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- (iv) External communication: audience segmentation

Taking control of the organisation's target groups

Submitted by Statistics Sweden

I. BACKGROUND

1. As a Communication Department we strive for the organisation to communicate in an integrated, uniform manner, that all channels support each other and that we have full control of our audiences and their needs. This is seldom the case in reality, especially not in the complex world of a statistical agency. Instead, we often find that the overall communication is a result of initiatives from different parts of the organisation; it is a mixture of old and new channels and has often been characterised by our own perspective. Statistics Sweden has been highly decentralised and no one part of the organisation has had an explicit responsibility for target groups.
2. We saw a need for taking control of our target groups and their needs. There has been no common view on the target groups and it has been up to the different subject matter departments to decide how they communicate with their “own” target groups. The Communications Department has therefore, in the spring of 2011, undertaken a target group analysis that will be a basis for a new strategy for external communication. This strategy will serve as a road map for our channels and audiences that have highest priority. This document describes the objective of this work, the approach and the lessons learned.

II. THE GOAL OF THE TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS

3. The goals of the target group analysis were:
 - a. To highlight if some target groups have needs that are not met through our existing channels.
 - b. To set up a document or database that will serve as a basis for setting up new communication policy documents
 - c. To have a fixed number of target groups that the subject matter units can work on in the Work Plan of 201

III. THE APPROACH AND LESSONS LEARNED

4. A large number of documents already existed that in different ways described the target groups we at Statistics Sweden work towards:

- a. Communication Policy
- b. Communication Strategy
- c. Channel Strategy
- d. Web Concept
- e. Marketing Plan
- f. Work Plan
- g. Documentation system for Customer Service
- h. Order and billing system

5. We made a thorough review of these documents, focusing on different audiences mentioned. The last two documents on the list do not cover audiences from a communication standpoint, but were reviewed to make sure that no group was overlooked and the definitions were consistent.

6. When putting these documents alongside each other it became clear that the same target groups sometimes had different names. E.g. mass media and journalists. These kinds of sub-groups were put together in groups with a unifying name. Another fact was that several groups have different roles. For instance, the Government assigns us our tasks, uses the grants available and is a customer. Other examples are different interest groups that are both providers and users of statistics.

7. We ended up with five main target groups that we defined as the responsibility of the Communication Department:

- a. Intermediaries
- b. The general public
- c. Business and organisations
- d. Public administration
- e. Teachers and students

8. In addition, we identified four target groups where we presently see other parts of the organisation as responsible:

- a. The Parliament and the Government in their roles as distributors of assignments
- b. Statistics Sweden's councils and boards
- c. Potential employees
- d. Respondents

We see that there is a need for the Communication Department to take on an increased responsibility for communication with our respondents. It is important that you meet the one and the same Statistics Sweden whether you are turning in data in a questionnaire or using the statistics.

9. Next we wanted to describe the target groups' needs based on our past experience. Statistics Sweden undertakes several customer and user surveys that we could use. It appeared that we had less knowledge about some target groups. We also studied the existing channels we use to reach the target groups.

10. We then tried to verify that the needs and channels were accurate. We let our Customer Service, our Press Officer and our Advisory Council for external communications give their views. Not surprisingly, it turned out that the website was by far the most important channel. But we also found out that

- few people use our printed publications
- a centralised Customer Service is much appreciated
- more advanced users would rather contact a specialist in a particular field.

III. RESULTS AND NEXT STEP

11. To really achieve the desired basis for making priorities and at the same time show where some target groups' needs are not being met, we wanted to illustrate how target group – needs – channels are connected. We wanted to create matrices or maybe even databases for this. We thought of using the form:

Target group	Need	Channel	Present activity	Possible strategic investment
Journalists	Quick contact with experts	Telephone	Hotline	-
		Webb	Contact information	Chat

But it turned out it was too difficult and costly to go through with.

12. However, we have a document we can use in working with different policy documents in the communication field. We have planned to go through, and in some cases update, these documents. They have the following hierarchical structure:

- Communication Policy
- Communication strategies – external, internal, respondents
- Road maps – prioritised channels, target groups
- Yearly action plans – departments, units
- Guidelines – e.g. publishing on the website, corrections, contacts with the media
- Procedures – handbooks / checklists
- Templates – e.g. Power Point presentations, making publications

13. Sometimes the way to reach the goal is as important as the goal itself. For the Communication Department this has meant that we have made the target groups of whole organisation clear to ourselves, and that we have the basis needed for further work. The need for a common view is clearly evident.