

**Establishing an Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy**

Jeffrey Elkner

University of the People

BUS 5112: Marketing Management

Dr. Soha Ragab

May 20, 2020

## Establishing and Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy

In the twenty-first century media and communications climate, an integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategy is essential to be able to reach a large audience with a consistent message across the broad range of media that exist today. "Delivering consistent information about a brand or an organization helps establish it in the minds of consumers and potential customers across target markets" (The University of Minnesota, 2010, p. 319). NOVA Web Development is just now arriving at the second stage in our product development life cycle. For months we have been focused on the development of our product, which is the skills of our development team. A few weeks ago I wrote about the product life cycle as it relates to open source software (Elkner, 2020). We now have our team ready, and are on schedule for meeting our goal of beginning a serious marketing effort by June 1st, so the question as to how to establish an integrated marketing communications strategy is on the top of our task list as a cooperative.

At this very early juncture, I think our most effective approach will consist of actively utilizing social media platforms, particular LinkedIn, together with actively searching through the online platforms used by freelance developers and companies looking to hire them. Market researcher Angela Beklemysheva in a blog post on Steel Kiwi titled "How to Find and Hire a Python/Django Development Company" provides a wonderful place for us to start. While her post is targeted at companies looking to outsource their own Python/Django development needs, the list of places to look and the things to look for in perspective development teams provides us with a tailor made place to start looking for where to post our information from the other end of the market transaction. We are a Python/Django shop, so Ms. Beklemysheva's post is very

specific about the market into which NOVA Web Development is entering. In a section of her blog subtitled "Where to find a Python software development company" she says that, "Even though there are about 22 million developers in the world, good Python/Django developers aren't easy to find and can be quite expensive. But there are many freelance marketplaces for software development companies and individual Python developers" (Beklemysheva, 2020). Both the "aren't easy to find" and "freelance marketplaces for software development companies" is music to our ears, since our plan is to use these marketplaces to find clients.

Ms. Beklemysheva includes a chart that lists a group of countries that fall into one of two of what she calls "cultural aspects", low-context, emphasizing facts and words, and high-context, focusing on trust and emotions. The countries and characteristics she lists are important enough to NOVA Web Development's marketing strategy that the table is worth quoting in full:

	<b>Low-context cultures</b>	<b>High-context cultures</b>
	UK, US, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway	Ukraine, China, Japan, France, Spain, Italy
<b>Decision-making</b>	Logical	Intuitive
<b>Work style</b>	Task-oriented, focus on individualism	Team-oriented, focus on collectivism
<b>Work ethic</b>	Task-oriented	Relationship-oriented
<b>Time and deadlines</b>	Important	Less important
<b>Relationships</b>	Short-term relationships	Long-term relationships
<b>View of change</b>	Quick to change	Slow to change
<b>Communication</b>	Explicit, specific, detailed, precise	Implicit, less direct

What I found most intriguing about this chart is that most of the characteristics listed under the column in which the United States is located are the very neo-liberal, market as god and people as things values toward which the emerging cooperative movement is in direct rebellion. We seek a human centered, caring environment that places a high value on teams and long term relationships. The agile philosophy we embrace does value clear communication and being able to be quick to change. It is the software that is quick to change, however, not the workers in our cooperative, who are very *raison d'être*. Under neo-liberal economic relations workers are valued only as commodities, and the system strives to put rules in place where they can be tossed out like useless garbage once they are no longer needed, with nary a care what happens to them thereafter.

Getting back to establishing our integrated marketing communications strategy, in addition to combing through the traditional places listed in Ms. Beklemysheva's blog post, such as Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com/>), the Python Jobs Board (<https://www.python.org/jobs/>), Remote Python (<https://www.remotepython.com/>), and Find Bacon (<https://findbacon.com/>), we also plan to reach out directly to the cooperative movement with the aim at finding partners with whom we share values and for whom it would be a pleasure to work. The Platform Cooperativism Consortium (<https://platform.coop/>) is just such a place, and two of us in NOVA Web Development have signed up to take an online course beginning June 1st specifically designed to help incubate cooperatives like ours (Scholz, 2020). It is with high hopes that I await the beginning of that course, the timing of which could not have been better for NOVA Web Development.

Our textbook, *eMarketing: The essential guide to marketing in a digital world*, mentions two other approaches that might be possible for us, crowdsourcing and crowdfunding (Stokes, 2013, p. 5). NOVA Web Development has two free software projects, LibreOrganize and Business Tracker, both of which could possibly be funded this way at some point.

As we reach out in all these ways, we will need to continue to update and improve our website (NOVA Web Development, 2020), which is sure to be a main stop on the journey through all our integrated marketing communications pathways, and is indeed the main communications channel that should integrate them.

## References

- Beklemysheva, A. (2020, February 27). How to find and hire a Python/Django development company. *Steel Kiwi*. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://steelkiwi.com/blog/how-to-find-and-hire-a-python-django-development-company/>
- Business Tracker (n.d.). [Software]. Hosted on GitLab. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://gitlab.com/novawebdevelopment/business-tracker>
- Elkner, J. (2020, May 3). *The life cycle of open source software*. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://elkner.net/static/UofPeople/TheLifeCycleOfOpenSourceSoftware.pdf>
- LibreOrganize (n.d.). Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://libreorganize.org/>
- NOVA Web Development (2020). Website. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://novawebdevelopment.org/>
- The University of Minnesota. (2010). *Principles of marketing*. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0. Retrieved April 9, 2020 from <https://open.lib.umn.edu/principlesmarketing/front-matter/publisher-information/>
- Scholz, T. (2020, April 30). PCC & Mondragon offer online course to incubate platform co-ops. *Platform Cooperative Consortium*. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from <https://platform.coop/blog/a-pcc-mondragon-course-helps-to-incubate-platform-co-ops/>
- Stokes, R. (2013). *eMarketing: The essential guide to marketing in a digital world 5<sup>TH</sup> Edition*. Retrieved April 9, 2020 from [https://www.redandyellow.co.za/content/uploads/woocommerce\\_uploads/2017/10](https://www.redandyellow.co.za/content/uploads/woocommerce_uploads/2017/10)