

Communications Campaign Plan Template

Organization Name

Date

[Use this template as a starting point—but don't get hung up on it. You may find that not all elements of the sample plan apply to your situation. Feel free to adapt it as needed. Combine sections, skip sections, or add your own.]

Campaign overview. Two or three sentences that summarize the essence of the campaign. Include your high-level objective, target audience, timeframe, and budget.

Campaign objective. A very clear description of what the campaign is trying to do. Are you trying to change attitudes (which ones, and by how much?), win a ballot initiative, create awareness of an issue?

Timeframe and approach. What are the major phases of your campaign and when will they run? For example, you might do six weeks of preliminary research, run a three month campaign, then do two weeks of post-campaign evaluation.

Target audience. Who exactly are you going to target? Be specific. Include geography, demographics, political affiliations, and attitudes on your issue (undecided, supportive?). If you can't define your target audience, what's your research plan for figuring it out (you can refer readers to the market research part of your communications plan for further details).

Messages. What are the two or three main ideas you want to communicate and how will you talk about them? Are these messages tested? If not, are you planning to test them? Who are your messengers? If you're not sure what your messages are, what's your research plan for figuring it out? Provide a brief summary here, then refer readers to the market research section for further details if needed.

Creative. Are you planning on using billboards, TV commercials, radio ads? Do you have rationale for your choices? Are you planning on doing any creative testing?

Market research. Are you planning to do a baseline poll? Target audience focus groups? Message testing? Creative testing? A pre- and post-market campaign poll? Summarize any proposed research here. Attach the more detailed research plan as a separate appendix if desired.

Media plan. What's your media budget? How and when are you planning to use this budget? The media plan should outline the media mix, vehicles, and schedule. Summarize the media plan in the body of your overall communications plan but attach the more detailed media schedule as an appendix. Your summary should touch on when you're planning to run your media, across what general types of media vehicles, how many target audience members you expect to reach, and how often you expect to reach them.

PR or earned media plan. Is earned media a big part of your campaign? If so, what's your strategy for going about this? Are you hiring a PR firm and what are you expecting them to deliver? Who are the media contacts for this campaign?

Campaign evaluation. How will you evaluate the success of your campaign? Are you planning on pre- and post-campaign polling?

Budget. Provide a high-level summary of the budget broken down by the major campaign components (e.g., any preliminary research or message development, creative development and testing, media buy, PR firm fees, pre- and post-campaign polling). Attach a more detailed budget as an appendix. The detailed budget should include line-item costs for all of the major campaign components.

Campaign schedule. Provide a detailed schedule with all of the major deadlines, from initial market research through creative development, through launch and evaluation of the campaign.