



# Communicating for Success

Ensuring MPA's are Valued





# Communicating for Success

Ensuring MPA's are Valued





# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	iii
Part 1: Developing the Plan for Outreach.....	1
Step 1: Getting Started .....	1
Step 2: The Approach .....	2
Step 3: Create the Message .....	4
Step 4: Packaging Your Message.....	5
Step 5: Campaign .....	7
Part 2: Outreach Toolbox.....	11
1. Print Materials .....	11
2. Media .....	16
3. Events .....	18
4. Exhibits .....	20
5. Online Communication.....	21
6. Listserves.....	22
7. Podcast.....	22
8. Video.....	26
Part 3: Partnership.....	31
Part 4: Evaluation .....	33
Part 5: Conclusion .....	35



# Introduction

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are one of the most effective tools we have established to promote conservation and diversity in the ocean today. From the clear blue reefs of the Caribbean to the icy waters of the Arctic, MPAs have made a proven difference. In a recent study, scientists explicitly identified five key features of successful MPAs: No-take reserve, well Enforced, Old, Large, and Isolated (NEOLI). The more of these features an MPA encompasses, the more successful it is. Of the MPAs with all five NEOLI features, there is a “224% increase in fish biomass; over a 800% increase in large fish, grouper, and jack biomass; and a nearly 2000% increase in shark biomass, however less than 5% of the MPAs in this study had all 5 features.” These statistics provide a source of encouragement that MPAs work and a sense of urgency to make more them even more effective. One of the most fundamental tools that managers can use incite such change is strategic communication.

This guidebook outlines how to use communication as more than just a tool for outreach, but rather as a mechanism to catalyze change in a community’s attitude and behavior. When using various communication techniques, it is important to regard them as tools to create change from the very beginning, rather than a way to update the community on progress after the fact. Communication should not be a one sided conversation. It is ultimately a way to engage in productive dialogue with those that you are trying to reach. When used properly, strategic communication is more practical and effective than policy, especially when there is inadequate enforcement of the policy.

This guidebook is an unprecedented effort by NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas-Marine (WCPA) to inspire a new view on communication. It will outline different types of media strategies with step-by-step instructions so that you can determine what is the most appropriate strategy for different situations and how to effectively employ use it.

We hope this is just the beginning of sharing communications and invite you to submit ideas, your best practices and case studies of applied communications strategies to share with others. Please send your input to [matthew.stout@noaa.gov](mailto:matthew.stout@noaa.gov) and we will update this document regularly to share the best knowledge and practices out there.













## PART 1: DEVELOPING THE PLAN FOR OUTREACH

### STEP 1: GETTING STARTED

Communication is the process of transmitting ideas and information. There is a direct relationship between how you are perceived, accepted and valued. Putting good efforts into communications planning can drive how your MPA is perceived, valued and accepted. Whether you are planning a new MPA or communicating the value or actions of an existing MPA, investing time, effort and funding into communications can have a direct result on your success. Communication can take many forms, including:

- Word of mouth
- News stories/press releases
- Print materials
- Presentations
- Special events

To communicate effectively, it helps to plan out what you want from your communication, and what you need to do to get it.

#### WHAT IS A COMMUNICATION PLAN?

Planning is a way to organize actions that will lead to the fulfillment of a goal. Your goal in this case is to raise awareness about your long-term benefits to your community.

- A plan will make it possible to target your communication accurately. It gives you a structure to determine whom you need to reach and how.
- A plan can be long-term, helping you map out how to raise your profile and refine your image in the community over time.

- A plan will make your communication efforts more efficient, effective, and lasting.
- A plan makes everything easier. If you spend some time planning at the beginning of an effort, you can save a great deal of time later on, because you know exactly what you should be doing at any point in the process.

Like any strategy, communication should have a clear outcome or expectation. The implementation of a communications plan should identify exactly what it is you want to achieve. A few reasons for communication include dis-

persing information, increasing awareness, influencing policy, increasing visibility, educating, and changing behavior.

Specific reasons include:

- Government leaders want to announce plans for new marine protected areas;
- A MPA Manager wants to alert government leaders of a growing crisis with illegal fishing;
- A MPA Manager wants to ensure that a presentation to a neighboring school is inspiring and age appropriate.

To get started, consider the following questions:

Question	Example	Your Cause
What do you want to communicate?	I want to communicate the status of the declining fish population in my MPA.	
What background information may be driving or influencing that communication?	Over the last 6 months there has been an observed decline of 60% in our fish population.	
Why is there a need for the communication?	This fish population is important to sustain biodiversity and a lasting ecosystem.	
Why is the communication important at this time?	There has been a recent feature in the national news about pollution and its effects on fish population.	
What or whom am I trying to influence?	I am trying to influence the general public and possibly the policy makers in my area	
What action am I trying to inspire?	I am trying to inspire the people to stop dumping waste down street drains that ends up in the ocean	
What outcome do you want?	I want the fish population to rise and the pollution to fall.	

Once there is a clear idea of what you want to communicate and why, this guidebook will help you in making your idea into a reality.



## STEP 2: THE APPROACH

### A. WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

Now that you have determined what makes your communication important, you should refine the exact message you are trying to spread. You will need to create goals and objectives. The difference between a goal and an objective lies in the tangibility. Goals are general, overarching statements that express the broad focus of your effort. For example, a goal may be: I want to communicate that there need to be more sharks in our reefs. Objectives however are developed to achieve a goal. They should be Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-focused (SMART). An example of an objective for my goal is: By the end of next week I want to produce a fact-sheet to display in the Marine Protected Area Visitors Center to explain why we need more sharks. It is imperative that your goals and objectives remain consistent with each other.

#### Creating SMART objectives

1. Specific – Objectives should specify what you want them to achieve.
2. Measurable – You should use measurable parameters so that you can determine whether you are meeting the objectives or not.
3. Action-oriented – Know what actions you need to take.
4. Realistic – Make sure that you can realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have available.
5. Time-focused – Identify when you want to achieve the set objectives.

It is likely that you will develop several objectives for each goal you are trying to achieve. A good way to ensure effectiveness in your goals and objectives is to keep the desired action in mind. Do you want to create more awareness and more knowledge, or do you want to inspire action among the target audience? It is very important to make your objectives as specific as possible, and to

include a time frame as well as a result. This approach will make it easier for you to stay on track and accomplish your objectives.

Once your objectives are defined, you need to prioritize them. You should evaluate which objectives are most important by determining which ones will best help you meet your overall goal. The ranking and weight you put on each objective may change over time (i.e., political, economic, or climatic influences)

### B. WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

Now that you have determined your goal, you need to determine who you are trying to communicate with. It is crucial to identify which audiences you will target, and your goals and objectives for each. In some cases your audience might be obvious, but in other cases, you will only be able to identify it after conducting research about the demographic.

The messages that you develop should be tailored to the different segments of the community you wish to reach. For example, to engage the public during a management plan review, you must address how MPA management affects—and is affected by—different potential audiences. Those who access the MPA for research may have different concerns and interests from those who access the MPA for recreation. Both are important participants in the public processes that help inform management, however the most effective methods to reach them differ due to their backgrounds.

### C. TYPES OF TARGET AUDIENCES

This section of the guidebook has been broken into three main target audience components: Key Constituent Outreach, Community Awareness, and Media and Staff Training. While reading this section, think about how your goals and objectives may be affected depending on these components.

#### Key Constituents

Targeted constituent groups include users, conservation and other interest

groups, elected officials, and government agencies. Constituent contacts should be divided into main groups, including (but not limited to):

1. Government agencies (federal, state, and local);
2. Recreational fishing;
3. Commercial fishing;
4. Volunteers;
5. Conservation groups;
6. Non-consumptive recreation groups;
7. Business and industry (fishing, oil, gas, mining, etc.);
8. Elected officials;
9. Ports and harbors;
10. Education/ and outreach groups;
11. Research and academia;
12. Military;
13. Cultural interests;
14. NGOs;
15. Skippers or fishermen;
16. Tourists/visitors

Each of these groups may have opinion leaders (whose ideas and behaviors serve as a model to others), disseminators (who communicate ideas to and from the group), and gatekeepers (who influence what information gets in and out) who will influence the target audience and possibly aid with communication.

#### Community Awareness

Targeted audiences include community groups, business associations, school groups, volunteer groups, and members of the general public. Community audiences should be divided into main groups, including (but not limited to):

1. Chambers of Commerce and trade groups;
2. Community service groups;
3. Youth groups/clubs;
4. Park auxiliary/volunteer groups;
5. School groups;



6. Community fairs, etc.
7. Religious leaders
8. Women groups
9. Teachers association-group

### Media

Targeted media may include local, regional, national, and international reporters and editors for print and electronic media, as well as “new media”, such as social networking, blogs and online news outlets.

### Staff

It is important to remember your MPA staff as a target audience. Your MPA staff is the key to promoting your message so it is important to ensure you are presenting a clear and cohesive message. The MPA site may want to consider offering specific training to volunteers or friends groups.

Goals for staff may include:

- Increasing staff awareness and understanding so they can be informed and effective facilitators of public outreach and when responding to public inquiries;
- Ensuring individual staff members fully understand their role;

- Establishing a consistent voice among staff when communicating with the public;
- Expanding upon internal communication and team building skills so the site is working more effectively; and
- Building upon external staff communication skills in order to more effectively communicate with the public.

## D. ANALYZE YOUR AUDIENCE

The two most important things to identify about your audience are:

1. What they care about (i.e. What aspect of your campaign is the most important to them?)
2. How to reach them (e.g., How do they get their information? Signs? Brochures? Media? Other methods?)

### Process Checklist: Identifying and Analyzing the Target Audience

- Have I defined the audience in a way that separates it from the general public?
- How many target audiences or segments have I identified?
- Have I identified the opinion leaders, information disseminators, and gatekeepers in the target audience?
- Have I divided the target audience into distinct subgroups?
- Are the objectives for each target audience and subgroup sufficiently defined?
- Have I identified the most effective communication channels to use with each target audience?
- Have I collected enough data to understand the target audience?
- Do I know what is important to the target audience?
- Do I know what barriers prevent the target audience from changing its behavior?
- Are the objectives consistent with the planning team’s goals?
- Are the objectives specific, with time limits and measurable components?
- Will the objectives be accepted and understood by the people who will be affected by them?
- Will I be able to evaluate whether the objectives were accomplished?
- Do I have the resources to accomplish the identified objectives?



## STEP 3: CREATE THE MESSAGE

### A. WHAT IS A MESSAGE?

Messages are general themes that guide your audience to a particular result. They are broad but simple and should give the audiences an understanding of your mission.

#### A message...

- Is closely tied to your goals and objectives;
- Delivers important information; and
- Compels target audience to think, feel, and act.

Remember: The more frequently and consistently messages are repeated, the more likely it is that the audience will absorb them.

### B. MESSAGE DELIVERY

Messages can be delivered both verbally and visually in many ways, including:

- Presentations
- Interviews
- Written materials
- Images
- Through actions and behavior
- Appearance, visuals
- Body language

The amount of detail and length of your message varies with the method of delivery. If you are writing a press release or article, you may go into detail to define your message. If you are preparing displays or signage, you will want to limit the amount of text you use, so messages will need to be simplified.

#### Process Checklist: Create the Message

- Is the message relevant and accessible to the target audience?
- Is the language of the message appropriate for the target audience?
- Is the message specific for each audience, and will it resound with each?
- Can the target audience understand the message?
- Is the message vivid and memorable?
- Have I included personal goals in the message?
- Have I road-tested the message with members of the target audience?
- Can the target audience respond to the message in an easy, convenient way?
- Have I successfully identified which behaviors to ask the target audience to change?
- Does the message motivate behavior or attitude change?
- Have I considered how the message will be delivered?
- Have I defined clear, actionable goals for my target audience through the message?





## STEP 4: PACKAGING THE MESSAGE

You have defined the objectives, assessed the target audience, and crafted the message. Now it is time to determine the best package or format for the message for eventual delivery to the target audience. The information you collected in Step 2, Defining your Target Audience, will help determine the most appropriate format. When selecting your message format, think about where the target audience gets its information.

### A. LINKING THE NEEDS OF THE AUDIENCE TO THE FORMAT

Making sure you choose the right message format for the target audience is one of the most important steps in outreach. Several factors about the audience come into play:

- **Size of the audience:** If the target audience is large, a door-to-door campaign might not be feasible. Perhaps, a community festival is a better option
- **Geographic distribution of the audience:** If the audience is widely distributed (such as across a rural county), presentations given at workshops might not be the best choice because participants would have to travel a long distance to get to them. A better option may be a live webcast of your presentation or a newsletter that could be mailed out.
- **Level of awareness and education:** If the audience consists of nonnative English speakers, newsletters or other written formats might not appeal to them; radio or TV public service announcements (PSAs) in their native language would be a better choice.
- **Preferred formats:** If the research you conducted on the audience revealed most of the audience members have access to the Internet and use it regularly, a campaign-specific Web site might be an important element to include in your campaign.

### B. FORMAT CONSIDERATIONS

The format that you decide on will define the distribution mechanism (brochures, radio spots, public events). Keeping in mind the possibility of using multiple formats, consider the following:

- Is the package appropriate for the target audience?
- Is it user-friendly?
- Does it clearly and compellingly communicate the message?
- How will the target audience access and use the information?
- Is it something they will see once and discard, or refer to often?
- Can it be produced in-house with existing resources?
- How much will it cost, and who will pay for it?
- Are there existing formats or templates that can be used?

Keep in mind that the package and venue for any message are usually linked. For example, printed materials containing environmental messages are often criticized if they're not produced with high post-consumer content recycled stock. Be mindful of the links between message, format, and distribution. In practice, this might mean announcing a festival on brightly colored recycled paper or reaching out to boaters on a local radio station.

### C. REPEATING THE MESSAGE

In addition to being promotional vehicles for messages, formats often dictate the frequency of message presentation. Frequency is important because it determines how well the message will be remembered. Professional marketers know the more times you see their advertisement for a product, the more likely you will remember the product and the more likely you will buy it. Educating stakeholders and citizens on ocean and watershed issues is no different: people remember what resonates with them and what is in front of them. As the saying goes, "out of sight, out of mind." So if your message is short, you might want to display it on a refrigerator magnet and keep it in front of the audience

for months or even years. Other items - calendars, news media pieces, printed materials, etc. - all have their own pros and cons. Take time to explore them to see if they fit your program by linking objective, audience, and message.

### D. CREATING YOUR CONTENT

In addition to evaluating what outreach format best suits your needs, it is imperative to think carefully about the content of your products and materials. For any outreach effort, keep in mind the type of language and writing style that will appeal to your audience. Make sure everything you write serves a purpose.

#### Identify the purpose

What are you communicating? What is the main goal of your outreach product? What should readers, listeners, and viewers know and be able to do?

A well-defined project reduces stress and uncertainty by forcing staff to carefully consider the need, function, and constraints of a project before the endeavor begins. Simple interpretive projects run the risk of being ineffective if the basic project goals and constraints have not been clearly identified. Make sure the message is clear, concise, and actionable.

#### Consider the audience

Who is the audience for your outreach product? Is it intended for experts or for people who are unfamiliar with the topic? Is it meant for those who have the time to study it or for those who will glance quickly and move on? Your text should always be clear and understandable to your audience. If you are reaching the general public, write for a 4th to 7th grade reading level. Only use technical terms if your audience is familiar with them. More technical language may be appropriate if, for example, you are writing for scientists

#### Writing for the Public

The following are three rules that are essential to creating effective outreach text:



- 1. WRITE FOR YOUR READER.** In all good writing, only one person is important: the reader. As you write, have an image of your reader in your head. Do not write to impress, but to inform. Write as you would talk; keep your language friendly, simple, and direct. Keep your message in mind at all times. Reinforce the key points throughout your text, making sure everything you write works toward your objective. Avoid clichés — these common phrases are so overused, they lose their power. Create your own metaphors and analogies. Communicating in original, simple language is one of the rewarding challenges of interpretation.

Examples of clichés include:

- “Raising awareness”
- “Countless hours”
- “All intents and purposes”
- “Litmus test”

- 2. WRITE VIVIDLY.** A well-worded sentence conjures vivid pictures. Careful selection of words eliminates the need for excessive adjectives and adverbs. Modifiers have their place, but they can make your sentences long and clumsy. Keep a thesaurus handy as you write — but do not rely on it too heavily, or you run the risk of sounding pretentious. Choose specific, concrete nouns and vivid, active verbs. Use the active voice

whenever possible. Passive voice, while not grammatically incorrect, encourages lazy writing and can lead to weak, vague sentences. For example, a sentence like, “Deep-sea corals were studied during the mission,” leaves out some important information — who was conducting the study? It would be better to write it as, “Scientists studied deep-sea corals during the mission.”

- 3. WRITE SIMPLY.** Your writing will reach more people if you are concise and direct. The more complex your writing, the more readers you will lose. Concise writing takes effort; cut out all the unnecessary “fat” from your sentences and paragraphs. Extra words just complicate a passage. Writing is more readable when you use short sentences, short paragraphs and familiar words. Be specific. Vague, weak language is a turn-off for readers. Do not make sweeping generalizations or broad statements if you cannot back them up with specifics.

## E. ADDITIONAL WRITING TIPS

There are no hard and fast rules or magical formulas for good writing, but here are some solid guidelines to keep in mind:

- Avoid technical language and jargon. This is a common mistake

in outreach products, especially when information is coming from expert with extensive knowledge of the subject. Do not assume your reader has the same level of comprehension of the topic that you do.

- Pay attention to grammar and punctuation and avoid careless mistakes and typos. Consult a writing stylebook to double-check just where that comma or apostrophe should go, or ask someone with experience and a keen eye to edit the piece.
- Use the active voice.
- Write in simple, declarative sentences. Make each word work. Use descriptive adjectives only when they add to the piece.
- Make sure your writing conveys your intentions.
- Sometimes a new perspective and a fresh start are needed, so do not hesitate to start over if necessary.
- If you come down with a case of writer’s block, you might be making too great a fuss over what you are writing. Sometimes it helps to just start writing, even if you begin at the middle or end of a piece. You can always go back and edit or enhance it later. Getting something on paper is the most important part.





### Process Checklist: Package Your Message

- Am I getting the message to my target audience with this format?
- Is the format appropriate for the message?
- Is the format appropriate for the target audience?
- Does the format exclude any members of the target audience?
- Does the format favor any members of the target audience?
- Does the format grab the attention of the target audience?
- Is my message concise and memorable?
- Do I have the resources necessary to prepare and use the selected format?
- Do I have access to the skilled staff needed to prepare and use the selected format?
- Will I have enough time to produce and distribute this format?
- Will I be able to distribute messages in this format effectively?
- Will I have enough materials for the entire target audience?
- Do my materials follow AP Stylebook and other MPA-specific style guidelines?

## STEP 5: CAMPAIGN

Creating a campaign is not much different from what you have learned in the rest of this communications guide. In fact, creating a campaign is much like planning a trip. Make a plan of where you want to go and map out steps towards that goal. There is no one correct way to create a successful campaign. The most successful campaigns are individualized and tailored to their audience. The main goal is to know who you want to reach, how they get their information and most importantly, what your “ask” will be. Your “ask” is a statement of what you’d like from your audience.

### A. PURCHASED MEDIA CHOICE

This is an important step in crafting an effective campaign. The media is how your audience will be getting all the information and connecting with you on your campaign. What type of media does your audience use most often?

Some questions to ask yourself as you choose a media option are:

- Is it cost effective?
- Is it memorable?
- Am I using a method that most of my audience has access to?

### B. MEDIA OPTIONS

Source	Pros	Cons
Print		
TV		
Electronic		
Radio		
Outdoor		
Collateral		
Events		

### C. CAMPAIGN COSTS

It is important to keep in mind campaign costs. These can pile up quickly being that they range from staff time, media time, type of media etc. This is a time where partnering can be a useful tool to disperse costs. This is also a time to look into social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) which can be a highly effective tool for little or no cost.

### D. MEDIA PLANNING

Depending on the type of media you have chosen. Keep in mind the duration of your campaign. Campaigns could run anywhere from a day to indefinitely.

### E. IMPACT MEASUREMENT

An important and often overlooked aspect of a campaign is measuring its



effectiveness. It is important to figure out if your message is getting through to your audience. You can do this a variety of ways, such as surveys, numbers of responses to requests or increase in social networking measurement (Facebook “likes”, Twitter followers.)

## F. DESIGN OF A CAMPAIGN: CASE STUDY

Motivated by common mandates to bring ocean awareness to the general public, NOAA's Office of National Ma-

rine Sanctuaries (ONMS) and the State of California created the statewide California public ocean awareness campaign, “Thank You Ocean.” The document in Appendix I explains the steps taken to create and implement the campaign, utilizing many of the considerations found in this guidebook. With four sanctuaries in California ONMS recognized a need to connect with the people of California. To that end, in 2005 ONMS partnered with Aquarium of the Pacific to host a workshop of “ocean communicators” in or-

der to bring together a variety of ocean interests to agree on key ocean messages. Matt Stout and Sarah Marquis from ONMS coordinated the workshop. Lori Arguelles, then director of National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, spoke about the nationwide outreach that was implemented for 1998's International Year of the Ocean. On behalf of the state of California, Brian Baird made a presentation from California Natural Resources Agency.

The initial meeting was such a success that the 80 participants from





around California decided to form the Ocean Communicators Alliance (OCA). The California OCA today is a group of more than 300 professionals in ocean-related organizations, agencies and businesses who, in the course of their work, reach millions of Californians with ocean messages. After the initial workshop, the State of California Natural Resources Agency joined in formal support of the OCA, and requested the alliance's help in the development of a public awareness campaign. California's Ocean Action Plan called for the

development of a public awareness campaign that empowers individuals to better understand and take action to address the threats facing the ocean. The 2004 federal U.S. Ocean Action Plan also called for greater public education about the importance of the nation's coasts and oceans.

As a result, ONMS and the California Natural Resources Agency supported the joint development of a public ocean awareness campaign for California, involving the OCA. A series of workshops hosted by aquaria partners brought alli-

ance members together to refine ocean messages, and The Hive Advertising was engaged to develop the campaign.

California's "Thank You Ocean" campaign was launched in 2006 to fulfill the state and federal plans' call to action. The campaign mission is to raise awareness of the benefits the ocean provides to us and to identify ways each of us can help protect the ocean in our everyday lives. In 2008, the Thank You Ocean Campaign received the Coastal America Award from the White House for its ocean and coastal initiatives.









## PART 2: OUTREACH TOOLBOX

### 1. PRINT MATERIALS

#### A. PUBLICATIONS CREATE YOUR IMAGE

By far, the most popular format for outreach campaigns is print. As communicators and interpreters, we use publications for two purposes: to deliver important messages and to enhance the public's perception of our organization. Print materials can be easily created and the target audience can refer to them again and again. Examples of common print products include newsletters, brochures, annual reports, rack cards, one-pagers, and posters.

There is a lot of competition for readers' attention. They are inundated with media of all types, so what is printed must be high quality to effectively communicate your messages. Everything with the name of your MPA on it tells the reader who you are; be sure that it makes the impression that you want to make. No matter what kind of publication you are producing, everything should reinforce the image you want to put forward.

A successful publication is one that reaches your audience, clearly communicates your message, and enhances your public image. Clear writing and clean design are the keys to a successful print product.

#### B. PLANNING AHEAD

Before starting to design a print product, ask yourself, "What are my needs?" Be sure that print media really is the most efficient and cost-effective method of spreading your message. On a tight budget, paying to print a

brochure or a poster may not be the best. Consider whether an electronic product, like a Web page or an e-mail newsletter, could accomplish the same goal with less cost and less waste.

When preparing printed materials, be aware of how the target audience will use the information. If it is to be faxed or photocopied, you will want to use a standard paper size and limit any artwork to line drawings. Dark-colored backgrounds can seriously limit photocopying. Keep in mind that your message will compete with a lot of other printed material. High-quality color materials can have considerable costs and the information can become dated quickly. Do not forget these issues during the planning phase.

#### C. PROS AND CONS OF PRINT MATERIALS:

##### Pros:

- Can reach a large audience
- Can be more technical than other formats
- Can tailor messages for specific audiences
- Go beyond building awareness with detailed information
- Reach more educated audiences
- Audience can clip, save, and think about the material
- Might provide more credibility
- Can be a low-cost option compared to other methods (with prices decreasing with quantity)
- Good to use as a follow-up mechanism

##### Cons:

- Printing and mailing are costly
- Require staff time
- Passive, not participatory
- Only as good as the mailing and distribution list
- Audience must have the interest to pick them up and read them
- Can be easily overlooked and discarded.

##### Uses

- Articles and interviews
- Outreach campaigns
- Events (e.g., announcements and summaries)
- Workshops
- Scientific data
- Requesting feedback from public
- Public education

#### D. DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

When designing the layout of your brochure, flyer, or how-to guide, use restraint, consistency, and quality materials. Restraint should be used in choosing typefaces or fonts; the kinds of graphics or artwork selected should be consistent; and quality materials should be used for photographs and artwork. Invite readers into your material with appealing, user-friendly layouts.

##### White space

White space is the space on the page that is left blank. White space should be treated as a graphic ele-

ment and used liberally because it is very effective at drawing attention. Remember Nike's "Just Do It" ad campaign? It features a large amount of white space with the Nike logo and that short, simple phrase. People all over the world instantly know the brand name and its products. To easily create white space, try expanding the margins on your brochure or flyer. Make your headline wrap onto several lines so white space is created on the right side of the page. Do not full-justify your text. Ragged-right creates more white space at the end of each line. It also makes text easier to read because your brain remembers the last word in the ragged line above the one that you are reading.

## Typefaces

Design your materials so the layout draws the eye into and around the entire work. **DO NOT USE ALL CAPS BECAUSE IT IS TOO HARD TO READ THE TEXT AND IT PUTS OFF READERS WHO FEEL LIKE THEY ARE BEING SHOUTED AT.**

## Layout of text

Always remember the ultimate purpose of your materials is to communicate, so make your text readable. Do not organize text into a clever shape (like a circle or a Christmas tree) if it will be difficult to read. Be careful about using graphic images behind the text (water-marks) because they can make the text nearly unreadable if not done skillfully. A general rule of thumb is the narrower the column of text, the smaller the font size. For example, on 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper, if the text is 6 inches wide, the font size should be 12 point. If you choose a 2-column format, the font size may be decreased to 10 point, depending on the font.

## Making your text come alive

Make the text interesting to your readers. Keep the length to a minimum and use the active voice. You can use various formats to make your text more engaging. Consider telling a story or leading off with a letter from a concerned

citizen. Always try to include a local angle, and keep your message simple.

## Hooks

Hooks are devices used to reinforce information in the text or to initially grab the reader. Your headline can be a significant hook to engage the reader. Headers in the form of a question are always engaging. For example, a brochure on groundwater contamination could lead off with "Is someone contaminating your drinking water?" Using games, humor, or contests can also encourage the reader to read all of the material. Most of all, it is important that your hook is catchy, repeatable, and memorable, while retaining accuracy.

## Using artwork and photos

Graphics — photos, logos, artwork, or even well-designed subheads — are great for breaking up long, gray blocks of text, giving readers a visual break, and making the text manageable. Ocean-themed images are ideal for dressing up your message format. The emotional appeal they elicit can be tremendous. This section presents ideas for incorporating artwork and photos into your ocean message material and presentations.

- **USING PHOTOS EFFECTIVELY -** Using photographs can reinforce your message dramatically, but it is better not to use a photograph if it is poor quality. Taking effective photographs takes practice and patience. Show action, in your photographs such as beach cleanups, whale watching, or other ocean-related activities. Photos of people, especially children, appeal to many audiences.
- **PROPER PHOTO CREDIT -** All photographs should have a photo credit, and when relevant, a caption as well. In some cases, you will be using a photograph from a partner or outside source and will be required to follow their photo credit guidance. There should be a Memorandum of Understanding created when partnering with a

partner or outside photographer that details the terms of the partnership including how and when the photographs can be used. This should be completed in addition to the photographer release form described below.

Under U.S. copyright law, a work becomes protectable by copyright the moment it becomes fixed into a tangible medium. Once the shutter snaps, the photographer has a copyright in the image. If that photographer is a private person, the copyright is his or hers. If the photographer is an employee of a company, the copyright belongs to the company or employer.

However, if the photographer is a contractor or third party, then the copyright belongs to the photographer, despite that he or she is paid by the client. This is true UNLESS an agreement specifies otherwise ahead of time. This is called the "work for hire rule." If the photographer is not an employee and the contract did not have a provision about ownership, the photographer owns the copyright.

Certainly an organization or agency has rights in the images because it paid for those images. However, its rights are limited to the agreement conditions.

- **CHECK TO ENSURE YOU FOLLOW PROPER COPYRIGHT LAWS FOR YOUR COUNTRY.**

## E. TYPES OF PRINT MATERIALS

### Brochures

Brochures, also known as pamphlets or leaflets, are small informational packets or magazines that contain information about an organization, event, etc. Brochures are good multi-use outreach publications that you can distribute at a wide range of venues and events, from conferences and fairs to visitor centers and museums. Think through the purpose of your brochure and its intended audience before you begin. Refer to "Create the Message."

You might use the brochure as a way to solicit interest and involvement or to promote ocean education and positive behaviors. Its purpose will significantly influence its appearance and content.

- Pros:
  - Easily distributed
  - Versatile with numerous layout options
  - Can provide moderate detail
  - Highly visual
- Cons:
  - Moderate printing cost
  - Time-consuming to produce
  - Can become quickly obsolete
- Content tips
  - Write concisely. The most common mistake in brochure design is trying to cram in too much text. Use short sentences and short paragraphs for better readability; you do not have to include every piece of information.
  - Use plain English. Use bulleted lists of simple, understandable phrases to make it easier for the reader to digest long paragraphs or complex information. Avoid using technical descriptions, jargon, and buzzwords. Unfamiliar terms and acronyms will only confuse your reader.
  - Include a call to action. You should have a purpose in mind for your brochure. What do you want it to accomplish? Make sure to clearly state any action your reader should take.
  - Interconnect your outreach materials. Include your Web site URL, newsletter sign-up details and any other pertinent information about your outreach products and programs in the brochure.
  - Make your brochure a “keeper.” You can give your brochure added value and encourage people to hang onto it, rather than throwing it away, by including

things like maps, wildlife identification guides, lists of important regulations, etc. Make visitors want to keep it as a souvenir.

- Design tips
  - The front cover is used to grab attention and make the reader want to open the brochure and see what is inside. Make it interesting and grab their attention.
  - The eye naturally looks to some visual cues before others. Your reader will first look at pictures, followed by headlines, charts and graphs, captions, and finally body text. Your information should be laid out clearly in order of importance, with the key sections emphasized through bolder or larger header fonts.
  - Your brochure should convey a concise and direct message in a visually appealing way. Use high-quality photos and images and be sure to follow the general guidelines in this document for defining your objectives and audience.
  - Make sure the reader is able to pick up the key information at a glance by looking at pictures and skimming the headlines and captions. Do not hide vital points within the body text. Be sure to include your main points in the headlines and captions.
  - Do not overcrowd your brochure layout. Leave some white space between columns of text, photos, boxes, etc.
  - Take full advantage of your space by spreading across multiple panels. Strict adherence to columns can make your brochure look boring and cluttered. Let headlines, photos, and boxes stretch across multiple panels, to encourage the reader to open the brochure and read the whole pamphlet.
  - Keep your font layout simple in your brochure design. Limit your

use of bold text, capitalization, underlining, italics and multiple fonts. By emphasizing everything, you emphasize nothing.

## Rack Cards

Rack cards are usually 4 inch by 6 inch cards that contain pictures and information about an organization, event, etc. Rack cards are cheap and effective pieces that can be very useful for increasing your site’s visibility. They provide a quick and easy way to introduce people to MPAs and deliver key messages and information about that these sites do. Printing rack cards is generally cheaper than other products, but the space to convey information is limited.

- Pros:
  - Cheap to print
  - Easy to distribute
  - Highly visual
  - Good introductory pieces
  - Can deliver key messages quickly
- Cons:
  - Layout restrictions
  - Provide limited information due to small size
  - Best suited for very basic outreach
- Content tips
  - Be selective about the information you include. Rack cards have limited space available for you design. There is no room for unnecessary text or graphics, so it requires extra effort to ensure that everything you include serves a purpose.
  - State your main points clearly. Rack cards need to be eye-catching, but they also need to deliver information quickly. You can help ensure that the reader takes away the messages you want by using bold headers, bullet points, and short, easy-to-read paragraphs.
  - Do not try to squeeze in too much text. Keep text on the

rack card text simple by limiting content to the most important points and messages, including any call to action.

#### ■ Design tips

- Make it eye-catching. One of the most important aspects of designing a rack card is to make it visually appealing. Powerful photos, bold colors, and simple, memorable messages are crucial to grabbing a reader's attention.
- Keep in mind how the rack card will be displayed. In many display racks, only the top few inches of the card will be visible, so be sure that space contains your key information.
- Do not use mediocre photos. The imagery on your rack card needs to be high-quality. Select high-resolution photos that are interesting and well composed or your product will risk looking unprofessional.
- Keep a consistent look and feel when creating multiple rack cards. Products containing similar colors and design elements will help reinforce your brand in a reader's mind.

### Newsletters

Newsletters are recent reports of news or events to a specific group of people. Newsletters often include detailed information and many images.

#### ■ Pros:

- Can be highly detailed
- Space for in-depth stories, photos, and graphics
- Flexible layout and design
- Keeps constituents engaged

#### ■ Cons:

- Time-consuming to produce
- Expensive to print
- Substantial reader time investment
- Requires more background knowledge

#### ■ Content tips

- Do not overcrowd your newsletter. Pick the most interesting and important stories, rather than trying to squeeze in every last bit of information.
- Include outside voices in your stories. Talk to experts and community members and quote them where appropriate. Quotes add flavor and can help make your content more engaging to readers.
- Add some recurring features. This gives your newsletter continuity from issue to issue. News briefs, profiles, and guest editorials are a few examples of pieces that you can run on a regular basis.

#### ■ Design tips

- Make your cover as eye-catching as possible. A powerful photo and bold headline will go a long way to make someone want to pick up and read your newsletter.
- Use photos and graphics for visual impact. Large blocks of text can turn a reader off, so break up your layout with attractive, high-resolution photos and graphics like sidebars and maps.
- Vary your layout from section to section, but try to keep some elements the same throughout to maintain a consistent look.

### Fact-Sheets

Fact-sheets, also known as one-pagers, are brief documents that provide information about an organization, news, events, etc. Fact-sheets can be extremely effective if they are engaging, concise, and memorable. They are often used to convey brief and important messages or to implore people to take simple actions. Keep the text brief, the font fairly large, and the design attractive. Do not forget to consider the target audience in the design, composition, and distribution.

#### ■ Pros:

- Moderate amount of detail

- Can print cheaply and in-house
- Minimal design necessary
- Template-friendly
- Adaptable for any topic

#### ■ Cons:

- Less visually appealing
- Lots of text can deter readers
- Little lasting value – readers rarely keep fact-sheets

#### ■ Content tips

- You do not need to fill the page. Just because you have space for lots of text does not mean you should fill all of it. A common mistake is overcrowding the page with large blocks of text, making it cluttered and difficult to read.
- Use plain language. Take care to explain things clearly and without technical jargon or confusing acronyms, especially if the one-pager focuses on scientific material
- Do not try to cover too many topics. If you need to, create separate one-pagers to address different subjects. This will make it easier for your audience to absorb the information.

#### ■ Design tips

- Use a template. It will save you time and effort, and you can easily replace the text and photos to create one-pagers with a consistent look and feel for a variety of topics.
- Clear organization is especially important with lots of information on the page. Keep paragraphs short and use sub-headings to clearly define different sections.
- Plan to make your one-pager available online, as well as in print. One-pagers and fact-sheets work well in PDF format, which can save you time and printing costs.

### Posters

Posters are large documents that are very visual and can be an excellent op-





tion for message delivery. They provide information in an interesting way and are often displayed for months or even years. Text, photos, slogans, and even graphs can be presented effectively on posters. Posters are most often used to build awareness or deliver a simple message (e.g., “Save the Bay”). However, you should be aware that production and distribution costs can be considerable. Mailing tubes and postage can cost more than the poster itself. Folding and mailing in large envelopes causes creases that detract from appearance, but this does not necessarily mean abandoning the approach.

■ Pros:

- High visibility
- Popular giveaways
- Lasting impression
- Good for promoting events

■ Cons:

- Expensive to print
- Bulky and awkward to transport
- Not suitable for certain audiences and venues

■ Content tips

- Use catchy slogans. These are

particularly important in the creation of effective posters that grab the readers’ attention. Come up with a tagline that will communicate your message in a memorable way.

- Keep it simple. Overloading the reader with text or images will make it harder for them to absorb any meaningful information in the few seconds that they spend looking at your poster.
- Stay focused. In general, keep your poster focused on one topic. People will easily understand your message if you limit it to a single concept or issue.
- Make the most important details stand out. If your poster is part of a campaign, then you should highlight the call to action. If it is advertising an event, make sure the date, time, and location are prominently featured. Do not force your readers to hunt for key information.

■ Design tips

- Use large and bold graphics such as photos and artwork to command attention. The imagery on your poster is what will

persuade people to read it.

- Use the highest quality images available. Your poster should use the best possible high-resolution photos or illustrations, since they will be printed much larger than normal. Consider holding a photography or art contest as a source of cheap and high-quality visuals.
- All text should be legible from three feet away. Assume most people will only briefly skim over your poster as they pass by. Use large font sizes and bold text to make your headlines and key messages stand out.
- Keep in mind balance, contrast, and other aspects of good design. Look at other outreach posters and research the principles of effective design for inspiration.
- Consider how the poster will be displayed and distributed. Decide how large the poster should be. Will it go in a standard-size frame or on a bulletin board? Does it need to be laminated for outdoor display? Can it fit in a standard poster tube or envelope for mailing?

## 2. MEDIA

### A. HOW WE DEFINE "MEDIA"

Media refers to public news and information outlets such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, Internet news sources, and Web news blogs. The line between media formats is blurring as the Internet gains popularity as the source for most of the public's news. This rise in popularity is largely the result of new Internet divisions of traditional news outlets, which extend the print and broadcast audience numbers as a result, rather than displacing them.

When your MPA supplies information to news contacts, you can include photos, video and interview opportunities. Nearly all print and radio news sources have video capabilities on their Web sites. Radio and television stations publish text articles on their Web sites and most media outlets also provide podcasts as well as video.

There are advantages with Web "on demand" news delivery, since an electronic story on the Web is available to be viewed at any time, as opposed to the set schedule of radio and television programs. Newspaper and magazine articles may be archived on a Web site for years, and now reach extended circulation because of Web access around the world.

### B. WHY WE WORK WITH MEDIA

You can begin to fulfill your responsibility of informing the public about your MPA and the ocean's health and well-being by disseminating relevant news that is important and interesting to local, regional, national, and international media. News and feature coverage of your MPA activity and issues magnify what you do every day. It helps you get the message out about your MPA.

Additionally, media coverage establishes credibility. News from any outlet is perceived as many times more believable than advertising since it comes from a source other than your organization. In addition, the media is a forum for public policy debate that reflects and enables open discussion of your MPA's issues and actions.

### C. WHAT IS NEWSWORTHY?

Much of what MPAs do is newsworthy. A story is newsworthy if it:

- Is new, unique, or a superlative (largest, first)
- Is timely
- Affects a large number of people
- Is visual
- Has a human-interest angle
- Is a variation of a theme already in the news

### D. IDENTIFYING MEDIA CONTACTS

You may develop media lists that consist of writers, reporters and editors who are interested in your topic. This may include reporters who cover the topics of environment, community news or general interest news. When you develop a media list, make sure to keep it updated, as contacts change and new reporters may need an introduction to what you are doing.

### E. DISSEMINATING INFORMATION TO MEDIA

- News Releases
  - Before you begin, ask yourself:
    - What am I communicating?
    - What is the expected outcome?
    - Who is my audience?
  - Is a news release the best vehicle to distribute this information or can I be more effective and efficient with a phone call, social media or succinct e-mail?
  - What is the "sound bite" or key messages that I would like to see in print, on TV, or on the radio?
  - What are the key messages and/or talking points that need to be conveyed?
  - Who will be the spokesperson or subject matter expert on this topic?
  - Why is this news significant?
  - Who will benefit and how will it be used?

- Would I want to read about this in a newspaper or listen to a story about it?
- Remember: The news release is not the end product. It should entice the reporter to do more. Think about its packaging, including art, animations, and audio.
- Drafting the News Release
  - Key AP Style Notes:
    - Spell out states in the body of the release. In headlines, use proper state abbreviations such as Mich. and Conn. rather than postal abbreviations such as MI and CT.
    - Use proper punctuation (e.g., a dash after telephone area codes instead of parentheses around and "ext." before the extension number.
    - Avoid acronyms, especially if that term is only used once. Refer to an AP stylebook on using acronyms.
    - Follow AP style for month abbreviations, particularly for the release date. There is no need to repeat the year after the month and day in the body of the release.
    - The press release should be no longer than 400-500 words in length total.
    - Web links are essential to a release. Ideally, only two links are included. URLs must be preceded by http://, except when embedded within the release. URLs should not be long and complicated. Hyperlinks also work if you are distributing the release electronically.
    - Use active, not passive, voice.
    - Avoid gratuitous sentences and paragraphs that designed to make people feel good but have no place in a news release designed for the general public, which is known as "back slapping."



## ■ Media Opportunities

- A media opportunity invites the media to experience an event or presentation, so that they may create news stories. This could include:
  - a formal meeting of partners to sign an agreement
  - a seminar or lecture
  - a community event such as an ocean fair or beach clean-up
  - a demonstration of marine debris or ocean technology
- A media opportunity is good for situations when you would like the media to gather and experience the story for themselves, rather than write a news story from a press release. It is also good for scientific or technical demonstrations, such as deploying of ocean equipment or return of research cruises.
- The media is invited by send-

ing out a media advisory that contains who, what, where and when it is best for media to show up. Take into consideration visuals and people who are present to be interviewed.

- A media advisory is directed to media, and should not be confused with a calendar announcement, directed at the public. Some demonstrations or partner meetings may not be public events, so it is good to put “not public announcement” on the advisory if you are only inviting the media.

## ■ Community or Calendar Announcement

- A community or calendar announcement is an invitation to the public to attend an event.
- The calendar announcement is written in the “who, what, where, when” format and appears in community and

calendar listings for events that are open to the public.

- Many news sources have assigned calendar editors, so it is good to direct the calendar announcement to “calendar editor” or “community editor.”

## ■ Media Statements

- For announcements in response to timely events, you may want a spokesperson to release a media statement. This is not as formal as a press release, and usually consists of one or two paragraphs that address the issue at hand.
- News sources may include your information in news coverage about the topic, or may follow up for an interview or more information.
- A media statement can be sent out to your media list with a reference to the topic and a contact person for follow up.





### 3. EVENTS

#### A. IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

As with any activity, first ask the questions outlined in the introduction:

- What is the need?
- What do we hope to accomplish?
- What is the audience?
- What are our goals and objectives with those audiences?

If an event is the answer, you are ready to plan!

#### B. EVENT TEAM

Events may be held solely by your MPA, or in partnership with another agency or constituent. The event team should include at least one key MPA person who will be involved throughout the life of the event. This person should be able to make decisions or have access to decision-makers. The team should also include the site media person and someone representing education.

#### C. PLANNING THE EVENT

Since events involve many moving parts, every event needs a plan. To plan an event, the first element needed is the date, time, location, and event description. Work your plan backwards from the date. For instance, if you need invitations, you will need to design them in advance, so they can be mailed with enough time for guests to RSVP. The below event checklist will help you consider elements of an event and how they may be handled.

A planning team should meet by phone as often as necessary until all details are confirmed. At least three people should be assigned to staff the event, not including speakers and dignitaries.

#### D. MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS

Every event will focus on key messages. What are the main messages that you are communicating with your event? Those messages should be considered early in planning, since messages will influence your choice of venue, decorations, agenda, and the text of invitations, press releases and speeches.

#### E. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Be sure to consider other factors, including:

- Are partners involved and, if so, how?
- How many speakers will address the guests?
- Is the event indoor or outdoor?
- Will the event feature entertainment or refreshments?
- How will costs be funded?
- Is the public invited?
- How many guests do you expect?
- Will you need registration and name tags?
- Are permits needed?
- Has the guest list been reviewed by several people, so that no one is inadvertently left out?
- Will there be a film?
- Do we have electronics for speakers?
- Will there be a blessing?
- Who from your MPA will attend?
- Is there a photographer? Who will provide back-up photography?





(Note: Always have more than one person assigned to capture photos, both formal and casual)

- Will there be a videographer?

### Event Checklist:

- Venue and event preparation:
  - Location, date, and time confirmed
  - Parking details confirmed
  - Guests, experts, and speakers invited and confirmed – Have a list of all invitees, VIPs, partners, guest experts, etc.
  - Detailed specifics on who is confirmed, or who will contact for confirmation, where they sit, what their function is
  - Agenda drafted, discussed, and finalized
  - Talking points distributed to speakers
  - Electronic requirements coordinated: (e.g., podium, wireless, mixer, mult box, screen, video player, A/V operator, sound man)
  - Confirm entertainment
  - Displays and materials are

listed, prepared, and confirmed

- Decorations supplied
- Guest sign-in and name tags arranged (optional)
- Video and b-roll viewing coordinated and sent to media coordinators
- Room layout designed and coordinated with venue, including podium at front, big screen for video, b-roll, and table at front with guest experts and partners as needed

(Note: For daytime events, do not put speakers in front of windows, as it makes filming and photography difficult)

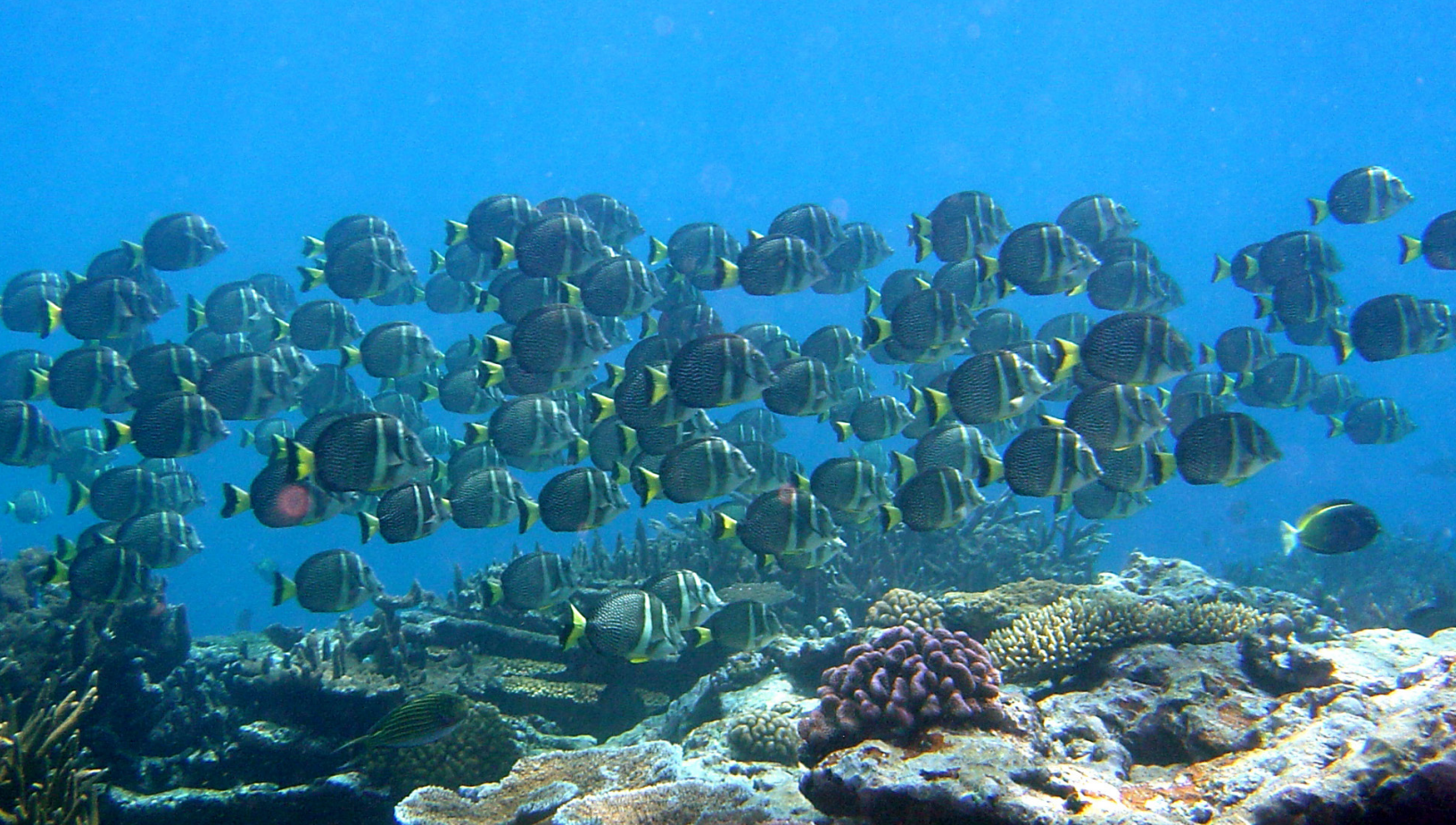
- Speakers briefed pre-event, “murder board” (ask tough questions that reporters might come up with so you are prepared to answer.)
- Media sign-in set up with comprehensive list of those in attendance (get cards)
- Food, refreshments, and drinks arranged (can be purchased through a partner organization)
- Ceremonial blessing coordi-

nated (optional)

- Media preparation:
  - Messages and talking points approved and distributed to all involved
  - Media lists refined
  - Materials prepared, including fact-sheets, contact sheet, etc.
  - Photo CD prepared and duplicated
  - B-roll prepared and duplicated by DVD (All media)
  - Press kits assembled and materials duplicated
  - Media advisory out to print and electronic contacts by fax or email
  - Release out to print and electronic contacts via local fax or email
- Follow-up:
  - Field and respond incoming media requests
  - Document media coverage. Online and in print
  - Ceremonial photos to partners and VIPs with letter of thanks
  - Report on event







## 4. EXHIBITS

### A. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS FOR EXHIBITS

Exhibits should include the following components:

- An introduction to the MPA using a standard map and video
- Graphic panels
- National kiosk including standard pages (e.g., Partners, Weather, Kids Only)
- Interactive video kiosks

When developing exhibits, considering thematic areas, such as:

- Conservation
- Research
- Education
- Management
- Cultural resources

### B. EXHIBIT DOS AND DON'TS

Consider the following items when

developing an exhibit:

- Will it be hard to clean? Will it collect dust easily?
- How durable is your exhibit going to be? Never underestimate the power of small children.
- How heavy will traffic flow be?
- How large of an exhibit is too large? How many exhibits is too many for your space?
- Is lighting direct or indirect? Will your exhibit fade? Will the sunlight on your outdoor kiosk render it unreadable for a portion of the day?
- Are video screens at a good height and easily viewable?
- Will you have seating? If so, will it be comfortable?
- Have you thought about accessibility and 508 compliance issues?  
The following are generally not recommended:
- Live animals – Animal husbandry is costly and time intensive.
- Water features – These can be

very high maintenance and costly.

- Static dioramas – Learn about new technologies. It is not all prohibitively expensive.

### C. INTERACTIVE VIDEO KIOSKS

#### Graphic Panels

When creating your exhibit graphic panels, keep in mind color palettes, fonts, logos, and acknowledgements. Specifications for panel size, materials and layout will vary depending upon the exhibit and should be discussed with your headquarters during the exhibit development process. If applicable, contact your exhibits team as early as possible for the development of exhibit graphic panels. Panels should be reviewed at key stages to ensure messaging is on target and content is concise. Make sure to copy edit for any grammatical errors or typos.

A picture is worth a thousand words. Resist the temptation to clutter panels with excessive text. The majority of your visitors are not interested in reading too much information.



## 5. ONLINE COMMUNICATION

### A. WEB SITE

A dedicated web site acts as a “one stop” location for the public and supporters to find out about your project, and keep up with the latest developments. If there is a budget for a website, you must consider initial development as well as long-term maintenance. Today’s web sites are dynamic rather than static, so a budget should be built in to your web plan for regular upgrades, changes and additions to the site.

Successful websites attract regular visitors by providing new information on a regular basis, and containing useful content (photos, videos) that people are interested in.

Web sites may be referenced in printed materials and press releases, as well as linked to social media sites.

It may be possible to enlist a web development professional or company to donate their expertise in creating and maintaining a site. However, budgets must be considered for owning a domain name and web hosting. It is best to consult a professional web developer and get estimates and suggestions from more than one source.

### B. SOCIAL MEDIA

#### Best Practices

- Provide alternative access to information published on social media. Members of the public should be able to learn about the agency’s activities and to communicate with the agency without having to join a third-party social media website.
- Contribute, engage, and get involved. The unique value of social media is to interact with others by commenting, replying, giving feedback and letting your voice be heard. Without it, you’re just broadcasting. Thank your followers for their feedback and interest in your content.
- Answer as many questions you can in a timely manner, without sacrificing accuracy.

- Any response that you make to a Web or social media user — especially direct messages on Twitter and emails — can go public and find their way onto blogs and websites anywhere in the world, and sometimes in an adulterated form. These might feel like private communications between an MPA and its followers when you are responding, but they are far from it. Think before you reply: Be respectful, be transparent, be accurate and do not engage users in an argument.
  - Be as clear as possible in your tweets and posts. First, answer the basics of Who?, What?, Where?, When?, Why? and How? in plain language. Use dates and time zone info whenever possible. Don’t use abbreviations only your line or program office will recognize. Keep your tweets short as possible and well within 140 characters to facilitate re-tweeting.
  - Patrol, maintain and update your originating website and blog content regularly to ensure accurate and timely information for social media distribution. Science, news, and circumstances can change quickly. Social media is a means to reach an audience with a teaser, let them know what you have on your websites as well as a great opportunity to engage with your audience.
  - Correct and acknowledge mistakes as quickly as possible, and announce your correction to your followers. You might know that something you stated was not quite right, but other may not. Make sure you issue a correction swiftly and clearly in tweets and posts — and be sure to tell people WHAT the mistake WAS and post the correction prominently.
- o Do not individually reprimand any users who violate your comments guidelines. Instead, hide or delete their comments, or block the user as a final resort if he/she meets the criteria.
  - Whenever possible, patrol your social media comments feeds to make sure people are not spreading rumors or posting misinformation. Also be watchful for posts directing readers to off-topic private sites. Try to answer the big questions as quickly as possible, and clear up misinformation in the comments feed.
  - o Remember: Every post is a new opportunity to reiterate essential links to critical information and resources.
  - Hiding or blocking comments on your social media platform page is a decision that depends on the situation, nature of the comments and frequency of the violation. In general, be sure your Comments Guidelines include a clear explanation about the possibility of comments being deleted or blocked from your page if the guidelines supporting on-topic, civil discussion are flouted.

#### Handling Comments

- Every social media page that allows commenting (e.g., Facebook) requires “Comments Guidelines” that users can readily access and that explain what type of comments are and are not allowed





## 6. LISTSERVE

### A. WHY LISTSERVE?

Email lists are a good way to disseminate information to a group of interested people without geographic boundaries. You can develop email lists from social media contacts, your web site, or in-person collection at events.

### B. STEPS TO DEVELOP A LISTSERVE

Setting up one or more email lists is a simple and quick process. Contact your MPA application managers to discuss the options that you would like to have in your email list as outlined below. Provide the necessary information for the account, including account name, moderators' names and addresses, access passwords, etc.

There are elements to consider when creating your list.

1. Decide the type of list you want to create.
2. Decide how subscribers can interact with the list.
3. Decide how your list will be moderated

## 7. PODCAST

### A. GETTING STARTED

#### What is a podcast?

A series of digital media files distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds for playback on portable media players and personal computers

#### What does that mean?

In its most basic form, a podcast is an Internet radio show with regular episodes produced in the form of digital media files. You can subscribe to a series of files, or podcast, by using a piece of software called a "podcatcher." Once you subscribe, your podcatcher periodically checks to see if any new files have been published and, if so, automatically downloads them onto your computer or portable music player. A "vodcast" is the term for a video podcast.

While the types and uses of podcasts and vodcasts are many and varied, they all share certain characteristics. Some of the key features of a podcast include: it is subscribable, updated regularly, and — most importantly — delivered to users via RSS (really simple syndication) so

they can listen to or watch it at any time.

A podcast is not just a single audio or video file uploaded to the Web. An excellent video explanation of podcasting is available at <http://commoncraft.com/podcasting>.

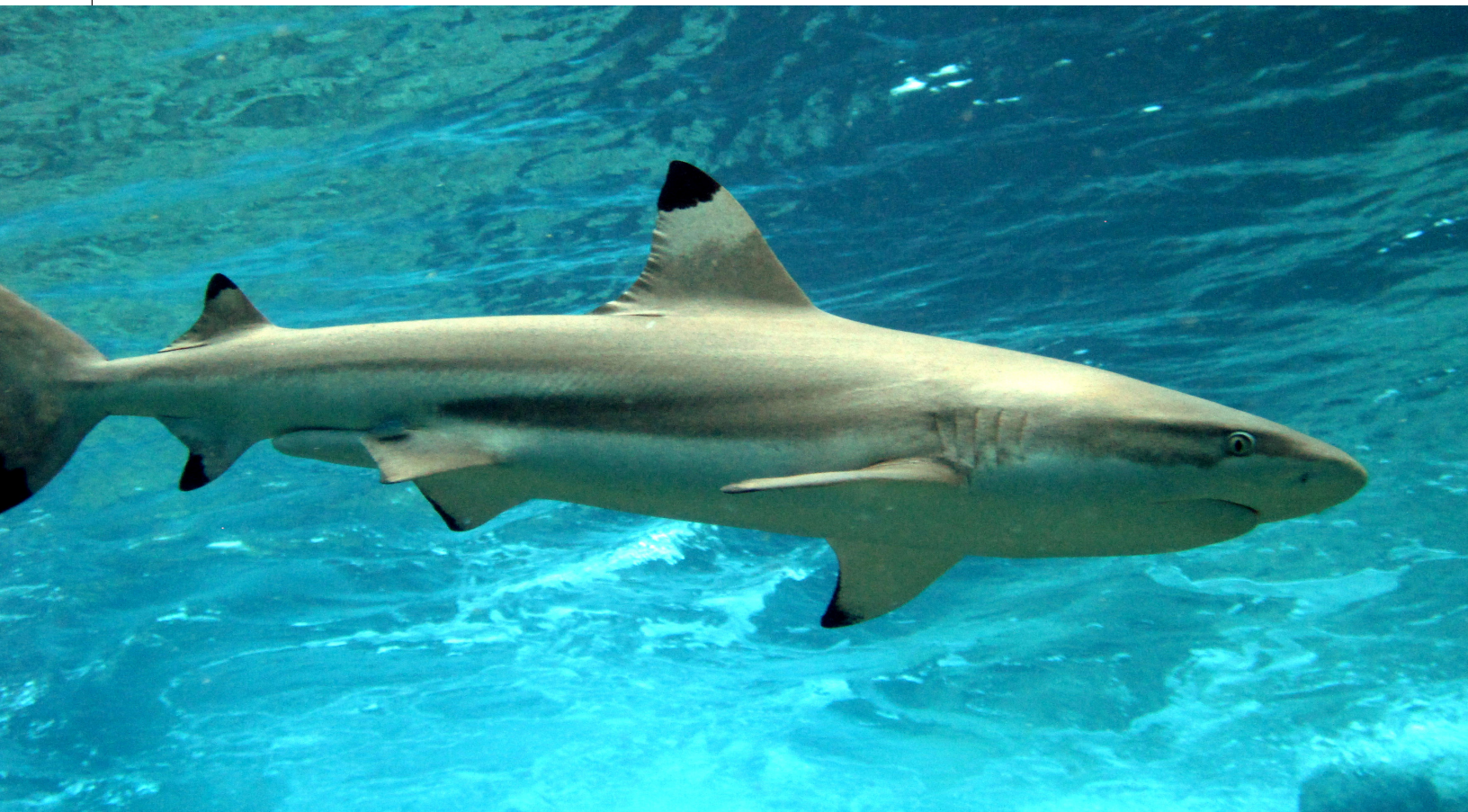
The most common podcatcher used by listeners is iTunes. It is highly recommended that you download it and familiarize yourself with how the program handles podcast subscriptions. It is available for free at <http://www.apple.com/itunes>.

#### Why podcast?

Podcasting is a rapidly growing way to reach listeners around the world. With small cost of entry, hundreds of thousands of new "broadcasters" are hitting the podcast "airwaves" daily. Millions of listeners around the globe are finding new, fun, interesting, entertaining, enlightening, and informative content that they want to hear. It offers a unique platform to engage with the target audience through special guests, interviews, and more.

### B. USES FOR PODCASTING

Podcasting's initial appeal was to allow individuals to distribute their own radio-style shows, but it quickly became used in a wide variety of other ways, in-





cluding distribution of school lessons, official and unofficial audio tours of museums, conference meeting alerts and updates, and distribution of public safety messages by police departments.

Podcasting is becoming increasingly popular in education circles. Podcasts enable students and teachers to share information with anyone at any time. It can be a tool for teachers or administrators to communicate curriculum, assignments, and other information with parents and the community. Teachers can record classroom discussions, vocabulary, foreign language lessons, music performances, interviews, and debates, which can be downloaded by absent students in place of missing class time. Podcasting can also be used as a publishing tool for student oral presentations. Podcasts can be used in all these ways, as well.

The list of uses for podcasts and vodcasts continues to grow, including:

- Talk show format podcasts
- Classroom lessons and supplements
- Audio news releases
- Internal news podcasts (e.g., Director's updates)
- Documentary-style podcasts
- Museum audio-guided tours
- Industry and trade news podcasts

## C. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

### Who is your audience?

Before even attempting to develop a podcast, your first step should be to identify your audience. Who are you trying to communicate with? What are their needs and interests? Make sure that a podcast is an effective means of reaching the audience you are trying to reach before moving into the development stage.

### What subjects or material are you covering?

Do a quick search of existing podcasts on the topic you are trying to market. Is the market flooded with the topic or is it something that no one has talked about?

Podcasting is great for reaching small, focused, and underserved topics of interest. By choosing a specific area of interest to focus on, your podcast can become a powerful source of information and enjoyment for others who share interest in your topic.

### How much time do you need to communicate your information?

Podcasts usually range in length anywhere from a few minutes to 45 minutes. Determine whether your audience will want short amounts of information or an in-depth analysis before starting to work on a script. This will also influence the amount of time it takes to develop the podcast.

### What is the budget for the production?

Consider whether your podcast can be created in-house or if you need to budget for an outside company to handle its production. If you plan to produce the podcast yourself, be sure that you have all of the necessary equipment. Make sure to prioritize the need for the podcast versus the amount of time and money it might take to produce.

### Things to Consider

- Be consistent. If you are going to start distributing podcasts and vodcasts, set a schedule and stick to it.
- Be realistic. Realize how much of a time commitment this form of social media requires and do not tackle it unless you can make the commitment.
- Be smart. Podcasts and vodcasts do not have to address new material. You can use these outlets to repurpose content you've written for other media.
- Set goals. Challenge yourself to reach a target number of listeners or viewers within a certain time period or develop new success metrics of your own.
- Listen to other podcasts. One of the best ways to improve your

podcasting savvy is by following successful podcasts

## D. STEP-BY-STEP DEVELOPMENT

Planning topics to discuss, possible guest interviews, and your show's length in advance will go a long way when producing a professional sounding podcast. Since you'll be recording your project in an almost live fashion, you will have the flexibility of going back and re-editing sections before your show is "podcast-ready."

Since nearly everyone has heard a radio program, you should expect that your listeners have grown accustomed to hearing material produced in a certain way. Read on for a basic guide to mapping out your production.

### Sample podcast recipe: A blueprint for your podcast

Shoot for a show length of 10-15 minutes. Keep topics moving and limit topic coverage to 2-3 minutes apiece. Use guests as a way to break up the conversation, pace and to set the tone of your shows. Use musical backgrounds (known as jingles or music beds) or other non-music interludes (referred to as stagers, sweeps and IDs) to transition between topics. These topic breaks are typically described as bumpers or sweepers, giving your listeners the time they might need to digest the content you just presented

### Show outline: Your table of contents

Here is an example of a show outline:

- Show intro monologue (who you are and what you're going to talk about): 30-60 seconds
- Intro music jingle (repeat for each show so listeners identify the jingle with your show): 30-60 seconds
- Topic 1: 3 minutes
- Topic 2: 3 minutes
- Interlude (music or break): 30 seconds
- Topic 3: 3 minutes
- Topic 4: 3 minutes

- Closing remarks (thank audience for listening, thank guests, and talk about the next show briefly): 2 minutes
- Closing music jingle (suggest same as intro music jingle): 2 minutes

### How to write your script: Writing relevant copy

Research all components of your podcast in order to deliver the most relevant material to your audience. Your writing style should be conversational with friendly language and the use of jargon or industry-specific words in order to accommodate your listeners.

Develop an introduction that will quickly explain and highlight the purpose of your podcast. This section should be roughly 2-3 sentences in length. Usually, an announcer will read this portion of your podcast over a music bed. This introduction can be reused at the beginning of each episode to build your brand.

Next, you will need to incorporate a brief salutation that greets the audience and gives them a preview of the episode, and perhaps even an overview of the show's agenda. This should be roughly 30 seconds long.

The first segment should be the most interesting to keep listeners' attention. This segment should appeal to the entire audience and broad content is encouraged to serve the majority. News and current events related to the podcast theme are often of interest to a full audience. Subsequent segments can be more in-depth and focus on specific areas of interest. Depending on the quality of the content, each segment should be no more than 2-4 paragraphs.

The wrap-up should thank the audience for listening to the episode. Close with an outro or music bed, ideally using the same theme music from the introduction to reestablish the branding of your podcast.

Once you have a listening audience, ask them for feedback about your show and gain valuable information that will help you to improve your podcast. They may even introduce new ideas that will give you an edge over any potential competitors and enhance their listening experience. Ideas that they provide might

refer to the length of segments, topics discussed, and guests on the show.

### Script writing style: Talking to your audience

There are two main voice-over styles for recording your podcast that you should keep in mind when writing your podcast script — polished and freestyle.

A polished, professional-sounding podcast is similar to what you might hear in a newscast or documentary. The script is written out and rehearsed prior to recording. Generally, this podcast may have particular themes that are explored in sequential order, demanding more structure and precision.

Freestyle recordings are most similar to live radio shows or television interviews. Freestyle is an ad lib, fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants recording style that can be unpredictable, engaging, and full of chemistry. This style may work best for podcasts with more than one host, highlighting their dialogue skills and spontaneity, or for individual podcasters that decide to record a verbal stream of consciousness, especially announcers and others that are recording impromptu or on location at a live event. When writing a freestyle script, you may only need to include your segment theme and some point form details within each segment. This way, you can refer to your freestyle script while recording without feeling nailed down to a finalized script.

The best results often come by combining these two methods and developing your own unique podcasting style.

### Summary: Key points about planning your content

In the preceding sections, we talked about the importance of planning your podcast and gave you some ideas about how to organize your podcast, including a sample recipe. In the next section, we'll discuss recording equipment, software, basic recording techniques, and how to set up your podcast for RSS distribution.

## E. TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

For many of the issues discussed in this section, a great deal of information

is available online through various free guides and tutorials. A quick Google or YouTube search will reveal more podcast production tips, RSS feed how-to's, and suggestions for equipment. If you have a question that is not answered in this document, the answer is likely readily available somewhere on the Web.

The following Web sites are good resources:

- <http://www.how-to-podcast-tutorial.com/index.htm>
- <http://radio.about.com/od/podcastin1/a/aa030805a.htm>
- <http://www.apple.com/itunes/store/podcaststechspecs.html>
- <http://handbrake.fr/> - Recommended for compression
- <http://www.musiciansfriend.com> - Recommended for finding recording components

### Basic Equipment

- Computer with Audio Input
- Microphone - The microphone stands between your voice and the podcast file and is arguably the most important device in the creation of a podcast. As such, it behooves you to ensure that the quality of the recording is as good as it can be based on your budget and expectations. Two main types of microphones are used for podcasting: dynamic microphones and condenser microphones.
  - Dynamic microphones are generally cheaper and more portable and durable, but do not always produce the most accurate sound. Most handheld microphones are dynamic.
  - Condenser microphones tend to be more expensive, but produce better quality sound than dynamic microphones. They are also much more sensitive and fragile, and are generally used only in studios. (Note: Condenser microphones require external power to function. This power usually comes from a mixer or



preamp device and is referred to as phantom power.)

- Mixer - You will need a mixer for more advanced podcasting techniques, including using multiple microphones requiring phantom power.
- Pop Filter - A pop filter is a screen that blocks or filters the popping sounds that are made when you say letters such as 'p' when you speak into a mic (called "plosives"). This is a common complaint about independent podcasters. They do not use a pop filter and the sounds that result can be annoying to listeners. Pop filters are available for around \$20, or you can make your own using the guide here: <http://www.deansabatin.com/2005/08/21/67/>
- Headphones or a Headset
- Audio Recording and Editing Software - Audacity, a free audio recording and editing program, is one of the most commonly used pieces of software for creating podcasts. It is available for download here: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net>. Extensive information on how to use Audacity to record and edit your podcast is available in the "Help" section of the program's Web site.

## Preparation

Collect and organize your information and audio clips in advance. When you write your outline, you should pull together your research on the topics that you will be talking about. If you will be commenting on something you read, you might want to print it and have it ready with your notes. If you'll be covering news headlines, get them ready. Pull together your stories, jokes, music, or whatever else you plan to use. This is also a good time to collect the audio clips that you will be using into one folder on your computer.

This is the preparation stage so that when you get in front of the mic and hit record you will not freeze up. Getting organized will help you feel confident and recording your show will be easier if you are prepared.

## Location

Have a place set up with your podcasting gear ready to go when you are. If possible, choose a spot that is quiet and free from distraction. Make sure the room does not have too many echoes or too much reverberation when you record. Be aware of the noise going on both outside and inside, such as fans, air conditioners, and extra computers that generate noise.

## F. PUBLISHING YOUR PODCAST

Once you have your podcast "in the can," you need to publish it to the Internet for your audience to access.

### The Basic Steps of Publishing Your Podcast

1. Upload your podcast to your Web site or other host.
2. Create a home page where users can find your blog, show notes, and other materials.
3. Create an RSS feed that your listeners can subscribe to so they can automatically download new episodes of your podcast.

### Working with RSS

As a podcaster, you create and update your RSS feed for your listeners to subscribe to. An RSS feed is nothing more than a specially formatted text file, written in a language called XML (similar to HTML). This is just a set of rules that outlines how the information in the feed file needs to be formatted.

An RSS feed for a podcast includes information about your audio or video file, such as its Web address and file size. When a user subscribes to your podcast, their podcatcher uses this information to find and download the file.

A detailed explanation of how to publish a podcast with RSS is available here: [http://radio.about.com/od/podcastin1/a/aa030805a\\_3.htm](http://radio.about.com/od/podcastin1/a/aa030805a_3.htm).

The following is a link to a free RSS file generator that can simplify the process even further: [http://www.tdscripsts.com/webmaster\\_utilities/podcast-generator.php](http://www.tdscripsts.com/webmaster_utilities/podcast-generator.php).

## iTunes Submission Process

Podcasting on iTunes requires several steps:

1. Creating your first episode, which can be an audio recording, video, or even a text document. Supported file formats include .m4a, .mp3, .mov, .mp4, .m4v, and .pdf.
2. Posting your episode file(s) on a server with a publicly accessible URL.
3. Creating an RSS feed (an XML file) that:
  - a. Conforms to the RSS 2.0 specification;
  - b. Includes the recommended iTunes RSS tags; and
  - c. Contains pointers to your episode.
4. Posting the RSS file on a server.
5. Submit the URL for your RSS feed to iTunes.

Visit <http://www.apple.com/itunes/store/podcaststechspecs.html> for detailed instructions on how to tailor your podcast for iTunes.

## G. MARKETING YOUR PODCAST

The following are a few basic tips to get you started once you have developed a podcast and are seeking to expand your audience:

- You will find it easier to market your podcast and maintain listeners with a podcast that focuses on a niche topic.
- Make sure to update your podcast regularly. If you set a monthly schedule, make sure you stick to it. Consistency will go a long way toward keeping listeners.
- Get your podcast into iTunes (see above for directions) and other podcast directories, where the general public will be more likely to seek it out.
- Include interesting and engaging show notes with each podcast, and post them on the podcast's home page. See information for tips on



writing show notes at <http://www.howto-podcast-tutorial.com/27-writing-podcast-show-notes.htm>.

- Link people to the podcast's home page whenever possible and mention it frequently in your other outreach products and materials (Web site, brochures, etc.).

## 8. VIDEO

### A. PRE-PRODUCTION

The pre-production process enables the client to formulate a clear idea of what their video is trying to communicate. This process involves:

### Storyboarding (or Scripting)

The first step is to understand what the client is trying to communicate and what the intended message is. Creating a script or storyboard will help ensure that you and your audience understand your intent. When creating your product keep in mind the 5 W's:





Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

There are two main styles for laying out a video project - a storyboard or a script. They each have their pros and cons. The storyboard contains a rough sketch representation of the video. It is essentially a timeline going from top to bottom, with the top occurring first. Using a storyboard gives an idea of what the scene will look like. This is one of the major advantages a storyboard has over a script. The storyboard method is also generally thought to provide a better overview than the scripting method.

Script style is similar to reading a book. It is very useful for dialogue-intensive pieces. If you do have a piece with a considerable amount of dialogue, use the video side to indicate who is speaking. Often, your voiceover talent will benefit more from this method than the storyboard, as they are more interested in their lines than creating a story.

The storyboard and script methods should be used in conjunction with one another. Creating a storyboard allows you to refine and examine the overall story line. Once completed, the storyboard should be turned into a script. The final script will provide the detail required for the actual shooting, if necessary. It will also allow the talent to view and rehearse their lines.

With a prepared script or storyboard, the producer needs to plan ahead to decide what production elements the video should include to help the client better communicate their message.

Turning a script or storyboard into a video will require some planning. Video incorporates many different elements such as zooms, dissolves, cross fades, music, and titles. When used properly, these elements can aid in telling a story. Putting them together requires some planning. To effectively use these production elements, the client must first understand them.

### Planning Production Elements

- Titles names, credits, and copyright page
- Graphics opening and closing
- Video chroma key, dissolves, fram-

ing, zooms, fades, wipes, close-up, and long shot

- Audio dialogue, sound effects, music, microphone techniques, and voice-over

### Creating a Pre-production Checklist

With a finished script or storyboard and knowledge of what production elements will be included, there are still a couple of things that you need to check on to ensure that the rest of your production goes smoothly.

- Identify copyright issues and usage rules with producers prior to production.
- Fill out multi-media request forms during pre-production to ensure that the timeline is met.
- Education and research teams must meet prior to their project so videos and shot lists are prepared prior to project launch.
- During script and storyboard development, educational and interpretive pieces should identify objectives based on educational standards.

### Additional Needs

- Acquire props, if needed
- Get tape log sheets
- Acquire all equipment
- Scout out sites
- Choose talent and rehearse
- Book studio time
- Does all equipment work? Or does it need maintenance?
- Charge batteries
- Choose a videotape format
- Purchase video tapes

## B. PRODUCTION

With storyboard and equipment prepared, the producer can begin work on production. This next section explains the Production phase. The Production phase involves the:

- **CAMERA** - Good camerawork will allow your audience to see things from your perspective. From close-ups for detail and emotion to long shots for perspective, camera angles, movement, and composition, will keep a project flowing. Poorly executed camerawork can make the best scripts confusing and uninteresting. Shots must be planned and discussed between the client and producer.
- **FORMAT** - The format depends on the level of quality the client needs and can afford. Formats such as digital video (DV) offer a standard of recording quality. However, some form of high-definition format is quickly becoming the standard.
- **LIGHTING** - When used properly, lighting is an expressive and powerful tool. When used improperly, lighting can make it difficult for an audience to view or understand the client's intent.
- **AUDIO** - Audio is often overlooked, which results in amateur-looking projects. Poor audio treatments often have too much ambience, noise, poor microphone techniques, wide variations in volume level, hiss, and other annoying sound problems. One of the best ways to look like a pro is to sound like a pro.

### Production Checklist

- Format
  - Identification of final format and cost associated during production.
  - Should we shoot everything in HD but chose export based on budget?
- Audio
  - Identify equipment which would work well in specific situations.
  - Audio must be clear. Remember that everything should be captioned.
  - Audio needs to be equalized so that it does not change from very loud to soft. It should also



be modulated for static volume settings at kiosks and displays.

- Ensure captioning costs are captured in the production contract requirements.

## C. POST PRODUCTION

This is where the producer makes the crucial decisions as to what stays and what goes. Graphics are also added at this point, which will give the video a polished and professional appearance.

### Tape Logging and Capturing

The more footage that is shot, the more critical this becomes. While reviewing the tapes, the producer writes notes in the log (see below). Notes can include the scene name, time code or control track numbers, and comments (e.g., usefulness, sound problems, bad take, etc.). After logging the tape, the producer can enter the parameters and capture the footage. This leads to the next step, which is creating an EDL.

### Edit Decision List (EDL) or Shot List

After completion of logging and cap-

turing, clips are reviewed and the shots that will be used are selected. These selected shots are recorded in the EDL or, alternately, the Shot List. These are printable representations of what the final edited video will look like. Using one of the lists will enable the producer to make the appropriate edits, such as: cut, dissolve, wipe, which tapes to use, the in and out for each edit, and what kind of edit to take: video, audio, both.

### Editing

Depending on the type of piece be-





ing edited, the (choice of) lists will flow differently. For example, to get the high-energy feel of a rock video, the producer would include lots of edits, keeping shots changing to create a sense of excitement. A variety of video effects can also help generate a feeling of excitement, such as wipes, chroma key, and dissolves. After completing the EDL, the producer can begin creating titles and graphics.

### Graphics

Graphics can accomplish several different objectives. They break up the

video and provide detailed information. They are also useful in demonstrating difficult concepts.

### Music

Adding music to a scene can help set the tone or provide nonverbal cues. Sound effects can provide a sense of realism for a project and can also be used to make the setting more believable. This realism will have a greater impact on the audience.

### Final Adjustments

Before finishing the producer must listen to make sure the overall levels are uniform throughout the edit. The audience should not be expected to adjust the volume during the video. Noises, clicks, hums, or buzzes should be removed. If these noises are very apparent, rerecording might be necessary.

### Output and Delivery

Upon completion of the final production, there will be one last review and approval. At this point, the master will be sent to the client or to a facility for mass-production.







## PART 3: PARTNERSHIP

### PARTNERSHIP

#### A. INTRODUCTION

##### Why Work with Partners?

Working with partners can leverage expertise and resources that allow your MPA to better fulfill your mission and spread your messages further.

##### Definition of “Partners”

A partner is an organization (governmental, private, academic or non-profit) that contributes funding and/or in-kind resources. Partners actively collaborate in the planning, promotion, execution, evaluation, and interpretation of your MPA-sponsored programs, supporting management, research, and/or education for your MPA.

Significant partnerships can leverage your ability to fulfill your mandate in a measureable way. Partnerships offer benefits including staff time and expertise, funding, exhibit space, vessel time, and the use of equipment or facilities.

##### Working with Partners on Education, Outreach, and Communications

Working with partners, while rewarding, adds another layer of input and decision-making to the planning and development process. It can sometimes be challenging to merge the ideals, messages, and desired outcomes each partner has for the project.

#### B. STEPS IN WORKING WITH PARTNERS:

##### Develop a Plan

Before creating a brochure, video, or other product, create a project plan that outlines the desired outcomes and how they will be achieved. Much like the goals that you learned to set earlier, this plan needs to be tangible, actionable, and have a deadline. It is important to define the roles of each partner and to specify who will contribute what to the partnership. In the plan consider what steps are needed to reach those outcomes, who will take those steps, and what timeframe they need to be completed in. The plan will guide the project and work as an agreement between the partners to ensure that all parties are on the same page.

##### Keep Track of Your Partnerships

It is the responsibility of each MPA manager to track and maintain partnerships. It is helpful to track the goals and outcomes of a partnership to determine its success. It also may be helpful to consider:

- Is there a need for a licensing agreement with the partner(s)?
- Who is contributing funding and in-kind support?
- Did you reach your desired outcomes?

##### Clearance Process When Working with Partners

As each partnership is different in its purpose and composition, the process for clearance will vary slightly for each. For example, a press release may need to be a joint release using both partners' logos and clearance processes. A brochure may need to incorporate graphic elements from each partner. A transfer of funds may require the signing of a cooperative agreement or memorandum of agreement, which may require weeks of planning.





## PART 4: EVALUATION

### EVALUATION

#### A. WHY EVALUATION?

- From the outset, it's good to build in plans to monitor and measure the success of your communications activities. The evaluation phase is an important stage in assessing what did and did not work and seeing if the objectives were met. The findings are also useful in guiding future communications activities.
- Evaluation is helped by setting relevant and realistic objectives during the planning stages of communication. It is a good idea to establish measurable benchmarks and specific targets for your objectives.

#### B. EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES:

Evaluation should be relevant, cost-effective and meaningful for what you

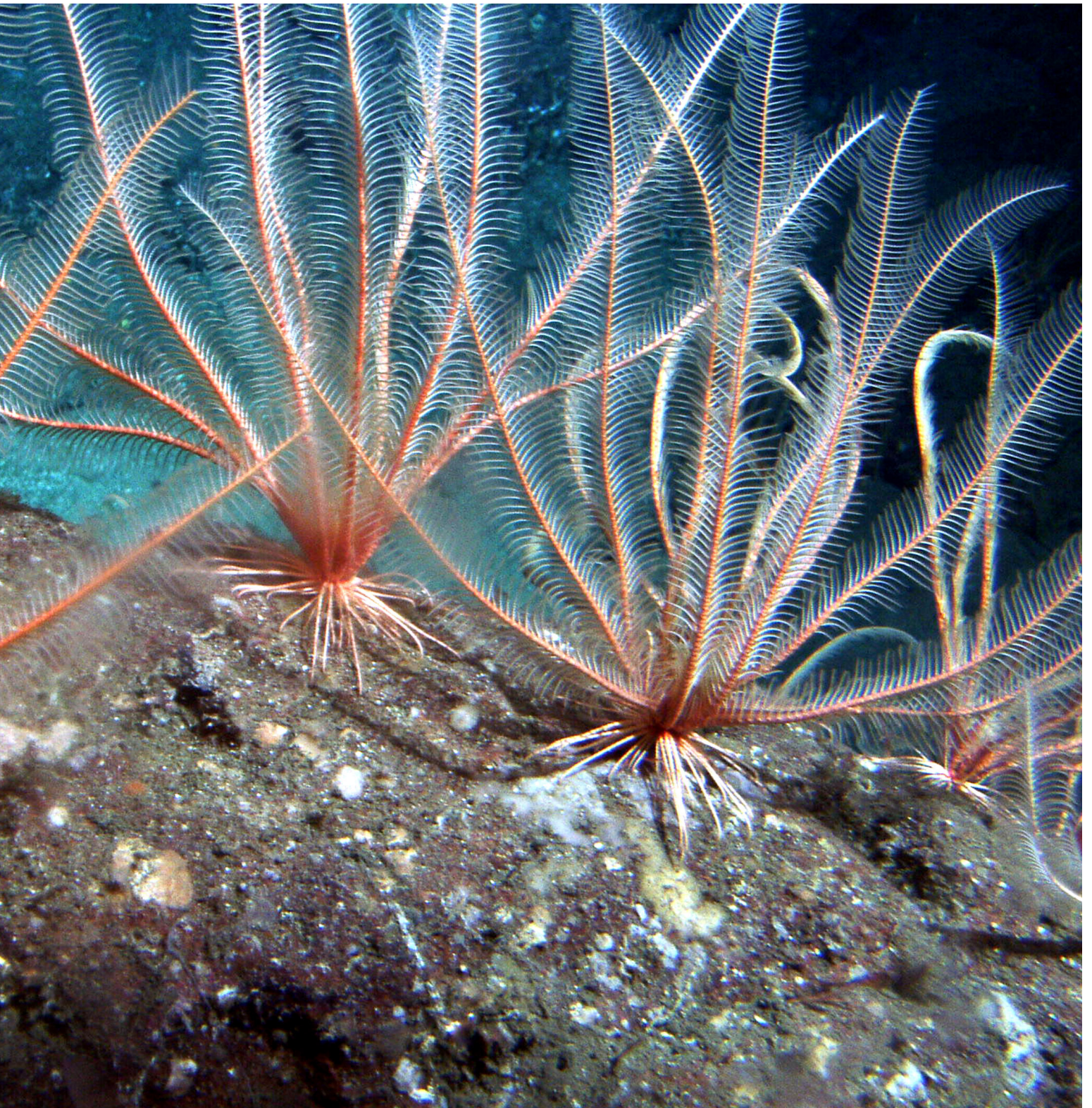
are trying to achieve and the methods used. Evaluation costs may be included as part of a total budget for your communications goals. Where possible, internal data sources should be captured. Examples of data sources may include:

- Website statistics including page views, collateral downloads and search engine rankings. Online research is a cost effective method of gathering campaign evaluation information.
- Social media numbers, such as "likes" or followers.
- Communication such as phone calls, emails, personal comments.
- Partner statistics.
- Monitoring of social media comments or discussions.
- Media statistics: by keeping track of media coverage, you can docu-

ment how many impressions your news stories have generated, and how much that might have cost if you had purchased similar advertising.

- For a target audience, you can create a survey, administered before and after a communications campaign. It can be designed simply, to measure increase in name recognition, or more detailed, to include an indication of message understanding. Surveys can be distributed in person, by email, or online.
- Research and communications companies offer paid evaluation services. These services use a range of consumer and media research methodologies such as recognition, linkage and demographics.







## PART 5: CONCLUSION

A good communications plan helps drive your perception and acceptance

There is a direct relationship between how you are perceived, accepted and valued. Putting good efforts into communications planning can drive how your MPA is perceived, valued and accepted. Whether you are planning a new MPA or communicating the value or actions of an existing MPA, investing time, effort and funding into communications can have a direct result on your success.

We hope this guidebook was helpful in outlining how to use communication as more than just a tool for outreach, but rather as a mechanism to catalyze change in a community's attitude and behavior.

This guidebook is an unprecedented effort by NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) to inspire a new view on communication. However, we are by

no means the absolute experts on all applications of communications.

We hope this is just the beginning of sharing communications and invite you to submit ideas, your best practices and case studies of applied communications strategies to share with others. Please send your input to [matthew.stout@noaa.gov](mailto:matthew.stout@noaa.gov) and we will update this document regularly to share the best knowledge and practices out there.







