



MARKETING STRATEGY

December 24, 2013



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This marketing strategy is rooted in the strategic investments made by the City in its Community Plan, Strategic Plan, partnerships and brand identity. It concentrates marketing efforts on a single audience, as a way of focusing the messaging and maximizing return on investment in the context of limited marketing resources.

It encompasses three strategic objectives:

1. Make the vision visible

The City's strategic plan is founded on a robust vision. Marketing efforts must focus on demonstrating how the City believes in the vision, communicates the vision, and lives the vision.

2. Communicate audience benefits

Effective marketing responds to audience needs. It is less about City of Whitehorse features and attributes and more about the emotional and rational benefits that citizens receive.

3. Put the money into online, owned and earned media

This will help move City of Whitehorse marketing and communications efforts further into the 21st century, and generate the biggest return on investment.

Our strategy proposes consistent core messages to help frame marketing efforts and reinforce the main themes of the strategic plan. They both reflect the benefits that our audience receives from the City and serves to inspire and rally city staff around the four main themes of the strategic vision. These hold that Whitehorse:

- is a well planned, self sustaining community
- is a leader in energy conservation and innovation
- conserves wilderness spaces
- provides for a vibrant economy and social life.

The Market Positioning Statement proposed for the City provides a structure and core rationale around which to build marketing campaigns. It clarifies what the city does, who it does it for, what it is they want, why they want it and how the City provides it. It balances citizens' needs and expectations with the City's unique features and assets.

Finally, our core tactical strategy is to focus much of the marketing effort on aligning City employees with the brand, vision and core messages of this plan. Three hundred City of Whitehorse ambassadors, on-message, on-brand and living the vision, could be the most powerful marketing tool ever employed by the City of Whitehorse.

CITY OF WHITEHORSE MARKETING STRATEGY

To make the City of Whitehorse Vision visible by believing it, communicating it and living it



THIS IS OUR VISION

- Balanced planning, self sustained
- Innovative conservation
- Wilderness values
- Vibrant life

From 2013-2015 strategic plan



THIS IS HOW WE TALK ABOUT IT

- Not always white and there's no horse. Everything else is true.
- Colorful 95%
- Doorstep to the wild
- Wild opportunities

Inspiring messages based on core messaging



THIS IS HOW WE LIVE IT

- Staff alignment
- Engaged communication
- Vision champions

From tactical plan



THIS IS WHY IT MATTERS

Finding the right balance

- a unique standard of living balanced with independence
- robust recreation opportunities balanced with cultural activities
- comfort, safety, civil amenities balanced with wilderness access

Audience

INTRODUCTION

Strategic investments over the last number of years by the City of Whitehorse have resulted in meaningful clarity with respect to planning, service delivery and communications. Elected in 2012, the current Mayor and Council have outlined their priorities within an extensive strategic plan.

With a well-crafted blueprint for the future (strategic plan), ongoing meaningful partnerships (YG Tourism, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, community engagement) and an articulate visual identity (logo, signage, communication collateral) the City of Whitehorse has assembled many of the building blocks necessary for effective marketing.

What follows is a brand-centric marketing strategy that begins to cement them together.

MARKETING THAT MATTERS

Every day, marketing strategies unfold around us. The radio jingles, print ads, YouTube videos, billboards, signs and Google ads that we are inundated with are all communication tactics of larger strategies working to distinguish one idea or item from another. At the very heart of these strategies is the desire for differentiation. How can an idea, product, service or communication be differentiated from all the others competing for people's attention?

The way to do that is first by making it matter to your audience, and second by making them believe it can be delivered.

- to make it matter; it needs to be focused on audience benefits, rather than product or service features—it needs to answer “why should I care...what's in it for me?”
- to make it believable, it needs to be rooted in authentic brand values—it needs to answer “why should I believe you...what do you stand for?”

While it may be easier to think about strategies in terms of tactics—a brochure, initiative or ad, for instance—it's more constructive to think in terms of an ongoing and iterative process. A marketing strategy is not just the glue between different tactics. Rather, it informs the way in which you think about your brand, manifesting its values in the things you say and do, and how you engage and interact with your audience.

To that end, this marketing strategy serves to give us a snapshot of who we are, what we stand for, what we offer, who we want to influence, what we have to say to them, how we'll do that and why they should believe us.

OBJECTIVE HIERARCHY

The project objectives outlined in the Marketing Strategy RFP provide an overview of what is to be done. The hierarchy below is a short list of strategic objectives to help get us there in the context of available resources.

- 1. Position the City of Whitehorse as a local government that is incredibly responsive to the needs of its citizens by communicating the audience benefits provided by Whitehorse community features.** Residents of the City of Whitehorse are the primary audience for this message. Concentrating limited resources on a core target will maximize efforts and trickle through other audience segments such as the business community and tourists.
- 2. Focus marketing efforts by maximizing the use of the most cost-effective communication resources.** Online channels, owned media venues and earned media provide the biggest pay-off in terms of results gained for effort invested.
- 3. Ensure that implementation of the 2013–15 City of Whitehorse Strategic Plan is visible, participatory, measurable and communicative.** The City of Whitehorse has a strong foundation in its mission and vision. Bringing them alive in the organization and in the community will mean finding ways to make the vision visible and then keeping your internal and external audiences informed and inspired by progress.

AUDIENCE PROFILE

Describing a cross section of our audience in their daily environment provides a springboard for communicating with them. Understanding our audience's lifestyle, priorities and goals allows us to leverage the goals of the City of Whitehorse in a meaningful way.

Primary Audience

The highest priority audience is residents of the City of Whitehorse. Residents can become agents of the City and its unique benefits. Visitors, tourists, and Yukoners outside of Whitehorse are important to the City, but effort focused on residents will filter to them by way of resident's anecdotal experience of the City. Additionally, narrowing the focus of marketing efforts to residents of the City is a better use of limited resources—concentrated effective communication to a smaller demographic will have a stronger ripple effect than spreading efforts thinly.

Channel Alignment

The most effective and economical way to reach residents of Whitehorse is through City of Whitehorse staff. As members of the community themselves, staff who reflect the core messages of the Whitehorse City brand not only create the face of the organization, they bring it into their personal networks and communities. Streamlining internal department communications, managing external communications meaningfully, and increasing brand awareness are the foundations necessary to achieve the City's strategic priorities as outlined in the City of Whitehorse Strategic Plan.

Mayor and City Council are also a valuable channel for communicating brand values. Investing energy in Council's awareness of the City of Whitehorse's core messages will result in clearer and more coherent communications with our target audience.

Audience Profile: **RESIDENTS OF WHITEHORSE**

Overview:

There are over 27,000 people living within the city limits. They enjoy access to amenities and culture familiar to most major cities—transit, emergency services, garbage and compost pick-up, recreational organizations and facilities, a business centric downtown, restaurants and entertainment

Interests and lifestyle:

Residents of Whitehorse feel grateful for the opportunity to live here. They recognize the unique balance in a lifestyle where work and play are both engaging and satisfying. They meet the challenges of Northern living with pride—long drives to visit or adventure, wearing the right gear against the cold, getting used to dark winter days and taking advantage of summer light.

They have a job that makes a difference—one that may have been harder to get outside. Making an impact in this community makes them feel a part of it, that and running into familiar faces about town.

Audience Segmentation

City of Whitehorse Staff (Channel)

- Take pride in working for the City of Whitehorse, have a vested interest in improving the community
- Feel like they are working several people's jobs, are worried about resource limitations
- Wish the good work done by the City was better recognized by the community

Mayor and Council (Channel)

- Representing the citizens of Whitehorse by listening to the community is very important to this Council
- Attend public events and are very present in the community
- Passionate about the City and have strong personal opinions about its management
- Concerned with public feedback and want the opportunity serve the City in the future

Cheechako residents

- Expect big-city amenities
- Are impressed with the abundance of opportunities

Sourdough residents

- Remember when most streets weren't paved
- Have mixed feeling about City infrastructure competing with cozy wilderness feeling

Squeaky wheels

- Have very strong opinions about how the City should be run, and aren't afraid to voice them
- Take up a lot of time for City employees and Council
- Are not easily satisfied

Silent wheels

- Access City facilities on a daily basis – CGC, Transit, etc in addition to infrastructure
- Are pleased with some of the City's offerings, less so with others (reluctant transit users), but would be very upset if service were disrupted to any programs they use regularly

Community interest groups

- Vested interest in certain projects (Sima, Humane Society)
- Limited interaction with the City outside of their area of interest

True believers

- Champions for the community, these people volunteer at events, buy local and generally try to support Whitehorse as best they can
- Vocal proponents of the city, focusing on the positive aspects of Whitehorse to family and friends within the Territory and outside
- Aware of how fortunate we are for things like access to recreation and wilderness, excellent infrastructure for the city's size and location and low tax rates compared to other municipalities

BRAND PROPOSITION MODEL

City of Whitehorse foundational elements*

brand attributes

These are our qualities, features, traits and corporate characteristics.

Attributes

Big town amenities in small town framework
 Regional hub
 Well funded
 Relatively low taxes
 National level facilities
 Top-notch core municipal services
 Abundant cultural activities
 Wilderness access
 Recreational access

Personality

Hard working
 Engaging
 Flexible/nimble

User

Outdoorsy
 Culturally informed
 Independent spirit
 Socially engaged
 Sustainable mindset

brand benefits

These are our attributes translated into benefits for our audience.

Rational benefits

Good value/taxes — vs other jurisdictions
 Ability to live a life of choice — autonomy
 Choice: Broad range of social spaces, facilities
 Choice: Residential options in housing, lot size
 Protected greenspace
 Access – transit infrastructure
 Access – wilderness, recreation, culture
 Safety
 Health

Emotional benefits

Self-fulfillment
 Social connections
 Identification with community
 Freedom from fear and worry
 Security
 Gratitude (been given a gift)
 Feel important (we listen, have strong partners)
 Pride and satisfaction (of City services)

* as presented by City of Whitehorse workshop participants, December 2, 2013

brand values

These are the essential values that cultivate our attributes and benefits.

The space we occupy

We value our wilderness landscape as well as our urban landscape, knowing that one is as important as the other in defining who we are and what we stand for.

The people who live here

We value the people we call our neighbours by providing the services necessary to live our lives with civil comforts, health and fulfillment.

Working together to keep it great

We value our collaborative efforts, working with innovation and commitment to ensure sustainability in all our environmental and social endeavors.

positioning statement

This is how we position attributes, benefits and values to motivate our audience.

The City of Whitehorse is the home, destination and investment opportunity for those who think highly of a community that values people, natural surroundings and sensibility for sustainable development.

brand promise

This is the most compelling way to say everything in just a few words.

Finding Balance

We care about keeping Whitehorse great and striving to make it even better because we appreciate the unique balance that makes this place so special. Whitehorse balances a neighbourhood friendly, small town with the amenities of a much larger centre. We balance the conservation of green space with the desire for urban development. We balance our gratitude for living in such an amazing place with our responsibility to ensure it stays that way. We strive to provide top-notch service that continuously looks at the whole picture and maintains that balance.

MARKET POSITIONING

VISION STATEMENT

Whitehorse is a self-sustaining community that balances planning and the delivery of service around the environmental, recreational, social and economic desires of its citizens.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

The City of Whitehorse is a municipal government focused on creating the conditions necessary to sustain a unique standard of living for citizens who expect a balance of robust recreation and cultural opportunities to fortify them in body, spirit and mind and who demand comfort, safety and civil amenities without foregoing independence. The City accomplishes this with strong and reliable revenue streams, uncommonly extensive community infrastructure, an independent, problem-solving culture and virtually unlimited access to wilderness spaces and corresponding values.

VALUE PROPOSITION

CORE MESSAGE

UNBEATABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

We enjoy the civilized comforts & opportunities of a city in the context of a neighbour-friendly small town.

VISION/MISSION

"Whitehorse will be a well planned, self sustaining community"
"an exceptional community to live, work and play"

PROOF POINTS

Recreation

- World-class sport infrastructure
- Youth access to national/international sport travel
- National/World championships
- Funding for new sport infrastructure/ongoing programs
- Ease of access with limited line-ups and plenty of space in many recreation activities
- Affordability of access

Education

- Yukon College within city limits
- New high school construction
- Quick air access to major Post Secondary Education institutions
- Government funded professional development programs
- Student access to funding programs such as the Yukon Grant as well as increased access to scholarships

Services

- Sewage and water systems
- Bylaw
- Transit
- Fire Department
- Waste Management
- Building Inspection
- Snow removal
- Landfill
- Recreation facilities
- Roadways
- Land planning and management

Cultural

- World-class artistic facility
- Inspirational environment for artists
- Artist in residence program
- Access to tourist focused artistic programming
- Music festivals, Rendezvous, craft shows, Arts in the Park, culture days

SMART, PROBLEM-SOLVING CITIZENS

Whitehorsians are well-educated, motivated and independent citizens who are prepared to think outside the box.

“will continue to strive for a better quality of life that is reflected in its vibrant economy and social life.”

Employment Requirements: Territorial and Federal Government

- Positions require specific credentials
- Professional development opportunities
- Professional work environment

Knowledge Sector Research

- Yukon Research Centre knowledge sector study
- High number of professionals, consultants

First Nations Traditions

- Adaptive to climate and environment
- Innovative solutions to life challenges
- Connectivity to the water and earth, communal mindset

Descendents of the Gold Rush

- Frontier spirit is in the blood of citizens

THE WILD DOORSTEP

We are a city within the wilderness and the wilderness is within our city

“is a leader in energy conservation and innovation that maintains and values wilderness spaces for future generations”

Environmental Sustainability

- 95% of electricity generated from renewable resources (hydro)
- Commitment to renewable and sustainable strategies
- Solid waste action plan
- Walk-ride-bike strategies
- Waste diversion plan including compost bins for all residents
- Leaders in building standards
- Adjusted standards to respond to climate

Wilderness Values, Access

- Abundance of green space, clean water
- The best air quality of any city in North America
- Access to camping and other outdoor activities
- World class hiking, biking and skiing trails
- Commitment to green spaces as outlined in the Official Community Plan
- Citizens who place a high value on wilderness and green spaces
- Option to unplug as desired but access to technology like bigger city

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Ours is a well-employed, well-resourced community capable of choosing its own future.

“one of Canada’s best local governments enabling Whitehorse to be an exceptional community to live, work and play”

Employment: Territorial and Federal Governments

- Quality of pay and benefits
- Consistency of long-term employment

City of Whitehorse Occupancy Rates

- Steady sub 5% vacancy rate for over five years

Economic Spin-offs/Job Creation from Government Employment

- Attraction of national/international retailers
- A Yukon based airline, daily Air Canada flights and seasonal Westjet service
- Vibrant year-round artistic community with world-class venue
- 20+ locally owned restaurants open year-round
- A locally owned/operated craft beer company
- Two locally owned/operated distilleries

Home Values

- Sustained growth in home values
- High rate of rental occupancy
- High rental unit rates

Capital City Investment

- Federal investment in capital city-type infrastructure
- Funding to YG to deliver adequate governmental service
- Access to Economic Action Plan funding

EXPANDED CORE MESSAGES

Core messaging is the heart of the matter, the things you want to communicate and which you want your audience to understand. As such, the City of Whitehorse's core messaging comes from its vision statement:

"Whitehorse will be a well planned, self sustaining community that is a leader in energy conservation and innovation that maintains and conserves wilderness spaces for future generations. Whitehorse will continue to strive for a better quality of life that is reflected in its vibrant economy and social life."

The four message themes that emerge are:

- Well planned, self sustaining community
- Leader in energy conservation and innovation
- Values wilderness spaces
- Vibrant economy and social life

Our core messages are:

I. We enjoy the civilized comforts & opportunities of a city in the context of a neighbourhood-friendly small town.

Whitehorse has all the amenities of a big city without crowding your personal space or detracting from a strong community dynamic. It has unbeatable infrastructure for a city this size, and part of that infrastructure helps you get away from it all (Mt. Mac, walking trails, roads and bridges). Whitehorse residents are well aware that they enjoy greater access to arts and recreation than most northern cities of this size. These facts all tie into the vision statement for the City of Whitehorse, which point to the desire for a *vibrant social life* and *well-planned community* all while *valuing wilderness space*.

Inspiring promotional messaging that would resonate with this core message could include*:

All the city we need

Not always white and there's no horse. Everything else is true.

* to be used and supported in context

2. Whitehorsians are well-educated, motivated and independent citizens who are prepared to think outside the box.

Part of becoming a *well planned, self sustaining community, and leaders in energy conservation and innovation* means capitalizing on our citizen's talents and skills. Residents here are resourceful, innovative and creative, leading to a community that isn't afraid to battle the elements and take on tough challenges. Part of what draws great people to this community is the fact that Whitehorse has something for everyone, and everyone can find their place here.

Inspiring promotional messaging that would resonate with this core message could include*:

**We survive here – ideas thrive here
For the colourful 95%**

* to be used and supported in context

3. We are a city within the wilderness and the wilderness is within our city.

We're closer than you think; to facilities, people, solutions, wilderness. Whitehorse truly is a **doorstep to the wild**. Planning the city well and *dedicating green spaces*, as per the City's Official Community Plan, will help to keep the fine balance of city and wilderness that residents here value so much.

Inspiring promotional messaging that would resonate with this core message could include*:

**The wilderness city
The human hub in a wild space
We're closer than you think**

* to be used and supported in context

4. Ours is a well-employed, well-resourced community capable of choosing its own future.

Many new residents move here for the financial and career opportunities and many students return for the same reason. Though this may be an initial draw, the endless other opportunities —for recreation, lifestyle, social interaction and creativity— are why people stay, and love it here. The incredible resources and employment prospects gives Whitehorse the opportunity to become a *well planned, self sustaining community* and to create a *vibrant economy and social life* as per the City's Strategic Vision.

Inspiring promotional messaging that would resonate with this core message could include*:

**Wild opportunity
An opportunity frontier
It's not your grand-dad's frontier**

* to be used and supported in context

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Our strategy for marketing the City of Whitehorse is to focus our resources on the primary audience—residents of the City of Whitehorse. The most effective channels of communication to reach residents are the employees at the City of Whitehorse. Focusing resources on aligning the employees with the organization's brand through core messages and brand awareness will have a ripple effect throughout the primary target audience and beyond. Following are five steps towards achieving the objectives outlined earlier:

I. Align City of Whitehorse employees with the City's brand and core messaging

Every employee of the City of Whitehorse needs to be aware of their brand's core messages for them to adopt these messages on the job—in essence, to live the brand. Front line workers such as receptionists at City Hall or building inspectors can create a lasting first impression. Adopting the City's core messages will help employees articulate—through simple conversation with residents and within their personal networks—the functional and emotional benefits associated with the City of Whitehorse brand.

Simply informing employees of core messages is not enough for the message to resonate meaningfully. They need to be articulated in an inspiring way in order to

create an emotional connection. Communications then need to train staff how they contribute to realizing the core message—representing the City's brand. Ongoing communications reinforce the brand through an employees career:

An important component of realizing internal brand alignment is making the resources available. The most obvious path to freeing up capacity at the City of Whitehorse is to improve internal communications. Improving systems and protocols surrounding everyday tasks such as internal emailing, responding to resident inquiries and broadcasting will increase efficiency—making all communications more meaningful and employees more accountable to the information they send and receive.

One of the best opportunities for brand alignment lies in implementation of the 2013–15 Strategic plan. This is a plan rooted in vision and focused on enduring brand values. For many people, unfortunately, a strategic plan is simply a wordy document that lives on a shelf. The opportunity lies in marketing its inspiring message to internal staff in a simple and brand-centric fashion, to keep it visible by highlighting and reflecting instances and examples of goal achievement, and to communicate progress on a regular basis. If the strategic plan can be made to live through broad, front-of-mind staff participation in meaningful ways, the City will go a long way to achieving its marketing objectives.

2. Implement an audience engagement strategy

Using the audience profiles to understand your audience as they relate to each department, we can identify and connect the appropriate communication channels needed to join conversations that are already happening among your audience members.

Many departments will benefit from a strategy specifically designed to take advantage of contemporary communications channels that are highly populated by Whitehorse residents. Public engagement with on-the-go communication needs such as transit schedules and CGC schedule changes would radically increase with improved mobile access and an active social media presence.

Part of this strategy includes resource allowances for social engagement, developing guidelines for when to utilize conventional (and costly) mass media options, and ideally some mobile application development.

3. Leverage the engagement of Mayor and Council

As a valuable communication channel, one that is constantly being observed and recorded by all Whitehorse media, Council represents the City's best opportunity to gain earned media. We need to ask ourselves, how can we demonstrate that our vision for the City, as expressed in our brand values and strategic plan initiatives, lives in our day-to-day lives and not just in a document? How can we turn our ideas into practice? Top 5 or Top 10 lists can be developed, tailor-made for Mayor and Council to champion. "If I believed in The Plan, I would..." "I commit to these five activities, because I'm committed to the plan" etc. This in turn, could form the launching pad for staff commitment and, ultimately, citizen commitment.

To move Whitehorse from an "I should..." city to an "I will" city, is a small but significant psychological shift that research has proven to be the most important step toward behaviour change. To have Mayor and Council demonstrably lead this charge has the added benefit of positioning them as champions of the City brand.

4. Take charge of utilizing City-owned marketing venues

The City of Whitehorse has marketing venues built right into many City-owned facilities. Rinks signage, transit signage and the active living guide are seen daily by residents who use these amenities and those that observe them. This is an opportunity to connect with a captive audience that should not be overlooked. Empty ad space can even harm the image of the City by presenting barren, underused surfaces that beg the question: why is this space not valued? These surfaces speak directly to audience segments—let's promote the benefits of transit on rink signage, the benefits of active living on transit and the true benefits that accrue to citizens of the City of Whitehorse in our publications.

5. Manage the brand

This is a policy matter that requires on-going support at management level. It requires oversight not only of city communications in general, but of brand standards and brand communications specifically. That oversight is best provided by a Brand Manager with a level of authority necessary to apply the standards and insist on adherence to them, across the various departments of the City.

Brand management is more than assuring consistent application of the existing visual identity. The City of Whitehorse has a valuable asset in its 2011 Brand Identity Guide. An important part of communicating to residents the benefits of the City as an organization is in making the City visible. Beyond that, the surest way to meaningful communications is to position the City of Whitehorse in terms of audience benefits. This grows with frequent and consistent use of core messaging as well as guidelines on which tone of voice is used when and where.

Brand management plays a starring role in consistently delivering the City's brand in all these strategies. By channelling communication material through people who are trained in brand management and having it go through fewer people as a result, makes it easier it is to manage the integrity of the brand and provide consistent messages to your audience.

MARKETING PLANNING MATRIX

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/ channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
I.1	Core message posters	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop inspiring posters from 4 original core messages 	One a month for four months	Common areas, staff rooms, etc.	Will require audit of common areas and coordination with department managers for displays
I.2	Core message calendar or other office collateral	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Branded departmental calendars, each month a variation on core messaging 	Annually	Internal mail/distribution	Develop shot list for photographic opportunities as they arise throughout the year
I.3	Email and corporate templates	Staff/External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate brand signature into all City of Whitehorse email signatures, templates and make their use mandatory 	One time foundational activity	Internal emails & templates	Department specific core messaging should be added at a later date
I.4	Strategic plan updates	Staff/Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular scheduled updates providing proof points for success and status on achieving strategic goals 	Quarterly each year	Internal mail/staff meetings	Provide real evidence of achieving strategic goals and staff/Council who live them

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
1.5	Email/internal comms policy	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy to be reviewed/implemented on how to improve internal communications including access to email distribution 	One time, yearly review	Internal comms committee, Business and technology services	Will require coordination from IT and department managers. Propose small committee to review and develop new policy
2.1	Assign Social Media Coordinator (SMC)	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media needs to be coordinated by a single person who can be a single voice for the City of Whitehorse 	One time, yearly review		This coordinator needs to have access to the right information to correctly respond to questions/comments, needs to be a creative writer, and will need the appropriate tools to perform their job (smart phone, time each day, online privileges, access to a graphic designer when needed and social media training, etc)
2.2	Create one City of Whitehorse profile for each medium	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Whitehorse should have one voice on each determined social media platform and managed by the SMC. This voice will speak for Transit, Canada Games Center, By-Law, etc 	One time, yearly review	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	Each profile needs to be complete with entire information section, use areas to speak to core messages and always include hours of operations, contact numbers, invitations to follow, join, etc

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
2.3	Close or remove obsolete profiles	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For improved focus communications all non-official City of Whitehorse profiles should be shut down (Canada Games Center, Transit, etc) 	One time, after official City of Whitehorse profile is launched.	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	Specific program profiles may be used or retained once reviewed by the SMC and managed under their wing. All existing profiles need to promote new profile and communicate what is happening before shutting down (explained in audience benefits)
2.4	Establish key messages for all front-line departments	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SMC working with managers will develop the 4-5 main audience benefits that need to be reinforced about each of the front-line departments (Transit, Canada Games Centre, etc) 	One time, with quarterly reviews.	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	Front line staff needs to be consulted in the development of these key messages
2.5	Develop weekly content schedule	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop weekly content schedules with arranged status update times/topics to ensure necessary quantity and quality is met Determine on-the-go communication, information that residents need on-the-go such as transit schedules, waste collection schedules etc (this can be built into the applications of the profile) 	Weekly	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn	It is important for the SMC to become part of the community by engaging with the City of Whitehorse audiences content (like, share, comment, respond to audience questions/comments). These profiles need to be the City of Whitehorse as a person

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
2.6	Facebook “Like us” campaigns	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook is only as effective as your base, specific campaigns and sponsorship opportunities need to be developed by the SMC to increase likes • Initial sponsored ads to increase likes to be purchased 	Initial and ongoing when opportunities arise	Facebook	Specific budget line for Facebook advertising, promoting posts, and sponsorship will be outlined in budget. Existing sponsorship the City has needs to be leveraged to increase more likes
2.7	Website Engagement	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core messaging, success stories and strategic plan updates need to be included in the rotation within “In the Spotlight” and “Important Notice” sections 	Monthly	Website	This homepage section is an opportunity to communicate and engage with our audience. Strategic plan updates should be considered as well
2.8	Whitehorse media matrix	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of the included Whitehorse media matrix to communications managers to assist in choosing effective bought media 	One time, ongoing easurement and feedback	Manager of Strategic Comms	This document should become a living document that gets reviewed and updated as all departments use it

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/ channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
2.9	Whitehorse City mobile application planning	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More and more residents of Whitehorse are becoming versed with and rely daily on their smart phone. Planning should begin in resource allocation, content development and outside sourcing of a smart phone app for launch in mid-2015 	On-going	Manager of Strategic Comms, IT department	It is no longer a question of yes or no but when, with respect to developing a City of Whitehorse Application. This app can be used for promoting services, schedules, push notifications for emergencies, closures, road conditions, promotions, etc.
3.1	Core message sharing	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One session with all Councillors and Mayor reviewing, explaining and demonstrating how to talk the talk of the City's core messages 	One time	Manager of Strategic Comms	Having the Mayor and all Councillors versed in how and when to use each core message will strengthen the brand and go a long way in marketing the City
3.2	Strategic Plan champions	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular scheduled updates providing proof points for success and status on achieving strategic goals Make Strategic Plan champions out of Mayor and Council 	Quarterly each year, and ongoing as updates happen	Internal email, council meetings	<p>Mayor and Council have an opportunity to champion the Strategic Plan</p> <p>Turn Strategic Plan initiatives into day-to-day actions to shift Whitehorse from "I should" to "I will"</p>

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
3.3	Council social media training	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper training in social media and its benefits to each Councillor will improve their engagement with their constituents, which will in turn benefit City communications. 	One time, with on going support	Social Media Coordinator (SMC)	As your SMC receives more training and experience, passing on and leveraging this knowledge will become essential
4.1	Owned internal advertising rate/policy review	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently no discounts are in place for interdepartmental advertising and no policy on how to manage vacant advertising • The City needs to leverage the fact they have substantial owed media opportunities and provide incentives to advertise their own services within them • Vacant advertising space only hurts the City's brand and value of the media space, policies need to be implemented where City of Whitehorse inspiring messaging or other promotions can be promoted within vacant spaces 	One time, yearly review	Committee or managers to review policies	There needs to be long term goals for the ROI with respect to giving discounts or incentives for inter departmental advertising

ID	Tactic	Target Audience/ channel	Purpose, Description	Frequency, Schedule	Distribution Vehicle	Comments
5.1	Assign Brand Manager	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand Management plays a starring role in consistently delivering the City's brand. The less people who manage the communications the easier it is to manage the integrity of the brand and provide consistent messages to your audience 	One time, yearly review	Manager of Strategic Comms	There can be more than one Brand manager however they must be trained and on the same page.
5.2	Ensure consistent use of Brand Identity Guide	Residents and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring all Brand Managers and departments have the updated Brand Identity Guide and core messaging and are applying them appropriately 	One time, yearly review	Brand Managers	There may need to have existing signage re-done, vinyl applications re-printed, etc. An Audit should be done and budgeting for this allotted for in 2015.
5.3	Ensure use of core messages in all promotion	Residents and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all communications maintain one of the 4 core messages 	Ongoing	Brand Managers	All communication needs to be structured in audience benefits.

WHITEHORSE MEDIA MATRIX

	TV	Radio	Newspaper
	CBC North APTN Channel 21 Info Cable 8 Channel 19	CKRW CHON CBC	Yukon News Whitehorse Star What's Up Yukon L'Aurore Boreal
General overview of media features/benefits			
Strength	Impact, credibility, believability	Mobile medium (delivers to audience everywhere), attention getting, not limited by visuals, can target demographically.	Credible, authoritative medium, sale ads are expected by audience, tangible medium.
Demographics	With the exception of young males, mostly everyone.	30–60, working class	Over 45, higher income (above 45,000) married couples.
Purpose, Best Use	Need to demonstrate a product. Long-term brand building. Dominate a day part and achieve frequency.	Wide reach for a diverse audience, with ease of message repetition. Short, key messages. Ability to build several spots around one concept or message. Run Saturdays. Be different, catchy	Price advertising, sales, products for older adults, big ideas, short term message that doesn't need repetition, couponing. Go wider and horizontal, pick up rates, go with long-term contracts.
Pros/Cons	Very high production cycle costs vs. relatively low placement cost. Limited local audience fractured by broad range of choice.	Relatively low production costs, modest placement. Fractured audience (considerable portion of Whitehorse demographic favours commercial-free radio.)	Relatively low production cost, vs. high placement. Fractured newspaper audience (YN vs. WhS). Diminishing readership as audiences migrate and newspaper influence declines. Pay attention to audited circulation numbers.

Magazines	Digital Media		Direct Mail	Out of Home
North of Ordinary UpHere UpHere Business	Facebook Google AdWords (includes YouTube) Google Display The Weather Network	Linkedin Kijiji Whitehorse Star Online Yukon News Online CBC North Online	Unaddressed household Unaddressed business Whitehorse only	Transit Sports Venue Billboard Paradigm Digital • airport • hospital

Credible, authoritative medium, closer readership, perception of higher value content.	Accessible to everyone with internet access, non-intrusive, engagement rather than interruptive marketing, paid, earned and owned.	Ability to target specifically demographically and geographically, one-to-one.	Cost efficiency of reaching a large number of people.
Higher education, higher income, professionals, niche interest groups.	Stronger as the demographic gets younger. More educated, higher income.	20–45, better educated (at least high school, preferably w/ college degree).	Mobile demographics (eliminates senior citizens, children).
Positioning, long-term brand messaging, awareness. Magazines have a longer shelf life than most other media, and multiple users (readers) at multiple locations (waiting rooms). Take advantage of that.	Consideration at least as an option, Availability, reference, brand awareness. Highly targetable, searchable, strong metrics suite. Content that engages your audience by way of education, entertainment.	Sell something, generate awareness when used in partnership with other media. Better response rates come from targeted lists and targeted offers. Flood a zip code Offer incentive in the mailing.	Name, recognition, awareness, branding — directional Be consistent with message in other media. Contrasting colors with readable fonts. Seven words or less.
High production and placement costs vs. multiple readership and long shelf life. Pay attention to audited circulation numbers.	Easy entry, low cost, targeted, update-able searchable and trackable vs. minimal content, fleeting nature, competition for eyes.	Accessible to the City as a result of pre-established address database. Fairly high overall cost vs. low cost per reader. 100% targetable. Best opportunity to direct sell benefits rather than product features — What, Why, When, Where, Who.	High production cycle cost, relatively high placement cost vs. hi visibility, long shelf life and excellent potential for awareness-building.

BUDGET

2014 – \$50,000

- 1.1 Core message poster development and production – **\$2,000**
- 1.2 Core message office collateral – **\$6,000**
- 1.5 Strategic plan staff update sessions – **\$2,500**
- 2.1 Social Media Coordinator – **\$5,500**
(travel and tuition)
- 2.2 Social media profile graphic design support – **\$4,000**
- 2.6 Facebook promotions budget (“like us” campaigns, sponsored ads, promote posts) – **\$5,000**
- 2.8 Traditional media with adapted core messaging – **\$8,000**
- 2.9 City of Whitehorse mobile app, planning and consultation – **\$10,000**
- 4.1 Development of Core Messaging Ads for owned media space – **\$3,000**
- 5.1 Brand management training – **\$5,000**

2015 – TBD

Budget considerations for 2015 would include:

- City of Whitehorse mobile application design and development
- Continued social media training and consideration for a full-time Communications and Promotion Specialist position.
- Graphic design support for the Manager of Strategic Communications, Communications and Promotion Specialist and Brand Managers.
- On-going brand alignment campaign work targeting City of Whitehorse residents.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

This is a 2-year plan that outlines necessary marketing and communications steps, tactical development and deployment timeframes, and corresponding budget estimates. However, a modest environmental scan suggests a number of critical factors that may impact the effectiveness of the tactics being deployed. To focus on them first is to build firm foundations for subsequent marketing and communications efforts.

I. The City of Whitehorse Identity

The City's brand identity is a reflection of the values and goals outlined in its strategic plan. This identity needs to be positioned as the umbrella under which all departments gather. It requires the adoption and use of consistent narrative, imagery and aesthetic so that both the internal and external audiences can recognize it as a city-wide identity, irrespective of the department or facility from which it originates.

The City of Whitehorse brand identity does not reside at the Department of Strategic Communications and Customer Service. If that's the only place it lives, then it does not really live at all. The City as a whole will continue to portray multiple personalities to its audience. In essence, it becomes a loosely knit family of brands rather than a cohesive City of Whitehorse brand.

2. Brand Policy and Management

This is a policy matter that requires on-going support at management level. It requires oversight not only of City communications in general, but of brand standards and brand communications specifically. That oversight is best provided by a Brand Manager with a level of authority necessary to apply the standards and insist on adherence to them, across City departments.

The Brand Manager need not be a new position; it can be a duty assumed by a senior member of the current communications staff. The Brand Manager will go on to identify or appoint Brand Coordinators within each department. Together, they will constitute a cohesive, tightly-focused team that will provide the necessary resources, contacts, arms and legs for City of Whitehorse brand communications coordination and implementation activities. This strategy is the necessary foot-in-the-door that begins to coordinate communications efforts away from a department/facility perspective and towards a City-wide one. It will encourage and enable each City department and facility to identify with the overall brand.

3. Strategic Plan Progress

The 2013–15 Strategic Plan can become a unifying marketing device, provided it is actively implemented and implementation is captured in ways meaningful for and useful to communications and marketing purposes.

Fundamentally, the plan says: This is what our vision consists of.

Marketing says: This is how we talk about it, and this is how we live it.

To do that, the marketing/communications team should develop a means or methodology for reviewing, acquiring or developing progress reports on the strategic plan.

In addition to providing marketing communications content, these will become increasingly valuable tools for demonstrating the authentic City of Whitehorse brand.

4. Marketing Resources

Finally, a significant requirement will be the provision or securing of adequate resources, both human and fiscal, to implement the marketing strategy itself. Human resources can be supplemented by outsourcing to appropriate agencies. The budget is whatever it is — or could be.

As City marketing resources are modest, it would be prudent to invest time and money in addressing numbers 1-3 above, laying the foundations for on-going initiatives in the future.

MEASUREMENT

Measurement is a necessary component of any effective marketing initiative. If we model the work on a conventional PDSA cycle of continuous improvement, we can view these marketing initiatives in this iterative way:



Audience feedback and measurement enable us to effectively study and act. Gathering a benchmark measurement of what our audience understands enables us to carry out the planning process and becomes the basis for future measurement.

The City already has in place a residents survey. This year benchmark questions need to be developed and worked into the survey to be used to test this and future iterations of these marketing initiatives. Each year the results from this residents survey will help craft the following years iteration of the marketing strategy.

Prepared by **aasman** December 2013



