

Communicating Our Way to a Stronger Movement!

by Susan Mackie

Strategically speaking...our new Plan outlines the seven Directions this organization will take to increase the momentum of a Movement we all value. Two of those Directions involve communications both external and internal — they should and will be addressed by Communications Services and our many communications volunteers. But what, exactly, do we communicate to you on this issue? What's your role when it comes to communications and the Strategic Plan?

First, let's look at the two Directions that address Communication and what they mean for both Scouts Canada, and for you as a leader.

Strategic Direction #3: Strengthening Scouting's External Profile

This should result in a "clear and consistent branding and sustained marketing to reconnect with community and corporate leaders and to identify the value and need for Scouting to new members and to the general public."

For Communications Services, this means that we will keep producing all marketing materials we create for your promotional uses with this Direction in mind. In other words, we will make sure that the materials we make available to you, the leader, contain consistent messages that are dynamic and exciting, and reflect who we are as a Movement and where we want to go. This takes a lot of work off your shoulders — all you have to do to find an ad, radio spot or press release template, is check out our national web site.

For you, the leader, it means that you use these materials in any way you can. But more importantly, remember that you are Scouting's best ambassadors to the general public. Your caring attitude and enthusiasm for the fun, safe programs you create are our greatest asset, and the best

marketing tool we have! The more you show it...the greater the strength of our organization; and you've done it all just by doing what comes naturally. Don't miss any opportunities for networking — put that enthusiasm out there no matter where you are, or what you're doing. Today's community meeting could mean tomorrow's new leaders.



Oh, and by the way...that "quantitative and qualitative growth" between Scouting and community organizations? That will only get better and better the more collaborations you have. Any projects that you can do with your community partner will result in a stronger bond of friendship and great exposure for both organizations.

National and Council External Communications Initiatives:

- Cooperative national advertising campaigns
- Radio public service announcements
- Press releases
- Web site features
- Publicity of events in partnership with other organizations (seize every opportunity for great publicity when we can) — i.e. Veterans Day ceremonies, Climate Change.

Strategic Direction #5: Enhancing Internal Communications

"Ensure an effective two-way flow of dialogue and information in support

of internal operations". This certainly falls in the "what we can do for you" category! We have the responsibility to ensure necessary information on all Scouting subjects is provided to leaders in a way that is timely, easily understood, and concise. It's up to us to find the best ways to do this — the November 2005 *Leader Magazine* contained an article on the many avenues of communication that are open to leaders. We'll continue to make every effort to see that you remain informed.

What can you do to enhance internal communications? Make sure you familiarize yourself with the avenues of communication open to you. Tour the national web site; know where to go to find the information you need; revisit the 'For Leaders' section; network with other leaders; make sure your e-mail information on file with your council is up-to-date so that you don't miss out on vital information.

National and Council Internal Communications Initiatives:

- Two-way communications tool - "Help" button on national web site linking to contact page, where several contact avenues are listed.
- We will form a communications network with selected individuals from each council to act as liaisons for communications purposes, and keep leaders up-to-date on materials available to help boost membership of youth and adults.
- Info Bulletins containing pertinent information for all members on web site — found on the What's New page.
- Register for and read your Program Tips for regular updates.

Most importantly: Don't forget to communicate with us — your feedback is essential to the task of improving both external and internal communications and will result in the overall strength of the organization. ✕

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