



## Reaching the Citizen: Toolkit on Effective Communications and Marketing



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## About CIVITAS

The CIVITAS Initiative ("City-Vitality-Sustainability", or "Cleaner and Better Transport in Cities") was launched in 2002. Its fundamental aim is to support cities to introduce ambitious transport measures and policies towards sustainable urban mobility. The goal of CIVITAS is to achieve a significant shift in the modal split towards sustainable transport, an objective reached through encouraging both innovative technology and policy-based strategies.

In the first phase of the project (2002 to 2006), 19 cities participated in four research and demonstration projects; and in CIVITAS II (2005 to 2009), 17 cities participated across a further four projects. The initiative is currently in its third phase, CIVITAS Plus (2008 to 2013), and 25 cities are now working together on five collaborative projects. In total, almost 60 European cities have been co-funded by the European Commission to implement innovative measures in clean urban transport, an investment volume of well over EUR 300 million.

But CIVITAS does not stop there. The so-called demonstration cities are part of the larger CIVITAS Forum network, which comprises almost 200 cities committed to implementing and integrating sustainable urban mobility measures. This, in turn, represents 68 million citizens in 31 countries. By signing a non-binding voluntary agreement known as the CIVITAS Declaration, cities and their citizens benefit from the accumulated know-how, experience and lessons learned of every participant. The CIVITAS Forum Conference brings together politicians and technical experts once a year in one of the network's cities.

If your city is interested in joining the CIVITAS Initiative, or if you have questions, please contact the CIVITAS Secretariat:

### CIVITAS Secretariat

c/o The Regional Environmental Center  
for Central and Eastern Europe  
Ady Endre ut 9-11  
2000 Szentendre  
Hungary

E-mail: [secretariat@civitas.eu](mailto:secretariat@civitas.eu)  
Tel: +36 26 504046  
Fax: +36 26 311294

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# Civitas

Reaching the Citizen:  
Toolkit on Effective  
Communications  
and Marketing



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## Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

The Communications and Marketing Toolkit provides guidelines on communicating with citizens about sustainable urban mobility options. Reaching citizens effectively requires specific approaches. Communicating directly and indirectly with them through various means helps ensure the success of sustainable urban measures, while demonstrating transparency and willingness to engage citizens in dialogue and involve them. This in turn can help public authorities achieve more effective policy and progress. The information and advice contained in this toolkit is designed to assist local, regional and national authorities with various communication considerations.

Primarily created for cities that are part of the CIVITAS family, the principles are equally applicable in other cities that are keen to promote sustainable urban mobility measures. The toolkit contains materials that will help you to create a strategic communications plan, organise events, and develop and distribute traditional and online media materials. It also provides general advice on reaching consumers directly, including the use of branding and promotional products.

Surveys, workshops and training events concerned with urban mobility repeatedly emphasise the importance of communication and collaboration with citizens. According to the 2009 study *Aiming for Sustainable Urban Mobility: A Survey of European Cities' Interests towards CIVITAS, Training Programmes and Information Resources*<sup>(1)</sup>, for instance, 31 percent of local mobility departments (transport practitioners) and decision makers recognised this as a critical factor in the successful implementation of mobility measures. In 2010, over 50 politicians, information and media specialists and leaders of mobility measures participated in the CIVITAS training workshop "Communicating with the Citizen" in order to learn more about successful communications.

The European Commission's CIVITAS Initiative ultimately seeks to help cities throughout Europe to develop a new mobility culture. Within the toolkit, emphasis is therefore given to reaching citizens in order to encourage the use of sustainable transport at grassroots level and to increase demand for additional means of sustainable mobility. The toolkit has been designed to help you communicate with your citizens about sustainable urban mobility measures. It includes a variety of materials that will help you to explain the goals of those measures, and to convince stakeholders of their benefits. The various sections are designed to assist you in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the communications activities related to specific mobility measures.

#### The toolkit comprises 10 core sections:

- **Communicating Effectively with Citizens**
- **Forming Effective Messages**
- **Analysing and Creating Brands**
- **Using Promotional Products**
- **Organising Successful Events**
- **Working with the Media**
- **Maximising Media Relations: Making News**
- **Essential Tools for Citizen Communications**
- **Using Social Media/Web 2.0**
- **Working with External Bodies**

We wish to extend our gratitude to each of the cities that contributed case studies and measure-specific information to help bring to life the theory provided in this manual.

This document and other complementary materials can be downloaded from <http://www.civitas.eu/downloadcenter>

(1) [http://www.civitas.eu/docs1/Needs\\_Assessment\\_Report0.pdf](http://www.civitas.eu/docs1/Needs_Assessment_Report0.pdf)



## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Citizens are the ultimate target group of clean urban transport measures, and reaching citizens effectively and efficiently requires specific communication approaches. The Communications and Marketing Toolkit provides guidelines, tips and checklists to help you with the planning and execution of a range of external communications activities.

Summarised below are the “best of” tips and core recommendations that will help you to carry out a successful external communications campaign to educate and influence citizens.

### Recommendation one: Prepare a communications strategy

Preparing a communications/marketing strategy will define a framework for the tools and market research techniques that you will utilise in effectively communicating and collaborating with citizens. To define this framework, the following steps are recommended:

- review your needs;
- define your SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) objectives;
- determine your audience;
- create key messages;
- select your tools and channels;
- define expected results;
- plan and activate your programme; and
- evaluate and measure success.

Further guidance on defining a communications strategy can be found in Chapter 1: Communicating Effectively with Citizens.

### Recommendation two: Create effective messages

Be sure that the core messages for your communications campaign are created with the specific target audience in mind. Messages should be benefits based and should answer the citizens' question “What's in it for me?” Effective messages:

- are straightforward and to the point;
- focus on outcomes not processes; and
- include supporting arguments with proof points.

Avoid the temptation to develop too many messages. As a general rule, you should create a maximum of three key messages. Further guidance on creating effective messages can be found in Chapter 2: Forming Effective Messages.

### Recommendation three: Brand your measures

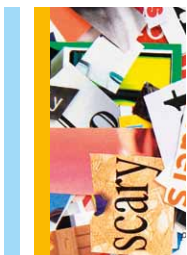
A sustainable urban mobility measure should have a visual identity and brand personality. Think about how your measure is presented and develop brand specifications to ensure the consistent communication of your measure's personality. Consider focus group feedback, and do not overlook the importance of lively, action-focused images that impart feelings of “fun”. Further guidance on creating brands can be found in Chapter 3: Analysing and Creating Brands.

### Recommendation four: Utilise promotional products

Using giveaways or promotional products is a way to brand your measure and build your image, but certain guidelines should be borne in mind:

- Do not forget to include your name on the giveaway.
- Always include your contact information (at a minimum your website address).
- Do not give out consumables.
- Consider the environmental impact of your giveaway.
- Try to distribute giveaways that are of immediate benefit (such as a public transport ticket protector).

Further guidance on the use of promotional products can be found in Chapter 4: Using Promotional Products.





## Recommendation five: Plan events

Not all events are created equal, and not every communications opportunity calls for an event. Think critically when planning an event to reach citizens. Develop a compelling theme, plan the event well in advance, and follow a detailed budget. When conceptualising an event, ask yourself:

- who you want to reach;
- what you want to achieve; and
- what the most effective communications channel would be: Is it, in fact, an event?

Further guidance on the use of promotional products can be found in Chapter 5: Organising Successful Events.

## Recommendation six: Harness the media

To gain visibility for your measure through the media, you will need to create a newsworthy angle that appeals to the audience of the news outlet you are approaching. No matter how important your story, it has to be promoted. A common approach would be to write a press release or issue a press pack. Your press material should be customised for the audience you are trying to reach and should target individual reporters rather than just the main editor. Make your angle timely (hook it to an upcoming or recent news event) and topical, but remember to use plain language and avoid jargon and acronyms.

Further guidance on gaining visibility through the media can be found in Chapter 6: Working with the Media.

## Recommendation seven: Know your toolkit

There are a variety of useful tools for communicating with citizens. Use the following checklist to ensure that your toolbox contains all you need:

- |                         |                            |                          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| - feature articles      | - journalist briefings     | - market research        |
| - press pack            | - press trips              | - survey results         |
| - news releases         | - media events             | - forward features plans |
| - press conferences     | - relationships with media | - expert opinions        |
| - op-eds <sup>(2)</sup> | - case studies             | - social media presence  |
| - letters to the editor | - interviews               |                          |

Further guidance on the essential tools required for communicating with citizens can be found in Chapter 8: Exploiting Essential Tools for Citizen Communications.

## Recommendation eight: Tap into social media and web 2.0

Make social media part of your overall communications strategy and integrate social media efforts within your plan. Take time to consider your objectives before launching activities such as a facebook page, and make sure that everyone in your organisation is prepared to deal with this new form of two-way communication before launch. First find out what is being said about your organisation by "listening in" to other discussions, then choose your social media tools carefully to support your goals and objectives.

Further guidance on making the best of social media can be found in Chapter 9: Using Social Media/Web 2.0.

<sup>(2)</sup> A newspaper article expressing the opinions of a named writer not usually affiliated with the paper's editorial board.



## 1 | Communicating Effectively with Citizens

Your communication with citizens may be intended to persuade, inform, influence, educate, share knowledge, empower, build trust, impress or gratify. It is up to you to choose an effective means of communication, and to devise a well-thought-out strategy in advance. Persuasion and gratification, for example, are not the same thing, so your approach must be calculated and well planned.

### 1 | 1 WHY TARGET CITIZENS?

Citizens are the ultimate target group of clean urban transport measures. Reaching citizens effectively requires specific approaches. Communications campaigns designed for citizens are not the same as communications designed for transport specialists, politicians or city officials.

### 1 | 2 WHAT IS CONSUMER COMMUNICATION?

The ultimate goal of communicating with consumers is to strengthen the relevance of your product or activity (e.g. your urban mobility measure) to individual citizens. Global brands use consumer communication to boost the reputation of their brands. Governments use consumer communication to persuade voters to support their policies and candidates.

City communication managers can and should use consumer marketing techniques to help consumers understand the benefits of sustainable transport. To succeed, however, your approach must be well planned and must include specific, achievable objectives.

### 1 | 3 DEVELOPING A SOUND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Rather than using a random set of communication tools and techniques, it is far more effective to create a comprehensive communication/marketing strategy. The strategy should define the range of communication tools that will be used and should outline the market research techniques needed to measure attitudes before and after the communication activity takes place. The main objective of your communications should be to provide core information about your measure in order to persuade citizens to favour sustainable mobility.

Key steps in developing a communications strategy:

- **Review your needs**  
What is your challenge? What is your communications problem? What are the causes?
- **Define your objectives**  
Why should you communicate? Why is it important to promote your measure?  
Ensure that your objectives are SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.
- **Determine your audience**  
Identify your audience's level of familiarity with the issue of sustainable mobility. Analyse the "general public": What are they interested in? What media do they read, listen to and watch? Can they be influenced? Will your news interest them? What are their cultural differences, levels of knowledge, demographics? Is your announcement newsworthy? Will members of the media be interested?
- **Create key messages**  
What impact do you want your messages to have? What "benefit messages" can you provide? Can you answer the question "What's in it for me?"? What actions can citizens take? What do citizens need to know? Where can they get additional information? Are your messages clear, concise, consistent, convincing and compelling?
- **Select your tools and channels**  
Decide which are the most effective tools. Consider two-way communication and interaction. Make absolutely clear to your audience what you hope to achieve. Assess your overall objectives and your budget in order to prioritise the most effective tools.





- **Define the expected results**  
Create a means of measuring success. Make sure you are able to demonstrate that your communication has succeeded. Record a baseline measurement whenever possible.
- **Plan and activate your programme**  
Follow your plan. Rely on partners for added value and support. Do not hesitate to ask peers for advice and input.
- **Evaluate and measure success**  
Build into your plan an element (and budget item) for evaluating success and for making changes to future communication efforts. Ensure that your evaluation connects back to your SMART communication objectives. This final step should include measures for sharing your successes — and lessons learned — with colleagues and other CIVITAS partners.

#### Developing SMART objectives

**Specific:** What is the ultimate goal?  
Are outcomes and audiences clearly identified?

**Measurable:** Will you be able to tell whether it worked?

**Achievable:** Is it reasonable to expect that the proposed strategies will help you attain the desired result?

**Realistic:** Is it realistic to expect that the plan can be implemented given existing capacity limitations?

**Time bound:** What is the implementation timetable?  
Is it feasible?

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COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH CITIZENS

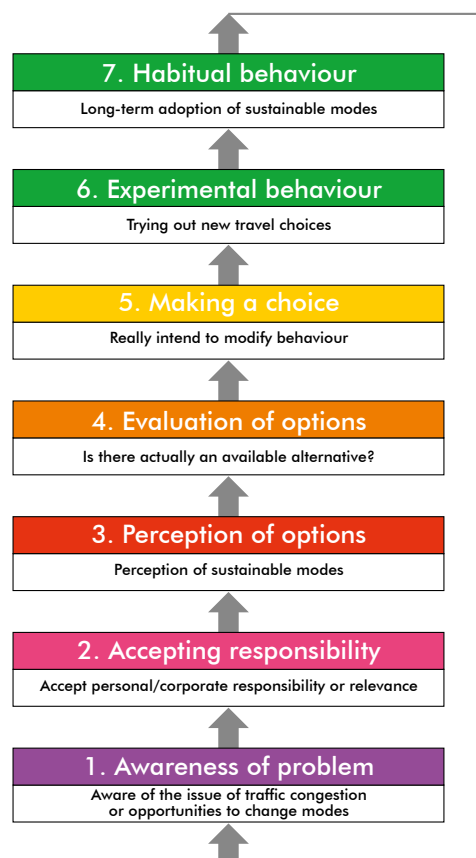
## 1 | 4 DEFINING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE: “SEVEN STAGES OF CHANGE”

Identifying links between attitudes and behaviour is the key to correctly defining and assessing your target audience (TAPESTRY 2005). This is essential for the success of the campaign design process and therefore of the overall campaign itself. A common mistake, and one that has led to the failure of many campaigns, is to think that changing behaviour is a simple, one-step process. It is unrealistic to believe that people who have never previously used environmentally friendly modes of transport will start to use them simply because they have read some information. Research in other sectors, such as health promotion, indicates that changes must first take place in people's awareness and attitudes before their behaviour changes.

The figure on the right presents the “seven stages of change” model, an effective tool in identifying the progress of a target group towards behavioural change. This can assist you with the selection of appropriate campaign strategies.

The diagram gives an overview of the basic steps, beginning with ensuring that the audience is aware of the problem. Once you understand the opinions of your target group, you can identify realistic goals for your campaign and decide how to target it. Basically, the higher the “stage” the narrower your targeting will need to be in order to achieve success, in terms of both target group and journey type.

Some campaigns will be targeted at an audience that is already at mid-level, thus your messages will need to be adjusted accordingly.



Always bear in mind the relevant target audience for your city's project and think about where they fit in this model.



SPOTLIGHT ON:

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COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH CITIZENS

## TARGET AUDIENCES

### Stakeholder Workshops for Bike Route Planning in Aalborg, Denmark

**This measure illustrates how Aalborg relied on a stakeholder workshop to create priorities for improvements to a bike route, and to solicit support for future cycling initiatives.**

City
Aalborg, Denmark
Local dissemination manager
Gustav Friis
Project dissemination manager
Gustav Friis (CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES)

### About the Mobility Measure

The measure focuses on the design of a high-quality commuter cycling route in the CIVITAS Plus innovation corridor between the city centre and the university in Aalborg with the aim of enhancing the attractiveness and safety of cycling. It includes giving priority to cyclists at traffic signals; creating dedicated cycling lanes; and providing signposting, shortcuts, shelters, services and other safety aspects.

### Communications Problem

The main elements of the project (e.g. route, accessibility, safety and visibility) had already been determined and initial ideas about what should be implemented had been developed. A group of stakeholders were then invited to suggest ways to improve these ideas and to provide new input within the framework of the project.

The workshop also aimed to foster a sense of ownership among the stakeholders in order to guarantee the further implementation of the initiatives. It was intended as the first in a series of cycling-related initiatives in the city, and establishing contact with stakeholders was seen as a first step towards future cooperation.

### Desired Solution

A primary goal of the workshop was to collect new ideas and to improve the quality of those already developed. The output was a list of ideas, and of specific problems and issues that needed to be addressed on the route.

On the process side, the workshop was also meant to raise interest among stakeholders and to establish the foundations for future cooperation.

## Action Steps

The most important planning steps were:

- Agreeing on the purpose of the workshop and a draft programme.
- Sending invitations to relevant stakeholders (approximately one month before the workshop). The invitation included the purpose of the workshop and a draft programme listing the main agenda items but not the specific content. This gave participants an idea of the process. In order to obtain input from a variety of perspectives, those invited included city employees working on bicycle planning issues as well as external professionals concerned with bicycling (Cyclist Federation, residents' board, police, etc.).
- Planning the workshop. The workshop opened with a presentation by a highly experienced cycling consultant, which was followed by a short presentation on the planned measure. Participants were then divided into groups to work on different areas and problems. As working materials, the groups were given maps, photos of the route, photographs of other routes, pencils, Post-it® blocks, stickers, etc.
- Recapping. The day after the workshop, employees working on the measure discussed what had taken place. The external consultant participated in this meeting in order to provide input on future steps.



## Success Parameters

The workshop resulted in improvements to some of the planned initiatives and in new ideas that could be further developed. The workshop conclusions now form part of the framework for the ongoing planning of the measure.

The diversity of the group resulted in useful discussion and gave participants a good overview of the challenges along the route. The workshop provided city staff with a common basis for further work and with goals for the route.

## Lessons Learned

Overall, the workshop met Aalborg's expectations. However, the following should be considered when planning a similar activity:

- Daily users of the route can give valuable input that would not otherwise be available.
- If you are planning group work, the city should be represented at every meeting.
- Hiring an external expert to present a "teaser discussion" on a subject you know well may seem a waste. However, inviting a presenter from outside City Hall indicates that the subject is being taken seriously and can be inspiring for both internal and external participants.

## Budget

- External consultant: approximately 10 hours.
- Workshop planning: approximately 25 hours.
- Direct costs: printing of approximately 150 pages and refreshments for participants.





## 2 | Forming Effective Messages

If communication is appropriate, pertinent and compelling, it will motivate the target audience — listeners or readers — to act.

The messages you develop to communicate your measure should be carefully thought out and delivered in the most effective way to your intended audience. Guidelines for creating effective key messages are provided below.

### 2 | 1 HOW TO CREATE KEY MESSAGES

#### Straightforward and to the point

When addressing the public you should avoid jargonistic phrases of the kind: “This measure will generate a decisive breakthrough by supporting and evaluating the implementation of ambitious integrated sustainable urban transport strategies that should make a real difference.” Instead, think about the existing level of knowledge among your target audience. If you are aiming to communicate your message to citizens, keep your language simple and direct, avoid acronyms and eliminate transport jargon.

#### Outcomes, not processes

Consumers care more about outcomes than processes. “What’s in it for me?” is likely to be the first thing they ask, either directly or subconsciously. Discuss with your audience the benefits of your project, not just the details of how it is taking shape.

#### Supporting arguments

A key message is not a policy or an argument. It is a brief and accessible summary of a policy or argument. Speakers communicating key messages therefore need to be armed with appropriate back-up material, examples and statistical data to support their statements and to assist them in question and answer sessions.

You will also need to develop “proof points” (or core indicators) to substantiate your messages, as described in the following section.

#### Make your key messages effective by asking yourself:

- Who is the priority target audience?
- What do they already know (or think) about your city’s project/sustainable mobility measure?
- What message do you want to convey?
- How can you prove your point?

#### Limit the number of key messages

Avoid the temptation to convey too many messages. The general rule is to limit key messages to three. Although speakers and interviewees should avoid confusing their audience by trying to say too much, key messages should cover a wide range of issues and be addressed to a broad target group. This can be achieved through careful categorisation, enabling speakers to select appropriate messages for particular occasions.

### 2 | 2 PROVE IT WITH PROOF POINTS

Concrete messages should be complemented by “proof points”, which are based on facts and figures. These should be created for each of your messages.

The following measurable quantities should be considered when substantiating your key messages:

- credentials/certification;
- years of experience;
- passenger retention growth rates; and
- number of satisfied users.

Proof points should be kept simple and delivered in terms that citizens will readily understand. The more you can support your messages with facts, the more credible your statements will be and the more confident you will be in delivering them.



## 3 | Analysing and Creating Brands

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### 3 | 1 BASIC BRANDING AND MARKETING TERMS

The concept of branding, in the basic form of a hot iron stamp to mark ownership, has been around since ancient times. However, in the last 100 years or so the concept has been developed into a tool for marketing and customer communication, as the following example illustrates.

In the late 1800s, soap was associated with drudgery and hard work. The product itself was of inconsistent quality, had a limited lifespan before it rotted, and was grey, unappealing and hard to use. It was sold by weight and wrapped in plain brown paper.

Lever Brothers, now part of the multinational company Unilever, was a British soap manufacturer at the turn of the 19th century. The company first improved the quality and effectiveness of its product, then presented it in more attractive packaging. The company's efforts resulted in the creation of one of the first brands in modern marketing: Sunlight Soap, sold with the slogan "Saves Labour. Saves Money."

This example highlights the importance of two elements: visual identity and brand personality. Visual identity comprises the technical specifications of how a brand is presented. It covers the font style, font size and layout of the brand name (Sunlight Soap) and slogan ("Saves Labour. Saves Money."), as well as the colour, size and design of the packaging. All these details are typically recorded in a "brand specification manual". Further details, such as where advertisements or products can be placed, and the frequency and timing of advertising, may also be specified in such guidelines. The CIVITAS Initiative itself has a Corporate Design Handbook (September 2009), which can be downloaded from the Members Area of <http://www.civitas.eu>





## Co-branding

Guidelines on using a logo in conjunction with other brands (e.g. the logo of a transport operator) may also be included in the brand specification manual.

## Brand personality

Returning to the Sunlight Soap example, there is no mention of the fact that the soap actually works or that it gets you clean. Instead, its selling points are that it saves labour and money. The colours are bright and the woman presenting the product is cheerful. Even the brand name, "Sunlight", is uplifting. The brand personality is cheerful and appeals directly to the target group's aspirations: after all, most people enjoy the sun and are keen to save labour and money.



## Researching brand image and personality

The image and personality of a brand are usually created by a focus group, made up of around eight people representing the target audience. Tools such as "guided journeys" and projective techniques are used to ascertain both the hard facts and content associated with the brand, as well as the more aspirational elements that will appeal to the target audience.

These techniques were used in Liverpool in the development of the TravelWise brand for promoting public transport, walking and cycling.

## The impact of images

Research has proved that images of families and fun are more effective in attracting consumers' attention than pictures of buses, trains and bicycles.

## 3|2 WHY BRANDS MATTER

In our busy world we are bombarded by visual and audio stimuli, and there is real competition for attention and "mind space". When planning how to reach people with your message, it is important to remember that they will be drawn towards other people and scenarios that match their own personal aspirations. For example, a particular meat sauce was advertised on UK television and the brand was associated with real-life scenarios involving a divorced family. Product sales fell by 7 percent per month, and the number of people who could remember the commercial was negligible. In contrast, a rival product brand was linked to a happy, cohesive family group. More than one year after these commercials were aired, over 80 percent of audiences were able to remember the brand and the commercials.

It is therefore important for brand images to be carefully thought out, tested for acceptance and employed according to rigorous standards.

Brand consistency is critical. It takes at least five years to establish a brand, and changing colours, style and layout will destroy the effort that has gone into the creative process.





### 3|3 BRAND MAPPING

It is possible to develop a “brand map” featuring qualitative data that can be used to position products and services. The map shown here identifies the position of modes of transport and the qualities most associated with them. Barriers to modal shift are also identified, helping you to frame your messages appropriately. This approach can be useful when planning a branding approach for your transport measure. Begin by determining what factors are pertinent to you (available travel modes, target audiences, barriers, enablers), then map their relevance and importance.

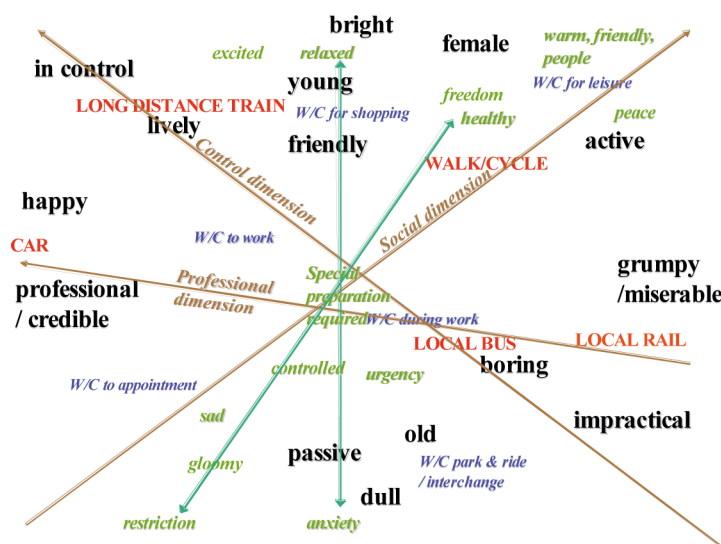


Figure 1 Brand map for transport modes

## BRANDING

Branding a New Mobility Strategy  
in Perugia, Italy

**One Italian city used the power of branding to engage stakeholders and encourage support for its transport measures.**

City
Perugia, Italy
Local dissemination manager
Lucia Cristea
Project dissemination manager
Adam Wyszormiszki, Jacek Piotrowski (CIVITAS RENAISSANCE)

## About the Mobility Measure

This measure is one of 15 implemented by Perugia in the context of CIVITAS RENAISSANCE. It focuses on raising awareness for the development of sustainable transport in the city. The measure forms the backbone of communications within the project and aims to strengthen collaboration among all stakeholders in the mobility field. Within CIVITAS RENAISSANCE, the municipality of Perugia developed its first-ever integrated awareness campaign, based on the newly developed mobility brand “ESC”.

## Communications Problem

Over the past 20 years, during a period of rapidly increasing car ownership, Perugia has made investments in Park and Ride facilities and in a new city centre vehicle access control system. However, the public transport network required further integration in order to produce the necessary shift from private car use. Thus a new and innovative system — the Minimetro — was introduced and is now the core feeder of public transport traffic into the city centre.

The recent Urban Mobility Plan introduced the concept of an intermodal public transport network with an integrated fare system, as well as a campaign to raise awareness among citizens of the new public transport options. Thus Perugia had all of the necessary building blocks to introduce a fully sustainable transport system and this measure was designed to promote the benefits of these choices among the general public in Perugia.

## Desired Solution

The municipality of Perugia, within CIVITAS RENAISSANCE, implemented a campaign to raise awareness of sustainable transport solutions that improve quality of life in the city. The communication

strategy involves all stakeholders and mobility providers and features the new mobility brand “ESC” as a core element. The ESC brand (Easy. Safe. Clean.) is the common denominator for all the efforts and solutions provided by the mobility actors. It links together all of the sustainable transport measures implemented in the city, thereby helping to ensure sustainable mobility as well as meeting citizens’ expectations for improved mobility.

Although the communication strategy was developed within RENAISSANCE, the aim is to continue and further develop it beyond the end of the project as a powerful communication tool that will address both the needs of the city as mobility provider, and the needs of citizens as mobility consumers.

## Action Steps

Within RENAISSANCE, the main objective — in terms of communication — was to increase the visibility of the city and its efforts towards sustainable mobility. By making the decision to structure the entire strategy around a newly developed mobility brand, Perugia took a huge step forward in integrating the area’s mobility options. A fundamental move was to ensure the collaboration of stakeholders and their agreement to invest in the new communication venture. Once this was achieved, the city selected a company with experience in communication to develop the concept agreed on by the stakeholders.

The result was an easy-to-identify visual element that will be at the core of all communication materials and products developed within the campaign. Brand implementation requires well-planned communication over a longer period of time. Brand recognition and acceptance will be assessed during RENAISSANCE but will continue after the project’s completion.

## Success Parameters

A series of indicators were identified and were already introduced in the evaluation plan. Assessment will be both quantitative and qualitative, based on different types of surveys and evaluation techniques. The quantitative evaluation will consist mainly of survey questions measuring the recognition and acceptance of the brand, as well as changes in the market share of public transport. The surveys will be carried out by the local authority and public transport operators (bus company and Minimetro).



The qualitative evaluation will consist of focus groups on brand implementation and brand recognition. The aim is to see whether the brand vision, mission and personality have been identified and understood by the target audience.

## Lessons Learned

Implementation is still in the starting phase, thus lessons learned will only be available in a few years. However, at the moment the acceptance and partnership of the main stakeholders can be identified as a “must” in the successful implementation of a brand identity. The local authority plays a key role as a catalyst in achieving a successful partnership to implement the common communication strategy.

Brand implementation is a long process: you will need to be prepared for changes in marketing activities on the part of all the actors involved.

## Budget

The estimated direct costs of brand development (external consultancy/branding specialists) are EUR 20 000. At this moment it is difficult to assess the total costs of implementation.

Throughout CIVITAS RENAISSANCE approximately 7 000 hours (minimum) are estimated for the project.

## Additional Comments

Even though the mobility sector has similar characteristics to other types of markets, the branding of public services (especially public transport) is not common practice. Perugia’s attempt to introduce a mobility brand at this stage is essential in order to preserve and further develop lasting relationships with clients.

By introducing the brand, Perugia is intending not only to give an identity to the mobility efforts, but also to engage citizens in building a better city-based lifestyle. The benefits of brand implementation will not be immediately recognised, but its effects will certainly be measurable and sustained over time.





## 4 | Using Promotional Products

Promotional products are common items at most events, whether trade fairs or events open to the public. Virtually everyone has some kind of “freebie”, “gadget” or “giveaway”, ranging from pencils to expensive CDs or DVDs. Other typical examples include backpacks, pens, mouse pads, T-shirts, Post-it® blocks, paperweights and key rings.

However, most marketing officers would be hard-pressed to say whether or not promotional products are effective, nor would they be able to tell you how the value of such products is measured. From a psychological marketing point of view, it is therefore hard to identify the best type of giveaways. There is no simple rule such as “pens are always better than pencils”. You need to ask yourself exactly what you want to achieve with your promotional product, and how (or whether) it fits into your overall communications strategy.

### 4 | 1 THE PURPOSE OF GIVEAWAYS

There are several overlapping reasons for producing and distributing branded items:

- **Branding and image building:** The giveaway reinforces the core benefits of your mobility measure and features the name of your city (and/or your CIVITAS city name and CIVITAS Collaborative Project name). It should also include a message about the benefit of your measure: for example the slogan “Safe home from school” could be printed on a reflective band aimed at parents and children.
- **Creating a positive feeling:** In most situations, it is human nature to think well of someone who gives you a gift. The traditional reason for producing and distributing giveaways on an ongoing basis is to remind people of the existence of the mobility measure.
- **Building a list:** Gifts that are handed out in exchange for the names and e-mail addresses of citizens or peers are great value for money: they are a low-cost way of building a list of contacts for future use.

### 4 | 2 SELECTING THE BEST GIVEAWAYS

The following general observations may be of help in choosing the most, and least, valuable types of giveaway.

- Consumable items (food) will generally have little marketing value as giveaways.
- Giveaways that do not feature your name are useless.
- Giveaways that do not have a branding message are less valuable than those that do. This means that a postcard featuring an organisation’s name is less valuable than one featuring the name plus a slogan that enhances its position.
- Giveaways that offer an immediate benefit are useful. It is also a good idea to give something that will remind recipients of your measure, such as a public transport ticket protector.
- Giveaways should always include your contact information — your website address at a minimum. What is the point of impressing your target audience if they do not know how to contact you for further information?
- Giveaways that encourage involvement are the most valuable, since involvement creates personal relationships and helps reinforce your message. Giving away tram or bus tickets will encourage new passengers to participate in your mobility measures.
- Giveaways can be an effective way to enhance a positive image, gather prospective leads, and generate repeated reminders of your mobility measure. However, you should also bear in mind that the wrong giveaways can merely be a waste of money, or at worst create a negative impression. For the best results, try to see them through the eyes of your target audience.
- Last but not least: consider the environmental impact of your promotional item. Be sure that you can justify its production and transportation (e.g. was it manufactured in the EU?) to environmentally aware citizens and media, particularly if the gadgets are produced to promote a sustainable mobility measure.



SPOTLIGHT ON:

## COLLATERAL MATERIALS

### Shopping by Bicycle in Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain

**This measure illustrates how one city gave away bicycles to promote shopping in the city centre.**

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USING PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

City
Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain
Local dissemination manager
Maarten van Bemmelen
Project dissemination manager
Gerardo Lertxundi, Karin Fischer (CIVITAS MODERN)

### About the Mobility Measure

To promote cycling as a regular means of transportation for shopping, the city of Donostia-San Sebastian gave away 170 bicycles to people who shop in the city centre. The campaign was launched on May 20, 2009, when shops in the downtown area began handing out scratch cards to their customers. On June 6, 170 winners rode off on black bikes equipped with baskets for carrying groceries. The “Go shopping by bicycle” campaign was a joint initiative between the city of Donostia-San Sebastian and the shopkeepers’ associations of Zaharrean and Centro Erdi.

### Communications Problem

The measure was part of a wider programme that combines the promotion of shopping in the city centre and the use of sustainable modes of transport. Because of the parking and access restrictions in the centre, many people go by car to big retail centres on the outskirts of the city where parking is free.

Raising awareness of environmental conservation was also a goal of the measure.

### Desired Solution

The objective was to promote the use of sustainable transport among those shopping in the city centre, thus reducing traffic congestion and boosting commercial activity in the heart of the city.

## Action Steps

The first phase of the project started at the beginning of 2009 with negotiations for the purchase of the bicycles, taking into account the price and deadline for procurement. Shops were then contacted individually and the objectives of the campaign were explained. Retailers were told how they could participate and were offered the possibility of displaying the prize bicycles in their shops as a way to encourage shopping in small and medium-sized shops in the city centre.

Three hundred scratch cards were given to each shop, with one winning card in each batch. Shops distributed the cards to their customers and the shopkeepers' associations kept a record of the winners.

The campaign was launched with a press conference organised by the shopkeepers' associations and the head of the city's mobility department, Gerardo Lertxundi. The project finished with the distribution of the 170 bicycles.

## Success Parameters

Thirty-six percent of association members displayed the bicycles in their shops. Most shopkeepers who chose not to display the bicycles gave limited space as their reason, although they still participated in the campaign.

The campaign was widely reported in the media, and participating shops were happy with the initiative.

## Lessons Learned

Involving and informing shopkeepers individually is critical, because their active participation and their support for sustainable transport are essential to the success of such a campaign.



## Budget

- 170 bicycles: EUR 18 700.
- Hiring of transport company to deliver the bicycles: EUR 1 620.
- Project management, information dissemination and other activities: EUR 3 550.
- Marketing (newspaper announcements): EUR 1 860.
- Posters, stationery and stickers: EUR 1 550.



## 5 | Organising Successful Events

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The topic of sustainable urban mobility lends itself well to presentation at public events, largely due to the visual nature of most measures, the active involvement of the public, and the attraction of environmentally sound efforts. Your challenge will often be to find the best means of staging an event. Not every announcement warrants an event, but if you do plan one you will need to think creatively in order to make the most out of it. It never hurts to think out of the box, so resist the temptation to use the same event formula that worked for you last year.

This section provides a range of ideas and practical advice to help you organise and manage successful events.

### 5 | 1 EVENT THEME AND CONTENT

The headline or description of an event can make or break its success. It is extremely important to develop an interesting and pertinent theme that will encourage participants to attend.

Which of the following sounds more appealing to you, as a consumer?

**8th Annual Mobility Fair**  
or  
**Get your Family Moving: Downshire Family Day Out**

### 5 | 2 ORGANISING AN EVENT

If, on the basis of the audience you want to reach, and your communication objectives, you have decided that an event is the best means of reaching your audience, you will need to determine what type of event to organise.

#### Information events

Besides disseminating information and attracting interest in a transport plan or project, information events elicit stakeholder feedback and support. Meeting people face to face and supplying them with information is a fundamental step towards getting informed feedback. To “get the word out” to a wide range of stakeholders, the project team needs to make information readily and conveniently available in a variety of locations. Offering people different ways to access information increases the chances it will reach them.

An information event can be used as part of an engagement strategy to:

- provide an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss a project face to face with project team members, which can help clear up any potential misunderstandings;
- introduce project team members to stakeholders, so they can begin to develop a rapport;
- present additional information to your target audience(s), which might be difficult to convey in a written publication;
- obtain feedback from the public; and
- enable members of your target audience (including the general public) to discuss the measure, share ideas and build relationships.





## Types of information events

### - **Exhibition**

An exhibition is usually held in an informal setting in which people can obtain information about your measure. It has no formal agenda, and unlike a meeting no formal discussions or presentations take place. There is no audience seating: visitors obtain information informally from the exhibits, and from the staff who can be engaged in conversation and asked to give their opinions and comments. It is important for the staff present at the exhibition to be able to provide a summary of the feedback they receive from visitors.

### - **Information centre**

A neighbourhood or community information centre is a venue where people can obtain information on an informal, ongoing basis. Choosing a central, accessible location will make it easier for people to find information about a project, express their concerns and raise specific issues. An information centre (which may also be referred to as a field office, site office or drop-in centre) offers an opportunity for informal contact with members of the community. It should therefore be:

- visible to the community and situated in an accessible and convenient location within a project area;
- mobile, in order to maximise contact with members of the public;
- open for regular hours;
- in operation for a designated period of time, such as during the planning or construction phase of a project; and
- staffed by planning, project and/or liaison personnel knowledgeable about the area, the measure and the related issues.

### - **Information session/briefing**

Information sessions can be a valuable way to engage community groups, especially those who would not otherwise necessarily participate. These meetings are usually requested by the project team to involve specific community groups, or can be requested by a community group in order to learn more about issues of particular relevance to them. The sessions usually involve an exchange of information, enabling the team to better understand local considerations, and the community group to learn more about the project objectives, possible proposals and process.

### - **Public meeting**

These are generally formal meetings arranged by the project team, the public or an external stakeholder in order to discuss a particular aspect of a project. A public meeting might be called to discuss a contentious issue or technical aspect of a transport-related project. Public meetings are usually a good way of explaining issues to the public and can also be useful in attracting support from influential citizens.

### - **Topic-specific event**

Sometimes it will make sense to spread information about your measure by piggybacking. Setting up an information stand or exhibition at a larger local event, such as a music festival, market day or seasonal event, can be an effective way of reaching the public. Having a presence at this type of event enables you to share information about your measure with members of the public, to discuss the project, and to obtain feedback from citizens in an informal setting.

### - **Press event**

These can include press briefings, traditional press conferences, online discussions, one-on-one briefings, seminars/media roundtables, speeches at industry conferences that might attract members of the media, and facility visits.

### - **Other**

Other events that may be suitable for reaching the public, depending on your local environment, include conferences, panel discussions, Web-ex, workshops/trainings and fam-trips (familiarisation-trips)/site visits.



## 5|3 EVENT PLANNING: A CHECKLIST

You should be prepared to address the following basic elements when planning an event. Additional considerations will inevitably arise, so be sure to start planning your event in plenty of time to allow for the fine-tuning of strategies and decisions.

- Starting day and time.
- End day and time.
- Total number of participants expected.
- Venue reservation.
- Registration process, including online.
- Payment methods.
- Bus/public transport passes for speakers and attendees.
- Parking permits, if required.
- Security assistance.
- Notification of local authorities (fire, police, etc.)
- Block booking at a nearby hotel for travelling participants/speakers.
- Name badges and place markers for the speakers' table.
- Selection of host/master of ceremonies/facilitator.
- Backdrop for podium with branded signage.
- Visuals for television journalists and photographers.
- Audio impact for radio reporters.
- Display stands.
- Direction signs.
- Catering and refreshments.
- Equipment and furniture (audiovisual equipment, tables, chairs, flipcharts, projector, etc.)
- Documentation and participant information (maps, printed speeches, presentations, bags/folders, e-versions rather than hard-copies, brochures, etc.).
- Press facilities (wifi, radio connections, television platform, etc.).
- Speaker preparation.
- Invitation process.
- Travel arrangements for VIPs.
- Creation of a dedicated website for the event.
- Photographer and/or video crew to document the event.

## 5|4 CONSENT FORM

When filming or taking photographs at an event, you will normally need to ask permission to use the images for CIVITAS or other promotional purposes. This is particularly the case for events that involve children. If your event is held in a school, for example, you will need to obtain permission from the school as well as from the parents of the children.

You should ask for written permission to edit, use or reuse images in print publications, on the Internet and in all other media. Ask legal advisors from your city for full details of related liabilities.

# SPOTLIGHT ON:

## EVENT PLANNING

### Zagreb's Info-Tram: A "Perpetual Event"

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ORGANISING SUCCESSFUL EVENTS

**How did Zagreb mobilise its citizens and create an opportunity for dialogue with the public? By transforming an old tram into an easily accessible "information point" in the city centre.**

City
Zagreb, Croatia
Local dissemination manager
Lidija Pavic-Rogosic
Project dissemination manager
Jorg Kastelic (CIVITAS ELAN)

### About the Mobility Measure

Within the CIVITAS ELAN project, key objectives have been identified in various policy fields. The high-level project objectives related to influencing travel behaviour are to:

- establish a mobility dialogue with citizens;
- provide high-quality mobility information to citizens; and
- ensure participation among the general and professional public by creating a forum.

### Communications Problem

In Croatia, citizens have been included in decision making regarding urban development since the 1960s through public hearings and various other means and at different levels of participation. However, in relation to mobility issues, such consultation is generally limited to professional input. The wider public become involved only in the form of reaction to decisions that have already been implemented. Representatives of the public should be involved in helping to reach appropriate decisions, reducing citizens' dissatisfaction and fostering a sense of community responsibility.

One of the purposes of the measure was to explore a new way to inform citizens regarding mobility issues. The chosen measure was carried out on the basis of:

- considering citizens not only as "a problem to be solved" but as a group that can be mobilised to become part of the solution, through dedicated participation and consultation; and
- giving priority to the needs and expectations of citizens.

## Desired Solution

To put into practice the project's principle of putting citizens first, emphasis was given to stimulating dialogue between policy makers/implementers and citizens and other mobility stakeholders. The measure aimed to create opportunities for better involvement in decision-making processes, a goal in Zagreb.

## Action Steps

Citizens and their well being are the focus of the planned measures for the improvement of urban transport in Zagreb. This requires decision makers to listen to all stakeholders and to develop solutions with a participatory approach. However, stakeholder involvement goes beyond listening: partners in Zagreb wish to encourage participants to contribute their own ideas, thus directly influencing decisions in mobility planning.

In order for this to happen, the city needed a permanent base of operation with normal working hours. It needed to be easily recognisable by citizens, readily accessible, and run by well-informed staff able and willing to be of service to professionals as well as ordinary citizens.

Through the CIVITAS ELAN forum, which serves as a basis for communication and information on the demonstration measures, the idea of establishing the CIVITAS ELAN Info Point emerged. The Info Point is located in a refurbished and redecorated tram located in front of the city's Technical Museum in the middle of the ELAN demonstration corridor. The Zagreb-based organisation ODRAZ–Sustainable Community Development and other local partners established the work programme of the Info Point, which is open every day except Sunday.

The establishment of the Info Point required four basic steps:

- obtaining the location permit;
- refurbishing and equipping the old tram car;
- hiring three members of staff to work daily from 13:00 to 17:00 and on Saturday from 09:00 to 13:00; and
- developing information materials (project brochure).

The mayor of Zagreb opened the Info Point during European Mobility Week 2009 and a press conference was organised to attract media attention. An ongoing programme, "Wednesday in the Tram", was established to disseminate information on CIVITAS ELAN project measures. Throughout the project, questionnaires related to the different measures (e.g. public transport satisfaction) have been distributed.



## Success Parameters

The success of the measure was evaluated based on the following criteria:

- number of visitors;
- quantity of information materials distributed;
- participation figures for the "Wednesday in the Tram" programme;
- number of completed questionnaires;
- content of completed questionnaires;
- quality and quantity of citizens' comments and suggestions; and
- quantity and quality of media reports about CIVITAS ELAN.

## Lessons Learned

The idea for the CIVITAS ELAN Info Point emerged after the project was launched as partners realised that some sort of permanent information stand was needed in the demonstration corridor to keep citizens informed and to gather comments and feedback. The Info Point is part of the CIVITAS ELAN forum, through which Zagreb plans to organise various events (presentations, workshops and a roundtable).

Within three months of opening, the need for the Info Point had been proved, with a daily average of 30 to 50 people visiting the tram and some making return visits.

Experience has shown the importance of establishing consistent and fixed opening hours so that citizens know when to visit.

Other important elements are a high level of enthusiasm among employees, and a friendly approach. They also need to be committed to the project idea in order to carry out their tasks effectively and to obtain feedback from visitors (the staff have collected over 700 completed questionnaires).

The programme must be relevant and interesting to citizens, and the materials and surveys should be regularly updated and revised.





## 6 | Working with the Media

Attracting media coverage of your CIVITAS measures is an effective way of reaching large audiences, and will give your news the cachet of journalistic independence. However, competition for such free publicity is fierce. In order to come out on top, you need to know a few tricks of the public relations trade.

### 6 | 1 HOW THE MEDIA WORK

Movies and television paint a romantic picture of the journalist: the investigative reporter on undercover assignment; the war correspondent braving gunfire and bombs; or the intrepid news show host doing ambush interviews. But such glamorous figures play a very small part in the production of the daily news. More often than not, it is not the journalists who go after the news but the news that goes after the journalists. Every day, editors and reporters are bombarded by scores of press releases, phone calls and e-mails sent by people hoping to influence their stakeholders through the media. As a result, those who work in the media spend much of their time sorting through this torrent of information for the precious few nuggets worth printing or broadcasting.

What criteria do they use to make their selection? This question is examined in greater detail in Chapter 7 (Making News), but for now we can say that the media gravitate towards the dramatic, the novel, the weird and the bizarre. But there is another essential factor: in order to be newsworthy, a piece of information must be relevant to the journalist's particular audience. While a major blizzard in Moscow may dominate the thoughts of Muscovites, it is the light snow flurry in Paris that plays on the front page of *Le Monde*.

The criticism is often made that editors choose news that sells newspapers. To a large extent this is true — not just of tabloids and gossip sheets, but also of the more respectable mainstream media. To be sustainable, news organisations depend on their customers — readers, listeners and viewers. They have to deliver what their audiences want. Daily news is not a dry record of what has transpired over the last 24 hours: it is rather a carefully parsed “best of” compilation of the information that the media have collected and been fed.

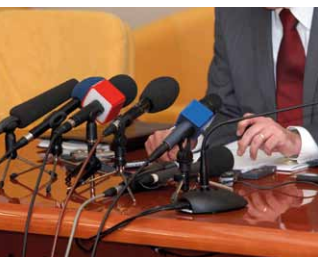
### 6 | 2 HOW TO WORK WITH THE MEDIA

If, as the dissemination manager of a local transport project, you have an event, a new project, or some other news you would like to spread through the media, the easiest thing to do might be to cut and paste some existing text on the project — perhaps something from your tender application — and e-mail it to the public address of the local newspaper. This is exactly what most people in your position would do. But it is a strategy that is almost certain to fail.

Just as a good fisherman learns to think like a fish, a good dissemination manager learns to think like a journalist. Your project may represent a big success for your department, and it may even have won plaudits from your partners in CIVITAS or the desk officer of the European Commission. But such acclaim will not send the media rushing to your office. You will have to explain to the journalist what makes your project innovative and special and, in particular, how it will affect the journalist's audience (in most cases, the citizens of your community).

Forget the project documentation, and instead explain your CIVITAS measure in plain language. Avoid acronyms and technical jargon (e.g. “GHG emissions”, “LEZ”, “AVI technology”). A press release full of terms like these will end up in the newsroom waste bin.

Keep your press releases short and to the point. You do not have to explain everything about the project — just enough to pique the journalist's interest and prompt him or her to call you back for an interview. Most press releases are less than a page long.



Once the release is written, you must identify the recipient journalist. The more narrowly you can target the release the better. Rather than send it to the editor's desk at the local paper (which in larger cities will be deluged with press releases on every subject under the sun from a wide range of sources), try to nail down the reporter most likely to report on your issue — a reporter who covers City Hall or community affairs, or, if possible, the environment or transport.

Another avenue might be niche media, such as magazines, blogs or websites whose content focuses on transportation and/or sustainability issues. Such publications may have audiences spanning the nation or even the globe, but if your project is somehow unique or innovative in the field of sustainable transport, it may appeal to niche media editors.

The best way to identify target journalists is to familiarise yourself with their reporting. You need to read their publications and listen to their broadcasts. Once you have identified the journalist, customise your basic press release for them, framing the message in a way that will appeal to the tastes and interests of their specific audience. After you have e-mailed the press release, follow up with a phone call. It is a lot easier to ignore an e-mail message than a phone call.

If you succeed in attracting a reporter's attention, it will be easier to repeat the success. Follow local and national news and look for opportunities on which to "hook" your messages. For example, before and during European Mobility Week, local reporters will be interested in finding stories that give this event a local angle. Your CIVITAS project will provide the right story at the right time. Watch the news for other transport-related stories — a hike in the price of petrol; pollution alerts; or government reports on public health, obesity, traffic accident rates, etc. Your measure on sustainable transport may well have direct relevance to current topics in the media.

Be careful not to exaggerate and do not tell the media anything that you are not sure about. A reporter's professional status is based on his or her credibility. If you are an unreliable source of information, reporters will stop listening to you. But if you provide useful, accurate information, you can become a source to whom reporters go to repeatedly for stories on urban transport. The reporters will always have their own stories, but will use you as a trusted, expert source of information. They may not ask specifically about your CIVITAS projects, but if the interview topic is relevant it is an opportunity to mention and promote your work on the project.

## 6|3 LOCAL VS. NATIONAL VS. EU-LEVEL OUTREACH

CIVITAS is a local mobility initiative carried out by local authorities. Naturally, the main geographical focus of a CIVITAS city's media outreach will therefore be local. But as a knowledge-sharing endeavour, CIVITAS requires its demonstration cities to share lessons learned in their projects with other cities. This sharing can be done through CIVITAS meetings and workshops and through direct communications. But it can also be done through national and EU-level media. Getting your message to an audience beyond your city boundaries requires a different approach and a bit of imagination. It is a good way not only to fulfil your obligations to share knowledge, but also to win some broader recognition for your work.

### Local media

You can think of the different levels of media as concentric rings, the innermost ring being local. Local media include radio and television stations as well as the full range of print media: neighbourhood and city-wide newspapers, culture and entertainment weeklies, television guides, business journals and more. The advantage of local media is that readers and listeners have an obvious common denominator: they live in the same city and rely on the same transport system.

Your CIVITAS project will invariably affect significant numbers of these local audiences and will therefore be of interest to them. As newspapers and local news broadcasts consider coverage of local public affairs and government almost as a responsibility, they will be quite receptive to messages about your CIVITAS project.

Local specialty publications are also looking for local stories, although each will require a different approach or "angle". A business journal will be more interested in stories about what your project may do for local commerce, for example, while an entertainment weekly will be more attracted by public events such as a mobility week celebration.



## National media

Getting into national media will be more difficult and requires some thought. Stories that seem to affect people in your city alone might not be of interest to the editor of a national newspaper or broadcaster. You will need to consider what it is about your project that would interest someone living in a city on the other side of the country. Perhaps you are undertaking a measure that is the first of its kind in your country. Maybe you are pioneering a practice, technology or idea that could be replicated at a national level. Or maybe a guest to an event you are organising is a national figure — perhaps a government minister or a national celebrity.

Not everything about your project will be of interest outside your city, but there may well be developments that appeal to a wider audience. It is up to you to recognise these opportunities and to make the most of them.

## EU-level media

In principle, the main media outreach at EU level for CIVITAS is handled by the CIVITAS Secretariat. However, your CIVITAS work may generate news that is of interest at EU level, and in this case why not go for EU-level media?

There are many broadcasts and publications with multinational, EU or global audiences. They include newspapers such as the *Financial Times* and *International Herald Tribune*; television news channels such as BBC World and CNN International; international wire services such as Bloomberg News and Agence France-Presse (AFP); and EU media organs such as European Voice.

As mentioned above, there are also niche outlets in the transport field such as ELTIS (<http://www.eltis.org>), an information portal on sustainable urban transport; or the UK-based Transport Business International (<http://www.transportbusiness.net>).

As with national media outreach, you have to begin by putting yourself in the place of a member of the target audience — perhaps someone in a neighbouring country. Does your project have something he or she would want to hear about?

As you may not be familiar with these publications, it is a good idea to have a look at their content so as to avoid pitching a story that is entirely unsuitable.

## WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

**Usti nad Labem Broadcasts  
about Sustainable Urban Mobility**

**The City Hall in Usti nad Labem used a radio broadcast to let the public know about the progress it was making in its sustainable transport projects.**

City
Usti nad Labem, Czech Republic
Local dissemination manager
Katerina Oktabcova
Project dissemination manager
Gustav Friis (CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES)

### About the Mobility Measure

The City Hall wanted to publicise the development and overall planning process of the Sustainable Urban Transport Plan (SUTP) of Usti nad Labem. The SUTP represents the direction in which the city wants planning practices to move in order to make the city's transport system sustainable. Usti's Transport Master Plan was adopted in 2007 as a basic transport document for the development of the SUTP. The Transport Master Plan outlined the development of city transport for the next 15 years, and the period until 2011 was seen as crucial for adopting good practices in sustainable urban transport planning.

### Communications Problem

The SUTP is the major document for the development of city transport. Usti nad Labem presently has insufficient infrastructure and significant transport overload, with high volumes of traffic. The citizens of Usti were dissatisfied and demanding changes. It was decided that a radio broadcast would be made about the development of the SUTP with the aim of communicating to the public about the progress achieved in local transport.

### Desired Solution

The communication goal was to reach the inhabitants of Usti nad Labem and to raise awareness about the activities Usti is undertaking to improve the transport situation in the city. Citizens were informed about new ways of organising city transport; the development of public transport; the availability of different means of transport; improvements in cycling conditions; and other related topics within the SUTP.



## Action Steps

The radio broadcast is now made on average once every two months following completion of transport measures. Broadcasts generally contain two items of news and are presented in the form of an interview with the CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES member. The interviews are recorded and broadcast by the public regional radio station Cesky Rozhlas during a regular programme about current city events. The content focuses on progress towards the concrete measures stated in the SUTP. The City Hall wants people to follow the actual state of development of the plan and to participate by giving their ideas and comments.

## Success Parameters

The radio broadcast is monitored by Usti nad Labem Municipality, and the number of listeners can be obtained from the radio information source. Feedback can be received directly from the public via phone calls to the CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES team members. Contact information is given during the broadcast, and listeners are encouraged to visit the website for more detailed information.

## Lessons Learned

The radio broadcast is not sufficient to be the sole source of information for the public. Along with the audio outreach, it is important to disseminate visual materials and to consider other kinds of promotional campaigns. In the future, a similar broadcast could be made on a private radio station as well.

## Budget

The broadcasting was free of charge for CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES and was based on long-term cooperation between Usti nad Labem Municipality and Cesky Rozhlas radio. The SUTP development news was included within the regular broadcast about current events in the city. The CIVITAS team devoted approximately one day of work for each broadcast.



## 7 | Maximising Media Relations: Making News

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### 7 | 1 CREATING A VIABLE NEWS ANGLE

Most people will be familiar with the story of the blind mice who come upon an elephant in the jungle, and how they each have a different perception of what they have encountered. The first mouse, creeping around one of the elephant's legs, declares that they have run into a tree. The second mouse, hanging from the twisted hair of the pachyderm's tail, surmises that it is a length of rope. The third, scurrying along the elephant's undulating trunk, says it is neither a tree nor a piece of rope, but rather a giant boa constrictor.

It may be something of a stretch to compare transportation measures to elephants, but the fact is that both are large and complex and will leave a different impression depending on one's perspective. When you seek to publicise your CIVITAS project, start by putting yourself in the position of your audience. What aspects will seem most interesting, useful and relevant?

#### The right angle for the right media

Each medium has its own audience with a defining professional profile, geographic distribution, age range, interests and other demographic characteristics. Business journals will cater to business managers, entertainment weeklies to a younger crowd of free spirits, and sports weeklies to a largely male audience. Even among "general-interest media", subscribers will tend to fit a limited profile. For example, readers of daily newspapers tend to be older than the general population's median age, while users of web-based news sites will be younger. Journalists are always aware of the special needs and interests of their audience, and you will also need to be when you approach a reporter with a story idea.

This can be illustrated by the "Shopping by bicycle" promotion, undertaken in the city of Aalborg, Denmark. The measure involved the distribution of 700 free bikes, each equipped with a shopping basket, based on a random draw. The raffle was organised by commercial associations in the centre of Aalborg and was aimed not only at encouraging greater use of a sustainable mode of transport but also at stimulating downtown retail activity, which was suffering from competition from the big suburban shopping malls.

The story has several aspects, and the one you emphasise in your promotional efforts will depend on which media you approach. If it is a chamber of commerce newsletter, or the business supplement of the local newspaper, it might be advisable to stress the story's commercial angle: the stimulation of downtown retail activity. If it is the health page of the newspaper's weekend edition, then you might stress the health benefits of everyday cycling. If it is the nightly news programme, you might do better to stress something that is more time sensitive, such as the programme launch or the announcement of the winners.

#### Creating topical news angles

A topical angle is a story-telling approach that relates your measure to one of the hot topics of the day. In the best case, the measure your city has undertaken was chosen on the basis of a current public need or interest and should therefore already be well suited to this approach. Nevertheless, you should give some thought to opportunities to link your measure to current public discourse. A confluence of international events and trends has recently sparked demand for sustainable transport:

- the economic crisis;
- health epidemics such as obesity and diabetes;
- the escalating price of petrol;
- the credit crunch;
- public security (following the 7/7 bombings on the London Underground in 2005);
- traffic congestion; and
- calls for energy independence.



These are just some issues of general interest across Europe and beyond, but every city has issues of particular local interest. When you frame your press releases and news pitches, the chances of attracting media interest are far better if your story touches on a topical issue that is already in the public mind. For example, a 1996 public transport strike in Paris was a piece of bad news that a bicycle advocacy group exploited for its own benefit. The organisation (MDB) launched an ad hoc publicity campaign focusing bicycles as a great way to cope with the transit strike. When the strike was over, the group carried out a follow-up campaign extolling the independence and freedom that travel by bike can give commuters. The strike is now credited for igniting today's bicycle revolution in the French capital. The publicity measure was a good example of communications capitalising on current events.

### Creating timely news angles

Reporters will also be interested in stories that are fresh and time sensitive and that must be reported immediately while they are still hot. In this respect, it is good to notify the media straight away when news emerges from your project. Examples include the receipt of project funding, the official launch of a measure or project, the announcement of results, or the announcement of contest winners.

Take advantage of the fact that reporters are compelled to report time-sensitive news right away — procrastinating is not an option. If you have such news, it is important to keep the journalists' deadlines in mind. If you want to get publicity about an upcoming event, each publication will have its own deadline for receipt of information. Daily newspapers and broadcast media might require no more than 24 or 48 hours' notice, but weekly or monthly publications will need more notification. Contact them ahead of time to find out their requirements.

## MEDIA RELATIONS

## Youth on the Move in Ghent's Trammelant Bus

**Ghent applied out-of-the-box thinking when devising a way not only to educate its target audiences, but also to create a timely and attractive “hook” for local and European media.**

City
Ghent, Belgium
Local dissemination manager
Patty Delanghe
Project dissemination manager
Jorg Kastelic (CIVITAS ELAN)

## About the Mobility Measure

To increase safety and security (among drivers and passengers) on buses and trams, the public transport provider De Lijn has implemented a set of integrated measures:

- the installation of on-board cameras;
- the installation of closed driver cabins;
- increased numbers of “Lijnspotters” (public transport security personnel); and
- close cooperation with schools and young people, in particular through the Trammelant project.

One year after its launch, the Trammelant project was in need of extra resources and some improvement. Using the CIVITAS budget, the city transformed an old bus into a “Trammelant” bus, which travelled from school to school to entertain and teach the pupils.

The objective was to raise awareness among school pupils through activities, discussions and role play. This helped to convey to young people messages about appropriate behaviour — what they should and should not do on public transport. Activities included group debates, visits to the De Lijn depot and dispatch centre, and a hands-on opportunity to remove graffiti. One group of students then acted as tutors to another group (classic peer-to-peer education).

The ultimate goal was to reduce levels of damage and vandalism, thereby increasing safety and creating a bond between pupils and drivers. Greater safety also means more passengers in the long term.



## Communications Problem

The annual CIVITAS ELAN consortium meeting took place in Ghent in November 2009. It is usual for a press event to be organised on such occasions, but the mere fact that partners were visiting the city was not sufficient to attract media attention. Therefore, at the request of the local dissemination manager, De Lijn rushed to finish the Trammelant bus in time for the annual consortium meeting. This created a great opportunity to link the visit of the ELAN partners to a tangible project measure. On the final day of the consortium meeting, the bus was presented to the press in the presence of several partners, the alderman, and the regional manager of De Lijn. The minister of mobility was invited, but was unable to attend.

## Desired Solution

- Put the media spotlight on the CIVITAS project to illustrate what Ghent is doing with European funds.
- Get as much media attention as possible for the measure.
- Mobilise people to come to the CIVITAS event organised for the following day (Saturday). The bus was parked in the main square and was one of the main attractions.

## Action Steps

- The strategy: to combine a weak media story with a strong one.
- The CIVITAS team is dependent on the media department of the City of Ghent for media relations; thus CIVITAS management cannot contact the media directly. Since it was a cooperative action (Ghent City Council + De Lijn), the teams crosschecked their media lists to ensure that no contacts were missed.
- Press materials were developed by the local dissemination manager and De Lijn.
- Invitations were sent by Ghent City Council media unit one week before the event.
- A press pack was created (CD with texts, photos, logos, etc.).
- There were three speakers at the press conference: a general introduction by the alderman of mobility; a discussion on the advantages of sharing knowledge and experience, presented by the project coordinator; and a presentation of the Trammelant project by a representative from De Lijn.
- The press and guests were invited to visit the bus in front of the City Hall for a demonstration.



## Success Parameters

### Quantitative

- Local television: coverage on the day itself followed by a more substantial item on the evening news the following week.
- Press items in local news sections.
- An increase in website visitor numbers.
- News picked up via the EU site: De Lijn later received an invitation to give a presentation on the project in Amman (Jordan).

### Qualitative

- Awareness of the CIVITAS brand was boosted thanks to the use of its name and logo, and the event helped to attract visitors to the CIVITAS meeting the following day.
- De Lijn was able to deliver a positive message (following a lot of negative media attention in the previous months).

## Lessons Learned

It is always worth double-checking in an attempt to avoid unfortunate circumstances. The most exciting part of the bus demonstration is the evacuation exercise, which generates a lot of smoke (dry ice). The police had been informed about this aspect in advance, but the fire department had not. The organisers mistakenly assumed that the police would communicate the information to the fire department. Just five minutes into the smoke demonstration, the fire department arrived with sirens blaring. This resulted in 15 minutes of chaos — all recorded by local television.

Make your message/event as attention grabbing as possible; make the journalist's job as easy as possible (copy-paste text and photographs, etc.); and always provide a good photo opportunity.

And try not to panic if things fail to go according to plan.

## Budget

- Estimated number of staff: 24 person/hours (meetings, correspondence, telephone calls, writing editorials, administration, making CDs, assembling press packs, etc.).
- Direct costs: minor costs for CDs, folders and bags.



## 8 | Exploiting Essential Tools for Citizen Communications

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### 8 | 1 FEATURE ARTICLE

#### What is a feature article?

A feature article provides an extended description of a project or a particular aspect of a project. It is longer than a conventional news story and might include photographs or drawings illustrating the project. A feature article may contain quotes from key individuals and organisations involved in the project and those affected by it.

While a conventional news item covers a single event or circumstance, a feature article provides a broader overview, exploring the project in greater detail. In some circumstances, a feature article may be written by a member of the project team, rather than by a journalist. In this case there will be some control over the content, although the editor will make the final decisions.

#### How to use a feature article to inform

A feature article can be an effective way to complement other news coverage, providing readers with a comprehensive overview of the project. This can improve the general level of understanding of the project's objectives and implications by clarifying details, particularly where issues have been oversimplified for the sake of attention-grabbing headlines and shorter news reports. A well-written feature article that identifies the main issues relating to a project can help to reassure readers that their concerns will not be ignored in the decision-making process, even if those issues have yet to be resolved.

#### How to use a feature article to encourage engagement

A feature article is primarily an information tool, but there are ways in which it can be used with other techniques to encourage stakeholder engagement. It is likely to prompt readers to consider the ways in which the project might affect them, which may encourage some of them to get involved through engagement events or letters to the newspaper. Letters pages should be regularly monitored to assess responses to the feature article, and the project team should react to any concerns or issues raised. It is important to remember that newspapers respond to their readers' interests. A newspaper that regularly reports on your project, either through news items or feature articles, is likely to have readers interested in it or affected by it. Paid advertising in the newspaper may be an effective way to publicise events.

#### When should you write a feature article?

The idea of producing a feature article may originate from the newspaper or magazine. In this case, the timing is in the hands of the publisher. It might still be possible to influence the publication date, but this will depend on the editor. If the idea for a feature article is generated by the project team, it is important to discuss with the newspaper the possibility for publication before committing resources to writing the article. Editors may wish to ensure that the feature article has some topical relevance, so before approaching the newspaper it is a good idea to identify key dates and events for the project and how these dates could influence the feature article.

The feature article can be timed to coincide with a project event, such as the launch of engagement activities, the opening of an exhibition or the start of construction work. Where the event forms part of the engagement process, the feature article might help to encourage stakeholder engagement.



## 8|2 PRESS PACK

A “press pack” or “media kit” is a useful tool for communicating important information to the public via the media. For a transport-related project, media kits might include a collection of information about the project, issue or decision, which is presented to journalists for inclusion in a newspaper article, journal or website.

At a news conference, a press pack can provide useful information and can give a broad overview of the project and its objectives, thus establishing the context for the new developments. Journalists will usually supplement a story with additional research and an interview, but providing them with a press pack to get them started can be the deciding factor in whether or not they write a story about your mobility project. Press packs also ensure that journalists get their facts directly from you rather than relying on third parties or hearsay.

Press packs are primarily designed for use by journalists, but you might also consider supplying them to other people requesting information about your mobility measures, such as local and regional authorities, EU-level decision makers, industry associations, and even the general public.

### Press pack contents

The press pack should contain up-to-date information about your project in the form of fact sheets, case studies on specific measures, photographs (or links to online images), and biographies of the key individuals involved. Press packs can be hard copy and/or electronic. Your budget and specific needs will determine what is best for your project, but at a minimum you should offer these materials on your website in a dedicated “press area”.

### How to prepare a press pack

- Consider carefully the messages you would like to communicate to the public and decide whether your materials need to be tailored to suit different media audiences.
- Summarise the key information. Bullet points can be a useful way to communicate key issues or arguments.
- Graphic materials, such as images and screen shots, can make the information more attractive.
- Think about the types of questions the media might ask and provide clear responses in your materials. Consider preparing a “questions and answers” document for this purpose.

### Benefits of a press pack

Producing high-quality, reliable, newsworthy material on a consistent basis will help you to build strong working relationships with journalists as a trusted source of information.

### When should you use a press pack?

A press pack can play an important role in supporting a media strategy at various stages. When launching a new measure, policy or project, a press pack is a useful tool for keeping journalists informed. In this case, the pack might include general background information; a description of the project; details of key milestones and opportunities for public involvement; and contact details for obtaining further information.

#### Consider using a press pack to:

- launch a new project or policy initiative;
- highlight key milestones during a project's lifetime;
- support press conferences or other media events (visits, etc.);
- provide additional information about the outcomes of a study or the results of engagement activities or events; or
- provide additional clarification on specific issues or concerns.



## Electronic press packs

### Online (or electronic) press packs have several advantages:

- they can be continuously updated;
- there are no printing or distribution costs;
- they are available to multiple audiences and can be accessed over a long period of time, as information on the Internet has a long shelf life; and
- they have less impact on the environment (paper, printing, distribution, etc.).

#### Electronic press packs: Tips and tricks

- Promote the website and your online press pack: simply posting the pack on your website will not generate press coverage.
- Ensure your information is well organised and easy to find on the website.
- Ensure that the information is easily printable from your web page.
- Regularly update your online press material.
- Do not use too many graphics as these can slow Internet connection speed and affect visitors' ability to download or print information.
- Provide contact details for obtaining further information.

## CD format

Preparing a CD (rather than printing the entire press pack) prevents journalists from being overburdened with huge quantities of paper, and production costs for CDs are very low compared to paper versions.

#### CD press packs: Tips and tricks

- Ensure CDs are clearly labelled with the name or contact details of your organisation and the CD contents.
- Ensure that the CD is easy to navigate.
- Do not be tempted to include too much information: the CD should contain only the key material.

## 8 | 3 PRESS RELEASE

Press releases are used to deliver new information on a project or mobility measure to journalists, who can then use the information as a source for a news report. A press or news release is a short document (generally one page, double-spaced, in printed and/or electronic form) that outlines an event, issue or measure. It is distributed widely to a range of media organisations and contacts, and for best results the organisation issuing the press release follows up by telephone/e-mail. The follow-up is known as "selling in" or "pitching".

### How to use a press release

A press release is designed to be easily adapted into a news story by a journalist. It contains all the necessary information for a short news report in a newspaper or magazine, or for a radio or television news bulletin. It also provides contact information so the journalist can explore the story further. A press release is an inexpensive and effective way to provide media organisations with information about an event or issue. It should only be used for an announcement that can be clearly explained in a single page of text and where further questions can be answered by your organisation's press office or media representative.

For detailed or controversial issues, or for high-profile launch events, you might want to consider holding a press conference (see the following section), which will give journalists an opportunity to question your organisation directly.



## When to issue a press release

Information should be released to the press at each key stage of your project in order to maintain media and public interest. For general updates on project progress, a press release can be distributed regularly, detailing the milestones reached and highlighting forthcoming deadlines or events. Media attention will be increased if these coincide with major events or issues in the decision-making process or with other related news stories. Linking a press conference (see details in the following section) with other events, such as a launch or community visit, can be an effective way to raise interest and present a visual angle for the media. Press releases and press conferences can also be used to respond to negative coverage of a project.

## Creating a press release

- **Date:** Always include the date on which the news is to be released, indicated by "for immediate release" or "embargoed until". You can embargo news that you do not want published until a later date, such as awards winners or research results. Embargoed items are often complicated issues that a journalist might want extra time to research before publishing a story. Do not embargo news unless warranted.
- **Spacing:** A single page with double or 1.5 line spacing is standard, because it is easier to read. If you cannot avoid going to a second sheet, be sure to number the pages and repeat the subject of the press release on the top of the second page.
- **Heading:** Use official letterhead featuring your organisation's logo.
- **Quotes:** Include quotes from senior officials and prominent local/regional figures. Quotes from citizens also add interest to news items.
- **Title:** If possible, develop a creative headline. If not, keep it simple and direct. Do not use a biased headline and avoid excessive use of adjectives.
- **Text:** Put the most important information first. Keep sentences and paragraphs short. Avoid jargon, acronyms and technical details. For local news, highlight the local angle in the first paragraph. The "lead", or first paragraph, should answer the questions Who? What? Why? Where? How? and When?
- **Technical information:** Financial details, operating budgets, timelines and the names of partners can be given in a separate section at the end ("notes for editors").
- **Contact information:** Include a name, mobile phone number and e-mail address for journalists to use. Make sure that the contact person will be available and that they will have constant access to their e-mail. The contact details must stand out: Do not bury them within the text.

## How to distribute a press release

Create a list showing name, organisation, title, address, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for local media and national press contacts. The list should include print, radio, television and online press contacts for both mainstream and trade press.

When distributing any press release, send it to the relevant press contacts with plain text in the e-mail. Journalists often do not open attachments, so it is important to paste the text of your press release into the body of your e-mail. Additional information (e.g. a PDF of the press release or one or two compressed pictures) can be sent as attachments. Remember that CIVITAS is also a resource to help disseminate your news: items can always be posted on the <http://www.civitas.eu> website.





## Tips for distribution

- **E-mail distribution:**
  - Do not send attachments unless you have good reason to do so or have warned the recipient in advance. Many people do not open unsolicited attachments in case they contain a computer virus.
  - If you send a document in Microsoft Word format, be sure to remove all tracked changes. Failure to do so has caused some high-profile disasters, with institutions unwittingly delivering to journalists documents containing a chronology of their news-spinning process.
  - Put all names in blind copy ("bcc") so that recipients will not see who else is on the list. Better still, use proprietary bulk e-mail software or an electronic press release distribution service.
- **Fax distribution:**
  - Ensure that the fax numbers you have are up to date and that you have the right fax machine for the specific journalist or editor most likely to cover your story.
  - If you know the name of the journalist who should receive the press release, write it clearly on the fax cover sheet.

## Press release follow-up

Calling journalists after sending your press release can improve your chances of generating a story if it jogs their memory or makes your news stand out from among other competing stories. It can also be a huge annoyance, unless you are efficient, friendly and brief. Ask if they have a moment to speak: if they do, explain that you are checking they have received your news and wondering whether they would like any further information.

Following up by telephone can also help you to get to know the journalists in your area and build up a working relationship with them.

## 8 | 4 PRESS CONFERENCE

At a press conference or news conference, new information on a project or mobility measure is announced to journalists. It is a staged event that gathers journalists to listen to brief presentations from members of the project team and gives an opportunity for them to ask direct questions. Press conferences can be used to deliver information simultaneously to a large number of media organisations, but it may be useful to tailor the information to different groups. For example, in the case of an innovative transport scheme it may be appropriate to adopt one approach for national and international media interested in novel aspects of the scheme, and another approach for local media.

The success of a press conference will depend on the willingness of journalists to take time out of their busy schedule to attend. It should therefore only be used to deliver real "breaking" news, that is, only when there are major developments in your project or when you have controversial news to share.

A press conference can also be a useful tool for correcting misleading reports, especially if they have become significant. While such press conferences provide an opportunity to directly address particular issues that require clarification, they may touch on sensitive issues and must therefore be carefully organised.

## 8 | 5 ADDITIONAL MEDIA TOOLS TO CONSIDER

### Op-eds

An op-ed (abbreviated from "opposite the editorial page") is an opinion piece in a local, regional or national newspaper, written and submitted by a reader. The more senior the author, or the more recognised their name, the more likely it is that the newspaper will accept the op-ed for publication.



An op-ed summarises a specific point of view on a topical and timely issue. It can include a reasoned argument aimed at converting readers to the writer's point of view.

Various publications accept such "opinion editorials":

- international dailies, such as the *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *International Herald Tribune*;
- national dailies, such as the *Times*, *Le Figaro* and *Handelsblatt*;
- weekly news magazines such as the *Economist*; and
- trade magazines.

When writing such an editorial:

- be concise — op-eds should generally not exceed 400 words;
- give the name of a senior figure as the author of the article; and
- liaise with the publication in advance to determine the deadline; the number of words; the preferred format; and whether they would like photographs.

### Letter to the editor

If you read a newspaper every day you will soon spot opportunities to write letters to the editor. These are short letters (the shorter the better) in which readers comment on previously published articles. They might express agreement with the position taken by the journalist, query facts contained in the article, or request clarification of figures.

### Journalist briefings

When you have a newsworthy announcement, or if you want to introduce a journalist to a transport concept relevant to your city, you can also consider requesting a one-on-one briefing. These can be held at your office, at the journalist's office, or on site (in order to show them a measure at first hand, for example). While an article might not follow immediately, briefings are an excellent means of building long-lasting relationships with journalists. They are also a way to identify yourself as an expert on a subject, to whom the journalist can turn for comment on future transport issues.

### Press trips

Group events, where more than one journalist is invited on a visit, are an efficient way to showcase measures and facilities. Press trips can be a valuable option when you have something newsworthy to show, but they must have immediate news value if you want journalists to invest the time to attend.

### Media events

Organise events that will be interesting for the media to attend. Send out an invitation and ask journalists to confirm their attendance so that you can estimate the number of attendees. For additional details, see page 27.

### Build relationships

Get to know the journalists with whom you will have continuing contact. Try to find out the kind of stories they are interested in; familiarise yourself with their work cycles and deadlines; and try to be as helpful as possible. Think of long-term relationships rather than short-term coverage. Investing in media relationships is like putting money in the bank — you can get out the cash when you need it. Consider inviting local media representatives for lunch or coffee, if appropriate, to develop a personal relationship.

### Case studies

Write a case study about the work carried out under your project and promote it to your target media. Standard case studies identify the problem addressed by the project, describe what was done to fix the problem, and highlight the results that have been achieved.



## Propose one-to-one interviews

Organise personal interviews with journalists when you have something newsworthy to tell them.

## Share compelling research

Publicise the results of research that has been undertaken as part of your measure or that is linked to your project.

## Create a survey

Devise a public questionnaire or carry out a survey linked to your project and send the results to the media — especially if the responses highlight a problem or show that you are making a difference. Make the survey relevant to your key messages and include news angles that are likely to interest the main media.

## Track upcoming feature topics

Most media have forward feature lists — that is, schedules of topics and themes for future issues. Ask to see the lists of your target publications and offer to contribute to any themes that are relevant to your project. You can often ask the advertising representative of a news outlet what the upcoming themes will be.

## Offer expert opinion

Position members of your team as industry experts and try to get them quoted in newspaper articles and on television and radio. The media are always looking for people to offer expert opinions, so let them know who your experts are.

## Constantly develop new story ideas

Prepare news and angles for feature stories that you can pitch if called by a journalist. Good PR involves not only calling media when you need them, but being ready to offer story ideas and assistance when they need you.

# 8 | 6 PREPARING FOR A MEDIA INTERVIEW: TIPS AND TRICKS

## Remember that you are the expert, not the “victim”

- You are the source of the information that the journalist needs.
- Position yourself as knowledgeable on sustainable urban mobility for the short term and the long term. Ideally, the journalist will contact you again for future comment.
- A specialist knows more than the journalist.
- Be at ease and be natural.

## Be prepared!

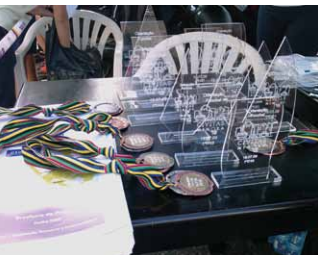
- **Know the media:** Who exactly will be interviewing you? Do a search for previous mobility stories they have published. Who reads/watches this news outlet? What type of story is the journalist planning — a news item or a feature article? What aspect of the measure is the journalist most likely to be interested in?
- **Know the environment:** When and where will the interview take place? What type of interview will it be — telephone, face-to-face or online? Will it be a live interview, or recorded for broadcast? Will there be other interviewees? If so, who?
- **Know your subject matter:** Be prepared to provide the information that the journalist wants. Review your key messages and subject areas in advance of the interview.



- **Know the rules:** Establish your boundaries for discussion, if necessary. Make it clear if there are any “off limit” areas that you are not willing to cover. If someone else is better suited to respond to certain questions, do not hesitate to tell the journalist. Rehearse your key messages.
- **Do’s:** Be yourself. Dress appropriately. Decide what you want to say, and stick to it. Be attentive, confident and in control. Answer the questions. Respect the agreed time limit. Be clear. Show enthusiasm. Be positive. State the facts: Do not speculate or provide personal opinion. If you make a mistake, correct it immediately. Use examples, human stories, anecdotes, graphs, statistics.
- **Don’ts:** Do not lie. Do not become aggressive. Do not say “no comment” — nothing is ever completely “off the record”. Do not say more than you should.

#### After the interview

- Ask for a copy of the interview, and ask when it will be published/issued/aired.
- If the news outlet asks you to verify quotes following the interview, do so immediately. Do not risk missing their deadline.
- Be aware that you might receive follow-up questions.
- Remember that even follow-up conversations, however informal they might seem, are still “on the record”.



## 9 | Using Social Media/Web 2.0

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### 9 | 1 WHAT ARE SOCIAL MEDIA?

#### Technologically speaking

Social media encompass all of the online platforms where Internet users can:

- create original content;
- publish this content without any specific technical skills (i.e. HTML); and
- share this portable content using viral features (tags, public shared bookmarking sites, etc.).

The created content can be shared as text, images, audio or video. Most well-known social media platforms are forums, blogs, social networks, wikis and podcasts <sup>(3)</sup>. Many other tools exist, such as RSS feeds, video or picture sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr), social editorial sites (Digg), social bookmarking sites (del.icio.us), virtual worlds (Second Life), and microblogging (Twitter).

#### Socially speaking

Social media fulfil a fundamental human need: they connect people with one another through things they have in common.

Interaction is increasingly the keyword for these "new" media and is the fundamental reason behind the creation of the Internet in the first place: to share information among peers. In that sense, social media are not a new development but rather a return to the original objective of the worldwide web.

What is new today, however, is the fact that rapid technological evolutions are enabling more and more people to connect with one another more easily for an ever-lower price.

Connections in this case refer not only to the need for relationships. They also encompass the natural impulse to obtain the things we need (information or products) from one another rather than from traditional powers such as businesses, media, governments and institutions.



Rapidly evolving technologies in the hands of increasingly connected people make this phenomenon very powerful.

### 9 | 2 DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK THAT INCLUDES SOCIAL MEDIA

"Individuals increasingly take cues from one another rather than from institutional sources like corporations, media outlets, religions, and political bodies. To thrive in an era of social computing, companies must abandon top-down management and communication tactics, weave communities into their products and services, use employees and partners as marketers, and become part of a living fabric of brand loyalists." (Charron et al. 2006)

The core guiding principles found below apply to any institutions willing to leverage the power of social media to successfully spread a message to its audience.

(3) For further definitions, see <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia>





## Share the social media state of mind

Before launching your social media strategy, you must make sure that your institution — and every decision maker within it — understands and embraces the social media state of mind.

Deciding to invest effort and time in social media demonstrates an understanding that your actions will lead you to engage with your audience in an authentic dialogue. And dialogue implies hearing potentially negative or harmful feedback too.

Before you begin, make sure that you and your institution are ready to see what is out there to be seen, to hear what is there to be heard, to talk with whoever is willing to talk with you, and to react accordingly (acknowledge weaknesses, improve customer services, etc.).

Do not start by focusing too narrowly on the tools. Many organisations begin their social media experience eager to jump on the bandwagon without any other strategic motivation than “our competition is doing it”.

The first questions these institutions ask themselves — or their communication partners — is “Shall we create a Facebook/ MySpace page? Who are the bloggers we can seed? Which blog platform shall we use?”

While such questions are a perfectly legitimate part of your strategic approach, in order to be valuable they should come as the last step in your thinking.

Focus on the benefits you will deliver to your audience. Focus first on your audience and your objectives.

### Listen

To make sure you focus on the right promise for your audience, start by listening to them. Listening is the first crucial step in elaborating your strategy.

According to your organisation's size and objectives, you can choose to listen using free alert tools or professional monitoring ones (which are long term, provide more actionable insights, allow for competition analysis and produce better quality data).

- Monitor mentions of your organisation or measure using free tools or professional monitoring platforms.
- Identify advocates and detractors, and existing communities.
- Gain insights from online conversations and use them to validate your strategy.

### Determine your objectives

Decide what you want to accomplish by engaging with your audience. Possible objectives in developing a social media approach include:

- increasing awareness (information/service);
- providing online audience support;
- launching a new campaign; and
- raising funds.

Define your objectives precisely. If your objective is to increase visibility, ask yourself:

- Are you targeting new stakeholders or existing ones?
- Which channels are you using?
- What percentage increase do you hope for?
- What are other possible indicators of success?



## Know your audience

Ask yourself critical questions:

- Is your audience active on social media platforms?
- How do they engage within those platforms?
- Are they creating content or are they commenting on existing content?
- Are they members of a social network?

Once you know the value to your existing audience of using social media tools, you will be ready to develop your strategic approach.

## Elaborate your strategy

You need to create engaging and valuable digital experiences to make your institution stand out in the eyes of your target audience while achieving your objectives.

Remember:

- You do not launch a social media campaign. You start a social media effort.
- Your strategy has to take into account your existing communication/marketing strategy, and you must have an understanding of how your relationships with your audience will change.
- Social media are part of your global strategy. Do not forget to integrate your actions with your other existing communication plans.

The following considerations and questions will help you in your planning:

- How do you want to engage with your audience to achieve your objectives and provide them with something of value, based on their social profile?
- Map out how the relationship is going to change. What steps will you be developing to encourage them to participate?
- Describe the new relationship (examples from satisfied participants to help persuade others and generate sales). Think about what value you want to bring to your selected audience and the message you want to convey (e.g. they are not buying a transport ticket, they are buying a cleaner environment/safer city, etc.).
- Create multiple participation points.
- Measure the impact of the change and your progress towards your objective.
- Return to the social media mindset. Ask yourself, for example, whether you are willing to let your target audience post reviews on your site and prepare your organisation for participation (and criticism).
- Identify barriers to the strategy.
- Set up key performance indicators that will help you define your success.
- Define the process and the requirements (budget, timing, hosting of blogs by third parties, etc.).
- Develop guidelines and a framework. Plan ahead: Who? What? and How?

## Choose your tools

Once you have identified which technologies your audience is using, you can choose the tools with which you are going to activate your own community and increase its participation.

Social media are not a fad. They will eventually affect every kind of organisation in all corners of the connected world, and probably sooner than most companies/organisations expect. Social media may be over-hyped, but in many ways they are still undervalued. While it is still difficult to estimate the huge changes this phenomenon will bring, there can be little doubt about the importance of integrating social media tools into your communication plan as early as possible.



## 10 | Working with external bodies

A project team might be unable to fully staff a project with the available internal resources. This may be due either to a shortage of people with the necessary skills, or simply to a shortage of people with the time to undertake the tasks required. For whatever reason, some elements of the project may need to be undertaken by external consultants.

An external agency (or individual consultant) can often be involved in transport projects, providing, for example, specialist facilitation for visioning workshops, communications support, or specialised transport engineering expertise for the design of solutions to complex transport problems.

Selecting external support is not necessarily a quick process. Sometimes the best choice might not be obvious. The following questions can be considered in the course of your decision making:

- Whose attention will you capture?
- What will your presence on the client list do for the agency?
- Will you be the smallest account, or the largest? Neither is ideal.
- Is the agency staffed to handle your project?
- Do they have experience in the transportation field? It is desirable, but not necessary.
- Is the consultant truly committed to doing great work for you?
- What other transport projects are the consultancy working on? Do any represent a conflict? Do you require confidentiality?
- Has the agency worked on public sector projects before?
- Do you have a good feeling for the individual and/or the team? Can you trust them?
- What kind of pitching process will you carry out? Traditional pitching can be expensive for both parties: workshops or trial projects are often effective ways of getting to know a consultant's work.
- Once you hire an external consultant, how will you handle the public communication? Are you obliged to issue a press release? Are you prepared to deal with inquiries from the general press or trade press if news of your selection is released?
- Do you have a clear, concise brief that includes your specific expectations and your communications budget?



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## About CIVITAS VANGUARD

Launched in September 2008, CIVITAS VANGUARD is a 54-month grant-based project of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG-MOVE), funded as part of the CIVITAS Initiative. It is a support action (SA) for the coordination and dissemination of CIVITAS Plus, the current phase of the CIVITAS Initiative, and as such serves the CIVITAS Plus collaborative projects (CPs) and the CIVITAS Initiative itself.

Funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, VANGUARD focuses on the dissemination of research activities, results and experiences from cities and projects participating in CIVITAS.

One of the objectives of VANGUARD is to support the CIVITAS Plus collaborative projects through the provision of a number of services and by disseminating the results of their activities throughout Europe. These services mainly relate to:

- coordination, support and facilitation;
- dissemination and promotion; and
- CIVITAS community support.

As part of its services, CIVITAS VANGUARD aims to support the CIVITAS Plus cities in facilitating stakeholder consultation within the framework of their sustainable mobility policies and their newly introduced measures.

### Publication

This toolkit is intended for all those with an interest in citizen communications. The publication is also available from the download centre on the CIVITAS website: <http://www.civitas.eu/downloadcenter>

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### Authors

Amy Johnson, Kostas Mastakas, Caroline Maerten (MOSTRA Communication)

Greg Spencer (Regional Environmental Center [REC])

John Porter (Interactions – CIVITAS MIMOSA)

With contributions from the partners of the CIVITAS VANGUARD consortium

**Special thanks to:** Gustav Friis (City of Aalborg – CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES); Maarten Van Bemmelen (City of Donostia-San Sebastian – CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES); Lucia Cristea (EIP – CIVITAS RENAISSANCE); Lidija Pavic Rogosic (City of Zagreb – CIVITAS ELAN); Patty Delanghe (City of Ghent – CIVITAS ELAN); Katerina Oktabcova (City of Usti nad Labem – CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES); and Marjan Frederix and Sarah Martens (Mobiel21); Ivo Cre (Polis); Peter Staelens (EUROCITIES); and Jerome Simpson (REC) (all CIVITAS VANGUARD).

### Editor

Anna Clark (Polis – CIVITAS VANGUARD)

### Copyeditor

Rachel Hideg (REC)

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