



COMMUNICATION PLAN

According to the website AskDefine:

“Communication is the process of transferring information from a sender to a receiver with the use of a medium in which the communicated information is understood by both sender and receiver. It is a process that allows organisms to exchange information by several methods.”

In its simplest form, communication is the use of words to describe and convey a message or give information to another person. We communicate using language as a code to share information, ideas and feelings.

VISION STATEMENT

“Brazeau County is a progressive government body committed to sustainable and responsible business practices that best address the needs of its citizens and businesses.”

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Goal

The goal of this plan is to raise public awareness of Brazeau County by educating key audiences that we have a strategic plan with measurable outcomes.

Objectives

- To communicate information in a precise and timely manner;
- To provide opportunities for citizen engagement and public consultations;
- To promote Brazeau County as a safe and friendly environment for families; and
- To promote Brazeau County as an open, transparent and progressive place for business investment.

A combination of traditional and non-traditional methods of communication will be used to effectively deliver messaging to identified target audiences.

Target Audiences

- Residents and businesses of Brazeau County
- Brazeau County and Administration
- Residents and businesses of the Town of Drayton Valley
- Residents and businesses of the Village of Breton
- Residents and businesses of bordering Counties
- Inter Municipal Partners
- Provincial and Federal Government
- Media

Positioning Strategies

- Brazeau Council, supported by Administration, are successfully working to improve the quality of life and prosperity in Brazeau County.
- Brazeau County Council is listening to the community and to key stakeholders.
- Brazeau County is a faithful steward of tax payer dollars.
- The system's leadership is knowledgeable about the key issues facing our County today.

Roles & Responsibilities

The delivery of consistent and accurate information is the responsibility of all Council members and employees of Brazeau County. Management of the overall communications plan and communication policies and procedures is the responsibility of the Manager of Economic Development and Communications. All tasks related to the day-to-day operational activities and assignments related to executing communication strategies are the responsibility of the Economic Development Communications Coordinator.

To see the current policies managed by the Economic Development and Communications Department, see appendix A. Currently, they include:

1. Public Relations Promotional Items
2. Visual Standards Policy
3. Website Policy
4. Social Media Policy

COMMUNICATION TOOLS & TACTICS

Brazeau County employs (or will employ) the following tools to accomplish its communication objectives over the next 12 months.

Tool	Frequency	Champion	Budget
Electronic/eMarketing			
Websites Social Media	Updated as needed	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications with support from IT Manager	In-house
Email/Electronic Signature	Updated as needed	IT	n/a
Corporate Letterhead/Business Cards	Updated as needed	Administration	In-house
Print Advertising & Marketing Materials			
Newspaper advertising, trade publication ads, yellow pages ads, etc.	As needed	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications Individual Departments	Across Departments \$35,500 – our division
In-house produced Welcome Package, Economic Profile, Department-specific information pieces	As needed	All Departments	In-house
Brazeau County Newsletter	6 times a year	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications with Outside Contractor	\$45,900
Brazeau Business Newsletter	Quarterly	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications	In-house
Annual Report	Annually	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications with Outside Contractor	Included in the above \$45,900
Radio			
Paid Advertising spots, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), Live Reads	Weekly and as needed	Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications	\$9,220

Tool	Frequency	Champion	Budget
Public Relations			
News Releases, PSAs, attendance at public events, speaking notes, news stories, etc.	As needed	CAO/Reeve/Council With support from Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications	n/a
Promotional items		Dept of Ec Dev. & Communications	\$12,495
Parades	3 times/year	Community Services	\$10,000

PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Promotional Items/Giveaways

To complement public relations activities, Brazeau County offers a variety of promotional items for giveaway and for sale. To aid in promoting the County brand, a selection of promotional items are for sale in the main lobby of the Brazeau County Administration Building as well given away at tradeshow, conferences and gifts.

See Appendix B for sample promotional items.

Earned Media Campaign

In as many cases as possible, Brazeau County should promote itself in an effort to stay connected with the community. This may be achieved through the following methods:

- Local print (newspaper) commentary
- Interviews with key media
- Endorsement of community events and programs

Fostering a relationship with local media provides a win-win situation for both parties. It provides a company with an outlet to cost effectively promote by providing interesting and relevant story ideas. Often, reporters are searching for angles for a good news story and what better way than promoting what the County is doing for its residents and businesses.

Electronic Tools

e-Marketing

Brazeau County website – www.brazeau.ab.ca

An organization's 'storefront' that informs, educates and promotes service offerings in a pleasing manner is essential in today's world. Upon receiving a print piece, reading an article, or receiving a business card that resident, business or potential investor can further browse the County's website for particular information of interest. This website is scheduled for a refresh in 2014.

Business in Brazeau website- www.businessinbrazeau.com

Just completed, a Business in Brazeau website informs, educates and informs on the investment climate in Brazeau County and is targeted to increase investment into the area.

Invest in Brazeau website- www.investinbrazeau.ca

A website dedicated to promoting tourism investment in Brazeau County, specifically the Brazeau Node.

Social Media

Brazeau County has established a facebook page, and will set up a twitter account to communicate news and information. The other tool that is recommended is You Tube to promote certain aspects of the County (i.e. Tourism).

Administration has created a social media policy as well will be developing a social media procedures document for ease of use by Brazeau County Council and staff. We want to encourage all to contribute news and information.

Print Tools

White Pages Advertisement

A standard white pages listing provides an easy point of reference for existing and new residents and business. This ad is placed in the Drayton Valley section of the local phone directory.

Weekly Newspaper Special Feature Page

A dedicated full page feature is a way for Brazeau County to communicate interesting information that is happening, news and events, employment offerings and department highlights. This full page is featured in two local publications – The Drayton Valley Western Review and the Breton Booster.

Marketing Collateral

Various in-house produced marketing pieces are an important means to promoting Brazeau County. Producing in-house material allows for information to be kept current through regular updates.

Collateral includes:

- Welcome Package
- Economic Profile
- Invest in Brazeau marketing material (professionally produced)
- Services to Businesses brochure
- Home-based and Agriculture Business Directory
- Guide to Rural Living
- Various department-specific brochures

Newsletters

Newsletters are a way to communicate information in more detail and capture moments in time for historical purposes. Brazeau County produces a newsletter for residents six times per year, working with an external contractor. A quarterly business newsletter is also produced in-house.

Annual Report

Transparency and accountability is of the utmost importance to Brazeau County Council and Administration. An annual report is a comprehensive report on a Municipality's activities throughout the preceding year. Annual reports are intended to give residents and other interested stakeholders information about the Municipality's activities and financial performance as well as look forward to plans in the coming year.

Targeted Advertising

Specific trade publication advertising and cross-promotion advertising is a way to promote beyond County borders. This form of advertising has been used to promote tourism, agriculture and recreation.

CROSS PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIPS

Brazeau County participates in marketing and communication partnerships in an effort to maximize resources and to ensure best success.

Some of those partners include:

- Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation
- Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources
- Brazeau Regional Tourism
- Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council
- Municipal partners including the Town of Drayton Valley and Village of Breton
- Travel Alberta

MEASUREMENT / MONITORING

Measurement of the public relations plan and promotional campaign is critical to the overall success of the marketing program. For future communication activity both in relation to this campaign and future campaigns, immediate measurement can provide important details on the marketing spend and on the effectiveness of the PR and promotion activities.

Measurement activities may include the following:

Media Monitoring – A permanent record should be maintained on all media activity. Currently, management tracks all media coverage via print placements and google alerts.

Program Participation – Perhaps the greatest measurement of effectiveness is a tally of the actual number of persons attending workshops, public events, etc. A tally of attendees is taken at each event.

Public Opinion Research – Once per year, Council and Administration meet with residents for public feedback prior to passing the annual budget. Each Council meeting also offers time for rate payers concerns. Every three years, a business visitation program is conducted amongst the business community to garner information related to business needs, awareness of services offered by the County and issues facing business development.

From time to time, a public opinion poll will be administered via website, newsletters or mailing (i.e. with utility bill or tax notice mailout) to garner information on a particular topic of importance.

APPENDIX A

Current Division Policies

APPENDIX B

Sample of Promotional items

Categories

Items will be categorized in storage based on the Council Policy – 10 Public Relations and Promotional Items.

(A) Category “A” Items (Under \$15.00)

1. Brazeau County Coffee Mug;
2. Brazeau County Pens;
3. Brazeau County Pins;
4. Brazeau County Paper Cubes (Sticky Notes);
5. Silver metal water bottle;
6. Brazeau County Stick it notes;
7. Picture Bag;
8. Brazeau County Leather Gloves;
9. Crystal Drinking Glass.

(B) Category “B” Items (Under \$50.00)

1. Knife Set;
2. Roll up Picnic Blanket;
3. Brazeau County Vests;
4. Leather Portfolio;
5. Plaques/Pictures used to welcome businesses;

(C) Category “C” Items (\$50.00 - \$150.00)

1. Jean Jacket with Brazeau Logo
2. Fold up Lawn Chair;
3. Deluxe BBQ Set (Zippo case);

(D) Category “D” Items (\$150.00 to \$250.00)

1. CASA Grande Canyon Briefcase (brown);
2. Crystal Decanter Set;
3. Wallingford Clock;
4. Grey/Blue Men’s Performance Winter Jacket.