

Communications and Marketing Committee Meeting

Rick Rhodes III, Chair

January 28, 2016, 4:00M Eastern [Via Teleconference]

In Attendance: Rick Rhodes III (Chair), Nancy Cox, Tony Windham, Daniel Scholl, Shirley Hymon-Parker, Cameron Faustman, Faith Peppers, Sarah Lupis, Darren Katz, Hunt Shipman, Ian Maw, Jane Schuchardt, Dan Rossi, Ashley Hawn, Elliot Carter and Rubie Mize [Recorder]

Actions/Decisions Made:

- Formed three CMC Working Groups (Rubie will send out poll and set-up teleconferences for each group before the March 6 meeting)
Group 1. Message Testing - Rick Rhodes-Leader, Nancy Cox, Michelle Rodgers, Dustin Bryant, Darren Katz, Hunt Shipman, Jane Schuchardt (Facilitator)
Group 2. Engaging Communicators - Scott Reed-Leader, Lou Swanson, Daniel Scholl, Faith Peppers, Sarah Lupis, Dan Rossi (Facilitator)
Group 3. Communicating CMC Progress - Bev Durgan-Leader, Tony Windham, Shirley Hymon-Parker, Cameron Faustman, Connie Pelton Kays, Ian Maw, Dan Rossi (Facilitator)
- Each group to brainstorm ideas/strategies to implement POW elements, present recommendations and will lead discussion at the March 6 meeting.
- Send agenda items or feedback to Rick for March 6 meeting

Minutes:

CMC Executive Committee met on January 14, 2016 to prepare the agenda for this call. There were some changes suggested and were incorporated in today's agenda.

1. **Welcome to New Members and Brief Overview** (see attached CMC operating guidelines) Rick greeted the new members and thanked Scott for his successful leadership. He added that CMC is well poised to take up an ambitious agenda in the coming year. We have an approved Plan of Work and new energetic members.

CMC will have a meeting on March 6, and the upcoming election presents opportunities that should be exploited.

2. **Review of Current CMC Membership** (see attached membership list) – Rick Rhodes Dan suggested that there should be a process on how members specifically those for ACE and CGA are assigned.

3. **Review of Notes from 10/22/15 CMC Conference Call** (see attached notes) – Rick Rhodes Highlighted were four elements in the minutes that warrant continuous dialog:

- 1- implementation of POW
- 2- issues of message testing
- 3- upcoming elections
- 4- planning agenda for March 6 meeting

Motion to approve minutes was seconded and approved.

4. **Cornerstone Report** – Hunt Shipman

- Brief Legislative Update

With conclusion of the omnibus appropriations bill, the focus is now on looking ahead at a compressed legislative schedule during 2016 and FY17. Speaker Ryan indicated he wants the appropriations bill on House floor as early as mid-March and combined with the President's budget. This means that member requests are due very soon. Senate target is March 15th. There is not a lot of time from when the President's budget is released.

There is two-year agreement reached on spending which provided increase that's equally divided between non-defense and defense.

- Feedback on Effectiveness of Communications Efforts

Cornerstone is working with Darren to plan for the year. Rick asked if there are immediate actions needed from CMC. Hunt replied that Cornerstone is working with AHS on enhanced direct advocacy effort. That project is underway but in early stages, and as it gets off the ground there will be opportunities for collaboration to support those efforts. Ian agreed with Hunt, that there will be activities that CMC can engage in once the project gets going.

5. **kglobal Report** – Darren Katz

- a) Review of 2015 Fourth Quarterly Report – Darren Katz (see attached executive summary)

Darren clarified for the new CMC members that Cornerstone covers advocacy side and kglobal works on the education side. kglobal works with Cornerstone to raise awareness on the value of the Land-grant system to stakeholders in targeted districts. Media used to transmit communication also winds up being nationwide.

Traditional media- newspaper and online news outlets – 682 national media hits during the 4th quarter and 350M impressions based on those stories. This is potentially how many people read the stories, and implies that they were well received.

Twitter Town Hall proved to be very effective in engaging local stakeholders, members of media and congressional offices. It is a venue for very focused discussion on programs in their institutions and states. Kglobal worked with UDC, Kansas State, Southern, and NDSU to highlight their innovative programs and extension work.

Overall, twitter impressions are increasing at an exponential rate, not only reaching out to our usual audience but also engaging new influencers.

On Rick's question on how 3.2M impressions are adjusted to 6M, Darren explained that number of impressions can be adjusted depending on the process, for example quoting a tweet within a tweet or whether it's expanded.

Sarah asked if kglobal has a sense of how many Q&A are organic vs. those that are planted. Darren replied that on Twitter Town Halls about half are questions from people they know will engage and the other half just unexpected.

Cameron asked if kglobal knows who target audience for Twitter Town Halls represents. Darren noted that one way of engaging people is to target members of media who cover agriculture and relevant members of congress or their staff. When they get a question, they know what their handles are and so will push that question and answers so they see them.

Rick asked what the current strategy is on who might host a Town Hall and if kglobal is seeking volunteers. Darren replied that his group is in regular contact with communicators and if they want to host one, kglobal team works with them and puts the event on the calendar. In addition, kglobal is proactive in promoting issues that are of interest to institutions and states/districts. Darren reported that recipients of the monthly newsletter had expanded dramatically. They track who and how long they've been receiving.

kglobal worked with the North Central Cooperative Extension Association (NCCEA) to promote a recent Batelle study with Robin and his team. They helped create and share a variety of collateral from a press release to social media graphics.

USDA-NIFA, Darren added, is also involved in promoting Twitter Town Hall, as they have the resources to help amplify our efforts.

Rick asked how CMC can best help kglobal. From Darren's perspective, the piece that's helpful is to make sure that kglobal gets feedback from committee members so that they can be more specific and more proactive on the work they do. Aside from reaching out to local communicators, they should also be informed if there are programs coming up that are worth highlighting. Programs of local value are more impactful as a member of congress can appreciate that it's in his/her district, and this is why funding the land-grant institution/system is worth it.

Rick inquired how CMC can turn those numbers, for example the 350M impressions, as a reflection of impact and how that can be shared with our constituencies within and outside our system?

Jane S. attested as to how hard kglobal is working for us. kglobal's Ashley and Elliot are working with NCFAR on Water Security and will interview AES and CES experts on Feb. 8. Keep in mind that kglobal can be contacted for this kind of requests.

Dan suggested that the CMC members think about the bullets below and revisit again. Rick added that these items will help us think strategically and utilize resources we have effectively.

b) CMC Feedback – All

- Different interests within the system to be promoted
- Different types of programs to be promoted
- New programs that might be of interest to promote
- Different impacts and outcomes that should be promoted
- Unique relationships with media, members of Congress or Congressional staff
- The internal politics of the system

6. Implementing the Plan of Work – Rick Rhodes

- a) Review attached POW update
- b) Path Forward (see attached proposal for working groups)

Dan and Jane proposed three working groups, as follows.

Group 1: Message testing

Group 2: Engaging Communicators

Group 3: Communicating CMC progress

CMC members assigned for each group will brainstorm ideas or strategies/recommendations before March 6. Rubie will send out a poll (Feb. 8-26) and help arrange teleconferences for these groups. Rick, Scott and Bev will each lead one of the groups. Dan and Jane will help facilitate.

7. Planning for the March Face-to-Face Meeting – Rick Rhodes

a) Logistics

- Date and Time – March 6, 2016; 4:00 – 6:00 pm
- Location – Westin Alexandria

b) Expected Outcomes

c) Agenda

On March 6, each group will report and lead the discussion. Expected outputs will be activities to implement elements of the CMC Plan of Work.

Rick asked members to forward to him suggestions or reflections on the agenda items for the March 6 meeting.

8. Update on Communication Strategies in Engaging Presidential Candidates – Jane Schuchardt, Darren Katz and Ian Maw

Darren's suggestion is to scale it back to local elections, and use congressional races as proof of concept. Look at ones that are close, spend time and educate them on what the Land-grant system does. If they get elected, they are prone to be more supportive when you educate them early on in the process. Jumping into presidential hopefuls is not a good use of resources as we lack experience and there are still too many in the pool.

Dan suggested that CMC develop the concept, and bring it back to the Policy Board. He noted that as CMC evolves we need to understand what our role is in the overall organization. CMC is an important part of the system. BAC works on advocacy and CMC on education.

9. Other business

None

Rick thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at 4:54PM.