

Sustain-Ability

The communication plan: guidelines
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Con il contributo di



fondazione
cariplo



In 2014 *lettera27* has developed its Communication Plan Guidelines, which we would now like to publish and share as a template/model for the small and medium size cultural organizations.

How did we work?

Starting from the organization's mission we have developed our communication objectives, then defined the organization's brand pillars and areas of intervention. This development was done together with the person in charge of the initiatives and content within the organization, since it was important to ensure the alignment between the two areas of expertise. This helped focus the organization's communication strategy and define the messaging framework for each initiative in place. After that we have proceeded to define the organization's tone of voice, which was shared with the Founders and members of the board to ensure that as the gatekeepers and authors of the organization's core values and aesthetics they were aligned on the way the foundation was intending to communicate. Together with the person in charge of initiatives we have defined our key target audience, mapping its mindset and setting the framework to define the demographics better.

Based on the formulated Communication Objectives we have considered various communication channels evaluating their potential to deliver against our goals and considering the areas of intervention defined and the various target audiences identified. For more specific and innovative communication channels, such as the Foundation's own editorial column, we have worked together with our external artistic and scientific advisors in order to define the editorial guidelines, initial editorial plan and content development. For each communication channel we have defined the specific measurement parameters and KPIs in order to evaluate the impact of the communication.

Below is the detailed Communication Plan that incorporates the main steps mentioned above.

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L27 MISSION:

- Promote access to and sharing of knowledge in the African continent.
 - o Support the initiatives of education, art and culture that produce social transformation
 - o Promote open culture and creative commons practices
 - o Create formats to help stimulate critical thinking and drive change

L27 COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE:

Become a storyteller of change on a systemic level

- Contribute to changing the collective perception of Africa by building awareness of the cultural, educational and social initiatives taking place in and around the continent
- Become a network aggregator, the stage for the various cultural actors of the continent, and the point of reference for a cultural debate around Africa
- Create practices/models/spaces that would stimulate our partners and programs' beneficiaries to narrate and document their stories in an impactful, relevant and engaging manner, creating interest-driven communities to exchange, network and drive change

L27 BRAND PILLARS:

- Knowledge transformation
- Open culture
- Art and creativity
- Social Transformation
- Innovation
- Co-creation
- Sustainability
- Critical thinking and debate
- Subverting stereotypes

L27 AREAS OF INTERVENTION:

- Art and culture for social
- Innovative education
- Sustainable culture

L27 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

- All the projects and initiatives that *lettera27* communicates should have a clear messaging that can be traced back to its mission
- An individual project/initiative messaging should always be coherent with the main communication message, while focusing on its specific entry point

MESSAGING FRAMEWORK

lettera27 Knowledge, art and culture can create a change

Internal initiatives

WikiAfrica

- A wiki community as a way to change the collective perception of Africa and enrich the world's knowledge pool

AtWork School

- Art as an educational tool to form the future change makers

Contributions

Infinite Writing

- An act of handwriting as a process of self-awareness, contemplation and transformation

Ashoka

- Empathy as a key quality to form the future change makers

Ker Thiossane

- Multidisciplinary and cross-sectorial artistic open culture projects as tools to build and transform a local Dakar community

AMM

- Cinema as an act of social transformation and a source of critical debate through the authentic voice of migrants

Chimurenga

- Culture and knowledge dissemination as a way to trigger critical debate and change the collective perception of Africa

Formats

Luoghi Comuni

- Personal stories as a way to change the perspective and foster the co-existence of different cultures, contexts and lifestyles

Atwork

- Art as a tool to stimulate critical debate and creative thinking

Research

Mobile A2k

- Mobile access to knowledge as a way for urban transformation with the focus on safety

Management operations

Sustainability

Replicable models and guidelines to transform the way cultural organizations operate and make them more sustainable

L27 TONE OF VOICE

- **Inspiring.** Our objective is to get our contents to as many people as possible, to do that we have to get through to our audience, be relevant to them, tell our stories in a way that touches their cords and makes them want to pass the word around. What can be more emotional and poetic than the themes of art, culture and empowering with knowledge? Let's inspire people with our communication.
- **Clear.** We are talking about the sophisticated topics to a sophisticated audience, the temptation is always to get too academic and intellectual and lose the message behind the complex verbal constructions. A clear message is the most effective one. "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius — and a lot of courage — to move in the opposite direction." Albert Einstein
- **Not too formal, human.** Yes, we are a cultural foundation, an institution. But who wants to hang out with an institution? Wouldn't you rather talk to the people that are behind it? Our tone of voice should always have a personal touch in order to engage our audiences, being formal puts a distance, we want to get closer to them.
- **No clichés.** The biggest risk in talking about Africa as a non-profit organization is falling into a cliché trap. We know it, our mission is the opposite of a cliché, let's always remember it when communicating. And every now and then let's make fun of the clichés.
- **Confident.** We have an amazing pool of experts and advisors that are the biggest authorities on their subjects. The objective of lettera27 is to become the point of reference on the cultural debate around the African continent, so the communication we put out should transmit confidence in the arguments.
- **Understated.** Dealing with the topics of art and culture it's easy to assume the snobbish, arrogant and excluding attitude. On the contrary, our tone of voice should never be ostentatious or aloof, let's stay cultured, yet humble.
- **Concrete.** As a foundation we support the cultural initiatives that produce a concrete and tangible change in a community, they are stories that are real, authentic, that serve a purpose. We should present our audience with the facts and concrete actions that come out of the initiatives, to continuously demonstrate a tangible change they can create.

L27 AUDIENCE

Mindset:

- International sophisticated, open-minded, intellectually engaged individuals interested and involved in the fields of art, culture, education, social entrepreneurship, with the critical thinking capacity, willing to go beyond the stereotypes surrounding the African continent, sensitive and open to learn more about our topics.

More detailed demographics:

- A more in-depth analysis of the potential audience profile will have to be conducted for each specific project.
 - This can be part of the capacity building process with our existing partners to better define their existing audiences and understand if they correspond to *lettera27* communication target audience or whether our communication target should go beyond the already existing partner audience pool.
 - Another important thing is to identify the platforms/communities pertinent to our topics and target their audiences. We are currently mapping a number of media platforms in the fields of art, open culture, social innovation, education and will identify the 20 platforms to monitor
 - Start analyzing the socio demographic profiles of the current website visitors and monitor their change as we start putting out the content on the external platforms driving to the website

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS:

After having formulated our Communication Objectives we have considered various communication channels evaluating their potential to deliver against our goals. Taking into consideration the variety of topics and fields that the Foundation operates with and hence the variety of very different audiences that need to be catered to we have chosen to act through the following communication channels:

- Social media, with the focus on Facebook and Twitter
- *Why Africa?* editorial column
- *lettera27* website and a relative newsletter
- AtWork website and a relative community on social media
- Ashoka storytelling platform for the schools' self-narration (still in development)

SOCIAL MEDIA (Facebook, Twitter)

The potential of social media to aggregate, converge, create a live dialogue and exchange between various stakeholders on a variety of topics makes them a perfect channel to realize the network aggregator objective of *lettera27*. By identifying the influencers and opinion leaders for particular topics and feeding our content to their extended communities we are starting to build the brand reputation in the relevant fields. On the other hand, by choosing and curating the content on social media pertinent to the African continent and its culture and knowledge, we are gradually establishing ourselves as a credible player in the international arena, with the ambition to become a point of reference for the cultural debate around the continent.

Tactics: weekly editorial plan for social media with 2-3 post a day with the following message mix:

- *lettera27* initiatives communication (Why Africa?, AtWork, Ashoka, AMM, Ecriture Infinie, etc.) 40%
- Osservatorio communication (cultural and social initiatives/events/articles pertinent to L27 brand pillars) 35%
- Re-publishing/sharing contents of our media partners (Doppiozero, Another Africa, Contemporary&, Chimurenga) 20%
- Institutional *lettera27* communication (Sustain-ability, 5x1000, etc.) 5%

Measurement :

Among the multiple possible measurement indexes we have chosen to focus on the following indicators, which combine quantitative indicators together with the identified qualitative parameters. We will be using the Hootsuite software to help pull out the relevant data.

FACEBOOK FAN PAGE

Facebook Page Overview

-#Total Fan

-#New Fan

-#Page Engagement

-#Total Reach

-Engagement quality (interaction with influencers or other opinion leaders according to the strategic objectives)

Facebook Insights

-Metric Top 10 Posts

-Likes by Region, Language, Demographic

TWITTER

Twitter Profile Overview

- #Followers
- #Following
- #Follower Growth
- Most Popular Links

Twitter Engagement - Summary

- #Follower Growth - Count: Total followers, Average Daily Growth, New Followers
- #Mentions - Count: Total Mentions
- #Retweets - Count: Total Retweets
- Engagement quality (interaction with influencers or other opinion leaders according to the strategic objectives)

WHY AFRICA? EDITORIAL COLUMN IN DOPPIOZERO

After having evaluated the potential communication channels we have determined that running our own editorial column could be an interesting experiment in building our brand's reputation not only as the content aggregator, but also as a content producer and curator and the conversation enabler. We have conducted the mapping of the potential media platforms, considering the topics, the audience, the user base and the engagement rate and the potential relevance of *lettera27* contents within the platform and have chosen Doppiozero as the channel to start with. We have set the following objectives for the column:

- The column should serve as a channel through which to implement the aggregator modality of the strategic plan
- The column serves as an experimental model of media partnership, a virtual laboratory where we can study and evaluate the potential impact of channeling the foundation's contents on an external platform
- The aim of the column is to become the point of reference for various themes pertinent to *lettera27*'s mission and the stage for the cultural critical debate around the African continent, giving the space to our partners to narrate their stories
- The column is also a unique and powerful community building tool, which allows *lettera27* to engage its network of partners, intellectuals, artists through inviting them to contribute with their perspective on the question "Why Africa?". The column thus becomes a meaningful and thought-provoking stage for the exchange, dialogue, sharing of relevant contents. It also allows to tap into the existing networks and communities of the featured authors, creating credibility

as the content aggregator and thus continuing to build *lettera27's* brand and reputation among the relevant audiences.

Editorial guidelines

- The column should start publishing the contents on a monthly basis with the intention to arrive to bi-monthly publications
- The contents should cover:
 1. the themes related to specific on-going projects (*AtWork*, *Infinite Writing* and *The Divine Comedy*, Ashoka Empathy program, etc.)
 2. general *lettera27* topics related to its mission (changing the common idea of Africa's perception, promoting access to knowledge, open culture and cultural debate)
 3. the specific pieces that answer the question "Why Africa?" focusing on the debate around the African identity
- The column should start with the existing pieces on the relevant topics from *lettera27* network of advisors/curators/artists/stakeholders as well as the Doppiozero authors pool and other media partner sources. Gradually the objective should be to start commissioning the pieces written ad hoc.
- The pieces should be published in the original language. In case of the English/French content a small abstract in Italian that summarizes the articles can be envisioned
- The style of writing should be personal and respect the overall tone of voice identified for *lettera27* communication

The latest example of the relevant content exchange is the partnership with Another Africa on-line platform. The model of the media partnership includes a series of articles on the emerging contemporary art scene on the continent produced by Another Africa that are regularly featured on *Why Africa?* Another Africa in its turn is promoting other *Why Africa?* contents on its social media channels. The exchange is mutually beneficial as it brings relevant content to the reciprocal audiences and attracts new readership demographics, growing user base on both ends.

Measurement:

We have chosen the following parameters to measure the success of our editorial column:

- #visits to a single piece
- #like on the article
- #new readership as compared to the usual Doppiozero audience
- geographic origins of the readers
- time of stay on the page

WEBSITES

lettera27.org

An As-Is analysis was conducted to evaluate the current website weaknesses and agree on the site redefinition objectives. Based on the analysis a 2 step intervention was envisioned:

1. Cosmetic intervention
 - Correction/revision of current texts of the website with a special eye for the English version.
 - Technical functions correction necessary to optimize the user navigation and journey from social channels, inclusion of social media share/comment functions, contents "up-to-dateness" check, creating an archive section for outdated projects, possibility to include slideshow functions and video functions
2. Complete site revision
 - Modernization of the site touching the technical features, aesthetics, content organization, user journey optimization, aggregator modality inclusion, partner valorization, etc.

Vision for the new website:

- Become an aggregator of the knowledge on the best practices in Africa
- Become the storyteller to contribute to change the collective perception of the continent

Strategic objectives lettera27.org website:

- Become the aggregator through integrating social media and external platforms' contents
- Serve as the collector of the foundation's network knowledge, expertise and activities
- Enhance and consolidate the social media communication and community building activities
- Act as a clear and enticing business card of the Foundation

Restyling objectives lettera27.org:

- Make the website more modern, visual, user-friendly and optimized for the social media interaction
- Highlight in a clear manner the Foundation's mission, vision and key themes and areas of intervention
- Optimize SEO and the contents' indexing
- Mark the contents with meta tags to attribute them to 3 key areas of intervention
 - Art and culture for social transformation
 - Innovative Education
 - Sustainable Culture

Numeric objective lettera27.org:

- Triple the unique visits to the website by the end of first year on-line

Regardless of the intervention type the website should have the following:

- Bi-monthly article on the website + newsletter on the theme of the most relevant project of the month
- Projects reports publication
- Re-edited "external user-friendly" version of the strategic plan publication

NEWSLETTER

- Update the newsletter format in line with the new website graphic project (better quality of the image, bigger size image)
- Consider a newsletter with multiple contents that can be grouped by *lettera27* themes (external and internal contents) to support the aggregator modality
- Optimize the newsletter database profiling/subscription interface

Measurement:

- #Newsletter database users

Atwork27.org

Strategic objectives atwork27.org:

- Become a tool that allows to create storytelling and build a community around the artist notebooks and AtWork brand
- Make the AtWork participants one of the key protagonists of the community

Restyling objectives atwork27.org:

- Become a constantly updated platform for the *lettera27* notebook collection
- Incorporate sections that make the AtWork world complete (Chapters, Labs, Corporate, Students, Workshop Leaders, Community, etc.)
- Become a stage for the emerging artists, featuring their notebooks, personal profiles
- Become compatible with social media, AtWork Facebook Group, optimized for SEO
- Maintain current graphic look and feel

Numeric objective atwork27.org:

- Multiply by 5 the unique visits to the website by the end of first year on-line

Measurement:

We have chosen the following indicators to measure the new websites' performance once they will be launched:

- #Sessions
- #Users/unique visits
- #Old and new visitors ratio
- Sessions duration
- Growth of the demographic segments relevant according to the strategic objectives (age and gender)
- Geographical origins variety according to the strategic objectives
- % of traffic coming from social media

AtWork Facebook Group

On top of redesigning and amplifying the contents of atwork27.org with the aim to render it a comprehensive AtWork format platform we have launched a dedicated group on Facebook in order to build AtWork brand and a relevant community around it.

Objectives:

AtWork group was created as a community space where all the participants to various AtWork workshops across the world as well as the hosting cultural organizations can exchange their experiences, showcase the produced notebooks and discuss the ideas that AtWork has stimulated. We also invite all those interested to contribute to the discussion with their ideas, to showcase their artistic and creative portfolios and get updated on the various artistic and educational initiatives and calls in different parts of the globe.

Measurement:

- # Group members
- # Posts
- Quality of content and engagement