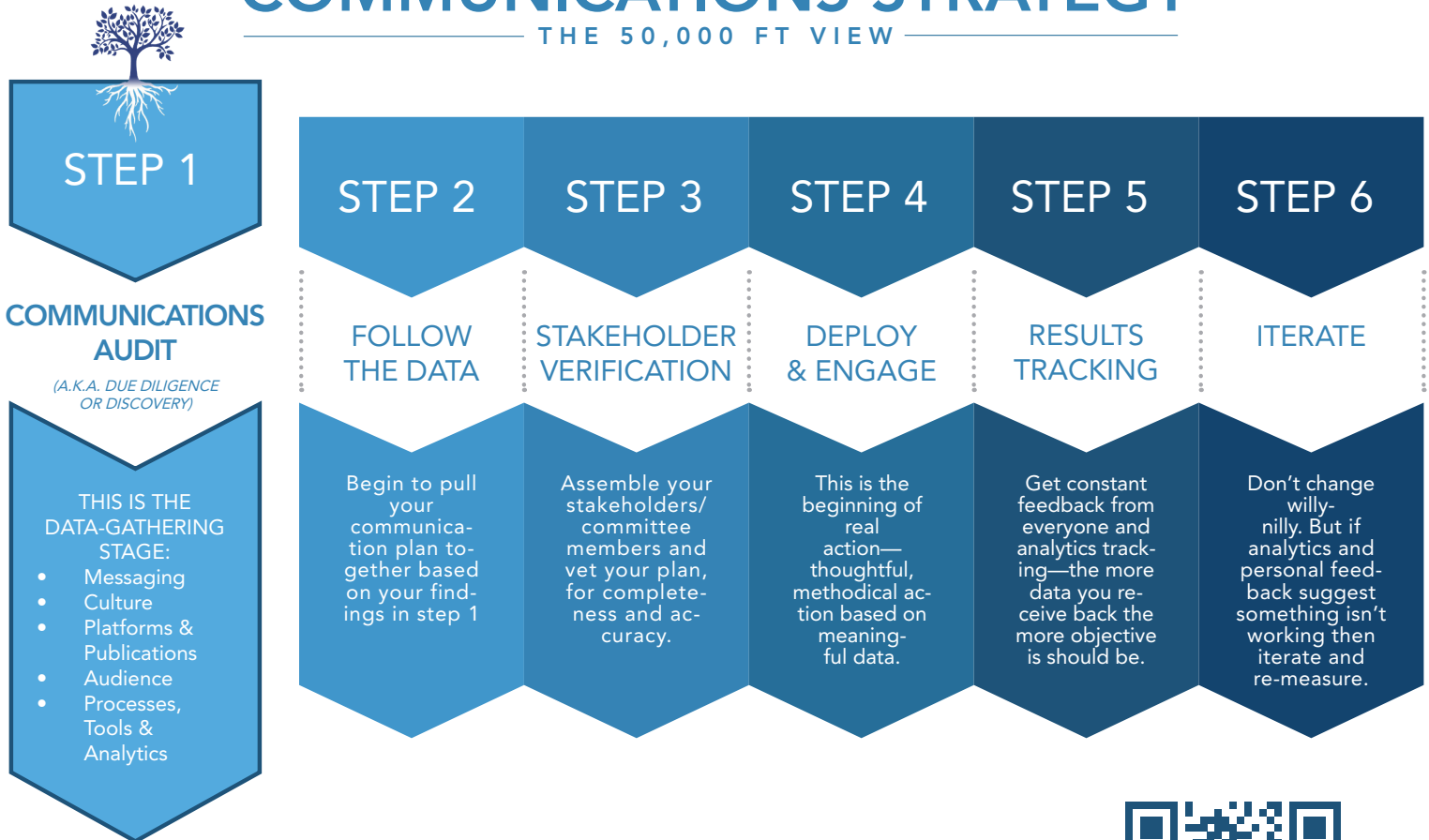


# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

THE 50,000 FT VIEW



**IN GENERAL**, before one can communicate, one must...

- know who they are
- know their messages
- be passionate
- be able to articulate why someone should care about their message

## WHY AN AUDIT?

The purpose of the audit is to strategize and build a plan that details out the big facts of who you are, who your demographic(s) are, what your message(s), and identify the tools needed for the job.

It should provide answers to the timeless questions: who, what, when, where, and how.

*Going a little deeper...*

**WHAT DOES AN AUDIT COVER?** The Communications audit is the information and data-gathering stage of a larger process, the communications STRATEGY & PLAN. At a macro level that plan should involve the following steps:

### 1. THE COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT (a.k.a. Due Diligence or Discovery)

This is the audit--the research stage. No real action or decision happens during this period. This is data-gathering. This is the time to answer important discovery questions like:



*Aim mobile camera to visit  
presentations notes online*

- **MESSAGING**

- What does your church do well?
- What are we saying? (messaging)
- Why should others care about what is being said?
- What resonates with you? Are they the same things that move the audience?
- What excites them?

- **CULTURE** (Describe US)

- As Christians & Episcopalians
- How would you describe the prevailing culture?
- Does culture inform your communication efforts and style?
- What is your parish/diocese core values? How do they impact communications?
- Who are we spiritually?
- Who are we philanthropically? (Engagement of time and/or money)

- **PLATFORMS & PUBLICATIONS**

What forms of communication exist?

Are all those form types effective? Are they each getting traction, resonating with your demographics?

- People as a communications channel (word of mouth/social sharing)
- Digital
- Print
- Support
- Mediums

- **AUDIENCE** (Demographics)

- Demographic study of the audience
- Internal
  - Regulars
  - Occasionals
  - Frequenters
  - Newcomers
- External
  - Surrounding community/Diocese
  - Needs, Wants and Concerns
  - Preferred Communication Channels/Mediums
  - Do they prefer Internet? Newspaper? Radio?

- **PROCESSES, TOOLS & ANALYTICS**

What was done before? Did it work?

What tools are needed to support the communication effort?

- What best practices are there surrounding the channels pursued?
- Have I met with all of the people I should?
- Editorial Calendars
- Social Media (FB, FB events, Instagram, Twitter)
- Email Marketing
- Analytics (Google etc.)
  - As efforts are measured, when do you adjust?
  - Note: Analytics simply measure the engagement--they are not the engagement.
- SWOT as a tool
- *Starter toolkit is below*

## **2. FOLLOW THE DATA** (OF THE AUDIT)

Begin to pull your communication plan together based on your findings in step 1

## **3. STAKEHOLDER VERIFICATION**

Assemble your stakeholders/committee members and vet your plan, for completeness and accuracy.

#### 4. DEPLOY & ENGAGE

This is the beginning of real action--thoughtful, methodical action based on meaningful data.

#### 5. RESULTS TRACKING

Get constant feedback from everyone--the more data you receive back the more objective it should be. For online efforts check google and social analytics to see what the real story is with how people are engaging you and the subsequent traction level

#### 6. ITERATE

Don't change willy-nilly. But if analytics and personal feedback suggest something isn't working then iterate and re-measure.

### SWOT ANALYSIS



A SWOT analysis is just one tool, a templated exercise designed to coach you through important perspectives and questions to help exhaustively answer many questions like the ones above.

It's important to note that this is not usually a siloed exercise, but one that connects you with colleagues, leaders, parishioners, vestry and others. It is the gathering of data from different perspectives that offers the greatest insight in to the informed audit.

These are at first blush very general questions, but you consider applying them to topics like all the individual forms of communications, design quality, writing style, is the work compelling and engaging, do all the forms

resonate with the demographics--suddenly it will become clear that this is a formidable exercise covering many facets and perspectives.

**Strength:** What works?

**Weakness:** What needs to change?

**Opportunities:** Opportunities you can leverage to improve communications with target demographics

# STARTER TOOL KIT

This compilation is in no way intended to be exhaustive, as much as to perhaps be a starting point for finding tools that can maximize and support your communications efforts.

**Threat:** what threatens your communications effectiveness?

## EDUCATION

- Episcopal Communicators List Serve  
The [ec-talk] list serve is a powerful tool connecting one to a national network of colleagues and peers. They are actively and daily asking questions and collaborating on situations that arise--very educational and also good for networking
- Lisa's Blog
- Kyle Oliver
- Books: "Speaking Faithfully" by Jim Naughton & Rebecca Wilson (2012)

## DESIGN

- Canva (non profit program)
- Adobe
- Adobe Non-Profit sellers: Tech Soup, Genesis Technologies
- Shift worship

## STOCK PHOTO

- TEC Stock
- The new ECUSA solution. In Beta--go team!
- Pexels
- Dreamstime
- Shift worship
- HUBSPOT: 20 of the Best Free Stock Photo Sites to Use in 2020

## STOCK AUDIO

- Shift Worship
- Audio Blocks
- HUBSPOT: 9 Royalty-Free Music Sites to Help You Make the Perfect Video Soundtrack

## STOCK VIDEO

- Shift Worship
- Story Blocks (blog)
- Pond5
- BEST ADVISOR: Best Stock Video Sites

## PROOFING

- Grammarly
- AP Stylebook
- Hemingway (website, desktop & mobile app)

## EMAIL

- Mailchimp
- Vertical Response
- Constant Contact
- Litmus
- Active Campaign (20% nonprofit discount)

- PC MAG: The Best Email Marketing Software for 2020

## SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

- Hootsuite
- Agorapulse
- Sprout Social
- Buffer (50% nonprofit discount)
- PERSONIFY: The 10 Best Social Media Tools for Nonprofits That Save Time and Money (2018 Update)
- BLOGGING WIZARD: 8 Best Social Media Management Tools To Grow Your Social Presence
- BUFFER: The 25 Top Social Media Management Tools for Businesses of All Sizes

## FORMS

- Google Forms
- Wufoo
- Signup Genius

## DIRECT MAIL

- overnightprints.com  
Overnight Prints is definitely worth it once you progress to the gold and platinum user levels.
- Local Mailhouse: do a web search for local mailhouses and call them up--tell them the type projects you do, and develop a relationship with one. It will pay dividends!

## SMS TEXT MARKETING

- EZ Texting
- Remind (some features free)
- Best SMS Marketing Software 2020

## WEBSITES

- Membership Vision
- Wordpress

## ANALYTICS

- Google Analytics
- Cyfe (analytics dashboard)
- HUBSPOT: The 11 Best Form Analytics Tools of 2020

## PODCASTING

- PODCAST INSIGHTS: 31 Best Podcast Hosting Sites (Top 6 Have Free Offers)
- BUZZSPROUT: How to Start a Podcast

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