

Fall 2025 CAE Study Group

Domain 8: Marketing and Communications November 20, 2025



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Domain 8: Marketing and communications work together to understand, reach, and engage association audiences. (10-12% of exam)



Marketing: Creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings of value



Brand Management: Stewarding every interaction that influences the stories stakeholders tell. "A brand is the set of expectations, memories, stories, and relationships"



Communications: Using messages to create meaning across contexts, cultures, channels, and media



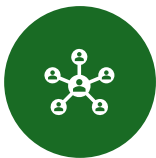
Public Relations: Building mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics

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Domain 8: The CSE's Responsibilities



THE CSE
ENSURES
MARKETING/COM
MUNICATIONS ARE
EMBEDDED IN
STRATEGY.



THE CSE ACTS AS
CHIEF
SPOKESPERSON
—CLEAR,
CONSISTENT
COMMUNICATION
IS ESSENTIAL.



THE CSE USES
DATA FOR
SEGMENTATION,
MEASUREMENT,
AND EVALUATION.



THE CSE
PRIORITIZES
LISTENING TO
STAKEHOLDERS.

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The Four P's of Marketing



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Integrated Marketing Approach

This is the call to action, goals, audiences (known & unfamiliar), and opportunities to expand reach and credibility.

Identifies tools for measuring marketing, communications, brand awareness, and PR effectiveness.

Precede all marketing campaigns with:


1. Audit of current efforts


2. Data mining for audience insight to predict behaviors


3. Trends analysis for internal/external influences


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The 8 Components of a Marketing & Communications Plan


 1 Overview (value to stakeholders)


 2 Measurable objectives


 3 Supporting data/analytics

 4 Target audiences

 5 Key messages

 6 Audience segmentation

 7 Schedule & budget

 8 Post-campaign evaluation

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Key Stakeholders to Engage

Member/customer
relations

Board & volunteer
leaders

Spokespeople

Staff

Members

Media

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Legal & Ethical Requirements of Marketing

Personal data protection:
privacy expectations, email
compliance, websites,
transactions.

Trademarks & copyrights:
create/protect
organizational assets and
avoid infringement.

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Brand Management

Key Principles

Branding extends far beyond logos and visual standards.

It encompasses everything the association does to define its uniqueness and shape stakeholder experience.

Strong branding influences stakeholder expectations, the stories they share, their relationships with the association, and ultimately their purchasing decisions.

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Core Elements of Effective Association Branding

Clear organizational identity reflecting stakeholder culture and value.

Defined brand standards covering **identity**, benefits, features, and value.

Consistent integration of the brand across all programs, services, and activities.

Ongoing **evaluation** of brand strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness.

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CSE's Role: The Brand Steward



The CSE ensures branding is a strategic function embedded across the organization.



Every touchpoint—marketing, communications, education, publications, IT, customer service, physical/virtual spaces—communicates something about the brand.



The CSE must maintain cultural alignment and prevent siloing of branding functions.



Commitment to listening to stakeholders, including social listening, is essential.

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Peer Influence & Stakeholder-Driven Narratives



Stakeholders trust peers more than brand messages.



Associations must adapt branding strategies to a world where communication is decentralized.



Encourage user-generated content, understanding that conversations occur beyond association-owned channels.

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Measuring Brand Strength



Financial metrics: dues revenue, non-dues revenue.



Nonfinancial metrics: Net Promoter Score (NPS), stakeholder sentiment.



Brand attributes: how the organization is perceived (e.g., “prestigious,” “innovative,” “trusted”).

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Communication: Key Principles

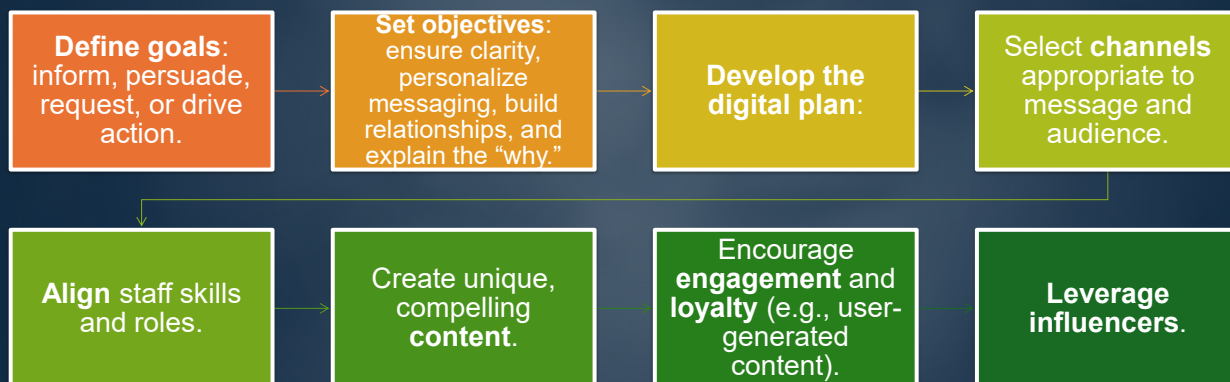
Communication delivers messages in context, using media chosen for their purpose and audience.

Core functions include strategy and planning, presentations, publications, and advocacy messaging.

Digital communication is essential for issue response, audience engagement, and governance.

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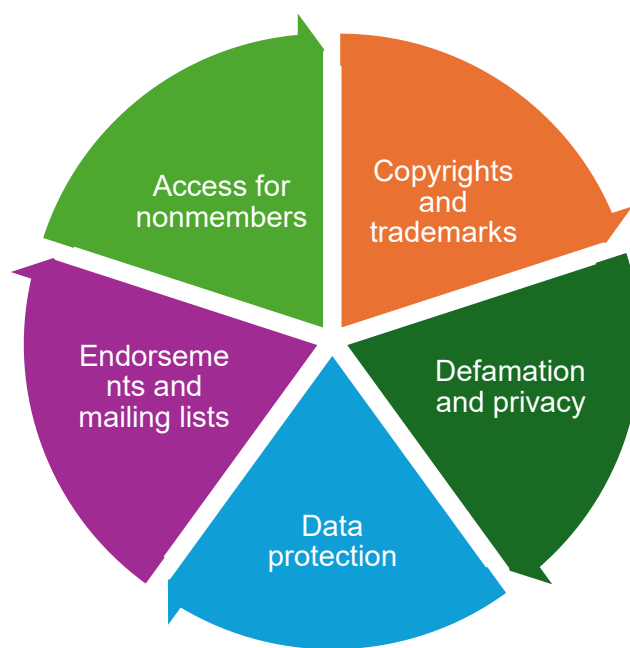
Building an Effective Communication Strategy



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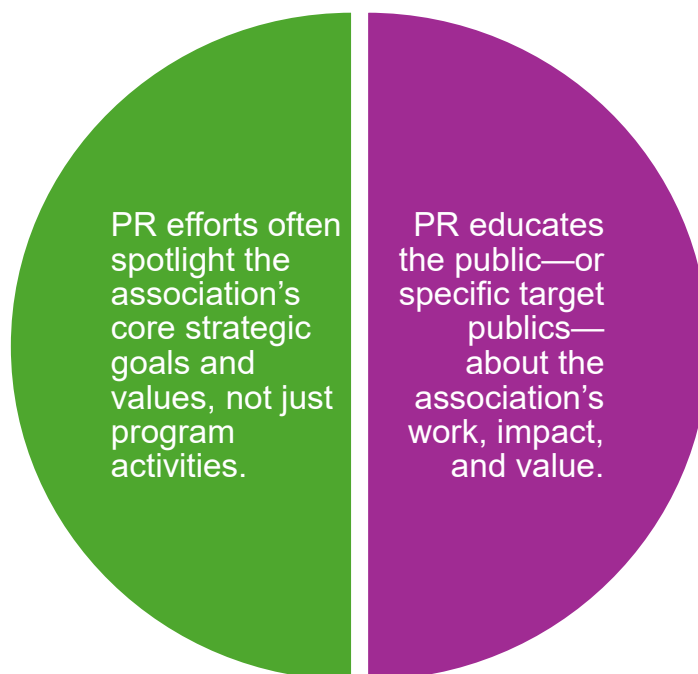
Communications Legal Considerations:

Publications and digital content must comply with laws related to:



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Public Relations: Key Principles



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Core Components of PR Programs

PR strategy and planning

Press/news releases

Media relations and outreach

Op-eds and thought leadership

Press/news conferences

Media tours and interviews

Paid media placements and advertorials

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Evolving Media Landscape



Influence now extends beyond traditional news outlets.



Specialty blogs, digital platforms, and niche media can have impact equal to or greater than mainstream



Effective PR requires understanding where audiences get information and building relationships across both traditional and emerging channels.

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Test-Taking Tips – Domain 8

Focus on Integration:

Choose answers that reflect strategic alignment with the association's mission and strategic plan.

Think Like the CSE:

Prioritize responses that emphasize leadership roles: alignment, oversight, ethical standards, and stakeholder listening.

Audience-Centered Approach:

Correct answers typically emphasize understanding diverse audiences, selecting appropriate channels, clear messaging tied to goals and personalization.

Digital is Non-Negotiable:

Choose options that integrate digital strategy, measurement, and channel selection.

DEI, Ethics & Legal Considerations:

Look for answers that DEI in messaging and planning, personal data protection (privacy, email laws, data integrity), copyright and trademark compliance, risk mitigation for social media and public communication.

Measurement Matters:

Strong choices include assessment and adjustment such as: NPS, sentiment, analytics, revenue and participation metrics.

Peer Influence & Stakeholder Voices:

Good answers often acknowledge that associations do not control all channels.

Strategy Before Tactics:

On scenario questions, prioritize setting goals, identifying audiences, selecting messages, and THEN choosing tactics

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Questions?

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