



Update to the communication plan Drafted by the Communication Hub for 2009 11/11/09

In an email sent to the GCG before our Oxford Hub meeting (16-21 November), we announced that among the issues we would discuss during our meeting will be to **review our annual work (in accordance with the annual communication plan and following-up on 2009 Caux GCG meeting)**. In preparation for that, each of the members of the Communication Hub prepared a memo to give some update about priorities, progress, problems and possibilities for each of the hub portfolios.

The following is a compilation of these memos. Don't hesitate to ask us any questions or make comments!

The Hub (Hennie de Pous, Mike Brown, Edward Peters, Andrew Stallybrass and Laurence Galopin).

Reminder: list of portfolios

- Coordination & liaison with IA (Hennie de Pous)
- Content & content producers (Mike Brown)
- Digital Media (Edward Peters)
- Media/ PR/ Print Publications/ Films (Andrew Stallybrass)
- Development strategy, relationship building; marketing; branding & design (Laurence Galopin)

Update on Content & content producers portfolio Mike Brown, 04 November 2009

Global Web – generate ferment of news, stories, ideas, photos, presentations, training material etc

- Formed 'Home Page' team (Mike L, Barbara D, Susan Korah) to make it dynamic, relevant – *good teamwork, potential for more. So far, hitting target of new story every week. Generally, Barbara does material for xChange, Mike L for public website.*
- 8 new 'Reflections'/ 6 new 'People' items – *less than target one/ month*
- 'Daily blogs from Caux' – *Caux reporting under Andrew S. Teamwork good; output patchy because of conference schedules.*
- Climate Change website gone line.
- Worked with Creators of Peace to upgrade their site; big plans to take it further, including 'Member' section and online funding – Bek Brown and Joanne Nabbanja will manage it.
- T4C response sluggish – but finally speeches/ papers from Cx T4C went up last week.
- Links section had a burst – 16 new links – then went quiet.

Encourage, enlarge network of national and programme Comms Officers

- Laurence's newsletters best development in this area
- Not much else from me. Line managing Killy Sanchez; keeping in touch with Alline Serpa; lining up Carole Khakula for Caux and now Ethiopia; brainstorming Liubov on Russian site; encouraging Nandor on Akasha; trying to get stuff out of India (despite their problems); working with Keith Neal on H-SL material...
- Barbara D and I have contact 3-10 / week on small stories needing work.
- Several weeks of emails with Heinrich/ Barbara to sort through responses to 'Opportunities'

- Chinese website team are back in action, updating; and AfL website finally revised and active.

Translators and translation

- Talked about it – done nothing. Sorry, Laurence! Big need.
- Some improved teamwork across editorial material for language websites.

Assist content for GU, Highlights, Caux Report etc

- Largest part of my work, mostly with Mike Lowe (who now does most of editing GU, after we've initially conceived it).
- *Highlights & Caux Report* take roughly 2 months each – one month editing/ designing; another month marketing, dispatching, invoicing.
- Going through it again now printing 4000 16 pps Creators of Peace Report

Assist IA/ IC with material as needed

- Share oversight of Erik's work. Moving more into CFHS hands
- Assist with printing/ marketing/ distribution of CHFS Reports

Commentaries through AS

- Dead in Lake Geneva at the moment! Susan Korah has produced memo with new ideas for 'Global Voices' page which should help revive it, before the end of 2009, I hope.

History section – add resources

- Talked about it passionately. Nothing moving.

Public record – Wikipedia, etc

- Ditto. Talked about it passionately. Nothing moving. Except John Bond has done some free-lancing.

Annual review of all program sites, refreshing needed

- Talked about it with Mike Lowe. Other priorities/ passions crowd out this dreary job.

Budgetting

- Coordinating with Edward and Heinrich on various parts of budget
- Most time consuming part is deciding payments- transfers/ clearing through Lorne/ Stefan.

Line management

- Mike Lowe: weekly Skype – but now, contact almost daily on details, stories, developing stuff. Review monthly Timesheets and pass his pay invoice.
- Erik P., made progress. His role in CFHS valued; and they will share financing him. Review and pass his quarterly invoices.
- Killy Sanchez – monthly Timesheets and coordination
- Negotiating Laurence's contract with lofC France.
- Susan Korah – deciding terms of engagement

Update on Digital Media portfolio

Edward Peters, 10 November

Global website

- Work is currently underway on improving the user experience in all languages on the global website. French and Spanish are already in a good state, and progress is being made in German and Russian. Portuguese might need some more support. Nandor Lim has just started work again on the Traditional Chinese website and has enlisted Ching-Che Liu (son of Renjou) to work on the Simplified Chinese one. There is no visible progress towards an Arabic section.

- The Comms Hub has a decision making role as regards what is in the top menu and what is not. Laurence can report some interesting additions to the French top menu on lofC history which are only in French. Also she started to make changes to the menu structure (Press, Media contact) which could be adopted by other languages.

General website issues

- There are 4392 'site members' on the lofC websites. But this high figure needs explanation. It includes over 3,000 people who were subscribed to email lists in the old system and who have been transferred to the new one as 'site members' even if they have not chosen to be. 79 site members have logged in during the past month, and 1221 since 1 January 2009.
- The visitor experience for site members needs to be reviewed but has not yet been.
- The user registration process should probably be simplified but has not yet been.
- We have been having some difficulties with 'bogus' site members who have posted what appear like legitimate comments but which include a website address unrelated to the topic; they are trying to increase the Google Rank for their websites. We are working out a method of dealing with this.
- The Caux Forum website may need some input from the Comms Hub?

Developing use of the xChange

- Growth in network membership is almost static (1,100 in Sept 2008; 1,180 at 7 July 2009; 1205 now). This may reflect a lack of growth in lofC numbers as a whole, and also a lack of enthusiasm among existing members about what the xChange offers.
- However, the xChange is used by quite a number of our activists. In the 24 hours up to the time of this report, almost 50 individual network members had logged into the xChange. In the 31 days (month) before this report, 337 members had logged in at least once.
- Since 1 January 2009, 744 members have logged into the xChange - while 461 have not logged in even once during this calendar year.
- I had hoped that we could find out from individual members what makes the xChange less useful than they would like, but have not found someone who could help with this.
- Jackie Euvrard has handed over to Barbara Down the task of processing network membership applications. The technical system for application and acceptance has also been much improved.
- The aim of preparing a more user-friendly member homepage has not been realised due to lack of time, and for technical reasons.
- User friendly 'group homepages' still delayed for technical reasons. When the software is available we will target the concept of more active groups on the xChange.
- Heinrich Pick and Barbara Down ran a successful day training in Paris in October for French network members.
- Nothing further has been done about creating training videos.
- Fortnightly xChange update emails continue to be sent to all network members with latest content.

Personnel, technical and content management issues

- Transition to Heinrich Pick's leadership has gone very well and he is now running the technical side with only occasional reference to me.
- Heinrich manages the workflow of Vitalie Cracan and of Daniel Kudwien, a top Drupal developer who is part of our part-time team. The four of us met in Augsburg in late October to lay plans for the technical sustainability of our technical infrastructure and it was most productive and hopeful.
- There will be a major upgrade of the system from Drupal 6 to Drupal 7 either in May or September next year. This will help with both stability and functionality.
- Edward Howard has taken over the management of the email list system. This system has been problematic, and should be improved by some re-programming work being undertaken before Christmas.
- A part time front-end designer is helping with design tweaks. Heinrich is keen to make some design improvements to help the user experience. He will produce a proposal and timeline on this. Maybe a budget line item for 2011?
- Heinrich is concerned that the growing web team requires increased line management from him, and that it is hard to fulfil all his responsibilities within his agreed 12-15 hours per week. He will keep us up to date on this, but we should expect some issues to arise in this area during 2010.
- Barbara Down continues to do an excellent job of managing the xChange, several other websites, and supporting webmasters and users. See Appendix I for some detail. She and Heinrich ran a training session for several European webmasters in Paris in October.

Contact databases

- The World Address List has been rebuilt by the painstaking work of Maria Grace. Vitalie is currently completing the technical side of making it available as PDF, ready this month.
- The technical system for managing contact info on iofc.org was reviewed thoroughly at the October technical meeting in Augsburg. It was considered robust, with one small simplification. Efforts are being made to ensure that it is more error-free and sustainable for the future.
- The UK lofC office continues to use this system for managing the UK database.
- The Swiss lofC office is planning to incorporate their national contact database into the system in the next few weeks. There is no suggestion of combining the full Serse system with our Drupal-based system, as it is too technically complicated. But we hope that there will soon be a synchronisation of contact/user data between Serse and iofc.org so that our system can be used for mailings, and eventually for Caux visitor logins.

Skills database

- I have done nothing to carry forward the decision at the GCG meeting in July to reintroduce a skills database to allow network members to indicate the skills they have which they are willing to make available to others.

New media

- Modest progress in podcasting Caux, but only speeches, no (so far as I know) interviews or conversations.
- There is potential for more podcasting.
- Twitter was used during the Caux conferences with some limited success. See Appendix 2 below. More extensive use of Twitter would help search engine rankings.
- Altaf Abid is keen for us to develop other new media such as use of YouTube. (Greencoat Forums are already available on YouTube, thanks to Owen Lean.)
- Heinrich feels that Google Earth should also be looked at: are all our locations marked in Google Earth? These are more marketing issues than technical. But they are relevant to our search engine rankings.

Introduction to lofC (PowerPoint)

- Still to do: develop web-based version for iofc.org if we think it would be worthwhile.

Appendix 1: Barbara Down

During 2009, Barbara has worked approximately 37.5 hours a week for lofC, employed by lofC UK. About 30% of that time has been related to lofC UK general and website work. The remaining 70% has been on global communications. The largest elements in this are the global website (17%), general website work and support for webmasters (17%), the xChange (18%), general email support (10%).

She writes: "I must say I love my job and miss it when I am off! It is very rewarding, has lots of variety and keeps my brain ticking over. It was encouraging in Paris to realise how far I had come, when I remember the days when you had to teach me what a tab was and realised I knew nothing!"

Appendix 2: Evaluation of Twitter at Caux by Philipp Thueler

"We had 37 followers, so that is not very much. On the other hand, it is not such a big deal to do regular updates. We tried to do one update per day and that's done in 2 minutes. So my personal conclusion is that this can be repeated next year, because it's no big deal to do it and if someone reads it, why not. On the other hand, we could have done more. I mean we could have encouraged people to tweet by themselves about Caux and include a defined tag. We did not do that but could do it next year. And the third thing is that we don't do anything now. Our Twitter account is called Caux2009, but as soon as the programme for 2010 is out, I will try to rename it to Caux2010 and use it again to tell our followers that the programme for 2010 is available and... That might be useful as an additional thing to the email newsletter and Facebook alerts... But I will probably not do daily tweet but rather when there is something to say."

Update on Caux comms and publications portfolio

Andrew Stallybrass, 9 November 2009

Nurturing the network through new resources, publications, PowerPoints

See below for publications, but there has been little or no progress on PowerPoints, despite efforts to find and encourage a PP on the Kim Beazley story. Should we have a section on xChange where people can

share PowerPoint presentations that they've made? (I have one on Frank Buchman in English and French, and I'm sure that there are more out there.)

Developing press kits

For the summer in Caux, a certain amount of press material was indeed produced by the Caux comms team. But we did not manage, as I had hoped, to produce a standard set of .pdf sheets from the material on the web. We are hoping to have a part-time assistant here in the Geneva office (there's a job description in preparation for a part-time paid person, and there are also a couple of volunteers). This could be one of their tasks. It's more a matter of collecting and reformatting existing material, than creating afresh from nothing.

Caux Comms

See the separate report signed also by Philipp Thueler.

lofC Books and the Caux bookshop

The Caux bookshop and Postal agency are now running pretty well. We've just found and are training a second person who can replace our shop manager when he is sick or on leave. But we don't yet have a clear picture of how sales went this summer. With the steep learning curve for the new person, and for reasons of the complications of running the Post Office side, this summer there were no volunteers helping in the bookshop. I hope that by next year we will have worked our way round this problem, and recruited a new team of helpers.

Michael Henderson promoted his new book, and we sold out all the copies we'd ordered (60). Hennie also promoted and sold her book during her time in Caux, as did Chris Evans (we had a 'market place' evening event, where we had a book-signing table with all the authors in the house).

It's noticeable that it's a lot harder to sell books when there's no author on the spot to do the selling, so the other new titles were less visible:

- 'Stories of the Caux School – 1955-65' by Mary Lean & Elisabeth Peters;
- 'An American in the Middle East' by Harry Almond;
- And the Beazley book didn't get the exposure that I had hoped for, though it did sell quite well.

Promotion remains a weak area. The new team in the bookshop should partially answer this need, but it could also come into the tasks of the reinforced team in the Geneva office.

One decision taken during the Comms meetings in Caux was to declare a moratorium on new books, in order to have the time and energy to work on the plans with Vijitha Yapa. But despite this, there are two new books in preparation, both of which will probably have a Caux Books label. A book by Michael Henderson on the MRA tour of India in 1952-53 ('Ice in Every Carriage'), and a memoir by Pierre Spoerri.

DVDs, films

I have continued to have regular touches with Alan and Imad, as well as with Francis Evans, the chairman of the FLT films board. The Geneva link with Alan has so far only been by e-mail.

Update on Development strategy, relationship building; marketing; branding & design portfolio

Laurence Galopin, 27 October 2009

Draft annual Comms plan

- Done in February. Sent to the GCG + memo to the EC and IA.
- Update sent in July to the GCG

Monitoring/ evaluating plan, incl. end of year Activity and financial report

- Preparation of GCG agenda together with Hennie.
- Drafting GCG report
- Skype reporting
- Drafting of Oxford agenda
- Preparation of an Annual review of our work

Re-examining the working process:

- Drafting of a Proposal for 2009 / 2010 Internal Planning for IofC Comms Hub
- Implementation of Communications audit, through a questionnaire sent to the GCG. Other parts of the audit have not been implemented yet.
- Review GCG composition
- Creation & send-out of the first issue of the Comms Quarterly Newsletter
- Communications to GCG on a monthly basis
- Asking for feedback for the Hub meeting in November.
- Review meeting design and evaluate ideas of working groups before next GCG; communication plan sent in advance (Northern Spring) with proposal for strategic goals so that we can discuss it during the next GCG. More pre-work.

Assist web review/ development

- Review of Francophone website with Eliane Stallybrass.

Oversee Francophone communications

- Took responsibility of francophone website from the 1st of June, replacing Eliane Stallybrass. Update, creation of new sections and pages (finances, press etc.), editorials ...
- Coordination of a team of translators who has been working hard to translate news article from the website and has also started the work being asked by Heinrich Pick of trying to offer the same level of information in all languages. Contribution to content and translation of Highlights 2008-2009. Translation of 2009 CFHS programme and report, 2010 Caux programme in French. Proofreading of Changer and Actualité Monde; cooperation between France website and francophone website.
- More cooperation with Anglophone Team for the homepage of the website.
- Problem: lack of translators and need for more work with Francophone teams around the world. Need to get stories from the Francophone world into English.

Web links /Partnerships

- Work with Mike Brown & Mike Lowe on a document which was sent to the IA and implemented by ML. Suggestions of names of organizations, categories as well as reflection on a possible Charta and criteria for partnerships which could be drafted.

CommStrat management; incl identify new areas of development in each domain of Hub

- Contribution to Marketing Plan. Some follow-up on Caux review.

Consolidation of branding:

- CSP and Caux Interns Program have accepted to use the traditional Caux template for their documents.