



## Barking Owl – January: Communications planning (29/01/25)

The Barking Owl is the network for NAVCA members who work in communications or similar roles. We meet each month to discuss a specific comms topic. The group is friendly and chatty, and you can contribute as much or as little as you are comfortable with.

Being proactive in our communications can be tricky, so at this meeting, we discussed our challenges and tips for communications planning.

The group discussed the importance of getting your colleagues on board with how comms works and the importance of forward planning. We discussed:

- Letting colleagues know exactly how long a comms task (e.g. writing a social media post, designing a graphic etc.) is going to take. This will help prioritise tasks and manage expectations.
- Having a comms committee on your trustee board. This has helped some members with getting support for comms from senior management.
- Informing colleagues about the importance of comms channels, particularly your website and how that can be a useful tool.

Some tips we discussed for effective comms planning are:

- Meeting with project leads across your team and asking them for information about significant projects that they know they'll be working on throughout the year. This can feed into an annual communications plan and you can identify gaps.
- Adding in awareness days and months e.g. Volunteers Week, Trustees Week.
- Monthly communications meeting with all staff, to encourage colleagues to plan ahead rather than expecting things to be done immediately. Helping colleagues to form new habits in terms of comms planning.
- Conducting a social media audit, so that you can see what channels are working or not working, and focus your time effectively.
- Using your CRM to segment demographics and contact them directly.
- Some members are using ChatGPT to save time.
- Setting KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for comms campaigns.

Join the conversation over on the NAVCA website here:

<https://www.navca.org.uk/topics/barking-owl-communications>