



GUIDELINE

OF GOOD PRACTICES
FOR DISSEMINATION
AND COMMUNICATION
MANAGERS



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Introduction

Communication is a bridge between your research and the rest of the world.

- › Communication can show how European collaboration has achieved more than would have otherwise been possible, notably in achieving scientific excellence, contributing to competitiveness and solving societal challenges
- › Communication can show how the outcomes are relevant to our everyday lives, by creating jobs, introducing novel technologies, or making our lives more comfortable in other ways
- › Communication helps us to make better use of the results of research, by ensuring they are taken up by decision-makers to influence policy-making and by industry and the scientific community to ensure follow-up”

This guideline of good practices for dissemination and communication managers, developed by the DANDELION project, aims to help you improve your communication skills in the field of Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH) and Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies (IIRS).

This guideline includes practical information, hints and recommendations to support practitioners when developing and implementing a communication and dissemination plan within a European funded project.



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Dissemination and communication - what's the difference? //////////////

Dissemination

The release of information about the project and its results to a public audience. Dissemination makes information available to all, on a website, for example, where anyone can find it. The dissemination of information can be targeted by being produced in a way that will be more appealing to those the project hopes to reach by making it attractive to different relevant stakeholders, like researchers, policy makers or the general public.

Communication

Strategic activities designed to promote a project and its results to a specific audience. Communication will allow a two-way exchange (dialogue) and through this exchange, information will flow and understanding be developed. An example of project communication is the project newsletter. This is a "tool" that contains information about the project and is sent directly to people who have a stated interest in the project's work (subscribers). The newsletter will contain calls to action, meaning recipients are able to engage further with the project and with project partners about the work.

**SET YOUR
COMMUNICATION
GOALS AND MAKE
THINGS HAPPEN**

01

01 Set your communication goals and make things happen

The design of your communication plan at the start of your project should be drafted to ensure that your project is quickly understood by your audience and its results create impact.

“ A GOOD COMMUNICATION PLAN STARTS ALREADY BEFORE THE PROJECT HAS STARTED, IN THE PROJECT PREPARATION PHASE, WHEN THE INITIAL DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IS DRAFTED ”

Be “SMART” in setting up your goals, keeping in mind the “KISS” principle, as most things work best if they are kept simple.

SMART

SPECIFIC
MEASURABLE
ATTAINABLE
RELEVANT
TIME-BOUND

KISS

KEEP IT
SIMPLE
(SERIOUSLY)



When defining the communication goals take into consideration the following:

1^o

Consider the objectives and expected impact of your project. Ask yourself in what ways communication can help you to achieve the objectives of your project and ensure the findings/results of your project reach your target audiences. **(WHAT)**

2^o

Be in line with the stages of the project. There are stages of development of a project that should be considered when envisaging the communication strategy **(WHEN)**. These stages are:

› **1st Stage - Design:** First months of the project when most activities have just started. The communication strategy should focus on establishing the conditions for a successful dissemination (in terms of developing the plan, defining the branding and identity of the project, a simple “motto”, and setting up the tools and channels to be used during the project).

› **2nd Stage - Research:** When the project has reached a mature stage (usually around the middle of the project’s lifetime) and most of the activities are ongoing, with some results have been obtained or produced. The communication strategy should focus on maintaining continuous and steady dissemination (promoting the website, engaging with social networks, participating/

organising events...), aiming at creating and increasing awareness around the project and engaging stakeholders in the project activities, whenever necessary.

› **3rd Stage - Implementation and Testing:** Towards the end of the project, when most activities are concluding and some outcomes are available, the communication strategy should focus on intensifying the dissemination towards exploitation and sustainability for some type of projects (i.e. RIA) and commercialisation and market uptake for others (i.e. IAs). Your communication should now be aligned to your exploitation and business models, and contribute to “selling” the benefits of the results, towards potential customers and/or investors.

3^o

Assess how each work package and activity can be communicated. Each work package and task has its own objectives and expected results. Analyse what type of communication and dissemination actions should be used for each different tasks that will help make it a success and increase its impact.



 4^o

Think about your target groups (TO WHOM). Communication goals may vary according to different target audiences – primary and secondary target audiences require different approaches. Tailoring your communication strategy to each target group is essential to its success. Make sure to think about what reaction you are trying to provoke from the people you are contacting. For example:

- › Be engaged in dialogue and provide feedback.
- › Change on behaviour or attitudes towards certain topic.
- › Take a certain decision or action.
- › Influence others, spread the word about project - act as a multiplier.
- › Use or benefit from the results of the project.

 5^o

Don't forget what is feasible. When assessing what will be possible to achieve. Try to leverage as much as possible from your existing networks (within the consortium) and “piggyback” on existing related projects and events. How broad or narrow the range of people you communicate with will be dependent on your project, but try to keep your communication objectives as specific as possible.

 6^o

Transform the **research results in useful material to be used** by the stakeholders **(WHAT FOR)**. Stakeholders are “hungry” for research results that can be implemented in real life. But often, research results are not available in a format tailored to the users’ needs, or are presented in an incomprehensible way (e.g. too technical or scientific language), hampering the valorisation of research results. The projects should analyse and focus on the stakeholders’ specific needs and deliver the research results in a way that is exploitable by the stakeholders in their work and practice.

1.1

Setting up action plans

Certain actions call for detailed plans. For instance, in an action for validating certain findings or methodologies in a focus group, the plan should include a goal such as “to engage certain number of people” and the planned outcomes can be “the number of participants coming from specific groups or demographics”.

Furthermore, for the planned outcomes you should take into account both the quantity e.g. number of people who demonstrably participate in the focus group, and quality to be achieved (e.g. insights and comments produced by the participants). For SSH-relevant research actions a number of stakeholder groups come into question more strongly than others. We have roughly distinguished among four broad categories: Policymakers; Civil Society actors, Researchers and Educators; and Business.

For each action, detail the steps needed for its implementation:

- › Define specific tasks and their components: What needs to be done first? What actions must be completed before others can begin? What activities are needed to motivate which target audiences to take the desired actions?

Check an example in [table 1](#).

- › Sort the tasks in chronological order, and identify which tasks require more attention.

- › Distribute tasks and responsibilities and set dates by which they should be completed.

Check an example in [table 2](#).

- › Identify the potential barriers and risks of implementing the actions and consider creating a contingency plan to guide you through adverse situations when things do not go to plan.

Check an example in [table 3](#).

Target Groups	Primary	Secondary	Communication Objective	Desired level of support/ involvement	How to engage the target group (channels/tools/ materials used)
			Action		
Business (i.e. Large companies, SMES)	X		Ex. Create awareness about the project and gather opinion/ expectations about the project. Number of participants: 20-30. Ex. Organise an “awareness event” at the beginning of the project to present the project objectives and activities and to feedback from participants through a short survey.	Ex. To attend and actively participate in the event and fill in the survey with their opinion and expectations about the project. Express interest (or not) to receive regular information about the project.	Ex. Identify relevant contacts in the domain of your project; Send individual invitations. Ask support to disseminate/ promote the event in relevant networks, Associations, chambers of commerce. Dissemination the event in social networks.
Research & Education (i.e. Universities, training)	X				
Policy makers (Politicians, public administration officials)		X			
Civil Society / Users (i.e. NGOs, citizen's initiatives, Media)	X				

Table 1: Example of visualisation of actions

Task (What,Where)	Priority Level (High Med Low)	Responsible	Resources/Support Needed	Deadline	Expected Outcome
Identify potential participants	High	All partners	Search in internal, network, Internet/ LinkedIn search		List of potential participants to send invitations to the event
Define the agenda/ speakers	High	Partner x	Contribution from all partners on the topics to be presented/ identification of speakers		Agenda
Send invitations	Medium	Partner y			

...

Table 2: Example of task distribution

Action	Risk	Probability to Happen	Contingency Plan
Invite participants to a workshop	Low participation to the workshop	Medium/High	Consider to cover travel and accommodation expenses of key participants; Promote the benefits of participating to the workshop through ambassador/s (well-known personalities in the respective field) Conduct a targeted dissemination with invitation by email and a follow-up phone call. Complement the targeted dissemination with a wider diffusion about the workshop, with save the date announcements and updates on the programme's development.

Table 3: Example of risk analysis

**MONITOR AND
ADJUST, ADJUST,
ADJUST**

02

02 Monitor and adjust, adjust, adjust

Monitoring your communications will help you to identify, whether the strategy is progressing as planned, and whether any adjustments to the strategy are needed.

Do not be afraid of changes. If you are not having the impact you expected, something is not working as it should. Remember that constant improvement is key to a successful communication strategy.

Your monitoring should include setting indicators, metrics and timelines to assess the progress of your strategy. Making your communications measurable allows you to keep track of progress, e.g. email open rates, social media exposure or direct mail responses. Establish a system to chart your success based on your key communication goals.

A monitoring and evaluation plan should be designed in a way that allows you to measure key indicators of the communication objectives. It establishes what data must be collected, during the strategy implementation, the methods of data collection, and how findings will be analysed and reported. This analysis must provide feedback throughout via reports and regular meetings, in order to allow for adjustments.

Important issues to be considered when building a monitoring plan:

- › Campaign goals and objectives;
- › Campaign actions;
- › Performance indicators and metrics;
- › Information to be collected and the means to do it;
- › Outcomes, including both unexpected and undesirable outcomes, which you need to know about so as to react effectively;
- › External changes, risks and opportunities;
- › Timelines: moments of monitoring and evaluation;
- › Responsibilities;
- › Means to share findings within the team and with other stakeholders: when and how (written reports, staff meetings, workshops, systematic briefings and debriefings or other forms of communication).

Indicators

An effective indicator for monitoring a communication plan should be:

- › **Valid:** it should measure the activity it is meant to be measuring;
- › **Reliable:** it should produce similar results when used more than once. It can be quantitative or qualitative. In some cases, qualitative descriptions can capture the information needed more effectively;
- › **Specific:** it only measures the task, activity or campaign it is intended to measure;
- › **Sensitive:** it reflects changes in the status of what is being analysed.
- › **Operational:** it is measurable or quantifiable, with developed and tested definitions and reference standards.

Action / Campaign	Comm. Goal	Metrics	Indicator/s	Objectives	Data collection	Responsibilities	Monitoring	Reporting & Evaluating
Participation in bilateral meeting or events	To reach a n° of individuals	N° of participants N° of business cards/ brochures distributed	Increased interest towards the project	Raise awareness, inform	Keep track of n° of business cards collected, expressions of interest to receive information about the project (i.e. newsletter)	Team assigned	Weekly	At the end of the planned action
Printed materials distribution: brochures, posters, leaflets...	To reach a n° of individuals	N° of materials distributed	Increased dialogue on the campaign issue among the target audience	Raise awareness, inform	Keep track of n° of materials distributed, to which segments and target audiences	Team assigned	Weekly	At the end of the planned action
Promotional video	To promote an event	N° of online viewings N° of times shared online or downloaded N° of times broadcasted on TV (when applied)	Increased attendance in relation to previous editions	To get a n° of participants at the event	Online metrics and statistics (social media) N° of participants at the event	Team assigned	Daily, weekly	At the end of the planned action
Digital marketing campaign	To promote a project / product	N° of website visitors N° of new subscriptions on website N° of visitors from payed advertising (ex.: Google Adwords)	Increased interest about issues being promoted	To promote To inform Raise awareness Reach audience engagement	Online metrics and statistics (ex.: Google Analytics) Web/social monitoring tools (ex. Hootsuite)	Team assigned	Weekly	Monthly Digital marketing reports
Online & Social Media engagement	To increase the level of engagement / followers	N° of likes, comments, followers, tweets, retweets, shares)	Increased interest about the project.	To promote To inform Raise awareness Reach audience engagement	Social media management tools such as Hootsuite social media dashboard	Team assigned	Weekly	Monthly

Table 4: Example of monitoring indicators

2.1 Evaluate and adjust

There are many situations that make it necessary to readjust a communication plan. Through regular monitoring activities, it may become clear that the proposed goals and objectives will not be reached, even though every step of the strategy is implemented. This should be a very agile process (plan – do – check – act), where activities that were previously planned and implemented are monitored at regular times and adjusted when necessary.

External factors may make it impossible to continue with the strategy as planned; unanticipated and relatively quick success might render some activities no longer necessary; unexpected information may become available, shedding new light on the issue being promoted, its causes and possible solutions, and calling for different or additional tactics and activities. Take into account that the context is always changing and so are the audience's behaviours and preferences.

To ensure strategic alignment, when planning adjustments to the communication plan, it is important to review all steps of earlier planning and strategy.

How to determine if a communication campaign needs adjustments:

- › **Monitor campaign activities and their outcomes frequently and regularly, especially in the early stages.** This helps to detect problems, risks and opportunities early on and allows you to respond timely and appropriately. Monitoring activities and outcomes is also a good way to assess which activities the campaign team or alliance is most successful at – if these are very different from the original strategy, an adjustment should be considered.
- › **Involve relevant stakeholders in the monitoring process.** The monitoring and adjustment of the strategy should include the engagement of stakeholders (e.g. members of the advisory board of the project, or potential addressees from the policy community, or practitioner NGOs and CSOs) from the early stages of the project, ensuring a continuous feedback loop with two-way communication. This allows opinions and insights from stakeholders to be considered not merely for adjusting the communication strategy, but also in terms of how the research is conducted, i.e. validating the research questions or the methods used. Furthermore, this involvement will also make it easier to anticipate new challenges and opportunities.
- › **Monitor the use and availability of resources.** Evaluate if campaign resources are used efficiently, such as budget, human resources, time and other. If not, adjustment will be necessary.

- PLAN
- DO
- CHECK
- ACT

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

03

03 Know your audience

“ THE BETTER YOU KNOW
YOUR AUDIENCE, THE
BETTER YOU CAN APPEAL
TO THEIR INTERESTS ”

One of the crucial steps to consider in a communication or marketing strategy is defining your target groups. After this you will be more prepared to:

- › Identify the best channels to engage with your audience;
- › Develop an effective message that appeals to your target groups;

A successful marketing strategy should begin by identifying of your target groups and gaining a thorough understanding of your audience. In the scope of European projects you may not have the time or resources to conduct a detailed research plan on demographic analysis, behaviour patterns (when, where, why and how people relate to your project's domain), etc. However, you should try to find out as much information as possible, about the target groups relevant to the scope of your project.

Building the profile of your target groups will help you to determine the direction of your communications strategy.

Ask the project consortium //

— Who are your primary targets?

— What is the desired involvement of your target group?

- › Endorse your initiative
- › Participate in certain activities (survey, interview, workshop/conference...)
- › Act as a multiplier – snowballing effect (promoting your project within their networks)
- › Purchase your product or service
- › Benefit from the SSH results
- › Receive training or new skills

— What factors within your target group are relevant to your project?

- › Age
- › Gender
- › Location (local, regional, national &/or urban, suburban, rural)
- › Marital/family status
- › Education level
- › Occupation

— Are the targets' lifestyle and attitudes relevant to your SSH project?

- › Personality types
- › Attitudes
- › Values
- › Interest
- › Lifestyles
- › Behaviours

— Are their needs and challenges related to the scope of your project?

Understanding your audience's needs and challenges will help you to tell them how your projects addresses those needs.

— How does your project address your audiences' needs?

What things from your project will drive your target groups to follow up the progress of your project or use their results? What obstacles might exist for your audience to be actively engaged with your project activities or benefit from their results?

— What media channels does your audience currently use?

Consider magazines, TV, websites, social networks.

— How can you best reach your target audience?

— Who are your stakeholders?

Profiling your target groups can be a challenging task, but it will be worth the effort, as knowing who you are targeting will allow you to more easily define, the communication messages and the most effective channels for reaching them.

There are market research resources available on the internet that can help you find this information. There are also blog posts, magazine articles and magazine results that may provide information about your target groups.

To learn more about your target group and what you should know when approaching them, check out the DANDELION **“Guideline for good dissemination towards your target groups”**



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

DEFINE YOUR STORY AND MESSAGES

04

04 Define your story and messages

Once you have defined your communication objectives and who you are targeting, it is time to think about the “meat” or content of your communication.

Let’s start by defining a simple and clear motto or slogan, which summarises in a phrase the general motivation or intention of your project. You can use your motto or slogan as a stand-alone sentence in all your communication materials or include it as part of your logo for a stronger link between your brand and your key message. In EU projects it is common practice to include the full title of the project in the logo. A shorter slogan is often more memorable, so try to keep yours down to as few words as you can - Google recommend no more than five. Remember - Just Do It! You could produce two versions of your logo - one using the tagline to be used for official purposes and the other, without the tagline when you want to keep things simple.

Hints

- › Keep it short and don't use more than one sentence.
- › A good tagline will be one that your audience easily understands.
- › Try to make it different, something that stands out and sticks in the mind.
- › Keep it real and honest.

WHAT IS YOUR “STORY”?

The ‘story’ of your project will underpin your communication strategy. It should concisely convey the motivation behind the project, along with the key messages and essential points that you are trying to communicate.

First, it is worth spending some time considering whether your communication will be problem or solution focused as this will have an impact on how stakeholders respond. In the former your communication will focus on sensitising your audience towards a problem that needs to be addressed and solved, while in the latter your communication will focus on the solution and the benefits that your research brings.

Preparing a summary of your project based on the content available in the Description of Work is an easy way to create the first “story” of your project. Use it to identify its key aims and objectives and tease out the most essential information about the challenges you are seeking to address, the work you will do and the results you expect to achieve.

Sharing and validating this summary with your consortium will also ensure that everyone is on the same page, in terms of having a common understanding of the fundamental aspects of the project, such as the challenges it addresses, main target groups, objectives and activities, expected results and the foreseen impact.

During this exercise you should also invest some time to think about your “Unique Selling Proposition” (USP). In business this is the main benefit of a product or service that when communicated well will drive its sales. The USP is the essence of what you are offering. Thus, in the scope of EU-funded SSH projects, the USP will be the main benefit that your project will bring to society. It will be what makes you different,

the unique nature of what you are proposing and it will clearly identify how you meet the challenge you are addressing.

The USP should also be specific, concise and compelling enough to attract interest in your project and what you have to offer.

The content produced for the summary of project, your “story”, could be a good starting point for developing the concept behind its branding and even some communication materials, such as a simple leaflet or PowerPoint presentation.

Outside the community involved in EU-Framework Programmes, nobody cares about work packages, so try to avoid using terminology such as WP, Task 3.1, deliverable, etc....

Hint

////////////////////

Your story could follow this structure:

- > **Why** – Describe the challenge that the project is addressing.
- > **For whom** – Who will benefit from your research, or be able to use the results?
- > **What** – Explain the main objectives of the project.
- > **How** – State the main activities of the project
- > **For what** – Indicate the expected results and impact.

////////////////////

In line with current trends, consider using infographics to tell your story in a simple, accessible format. These work particularly well on social media, where they have a big impact.

4.1 Create messages that speak to your target groups

The messages of your project should be tailored to resonate with your target groups. You may need to create various versions of the message to reach different groups. The same message could be interpreted or understood differently by a policymakers, researchers and students..

In addition, it is also important to consider who will deliver the messages, i.e. the “messengers”. For example, behaviour-change messages resonate better from peer groups of the target audience (i.e. young people, researchers or business entrepreneurs), but awareness and advocacy messages resonate better from role models, politicians, or even celebrities.

Your content should be the core of all your communication. In marketing, the concept of “content marketing” is used to attract and retain customers by consistently creating and curating relevant and valuable content with the intention of changing or enhancing consumer behaviour. Through content strategy, businesses try to separate themselves from the perception that “companies just try to sell stuff” by providing new and relevant information that will engender trust and loyalty.

In the context of EU funded projects, you should try to avoid transmitting an image of disseminating project results just for “contractual reasons”, and try to link this dissemination with a sense of intention, emotion and care.

USE CONTENT TO MAKE A PERSON:

- **STOP**
- **READ**
- **THINK**
- **BEHAVE
DIFFERENTLY**

4.2 Make the most out of your content

Do not stop at making your public results or “deliverables” available on your website. Go beyond that and make the most out of the content you have produced for those documents.

- › Create an aesthetic version of your results i.e. the main conclusions or highlights. Use a less official format than the one in your deliverable. Change your language from “reporting” voice to “narrative”.
- › Promote this version on the website, share it on your social networks, and distribute it at relevant events.
- › Use the key messages or conclusions of your deliverable as stand-alone posts for your social networks. Use social media management tools to schedule the posts.

” CONTENT IS KING BUT
ENGAGEMENT IS QUEEN,
AND THE LADY RULES
THE HOUSE ”

Mari Smith

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND TOOLS

05

05 Choosing the right communication channels and tools

The channels and tools via which you communicate will be an essential part of your communication strategy. Although you might be tempted to cover every type of channel there is, an effective strategy is a focused one. Bear in mind that what is successful for one communication strategy or campaign may not be right for another. Thus, it is very important to consider the context of your project, the relevance of each channel for your specific communications objectives and which will be better for reaching your target groups.

You should also take into account that if you are targeting small groups, common channels or media may not be as effective, so you may need to implement more targeted or informal means to ensure a stronger impact.

Among the different type of events, one can distinguish between interpersonal channels (workshops/seminars, focus groups, conferences/trade show), community-oriented channels that use existing social networks, and media channels (including modern mass media such as radio and TV, and “new media” such as the internet and SMS).

REMEMBER

“ IT IS STRATEGIES, NOT CHANNELS, THAT HAVE ASSOCIATED BEST PRACTICES AND DELIVER RESULTS ”

Samuel Scott



5.1 Interpersonal channels

Awareness events

Usually a short event of half a day where a topic is presented for the first time to a particular audience, these events can create awareness and engage participants in future activities.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: This type of channel is used in the early stages of the project, both to create awareness and to collect feedback from participants in terms of level of interest about the project topics, relevance and expectations.

In practice: The event should consist of a brief presentation about the project and a session for questions and answers. A short survey can be also distributed to collect qualitative information and contact details for the mailing list of the project. This can later be used to categorise different audiences for customised messages about the project.

Workshops

Workshops are interactive sessions, often taking a full day or more, in which clients, researchers and other participants work intensively on an issue or question. The process often combines elements of qualitative research, brainstorming and problem solving. They may involve a larger number of people than conventional group discussions, and can involve more than one moderator or facilitator.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: Workshops are a good channel to foster discussion, collect feedback, or validate a certain methodology, topic or issue that the project is addressing. A workshop can be directed to particular types of stakeholders from which you would like to obtain insights.

In practice: The workshop should start with an introduction to the project and the purpose of the workshop, after which an interactive activity should be conducted, e.g. ask participants to work on a specific task, to have brainstorming sessions, to ask direct questions, to organise focus groups on specific topics. Finally, a plenary session should wrap up the conclusions obtained during the interactive activities.

Targeted Stakeholders Seminar

Seminars are a form of academic instruction, either at an academic institution or offered by a commercial or professional organisation. They have the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on a particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: Seminars should be used when a more academic approach is required, such as for a technical presentation towards researchers or professionals coming from the same field. A certain level of literacy, expertise and capabilities from the participants is expected.

In practice: A technical or research related presentation should be given, assigned readings can be discussed, questions can be raised and debates can be conducted.

Conferences

Conferences are formal meetings in which many people gather in order to talk about ideas or problems related to a particular topic, usually for several days. Conferences can be composed of several presentations, which tend to be short (from 15 to 30 min) followed by a discussion. They can also include keynote speakers whose lectures are often longer.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: Conferences are an ideal channel to communicate a relevant piece of information about your project to a large audience.

In practice: Usually you may need to go through a “call for papers” process, or you can also try to contact the organisers requesting to be one of the speakers. Conference programmes tend to be organised quite in advance; make sure you don’t miss deadlines to submit papers.

Parallel sessions

Large conferences often have several parallel sessions covering specific topics. These sessions are usually composed of a panel of three to four speakers, but can also consist of a single presentation or topic of discussion.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: Parallel sessions are a good opportunity to leverage from the visibility of the larger conference and to ensure participants attend your session. Since participants have to select (and even register to) the parallel session they want to go to, it is almost assured that they will have a real interest in the topic and will actively contribute to the discussion.

In practice: You will probably have to submit a paper about the topic for your presentation and go through a selection process. Try to make your paper interesting to catch the attention of the

jury that evaluates the papers. If selected, your session will be “competing” with other parallel sessions happening at the same time, so make your title and short introduction attractive to potential participants.

Exhibition area

Conferences and other events may provide a space for exhibitors to display information and material about specific fields. The exhibition area or space may include stands and promotional material, e.g. posters, roll-ups.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: This area can be used for project’s dissemination and promotional purposes, i.e. using a stand to provide information and material about the project, or participating at poster exhibition.

In practice: The costs and resources for participation in the exhibition area should be carefully considered (stand, shipping of material, equipment necessary), as well as the personnel available to ensure the stand always has someone to provide information or respond to any inquiries.

Trade fair

Conventionally a trade fair is a type of exhibition for companies in a specific industry to showcase and demonstrate their latest products and services, meet with industry partners and customers, study activities of rivals, and examine recent market trends and opportunities. Some fairs are only open to the public, while other fairs are only open to members of the trade. Other “hybrid” fairs, are open to both public and trade members.

Use in the scope of EU funded projects: Participation in this type of event can be useful for exploitation activities or market uptake, such as a demonstration of project results or a showcase of a prototype. Also, they can be a good opportunity to meet with potential industry partners, customers and investors.

In practice: When considering whether to participate in a fair, you should consider the budget and resources. Furthermore, you should also consider the level of development of your results and define the objective (e.g. create awareness and obtain feedback, or organise a prototype demonstration). Do not expect to close any deal in a trade fair, but instead generate “leads” which you can closely follow up.

5.2 Community oriented channels

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and many other social networks have become great instruments to enhance communications, maximise exposure and strengthen your online presence. But which social network do your target groups use the most, and when are they more active?

These tools require a great level of interactivity. It is not only about spreading information but engaging others to spread and share your information on their networks. In addition to this, it is necessary to maintain a continuous flow of information going through your social network, keeping it constantly active with updates about the latest information. If you do not post anything new for a long time, it can discourage viewers from looking at your page, profile or group.

In order to keep the information flowing, you should distribute the responsibility of feeding the social media within your consortium. Although all partners would be strongly encouraged to contribute to the social networks, one or two partners can be nominated per month to ensure steady posting.

The following characteristics of the major platforms may help you to decide which social network you should use for your project.



Facebook – Key facts

With 1.44 billion monthly active users , Facebook is the market leader for social networking sites. Facebook data shows that the 18–24 age range is still the biggest demographic using the site. However, it is also worth noting the 63% of users between 50–64 years-old which is quite significant when comparing this with the 9% of Twitter and 6% of Instagram users of this age range.

- › 87% of adults 18–29 use Facebook.
- › 63% of adults 50–64 use Facebook.
- › 73% of adults 30–49 use Facebook.
- › 56% of adults 65+ use Facebook.

Facebook also seems to skew more heavily toward women, with 77% of adult females on the site and 66% adult males.

According to Business Insider, Facebook’s users are younger, and that means brands that advertise luxury goods and services are still finding more success advertising in magazines than on social media. Other types of brands — such as fast-moving consumer goods — perform well on Facebook. And Facebook users show high ad engagement overall, accounting for half of all retargeted clicks on the Web.

Facebook usage among key demographics:

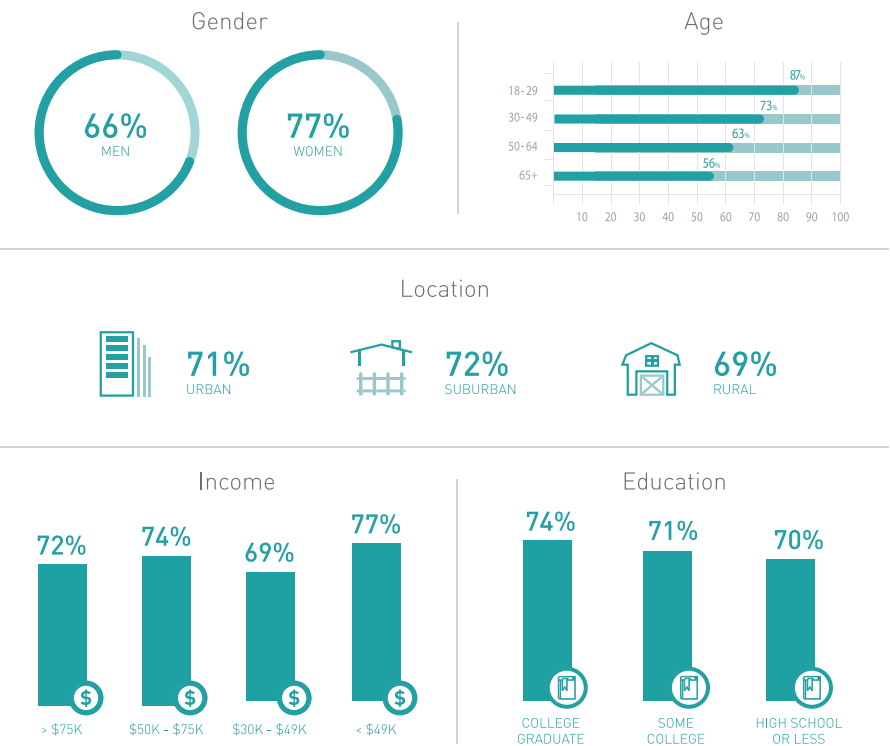


Figure 1: Facebook key demographics

USE OF FACEBOOK IN THE SCOPE OF EU PROJECTS

A Facebook page for the project allows you to build a group of followers and take advantage of the common and overlapping interests of this audience with the project's concepts and activities. Facebook is also a good channel for disseminating and sharing general information, news, developments and results related to the projects, and also to communicate and promote key events and activities aiming to engage people's involvement. It is important to create a sense of community, so spend some time getting to know other profiles and pages addressing similar topics, and "like" and share information with them.

Twitter – Key facts

Twitter age demographics, according to Pew are:

- › 37% of adults 18–29 use Twitter.
- › 12% of adults 50–64 use Twitter.
- › 25% of adults 30–49 use Twitter.
- › 10% of adults 65+ use Twitter.

The gender demographics from that same study are:

- › 24% of adult men use Twitter.
- › 21% of adult women use Twitter.

According to Business Insider, people tend to use Twitter for news consumption. In 2012, 83% of users reported seeing news on Twitter. The best time to post on Twitter is Monday through Thursday between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. The worst time is after 3 p.m. on a Friday.

Twitter usage among key demographics:

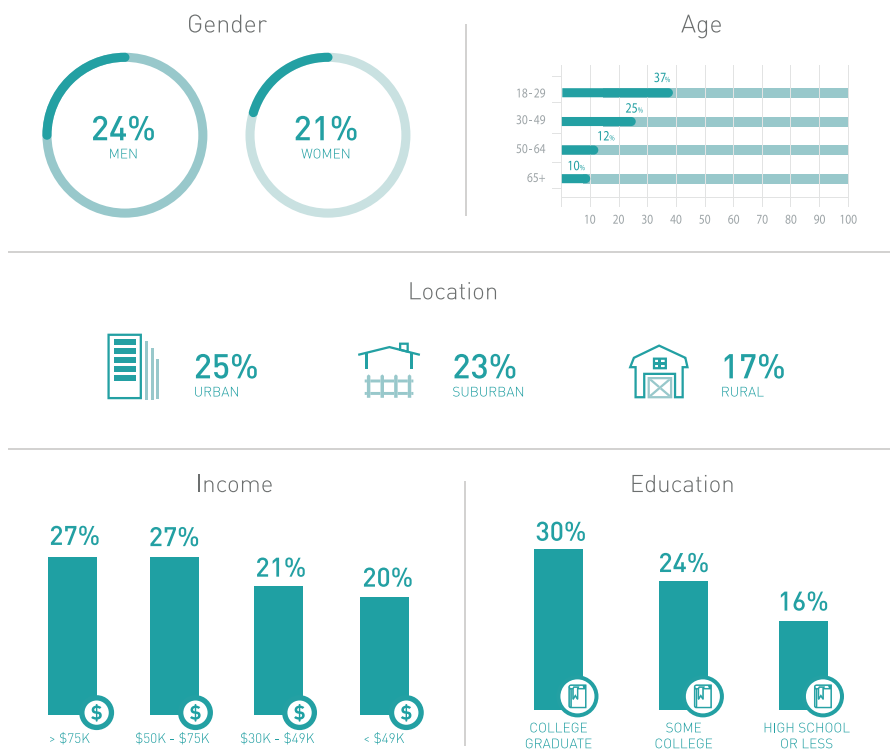


Figure 2: Twitter key demographics

USE OF TWITTER IN THE SCOPE OF EU PROJECTS

Twitter allows fast and effective communication. It is also good for monitoring developments and progress in other related projects, initiatives and relevant organisations. Twitter is useful for communicating participation in events by posting brief highlights of speeches or sessions, pictures, etc. The use of hashtags can be confusing at first, but it is an efficient way to follow topics of interest.

LinkedIn – Key facts

According to LinkedIn, there are more than 347 million members in over 200 countries and territories in its network. The higher average income of users and working mind-set of the network make it an ideal social network for businesses. This is the first social network where the majority of users don't fall between the 18–29 year-old category.

- › 31% of adults 30–49 use LinkedIn.
- › 30% of adults 50–64 use LinkedIn.
- › 23% of adults 18–29 use LinkedIn.
- › 21% of adults over 65 use LinkedIn.

There is a pretty close divide when it comes to the different genders using LinkedIn.

- › 28% of online men use LinkedIn.
- › 27% of online women use LinkedIn.

Their geographical membership includes:

- › 111M+ users in the United States
- › 84M+ users in Europe
- › 64M+ users in Asia and the Pacific
- › 48M+ users in Latin America

According to Business Insider, LinkedIn is the place for white-collar professionals to network, meaning its population is high-income and highly educated. The best time to post on LinkedIn is Tuesday through Thursday, when professionals are either beginning or finishing their workday.

LinkedIn usage among key demographics:

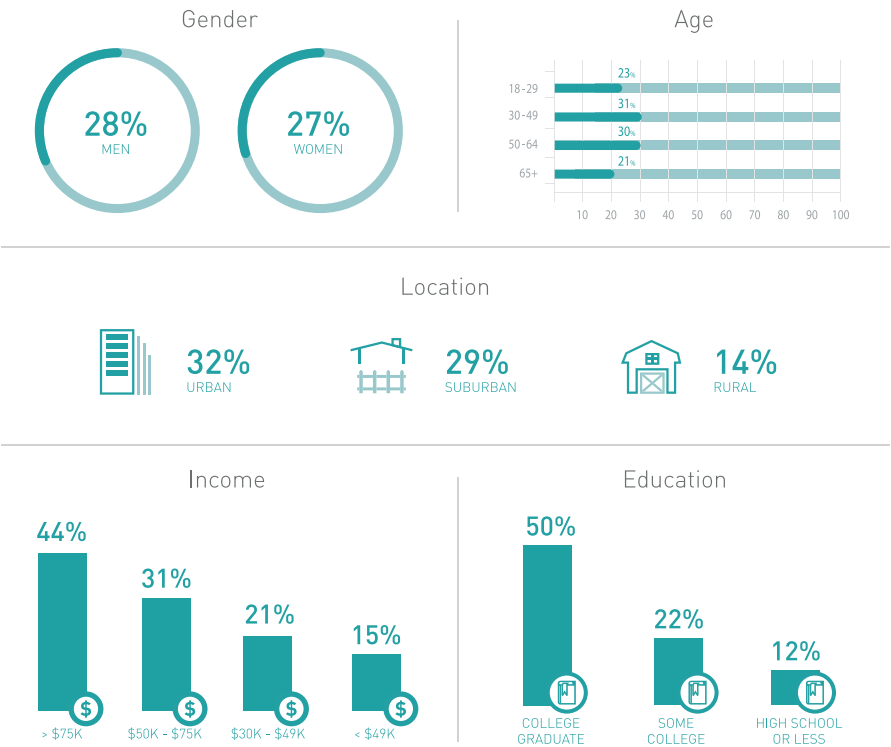


Figure 3: LinkedIn key demographics

USE OF LINKEDIN IN THE SCOPE OF EU PROJECTS

LinkedIn brings a more institutional approach to project dissemination. The creation of a LinkedIn Group enables you to boost professional and expert discussions on issues of common interest. Invitations to join the group can be sent to databases of stakeholders. The sharing feature on LinkedIn is usually available on most websites, which facilitates sharing of information and create topics for discussion.

One limitation of LinkedIn groups that it is not possible to share a post created in the group. Thus, for posts intended to have more visibility, than only the group, it is advisable to “publish an article” in your profile at the “home” section and share it from there

Instagram – Key facts

Boasting a community of over 300 million users sharing over 60 million photos every day, Instagram is one of the rising stars of social media. Instagram has overtaken Facebook and Twitter as the network with the largest population of younger users. The breakdown of the percentage of online adults who use Instagram by age:

- › 53% of 18–29 year olds use Instagram.
- › 11% of 50–64 year olds use Instagram.
- › 25% of 30–49 year olds use Instagram.
- › 6% of people 65+ use Instagram.

Also, of all of those age groups, the dominant gender on the photo-sharing site is female.

- › 29% of online females use Instagram.
- › 22% of online males use Instagram.

Instagram usage among key demographics:

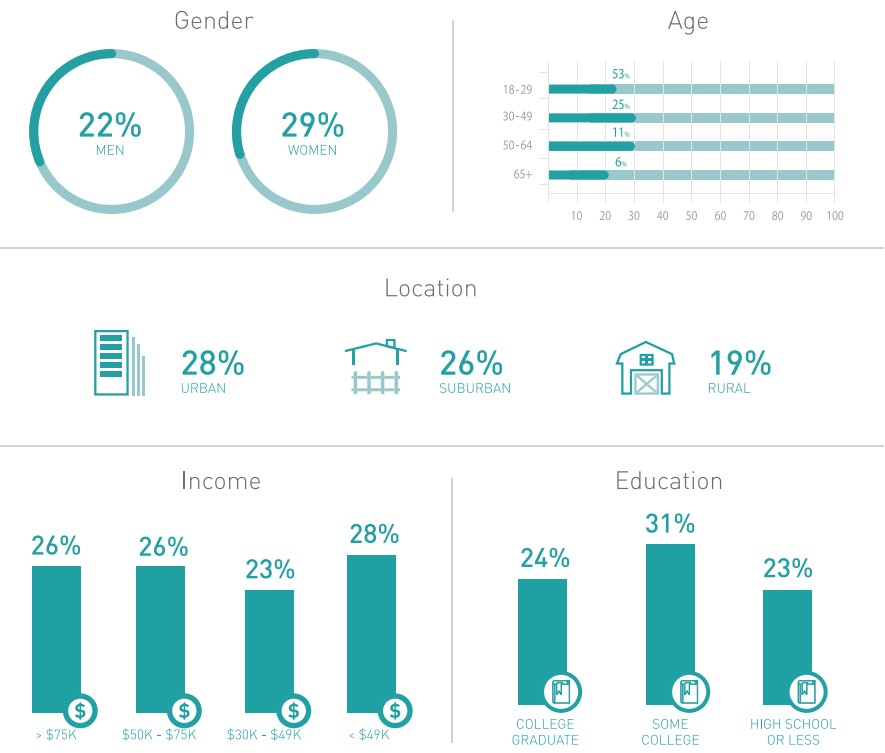


Figure 4: Instagram key demographics

USE OF INSTAGRAM IN THE SCOPE OF EU PROJECTS

Instagram can contribute to the massification of the project and is a good “layman” promotional vehicle. Mainly for photo-sharing and video-sharing, Instagram is more appropriate for those projects that intends to have many events, interviews, videos, infographics and any activity that could have visual results.

Youtube – Key facts

Although not strictly a social media website, YouTube is the largest free video streaming site on the internet and is a valuable tool for the sharing of videos across all social media platforms.

With 300 hours of videos uploaded every minute and 5 billion videos watched every day, it is most popular with 18-29 year olds. YouTube users are split in to two different categories: those who simply watch the videos and those who post and share their videos, known as 'YouTubers'. YouTubers have branched out to other social media platforms to share their videos – most videos that are shared through Facebook were originally created by a YouTuber.

Youtube usage among key demographics:

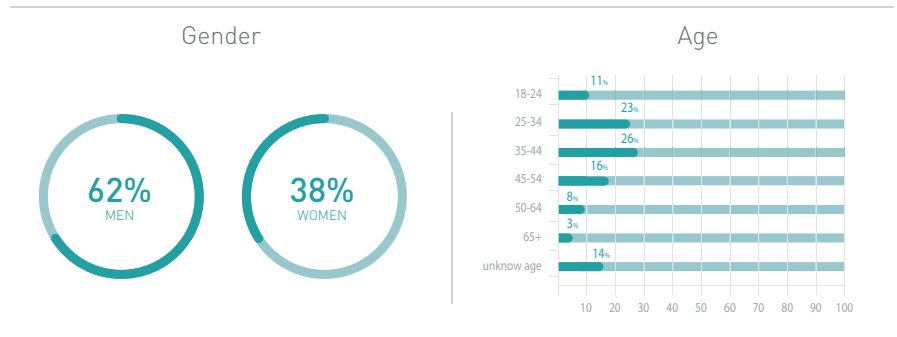


Figure 5: Youtube key demographics

USE OF YOUTUBE IN THE SCOPE OF EU PROJECTS

A YouTube account for a project allows you to share videos to a group of subscribers on the account and then share that to other social media platforms. It is also a good way to receive anonymous feedback on your content through likes, dislikes and comments from the viewers, as well as the number of views it has gained. By sharing videos on a portal such as YouTube it also makes your project easier to find on an online search engine, such as Google. When uploading your video content you can add tags to it, creating links to similar videos that share the same tag. Those videos would then appear in a column on the right-hand side of the page. To optimise this feature, check popular videos that relate to yours and use tags that they have used.

Social media monitoring and management tools

Social networks are used by European funded Projects to disseminate and share information, to network and to gather feedback from target groups. However, continuous management of 3, 4 or more profiles, groups or pages, can become a challenging endeavour. In addition to ensuring a regular flow of updated information to keep the networks active and keep your audiences hooked, it is also necessary to keep track of and monitor the feedback received that will help you understand your target groups better and improve your communication strategy.

In order to make the most of social media, there are tools that can help you to monitor, manage and listen. Some examples of free tools available online are:

Hootsuite is a social media dashboard that covers multiple social networks, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, WordPress, Foursquare and Google+. This tool offers social media management functions such as:

- › Monitor and engage in conversation across all your social networks from one place
- › Schedule messages and use RSS to automate content to post
- › Measure your social media growth

SocialMention is a listening tool that monitors over one hundred social media sites. It analyses data and measures influence with four categories: strength, sentiment, passion, and reach.

TweetDeck is useful for beginners on Twitter. It allows scheduling tweets and monitoring interactions and messages, as well as tracking hashtags and managing multiple accounts.

Google Alerts is a web monitoring tool allowing you to track new interesting content, mentions of your project, your organisation, related projects, topics, etc.

Remember that monitoring your social media presence will help you to engage when appropriate and respond when necessary.

5.3 Media channels

Website

The website of a European project should provide: i) general information about the project such as main objectives, overall approach and activities; ii) information about the consortium such as partners' organisations, URL, role in the project, key personnel; iii) a section for news and events; iv) a download section including public results, newsletters and publications; iv) a multimedia gallery for pictures and videos; and v) contact details.

Depending on the scope of the project and activities, additional sections may be considered.

Consider using a web monitoring tool (e.g. Google Analytics) and make the website "shared friendly" by associating it with your social networks. Share your news and events in your social networks to create traffic to your website.

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Assess the performance of your website - Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a free web analytics service that provides statistics and basic analytical tools for search engine optimisation (SEO) and marketing purposes. Some information that Google Analytics will provide about your website are:

- › Total number of pages viewed
- › Users that have had at least one session within the selected data range (including new and returning users)
- › Where your visitors are located
- › Which online campaigns bring the most traffic
- › What people are searching for on your site
- › What people click on the most
- › What is your top content?
- › What are your worst performing pages

////////////////////

Blogs

A blog of your project can help to disseminate knowledge on a more personal tone and can contribute to community build-up. The blog can either be open to just the consortium partners or to external parties. The latter will allow you to enrich the knowledge and discussion on certain topics. For instance, a researcher working on a paper could use the blog to share a summary or key elements of the paper with the project's community.

Radio, TV, dedicated magazines and journals

These channels serve as intermediaries in the communication of a project's results to its audience. In order to attract their attention, the media should be actively involved in the project from early stages in order to create a relationship. Actions such as inviting the press to events, sending press releases or creating an appealing media kit can contribute to enhancing their interest in the project.

The project consortium can initiate media interaction at regional or national level to ensure local impact and to create momentum for wider press coverage.

To learn more about media and what you should know when approaching them, check out the DANDELION **"Guideline for good dissemination towards your target groups"**

Online advertising and digital marketing

Online advertising and digital marketing is by definition "a form of marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium". It includes email marketing, search engine optimisation, social media marketing and more. These types of channels are increasingly being used by EU funded projects.

In the case of online advertising it should be considered that an increasing number of people are using ad-blocking software to avoid receiving unwanted information.

Digital marketing used in European Projects

Email marketing

In the scope of European projects, email marketing is usually used for sending important communications to an existing database of contacts from stakeholders. These communications can be newsletters, invitation to events, distribution of online surveys, etc.

It is important that the consortium starts developing a database of stakeholders from the beginning of the project. In the case of a newsletter, projects can also opt to add a subscription feature in the website.

Search engine optimisation (SEO)

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is an area of website development that seeks to improve the way content is ranked by search engines in organic search results. In order to achieve this goal several approaches are taken, including making sure the website architecture makes it easy for visitors to find content and that pages are mobile-friendly and load quickly.

Ultimately, sites should focus on providing visitors with useful content and a good user experience.

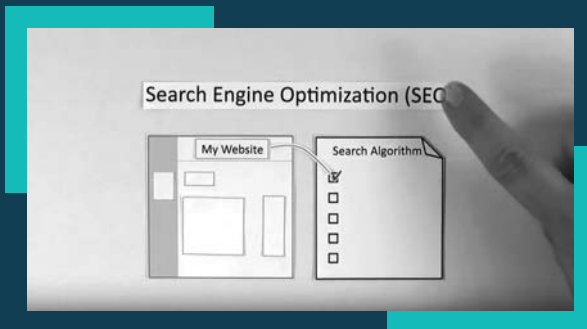


Figure 6: Video introducing the basic of SEO by Common Craft

Youtube: What Is Search Engine Optimization / SEO
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hF515-0Tduk>

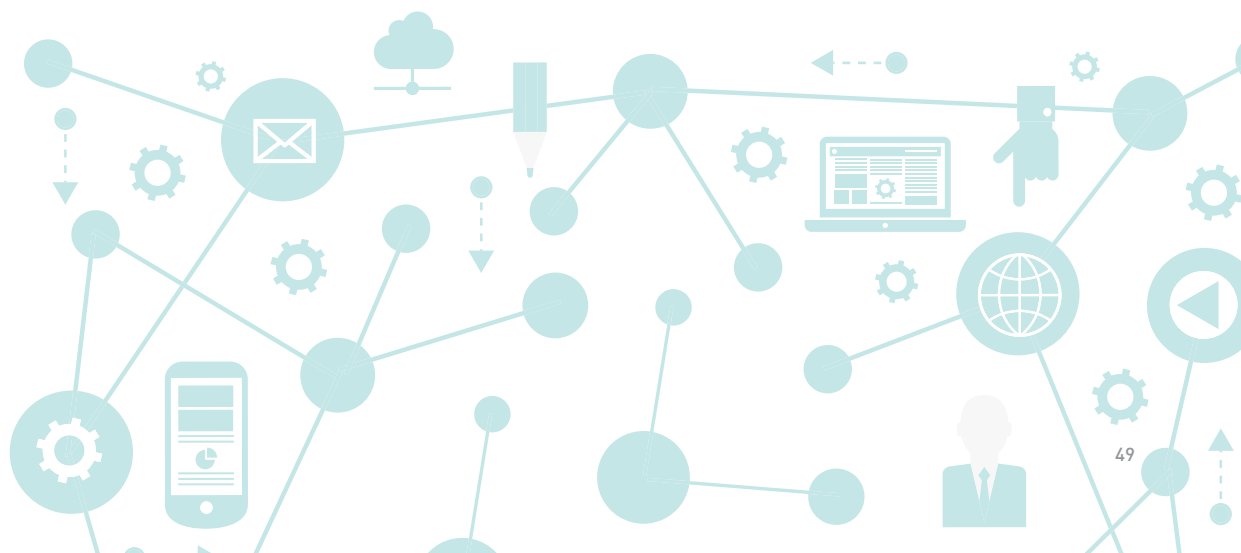
BRANDING AND DISSEMINATION MATERIALS TO DIFFERENTIATE YOUR PROJECT

06

06 Branding and dissemination materials to differentiate your project

Logos, stationery, dissemination material and more; your brand must speak to the target groups in a contemporary and relevant manner. When defining your brand you should consider what your target groups will understand and remember.

An example of a powerful way to build brand awareness in the short term, is to find a well-known individual who can provide a testimonial for the brand and influence their followers to accept this new brand.



6.1 The logo and identity

The brand created for a project should provide a cohesive visual identity of the project. The brand will be used in different materials produced under the frame of the project, including templates, brochures, websites, posters, roll-ups and more.

Defining the concepts you want your project to visually transmit may help you to create the brand or logo. Keep in mind that your logo may be used in small size, so try to avoid small details or small lettering.

The colouring (RGB) is also an important aspect as all the other materials should follow the same style.

In order to ensure a proper use of the logo a brand manual can be produced detailing the characteristics of the brand.



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6.2 The stationery

The stationery should comprise specific templates to support the communication and reporting of the project, such as a deliverable template, a meeting minutes' template and a presentation template.

Furthermore, it should also include letter head paper and folders which can be used in events and meetings, and an email signature for any formal communication.

This material aims to ensure coherent and efficient communication of the brand. Therefore, the consortium should always use this material for any communication of the project.

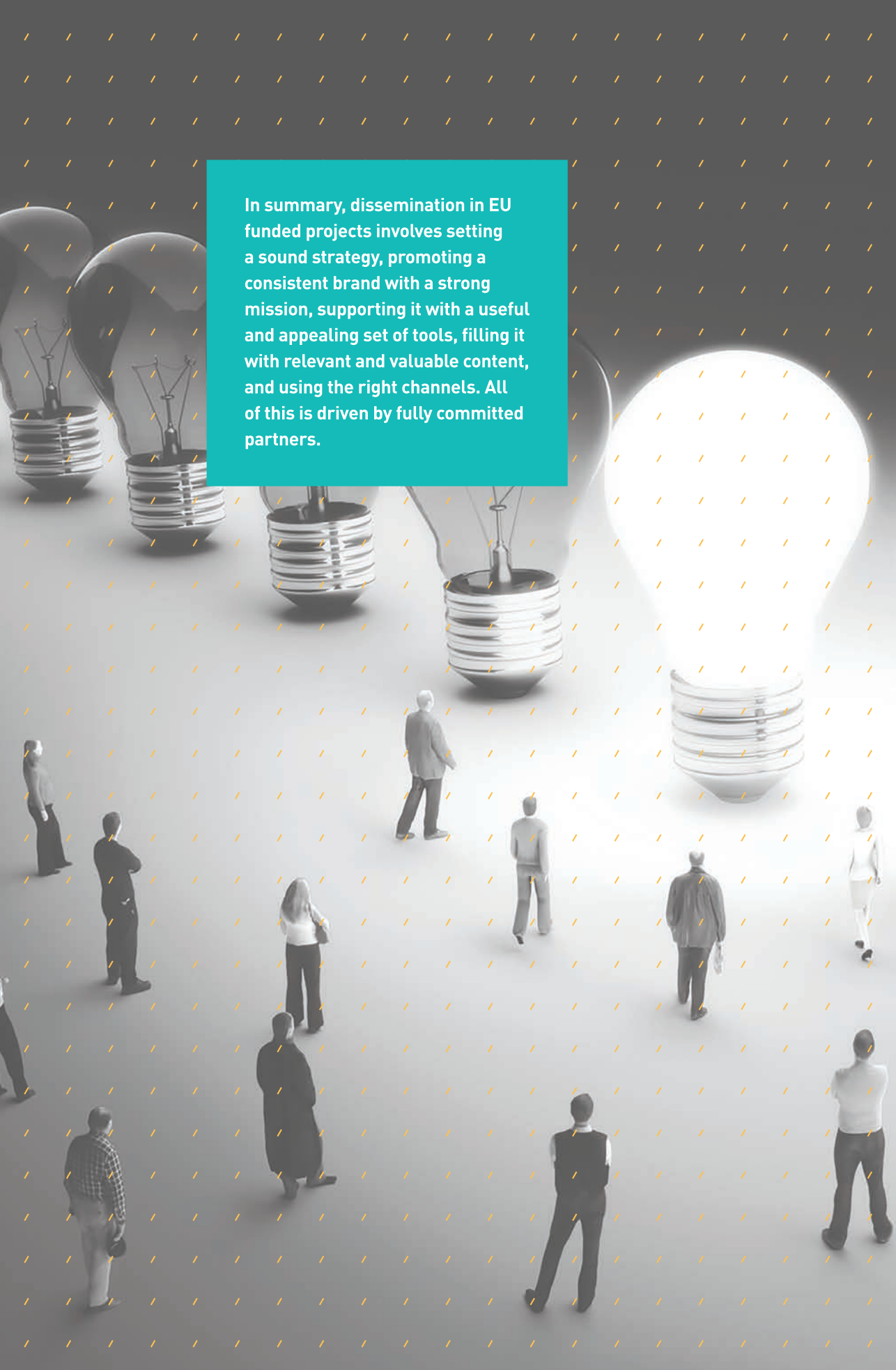
6.3 Dissemination materials

Dissemination materials such as leaflets, brochures, posters, infographics and videos are important tools for creating awareness and interest about the project.

Some of this material will mainly be used for events, but others can be used for digital promotion such as infographics and videos.



Figure 7: Video introducing DANDELION project
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqU7DVb6VvE&t=8s>



In summary, dissemination in EU funded projects involves setting a sound strategy, promoting a consistent brand with a strong mission, supporting it with a useful and appealing set of tools, filling it with relevant and valuable content, and using the right channels. All of this is driven by fully committed partners.

When, What, How and Why

The following table explains that several actions are needed in the different stages of the project (from proposal to after project, in terms of consequence of the sustainability and exploitation plan).

		When	What	How	Why
		Before the project (proposal preparation)	Communication and Dissemination Strategy	Create a strong Dissemination and Communication strategy (Involve experts if needed). Allocate appropriate resources for dissemination and communication tasks. Define KPI (key performance indicator). Make sure that the strategies to increase impact are envisaged for every project activity.	To ensure that your research will have an impact on the relevant stakeholders.
DURING PROJECT	Design Phase		Impact, Communication and Dissemination plan	Know your target audience: • Create a detailed categorization of your target audience • What they are interested in? • Use strategically the right contents/channels/ language depending on the target audience • Speak their language. Be clear and simple Carefully plan your activities from early project stages. Define the project identity (branding and “motto”, coordinated image). Use professional competences and/or train your staff in Communication. Clearly assign roles in the project team. The researchers are not communicators and viceversa.	To make sure that the correct message reaches the target audience
	Research Phase		Early and continuous implementation of activities (Dissemination and Communication)	Start your Dissemination and Communication activities early in the project. Establish a productive dialogue among the researchers and the Communication manager. The first will provide the contents; the second will transform these contents in interesting contents for the stakeholders.	To maximise the exploitation of the knowledge produced and increase the impact of your project outcomes.
	Implementation and testing phase		Continuous implementation of activities (Promotion and Valorisation)	Revise and adjust your strategy. Keep your Website and social media pages active and updated. Add your results to the public domain platform, thematic group of interests, media (make sure you use the right channel to address the specific target audiences). Co-organize events and activities with stakeholders. This will enable the wider promotion of your work and will strengthen the impact of the events. Setup innovative strategies to better valorise the results of your research. Plan the sustainability of the research results.	To make sure that the information reaches the intended target audiences
		After the end of the Project (sustainability and exploitation)	Ensuring long term availability of outcomes	Make sure that the research results are widely available after the project conclusion. Many websites disappear after the final review. There are free repositories, you can benefit from this opportunity.	To ensure long term availability of the outcomes

Table 5: When, What, How and Why

Are you a researcher in IIRS field,
a policy maker or other stakeholder?

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