COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 101

For science communicators

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Quick introductions

TODAY'S SESSION

- Defining goals – how to develop specific goals for a broad audience
- Situational analysis – the key questions to ask
- Messaging – structuring a messaging framework
- Where? How to find the right channels
- When to outsource – different types of agency relationships
- Evaluation – measuring beyond circulation to identify impact

GOALS

FIND YOUR FOUNDATIONS

- What key business or organisational goals are you supporting?
- Ask to see business plans and strategies
- Engage key stakeholders early-on in discussions

BE SPECIFIC & REALISTIC

- Following tried and tested methods, such as SMART goals can help to bring structure
- Don't be afraid to admit you don't know enough about an audience!

DIG DEEP INTO OUTCOMES

- Outputs can be useful indicators for how you are progressing against your goal, but ultimately the outcomes will highlight the **impact** of your work
- Outputs can help to illustrate your **progress** towards your goals
- How do the outcomes you want to achieve translate across your audiences?

THINK OF YOUR GOALS AS A TOOL

- Your goals should support you for highlighting priorities and fighting for more resource
- Secondary goals can help outline key areas of focus that will help make or break your overarching ambition

IMPACT ACROSS BORDERS

- What is your current understanding of your audiences? Where are the gaps? Where is the evidence?

- Where are the similarities? Is there a united goal, or different desired outcomes across different audiences?

- Are you being mindful of audience 'borders' in meeting your ambition? (Demographics, location, industry, interests, values, goals...)

Questions to ask

- Do you have enough information from your organisation to be confident in the focus of your communications goal?

- Do you feel like you have a good understanding of all the audiences you want to reach?

- Do you have an overarching goal in place that describes how you want to reach these audiences?

- Does the way you currently segment your audience support where and how you look to target them?

- Do you have clear timescales in place for reviewing and assessing your communications activities?

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

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SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

PORTER'S FIVE FORCES

1. Threat of new entrants
2. Bargaining power of suppliers
3. Bargaining power of buyers
4. Threat of substitute products or services
5. Industry rivalry

INFLUENCING FACTORS

- What is influencing/ driving your audiences at the moment?
- Are key trends shifting their world?
- What are they likely to be prioritising?
- Do you have existing relationships with key influencers for your audiences?

INTERACTIONS

- How do the audiences interact with your organisation at the moment?
- What other organisations could the audience be looking to for the same answers?

BARRIERS

- What are the key barriers to reaching your communications goal? (Do they need more than communications to solve?)

What's the common thread?

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INFLUENCING FACTORS

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INTERACTIONS

- How do the audiences interact with your organisation at the moment?
- What other organisations could the audience be looking to for the same answers?

BARRIERS

- What are the key barriers to reaching your communications goal that communications alone cannot solve?

Media monitoring

Interviews

Gated content

Job descriptions

AI analysis

Channel audit

Content audit

Share of Voice analysis

Stakeholder audit

Internal surveys

Workshops

Questions to ask

- Would a SWOT analysis or Porter's Five Forces meet your needs? Why?
- Can you identify a common thread?
- Which tools and questions will help bring clarity around your goal(s)?
- Which techniques would suit your organisation?

MESSAGING

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KEY CONSIDERATIONS

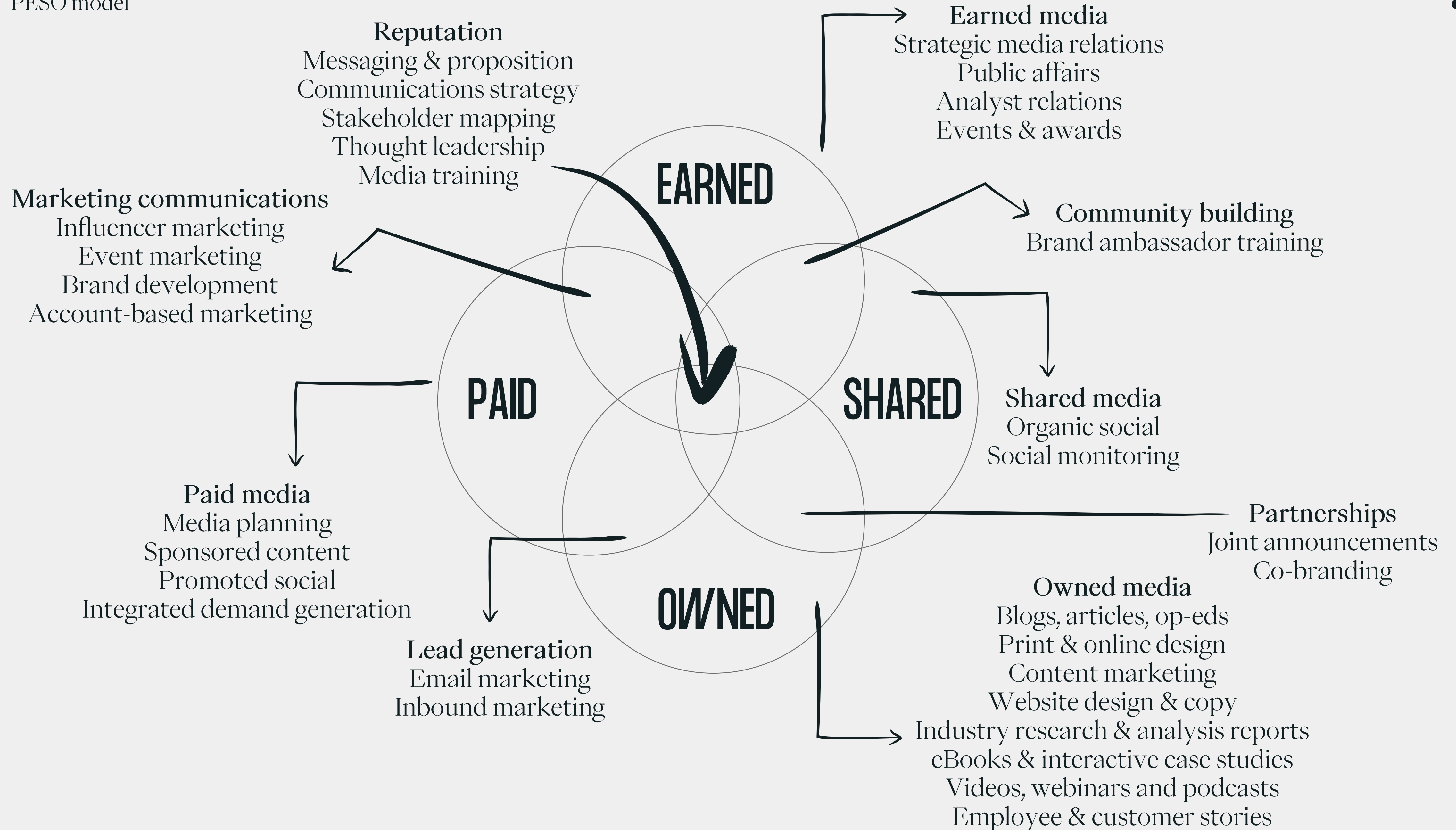- Ensure full context is considered and available (include drivers, goals and challenges)

- Align with organisational branding (consider brand hierarchy and tone of voice)

- Ease of use (for example messaging framework approaches, full campaign narrative and 'house' models for media)

- Spokesperson and content alignment (consider spokesperson matrix, content pillars, partner toolkits and templates)

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Questions to ask

- Is the relevance of the key messages to each audience segment clear?
- Does the messaging support your organisations existing brand and tone of voice?
- What supporting materials do you need to make messaging successful (spokespeople, partners)?

THE RIGHT CHANNELS

PESO model

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Reputation
Messaging & proposition
Communications strategy
Stakeholder mapping
Thought leadership
Media training

Earned media
Strategic media relations
Public affairs
Analyst relations
Events & awards

Marketing communications
Influencer marketing
Event marketing
Brand development
Account-based marketing

Community building
Brand ambassador training

EARNED

PAID

SHARED

OWNED

Shared media
Organic social
Social monitoring

Paid media
Media planning
Sponsored content
Promoted social
Integrated demand generation

Partnerships
Joint announcements
Co-branding

Owned media
Blogs, articles, op-eds
Print & online design
Content marketing
Website design & copy
Industry research & analysis reports
eBooks & interactive case studies
Videos, webinars and podcasts
Employee & customer stories

Lead generation
Email marketing
Inbound marketing

OUTSOURCING

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Key roles for an agency partner:
- Overarching strategy and campaign planning
- Consultancy and adjustment
- Project and stakeholder management
- Tactical execution of activities

Agency

Consultancy

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EVALUATION

AWARENESS

Quantity press coverage

Press coverage reach

Social media impressions and reach

Search ranking

Circulation of owned assets

Third party involvement

ENGAGEMENT

Content downloads

Website traffic

Event attendance

Social media engagements

Google search trends

Newsletter opens

Click-through rates

New subscriber rates

INFLUENCE

Media share of voice

Content citations by third parties

Press coverage and social media sentiment

Website time & behaviour on site

Newsletter forwarding and retention rates

Advocacy, testimonials & case studies

Event feedback and outcomes

IMPACT

Secured funding

User registrations

New partnerships

Service enquiries

Length of collaborations

Change in perception

Questions to ask

- Considering your goal, what metrics would ultimately help you to define the impact? What metrics can help you describe the outcome?

- What could help indicate that you are making communications progress?

- What metrics can you access?

- What evaluation process do you have in place now?

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THANK YOU