

Eighth Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia-Pacific

Strategies for Achieving Effective Data Communication

Communication with data users: strategies and tactics

**Mass Media/Marketing: The Experience of the Census and
Statistics Department of Hong Kong, China**

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Agenda

- Introduction
 - Objectives of Marketing Communication
 - Partners and Channels
 - Challenges
 - Meeting the Challenges – C&SD's experience
 - Key Communication Messages
 - Key Strategies
 - Looking Ahead
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Introduction

- Marketing communication is a two-way process
 - To better understand user needs, preferences and concerns
 - To convey brand image, product characteristics and benefits
 - Effective marketing communication can facilitate
 - NSOs to design user centric data collection and dissemination channels with value propositions
 - Citizens and businesses to use official statistics in a more informed manner for better decision making
 - Marketing communication is therefore crucial for effective data collection and dissemination
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Objectives of Marketing Communication

- ❑ Promote better informed decision making
 - ❑ Promote proper use and interpretation of official statistics
 - ❑ Promote co-operation of survey respondents
 - ❑ Promote departmental image, professionalism, official source
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Partners and Channels for Marketing Communication

- Mass media - an indispensable business partner for effective marketing communication
 - The Virtuous Circle effect: Good communication with mass media and through them with users can help C&SD to win the cooperation of respondents (often also data users), which in turn will enhance quality of data and hence usefulness of data to users
 - Other channels – direct and proactive communications with different groups of stakeholders, community participation, industry competitions, website, etc.
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Challenges

- ❑ Dynamic external environment results in changing landscape, presenting new challenges and opportunities
 - ❑ Increasing focus on privacy and confidentiality - minimal interference; concern on handling of personal data
 - ❑ ICT advances and cross sector experience – users expect free, prompt, round the clock “7x24” service
 - ❑ Increasing user demands for free, timely access to detailed data, preferably with self-help tabulation tools
 - ❑ Demand for greater accountability, communication and explanation of survey findings
 - ❑ Emergence of “Competitors” [Partners?] (i.e. Data Agencies)
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Meeting The Challenges – C&SD's Experience

- C&SD accords high priority to develop strategies for effective marketing communication and media relations
 - User-focused messages are developed and combined with a wide range of strategies for achieving effective communication
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Key Communication Messages

- User centric data collection and dissemination services
 - Greater privacy with access to e-services from home – website, e-reporting, minimal interference
 - Proactive management of respondent burden for large companies – “Customer Window Scheme”, customized e-templates to facilitate reporting
 - E-services – online, anytime, anywhere, prompt service with value-added features to empower data users
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Key Communication Messages

- Value propositions and user benefits
 - Automatic statistical updates through website functions
 - ALL publications (since Oct 2001) available for Free Download at C&SD Website – Award Winning “Free Download Policy”
 - Total publication circulation increased by over 35 times
 - Online platform for building tables, charts and maps to enable users to perform simple analysis on detailed 2006 Population By-census data - “Interactive Data Dissemination System”
 - Saving time and enhancing privacy through e-reporting
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Key Communication Messages

□ Branding

- Vision, Mission and Values
 - Promulgate Performance Pledge (since 1995)
 - Describes services provided, standards of services to be expected and feedback channels;
 - Reports on performance and achievements in improving quality of services in past year and describes new targets for coming year
 - Press conference to explain findings of major surveys
 - Emphasize “official” source – acknowledgement of source required in quoting official statistics
 - Partnering with data agencies to extend the reach of official statistics while promoting image of official statistics in their service offerings
 - Legislative back-up – Census and Statistics Ordinance
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Key Communication Messages

□ Vision

- To provide high-quality statistical services, contributing to the social and economic developments of Hong Kong

□ Mission

- To provide adequate, relevant, reliable and timely statistics to facilitate research, discussion, planning and decision making within the government and in the community
- To ensure that the compilation and dissemination of statistics are in accordance with scientific principles, professional ethics and international standards
- To promote a user-based culture, ensuring that users can obtain effective and convenient services

□ Values

- (i) Professionalism; (ii) objectivity and neutrality; (iii) cost-effectiveness; (iv) respect for privacy; (v) progressing with the times; and (vi) commitment to excellence
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Key Communication Messages

- Performance targets for some types of services:

<i>Type of service</i>	<i>Performance target</i>
■ To entertain enquiries on small volume of data that can be easily retrieved	Within 1 working day
■ To provide an estimate of the time needed and a quotation of the payable charge for entertaining enquiries on data that are not readily available	Within 3 working days
■ To arrange personal visits by field staff to assist in completing survey forms	Within 2 working days

Key Communication Messages

- Professionalism in service delivery
 - Benchmarking international standards
 - Highest level of confidentiality maintained in handling personal data
 - Quality Assurance System to ensure high data quality, and shared in international forum
 - Service Standards promulgated in the Performance Pledge and continually under review to aim at higher goals
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Key Strategies

- Building rapport, creating value for KEY Clients and proactive communication with different groups of stakeholders to better understand user needs and concerns
 - Involved in major govt. projects and studies
 - Statistics Advisory Board
 - Data Users – Courtesy Visits, Customer Liaison Groups, Consultations
 - Survey Respondents – Courtesy Visits, Meet-the-Clients Sessions, Respondent Encouragement Scheme
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Key Strategies

- Respondent Encouragement Scheme
 - For business firms which return the completed questionnaires to C&SD before the deadline, provide them with summary survey findings via email when the survey results are released
 - The summary findings are in the form of Industry Profile Reports specific to the firms concerned so that the firms can better understand their own profile relative to the industry aggregates
 - Helping respondents appreciate the use of data will enhance their cooperation, and hence the quality and usefulness of data
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Key Strategies

- Partnering with the Media
 - Annual publicity/promotion programme
 - Pre-announced press release schedule for the coming year
 - Press conferences/media interviews/briefings on specific themes and projects
 - Seminars and talks for media workers at regular intervals
 - Short articles on newspapers
 - Media corner on the website
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Key Strategies

- Developing statistical awareness among students – our leaders of tomorrow
 - School talks
 - Newspaper articles
 - Sponsoring the Statistical Project Competition for Secondary School Students
 - Teaching kit “Living with Statistics”
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Key Strategies

- Community/Business participation
 - Public seminars and exhibitions – Science in the Public Service
 - Partnership with Hong Kong Statistical Society and other professional bodies
 - Participation in business courses run by Universities and professional bodies
 - Establishing contacts with associations and practitioners in the business sector
 - Information booklets and pamphlets
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Key Strategies

- Leveraging advances in ICT for more effective data communication
 - C&SD Website
 - E-Reporting Channels
 - Participation in Industry competitions
 - HK ICT Awards
 - HK Govt's Outstanding Customer Service Awards
 - Regional Government Technology Award
 - E-Services and Free Download Policy won several awards
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Key Strategies

- Hosting and Participation in international events
 - Hosting of 2009 Population Census Conference
 - Hosting of 2013 World Statistics Congress of the ISI
 - Participation in various international conferences, e.g. UNSD, ESCAP
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Looking Ahead

- ❑ Evolving landscape continually opens up new challenges and opportunities
 - ❑ Creating further value for data users in the interpretation and use of statistics
 - ❑ Creating further convenience for respondents in e-reporting
 - ❑ Further strengthening rapport with the media and arriving at an “all-win” situation
 - ❑ Need to anticipate, think ahead and build for the future
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Thank You

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