

STAFF REPORT

TO: Communications Subcommittee
FROM: Communications Adviser
DATE: 14 January 2011
REFERENCE: C797
SUBJECT: Communications Activity Report – RFN11-01-01

This report covers November and December 2010 communications activity.

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

November and December are traditionally very busy times for Council's communications. The A&P show season is in full swing, there are a number of Council organised or sponsored events, Updates need preparing in advance of the holiday period for all newspapers, all Council's Community Recreation publications final issues for the year are produced as well as 'Hummin' in Tasman'. Add to this mix the extreme weather events the District has experienced, Amalgamation hearings, Annual Report communications, Newslines and 'business as usual' communications, which has made this year particularly busy.

A great deal of media focus was evident post-Christmas due to the flooding events beginning 28 December. While the majority of information was released under the Civil Defence Emergency Management banner, much of the subsequent media attention has been on the recovery process led by the Council in the affected areas, particularly Aorere and Murchison.

On the whole, while the information and the management of the process throughout these areas have been viewed positively, the events have identified areas for improvement. The improvements will be incorporated into the debrief process and picked up by the communications function where possible.

The Council has been, and will be, represented at four A&P shows this season with the Richmond and Motueka shows occurring before Christmas with the Takaka and Murchison shows in January and February respectively. This season we have taken the active step of ensuring the Council presence is staffed with Council employees and focusing on initiatives occurring specifically in the host areas. This, in addition to live links back to the Council's systems, has made interaction at the shows more valuable and has often corrected information regarding District-wide and local projects and initiatives.

PUBLICATIONS:

Mudcakes and Roses

The latest issue for 2010 (December cover date) has been produced, printed and distributed. The first issue for 2011 will have a cover date of 1 February.

In the December 2010 issue a reader survey/feedback form was included to gain some insight into what 'Mudcakes & Roses' readers liked about the publication, its format, what they thought could be improved and the delivery method (see appendix 1 for a copy of the survey). This survey was also distributed at the recent Positive Aging Expo.

Newsline - The Mag

Two issues of Newsline were produced in November and two in December. All were 12 pages except the 10 December issue, which was a 20 page 'special' incorporating an Annual Report Summary and relevant information from the 2010 Annual Residents Survey.

All issues of Newsline were produced and delivered on time with no reported issues.

The first Newsline of 2011 has a cover date of the 28 January 2011 and production will continue on a fortnightly basis.

The review of Newsline, reported last meeting, identified a need to provide an avenue for settlement specific information and news. To this end a request to all community associations and boards was sent out for the Communications Adviser to present at the next meeting. The presentation discusses the outcome of the survey and the proposal and invitation for the respective associations and boards to provide information to be printed within specific pages of Newsline.

So far the associations of Brightwater and Marahau have been visited and Tasman will occur in February. The first edition containing the association/board specific information will be produced in early February.

Boredom Busters

The 'Summer' issue of Boredom Busters was produced and distributed prior to the end of the school term and continues to grow in popularity with both event organisers (who, through OSCAR, are able to advertise their holiday programmes in the centre eight pages) and the readers (using competition entries as a bench mark).

For 2011 Dry Crust has been working with Mondo Travel in Richmond to offer a family holiday for four to the Gold Coast as a prize package. This has now all been signed off and the competition will begin in the March issue and run for two issues. The colouring competitions, sponsored by Village Cycle, will continue to run throughout 2011.

Hummin' update

Distribution of Hummin' in Tasman (25,000 copies) began in November and continued throughout December. Previous reports to the Communications Subcommittee detail the process behind content creation for the publication. As at the 12 January 2010 there were 3,500 copies of Hummin' still to be distributed. With the Golden Bay A&P show on the 15 January 2011 and continuing high demand for the publication from I-Sites, Richmond Mall and other high traffic sites it is expected that all copies of the publication will have been picked up by mid February.

MEDIA RELEASES:

Media releases sent out during November/December were:

Dry Weather Taskforce x 2
Annual Report 2010
Aquaculture law changes
Higgs Reserve damage
Tasman District Council amalgamation submission
Tiny Tots & Teddies Party
Audit NZ report
Carols by candlelight
Lee Valley Dam
Mapua Wharf pump station
Tasman Skatepark Tour
Council presents to Local Government Commission
Takaka firefighting water supply contract
Council increase presence in Golden Bay
Heavy rain warning 21-12-10
Heavy rain warning 27-12-10
Aorere River at record high
Rainfall easing 28-12-10
Flooding recedes 28-12-10
Clean up begins 28-12-10
Aorere Experiences 108 year flood
Recovery and Restoration now the focus
Emergency River Work commences
Council and communities work together
Light to medium rainfall forecast
Pohara boil water notice lifted
Aorere river repair work passes test

Please see the accompanying media report for further information/analysis

TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL MEDIA MONITORING REPORT NOVEMBER 2010

Background

Dry Crust Communications monitors local print media on behalf of Tasman District Council. The following media are monitored:

- Live Nelson
- The Nelson Mail
- The Leader (3 editions - Nelson, Motueka-Golden Bay News and Richmond/Waimea)
- The Guardian
- The Waimea Weekly
- GB Weekly
- Nelson Marlborough Farming
- Nelson Weekly

* Copies of The Nelson Weekly were not delivered for November.

News stories and letters that feature the words 'Tasman District Council' or those that clearly relate to Tasman District Council events or projects are clipped, scanned and measured and evaluated as either positive, negative or neutral. A dollar value is assigned to the story based on its size.

Dry Crust Communications also subscribes to the Google Alerts service which provides a report on online activity for the words 'Tasman District Council.'

Evaluation of Costs

Each story that runs in the print media is allocated a cost based on what the article would cost to purchase if buying the equivalent in advertising space.

Advertising space is calculated as height (cm) x width (columns) x \$(rate). For example a story that was 10 cm high x 2 columns wide in The Nelson Mail would be calculated as:

$$10 \times 2 = 20 \text{ cm (approx size)}$$
$$20 \times \$4.15 \text{ (advertising rate)} = \$83.00$$

Notes

- 1 Costs are not allocated against stories that run in Live Nelson.
- 2 This is not a perfect measure. Advertising sizes are fixed and are based on column centimetre widths. However editorial stories can be almost any size and do not adhere to the column centimetre widths. Therefore the closest approximate measure of column centimetre width has been used.
- 3 Costs are not allocated against online stories or activity.
- 4 Where stories are primarily about an unrelated topic and include only an incidental mention of Council, the size and value is calculated as zero so as not to skew the results.
- 5 The GB Weekly has a different way of charging for ads, but we calculate based on an average column/centimetre rate of \$2.37 (the same rate as for The Mot GB News)

Summary Statistics for November 2010

Story Tone

Tasman District Council featured in 100 stories in monitored publications during November. This was up slightly on the October total of 92.

35 stories were evaluated as positive (Oct 29)
47 stories were evaluated as neutral (Oct 47)
18 stories were evaluated as negative (Oct 16)

The number of positive stories was up against the previous month. A large number of the positive news stories during November related to the Big Beach Clean Up which Tasman District Council was involved in sponsoring. This event generated 1,163 column centimetres of coverage – all of it positive.

Publications

The number of stories each publication ran that mentioned Council during November 2010 were as follows. October's figures are shown in brackets alongside.

GB Weekly 19 (Oct 15)
Live Nelson – 1 (Oct 1)
Motueka Golden Bay News – 7 (Oct 10)
Nelson Mail – 43 (Oct 51)
NM Farming – 2 (Oct 0)
Nelson Weekly – unknown (unknown)
The Guardian – 7 (unknown)
The Leader (Nelson) - 3 (Oct 0)
The Leader RMD/Waimea - 7 (Oct 7)
Waimea Weekly – 11 (Oct 8)

This is unsurprising as The Nelson Mail is a daily, whereas all of the other publications are weekly or fortnightly.

Publication & Tone

Of the 18 stories evaluated as negative, 10 ran in The Nelson Mail and many of the negative stories in all publications were letters to the editor.

Of the 35 stories evaluated as positive, these were quite evenly split between the different publications.

The Nelson Mail ran the same amount of positive as negative stories this month. This was the same in October.

Front Page Stories

Front page stories often have more impact as they are often larger and more widely read. During November there were 11 front page stories about Council, this was the same as for October.

5 - Nelson Mail (Roading firm to reduce staffing; Amalgamation protest signed by 3510; Petition underlines alarm at sewage plant upgrade; drought risk up; Auckland reform is tip of iceberg)
1 - MG News (Clean up nets 10.5 tonnes)
1 - The Leader NN (Working bee for whole region)
1 - The Leader RMD (Big beach clean up impresses)
1 - The Guardian (Upgraded Rec centre formally opened)
1 - The Leader NN (Working bee for whole region)
2 - Waimea Weekly (Judgement day is nigh for lodge; Miccio ignores pleas, is hell-bent on study)

All of these were positive or neutral.

Topics & Tone

The stories that caused the majority of negative press for Council during November 2010 were: CBD roadworks in Golden Bay, Village Market in Golden Bay, motocross noise, amalgamation, Council's internet policy and Maitai Lodge.

As noted above, the Big Beach Clean Up generated a large amount of positive coverage across almost all the publications. Other issues generating positive coverage were Motueka Recreation Centre upgrade, Environment Awards, Best town competition, Motueka Community Board dropping Environment Court appeal and the positive outcome to CBD roadworks issue in Takaka.

A lot of the neutral coverage related to amalgamation. It was also interesting to note that the coverage of the Maitai Lodge issue became more neutral and less negative during November. Even potentially contentious issues such as Takaka sewerage, Higgs Reserve damage and Mapua/Ruby Bay seawall were treated in a balanced manner, with both sides of the issue being reported.

Value

The approximate 'value' of the stories based on their size is:

Negative: \$4,676.44

Positive: \$10,839.84

**Overall total (value of positive coverage less negative coverage):
+ \$6,163.40**

This was up on the previous month's overall total of \$5,084 (although October figures were missing The Guardian articles)

TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL MEDIA MONITORING REPORT DECEMBER 2010

The December 2010 media report is still being collated (delay due to undelivered papers over the holiday period). The December 2010 media monitoring report will be delivered to the Communications Subcommittee at the next Communications Subcommittee meeting.

A&P SHOWS 2010/11

To date Council has had a presence at two A&P shows (Nelson and Motueka) with Takaka scheduled for the 15 January 2011 and Murchison for the 19 February 2011. Public response to Council's stand has been neutral/positive. The stand again focuses on 'What makes Tasman great' as well as giving specific project outlines for the relevant communities i.e. Richmond CBD redevelopment for the Nelson show. A survey is being undertaken at each show to get some low level feedback from visitors. 'Hummin' in Tasman' is being distributed at each show with approx 1,000 copies handed out at Nelson and 400 at Motueka. The A&P shows continue to provide a very relaxed way for Council to interact with the community and to help address ratepayers and residents concerns on specific local topics. A full A&P show report will be included in the next Communications Subcommittee report.

CURRENT WORK

See attached Work In Progress report (Appendix 2).

RECOMMENDATION

That the Communications Subcommittee receives the Communications Activity Report RFN11-01-01.

Chris Choat
Communications Advisor

Appendix 1: MUDCAKES & ROSES SURVEY 2010

The results as at the 15 December 2010 are below (please note - we have continued to receive survey responses and will do a final summary for the next Communications Subcommittee meeting):

A total of 49 responses were received. Of these, 17 came from the 2010 Positive Ageing Expo while the remainder came from a survey printed in the December 2010 issue of the magazine.

Number of respondents - 49

* (Five survey respondents at the Positive Ageing expo were people who hadn't seen Mudcakes previously and just filled it out to become subscribers. They did not fill out the whole survey)

1 District and Age Bracket

Of those who responded to the survey:

- 22 were from Nelson
- 22 were from Tasman

In terms of ages

- 2 respondents did not answer
- 1 respondent was aged under 50
- 5 were aged 50 – 59
- 7 were aged 60 – 69
- 18 were aged 70 – 79
- 9 were aged 80 – 89
- 2 were aged 90 or over

2 In terms of subscriptions

- 19 were non subscribers
- 5 did not answer or weren't clear what it meant
- 19 were subscribers

3 In terms of readership

- 1 was an occasional reader
- 6 did not respond
- 37 were regular readers

4 In terms of likes and suggestions for improvements, the responses were as follows:

Likes

- Positive outlook & personal stories
- Interesting articles
- Everything
- Diary of what's available in the wider district, topical write ups, covers people and doings in wider district.
- The interesting, informative articles
- It's a great read with lots of good local info and funny snippets

- The individual stories and events calendar
- People doing things not considered 'age appropriate'
- Crossword
- Good sized print

Suggestions for improvements

- More of the same!
- I did prefer the old format
- Writers names for each story
- Repeat the scam advice and a story on road marking changes
- Have some stories of really elderly and feature service groups
- Add other puzzles e.g. word searches, mazes, jokes, spot the difference
- Gardening tips
- Antique information giving dollar value
- Add a recipe section, Sudoku, finding things for seniors that don't cost money

The suggestions for improvements that came up the most often were: increasing the number of puzzles, gardening tips and free or low cost things for people to do. Many readers also noted that they thought the publication was great as it was.

5 In response to questions about the events guide and recreation and service directory and how effective they had found it:

When asked if they had used it to find an event or club:

- 6 did not respond
- 7 said no
- 31 said yes

Those who said they had used the events or service directory were asked how effective they'd found it and any suggestions for improvements, the comments were as follows:

- Good
- Did not know anything about an event until I read the magazine & would like more information of other events.
- Encouraged me to get out
- Very good, you are doing fine.
- Put me in touch with a new activity and made new friends
- OK, but the information about contacts is sometimes out of date
- Very useful, this info cannot be found in other places
- I found what I was looking for but it was too expensive to join for a pensioner. The clubs should state their fees.
- Discovered several events which I didn't know existed
- I know of the Stoke Seniors Club and still had difficulty in finding what they are doing on the list
- Just check that the phone numbers are relevant
- Swim – Don Pepperell – club now disbanded due to lack of support
- Ask clubs to supply two phone numbers to cover change of staff

6 In terms of whether they had ever used it to promote an event or club, the following responses were received:

- 29 said no
- 11 did not reply
- 4 said yes

The people who said yes all noted that it was effective. Suggestions offered for improving the directory included:

- 'There is a problem with changes to contact people changing. So not necessarily secretary but maybe the person needs to be contactable all the time.' (This was mentioned several times by respondents)
- Could you adopt a school and get them to check contact details, or several schools
- I would like a list of deadlines
- Perhaps email an update return at the start of the year

7 In response to the question about the amount of advertising,

- 9 did not respond
- 35 said it was 'about right'
- No-one said there was 'too much'

8 In terms of computer use and internet access, the following responses were received

- 5 did not respond to any of the questions about computer use and internet access
- 11 said they did not have a home computer
- 11 said they did not have internet access
- 28 said they had a home computer
- 25 said they had internet access
- 21 said they were regular computer users
- 8 said they had a Facebook account (although one noted they did not use it)
- 31 said they did not have a Facebook account

9 In terms of whether the format of the magazine should change:

- 6 did not respond
- 36 said it should stay in its current hardcopy printed format
- 3 said it should stay in its current format but also become an e-newsletter and a website!
- 2 said it should stay in its current format but also become a website
- 1 said it should become a website

10 Under the free comments section:

Other comments were as follows:

- Please keep it going as it is
- Some people may be happy to go on an email list. This would save paper and postage delivery for you.

- This publication does not interest me at all but if it continues, it should remain in its current format for those who like it and do not use a computer. I am going to ask to have my name removed from the circulation list and thus save a little of my rates
- Who is it aimed at? The older 80+ or the younger? Would it be a challenge to do research on how many have a computer and the means to bring it up?
- It's relaxing to sit and read this magazine – I wouldn't bother if it was email
- Great little publication – please do not put on email (this was repeated several times)
- While I like the current printed format, it would save dollars to put it on email
- Older people tend to think about the future and what comes after death. My suggestion is for some input in this magazine for spiritual help from a Christian
- I like the newsletter but can't afford to pay a subscription, so getting it free through the mail is wonderful for me
- I enjoy my computer but would miss your well written magazine. As for adverts, well you need some revenue so good luck, we are lucky to get it. Many older folk don't use computers
- Unfortunately my vision is limited but good to have on hand to send to any one of my many prison penpals
- Please remember those who cannot afford the home computer will miss out if it goes to email
- I am truly grateful – sometimes I cut things out for my scrapbook
- Could there be a space for updating addresses?

Some suggestions on future stories and also points of grammar were noted in this section.

General Recommendations based on survey results:

- Add info to the Events & Service Directory about how people can update their details (maybe include a form once a year?)
- Consider adding a regular gardening column
- Consider adding a regular antique column
- Consider adding additional puzzles –e.g. sudoku, code cracker
- Consider adding reader recipe
- Keep with printed format, but could look at offering e-newsletter or website option as well
- Add info on how people can update their address details

Story suggestions:

- Regular updates on scams
- Run regular stories on free and low cost activities
- Some stories on the "real elderly" – 80+
- Story on legal info e.g. dealing with door to door salespeople
- Feature one group from the service provider directory each time
- Story on road marking & road rule changes
- Story on unusual hobbies
- Ask the elderly about the No 2 bus!
- Motueka Secret cyclists – John Hope 528 7764
- Motueka U3A and the wide range of courses on offer – contact Malcolm Garrett 528 7484

Appendix 2 - WORK IN PROGRESS AS AT 12 JANUARY 2011

7013 Your Guide to Refuse in Tasman
7542 Newslines 26 January 2011 Issue #243
7543 Newslines 9 February 2011 Issue #244
7476 Mudcakes & Roses Jan/Feb 2011 #64
7250 Facility Branding - Motueka Rec Centre
7455 Sheep Dip Factsheets Template
7428 Takaka A&P Show Jan 2011
7429 Murchison A&P Show Feb 2011
6843 Conditions of Permit Signs
5173 Native Restoration Manual
6127 TDC Brand Manual
6652 Tasman Collection - order fulfilment