## The Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies and the Population Research Center

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

2015

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Background

As part of the College of Urban and Public Affairs, The Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies (IMS) and the Population Research Center (PRC) supports the PSU brand, “let knowledge serve the city.” Throughout the region, state, and nation, they are distinguished as a source for credible research and analysis, with partnerships both locally and regionally. IMS/PRC is positioned as a 21st Century influencer, with aspirations to extend their brand presence to a broad range of audiences.

GOALS

## Increase the use of IMS/PRC research and data tools

#### *Scale: Local to statewide*

Create a broader awareness of the data tools that IMS/PRC has available for the public to use for various functions, not limited to grant writing, urban planning and development, social services, transportation planning, education forecasting.

## Develop and promote partnerships

#### Scale: Local to statewide

Work with new and existing partners to help communicate latest data and research work that would be of benefit and value to their communities.

## Create collective impact

#### *Scale: Local to statewide*

Create a broader awareness of IMS/PRC and have a significant influence on decisions resulting from applying IMS/PRC data and information. Leverage awareness, participation and partnerships to develop community resiliency, and provide tools to enhance constructive dialogues and strengthen civic capacity and governance.

Communication Objectives

1. Enhance communications about the IMS/PRC work and data tools with the residents and businesses in the Portland/Vancouver region and Oregon state.
2. Engage audiences within PSU.
3. Build support and engagement through consistent and timely communication.
4. Increase engagement—Encourage and enable residents and businesses to participate in public policy affecting the region.
5. Create a communication process that is easy for all staff to follow.

Target Audiences

Target audiences for fall into two primary groups:

### A: Audiences outside the University

1. Public sector leaders in local, regional, and state governments
2. Non-profit organizations
3. Informed citizens/thought leaders, community leaders and influencers
4. Small businesses, such as engineer and architectural firms, real estate agents (TBD)
5. IMS Board members

### B. Audiences within the University

1. Undergraduate and graduate students with focus areas that use regional data and research
2. University leaders
3. Engaged faculty and staff

a: Audiences outside the University

## Audience 1: Public sector leaders in local, regional and state governments

**Focus**: The Public sector leaders— both elected and non-elected—in planning, housing, transportation, school district leaders, urban development and planning, must see the benefit of IMS/PRC tools as contributing to their organizations’ decision making process for the greater good of their constituents.

**Needs:** Tools that are easy-to-use will enable public sector leaders and/or their staff to collect data quickly to support their proposals and plans that may impact the region. Land use reports, migration patterns, housing, transportation trends and poverty rates are a few examples of data that would be valuable to this audience. It’s important for this audience to understand the depth and breath of IMS/PRC data that is available to them, and how it can be used to generate support for additional actions or policy changes.

**Awareness**: High awareness of IMS/PRC due to their high interest in public policy issues. They have the highest interest in receiving communications from IMS/PRC.

## Audience 2: Non-profits

**Focus:** Non-profits directors and staff—have a need for data and information that will help them with grant writing and obtaining other sources of funding for their organizations.

**Needs:** This audience needs compelling data and information to make reports, and grant proposals.

**Awareness**: Medium. There is a greater awareness among the non-profits that are focused on urban issues, education, health, land use, housing, sustainability, public safety, employment and transportation. There is a larger, untapped sub-group within this audience grouping that could benefit from the IMS/PRC data and information.

## Audience 3: Informed citizens/thought leaders, community leaders and influencers

**Focus:** This audience is comprised of people who are active in their communities who have an interest in knowing data that affects their communities, city or region. They appreciate data and information that tells them a new story that can influence such decisions as their voting, buying, transportation patterns, or housing.

**Needs:** To be aware of timely IMS/PRC findings and data tools that they may be able to use for neighborhood reports/proposals and personal interest.

**Awareness**: Medium to low. While many of these people are actively engaged in their communities, they may have limited use or awareness of IMS/PRC tools.

## Audience 4: Small businesses (TBD)

**Focus:** Small businesses such as engineering, architectural, retirement homes, golf courses, real estate or design firms would benefit from the use of IMS/PRC data tools in their business planning and long-term strategic planning. This audience may be a new target for IMS/PRC.

**Needs:** These businesses need demographic, population growth trends and census data to provide credibility for new business proposals.

**Awareness**: Low. This segment offers an untapped audience.

## Audience 5: IMS Board Members

**Focus:** IMS Board members can serve as ambassadors for IMS communication goals with their potential to influence and reach a specific, engaged audience.

**Needs:** Ongoing communications on newsworthy topics that they can pass onto their contacts.

**Awareness**: High.

b: Audiences within the University

## Audience 1: PSU undergraduate and graduate students

**Focus:** Students in CUPA are a primary target for IMS/PRC data and tools.

**Needs:** Partnering with faculty, students need to learn about all the tools available to them to help them with their academic studies.

**Awareness**: Low. Limited mostly to students at the College of Urban and Public Affairs.

## Audience 2: University Leaders

**Focus:** University leaders need to be aware of the work of IMS/PRC so they appreciate the value the institutes provide to the university, Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area, and the state. This audience needs to perceive IMS/PRC as leaders in developing the data and other information required to create a dialogue and make decisions about pressing issues facing the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region and the state.

**Needs:** This audience primarily needs to be informed of recent publications, online tools, community partnerships, websites or news released by IMS/PRC.

**Awareness**: Medium to low.

## Audience 3: Engaged faculty and staff

**Focus:** It is critical that IMS/PRC work with faculty and staff to get their students to use GPP and other IMS/PRC data tools and reports.

**Needs:** Faculty is most likely to engage with IMS/PRC if the research is in-depth and not generic. They are a good target for reports and current publications that have new implications that they can use in their classes. Staff can be very effective ambassadors for the IMS/PRC. This group is typically under-informed.

**Awareness**: Low



strategic messages

The messages to be developed are designed to support the PSU, IMS/PRC brand positioning and align with Board and IMS/PRC priorities. To make them memorable and effective, they are short and simple. They are also tied to the *Brand Values:* *transparent, neutral, accessible, collaborative, lower cost, credible, influential, and trainer of future work force.*

## Key concepts and themes

There are three themes to direct messages and communications. These themes encompass who IMS/PRC is and provides a unique positioning:

1. IMS/PRC shares its tools and information to create a common understanding of public issues and trends
2. IMS/PRC influences local, regional and statewide decisions through its data and tools
3. IMS/PRC cultivates citizen engagement and constructive dialogue

## Messages Tied to key Themes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **THEME** | **MESSAGE** |
| IMS/PRC shares its tools and information to create a common understanding of public issues and trends | IMS/PRC creates meaning with data that provides perspective on public issues. |
| IMS/PRC influences local, regional and statewide decisions through its data and tools | IMS/PRC data is a credible, neutral influencer affecting public policies. |
| IMS/PRC cultivates citizen engagement and constructive dialogue | IMS/PRC values citizen input. |

We will thread these key messages throughout all IMS/PRC communications, campaigns, and information releases.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS assessment

IMS/PRC use the following communication channels to disseminate information or update audience on news and events:

**Content Frequency**

Email newsletters: IMS, GPP and CUPA Quarterly, CUPA is weekly

Event announcements sporadically on FB, email, website

Press releases As appropriate

Report release Average 1x/month

Video clips None

Metroscape Twice a year

Meeting presentations Average 2 times/month

Twitter feeds GPP, weekly+

Facebook postings GPP weekly, IMS, sporadically

## Assets

### Websites

There are three websites managed by IMS/PRC. All run on the Drupal content management platform, which is used throughout PSU. A significant limitation of how Drupal is implemented at PSU is that search tags are limited to the designated PSU list, rather than the unlimited possibilities offered through other content management systems like WordPress. Images also cannot have tags. Both of these factors impede the ability of Google to successfully identify key words to include in a user search, thereby limiting the number of hits the sites receive.

**Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies:** Analytics (Google, 10/27/14) show that most people are viewing the site from their desktop devices, the # of sessions over approximately a month was 388; users: 232; page views: 720. Average session time: 3 min. Returning and new visitors is roughly equal.

**Population Research Center**: Analytics (Google, 11/6/14) show that most people are viewing the site from their desktop devices, the # of sessions from Oct 6-Nov 5, 2014 was x; page views: 7,699. Average session time: 1.25 min.

**Greater Portland Pulse:** Analytics (Google, 11/4/14) show that most people are viewing the site from their desktop devices, the # of sessions from Jul1-Nov 3, 2014 was 652; page views: 3604. Average session time: 5 min.

### Email newsletters

IMS and GPP. Sent out quarterly. The IMS e-newsletter, Catalyst has 2978 subscribers. Most recipients open the newsletters, but few click on the embedded links. The GPP e-newsletter has 1456 subscribers. The CUPA newsletter goes out weekly.

### Print publications

**Metroscape**: Distribution: 3,000. Published twice a year.

Reports: Once a month on average. Limited distribution.

**Press Releases:** Scott Gallagher will collaborate with IMS/PRC on press release distribution via Vocus. In addition, Scott has good relations with local media and can help promote high interest stories.

**Television**: KGW (Ch 8), ABC (Ch 2), CBS, (Koin, Ch 6), and Fox (Ch 12) all report on PRC data. Otherwise, they are only interested in unique or highly topical, targeted news. TV wants to have visual news, e.g., maps.

### Social Media

Twitter: GPP posts several times a week. Add stats. IMS has newly created Twitter account and button to be added to website.

Facebook: GPP posts regularly. Add stats. IMS posts infrequently.

*This chart illustrates the recommended communication channel for each content type*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Content Types** |  | **Communications Channels** | | | |
|  | **Website** | **Email** | **Facebook** | **Twitter** | **You Tube** |
| eNewsletter |  | X |  |  |  |
| PSU enewsletter & Web news feeds | X | X | X | X |  |
| Social Media Posting |  |  | X | X |  |
| Press Release | X | X |  |  |  |
| Reports | X | X | X | X |  |
| Video clips | X |  |  |  | X |
| Metroscape | X | X | X |  |  |
| Public speaking | X |  | X | X | X |

## Potential new channels

### Print

**Quarterly Review**: Focus: Research and report findings. Primarily PSU audience, but also some partners. Published quarterly.

**Portland State Magazine**: Publishes 2x/yr, Fall and Spring.

Distribution: 120,000. 68% in Portland Metro area (81,600)

2000 on campus.

**The Vanguard:** Student weekly newspaper.

**Currently**: faculty and staff newletter.

### Social Media

IMS/PRC needs to have a visible social media presence to:

* Create conversations about IMS/PRC work
* Listen to our audiences to gain their trust and insights
* Build and develop relationships to strengthen influence
* Insert IMS/PRC voice into online conversations

Both Facebook and Twitter are important channels because they focus on dialogue and engagement with users. They also can drive traffic to the IMS/PRC websites and build community and awareness.

Board Members play a key role in helping to develop IMS/PRC social media presence by Liking, Re-Tweeting, and promoting IMS/PRC social media sites.

Podcasts/webcasts: Have select talks released to a podcast or webcast.

YouTube videos can be uploaded to the websites and FB/Twitter.

PRIORITY ACTION PLAN FOR 2015

Build on the key messages with all communications:

* *IMS/PRC creates meaning with data that provides perspective on public issues.*
* *IMS/PRC data is a credible, neutral influencer affecting public policies.*
* *IMS/PRC values citizen input.*

### Develop a Spring Lecture Series

Schedule a Spring Lecture Series to gain exposure as a producer of relevant and timely content. IMS/PRC may work with partners across campus to produce a series of events over the course of the semester to highlight pertinent issues and related programs. *April-June*

### Advertising

Strategic advertising placement in targeted publications is useful for raising the profile of IMS/PRC. Specific opportunities could include the promotion of the Neighborhood Pulse software tool and relevant presentations and Jason’s research and survey participant recruitment for his study on *Urban Amenities, Economic Opportunity, and Migration of the Young and College-Educated. TBD*

### Print Collateral

Customize “one-sheets” that highlight the research of IMS/PRC , the undergraduate and graduate programs and community partnerships. Print IMS/PRC bookmarks that can be handed out at events or classes. *Ongoing*

### Portland State Magazine

Work with Kathryn Kirland (in Jan.) to develop a story on GPP for the May publication of *Portland State Magazine*. Can include the new data from the *“Where the Ends Don’t Meet..”* report. *May*

### Portland State Newspaper, VG

Get an article in VG quarterly.

### Campaign

Launch a campaign to publicize the release of the Neighborhood Pulse software. Write press release, give presentations to neighborhood organizations. Scott Gallagher can help with planning and implementation. *Spring-Summer*

* On-campus campaign promoting CUPA Institutes. Collaborate with Christine Hanolsy, as well as Institute Directors and CUPA faculty.
* Participate in more of the Portland State of Mind type of events.

### Population Report

Write press release, create sound bites for social media, and visually compelling data when final numbers are released. *Spring*.

### Metroscape

Take sections of winter Metroscape and release as social media “soundbites.” *Winter*

metrics

A basic measure of the success of the IMS/PRC communications plan is the number of people who see the various IMS/PRC media and reports. We will collect the following data to help us measure our progress:

* Attendance at events. Presenters distribute and collect completed evaluations.
* Number of speaking engagements.
* Participation in online surveys.
* Website traffic analysis.
* Number of articles written about IMS/PRC data, information or findings.
* Number of times IMS/PRC appear in media.
* Social media tracking (Facebook/Twitter).
* Document downloads from website.
* Public contact request for information (Consolidate all requests from senior staff in one location).

Staff roles and IT tools TBD.