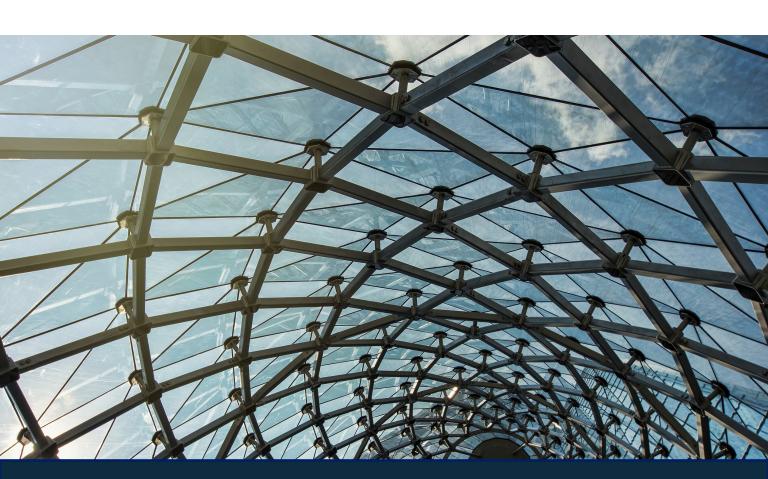# CBCP
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CHANNEL MANAGEMENT
Mastering the Multi-Channel Message

To unlock the greatest potential communications needs practical tools & precision execution

The last year demanded a proliferation of new internal communication channels, from high-volume video conferencing and virtual townhalls, to internally focused social media platforms.

While the internal communications landscape has changed, industry reports indicate that almost half of businesses are operating internal communications without strategic content and channel planning processes.
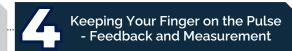
To unlock the greatest potential in this new workplace reality, internal communications teams need to evolve and translate planning (powered by a Communications Pulse Check and defined brand purpose), into the practical tools for channel management and precision execution.

Let's have a look at how to do this.

| **1** Start with a Channel Audit | **2** Channel Mapping | **3** Channel Management | **4** Keeping Your Finger on the Pulse - Feedback and Measurement |

Step 1. Start with a Channel Audit

Whether completed as part of your Internal Communications Pulse Check or independently, detailed mapping of the internal communications channels used within your organization, including those owned by other divisions, is a critical first step.

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A channel audit is assessed by key metrics, including:

- Message flow (vertical/horizontal, intra/extranet, one/two way);
- Frequency of use;
- Content classification; and
- Audience experience, access, and usage.

Internal and external communications are more closely linked than ever before, so it is also important to consider external, third-party platforms where employees have gathered to have independent conversations or are looking for information about the company.

This review of channels generates precision audience targeting, mitigates channel duplication, enables effective cost controls, and ultimately, it informs whether a channel should remain active, be refreshed, or carefully retired.

► Understand your Audiences

Particularly in large, complex or matrix structured organizations, your audience will have subgroups that share distinct characteristics from the whole - this will have a direct impact on how they access information, as well as their information needs.

There may be critical factors that determine how to engage, such as language, technology, education, or culture. These need to be identified, mapped, and managed.

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Step 2. Channel Mapping

Aligning audience groups with the correct channels ensures any barriers to engagement can be overcome (such as providing translated content or technology solutions).

It is important to remember the benefits of a multi-channel approach, as often a single channel will not suit all audience groups.

A comparative way to think of this is to consider how you consume information outside of work – more than likely it is a mix of social media, television, radio, internet, outdoor advertising, word-of-mouth etc.

For the message to effectively cut-through, a similar multi-channel approach needs to be considered for internal communications and modelling the communications flow by channel is a critical step in achieving message cut-through.

Step 3. Channel Management

With this clear view of your channels and audience groups, defining how the channels will be managed – frequency, ownership, use of spokespeople, etc. – creates a structure and clarity for how they can be consistently reached over the long term.

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Creating a practical workflow framework, aligned to the channel mapping, not only guides the internal communication function, but provides clarity to stakeholders and business partners, enables cross-function collaboration, coordinates campaign planning.

The framework create for effective channel management should be considered a 'living' document that is referred to with high frequency. It is the tool that translates strategic thinking and long-term goals, into the tactical daily activity of the team.

Channel management is the practical foundation for forward-thinking, successful strategic communications.

Step 4. Keeping Your Finger on the Pulse - Feedback and Measurement

Analytics and feedback can tell you a lot about the effectiveness of your channels. The audit and mapping process will highlight whether you have the right reporting processes in place to track and inform your planning process, and whether additional measures are required.

In addition to in-built metrics (e.g. views, click-throughs), qualitative data also adds value to reporting (e.g. survey results, comments, listening sessions).

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► **Putting the Plan in Place**

With the clarity that channel mapping provides, internal communicators can develop a forward-looking calendar of targeted and effective communications to support even the most complex of organizational objectives, including culture change and business transformation.

Taking the time to understand these internal audiences, and the right channels to reach them, is critical to getting the right message, to the right team, at the right time. Effective channel management delivers clarity, in complexity.

CBCP is here to help you. Contact us to review your communications effectiveness and provide a range of recommendations to set you up for success.

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