CORPORATE *Communications*

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012

June 2013

Introduction

The City of Guelph's Corporate Communications Department provides strategic communications services aligned with the City's values of integrity, excellence and wellness that enable the City to meet its business and service goals by:

- Supporting and encouraging an engaged community that participates in the public involvement process and recognizes its role in addressing issues and contributing to municipal policy and solutions
- Establishing and building on mutually beneficial, trustworthy relationships with stakeholders
- Enhancing staff's capacity to anticipate and respond to issues effectively
- Improving the quality of internal communications

The 2012 Communications Annual Report is the department's second performance report, though it is the first time the department is reporting on performance in this format.

This year's report has been divided into the following four sections:

Section 1: Key Initiative Summary (2012)
A summary of the department's key initiatives throughout the year. This section expands on the 2012 accomplishments for the department as reported in the 2013 Operating Budget submission.

Section 2: Communications Dashboard
A visual interpretation of the data analysis, trends and targets.

Section 3: Performance Analysis Overview
This section provides further context, detail and analysis regarding the performance measures reported in the dashboard and scorecard. This section also looks at external trends in corporate communication and public relations that are either having an impact or are expected to impact the way we provide service in the coming years.

Section 4: 2013 and Beyond
This section includes a brief overview of Corporate Communications' 2013 work plan.

Section 5: Data tables
This section includes data tables to support the analysis in Section 3.

Section 1: Key Initiative Summary

Issues Management

Issues management moved to the forefront of the department's focus in 2012. Corporate Communications led the development of an issues management framework for the organization. The department was instrumental in helping the organization improve stakeholder relationships by fostering dialogue that mitigates conflict and leads to win/win resolutions.

Strategic Communications Management

The department developed several communications plans for corporate and departmental initiatives including Guelph's Employee Engagement Survey, the Corporate Technology Strategic Plan, Internal Audits, the Outdoor Water Use By-law review, and more.

Corporate publications

The department researched, wrote, edited, and designed several corporate publications for print and online production. Some of the City's 2012 publications are:

- We're making a difference together: a community and financial report
- 2013 City budgets, proposed and approved versions: tax-supported operating, capital, enterprise, local boards and shared services
- Guelph Community Guide. Two editions
- City Holler employee newsletter. Six editions
- 2013 Conservation Calendar. Delivered to 45,000 homes
- Guelph Wellington Emergency Medical Services Community Report

Public opinion and best practices research
Measuring waste cart awareness

Corporate Communications and Solid Waste Resources worked with an independent research firm to develop a telephone survey to measure residents' awareness of the waste cart program prior to the first rollout. The findings informed the City's well-received waste carts communications and customer service practices.

External communications
Give Waste a New Life Campaign

Corporate Communications and Solid Waste Resources developed an award-winning community education program that supports the transition to a cart-based waste collection system designed to increase Guelph's waste diversion, and reduce the City's operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

Waste diversion education centre

Event planning and promotion of the City's first interactive education centre for waste diversion and minimization were led by Corporate Communications. *The Guelph Mercury, Guelph Tribune* and *The Guelph Review* each reported on the successful grand opening.

Since then, Solid Waste Resources has provided tours to more than 150 participants from local community and school groups, and the centre's dedicated web page had 597 page views between May and December, 2012.

Web and Social Media
In aid of improving the quality of the City's key stakeholder relationships, the Corporate Communications department highlights the following web and social media statistics for 2012:

- 38,000 weekly visits to guelph.ca
- 6,370 followers on Twitter
- 3,000 fans on Facebook
- 45,750 Facebook impressions per month

Corporate advertising
The department planned, copywrote, designed and placed more than 750 City News ads and public notices.

Employee communications
An internal communications plan helped the City achieve 77 per cent participation in the employee engagement survey; two per cent higher than the participation rate of Canada's best employers.

Media Relations
As part of the City's efforts to make information about City business available to stakeholders, Corporate Communications wrote and distributed 112 news releases, media advisories and information bulletins, and garnered more than 1,069 local news articles in 2012.
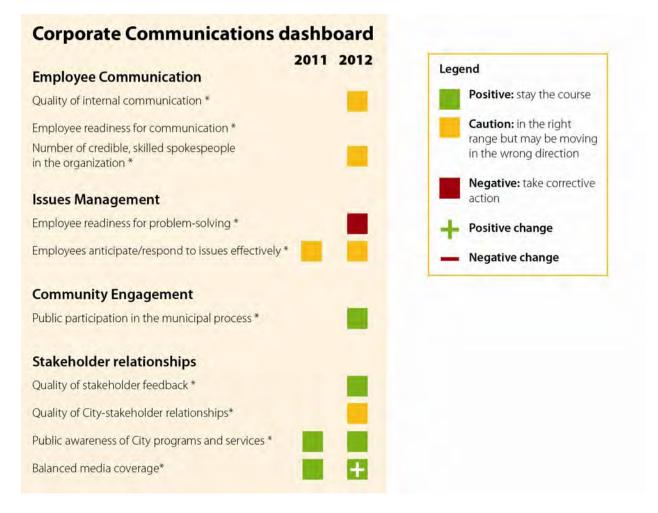
Section 2: Corporate Communications Dashboard

Below is the Corporate Communications dashboard. Key performance indicators have been identified to illustrate performance and progress towards overarching goals of *The City of Guelph Communications Plan: A journey towards communication excellence*.

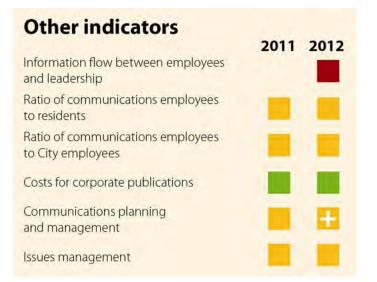Three colours represent thresholds for performance, as follows:

Green indicates the department is reporting metrics or has anecdotal information to show it meets or exceeds the demands of the organization and the City's stakeholders. Yellow indicates the department is reporting metrics or has anecdotal information to show it meets demands but improvement is required. Red indicates the department is reporting metrics or has anecdotal information to show it does not meet organizational demands and requires immediate action.

Corporate Communications dashboard

	2011	2012
Employee Communication		
Quality of internal communication *		🟧
Employee readiness for communication *		
Number of credible, skilled spokespeople in the organization *		🟧
Issues Management		
Employee readiness for problem-solving *		🟥
Employees anticipate/respond to issues effectively *	🟧	🟧
Community Engagement		
Public participation in the municipal process *		🟩
Stakeholder relationships		
Quality of stakeholder feedback *		🟩
Quality of City-stakeholder relationships*		🟧
Public awareness of City programs and services *	🟩	🟩
Balanced media coverage*	🟩	🟩 +

Legend

🟩 **Positive:** stay the course

🟧 **Caution:** in the right range but may be moving in the wrong direction

🟥 **Negative:** take corrective action

➕ Positive change

➖ Negative change

* These performance indicators have been chosen because they best measure the success of the goals of *The City of Guelph Communications Plan*. In several cases however, the City lacks the ability – at present – to measure progress vis-à-vis these indicators. Work is underway to establish baselines for these areas. The performance indicators in the dashboard are those Corporate Communications will measure moving forward.

Though the department lacks data for many of its KPIs at present, other meaningful metrics are presented below and provide a snapshot of how the department is performing in relation to the needs and expectations of the organization, and the City's stakeholders.

Other indicators

	2011	2012
Information flow between employees and leadership		🟥
Ratio of communications employees to residents	🟨	🟨
Ratio of communications employees to City employees	🟨	🟨
Costs for corporate publications	🟩	🟩
Communications planning and management	🟨	🟨✚
Issues management	🟨	🟨

Section 3: Performance Analysis Overview

Media Analysis

The media analysis project shows us how the City of Guelph is represented in the media and—in turn—to its stakeholders. The project was also intended to compare coverage from 2011 and 2012.

The City used the industry standard Media Relations Rating Points (MRRP) – a media measurement tool endorsed by the Canadian Public Relations Society. The City analyzed media coverage for effectiveness and value using quantitative (e.g., number of readers/listeners/viewers) and qualitative (e.g., tone, quality ratings) measures.

During the measurement period, the City analyzed 1,053 media stories from 25 media outlets including online dailies, online community newspapers, blogs, radio and television.

The analysis reveals:

- six out of ten stories are balanced; three in ten are positive; and one in ten is negative.
- City spokespeople are quoted in 56% of articles
- key message pull-through is present 59% of the time.
- the City's media relations activities reached an audience of 64,570,636 readers, listeners and viewers.

Findings show greater opportunity exists for City staff to speak to media on topical issues; key messages to include calls to action; and coverage that includes key messages.

From the analysis, staff have identified a number of considerations and recommendations that are helping improve the way we work with the media to connect with stakeholders.

Minor deviations (one to two percent) are apparent when the coverage from 2011 is compared to that of 2012. In general however the results are consistent.

Findings will be used to inform the City's media relations strategy and are informing the City's media relations practices.

Information flow between employees and leadership

2012 employee engagement data shows a need for the City of Guelph to place greater focus on internal communications. Effective employee communications is essential in improving stakeholder relationships and delivering effective programs that help achieve organizational goals.

When asked whether essential information flows effectively from executive and senior managers to employees, only 20% agreed that it did. 40% of employees either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 40% either slightly agreed or slightly disagreed

When asked whether essential information flows effectively from employees to senior and executive managers, only 20% agreed. 35% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 45% either slightly agreed or slightly disagreed.

A relationship measurement tool has been developed and can be applied to help the City of Guelph establish a baseline from which to measure employee communications. Staff recommend the tool be deployed in 2014. An audit of the communications function—to be conducted in 2013—will also yield findings to help inform the employee communication baseline.

The terms 'internal communications' and 'employee communications' are synonymous.

Internal design costs versus outsourcing

The Corporate Communications department is providing service areas with good value for money in the area of graphic design, when compared with the cost to deliver the same service using an external designer.

A cost comparison to design the weekly City News pages—the City's weekly source of City information and updates in print format—shows outsourcing would cost *more than twice the amount* of in-house design[1].

Likewise, the cost to produce the *City Holler*, the City's employee newsletter, in-house is one fifth the cost of outsourcing.[2]

See Section 5 for details.

Communications Planning and Management

In 2012 the Corporate Communications department developed 19 formal communications plans to support the work of the corporation, special initiatives, and City departments.

Best practice is to develop and follow a formal communication plan to support each and every initiative for which communications support is required.

City of Guelph communications plans are developed in accordance with industry best practice using the R.A.C.E. (Research, Analysis, Communication, and Evaluation) methodology.

Issues Management

The Corporate Communications department was formally involved in the management of 41 departmental and corporate issues, compared to 10 in 2011. The department's—and the organization's—involvement in managing issues supports aligning organizational activities to stakeholder expectations, and involves a genuine and ethical long-term commitment on the part of the organization to an inclusive, two-way standard of corporate responsibility toward stakeholders.

We saw movement in the right direction in 2012, with room for significant improvement still to come through the development and introduction of an issues management framework.

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[1] See section 5 for details.
[2] See section 5 for details.

Ratio of communications employees to residents

To understand how staffing levels of Guelph's Corporate Communications department compare to those in other cities, staff undertook a comparison of the communications staff compliment in 10 Ontario cities. The comparator group is Council's approved list of 18 comparator cities, from which the City received ten responses.

When it comes to staff complement, Guelph ranks in the middle of its comparator group[3].

Ratio of communications employees to City employees

This is another area where staff drew a comparison based on Guelph's Council-approved comparator group.

When comparing the number of municipal employees per Communications employee, Guelph ranks in the middle, with 309 employees per Communications employee.[4]

External Trends

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Province's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) aims to achieve full accessibility throughout Ontario by 2025. Through the AODA, provincial standards have been developed for information and communications.
The Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications means that as a City we must:

- make our websites and web content accessible according to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0
- provide accessible formats and communications supports as quickly as possible and at no additional cost when a person with a disability asks for them
- make feedback processes accessible by providing accessible formats and communications supports when requested
- make public emergency information accessible when requested

Corporate Communications will work together with Web Services, the Accessibility Coordinator, and other City departments to meet these provincial standards.

Trust

Government's ability to achieve its goals and objectives is reliant on the public's trust. To maintain and build trust among our community of stakeholders, the City must work collaboratively towards mutually satisfactory objectives, engage stakeholders in meaningful ways and act with integrity.

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[3] See section 5 for details.
[4] Excluding Guelph and outliers in a comparison of 9 cities in Guelph's comparator group.

Using the internationally-acclaimed Edelman Trust Barometer as a reference guide, the City's strategic communications planning efforts must consider and contribute to greater accountability, transparency and engagement. In part, this can be achieved by strengthening citizen and stakeholder engagement and communications through the City's Community Engagement Framework and many of the initiatives that form part of *The City of Guelph Communications Plan.*

Transparency

It's well known that transparency is among the pillars of good government.

More than ever before, government is called upon to meet public expectations around openness as citizens hold both elected officials and administration accountable for their decision and actions.

Even more recently, the concept of Open Government—viewed as a continuum of policies and activities related to key principles of participation, innovation, transparency and accountability—is gaining momentum.

To strengthen accountability and transparency, the City is developing an open government framework in 2013. The open government framework will reshape the City's internal processes, support two-way communication, provide greater opportunities for citizen engagement, and enhance our capacity to provide information that is timely, accurate, clear, accessible and responsive. It will change – in a fundamental way – how the City of Guelph operates.

Social media

Social media is about participating in conversations with residents, visitors and other stakeholders; providing helpful information and building relationships which, in turn, help achieve organizational and community goals.

Social media also allows the City to demonstrate many of the guiding principles established in *The City of Guelph Communications Plan*:

- provide information that is timely, accurate, clear accessible and responsive
- consider the range of communications tools at our disposal, and use the most appropriate to address the needs associated with each circumstance
- support opportunities for public engagement to inform public policy
- strive to achieve a culture of "two-way communication and "communications excellence" practices

Moving forward, communications staff will coach, counsel, and become "enablers" to position non-communications staff for success as the City leverages social media to connect directly with stakeholders.

The "communicative organization"

The Melbourne Mandate, endorsed by 29 countries at the World Public Relations Forum in 2012, is a call to action in public relations and communication management.

The Mandate defines the communicative organization as one that:

- Builds trust through respectful and enduring relationships with both internal and external stakeholders and the wider community;
- Pursues policies and practices based on internationally recognized standards for corporate responsibility, sustainability, reporting and transparency; and
- Sees listening and engagement as a research-based process to identify both risks and opportunities, in which all internal and external stakeholders can play a role.

Communications professionals have a role to play in defining and maintaining the City's character and values; in building a culture of listening and engagement; and instilling responsible behaviours by individuals and organizations.

Section 4: 2013 and Beyond[5]

In 2013 Corporate Communications will continue to deliver against the action areas of *The City of Guelph Communications Plan*. This work will include:

Needs assessment and communications audit
The City will work with a consultant to conduct a corporate-wide needs assessment to clearly articulate the organization's expectations with respect to communications services. The City's Internal Auditor will then conduct an operational audit of the department to consider departmental structure and processes, and make recommendations so that it might better serve the organization.

Issues management
Customize generic framework and develop and execute implementation plan. Implementation includes research and development of a suite of templates, customized training to approximately 85 employees, and ongoing counsel and execution for management and staff.

At the same time, lead the organization in the strategic management of issues to build stakeholder relationships, mitigate unnecessary escalation, and avoid risk.

Communications policy and framework development
Develop and roll out a revised media relations policy for staff, one for elected officials, and a social media framework.

Community Engagement Framework
Collaborate with Community and Social Services staff to operationalize the Community Engagement Framework and toolkit. Continue to support an engaged community that participates in the public process.

Guelph's image and identity
Corporate Communications will lead efforts to scope the work involved in reviewing Guelph's identity and image, included in Guelph's Corporate Strategic Plan.

Social media
Lead the development of a social media framework for the organization that includes corporate guidelines and principles, and training.

guelph.ca
Corporate Communications is working closely with Web Services to revamp the administration model for guelph.ca. Whereas 90 different administrators contributed content to the City's website with limited quality control or approval process before, in 2013, the Corporate Communications department will collaborate with the Information Technology

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[5] These represent a small selection of 2013 projects and work.

department to review and recommend ways to improve consistency, accuracy and accessibility of online content.

In addition, Corporate Communications will support the following initiatives:

Supporting Guelph's Downtown
Corporate Communications staff will support a substantial, long-term umbrella communications program to generate community awareness, understanding and enthusiasm for the outcome of a comprehensive, coordinated downtown development strategy made up of various downtown improvement/development projects.

Communicating the Corporate Strategic Plan
Corporate Communications will be actively involved in ensuring the Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) is meaningful to all stakeholders – including City employees. A strategic communications program will help the City achieve its CSP goals and objectives.

Guelph Transit
Corporate Communications staff will develop and lead a long-term communications effort on behalf of Guelph Transit. The program is a two-phased approach that communicates service changes and improved performance, and engages stakeholders to provide feedback in aid of continuous improvement.

2014 Election
Corporate Communications resources will be allocated to support the 2014 election.

Open Government
The department will be actively involved in supporting the Open Government Framework, which is a priority initiative in Guelph's Corporate Strategic Plan.

Employee Engagement
Corporate Communications will continue to be actively involved with reporting on and promoting the internal activities and initiatives that support increasing the City's 2012 employee engagement score.

Section 5: Data tables

Cost Comparison - Graphic Design Services

City News	Internal	Out-source	Notes
Ad rate per page	$1,120	$1,490	Sole vendor charges for design
Graphic design rate	$36		
Communications Coordinator rate	$38		
average pages/week	3	5	Sole vendor uses modular ad sizes ads 20-30% larger on average
design time per week	4		
administration in hours	3	3	Communications Coordinators work with directly with Guelph Tribune on admin/production coordination
average ad cost per week	$3,360	$7,450.00	
design cost per week	$144		
administration cost per week	$108	$115.20	
Average City News cost per week	**$3,612**	**$7,565.20**	
Total City News cost per year	**$187,824**	**$393,390.40**	

City News is designed and coordinated in-house by City staff. On one occasion, due to resource limitations, the City outsourced the design and coordination.

Cost Comparison - Graphic Design Services

City Holler	Internal	Out-source	Notes
design cost/issue	$360	$1,300.00	based on two quotes from freelance designers
administration	included	$384.00	Communications Coordinator liaises directly with contractor
cost per issue		$1,684.00	
6 issues per year	**$2,160**	**$10,104.00**	

The City Holler is designed and coordinated in-house by City staff. On one occasion, due to resource limitations, the City outsourced the design and coordination.

Survey – number of employees per Communications employee

Municipality/Region	Number of communications employees	Total employees	Number of citizens	Total employees per Communications employee	
Brampton	26	4,977	523,911	191.4	
Brantford	3	1,231	135,501	410.0	
Burlington	9	1,121.5		124.6	Outlier
Cambridge	2	654		327.0	
Guelph	7	2,161		308.7	
Hamilton	8	8,229		1028.6	Outlier
Kingston	15	1,225		81.7	Outlier
Mississauga	11	7,278		661.6	
Oakville	5	1,051		210.2	
				360.1 Average excluding Guelph & outliers	

These numbers don't reflect demand for service nor quality of work.

All 18 cities in Guelph's Council-approved comparator group were surveyed. Data reflects all responses received (9).

Municipality/Region	Number of Communications employees	Population	Ratio of communications employees to residents
Brampton	26	523,911	1:20,150
Brantford	3	135,501	1:45,167
Burlington	9	175,779	1:19,531
Cambridge	2	123,900	1:61,950
Guelph	6	141,097	1:23,516
Hamilton	8	721,053	1:90,131
Kingston	15	159,561	1:10,637
Mississauga	11	713,443	1:64,858
Oakville	5	182,520	1:36,504
Sudbury	9	160,274	1:17,808

All 18 cities in Guelph's Council-approved comparator group were surveyed. Data reflects all responses received (10).

2011-2012 Media Analysis

Report	Total number of stories	Tone Positive	Tone Balanced	Tone Negative	City/brand mention	Spokesper son quoted	Key messages	Call to action	Total reach
Annual July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012	1,053	28%	63%	9%	99%	56%	59%	14%	64,570,636
2011 July 1 to December 29, 2011	614	27%	63%	10%	98%	55%	59%	12%	34,058,357
2012 Jan 3 to June 30, 2012	438	28%	65%	8%	98%	55%	59%	16%	30,556,276

Media outlets monitored

Blogs
1. 59 Carden St
2. envirolaw.com
3. thefountainpen.com
4. From the Editors
5. Guelph Civic League
6. Guelphpolitico
7. Mediagroupie
8. Ward 2 Guelph

Websites
Community newspapers websites
1. guelphreview.ca
2. guelphtribune.ca
3. orangeville.com
4. theontarion.com

Community daily newspapers websites
1. guelphmercury.com

2. londonfreepress.com
3. therecord.com
4. The Toronto Sun

National daily newspaper websites
1. The Globe and Mail

Misc. websites
1. Canada.com
2. Daily commercial news
3. municipalinfonet.com
4. windsorite.ca
5. University of Guelph

Television websites

1. kitchener.ctvnews.ca

Radio
1. CIMJ-FM (106.1 Magic FM)
2. 570news.com

Total number of outlets: 25