

UNHCE Communications: *Educational Information, Marketing & External Relations Division* Vision/Logic Model (2004-2009)

The UNHCE Communications Educational Information, Marketing & External Relations Division will

Stimulate, educate and support staff and volunteers to produce exceptional educational and marketing products for distribution through hard copy and diverse electronic formats.

Propose and support new models for marketing UNHCE.

Propose and help develop new models for improving internal CE communication.

Develop and promote models for collaborative and interactive engagement among staff/volunteers, UNH faculty, UNHCE partners and UNHCE clientele to collect, integrate and distribute educational/informational resources that address issues of broad public concern.

Situation

Communication in one form or another describes nearly everything we do in Cooperative Extension. The current Communications/Technology Strategic Plan developed by the Communications and Technology Strategic Planning Team (Comm/Tech Team) presents a vision for CE communications *technology* and the staff training essential for using that technology. It includes no mention of how CE will develop, ensure the quality, or evaluate the effectiveness of our internal and external communications products themselves.

External Communications Cooperative Extension's external communications have traditionally involved face-to-face teaching encounters, supported by a wide variety of primarily static (non-interactive) communications products: fact sheets, curricula, newsletters, and a Web site that currently posts most materials in non-interactive PDF formats that replicate our printed materials.

We characterize the current CE educational model as *expert-driven* (i.e. Extension professionals assess the needs of their many publics—often seeking outside input—then develop and deliver programs designed to meet those needs.) Yet the Internet has evolved powerful new *user-driven* models of teaching and learning which (1) empower users to build new forms of community, (2) perform their own information quality assessments and (3) tailor their online activities to meet their unique, self-determined needs of the moment. Despite keeping pace with advances in digital technology, UNH Cooperative Extension has not kept pace with understanding the implications of user-driven learning and teaching models, nor invested time and resources exploring whether or how we might adopt them.

Some Extension professionals, though they possess advanced degrees, strong technical skills and many years of experience in their respective fields, lack strong writing skills. They don't seem to see the need, can't acknowledge it, or don't know how to improve their

writing skills. Others appear to need information about the basic principles of adult learning and how to incorporate these into their written communications.

Marketing and external relations Although we like to say one in four New Hampshire residents takes advantage of a Cooperative Extension program in any given year, anecdotal evidence suggests very few people have much understanding of the breadth and depth of programming across the entire organization, including many CE staff.

Internal communications The great diversity of UNHCE programming, the organization's division into many psychologically distinct "cultures," and the separation (both geographic and psychological) between campus-based administrators/specialists and county staff creates tremendous challenges to understanding each other's work. In turn, this greatly constrains communicating the scope and breadth of Extension's mission and activities to external audiences. These internal cultural and geographic divisions also may work to reduce mutual empathy among and between CE colleagues, as well as to promote the formation of internal cliques and cabals.

Our need to seek increasing amounts of grant funding may complicate and exacerbate this situation. CE employees or contracted workers funded by outside grants have some degree of independence from standard CE operating and communicating protocols.

Assumptions

We assume conventional sources of CE income will continue to diminish, requiring us to develop innovative methods of programming and marketing to attract new sources of revenue and an expanded stakeholder base.

We assume UNHCE leaders will guide, support and champion our work.

We assume organization-wide support for making the changes needed for UNHCE to compete in the informal educational marketplace.

We assume UNHCE leadership will provide adequate funding and personnel to enable our unit to fulfill its stated objectives.

Internal Factors

Extension's traditional focus on one-way, expert-to-layperson communication.

The organization's division into discrete subject/program areas, with subject matter specialists providing technical support for programming.

A tacit assumption that program leaders, specialists and educators possess adequate writing and document design skills to enable them to communicate well with their various publics.

Increasing need to seek outside grants.

External Factors

Many information, educational and entertainment providers compete with CE for our customers' time and attention.

We will likely continue to experience shrinking support from our traditional funding sources.

We may need to divert resources into communications initiatives that help us develop new funding sources.

Changing demographic and economic factors and new technology will challenge the content and delivery models of traditional CE programming.

UNH has hired a Vice President of Communications and will soon issue a Communications Strategic Plan.

UNH has initiated a campaign to establish the concept of *discovery* as its “defensible, memorable and sustainable brand identity,” the “one thing” that “will distill [the University’s] identity and vision” and “form the center of gravity for telling the University of New Hampshire story...and that will distinguish the University of New Hampshire among similar universities.”

Barriers

Colleagues tied to conventional ways of developing and delivering education and information.

Lack of an in-house graphic designer.

Exclusion of our unit from ITDE planning and activities; no representation on Comm/Tech team.

Lack of a unified Web design/content development/editing team.

Time.

Stakeholders: UNHCE leadership, staff, volunteers and partners, public officials, policymakers, key opinion leaders, UNH as an institution, and all of CE's various publics, which include the general public.

Communications Unit (*Educational Information, Marketing & External Relations Division*) Logic Model

| Inputs | Activities | Participants/ Audiences | Learning Outcomes | Behavior Change/ Action Outcomes | Impacts* 5+ years |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Peg and Holly's time</p> <p>Paul B-K's time</p> <p>CE Communications Workgroup members' time</p> | <p>Recruit and co-chair CE EIM&ER Workgroup (ad hoc, with people coming in and out, not a standing committee)</p> <p>Work with this group to refine the vision/logic model for the unit</p> <p>Team members may perform marketing and other essential communications work</p> | <p>Internal participants: EIM&ER Division staff and Workgroup</p> | <p>Peg and Holly learn more about internal needs for improving communication</p> <p>Workgroup members suggest and learn ways to improve communications quality and integration</p> <p>All internal and external communications projects benefit from diversity of perspectives represented by the team</p> | <p>Standards for high quality communications products will diffuse throughout CE</p> <p>Staff will increase number and quality of interdisciplinary/multi-partner communications products</p> | <p>UNHCE will receive national recognition as a leader among higher educational institutions in developing a fully integrated, multi-disciplinary approach to informal education that strengthens youth, families and communities, sustains natural resources, and improves the economy</p> |
| <p>Peg and Holly's time</p> <p>Funding for graphic design services</p> <p>Graphic designer's time</p> | <p>Provide copyediting services for major UNHCE publications and Web content</p> <p>Perform writing tasks as required (including writing and revising fact sheets)</p> <p>Provide editorial oversight for print publications; provide liaison between author, graphic designer and printer/publisher, get estimates, schedule printing, distribute publication</p> <p>Develop clean new UNHCE graphic identity and templates for various CE publications, with variations for each program area</p> | <p>CE staff</p> <p>Intended audiences</p> | <p>Staff will experience directly and understand the importance of good copyediting, and a little about the rhetorical alignment of visuals with textual material</p> | <p>Quality, consistency and overall integration of UNHCE communications will improve as measured by meeting established benchmarks</p> | <p>Other UNH units, including UNH administration, will publicly recognize UNHCE as providing higher education models of excellence in outreach communications that help support our mission to strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Peg and Holly's time</p> <p>EIM&ER workgroup members' time</p> <p>New England Clipping Service (through UNH Media Relations)</p> | <p>Develop marketing campaigns for selected publications</p> <p>Develop social marketing program for innovative Web features</p> <p>Collect articles and references to UNHCE programs via clipping service</p> | <p>Intended readerships</p> <p>UNHCE Web site users and NH print and online newspaper readers</p> | <p>NH residents, legislators, policymakers and key decision makers will increase learn , use and value UNHCE publications and innovative Web features and increase overall knowledge of UNHCE</p> <p>Clipping Service will help CE staff gauge the use and effectiveness of written materials, event promotions, etc.</p> | <p>Responding to increased attention to UNHCE educational materials, staff will improve quality, innovation and "reach" of important hard copy and Web-based formats</p> | <p>UNHCE will receive national recognition as a leader among Land Grant in developing highly integrated, multi-disciplinary and impactful communications products that strengthens youth, families and communities, sustains natural resources, and improves the economy</p> |
| <p>Peg and Holly's time</p> <p>EIM&ER workgroup members' time</p> <p>Volunteer testers</p> | <p>Develop benchmarks for assessing quality improvements in written communications and Web content</p> <p>Develop protocols and training for pre-testing communications products on real-world users</p> <p>Develop protocols for periodically re-testing important communications products</p> | <p>Internal producers</p> | <p>CE writers will understand the need for user testing</p> <p>CE writers and designers will learn appropriate methods for testing various products and audiences</p> <p>CE writers and designers will begin editing their work based on previous testing results</p> | <p>CE communications products will consistently meet the multiple needs of real users</p> | <p>See above</p> |
| <p>Peg and/or Holly's time</p> <p>Webmaster's time</p> <p>ITDE team members' time</p> <p>"Usability lab" (computer terminal, tester's table and video camera w/operator</p> | <p>Peg/Holly will join the newly-organized Web design team as editors</p> <p>Staff will begin to develop content specifically for online use, including interactivity</p> <p>Communications Unit and ITDE team will develop usability lab, design and conduct Web usability testing and periodic retesting</p> | <p>Web audiences</p> <p>Internal audiences (to learn online writing skills and Web usability testing procedures)</p> | <p>Webmaster and technical support team will understand the critical "communications" aspects of Web information delivery</p> <p>Web Team (technical and communications aspects) will learn to improve Web site by conducting periodic usability tests</p> | <p>UNHCE staff will contribute more Web content, more often, and in more varied formats</p> <p>Web site usability will improve measured by meeting established benchmarks</p> | <p>UNHCE Web site will win national recognition for innovative design and content integration that helps NH residents make better decisions that strengthen youth, families and communities, protect natural resources and improve the economy</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | | EIM&ER Division will learn and support the technical concerns and workload of Webmaster and technical staff | | |
| Peg and Holly's time Graphic designer's time | <p>Develop model for ongoing needs assessment for writing/editing training and coaching</p> <p>Develop and deliver ongoing series of writing, editing and document design workshops</p> <p>Develop in-service trainings related to marketing CE</p> <p>Offer online, telephone and face-to-face "coaching service" for CE writers</p> <p>Post manual of writing design and marketing resources on Web site</p> | <p>Internal publics</p> <p>UNHCE/partner workgroups</p> | Staff will measurably improve written communications skills as measured by meeting benchmarks | <p>As fluency and ease of writing improve, more CE staff will enjoy writing more</p> <p>Workgroups will increase their capacity for editing each other's work , as measured by self-reporting and assessment of work using benchmarks</p> | Other UNH units, including UNH administration, will publicly recognize UNHCE as providing models of excellence in outreach communications that strengthens youth, families and communities, sustains natural resources, and improves the economy |
| Peg and Holly's time L Team support | Develop a plan that gradually shifts more and more UNHCE communications to Web for online distribution to printers and/or general public | All internal and external publics | Staff will learn the value of just-in-time publishing and capacity for continuous updating | <p>CE will improve Web-based communications and develop a better-integrated base of written communications</p> <p>Reduce warehousing, printing and distribution costs</p> | UNHCE earns national recognition as a leader in Web-based information integration and publishing that strengthens youth, families and communities, sustains natural resources, and improves the economy |
| Peg and Holly's time (a lot of extra time training interns and editing their work) | Develop an internship program for UNH student communications/writing/marketing/majors | <p>UNH student interns</p> <p>Various publics</p> | Students gain important real-world experience | UNHCE helps other UNH units understand and increase outreach /engagement | UNHCE develops a long-term extension of the EIM&ER unit, dedicated to specific programs that that strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Leadership support—both CE and UNH department heads/administrators</p> | <p>Under EIM&ER guidance and editorial management, assign student interns to CE programs to provide marketing support, cover events, write press releases, etc</p> | | | <p>UNHCE develops “ambassadors” who know something about CE staff, mission and stakeholders</p> <p>UNHCE units receive help promoting and publicizing events</p> <p>UNH can use program as “proof point” for service learning and its new “discovery”brand.</p> | <p>natural resource, and improve the economy</p> |
| <p>Peg & Holly’s time</p> <p>CE Leadership support</p> <p>EIM&ER advisory team input and support</p> <p>Appropriate UNH department heads, public officials, lay people (to participate as a topic-organizing committee)</p> <p>Campus Communicators, NH newspaper reporters (to perform interviews, writing and document design work)</p> <p>Other CE staffers’ time</p> | <p>Develop proposals for <i>public issues education</i> campaigns</p> <p>EIM&ER Division develops ideas for issues to pursue</p> <p>Team engages other UNH departments, NH daily newspaper editors, NHPR & NHPTV producers, public officials and lay people to form an “issue steering committee” that identifies the dimensions of the selected public issue, as well as appropriate spokesperson(s) for each dimension</p> <p>Writers and graphic designers divvy up interviews and design the format, write and develop graphics to accompany6 the articles</p> <p>Peg and Holly will provide overall editorial oversight. Tech experts will also review each article before publication</p> | <p>Internal publics</p> <p>UNH departments</p> <p>Public and non-profit officials</p> <p>General public</p> | <p>Entire CE staff will become better-educated about the many dimensions of each critical issue addressed in these campaigns</p> <p>Program will increase level of public discourse on hot/critical topics</p> <p>Internal and external publics will understand CE has important role to play as convener and organizer on topics of broad public concern</p> <p>Professional groups will understand that CE can deliver their message in ways they cannot</p> <p>CE staff will learn ways to deliver strong, conflicting opinions on many sides of an issue without acting (or being perceived) as advocates for a particular point of view</p> | <p>Within five years, 40 percent of NH residents will have read or participated in one of UNHCE/UNH’s public issues campaigns</p> <p>Legislators from both political parties and policymakers will publicly acknowledge the benefit and importance of integrated public issues education that involves the University, outside experts and laypeople</p> <p>UNH can use public issues program as “proof points” for critical issues outreach and for its new “discovery” brand</p> | <p>NH political leaders and policymakers will participate in and help promote UNHCE-organized public issues campaigns that strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy</p> <p>UNH will win at least one national recognition for its commitment to public engagement</p> <p>UNHCE will win at least one national award for its public issues campaigns</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| | <p>Publish initial issue document online, insert in daily newspapers through NH</p> <p>Develop interactive discussion boards on the Web to promote public input and update as situation changes</p> <p>Schedule radio and TV programs that discuss the issue</p> <p>CE staff and UNH faculty host face-to-face workshops and public forums around the issue at hand</p> | | | | <p>UNHCE Web site will host ongoing and vibrant public issues conversations that aim to strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy</p> |
| <p>Peg and Holly's time</p> <p>Communications workgroup</p> <p>ITDE support</p> <p>L Team support</p> | <p>Develop proposals and products for improving internal UNHCE communications</p> | <p>UNHCE staff, including support staff</p> | <p>Staff will learn more about each other's work, critical issues as seen from others' perspectives</p> <p>Staff will expand professional/personal networks, identify new potential partners and resources</p> | <p>UNHCE staff will harvest both tacit and explicit knowledge from entire UNHCE network</p> <p>UNHCE staff will build a strong foundation of interdisciplinary knowledge</p> <p>Program area "cultures" will develop new perspectives on issues, develop insights into new ways to foster interdisciplinary initiatives</p> | <p>UNHCE will receive statewide and national recognition for interdisciplinary communications, particularly regarding emerging and critical issues (which always cross disciplinary boundaries) that strengthen youth, families and communities, sustains natural resources, and improves the economy</p> |

* Much of the work of our unit seeks to improve the effectiveness, reach and depth of other CE units' programs, and hence, their long-term outcomes.