

Effective Communication Strategies for Creative Economy Initiatives

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Fundamental Principles

- Don't let brand get in the way of message
- The internet is a language
- Fluency is a core requirement
- Eliminate friction whenever possible
- Don't let technology get in the way
- This will be messy - allow for mistakes

Communications for Berkshire Creative

- Website at berkshirecreative.org
- Multiple subsites
- Eblasts via MainStreetMail
- Facebook profile
- Twitter at BerkCreative
- Surveys via SurveyMonkey
- Google Analytics
- Shared Documents via Google Apps

Why? Fundamental Goals

- Build constituency
- Communicate frequently
- Serve our market/Pursue mission
- Manage costs and staff time

What are the Components?

- Wordpress as CMS (Content Management System)
- Off the shelf - Facebook, twitter, youtube
- Eblast - MStreet, MailChimp, Constant Contact, PatronMail
- SurveyMonkey, doodle.com for calendar

wordpress.org

- Open Source / Community supported
- 13% of the top websites are WP
- Built on MySQL Database, uses PHP
- Blog structure easily adapted to CMS
- User-management of all content

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Principles, cont.

- Create a culture that embraces change
- Hire and train for internet fluency
- Open Access - reward openness
- Connect Communities - build relationships
- Opportunity and Creativity - Expression

Principles, cont.

- OPEN SOURCE when possible
- Refresh through theme updates
- "Widget" ready design integrates new tools
- Empower staff to change, manage, enhance
- Use the most popular off-the-shelf-tools

Results

- Metrics matter - pay attention!
- Visits, friends, followers, subscribers
- Measurable effect on overall visibility and community participation online and offline
- Setting the example for other industry partners

How can I build it?

- Focus resources on communication, not brand or design
- Let form follow function
- Follow the path of least resistance (start with a facebook page)
- Eliminate committee approval in favor of mission-driven message protocol
- Measure and report on statistics and impact frequently
- Search for wordpress/social media talent in your community

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