



Diocese of  
**Guildford**   
TRANSFORMING CHURCH  
TRANSFORMING LIVES

# Planning communications

May 2020

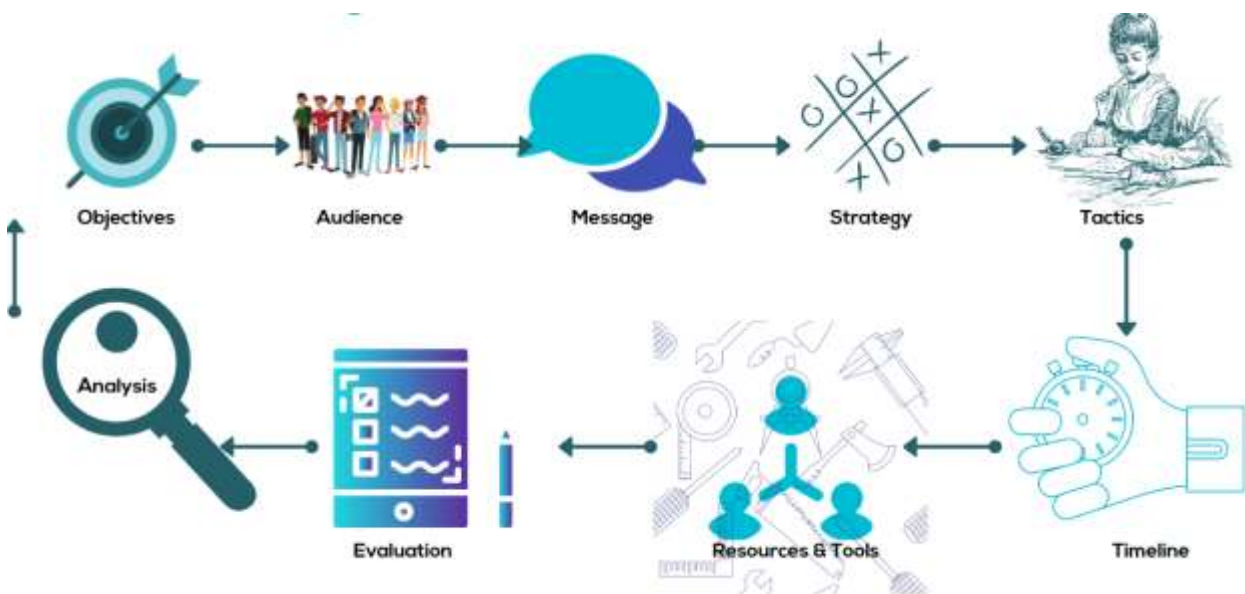
This guide supports the Planning Communications Training. It covers all stages of planning from idea to execution

# Campaign planning

May 2020

“A communication plan is a blueprint for how, when and with whom you want to share information with.”  
<sup>1</sup>It’s also about the means in which you share that information.

## The planning process



### In other words

1. What are you trying to achieve? (Your overall goal and objectives)
2. Who do you want to talk to? (Your audience)
3. What must you say? (Your message)
4. How will you say it? (Your channel, tactics and content)
5. How do you know you got it right? (Your measurements)

This process can look onerous so why do we do it to ourselves? Have you ever received an email or newsletter and wondered –why am I receiving this or this wasn’t for me? Then the sender probably hasn’t given as much time to the planning as they should have.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/how-to-develop-an-excellent-church-communication-plan>

#### Planning....

- Focuses efforts
- Sets direction and priorities
- Gets agreement and alignment
- Improves effectiveness and efficiency of communications
- Minimises issues/Reconciles conflicts
- Facilitates proactivity

### What are you trying to achieve?

This is your overall goal, purpose and/or objectives. You will already have an idea, issue or challenge that you want to address

#### Some things that might be on your mind:

- Becoming better known in the community
- Raising awareness of a particular issue that the Church addresses
- Recruiting volunteers to help with your work
- Recruiting participants to a project
- Announcing an event
- Rallying supporters for a cause
- Fundraising
- Create awareness,
- Promote understanding
- Overcome misunderstanding or apathy
- Displace prejudice
- Encourage belief
- Confirm realign perception
- Act in a particular way

Before you jump to a tactic or solution it's always best to have a look at what is causing the issue, challenge. This research will inform how we respond and to whom. Research is therefore important for setting objectives but also what Strategy will work.

There are number of ways to do this, many communications practitioners recommend using SWOT or PEST analysis as a way to bring up all the external factors that may influence your idea. However it could be as simple as talking to a number of people to get feedback, a focus group or a short survey.

Read more about [SWOT analysis](#)

Read more about [PEST analysis](#)

Based on your research you should then know:-

- What is the current perception and attitude to what you are trying to achieve – do people understand the issue, are they aware of it, do they believe it? This will highlight what level of interest you will have.
- What is going on in the external world that could impact or limit what you are trying to achieve – for example COVID-19 lockdown may limit what you can do or there isn't a way to communicate directly with the people that need this information.
- What constraints do you have – we all have big ideas, do we have the resources to support putting them into action?

### Setting an objective

Objectives are usually set at three levels

Awareness – What do you want people to know?

Attitude or Opinion – what do you want people to feel?

Behaviour – what do you want people to do?

Think SMART when you set your objective. If its too big or too vague you won't know if you ever achieved it.

Specific

Measureable

Achievable

Realistic

Time bound

Example – a personal Christian SMART Faith objective

By June 2020, I will have spent 30-45 minutes with God each morning, praying and talking to Him. I will memorize 10 new scripture verses that have helped me grow in my walk with Him and I will share these with my home group.

### Who do you want to reach, talk to?

Your research should have helped you answer a number of questions about your audiences.

- Who is interested in the subject
- What do they know about the subject
- Do they recognise the problem
- Do they perceive they need to do anything
- How involved are they

Let's take a tangible but extreme example

We started to see reports in January of a flu outbreak in China,

Where the general public in the UK interested in this subject? There was a level of awareness from news but probably a lot of 'Not in my back yard' thinking. The public knows what is shown on the news, they recognise that China has a problem but they don't perceive there is threat. Involvement is low.

**By January 30<sup>th</sup> – WHO have issued their 10<sup>th</sup> report and declared it a Public Health Emergency of National Concern. On the 21<sup>st</sup> January the UK has its first case, the USA closes its borders to foreign nationals who have been to China.**

Awareness for this has increased, increased news coverage and a growing sense that this is coming to the UK. They recognise it's a problem for those who visited China but they don't perceive it as a individual threat. Involvement is low/moderate. People still going on holiday elsewhere, still working and still going about daily lives.

**Early March – panic buying, cancellation of key events, financial disturbances, questions from the public are we doing enough**

Awareness is now high, increased media coverage and a sense of personal panic. Involvement is moderate to high, businesses are looking at continuity.

**Lock down announced**

- Who is interested in the subject - EVERYONE
- What do they know about the subject – What is being reported, death figures and NHS crisis
- Do they recognise the problem - YES
- Do they perceive they need to do anything - YES
- How involved are they – All In IT Together

This is an extreme and one of kind scenarios however it highlights how the external factors, people's beliefs and timing all make a difference when you are planning communications. A crisis is a specialist situation but the principles apply to everything.

## What must you say?

So now you have your idea, your research, you know the level of awareness and involvement of the people you want to reach and what you want to achieve.

A message tells your audience (which you have identified – your community, young people, non-digital users etc) what they are asked to do, why it is worth doing, and the positive impact of their action.

- Write down the facts – Who, What, Where, How, When, Why
- Write down the preconceptions/attitudes/behaviours that are in play – what needs to change, if anything?

You can craft your messages in two ways:-

- Logic and reasoning – using facts, evidence
- Emotions - an emotive message tends to be effective if you want the public to act, if you are appealing to an individual or if you're planning a fundraising appeal.

Consider your tone, the context, timing and whether repetition is important.

## Examples of messaging

Diploma Unit 2.2 - PR Planning & Management  
Report Proposal  
Candidate Number 41755

## Messages

### Overarching message

'Vaccinations; not to be sneezed at. Do you really need the jab?'

YES! – I maintain the UK's health care system or the country's infrastructure

- 'I'm in the emergency services, I look after the public safety of my country'
- 'I'm a health worker, I look after the welfare of my country'
- 'I'm in the military, I protect/defend my country'
- 'I'm in the government, I run my country'

YES! – I'm more vulnerable to swine flu and at risk from potential complications

- 'I'm Pregnant'
- 'I'm Elderly'
- 'I'm a Child'
- 'I have a compromised immune system'

NO! – 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' are you doing your bit?

### Supporting messages

Yes groups – Help protect those around you, get the jab

- You can't get the flu from the flu jab, so why risk getting the flu?

No group - 'Vaccinating a few, helps protect all of you'

### Specific messaging to target groups

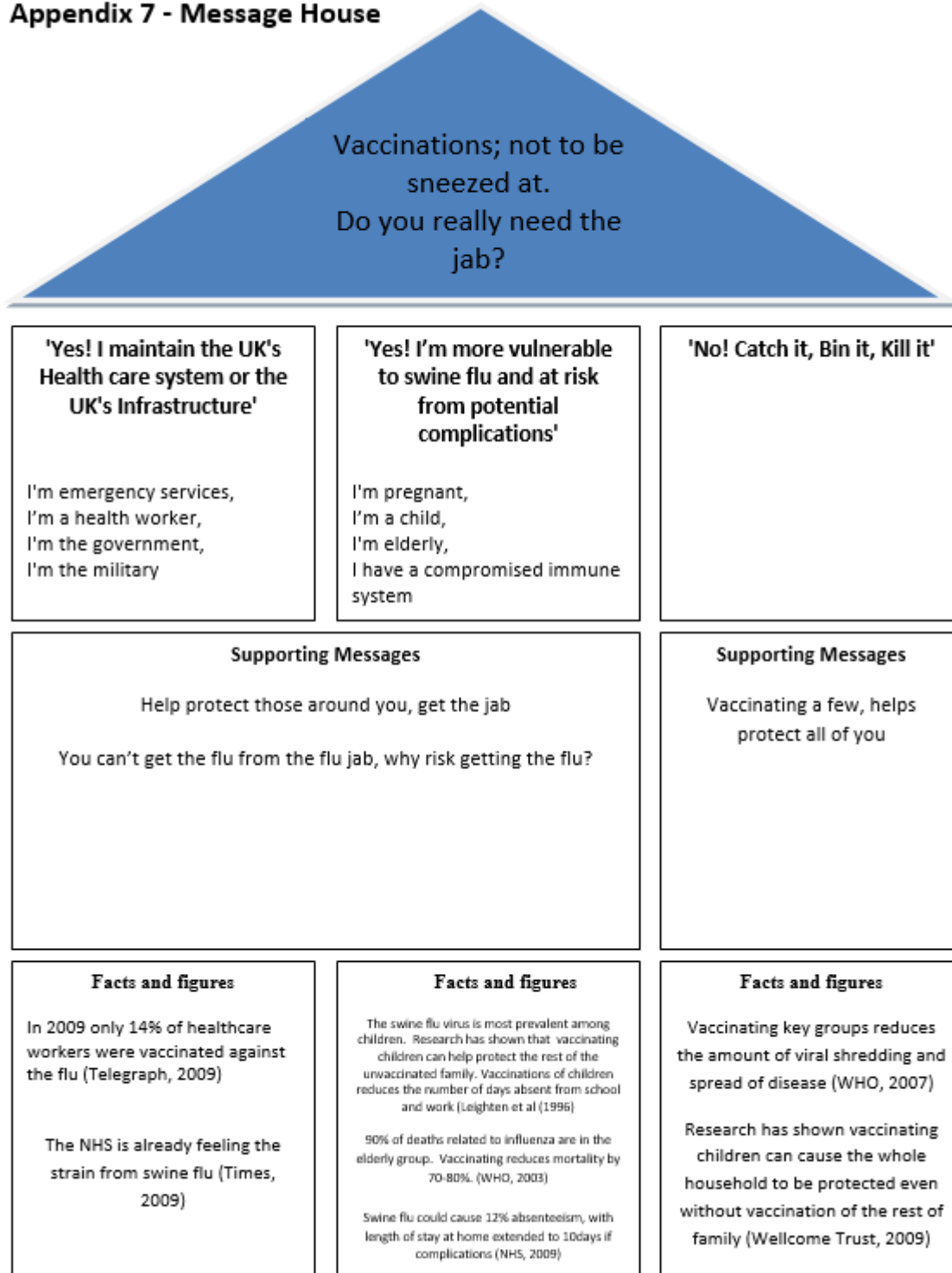
The overarching messaging is for the national campaign, specific facts for each target groups, local campaigns or specialist media is located in appendix 7

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<sup>22</sup> Fictional campaign taken from Diploma in PR assignment Wendy Sleight nee Garbutt (2009)

## Appendix 7 - Message House



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<sup>3</sup> Fictional campaign taken from Diploma in PR assignment Wendy Sleight nee Garbutt (2009)

## Digital Charlotte / EveryoneOn Message House

Target audience(s): media, general public, internal

Weave these messages into your communications as appropriate.  
You don't have to use them verbatim.

### **Why it matters:**

This message conveys why this initiative matters in the larger scheme of things.

Digital literacy skills are the key to education and economic opportunities for current and future generations.

### **What we offer:**

This message conveys the immediate usefulness of the project.

EveryoneOn / Digital Charlotte will connect Charlotte residents to technology through free digital literacy training.

### **Response to critics:**

This message pre-empts misperceptions that everyone already has online access.

A recent Marketwise survey of Mecklenburg County adults found that one in five do not have Internet access from home, and one in three do not have a smart phone.

### **Call to Action:**

This message tells the audience what to do.

For more information on the campaign and list of free digital skills training opportunities in your area, call 1-855-EVERY1ON or visit [www.EveryoneOn.org](http://www.EveryoneOn.org).

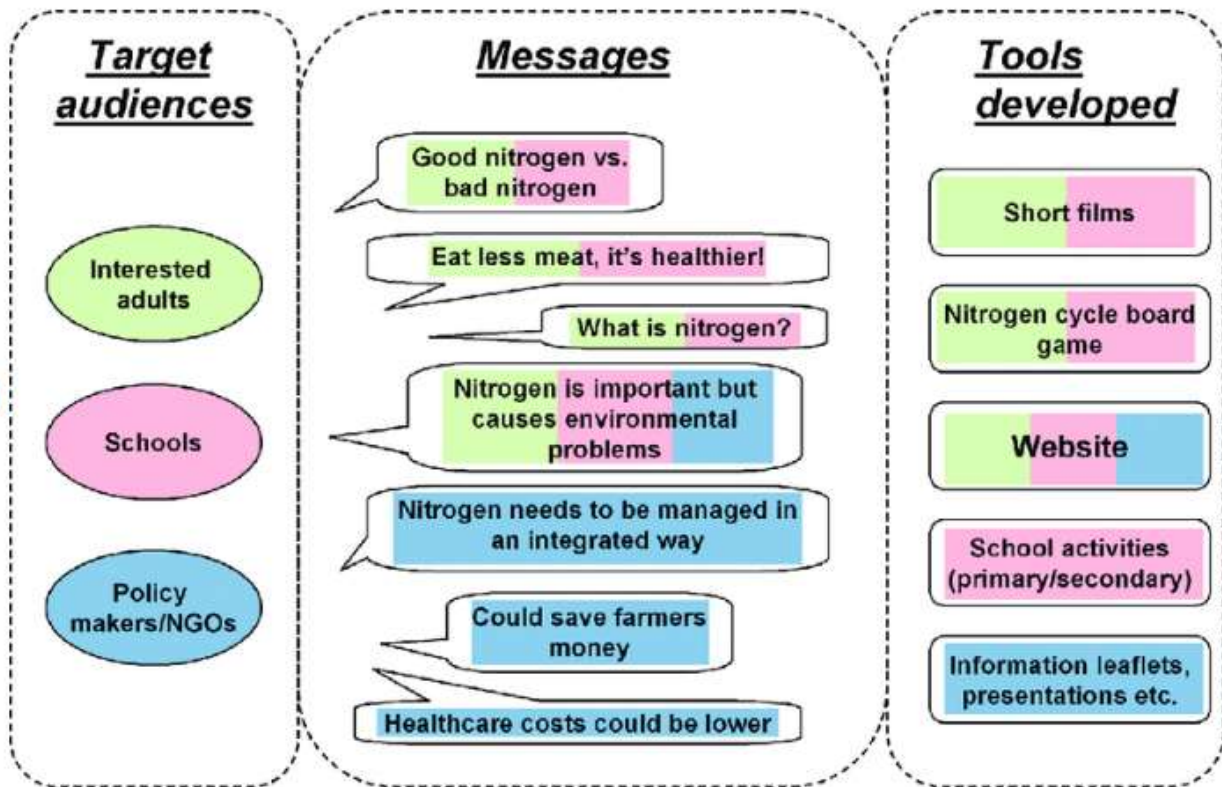
Learn more at [messagehouse.org](http://messagehouse.org).

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<sup>4</sup> <https://messagehouse.org/examples/>





<sup>11</sup> The three selected target audiences, the key messages that could be used when engaging with these audiences, and the tools developed during the 'Nitrogen Young Scientists' Workshop' to aid this communication. The colours indicate the different target audiences.

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## How will you say it? (Your channel, tactics and content)

This is the fun bit....

Developing a strategy for a plan is hard but if you get it right, the tactics are simple. Your strategy is the overall approach you are taking – sometimes it's the big idea and sometimes it comes to you before you have defined your objectives.

An example could be

<sup>6</sup>God's Vision - Salvation

God's Strategy – For God so loved the world that he sent His only Son

God's plan – He sent Jesus and said 'Go and Make Disciples'

God's tactic – word of mouth and the Bible

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-three-selected-target-audiences-the-key-messages-that-could-be-used-when-engaging\\_fig10\\_271897931](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-three-selected-target-audiences-the-key-messages-that-could-be-used-when-engaging_fig10_271897931)

<sup>6</sup> Russ Hughes Sociatech, 2014

Idea, issue, challenge	Objective	Strategy – How you achieve objective	Tactics – What you will do
People are facing poverty due to COVID-19	Raise money for a charity that is suffering during COVID-19	Mount a Fundraising campaign with a simple concept	Set up giving page, enable simple participation and sign up, Press Launch, Social Media advert, Social Media, Press release, Event invitations
People need support while they are losing their loved ones	Build awareness of bereavement support	Position your Vicar as the go to person on bereavement for the community	Media relations, interviews, case studies, blogs
Mission – how do we increase those who come to Jesus	Highlight that Church is not closed during COVID-19 and grow congregation by 10%	Mount social media campaign Church team to build awareness in the local community that the Church is here for them	Join facebook community groups, invite communities to join in church activities, put on special exploring faith sessions; hold online alpha courses
A new offering	Publicise new digital service offering	Mount Media Campaign	Social media and press activities
Communities are supporting each other on facebook	Make friends with your community – increase the number of ppl you know by 10%	Join Facebook community group or set one up	Join facebook community group, share information they need, volunteer to coordinate efforts etc

Common tactics (taken from [nonprofitmarketingguide.com](https://www.nonprofitmarketingguide.com))<sup>7</sup>

1. **Website.** It's your home base online.
2. **Blog.** Blogs are typically a part of your website. They can be everything from a "what's new" section to more substantive posts.
3. **Single-topic email** appeals, updates, and invitations. These are emails that are meant to drive one specific action.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nonprofitmarketingguide.com/blog/2019/01/03/27-communications-marketing-tactics-nonprofits/>

4. **Email newsletters** with multiple articles. These emails are typically more FYI, but will often include multiple calls to action too.
5. **Social media**, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.
6. **Single-topic print** appeals, updates, and invitations meant to drive a specific action.
7. **Print newsletters** with multiple articles that are typically more FYI, but will often include multiple calls to action too.
8. **Mobile apps**.
9. **Direct messaging, private chat, texting** and other forms of instant, private messaging.
10. **Earned media**, PR, press releases and other forms of media relations.
11. **Paid advertising**, including radio, TV, print, online, and outdoor.
12. **Syndication and guest writing**, where you create content but publish it elsewhere.
13. **Content curation and synthesis**, where you publish content created by others.
14. **Video and audio recordings**.
15. **Graphics and infographics**.
16. **Photography**.
17. **Signage, posters, banners**.
18. **Storytelling**. This is a specific type of content that's very effective for nonprofits.
19. **Problem-solving tools, calculators** and other interactive ways to help people make better decisions.
20. **Downloads, case studies, how to guides** and other helpful content.
21. **Testimonials, referrals** and other forms of social proof.
22. **Brochures, flyers, and other leave-behinds** including pamphlets, rack cards, and door hangers.
23. **Displays and booths**, staffed and unstaffed.
24. **Hosting gatherings**, and meetings, networking events.
25. **Public speaking** at events hosted by others.
26. **Contests, gamification, competitions** and other forms of competitive engagement.
27. **Listening and data collection** and other ways of gathering feedback.

## How do you know you got it right? (Your measurements)

Evaluation is typically the thing we do the least but it can inform our future plans. It doesn't have to be difficult and could simply be getting anecdotal feedback. Below are some examples that you could consider.

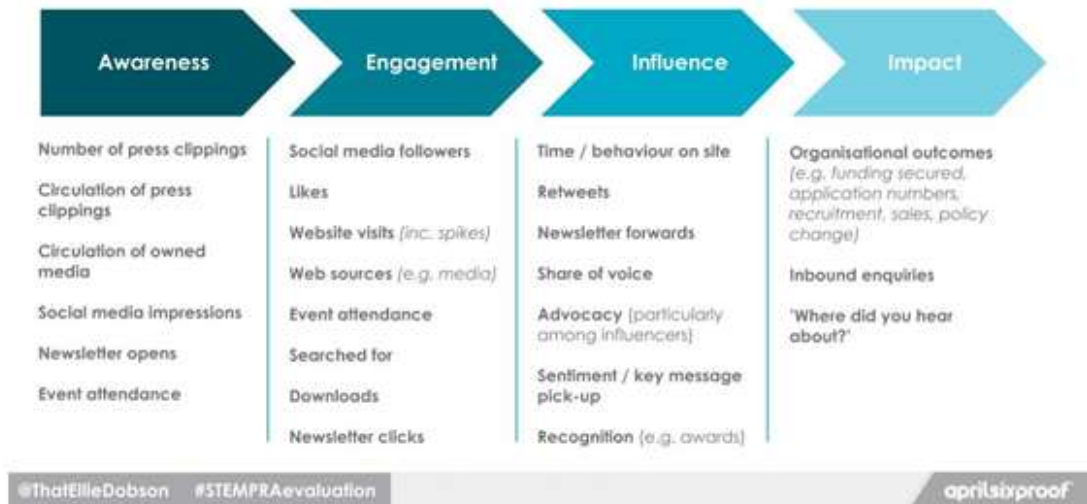
**Growth of online congregation** – capture the number of views of your videos (across each platform) each week an hour after you have broadcast your service. Recapture the viewing figures after 24 hours. Keep a spreadsheet to show growths, spikes of views.

**Engagement** – capture the number of comments, shares, likes you receive for a story. Engagement shows that people not only have read or watched something but they are behaving differently because of it. Facebook provides insights on your profile and page for free.

**Website traffic** – if you link to your website, how many new visitors are coming to it and from where. This will help you understand what people are looking at, where they are looking at it.

**Newsletter open rate** – anything over 45% is a good reflection of readership. If you use tools such as mailchimp you can even see what people clicked on and where – which will help you develop content again in the future.

## PR measurement model



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Have fun 😊

### Resources

[https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/communicationservices/internalcomms/documents/Using\\_Our\\_Communications\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/communicationservices/internalcomms/documents/Using_Our_Communications_Plan.pdf)

<https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/CommunicationsPlanning.htm>

<https://www.axiapr.com/blog/6-steps-to-creating-an-effective-communication-plan>

<https://www.syntrinity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/communicationplanningchurches.pdf>

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/how-to-develop-an-excellent-church-communication-plan>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.aprilsixproof.com/>