

Communications Tactics and Tools: Overview

Tactic	Benefits	Considerations/Possible Issues	Cost-effective Tools and Tips
Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent base for sharing information about the organization, activities and contact information • Good for breaking news and announcements • Accessible 24/7 to everyone • Can have secure sections to provide information to members or to select groups • Excellent at building your brand if it is designed consistently with the rest of your brochures, reports etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be expensive for initial set-up. Good design and navigation are essential to make it work well • Need a website you can update easily yourself • Can be time-intensive if you have lots of information to load and update regularly • Does need promoting so people know how to find it • If you have an unattractive website, visitors may view your organization negatively • Need to make sure mission and content is clear • Make sure its donor friendly – do you have an easy way for people to donate to your scholarship fund online? 	<p>Inexpensive, customizable templates to build basic websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wordpress • Wix • Weebly • Webnode • Webs • Google Sites • Wild Apricot <p>More sophisticated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dot Net Nuke • Drupal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlist the help of a tech-savvy volunteer to help with your website. Many high school students must fulfill community service hours and may have knowledge of website creation and maintenance.
Online newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast and easy dispatch of news and information • Much cheaper than printing newsletters • Recipients can easily forward on to others who might be interested • Can manage mailing list easily through online databases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be viewed as spam if you don't seek permission from recipients to receive information in this way • Limited ability to use pictures or graphics as these can cause newsletter to be blocked or else take too long to download • Need to keep email lists up to date to be effective • Needs to be short and well written, preferably with list of contents at top to save readers' time • Have to print it out if you want to take it somewhere aside from your desk to read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma • Constant Contact • Mail Chimp • Mad Mimi • iContact
Printed newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can have longer shelf life than online newsletters because they sit around on desks and tables • Easier to take home and read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much longer production times with layout and printing involved • Much more expensive to produce including design costs, layout, printing, and postage 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great if you want to use lots of pictures and graphics • Excellent for in-depth articles, commentary and longer information pieces • Good for people who do not have computers, or have limited computer literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure you can keep your mailing list current to avoid wastage • Need to have sufficient resources to produce on a regular basis. 	
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effective (predominately free) way of reaching large numbers of people • Can engage members, supporters, and potential members and supporters • A platform for dialogue, sharing news, photos and videos, petitions and other information • Cheap advertising • Can be used for membership engagement and recruitment; fundraising; advocacy; and event promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is constantly changing so can be difficult to keep up • Privacy and security of personal information can be a concern • Have to update regularly (at least once a week to maintain presence and engage supporters) • Some tools are quite complex and can be difficult/daunting to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Twitter • Google + • LinkedIn • Youtube • Flickr • Pinterest • Consider starting with one or two tools, building an audience, then expand to other tools.
Media Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost-effective way of gaining publicity • Can gain excellent coverage across a variety of media if the news is strong enough • Can help you develop productive working relationships with key local journalists • Providing a backgrounder with your media release is a useful way of educating the journalist about your organisation and the issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need an up to date list of journalist and news sources in your area – send by email, or “tweet” at journalists • If you use a wire service, it can be very expensive • Need to ensure releases are well written and do have something ‘newsy’ rather than just information you want to distribute • Can’t control how the final story will appear or how the media may ‘twist’ the story to their own views or agenda • For controversial news, you will need to prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post your media release to your website/ and or blog • Share through social media networks like Facebook and Twitter – Tweet to journalists and politicians • Share with members through your newsletters

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		<p>for media enquiries and know how to answer the hard questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – preparing some questions and answers in advance is recommended • Still need to follow up on the release with a call to the journalist to ensure they received it, and to check if they have any queries 	
Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives you total control over the message, the timing and the branding • Often useful if you cannot get journalists to pay attention to you • You get to choose which paper, magazine (or radio/tv) you want 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be expensive • A poorly written or designed ad will not be noticed and will affect how you are perceived • May require the help of a professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student newspapers can be a cost effective space to advertise • Facebook ads are inexpensive and can reach a wide audience
Functions/Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good way of building relationships and getting key stakeholders together • Good way of informally networking and influencing views of others and seeking feedback • If managed well, can engender a lot of goodwill toward your organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be expensive to manage by the time you account for space, catering and any other associated costs • Need to ensure there is a compelling reason for invitees to attend – perhaps a major announcement, or a celebration (e.g. International Women’s Day) • Need to consider how to publicize the event (e.g. media advisory, Facebook, posters, email) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote your event on social media (particularly Facebook by setting up an “event”) • List your event in Community Newspaper calendars • Partner with a student group or other community organization to get the word out, and increase your potential of accessing free space or other sources of funding • Publicize event in other groups’/ organizations’ e-newsletters • Have materials (e.g. brochures) about CFUW available at the event
Tabling and Canvassing (e.g. having a table at a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great way to be visible in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers need to be knowledgeable about the Club’s activities, and how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You could consider creating a list of community events that

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university volunteer fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can reach new audiences you don't normally engage with (particularly if you table at an event with a broad audience) • A membership recruitment opportunity • Can help raise awareness about issues, for instance, if you're canvassing the community collecting signatures for a petition. • Another means of fundraising 	<p>to communicate effectively with the particular audience you're reaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have well designed communications materials like brochures available; this can be costly if you're handing out a lot of materials. • Can have a cost – some community events will charge money to organizations that want to have a table. However, if your Club helps organize the event, or volunteer some time/resources, they may waive the fee. 	<p>you think would be beneficial to have a presence at, then find out if they are allow organizational tables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think ahead of time about the audience you're going to be speaking to and what messages will resonate with them.
Brochures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great for providing all manner of information to your stakeholders, whether it be to do with new member Recruitment, explaining who you are and how you operate, or promoting a specific event • A great opportunity to build visibility for your organisation, but you need to ensure consistent design between all your brochures so that people begin to recognise them as coming from you, even without seeing your organisation's logo • You can have brochures inserted into magazines targeting your stakeholders, mailed out with another existing newsletter to save costs, or given out at events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you try and cram too much information into a brochure, it will lessen readability. Either take some copy out, or make the brochure bigger. • Bad design will hurt your image and the uptake of the brochure • Can be expensive to print • Make sure you get someone to proofread the copy very carefully before you have it printed. It can make you look unprofessional if you produce something full of mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Word has several templates you can use to create an attractive brochure • Take a look at other organizations brochures; what works? What doesn't work?