

Communications and Marketing Committee Meeting

Hilton Crystal City – Crystal Ballroom

Arlington, VA

Sunday - March 4, 2018, 4:00 – 5:50 PM

Minutes

In attendance: Bev Durgan, Scott Reed, Gary Thompson, Mike Harrington, Becky Walth, Mary Wirth, Maggie Earle, Hunt Shipman, Vernie Hubert, Faith Peppers, Cynda Clary, Nancy Cox, Chuck Hibberd, Mark Latimore, Jim Richards, Jenny Nuber, Alex Miller, Alan Grant, Steve Loring, Mark Hussey, Ian Maw, Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz

Minutes of the January 24, 2018 teleconference were approved unanimously.

Some modifications to the agenda were requested:

- Cynda Clary asked to discuss the Fed By Science Letter
- Rick Rhodes would like to propose some changes to the CMC operating guidelines
- **Both items were added under 'New Business'**

kglobal update and feedback to the CMC – Jenny Nuber

- Jenny Nuber reintroduced Alex Miller, day-to-day project manager of AgIsAmerica project
- 2018 Q1 report is forthcoming
- Since the 2017 Video Campaign, kglobal has focused on “mini CTAs” to drive the AgIsAmerica community, ongoing in 2018 Q1
- UC ANR nutrition mini CTA was released in January around the new year, to coincide with New Year’s resolutions and renewed interests in nutrition
- Always looking for opportunities to insert ourselves into relevant, ‘average joe’ conversations, to illustrate what we’re doing in these areas
- Downloadable information was released to the community
 - Infographics
 - Healthy Shopping Guide
- No digital advertising on this campaign. Layers of approval proved difficult to get that content up and running in previous campaigns.
 - Results were lower as a result
 - Less than 200 page views gathered without digital advertising
 - Least successful CTA until this point
- February 2018 – development of a broader, more direct CTA compared to the video campaign
 - Multiple states, multiple institutions, sub-levels of content
 - Asked the community to reach out to their elected officials
 - Government Affairs groups at various institutions had different levels of approval which slowed down the release of content
 - Focused this CTA around Water (a hot topic – drought, wildfires) – 2 weeks per state
 - States were selected in conjunction with where Cornerstone’s efforts are focused:

- FL (home of new member of senate ag approps subcommittee and members of house subcommittee) and GA (Ranking Dem on house ag approps subcommittee and members on senate subcommittee) launched on 02/28/18
 - CA and WA launch on 03/05/18
 - NDSU will launch in March
 - 240 views in the first 48 hours
- Focused on an external audiences (communities), not measuring engagement with institutions
- **Kglobal can circulate CTA reports separately from the quarterly reports**
- How do we know this works?
 - How many folks sign the petition
 - Testing a segment of the community audience, without the institutions involved
 - Who is engaging with the content?
 - Number of views on the actual website
 - Number of clicks to the petition page
 - Where are people coming from? (Facebook, Twitter, digital advertising beyond AgIsAmerica, Newsletter, shared through institutional communicators)
- Levels of conversion were cut out – less switching webpage to webpage, less clicks, less forms
- Cornerstone utilizes CARET delegates, AHS meetings, asking for the same thing – submit ideas around the six priority requests as identified by the BAC
- Challenge: Inconsistent communications from various parts of the system
- Kglobal is beginning the plan for the Major CTA – driving support and communications for this year’s appropriations bill
 - New campaign, April 9
 - Considering a similar campaign to the Water initiative
 - A nationally resonant issue; perhaps Food System / Food Security
 - Food policy is relevant to all states, presents an opportunity to showcase impacts from the LGU system
 - Conversation and content will be localized – different state to state
 - Working with communicators and deans at LGUs to determined what their communities are focused on first, then asking what colleges are doing to address the community focus
 - Looking for stories with research + Extension components, telling the holistic story
 - Not creating another video campaign; that was very costly in comparison to the return
 - ND, AL, FL, GA, are primary target states, ~10 states will be the major areas of focus
 - Digital + Social campaign will launch in April 2018, run through June, willing to extend if it’s impactful
 - All direct asks will be housed on the AgIsAmerica Website rather than through multiple levels / clicks
- Suggestion from Gary Thompson to focus not only on Blessed States, but also Regional areas of focus

- If states don't see their issues being focused on, it's hard for an institution to get behind "the ask"
- **As a national system, we need to support national efforts. Communications offices at all Land-grant institutions should be charged with sharing AgIsAmerica content.**
 - Regional focus is a soft priority for kglobal; engaging Blessed States will impact the funding more than others
 - CMC members will need to help kglobal ensure that they have the best / correct / most compelling targeted information to inform the campaign
 - Provide exciting information to people who don't know it's out there

Cornerstone update and feedback to the CMC – Hunt Shipman

- Still operating under a CR since 10/01
- Full appropriations bill expected by March 23
- Focus will shift to FY19 budget cycle
- President's budget is not as bad for 6 Priority Areas as was expected
 - McIntire Stennis is proposed to have the greatest (%) reduction in the priority lines
 - Smaller budget lines are proposed to be cut
- Cornerstone and kglobal are not changing their targets in Congress; 2nd year of this 2-year congress
- April 9th date coincides with Congress's return from Easter recess
- Need to align Dean's offices, communications offices, President's offices, Provost's offices, government affairs offices within LGUs
- Need to work with colleges to determine what communities are focused on, and what colleges are doing to address those concerns
- Digital content goes up first, followed by grassroots/grasstops media
- Engagement requests for the directors shouldn't come at the last moment in 'crisis mode' – response time is not always so rapid
- Western Governors have a major initiative every year – 2019 is biosecurity with invasive species and pest management. Is this an opportunity?
 - Who from our communities would be willing to contribute content or sign an op-ed?
 - Can we tap into more local networks through community professionals?
 - We need to ensure that new areas of focus fit within the six identified priority areas
- If we're not specific in making connections which are directly meaningful to members of congress, they can focus on something else which may not be beneficial to the LGU community

Update on proposal to BAA: CMC, a standing committee – Rick Rhodes

- Proposal was made to the Policy Board of Directors to make CMC a standing committee of the BAA
 - CMC is currently a standing committee of ESCOP; has added ECOP and AHS over the years
 - Is there a better position for this committee to be successful? To create a more unified, single voice?
 - CMC seeks appointment to the BAA as a standing committee
 - 2/3 vote of the entire BAA membership is required to make the CMC a standing committee.

- As an intermediate step, the CMC requested appointment as an ad hoc BAA committee.
- The Policy Board has tabled the CMC's request, in anticipation of the PBD members going out to their individual sections seeking input
- Orlando McMeans will chair a discussion subgroup of the Policy Board, to examine the CMC's request
- PBD tabled this request because of broader concerns about CMC's activities
- PBD can't change BAA bylaws. Initial repositioning of the CMC will not change the bylaws. A standing committee requires a change in the bylaws. Participation of the CMC (not repositioning) with the PBD would not require a change in the bylaws.

Review of CMC 2017 accomplishments – Bev Durgan

- As provided on agenda brief
- Who should we be working with from the states?
- Better with releasing quarterly reports – with the CMC and to the sections
 - Just because the CMC gets reports doesn't mean the sections are receiving them
 - CMC's job to disseminate reports to sections
 - Sections should receive summaries of the committee's work, drafted and distributed between the Chair and Executive Vice Chair
- 2017 was the CMC's pivoting year – from growth to engagement, and into testing of engagement
- The video campaign, despite a tepid response generated more responses to congress than any of our 'asks' in the past. How can we amplify that?
- Faith Peppers is the example, but she is exception rather than the rule – institutional communicators need to be more engaged, more involved
 - Communicators aren't disinterested, they aren't being charged to support our campaigns. Deans need to charge communicators to engage.
 - Communicators are helpful when it comes to *providing* content. They aren't as involved with *distributing / rolling out* the campaigns.
- Mark Hussey (TAMU) noted that the TAMU communicator point of contact is not who he would have placed into that position. Mark as an Administrative Head did not receive the ask for who should be the contact for TAMU, and therefore never engaged internal communicators personally.
 - The Administrative Heads should be charged with identifying the appropriate point of contact within their institutions.
 - Correspondence should go out to Administrative Heads – who is your point of contact within the institutions?
 - Administrative Heads might put higher level administrators in as the POCs as opposed to communicators
 - 2 lists might be required – one for communicators (content) and one for institutional contacts (strategy, leadership, delivering the charge)
- Our metric – did our money change?
 - The bar hasn't changed (increase or decrease) over the years...
 - Other metrics are needed to assess project progress and success

Presentation of the Plan of Work – Mark Latimore

- As provided on agenda brief
- Is there a different way kglobal should be measuring the value of their work?
- By including kglobal's scope of work in the CMC's Plan of Work, we will be able to align the two and better measure our effectiveness
- The CMP is working to build a brand of what we *all* collectively do: LGUs, colleges of Ag, Extension, Administrators, APLU
- kglobal's challenge is measuring impact – at a higher level beyond quantitative metrics (shares/tweets)
- Policymakers: We're spending real money on this – are we getting a positive return on our investment? If so, we need to be able to say HOW.
- It's not necessarily the number of people, it's about contacting and engaging the right people – people who have influence over funding
- Directors/Administrators beyond the CMC won't have an idea of what the committee's doing and how effective we are.
- **Motion to approve the 2018 CMC POW was introduced by Mark Latimore, seconded by Chuck Hibberd, approved unanimously**

New business

- SoAR Initiative – Fed By Science
 - A number of deans formed a committee to roll out a strategy for SoAR, asking for participation in a collective communications effort to raise the visibility of the value of federal and state investment in Food and Agricultural Research.
 - \$5,000/yr buy in to the campaign
 - Educating and inspiring legislators to secure additional funding for Food and Ag Research in the next Farm Bill
 - Focused beyond colleges of Ag, to Biological Sciences at large
 - Extension is mentioned in the letter; not typical of SoAR
 - We should collectively engage SoAR; another advocate
 - SoAR contact – Andrea Putman
 - Gary Thompson (ESCOP Chair) and Chuck Hibberd (ECOP Chair) will return to DC to engage SoAR and NC-FAR
 - **Next conference call – invite a SoAR adviser to join the CMC to discuss Fed by Science**
- Changes to CMC Rules of Operation
 - **Rick Rhodes will provide a redline version of the rules**
 - Moving CMC Plan of Work formation to the fall – to better align with the execution of the contract that outlines the kglobal scope of work
 - Move the Face to Face CMC meeting to APLU in November, rotate chairship in November
 - Approve POW at APLU in November, which would inform the kglobal Scope of Work

Passing the gavel, concluding comments and adjournment – Bev Durgan and Mark Latimore

- Bev Durgan passed the gavel to Mark Latimore.
- Bev Durgan and Scott Reed were thanked for their service to the committee (Bev is rotating to the past chair position, and Scott is rotating off the committee as past chair).
- **David will contact the CMC to schedule the next conference call sometime in June.**
- The meeting adjourned at 6:11 pm.