign program and leave room for their comments and/or input. By doing this, we get their buy-in in the program and we try to convince them to play a role in this process, both actively (in seminars and policy discussions, as interviewees in the news magazine) and passively (as a target group of the campaign).

E.2.1.2 Create a toolbox

In order to create consistency in the different communications, a toolbox could be the solution.

This way, you are able to create a consistent communication (both on the level of messages as on the level of look & feel and tone of voice).

A toolbox could contain:

- How to...
 - Tips and trick on how to organize press contacts
 - The do's and don'ts of media interviews
 - How to organize a press conference
 - How to organize an event with journalists attending
 - How to talk to policy makers; with a prepared list of arguments which can then easily be adapted to specific national circumstances.
 - How to talk to NGO's; with a prepared list of facts and arguments; which can be adapted to national circumstances.
- Information and messages
 - The key messages
 - Basic facts and data on your organisation
 - A standard slide presentation on your organisation
- Coherent visual identity
 - Graphical guidelines: the quality label, the baseline and the different graphical guidelines
 - The creative concept
 - Stock pictures and video's about your organisation for use in press relations
- Organisational information
- A detailed copy of the programme of the communication process

- A clear explanation of what is expected in the context of the communication process
- A list with possible themes for activities (press releases, interview opportunities, press conferences, debates,...)

E.2.1.3 Identify spokespeople to support your organisation

Experts supporting your message (let others talk about you) will create added value, certainly because of the specific topic we're dealing with.

In public relations these people are called popes, because in their area of expertise they have the necessary and undoubted authority to speak and be listened to.

Therefore a list of all relevant spokespeople on your organisation, on transport and on logistics, and even some experts on economy and the environment, could be assembled and contacted, in order to 'convince' them to participate.

Of course, this all needs to be done in all transparency (they need to know about the goals, the communication program, our expectations towards them need to be clear from the start,...).

The popes' role: we should be able to call upon them as speakers in seminars, as interviewees, as available contacts for journalists looking for a scientific and independent point of view,...

Who could be a spokesperson for your organisation?

E.2.2 Activities of the communication and campaign

Here is a suggestion as to how a communication campaign for European inland navigation could look. Can you adapt this for your organisation?

E.2.2.1 *Launch of the campaign and communication*

The campaign starts with a European kick off and several national kick offs.

- *European launch*

The European kick off ideally takes place in the presence of civil servants of the DG Transport of the Commission and a selected number of members of the EP Transport Committee.

On this occasion the communication program will be presented, so that the buy-in of the Commission and the EP Transport Committee can be ensured.

The Commission (and preferably the Transport Commissioner) could deliver the key note speech on the future of IWT in Europe.

The European accredited journalists should be invited and a press release has to be send afterwards.

National organisers need to relay this press conference on their markets.

- *National launches*

In the weeks following the European launch, national kick off meetings could be organized in the participating countries.

We would advise them to organize their press conference in an *IWT habitat*, that way we make the medium (part of) the message and this, again, will reinforce your message. Because when you organize your press conference in a relevant place, such as a harbour or intermodal hub, the subject of your communication is physically visible.

(Organizing the press conference in a capital of course has the advantage of the media being concentrated there. But when your message or the subject of your press conference is strong enough (and the location adds value), journalists are prepared to travel some distance.)

The general and specialised press has to be invited and the program of the national communication needs to be explained.

On top of that, both national and European policy makers should be invited.

- *Visit to harbours/intermodal hubs*

Visits to harbours and/or intermodal hubs are a very effective tool to create visibility and attract the attention of (business) media and transport and logistics press.

The program could include on the spot sessions and inhouse sessions with a *pope* (see above), explaining the more theoretical side of the story.

It is also essential to have some national businessmen, transport companies, shippers and/or companies using IWT present, to testify about their experiences with IWT.

These visits need to be prepared in advance, with all speakers present, to make sure that all messages are well aligned.

It is also important not to “drown the fish” in too much figures and details. Once again you should first concentrate on the key messages.

The program could be:

- Introduction by the local organiser
- Speech by EU representative on IWT in Europe and its prospects
- Key note speech by a transport and logistics specialist
- A discussion panel with industry representatives (transporters, shippers, companies using IWT) on the prospects (and threats) of IWT
- Visit to the installations
- Questions & answers session
- Drink

The visits need to be very functional and educational, in a sense that they need to go beyond ‘just showing installations’. We need establish a genuine understanding of the advantages of IWT:

- Intermodal transport is a realistic and functional alternative
- Intermodal transport is an investment in its and the future
- Intermodal transport will grow in the future (free capacity)

What could be communication activities for your organisation – do you have events?

E.3 Yet more tips and tricks!

E.3.1 Organisation of debates on IWT on television stations

You can contact the television stations with a 'ready to broadcast' concept of a debate on IWT:

- by providing a list of IWT *popes* and experts and other relevant participants from industry and government
- creating a scheme for the debate
- a draft questionnaire, with introduction texts and annotated theme lists

Why would television stations be prepared to listen, let alone broadcast this? All television stations in Europe are cutting their budget, so all help is welcome, both in the form of basic preparation of work (cfr. above), proposals of easy to implement formats/concepts and concrete financial help.

The only important condition for this: it needs to be very interesting and relevant for the television station and its audience.

It is of course important that there's no influence on the outcome of the debate. All liberty in the organisation of the debate should stay with the television stations.

The real challenge is on the level of information and content: get IWT on the agenda (its advantages, its potential (just in time, reduction road congestion, ecological benefits,...) by putting it in a broader scope.

In order to maximize the chances of succeeding in convincing television stations (also taking into account the needs of audiovisual media), a budget should be foreseen to provide footage on IWT both in Europe and in particular in the concerned country.

E.3.2 Select your communication tools with care

Here is a list of possible communication tools that can help you "sell" your organisation and its goals.

E.3.2.1 *The website*

Today's communication is more successful with a professional website. The website is the ideal medium to, in first place, communicate your key message but also, in second place and on a lower level in its structure, provide the target groups with detailed information.

Next to that, it should also display the creative concept (and campaign), the quality label and the baseline. The website should be designed in the created look & feel.

Your website is a medium able to incorporate educational, advertising and audiovisual material and by doing this, it has the potential to create the perfect IWT universe which we would like to leave behind with its visitors.

The website should be as interactive (creating a dialogue) as possible.

Furthermore it could contain the following chapters (not exhaustive):

- Quality label and baseline
- Its design, look & feel, is aligned with the graphical guidelines (same look & feel as all of the other means)
- The key messages
- Facts and figures on your organisation
- The campaign/creative concept
- An overview with the objectives and the program of your organisation
- A calendar with upcoming events
- A presentation of your organisation and its advantages on economic and ecological level
- Video, visual and audio material
- Background articles on your organisation
- Overview of European legislation and initiatives concerning your organisation
- A search function
- The possibility to ask questions that will be answered
- Testimonials.
- A number of blogs with interviews of popes, or posts by popes or other interesting people.
- It should have a press room where articles on your organisation can be downloaded.
- Forum
- Who's who in your organisation and how to contact them.
- A list with FAQ, Frequently Asked Questions

E.3.2.2 A factsheet - Everything you ever wanted to know about IWT

If we want to achieve a higher knowledge level with our target groups, a simple and clear general factsheet, visually attractive, should be created and distributed. This factsheet's starting points are the key messages and key advantages, scrolling down into more details... It should be visually attractive (based on the graphical guidelines) and it should be easy to read.

E.3.2.3 One-on-one conversation – creating a dialogue via direct marketing

To complement our messages in print-media (cfr. 5.3. Advertising), we could also start a one-on-one conversation via a direct mailing with the different target groups.

A direct mailing to a selected database will allow us to provide additional information and backgrounds in order to fully inform the involved audience about the benefits of your organisation. A direct mailing also allows the addressees to respond if they seek more information (and it allows you to include a 'call to action' (eg. visit our website, leave a comment on our forum,...)).

This offers possibilities to start conversations with the different stakeholders.

E.3.2.4 White Paper, best practices

A White Paper with best practices could be edited and published throughout Europe. The editorial committee should be composed of relevant actors but also top academics and political actors, who must guard the content (its quality and its political relevance). This way, we can ensure that the White Paper cannot be contested in any way and can be used in all countries.

A good balance needs to be found between the European level (with its trans-border legislation and its TREN projects) and the different national levels.

The White Paper needs to be presented officially on a European level and on the different national levels.

E.3.2.5 Study/research

The communication of the results of performed research (on transportation in general or on IWT in particular) always has a strong impact.

Of course, firstly you need to check the different studies that are possibly already available. But it's clear that there might be some elements that need some more, or first, research. So why not organize this over the different member countries?

It is the perfect trigger to communicate interesting information and it allows us to 'claim' the position of 'we speak in the name of the sector' (which is a strong and relevant claim, given the fact that we 'promote' intermodality).

Before you start the study, clearly define the point you want to make with the results.

E.3.2.6 Ready to use articles on IWT

- Testimonials for use by the media.
 - A number of ready to use testimonials need to be produced, eg. on the following topics
 - IWT used in some concrete situations
 - showing off co-modality and its efficiency
 - IWT for bulk transportation but also for other goods

It is important that these testimonials, in time, cover all regions and major waterways for IWT.

- Interviews with popes for use by the media:
Prepare a number of ready to use interviews with popes (ready for publication but also as background information for interested journalists).

E.3.2.7 The news magazine

An important element of this communication could and should be a news magazine.

It shouldn't contain more than 8 pages, but it's best to choose a large format, in order to be able to use nice and strong photos (because a picture tells more than a thousand words) and to insert simple graphic schemes.

Its purpose is to keep on communicating essential and up-to-date information on your organisation and to create and maintain momentum with the target groups (with industry, in politics and press).

We should take into account that people in general and our target groups in particular are very occupied and don't have much time to spend on reading. Therefore the magazine should be conceived as a fast to read medium and the messages have to be clear and unequivocal.

Subjects could be: interviews with major players in the IWT field, new (sort of) clients, comparison of IWT with its main competitors, facts and figures, articles on modality, the creative campaign, etc.

Once again, the look & feel of the magazine should of course be 100% aligned with the graphical guidelines.

E.3.2.8 Mailshots to specific target audiences

Some specialized transport and logistics magazines sell databases of their subscribers. This could be a good channel to communicate directly with one of your target groups, namely the industry (both shippers, transport companies and industries using, or not using, IWT).

This channel can be used for specific and very concrete cases, information and situations.

E.4 Creative campaign - Advertising

Advertising (showing the creative campaign, based on the creative concept) is our third pillar in this section. Advertising is always a tricky subject, because it is often difficult for organisations to exactly quantify return for their money – however, its a proven fact that advertising increases awareness. One thing to keep in mind is that you will only start to see return and added value after a minimum of 2-3 years of advertising.

The content of the advertising wave is of course the to be developed creative concept, based on the brand summary, communicating and underlining the key message(s).

In the following we propose the most effective channel to do this and reach our target audience.

The first step is to define your communication objectives. For the European IWT campaign, we defined three particular communication objectives for this part (aligned with the general objectives, of course):

- Creating awareness, putting IWT high on the agenda
- Provide information about inland water transport and build up the knowledge level
- And finally to go along with the providing of information, our media-choice also has to allow us to construct the desired image for IWT.

What would be the objectives of an advertising campaign for your organisation?

E.4.1 Selection criteria

Having defined your target audience, you need to decide what channels you will use to reach them. Think.BBDO offer the following guidelines for the selection of the most effective channels

- In order to meet the first objective of enlarging the knowledge amongst the different target groups about IWT, we have to select media and/or channels that give us the opportunity to provide **information** about IWT.
- Considering the fact that we are aiming our communications at three different target groups, we have to make sure that our choices offer the possibility of **targeting the people** we really want to reach and thus **eliminating as much waste** as possible in order to maximize the efficiency of the budget.
- We have to select media channels, that allow us to support the **image building**.

E.4.2 Primary Channel Choice

Taking into account the previous three criteria and considering the objectives and target groups, we recommend using **print-media** as the main channel.

By carefully selecting the publications in which we appear and the number of insertions we place in each of these publications, we can reduce our waste and optimize the efficiency.

There are a number of different print-media we want use to reach the different target audiences:

- **Business-to-business titles (magazines)**
In order to communicate with the current and future users and the major stakeholders on the transportation market, we recommend using targeted b-2-b titles. These magazines provide an editorial context in which our message will fit perfect.
Through **focussing** and selecting special reports and theme-issues, these magazines bring throughout the year, we are able to create even more editorial impact.
Magazines allow us to stretch our message **over time** and to be present during a longer period.
A long-term presence will allow us to really build on the image.
- **(More) common magazines**

E.4.3 Secondary Channel Choice

- **Direct Mailing**

To complement our messages in print-media, we already recommended to start a one-on-one conversation with the different target groups, eg. by direct mailing.

- **Adding online to the media mix**

And to make sure we reach every target group through multiple channels and to optimize the impact, we suggest adding online to the media mix.

Online can have two different functions:

- it will allow us to build traffic to your website, from those who actively seek extra information and practical info on IWT
- online can help us build IWT's image.

E.4.4 Other Options

There are a number of other media or channels we could use. Within the PLATINA campaign, we came to the conclusion that these other media were not the right fit for us. However, we include them and our reasons for rejecting them as a guide to your organisation's decision making – you may wish to use these mediums

- **Television**

Although television enables a maximum reach and rapid reach building, this channel does not respond to the communication needs.

The waste of a TV campaign would be enormous, because we would mainly be reaching the general public and barely reach our targets, making a TV campaign very cost-ineffective. A 30 sec spot is too short to increase knowledge.

- **Radio**

Radio is more of a traffic or call-to-action building medium. Since this isn't one of the main objectives, we suggest not to use radio, because other media channels offer better ways for the spreading of information and image building and thus respond better to the specific communication needs.

Since this is also a mass medium like TV, there is also a lot of waste.

On top of that, the IWT message is a too complicated message for a medium as radio. Radio is a background medium, so context-wise this isn't the best choice.

- **Postering**

Although postering would offer IWT good visibility to almost the entire population, like the other mass media, the waste is just too enormous.

Postering does not allow us to give information about IWT. Postering is a good medium to raise awareness and become 'top of mind' with the consumer.

Since the focus of the IWT message is on other targets than the 'everyday consumer', this medium doesn't respond well to the specific needs of IWT.

E.5 Some extra ideas for those with plenty of budget or after 5 – 6 years use of other means

(but not always 100% on the target groups)

- **Introductions on IWT in universities and business schools**

Presentations on IWT (its current and future importance, its advantages, recent developments on infrastructure and planning level, cases,...) can be prepared with a team of popes (to withstand critics). The national organisers can contact all relevant universities, business schools and all other institutions or organisations offering education or training on transport and logistics, in order to discuss the possibility of a lecture by a pope. A budget is to be foreseen to pay the popes a sufficient fee, as to make it attractive for them to invest time in this activity.

- **Award for the best national theses on IWT**

A budget could be foreseen to create an Award on IWT in each of the participating countries. The IWT Award will be discussed by a jury consisting of all tiers of the IWT world, i.e. academics, government and business and will be awarded to the thesis that delivers the best and most concrete contribution to the development of IWT.

The prize can be awarded in a in the presence of the press, to maximize the effect in the media is achieved. All awarded studies can then be published in a book and distributed on a large scale to the media, relevant universities and institutions, European and national decision makers,...

- **Gadget/give away:** eg. stress 'ball' in the shape of a relevant object



