



ODYSSEA
Operating a network of integrated
observatory systems in the Mediterranean
Sea

Project Deliverable Report

Deliverable Number: 11.1

Deliverable Title: Communication Plan

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Work Package Number: 11

Work Package Title: Dissemination, Communication and Visibility



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727277

ODYSSEA Project Information	
Project full title	ODYSSEA: Operating a network of integrated observatory systems in the Mediterranean Sea
Project acronym	ODYSSEA
Grant agreement number	727277
Project coordinator	Georgios Sylaios
Project start date and duration	1 st June 2017, 54 months
Project website	http://odysseaplatform.eu/

Deliverable Information	
Work package number	11
Work package title	Dissemination, Communication and Visibility
Deliverable number	11.1
Deliverable title	Communication Plan
Description	ODYSSEA project communication plan identifying target audiences, project key message, channels of communication and methods to evaluate the success of communication activities.
Lead beneficiary	Blue Lobster
Lead Author(s)	Kathryn Keeble, Simon Keeble
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Revision number	V1.0
Revision Date	20 th November 2017
Status (Final (F), Draft (D), Revised Draft (RV))	Final
Dissemination level (Public (PU), Restricted to other program participants (PP), Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (RE), Confidential for consortium members only (CO))	PU

Document History			
Revision	Date	Modification	Author
0.1	20/11/2017	Initial draft	Kathryn Keeble
1.0	29/11/2017	Final	Kathryn Keeble

Approvals				
	Name	Organisation	Date	Signature (initials)
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Executive Summary

A communication plan setting out an initial communication strategy for the ODYSSEA project has been prepared. The communication strategy aims to promote the ODYSSEA project, products and services to its stakeholder user groups, and to inform and actively engage users in the project and its activities. 11 key stakeholder user groups representing public, policy, industry, education, environmental conservation and scientific / research sectors have been identified as target audiences. A key message to communicate the main activities, purpose and benefits to stakeholder user groups has been proposed. The key message will be refined and agreed by the consortium and additional key messages targeting specific audience types will be defined. 14 channels of communication and dissemination targeting individual or groups of stakeholder user groups at the local, national or international level are included in the plan. Methods for evaluating the success of the communication strategy are given. A schedule for implementing the communication plan over the next 12 months is provided.

Introduction

The Communication Plan sets out an initial communication strategy for the ODYSSEA project. The plan is iterative and will be reviewed as the project progresses and at least annually. A successful communication strategy is adaptive and is essential for continued active engagement with project partners, stakeholders and end-users.

The communication plan sets out a series of activities and methods to achieve the following key objectives:

- To inform and update project partners and external stakeholders and end-users on the latest news, events, products and services
- To promote and raise awareness of the ODYSSEA project, products and services amongst external stakeholders and potential end-users and to maintain their interest
- To actively engage partners and external stakeholders and end-users in the design and development of the project products and services
- Demonstrate the instrumental role of a Euro-Mediterranean collaborative approach in achieving scientific excellence, contributing to competitiveness and solving societal challenges

Methods and Results

The communication strategy was defined by identifying all stakeholder user groups (i.e. target audiences), defining key messages to communicate to users and specifying the channels of communication to be used to target individual or groups of selected users.

Identifying Target Audiences

Target audiences (i.e. stakeholder user groups) were identified by first considering uses of the Mediterranean Sea both as a natural resource and of the wide variety of commerce, industry and ecosystem services that it supports. The main uses identified were:

- Maritime, transport and shipbuilding
- Fishery and aquaculture industry, food security, nutrition
- Health
- Energy and raw materials
- Leisure-based activities (including tourism)

- Working and living place
- Coastal protection, flood control and low water replenishment
- Maritime monitoring, research and surveillance
- Climate regulation through carbon storage
- Protection against extreme weather events
- Global oceans ecosystemic functionality, balance and productivity

Consideration was then given to types of individuals, companies or organisations with a direct / indirect interest in any of the above sectors. These were identified as the main stakeholder user groups and represent potential end-users of its products and services (i.e. the target audiences).

The target audiences identified comprise representatives from public, policy, industry, education, environmental conservation and scientific / research stakeholder groups and include:

- Industry relating to maritime, transport and shipbuilding operating in the Mediterranean Sea (e.g. ferry operators, freight / cargo ship companies)
- Industry relating to food nutrition and ecosystem services (e.g. aquaculture operators)
- Industry relating to energy and raw materials (e.g. oil and gas companies)
- Public recreational users of the Mediterranean Sea (e.g. sailors, anglers)
- Citizens who live and / work on the Mediterranean Sea directly or indirectly (e.g. coastal residents, employees of industry operating in the Mediterranean Sea)
- SME's operating on the Mediterranean Sea directly or indirectly
- Local, National and International organisations charged with environmental conservation and coastal zone management (e.g. local government, policy makers regulating industry, policy makers enforcing environmental protection, sustainable resources exploitation)
- Educators teaching subjects relating to the Mediterranean Sea, its natural values, resources or its uses.
- Researchers and scientists external to the project whose discipline is related to marine observation, ocean modelling and forecasting, protected areas, marine spatial planning, marine data management and presentation or other related disciplines
- Internal project partners including large and small-scale industry, academic researchers and educators, as well as policymakers
- Other related ongoing projects and initiatives such as JERICO-NEXT, BLUE MED, Respon-SEA-ble, EcApMED II, EcApAdria, among others

Defining the Project Key Message(s)

An initial key message was defined to help highlight the purpose of the project, its aspirations and why it is important to the end-user groups. In order to define a key message, it was necessary to identify the motives and aspirations of the project in terms of the current shortcomings of the Mediterranean Observing Systems for its users, the requirements for addressing these shortcomings, the solutions that the project is aiming to provide and the benefits for the end-user groups. To identify these elements necessary to define the project key message, an analysis of the projects DoA was carried out. The results are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Identifying elements to form the project's Key Message			
Shortcomings	Requirements	Solutions	Benefits to end-users
Gaps in current monitoring activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Fill gap in current monitoring activities in the Mediterranean Sea	Installing 9 new Mediterranean marine monitoring systems to fill gaps in current activities	More accurate models, improved data coverage and availability
Some current monitoring activities are disparate and are not integrated with the wider marine monitoring networks	Improved products and services that meet end user requirements	Collating and Integrating new, historic and operational forecast model data	Improved data access, interoperability and integration
Currently a lack of easily accessed products and services that meet end user requirements	Improved access to all Mediterranean marine monitoring products and services for end users	Employ a user-centric approach to design and build a platform for generating products for users.	Easy access to user-defined products and services
Spatial constraints of data collected by in situ monitoring and observing systems	Data to fill gaps in spatial coverage provided by in situ monitoring / observing systems	Developing a unique series of models for operational forecasting	Prognostic operational models to fill gaps in spatial data in locations where end-users operate

From the elements identified in Table 1, the following initial key message is proposed:

“ODYSSEA is building a platform to provide user-designed products and services for the Mediterranean, installing 9 new observing systems and developing a unique series of models for operational forecasting to fill gaps in current marine monitoring activities, improving access to disparate, historic and operational datasets, and building the capacity for a more integrated Mediterranean observing system for the future.”

From the analysis carried out to define the initial projects key message, the following initial strapline was proposed:

“Creating products and knowledge for the Mediterranean”

In addition, a number of key phrases for describing the ODYSSEA project in more detail to a variety of end user groups were identified:

- *“Building end-to-end Mediterranean-wide coastal and offshore user-centric information services by integrating new and existing marine observatory systems”*

- “Integrating new and existing multi-national, multi-platform and multi-parameter Mediterranean marine observations for discoverable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable metadata, data and information.”
- “Improved understanding of the Mediterranean Marine environment, its pressures and its management for ocean conservation, sustainable use, living and jobs.”
- “Extending marine monitoring and modelling capabilities in the Mediterranean Sea”
- “Improved coastal and ocean forecasting in the Mediterranean Sea.”
- “Generating user-centric information products to enhance competitive capabilities, drive innovation, engage end-users in the design and operation of Mediterranean marine monitoring systems, and to support sustainable management decisions.”
- “Creating information products to support environmental management and policy decisions, industry innovation and development, leisure and tourism activities, education, science and research for sustainable use of the Mediterranean Sea and its resources.”
- “Building a new infrastructure to increase monitoring capabilities in the Mediterranean Sea by filling gaps in current systems”.
- “Providing a one-stop platform to access integrated, user-defined, information products from new and existing marine observatory systems; enhancing collaboration and networking”.

The key message and strapline will be refined and agreed by the consortium. It may be necessary to define several key messages and straplines to target specific audience types. Once agreed, it will enable the partners to raise awareness of the project and its aims to end user groups concisely, clearly and consistently. They will also help end users to promote the ODYSSEA project accurately to their wider networks and communities.

The agreed key messages and straplines will be used on the communication and dissemination materials produced during the first part of the project.

Channels of Communication

The ODYSSEA communication strategy will use a combination of 2-way and 1-way communication channels to reach target audiences and their wider networks. Communication channels will be tailored toward individual or groups of stakeholder user groups and may be at the local, national or international level depending on the target audience and the communication method.

Channels of communication will include:

- 4 themed project newsletters
- Frequent blog articles published on the projects blogs that is integrated into the project website
- Regular updates on the project website (<http://odysseaplatform.eu>)
- Regular Social Media posts broadcasting all project activity, blog articles, website posts and information relevant to the projects e.g. conferences and events.
- Press releases, publications and policy briefings
- Project identity including project logo, graphics and communication templates
- Regular emails between project partners and external stakeholder groups engaged with the project
- Flyers, leaflets, posters and brochures targeting individual or groups of stakeholder user groups
- Stickers and other merchandise
- Conferences, events and exhibitions relevant to the project
- Workshops and meetings – both internal and external
- Summer schools – 2 summer schools are planned to target early career scientists

- End-users and policy makers focus groups
- Videos

Where possible, materials produced will be available in English, Greek, French and Arabic.

Evaluation

The ODYSSEA communication strategy will be evaluated using a variety of metrics. The metrics will be used as a measure of the effectiveness of the communication strategy and channels employed. The strategy will be adjusted as the project progresses to maximise its impact and reach and engage target audiences effectively.

Metrics will include the number of people and types and audiences reached. The EU requires that we collect metrics on outreach and dissemination activities from all partners during each reporting period. For that purpose, the following information will be collected as part of periodic reporting:

- Number of conferences, events, meetings and workshops organised / attended,
- Number of posters, flyers, leaflets, stickers, newsletters etc. distributed
- Number of posts, articles, press releases, papers, tweets and social media updates published
- Number of people reached measured by session views on websites, followers on social media,
- Number of people attending conferences, meetings, events and workshops
- Target audience for each activity

We will also gather information on the quality of some of our communication activities by requesting feedback from partners, external stakeholder groups engaged in the project, and delegates attending the summer schools and workshops.

Implementation

A schedule of activities required to implement the communication plan over the next 12 months is outlined as follows:

October 2017

- All work package leaders to commit to contributing to Blue Lobster 1 suggested “Tweet a Month” with a highlight from an activity in their work package. At least 1 tweet will be extended into a blog post for the project website.

November 2017

- Design and agree flyer, leaflet, brochure, stickers and poster telling potential end-users and external stakeholders about the ODYSSEA project – its aims, objectives, key messages and aspirations.
- “Tweet a Month” from each WP leader
- November blog post
- A schedule (next 12 months) of relevant conferences, events, workshops and meetings, built from information contributed by all partners. Who will be attending (whenever is confirmed) and how they will be representing ODYSSEA. These events should be posted on the website and broadcast via Social Media if possible
- Press releases as appropriate
- Nomination of ‘translators’ for Social Media and website activities.
- Upload the project communication and dissemination activities log to the project website for all partners to contribute.

December 2017

- Print poster, flyers, leaflets, stickers and brochure and upload to project website.
- “Tweet a Month” from each WP leader
- December blog post
- Update conference and events schedule
- Press releases as appropriate
- Refine and agree project key messages and straplines

January-March 2018

- Timetable, template and themes to be outlined for the 4 project newsletters.
- Themes and schedule for the 2 project summer schools.
- Template for feedback forms
- Collaborate with WCMC on Task 2.2 and Work Package 9 on end-user and stakeholder requirements and engagements
- “Tweet a Month” from each WP leader
- At least 3 new blog posts
- Press releases as appropriate
- Update conference and events schedule

April-November 2018

- Continued collaboration with Work Package 9 as appropriate
- Draft 1st project newsletter
- Plan first project summer school (host, theme, number of delegates, feedback forms, draft agenda, application and selection process, advertising approach)
- “Tweet a Month” from each WP leader
- At least 6 new blog posts
- Press releases as appropriate
- Update conference and events schedule
- Collect partner communication activities and metrics for period 1 (ending 31st November 2018).
- Revise and update communication strategy

Results of the communication activities will be collated and reported as part of the projects periodic reporting.

Summary

Table 2 provides a summary of the ODYSSEA communication plan

Table 2: Summary of communication plan					
Medium / Activity	Type of Audience	Communication Level	Communication Type	Date / Frequency	Evaluation
Newsletters	Public	International	1-way	Annual (4 in total)	Number distributed
Social Media	Public	International	1-way	2 per week (dependent on 1 tweet per month from each WP leader)	Number of posts and followers

Website	Public	International	1-way	On-going updates	Number of session and session time
Conferences, events and exhibitions	Science and Research, Policy, Industry, Education	International	1-way, 2-way	Attend and presents at all relevant conferences, events and exhibitions possible.	Number attended and presentations / publications delivered, people reached, connections made
Workshops and meetings	Public, Science and Research, Policy, Industry, Education, Internal partners, External stakeholders engaged in the project	International, National, Local	2-way	Organise / attend frequent workshops and meetings throughout the project.	Number organised and attended
Summer schools	Early career scientists in related disciplines	International	2-way	2 during the project	Number of applicants and feedback from delegates
Peer reviewed publications	Science and Research	International	1-way	1 or 2 peer reviewed publications from the project	Number of publications
Posters / banners	Science and Research, Policy, Industry, Education	International	1-way	1 near the start of the project focused on project aims and objectives and 1 near the end show casing products	Number of events displayed at
Flyers, leaflets, brochures	Science and Research, Policy, Industry, Education	International	1-way	1 near the start of the project focused on project aims and objectives and 1	Number distributed

				near the end show casing products	
Logo / identity	Science and Research, Policy, Industry, Education	International	1-way	To be used on ALL project communication activities and channels.	Are the templates being used by all partners?
Emails	Internal partners, External stakeholders engaged in the project	International	1-way, 2-way	On-going communication	Feedback received regarding email communication
Press releases	Public	International	1-way	Press releases for all newsworthy project outputs	Number released
Blog posts	Public	International	1-way	Aim for at least 1 per month	Number of posts and views
Stakeholder focus groups	All	International	2-way	Aim for at least 1 per year	Number of attendees, feedback on sessions

Outreach and Communication Activities

The communication plan was presented to project partners at the ODYSSEA partner meeting in Rome, October 2017. The draft communication plan has been shared with all partners internally via the projects website.

Version 1.0 of the Communication Plan and the accompanying Deliverable Report (D11.1) will be published on the project website and be available to the public. Links to the Communication Plan and the Deliverable Report will be broadcast via the projects Social Media Channels.

Next Steps

The communication plan is iterative and will be reviewed as the project progresses and at least annually.

A set of key messages and straplines will be agreed by the consortium and will be used on all materials produced in the first part of the project.

Resources

European Commission (2014) *Communicating EU research and innovation guidance for project participants*. Available online at http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/gm/h2020-guide-comm_en.pdf (Accessed 25th October 2017)

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Appendix i - Full Communication Plan

Attached as ODDYSEA Project Communication Plan V1.0.pdf