

# Credocast

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*Promoting events for impact*

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## Observing Milestones

*Events are held to celebrate, observe or promote a particular personal, business or organizational milestone.*

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## Developing Strategy

*Developing an effective communications strategy is key to creating a successful launch or event.*

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## Implementing Action Plan

*Effective event communications can positively impact the event outcomes, strengthen brands and raise awareness on a particular issue. Strategies and action plans are required for seamless and effective implementation.*

## About Credo Advisory

Credo Advisory is a strategic communications firm that specializes in designing and implementing strategic, operational and tactical communications initiatives. We provide a full suite of communications support to our clients, which include public communications and advocacy, government relations, community engagement, media relations, crisis communications, digital communications and capacity building.

Our mission is to develop bespoke communications products, activities and campaigns based on knowledge, research and industry insights. With our ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences and stakeholder groups, Credo's mission is to provide impactful strategic communications advisory from inception to implementation. At Credo, we are committed to improving the way societies communicate.

[www.creadoconsulting.com](http://www.creadoconsulting.com)



*“Some events are designed to drive sales, while others are held for recognition, funding or support. Regardless of the objective, communications is key when promoting the event.”*

## Observing Milestones

Generally, events are held to celebrate, observe or promote a particular personal, business or organizational milestone. They are developed with set objectives, therefore before promoting an event, determining the primary goal is priority. Some events are designed to drive sales, while others are held for recognition, funding or support. Regardless of the objective, communications is key when promoting the event. Usually, more emphasis is placed on the design of invitations, the venue or food (popularly known as Item 7 in Nigeria) while an actual communications plan is omitted.

This thought piece addresses key steps to successful event communications. It also captures effective communication strategies and timelines to guide event promotion.

## Communications Strategy

What is event communications? Event communications involves a detailed process of identifying goals geared towards executing a successful event that will generate the needed recognition an organization, individual or business needs to achieve their event objectives. It captures key messages crafted to meet short term and long-term event goals.

Developing an effective communications strategy is key to creating a successful launch or event. The organiser needs to assemble the right team, identify event goals and determine the audience to be reached. Doing so, facilitates seamless execution.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Forbes (2018) 11 Important Steps to a successful Event Communications Strategy. Available from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2018/03/16/11-important-steps-to-a-successful-event-communications-strategy/#478a66bd7f7c>

“Success of an event is dependent on the proper execution of the action plan.”

The following should be prioritized when developing an event communications strategy:

### Core message

Core messaging is the foundation of a messaging strategy that supports clear and consistent communications across board<sup>2</sup>. It is what the organiser wants people to remember about the event. For example, a fundraising event on breast cancer awareness should incorporate core messaging that communicates early detection. To that end, early detection becomes the focal message on presentations, speeches, creatives and event branding. Subsequently, an effective way of boosting this message on social media is by using hashtags (#EarlyDetection). With hashtags, conversations are built around the core message of the event on social media.

### Action Plan

Developing an action plan provides structure and assigns responsibilities to event organizers. Success of an event is dependent on the proper execution of the action plan. An action plan has three major elements:

**Tasks:** What will be done and by whom

**Timeline:** When will it be done

**Budget:** What funds are available for specific activities<sup>3</sup>

Responsibilities in an event action plan are often assigned to; photographers, videographers, master of ceremony, and social media manager. Regardless of level of experience, communications best practice recommends a brief is developed to serve as a guide on implementation. For example, a photographer's brief would identify mandatory photos of individuals, key moments like speeches, cake or ribbon cutting, action photos (registration, dancing, etc.) and group photos.



<sup>2</sup>Conveyor (2018) Core Messaging: What is it and Why Should You Care <http://goconveyor.com/blog/core-messaging-what-it-is-and-why-you-should-care-07-16-2018>

<sup>3</sup>Business dictionary. Action Plan. Available from: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/action-plan.html>

“The pre-event phase is the period leading up to an event during which communication activities and initiatives are carried out.”

# Implementing Action Plan

## Pre-Event Activities

The pre-event phase is the period leading up to an event during which communication activities and initiatives are carried out. Key actions to be executed include but are not limited to:

### Event branding

For an organization or business event, this involves capturing the organiser’s brand identity and incorporating it in event marketing materials.<sup>4</sup> This can be done through digital branding (event websites, event apps, social media, event email marketing, etc.) or onsite branding (venue branding using backdrops, stage banners, roll up banners, etc.) Other branding elements can also include souvenirs which can be; branded notepads, bags, pens and other corporate gifts.

### Media

For events that require public awareness, local and national media must be leveraged. This will require pre-event media relations on the upcoming event, its objectives and outcomes which can be achieved with a tailored media invitation.

In preparation for the event, a press kit must be developed for effective media coverage and will serve as a messaging guide and channel to access event details. Best practice press kits should include electronic and hard copies of the following:



<sup>4</sup>The Bizzabo blog (2019) Event Branding: The 2019 Guide. Available from: <https://blog.bizzabo.com/event-branding>

“ Specific information and event activities should be documented for future communications activities and initiatives. ”

### Event promotion

Pre-event promotion enables organisers to announce the upcoming event over a period of time. This will allow participants or attendees an early opportunity to save-the-date as well as build some anticipation around the event. For example, pre-event promotions for a public sports event would entail creating buzz with marketing videos featuring the teams, social media promotions and radio and television spots.

Specifically, social media is an effective way to publicize and create an online community around the event . A comprehensive social media plan will determine the information to be published at every stage leading up to the event. In the case of a sports event, photos of the players with their track record or short game videos can be boosted on social media platforms.

## During-Event Activities

### Capturing the event

Specific information and event activities should be documented for future communications activities and initiatives. They include:

**Contact Details:** Names, phone numbers, organization and email addresses of attendees should be obtained from the event registration or sign-in sheets.

**Photography:** As captured in the action plan, the photographer should capture key event moments. These can be used for post event e-flyers, communiques, website and social media.

**Videography:** The videographer should include vital activities and participant testimonials that will be used for website content, videos and shared on social media.



“Press briefing is an opportunity to engage with the media, drive event messaging as well as address pertinent media inquiries that can influence media coverage.”

**Social live streaming:** This facilitates engagement with an online audience as well as boosts event awareness and interactive engagement.

**Testimonials:** Two-way communication is essential for successful event promotion. Obtaining participant and organiser feedback will serve as content for various promotion products.

**Question and answer session:** Depending on the type of event, interactive participant feedback is crucial. Here, organisers can address concerns, questions, as well as identify event gaps. Additionally, feedback can be used to develop FAQ content for website and communications products.

**Press briefing:** This is an opportunity to engage with the media, drive event messaging as well as address pertinent media inquiries that can influence media coverage.



## Post-Event Activities

This phase entails promoting event activities and outcomes with the following communications products:

### E-flyers

According to best practice, an e-flyers should be disseminated within 24 hours after the event. The content can include general event details, objectives, participants, organisers, outcomes with supporting photographs and organiser contact details (social media and website information). The e-flyer can be emailed to stakeholders and event participants in addition to social media and websites.

### Press release

The draft should be circulated within 24 hours of the event targeting all media stakeholders. The press release should include event photos, key highlights, and also include relevant website links.

*“The implementation of the event communications strategy must be executed in close coordination with the organisers and event planners.”*

## Communiqué

An event communiqué provides comprehensive details on the event for circulation to stakeholders and event attendees. Specifically, it includes:

- Objectives
- Highlights
- Brand visibility
- Speeches summary
- Key photos
- Links to photos
- Link to videos
- Link to presentations
- About the organisers and partners
- Social media handles
- Websites

At Credo Advisory, event communications is at the forefront of what we do. We recognize the role event communications plays in creating brand awareness or recognizing a critical milestone. Recently, at a client’s two-day technical workshop that provided prospective project developers with the requirements to participate in a tender, Credo first identified the communications goals based on event objectives. Second, it developed a communications action plan that synergized communications with event planning activities. Key event communications tasks included designing branded products (banners, backdrops, name tags, event programme, etc.) in line with the client’s corporate brand and event theme. During the event, photographs and video capturing the sights and sounds of the event were captured and later used to create visual and digital post-event creatives. As a result, over a period of three weeks, various communication products were disseminated to all client stakeholders and event attendees via social media, website and email.

## Conclusion

Effective event communication can positively impact event outcomes, strengthen brands and raise awareness on a particular issue. Strategies and action plans are required for seamless event implementation. The execution of an event communications strategy must be done in close coordination with the organisers and event planners. This thought piece reviewed key communications measures and initiatives that will facilitate successful event promotions from a pre-event, during-event and post event perspective.